Exhibits

Exhibits for Case Study 29, July 2015, Sydney

Display per page 100

Exhibit Number	Hearing Day	Tendered By	Witness Names	Date Tendered
29-0001	Day 147	Angus Stewart SC	BCB	27-Jul-15

Statement of [BCB]

Document ID: STAT.0603.001.0001_R
Document Date: 10-Jul-15

3.8 MB

Exhibit Number	Hearing Day	Tendered By	Witness Names	Date Tendered
29-0002	Day 147	Angus Stewart SC	Max Horley	27-Jul-15

Statement of Max HORLEY

Document ID: STAT.0601.001.0001_R
Document Date: 07-Jul-15

1.2 MB

Exhibit Number	Hearing Day	Tendered By	Witness Names	Date Tendered
29-0003	Day 147	Angus Stewart SC	N/A	27-Jul-15

Undated document authored by [BCH] regarding reinstatement.

Document ID: QLD.0068.001.1460_R
Document Date:

2.6 MB

Undated handwritten letter from [BCH] to Ron De Rooy, Mareeba Congregation pleading for reinstatement.

Document ID: QLD.0068.001.1473_R
Document Date:

2 MB

Undated report of Judicial Committee, Mareeba Congregation, regarding original decision to disfellowship [BCH].

Document ID: WAT.0001.002.0134_R
Document Date: 12-Jul-89

14.7 MB

Letter from [BCH] to Elders of Mareeba Congregation appealing the original decision to disfellowship.

Document ID: QLD.0068.001.1474_R
Document Date: 19-Jul-89

2.6 MB

Report of Appeal Committee regarding [BCH].

Document ID: WAT.0001.002.0135_R
Document Date: 23-Jul-89

9.4 MB

Handwritten letter from [BCH] to the Body of Elders, Mareeba Congregation, asking for forgiveness.

Document ID: QLD.0068.001.1472_R
Document Date: 07-Aug-89

917 kB

Letter from Judicial Committee Beenleigh East Congregation, C/- Rodney Spinks, to Judicial Committee, Mareeba Congregation, regarding meeting with [BCH] in relation to plea for reinstatement.

Document ID: WAT.0006.001.0036_R
Document Date: 19-Mar-90

2.3 MB

Letter from Judicial Committee, Mareeba Congregation, to Judicial Committee, Beenleigh East Congregation, regarding [BCH]'s plea for reinstatement.

Document ID: WAT.0006.001.0026_R
Document Date: 23-Apr-90

1.3 MB

Report on plea for reinstatement by [BCH] prepared by Rod Spinks, Monty Baker, and Arthur Johnson.

Document ID: WAT.0006.001.0034_R

Document Date: 15-Jun-90

1.6 MB

Erroneously dated (1990) letter from the Judicial Committee, Beenleigh East Congregation to the Judicial Committee, Mareeba Congregation, regarding further plea for reinstatement by [BCH].

Document ID: QLD.0068.001.1466_R
Document Date: 19-Mar-91

2.6 MB

Letter from [BCH] to Monty Baker, Beenleigh East Congregation, pleading for reinstatement.

Document ID: QLD.0068.001.1465_R
Document Date: 02-Sep-90

2.4 MB

Letter from Judicial Committee, Mareeba Congregation, to Judicial Committee, Beenleigh East Congregation regarding plea for reinstatement by [BCH].

Document ID: WAT.0006.001.0021_R
Document Date: 06-Apr-91

2.7 MB

Letter from [BCH] to Monty Baker, Beenleigh East Congregation, regarding inaccuracies expressed in last correspondence between them.

Document ID: WAT.0006.001.0024_R
Document Date: 10-Apr-91

4.8 MB

Letter from [BCH] to Ron De Rooy, Presiding Overseer, Mareeba Congregation pleading for reinstatement.

Document ID: QLD.0068.001.1461_R
Document Date: 05-Jun-91

1.2 MB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to The Body of Elders, Beenleigh East Congregation, enclosing letter from [BCH] and regarding consideration of second plea for reinstatement.

Document ID: WAT.0006.001.0016_R

Document Date: 12-Jul-91

1.9 MB

Letter from [BCH] to Watchtower Australia and copying Beenleigh East Congregation, as enclosed with letter from Watchtower Australia to Beenleigh East Congregation dated 12 July 1991, regarding reinstatement.

Document ID: WAT.0006.001.0017_R
Document Date: 07-Jul-91

1.6 MB

Letter from Monty Baker, Beenleigh East Congregation, to Judicial Committee C/- Ron de Rooy, Mareeba Congregation, regarding pleas for reinstatement by and meetings with [BCH].

Document ID: WAT.0006.001.0014_R
Document Date: 14-Aug-91

240 kB

Letter from Beenleigh East Congregation to Watchtower Australia regarding [BCH]'s pleas for reinstatement.

Document ID: WAT.0006.001.0012_R
Document Date: 16-Aug-91

5 MB

Letter from [BCH] to the Service Desk, Watchtower Australia, regarding reinstatement.

Document ID: QLD.0068.001.1457_R
Document Date: 29-Aug-91

1.9 MB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to Beenleigh East Congregation, regarding plea for reinstatement by[BCH] and advising caution.

Document ID: WAT.0001.002.0133_R
Document Date: 05-Sep-91

8.5 MB

Letter Beenleigh East Congregation to Mareeba Congregation regarding [BCH]'s move to St George Congregation and plea for reinstatement.

Document ID: WAT.0006.001.0003_R

Document Date: 14-Mar-92

8.7 MB

Letter from Bernd Kloos, Presiding Overseer, St George Congregation, to the Judicial Committee, Mareeba Congregation recommending reinstatement of [BCH].

Document ID: QLD.0068.001.1451_R
Document Date: 22-Mar-92

632 kB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to The Body of Elders, Beenleigh East Congregation regarding handling of pleas for reinstatement by [BCH].

Document ID: WAT.0006.001.0010_R
Document Date: 02-Apr-92

1.1 MB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to the Judicial Committee of St George Congregation expressing caution as to believing [BCH]'s shows of repentance and recommending him for reinstatement

Document ID: QLD.0068.001.1450_R
Document Date: 03-Apr-92

2.6 MB

Letter from Mareeba Congregation to St George Congregation expressing concern about reinstating [BCH].

Document ID: QLD.0068.001.1449_R
Document Date: 16-Apr-92

629 kB

Letter from St George Congregation recommending reinstatement of [BCH].

Document ID: QLD.0068.001.1448_R
Document Date: 19-Oct-92

2.4 MB

Letter from Mareeba Congregation to St George Congregation agreeing to reinstate [BCH].

Document ID: QLD.0068.001.1447_R
Document Date: 04-Nov-92

1.2 MB

Notification of disfellowshipping and reinstatement of [BCH] from Mareeba Congregation, QLD for 'Loose conduct and lying'.

Document ID: WAT.0001.002.0136_R
Document Date: 13-Nov-92

9.9 MB

Letter from the Judicial Committee, Mareeba Congregation to the Body of Elders Loganholme Congregation, regarding restrictions to be placed on [BCH].

Document ID: QLD.0068.001.1446_R
Document Date: 17-Dec-92

1.2 MB

Letter from Mareeba Congregation to Watchtower Australia forwarding the original disfellowshipping and reinstatement form of [BCH].

Document ID: QLD.0068.001.1445_R
Document Date: 12-Jan-93

111 kB

Letter from Ron DeRooy, Mareeba Congregation, to Watchtower Australia enclosing handwritten letter from [BCG].

Document ID: WAT.0001.002.0121_R
Document Date: 19-Dec-95

1.7 MB

Handwritten letter from [BCG] regarding child sexual abuse by [BCH], his disfellowshipping and his reinstatement after only two years.

Document ID: QLD.0068.001.1410_R
Document Date: 19-Dec-95

2.1 MB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to [BCG] regarding [BCH].

Document ID: QLD.0068.001.1409_R
Document Date: 26-Feb-96

338 kB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to the Body of Elders, Mareeba Congregation regarding factors taken into account in the reinstatement of [BCH].

Document ID: QLD.0068.001.1408_R
Document Date: 25-Jul-96

1.4 MB

Police statement of James Bennett.

Document ID: QLD.0066.001.0502_R
Document Date: 11-Oct-00

296 kB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to Vincent Toole regarding production of documents relating to [BCH].

Document ID: WAT.0012.001.0021_R
Document Date: 06-Jul-01

1.7 MB

Letter from Vincent Toole, Solicitor, to Constable Natalie Bennett enclosing draft statements from Joseph Miraziz, Donald Wilson, and Alan Wood.

Document ID: QLD.0066.001.0522_R
Document Date: 09-Jul-01

1.8 MB

Letter from Vincent Toole, Solicitor, to Constable Natalie Bennett enclosing four documents relating to the decision to disfellowship and reinstate [BCH].

Document ID: QLD.0066.001.0527_R
Document Date: 09-Jul-01

120 kB

Police statement of Donald Angus Wilson.

Document ID: QLD.0068.001.0163_R
Document Date: 17-Aug-01

494 kB

Extract From ODPP Schedule of Facts: Committal hearing for [BCH].

Document ID: QLD.0068.001.1267_R

Document Date: 24-Oct-01

3.2 MB

Letter from [BCK] to Vincent Toole regarding [BCH].

Document ID: WAT.0012.001.0019_R
Document Date: 13-Oct-02

6.1 MB

Letter from [BCK] to Vin Toole regarding child sexual abuse by [BCH].

Document ID: WAT.0001.002.0114_R
Document Date: 23-Oct-02

187 kB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to Loganholme Congregation regarding prosecution and imminent disfellowshipping of [BCH] and requiring Loganholme Elders to meet with [BCH].

Document ID: WAT.0001.002.0112_R
Document Date: 01-Nov-02

467 kB

Memorandum to the Service Department, Watchtower Australia, from Vincent Toole, Legal Department, Watchtower Australia regarding [BCH] and the charges for which is should be disfellowshipped from the Loganholme Congregation.

Document ID: WAT.0001.002.0109_R
Document Date: 23-Jan-03

707 kB

Notification of disfellowshipping of [BCH] from Loganholme Congregation on the basis of deliberate, malicious lying, bearing false witness.

Document ID: WAT.0001.002.0107_R
Document Date: 11-Mar-03

10.8 MB

Report of Allan Pencheff, Albert Hatton and David McGee, Loganholme Congregation regarding decision to disfellowship [BCH].

Document ID: WAT.0001.002.0108_R
Document Date: 23-Mar-03

239 kB

Letter of reference from Bernard Kloos to the Presiding Judge of the Brisbane District Court.

Document ID: QLD.0068.001.1403_R
Document Date: 12-May-03

3.1 MB

Transcript of third criminal trial: R v [BCH] (Day 5 - sentencing).

Document ID: QLD.0068.003.0104_R
Document Date: 03-Dec-04

1.6 MB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to Loganholme Congregation regarding plea for reinstatement by [BCH].

Document ID: WAT.0001.002.0104_R
Document Date: 31-May-06

450 kB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to The Body of Elders, Loganholme Congregation, regarding [BCH]'s contact with daughters and absence of repentance.

Document ID: LOCO.0001.002.0014_R
Document Date: 28-Aug-07

2.4 MB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to The Body of Elders, Loganholme Congregation, recommending that the Elders refrain from meeting with [BCH] whilst he continues to deny allegations of child sexual abuse.

Document ID: LOCO.0001.002.0010_R
Document Date: 16-Sep-08

163 kB

Letter from Loganholme Congregation to Watchtower Australia enclosing S-77 Notification of Disfellowshipping form.

Document ID: LOCO.0001.001.0023_R
Document Date: 16-Mar-09

2.3 MB

Revised disfellowshipping form regarding 2003 disfellowshipping of [BCH].

Document ID: LOCO.0001.002.0002_R
Document Date: 02-Apr-09

19.7 MB

Letter from Kalamunda Congregation to [addressee unclear] requesting guidance in anticipation of a plea for reinstatement by [BCH].

Document ID: WAT.0012.001.0004_R
Document Date: 24-Apr-10

1.1 MB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to The Body of Elders, Kalamunda Congregation, regarding plea for reinstatement by [BCH].

Document ID: LOCO.0001.002.0008_R
Document Date: 11-May-10

2.7 MB

Letter from Kalamunda Congregation to [addressee unclear] seeking direction in relation to a plea for reinstatement by [BCH].

Document ID: WAT.0012.001.0005_R
Document Date: 30-Oct-10

3.5 MB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to The Body of Elders, Kalamunda Congregation, regarding plea for reinstatement by [BCH].

Document ID: LOCO.0001.002.0007_R
Document Date: 09-Nov-10

2.7 MB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to The Body of Elders, Kalamunda Congregation, recommending caution in considering [BCH]'s requests for reinstatement.

Document ID: LOCO.0001.002.0012_R
Document Date: 21-Dec-10

4 MB

Letter from Kalamunda Congregation to The Body of Elders, Loganholme Congregation, regarding [BCH]'s plea for reinstatement.

Document ID: LOCO.0001.001.0018_R
Document Date: 27-Mar-11

2.5 MB

Letter from Loganholme Congregation to Watchtower Australia regarding recommendation for reinstatement of [BCH] by Kalamunda Congregation.

Document ID: LOCO.0001.001.0025_R
Document Date: 29-Apr-11

2.8 MB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to The Body of Elders, Loganholme Congregation, regarding plea for reinstatement by [BCH].

Document ID: LOCO.0001.002.0006_R
Document Date: 05-May-11

3.6 MB

Letter from Kalamunda Congregation to Watchtower Australia regarding fourth plea for reinstatement by [BCH].

Document ID: WAT.0012.001.0007_R
Document Date: 27-Aug-11

5.6 MB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to The Body of Elders, Kalamunda Congregation, advising extreme caution in recommending reinstatement of [BCH].

Document ID: LOCO.0001.002.0011_R
Document Date: 19-Sep-11

978 kB

Letter from [BCH] to Kalamunda Congregation, WA, requesting reinstatement.

Document ID: WAT.0001.002.0101_R
Document Date: 17-Dec-12

791 kB

Letter from Kalamunda Congregation to Watchtower Australia enclosing [BCH]'s request for reinstatement and advising that the Elders believe that he should be considered for reinstatement.

Document ID: WAT.0001.002.0100_R

Document Date: 02-Feb-13

7.5 MB

Letter from the Watchtower Australia to Kalamunda Congregation regarding the request for reinstatement by [BCH] reiterating their direction to exercise extreme caution in recommending reinstatement of a child abuser.

Document ID: WAT.0001.002.0099_R
Document Date: 12-Feb-13

9.7 MB

Letter from [BCH] to the Kalamunda Congregation requesting reinstatement.

Document ID: WAT.0001.002.0098_R
Document Date: 18-Aug-13

6.9 MB

Letter from Kalamunda Congregation to Watchtower Australia regarding [BCH]'s request for reinstatement and asking for approval for reinstatement.

Document ID: WAT.0001.002.0096_R
Document Date: 15-Dec-13

16.1 MB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to the Body of Elders, Kalamunda Congregation regarding request for reinstatement by [BCH] advising no reason to consider he is repentant.

Document ID: WAT.0001.002.0095_R
Document Date: 27-Dec-13

10.1 MB

Letter from Kalamunda Congregation to Watchtower Australia seeking details of the evidence against [BCH] relevant to reinstatement.

Document ID: WAT.0001.002.0094_R
Document Date: 20-Jan-14

9.4 MB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to the Body of Elders, Kalamunda Congregation, regarding [BCH]'s request for reinstatement.

Document ID: WAT.0001.002.0092_R

Document Date: 31-Jan-14

20 MB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to Body of Elders, Kalamunda Congregation, regarding details of allegations against [BCH] and his pleas for reinstatement.

Document ID: WAT.0001.002.0091_R
Document Date: 09-Dec-14

7.1 MB

Letter from Doug Jackson, co-signed by Max Horley, to Watchtower Australia dated 1 February 1992.

Document ID: WAT.0001.002.0504_R
Document Date: 01-Feb-92

4.3 MB

Letter from [REDACTED] Congregation to Watchtower Australia attaching a statement from [BCB] dated 18 December 2012.

Document ID: WAT.0001.002.0500_R
Document Date:

974 kB

Written statement by [BCB] regarding William (Bill) Neill and enclosed with letter from [REDACTED] Congregation to Watchtower Australia dated 18 December 2012.

Document ID: WAT.0001.002.0501_R
Document Date:

6.5 MB

Letter from [REDACTED] Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses to Watchtower Australia regarding background information about [BCB].

Document ID: WAT.0001.002.0495_R
Document Date:

3.3 MB

Undated handwritten letter from [BCB] enclosed with letter from [REDACTED] Congregation to Watchtower Australia dated 17 December 2014.

Document ID: WAT.0001.002.0497_R
Document Date:

7 MB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to The Body of Elders, [REDACTED] Congregation regarding the Congregation's provision of background information on [BCB].

Document ID: WAT.0001.002.0494_R
Document Date:

882 kB

Letter from Max Horley to Watchtower Australia regarding his recollection of allegations against Bill Neill.

Document ID: WAT.0001.002.0493_R
Document Date: 06-Jan-15

1.6 MB

Article in Awake! magazine entitled What Parents Can Do.

Document ID: WAT.0001.004.0225
Document Date: 22-May-70

2.4 MB

Article in Awake! magazine entitled To End Child Abuse.

Document ID: WAT.0001.004.0223
Document Date: 22-Jun-82

869 kB

Article in The Watchtower magazine entitled Help for the Victims of Incest.

Document ID: WAT.0001.004.0325
Document Date: 01-Oct-83

1.4 MB

Article in Awake! magazine entitled Child Molesting: Every Mother's Nightmare.

Document ID: WAT.0001.004.0205
Document Date: 22-Jan-85

4.3 MB

Memorandum and Articles of Association: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia.

Document ID: WAT.0009.001.0021
Document Date: 29-Jul-85

925 kB

Extracts from Pay Attention to Yourselves and to All the Flock.

Document ID: WAT.0013.002.0001
Document Date: 01-Jan-91

3 MB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to All Bodies of Elders regarding helping victims of child abuse.

Document ID: WAT.0001.004.0001
Document Date: 23-Apr-93

1.3 MB

Document entitled What Elders can say to abuse victims enclosed with letter from Watchtower to All Bodies of Elders dated 23 April 1992.

Document ID: WAT.0001.004.0004
Document Date: 23-Apr-92

759 kB

Articles in Awake! magazine entitled “Your Child is in Danger”, “How Can We Protect Our Children?” and “Prevention in the Home”.

Document ID: WAT.0001.004.0238
Document Date: 08-Oct-93

3.2 MB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to All Bodies of Elders regarding protecting victims of child abuse.

Document ID: WAT.0001.004.0005
Document Date: 01-Aug-95

658 kB

Article in The Watchtower magazine entitled Comfort for those with a 'stricken spirit'.

Document ID: WAT.0001.004.0310
Document Date: 01-Nov-95

1.3 MB

Article in The Watchtower magazine entitled Let Us Abhor What Is Wicked.

Document ID: WAT.0001.004.0306
Document Date: 01-Jan-97

1.2 MB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to Governing Body, Publishing Committee, Brooklyn, regarding handling child abuse matters and court subpoenas.

Document ID: WAT.0004.001.0010
Document Date: 18-Feb-97

88 kB

Letter from Watchtower Pennsylvania to Watchtower Australia regarding handling child abuse matters and clergy confidentiality.

Document ID: WAT.0001.004.0007
Document Date: 04-Mar-97

516 kB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to All Bodies of Elders regarding protection of victims of child abuse and information sharing.

Document ID: WAT.0001.004.0008
Document Date: 14-Mar-97

748 kB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to All Bodies of Elders regarding child protection.

Document ID: WAT.0001.004.0011
Document Date: 01-May-97

804 kB

Interbranch memo from the Publishing Committee to Watchtower Australia regarding child abuse and subpoenas for confidential records.

Document ID: WAT.0012.001.0025
Document Date: 07-Oct-97

141 kB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to Governing Body, Publishing Committee, Brooklyn,

regarding handling child abuse matters and mandatory reporting.

Document ID: WAT.0004.001.0014
Document Date: 29-Oct-97

116 kB

Flow chart entitled Handling Child Abuse Matters enclosed with letter from Watchtower Australia to Service Committee dated 29 October 1997.

Document ID: WAT.0012.001.0013
Document Date: 29-Oct-97

319 kB

Comments on Flow Chart entitled Handling Child Abuse Matters enclosed with letter from Watchtower Australia to Service Committee dated 29 October 1997.

Document ID: WAT.0012.001.0014
Document Date: 29-Oct-97

138 kB

Memo from H V Mouritz to Service Committee (Governing Body) entitled Comments on Handling Cases of Child Abuse in Australia.

Document ID: WAT.0012.001.0011
Document Date: 21-Nov-97

73 kB

Letter from Watchtower Pennsylvania to Watchtower Australia regarding confidentiality and child abuse cases.

Document ID: WAT.0001.004.0014
Document Date: 12-Feb-98

515 kB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to Governing Body (Watchtower Pennsylvania) regarding disclosure of information to secular authorities.

Document ID: WAT.0012.001.0009
Document Date: 28-Apr-98

145 kB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to All Bodies of Elders regarding child abuse and scriptural freedom to remarry.

Document ID: WAT.0002.001.0003
Document Date: 20-Jul-98

725 kB

Letter from Watchtower Pennsylvania to Watchtower Australia regarding informing secular authorities.

Document ID: WAT.0004.001.0026
Document Date: 24-Jul-98

67 kB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to All Bodies of Elders regarding child molestation and scriptural freedom to remarry.

Document ID: WAT.0002.001.0001
Document Date: 20-Dec-98

817 kB

Letter from Watchtower Pennsylvania to Watchtower Australia regarding dealing with those who have been guilty of child abuse.

Document ID: WAT.0004.001.0021
Document Date: 31-Dec-98

89 kB

Letter from Watchtower Pennsylvania to Watchtower Australia regarding clergy privilege and mandatory reporting.

Document ID: WAT.0001.004.0020
Document Date: 21-Jan-99

515 kB

Extract from Our Kingdom Ministry regarding announcement in relation to compliance with Caesar's laws on reporting.

Document ID: WAT.0004.001.0027
Document Date: 01-Apr-99

515 kB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to Governing Body regarding transfer of funds between branches.

Document ID: WAT.0012.001.0023

Document Date: 28-Aug-01

142 kB

Extract from Holden A Jehovah's Witnesses: Portrait of a Contemporary Religious Movement entitled Chapter 2: The Jehovah's Witnesses in the modern world.

Document ID: WEB.0053.002.0001
Document Date: 01-Jan-02

22 MB

Letter from Watchtower Pennsylvania to Watchtower Australia regarding amendments to privacy law.

Document ID: WAT.0012.001.0016
Document Date: 03-Jan-02

744 kB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to Governing Body regarding privacy laws in Australia.

Document ID: WAT.0012.001.0022
Document Date: 08-Jan-02

67 kB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to All Congregations in Australia regarding reporting of child sexual abuse to secular authorities.

Document ID: WAT.0004.001.0001
Document Date: 28-Aug-02

454 kB

Extract from Learn from the Great Teacher entitled Chapter 32: How Jesus Was Protected.

Document ID: WAT.0001.004.0128
Document Date: 01-Jan-03

726 kB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to Body of Elders referring to responsibility to provide safe environment.

Document ID: WAT.0001.002.4967_R
Document Date: 20-Jan-03

1.6 MB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to a Body of Elders regarding application of two-witness rule.

Document ID: WAT.0001.002.5407_R
Document Date: 23-Apr-04

1.8 MB

Extracts from Organized to Jehovah's Will

Document ID: WAT.0013.001.0001
Document Date: 01-Jan-05

30 MB

Letter from Watchtower Pennsylvania to Watchtower Australia enclosing Service Desk Guidelines to replace previous Guidelines dated 31 March 1997.

Document ID: WAT.0001.004.0023
Document Date: 07-Sep-05

526 kB

Guidelines for Branch Service Desk - September 2005.

Document ID: WAT.0001.004.0025
Document Date: 01-Sep-05

573 kB

Letter from Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses to All Bodies of Elders regarding letters of introduction (US version referred to in Watchtower Australia letter of 17 Nov 2010).

Document ID: WAT.0004.001.0067
Document Date: 01-Jul-06

93 kB

Article in Awake! magazine entitled A Danger that Concerns Every Parent.

Document ID: WAT.0001.004.0253
Document Date: 01-Oct-07

2.3 MB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to Service Committee, US, regarding privacy laws and proposed revision to S-77 Notification of Disfellowshipping form.

Document ID: WAT.0004.001.0058
Document Date: 15-Jul-08

75 kB

Proposed instructions for completing S-77 Notification of Disfellowshipping form, enclosed with letter from Watchtower Australia to Service Committee dated 15 July 2008.

Document ID: WAT.0004.001.0060
Document Date: 15-Jul-08

82 kB

Proposed revision to S-77 Notification of Disfellowshipping or Disassociation form.

Document ID: WAT.0012.001.0027
Document Date: 15-Jul-08

724 kB

Letter from Watchtower Pennsylvania to Watchtower Australia regarding privacy laws and proposed revision of S-77 Notification of Disfellowshipping form.

Document ID: WAT.0002.001.0011
Document Date: 19-Aug-08

527 kB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to Service Committee, US, regarding privacy laws and proposed revision to S-77 Notification of Disfellowshipping form.

Document ID: WAT.0002.001.0013
Document Date: 12-Sep-08

525 kB

Letter from Watchtower Pennsylvania sent on 27 October 2008 to Watchtower Australia regarding privacy laws and proposed revision to S-77 Notification of Disfellowshipping form.

Document ID: WAT.0001.004.0046
Document Date: 16-Oct-08

524 kB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to All Bodies of Elders regarding revisions to notification of disfellowshipping procedure.

Document ID: WAT.0001.004.0047

Document Date: 20-Nov-08

557 kB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to All Bodies of Elders regarding retention of confidential records.

Document ID: WAT.0001.004.0049
Document Date: 21-Nov-08

555 kB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to All Bodies of Elders regarding retention of confidential records.

Document ID: WAT.0002.001.0015
Document Date: 01-Feb-09

765 kB

Marked-up copy of Shepherd the Flock of God.

Document ID: WAT.0003.001.0001
Document Date: 01-Jan-10

1.4 MB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to All Bodies of Elders regarding letters of introduction.

Document ID: WAT.0002.001.0017
Document Date: 17-Nov-10

556 kB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to All Bodies of Elders regarding correspondence from the branch office and congregation files.

Document ID: WAT.0002.001.0019
Document Date: 07-Sep-11

583 kB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to All Bodies of Elders in South Australia regarding mandatory reporting.

Document ID: WAT.0001.004.0065
Document Date: 10-Jan-12

1.4 MB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to All Bodies of Elders regarding child abuse.

Document ID: WAT.0001.004.0066
Document Date: 01-Oct-12

731 kB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to All Circuit Overseers regarding child sexual abuse and special committees.

Document ID: WAT.0001.004.0072
Document Date: 02-Oct-12

574 kB

Letter from Watchtower Pennsylvania to All Branches enclosing revised Guidelines for Branch Office Service Desks (S-66)

Document ID: WAT.0001.004.0075
Document Date: 27-Aug-13

520 kB

Guidelines for Branch Office Service Desks - 2013

Document ID: WAT.0001.004.0076
Document Date: 27-Aug-13

794 kB

Extract from Keep Yourselves in God's Love entitled Chapter 5: How to Keep Separate From the World.

Document ID: WEB.0053.001.0001
Document Date: 01-Jan-14

4.8 MB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to All Bodies of Elders regarding appointment and deletion of elders and ministerial servants.

Document ID: WAT.0002.001.0034
Document Date: 13-Jul-14

592 kB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to All Circuit Overseers regarding appointment and deletion of elders and ministerial servants.

Document ID: WAT.0002.001.0039
Document Date: 14-Jul-14

619 kB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to All Circuit Overseers regarding appointment and deletion of elders and ministerial servants.

Document ID: WAT.0002.001.0046
Document Date: 14-Jul-14

519 kB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to All Bodies of Elders regarding regular pioneers.

Document ID: WAT.0002.001.0047
Document Date: 25-Aug-14

598 kB

Annual Report and Financial Statements of the Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia Ltd.

Document ID: WAT.0009.001.0004
Document Date: 31-Aug-14

13.3 MB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to All Bodies of Elders regarding procedures when legal issues are involved

Document ID: WAT.0014.001.0009
Document Date: 06-Nov-14

1.8 MB

Extract of 2015 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses entitled 2014 Grand Totals - 2014 Service Year Report Of Jehovah's Witnesses Worldwide

Document ID: WAT.0013.003.0001
Document Date: 01-Jan-15

897 kB

Watchtower Australia Submission in response to the Royal Commission's Summons to Produce Documents No S-NSW-391

Document ID: WAT.0001.001.0001
Document Date: 01-Feb-15

461 kB

ACNC Charity Register Summary: Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia.

Document ID: WAT.0009.001.0001
Document Date: 21-May-15

222 kB

Index to Letters for Bodies of Elders

Document ID: WAT.0014.001.0001
Document Date: 26-May-15

1.6 MB

Letter from Watchtower Australia to the Royal Commission regarding compliance with Summonses 461 and 462.

Document ID: WAT.9999.004.0003
Document Date: 17-Jun-15

1009 kB

ASIC current and historical extract

Document ID: ASIC.0002.001.0001
Document Date: 13-Jul-15

4.4 MB

Exhibit Number	Hearing Day	Tendered By	Witness Names	Date Tendered
29-0004	Day 147	Angus Stewart SC	Doug Jackson	27-Jul-15

Statement of Doug JACKSON

Document ID: STAT.0600.001.0001_R
Document Date: 10-Jul-15

807 kB

Exhibit Number	Hearing Day	Tendered By	Witness Names	Date Tendered
29-0005	Day 148	Angus Stewart SC	Joseph Bello	28-Jul-15

Statement of Joseph BELLO

Document ID: STAT.0594.001.0001_R
Document Date: 06-Jul-15

734 kB

Exhibit Number	Hearing Day	Tendered By	Witness Names	Date Tendered
29-0006	Day 148	Angus Stewart SC	BCG	27-Jul-15

Statement of [BCG]

Document ID: STAT.0590.001.0001_R
Document Date: 10-Jul-15

2.8 MB

Exhibit Number	Hearing Day	Tendered By	Witness Names	Date Tendered
29-0007	Day 148	Angus Stewart SC	Dino Ali	28-Jul-15

Statement of Dino ALI

Document ID: STAT.0598.001.0001_R
Document Date: 10-Jul-15

3.5 MB

Exhibit Number	Hearing Day	Tendered By	Witness Names	Date Tendered
29-0008	Day 149	Angus Stewart SC	NA	29-Jul-15

Notes of Investigating Committee

Document ID: QLD.0068.001.1478_R
Document Date: 01-Jun-89

21 MB

Exhibit Number	Hearing Day	Tendered By	Witness Names	Date Tendered
29-0009	Day 149	Angus Stewart SC	NA	29-Jul-15

Transcription of Notes of Investigating Committee

Document ID: QLD.0068.001.1478_T_R
Document Date: 02-Jun-89

5.3 MB

Exhibit Number	Hearing Day	Tendered By	Witness Names	Date Tendered
29-0010	Day 149	Angus Stewart SC	Kevin Bowditch	29-Jul-15

Statement of Kevin BOWDITCH

Document ID: STAT.0602.001.0001_R
Document Date: 12-Jul-15

3.5 MB

Exhibit Number	Hearing Day	Tendered By	Witness Names	Date Tendered

29-0011	Day 149	Angus Stewart SC Jason Davies	29-Jul-15

Statement of Jason DAVIES

Document ID: STAT.0595.001.0001_R
Document Date: 08-Jul-15

2.3 MB

Exhibit Number	Hearing Day	Tendered By	Witness Names	Date Tendered
29-0012	Day 149	Angus Stewart SC Jason Davies		29-Jul-15

Supplementary Statement of Jason DAVIES

Document ID: STAT.0595.002.0001_R
Document Date: 20-Jul-15

1.8 MB

Exhibit Number	Hearing Day	Tendered By	Witness Names	Date Tendered
29-0013	Day 150	Angus Stewart SC	Dr Monica Applewhite	31-Jul-15

Annexure 2 to the Statement of Dr Monica Applewhite - Curriculum Vitae of Dr Applewhite

Document ID: STAT.0606.001.0017
Document Date:

2.9 MB

Statement of Dr Monica Applewhite

Document ID: STAT.0606.001.0001
Document Date: 22-Jul-15

4.4 MB

Annexure 1 to the Statement of Dr Monica Applewhite - Letter from Watchtower Australia to Dr Applewhite

Document ID: STAT.0606.001.0012
Document Date: 07-Jul-15

1.1 MB

Exhibit Number	Hearing Day	Tendered By	Witness Names	Date Tendered
29-0014	Day 150	Angus Stewart SC	Dr Monica Applewhite	31-Jul-15

Article in Awake! magazine entitled To End Child Abuse.

Document ID: WAT.0001.004.0223
Document Date: 22-Jun-82

869 kB

Exhibit Number	Hearing Day	Tendered By	Witness Names	Date Tendered
29-0015	Day 150	Angus Stewart SC	Dr Monica Applewhite	31-Jul-15

Conceptualising the Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse - Final report

Document ID: WEB.0061.001.0001
Document Date: 01-Jun-15

1.7 MB

Exhibit Number	Hearing Day	Tendered By	Witness Names	Date Tendered
29-0016	Day 151	Angus Stewart SC	Ronald de Rooy	03-Aug-15

Statement of Ronald de ROOY

Document ID: STAT.0597.001.0001_R
Document Date: 10-Jul-15

1.3 MB

Exhibit Number	Hearing Day	Tendered By	Witness Names	Date Tendered
29-0017	Day 151	Angus Stewart SC	Monty BAKER	03-Aug-15

Statement of Monty BAKER

Document ID: STAT.0605.001.0001_R
Document Date: 07-Jul-15

2.9 MB

Exhibit Number	Hearing Day	Tendered By	Witness Names	Date Tendered
29-0018	Day 152	Angus Stewart SC	Allan PENCHEFF	04-Aug-15

Statement of Allan PENCHEFF

Document ID: STAT.0604.001.0001_R
Document Date: 10-Jul-15

3.2 MB

Exhibit Number	Hearing Day	Tendered By	Witness Names	Date Tendered
29-0019	Day 152	Angus Stewart SC	Rodney SPINKS	04-Aug-15

Statement of Rodney SPINKS

Document ID: STAT.0591.001.0001_R
Document Date: 10-Jul-15

9.6 MB

Annexure 1 to the Statement of Rodney Spinks – Request for Statement by the Royal Commission

Document ID: STAT.0591.001.0015_R
Document Date: 26-Jun-15

1.4 MB

Annexure 3 to the Statement of Rodney Spinks - Application For Regular Pioneer Service

Document ID: STAT.0591.001.0023
Document Date:

234 kB

Annexure 2 to the Statement of Rodney Spinks - Summation of Branch Office Handling Of Child Abuse Matters

Document ID: STAT.0591.001.0018
Document Date:

746 kB

Exhibit Number	Hearing Day	Tendered By	Witness Names	Date Tendered
29-0020	Day 152	Angus Stewart SC	Rodney SPINKS	04-Aug-15

Circuit Overseer Meets with Elders and Ministerial Servants – Program from September 1998 through February 1999

Document ID: EXH.029.020.0001
Document Date:

1.4 MB

Exhibit Number	Hearing Day	Tendered By	Witness Names	Date Tendered
29-0021	Day 152	Angus Stewart SC	Rodney SPINKS	04-Aug-15

Summary of Watchtower Australia Case File Analysis

Document ID: WAT.9999.013.0012
Document Date:

357 kB

Re: Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (“Commission”) – Analysis Summary – Comments and Verification

Document ID: WAT.0018.001.0001_R
Document Date: 20-Jul-15

4.3 MB

Letter from Royal Comiission to Milton BRAY

Document ID: WAT.9999.013.0005_R
Document Date: 29-Jul-15

3.7 MB

Letter from Royal Comiission to Milton BRAY

Document ID: WAT.9999.013.0001_R
Document Date: 16-Jul-15

2 MB

Exhibit Number	Hearing Day	Tendered By	Witness Names	Date Tendered
29-0022	Day 152	Angus Stewart SC	Rodney SPINKS	04-Aug-15

Second Statement of Rodney SPINKS

Document ID: STAT.0591.002.0001
Document Date: 24-Jul-15

314 kB

Exhibit Number	Hearing Day	Tendered By	Witness Names	Date Tendered
29-0023	Day 153	Angus Stewart SC	Vincent TOOLE	05-Aug-15

Annexure 1 to the Statement of Vincent Toole – Request for Statement by the Royal Commission

Document ID: STAT.0593.001.0011_R
Document Date: 26-Jun-15

1.4 MB

Statement of Vincent TOOLE

Document ID: STAT.0593.001.0001_R
Document Date: 10-Jul-15

6.6 MB

Exhibit Number	Hearing Day	Tendered By	Witness Names	Date Tendered
29-0024	Day 153	Angus Stewart SC	Terrence O'BRIEN	05-Aug-15

Statement of Terrence O'BRIEN

Document ID: STAT.0592.001.0001_R
Document Date: 10-Jul-15

12 MB

Annexure 2 to the Statement of Terrence O'Brien – References to Watchtower articles

Document ID: STAT.0592.001.0024
Document Date:

2.9 MB

Annexure 1 to the Statement of Terrence O'Brien – Request for Statement by the Royal Commission

Document ID: STAT.0592.001.0021_R
Document Date: 26-Jun-15

1.8 MB

Exhibit Number	Hearing Day	Tendered By	Witness Names	Date Tendered
29-0025	Day 153	Angus Stewart SC	Terrence O'BRIEN	05-Aug-15

Second Statement Of Terrence O'BRIEN

Document ID: STAT.0592.002.0001
Document Date: 16-Jul-15

5.6 MB

Exhibit Number	Hearing Day	Tendered By	Witness Names	Date Tendered
29-0026	Day 153	Angus Stewart SC	Terrence O'BRIEN	05-Aug-15

Third Statement of Terrence O'BRIEN

Document ID: STAT.0592.003.0001_R
Document Date: 24-Jul-15

496 kB

Exhibit Number	Hearing Day	Tendered By	Witness Names	Date Tendered
29-0027	Day 153	Angus Stewart SC	Terrence O'BRIEN	05-Aug-15

Extract of Keep Yourself In God's Love

Document ID: EXH.029.027.0001
Document Date: 03-Jun-05

1.7 MB

Exhibit Number	Hearing Day	Tendered By	Witness Names	Date Tendered
29-0028	Day 153	Angus Stewart SC	Terrence O'BRIEN	05-Aug-15

Extract of Branch Organization

Document ID: EXH.029.028.0001_R
Document Date: 01-Jan-15

176 MB

Exhibit Number	Hearing Day	Tendered By	Witness Names	Date Tendered
29-0029	Day 153	Angus Stewart SC	NA	05-Aug-15

Email from Milton Bray to the Royal Commission

Document ID: WAT.9999.012.0001
Document Date: 16-Jul-15

46 kB

Exhibit Number	Hearing Day	Tendered By	Witness Names	Date Tendered
29-0030	Day 153	Angus Stewart SC	NA	05-Aug-15

Transcription of Notes of Investigating Committee

Document ID: QLD.0068.001.1478_T_R
Document Date: 02-Jun-89

5.3 MB

Exhibit Number	Hearing Day	Tendered By	Witness Names	Date Tendered
29-0031	Day 153	Angus Stewart SC	NA	05-Aug-15

Case File Analysis

Document ID: WAT.0021.001.0001
Document Date: 04-Aug-15

956 kB

Exhibit Number	Hearing Day	Tendered By	Witness Names	Date Tendered
29-0032	Day 153	Angus Stewart SC	NA	05-Aug-15

Extract of Organisation to Accomplish Our Minstry

Document ID: WAT.0020.001.0001
Document Date: 01-Jan-83

22 MB

Exhibit Number	Hearing Day	Tendered By	Witness Names	Date Tendered
29-0033	Day 153	Angus Stewart SC	NA	05-Aug-15

Extract of Pay Attention to Yourselves and To All the Flock

Document ID: WAT.0019.001.0001
Document Date: 01-Sep-81

6.2 MB

Exhibit Number	Hearing Day	Tendered By	Witness Names	Date Tendered
29-0034	155	Angus Stewart SC	NA	14-Aug-15

Letter From Watchtower Bible And Tract Society Of Australia To All Bodies Of Elders In Australia

Document ID: CORR.0182.001.0005
Document Date: 10-Oct-02

793 kB

Exhibit Number	Hearing Day	Tendered By	Witness Names	Date Tendered
29-0035	In Chambers	Angus Stewart	Geoffrey Jackson	08-Sep-15

Statement of Geoffrey William Jackson

Document ID: STAT.0670.001.0001
Document Date: 02-Sep-15

743 kB

First Previous 1 Next Last

ASIC
Australian Securities & Investments Commission

Current & Historical Company Extract

Name: WATCHTOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA
ACN: 002 861 225

Date/Time: 13 July 2015 AEST 03:55:00 PM

This extract contains information derived from the Australian Securities and Investments Commission's (ASIC) database under section 1274A of the Corporations Act 2001.

Please advise ASIC of any error or omission which you may identify.

EXTRACT

Current & Historical Company Extract

WATCHTOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA
ACN 002 861 225

Organisation Details		Document Number
Current Organisation Details		
Name:	WATCHTOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA	0286122A
ACN:	002 861 225	
ABN:	42002861225	
Registered in:	New South Wales	
Registration date:	29/07/1985	
Next review date:	29/07/2013	
Name start date:	UNKNOWN	
Previous state number:	34657717	
Status:	Registered	
Company type:	Australian Public Company	
Class:	Limited By Guarantee	
Subclass:	Company Licenced To Omit "limited" From Name	

Address Details		Document Number
Current		
Registered address:	12-14 Zouch Road, DENHAM COURT NSW 2565	1F0274231
Start date:	26/07/2010	
Principal Place Of Business address:	12-14 Zouch Road, DENHAM COURT NSW 2565	1F0274231
Start date:	01/07/2010	
Historical		
Registered address:	2-4 Zouch Road, DENHAM COURT NSW 2565	1F0063432
Start date:	01/10/2007	
Cease date:	25/07/2010	
Registered address:	2-4 Zouch Rd Denham Court, INGLEBURN NSW 2565	00286122G
Start date:	06/01/1997	
Cease date:	30/09/2007	
Registered address:	2-4 Zouch Road, DENHAM COURT NSW 2565	0286122A
Start date:	UNKNOWN	
Cease date:	05/01/1997	
Principal Place Of Business address:	2-4 Zouch Road, DENHAM COURT NSW 2565	1F0063432
Start date:	18/09/2007	
Cease date:	30/06/2010	
Principal Place Of Business address:	2-4 Zouch Rd Denham Court, INGLEBURN NSW 2565	00286122G
Start date:	28/12/1996	
Cease date:	17/09/2007	
Principal Place Of Business address:	2-4 Zouch Road, DENHAM COURT NSW 2565	0286122A

Start date:	15/01/1991
Cease date:	27/12/1996

Officeholders and Other Roles		Document Number
Director		
Name:	WINSTON REGINALD PAYNE	1F0274231
Address:	12-14 Zouch Road, DENHAM COURT NSW 2565	
Born:	16/12/1940, WARWICK, QLD	
Appointment date:	17/10/2002	
Name:	HAROLD VIVIAN MOURITZ	1F0274231
Address:	12-14 Zouch Road, DENHAM COURT NSW 2565	
Born:	11/11/1927, NAGAMBIE, VIC	
Appointment date:	29/07/1985	
Name:	TERRENCE JOHN O'BRIEN	1F0274231
Address:	12-14 Zouch Road, DENHAM COURT NSW 2565	
Born:	29/04/1952, BRISBANE, QLD	
Appointment date:	19/12/2009	
Name:	ALAN JOHN WOOD	1F0500101
Address:	12-14 Zouch Road, DENHAM COURT NSW 2565	
Born:	11/11/1946, SURREY, UNITED KINGDOM	
Appointment date:	28/12/2013	
Name:	GREGORY JOHN FRANK	1F0500101
Address:	12-14 Zouch Road, DENHAM COURT NSW 2565	
Born:	03/06/1949, SYDNEY, NSW	
Appointment date:	28/12/2013	
Secretary		
Name:	TERRENCE JOHN O'BRIEN	027746607
Address:	12-14 Zouch Road, DENHAM COURT NSW 2565	
Born:	29/04/1952, BRISBANE, QLD	
Appointment date:	03/12/2011	
Previous Prev. PEO		
Name:	HAROLD VIVIAN MOURITZ	00286122C
Address:	2-4 Zouch Road, DENHAM COURT NSW 2565	
Born:	11/11/1927, NAGAMBIE, VIC	
Appointment date:	29/07/1985	
Cease date:	08/12/1995	
Previous Director		
Name:	GORDON DOUGLAS KING	1F0274231
Address:	12-14 Zouch Road, DENHAM COURT NSW 2565	
Born:	01/05/1924, HURSTVILLE, NSW	
Appointment date:	29/07/1985	
Cease date:	28/12/2013	
Name:	DONALD HOWARD MACLEAN	1F0274231
Address:	12-14 Zouch Road, DENHAM COURT NSW 2565	
Born:	25/01/1923, TRURO, CANADA	
Appointment date:	29/07/1985	
Cease date:	28/12/2013	
Name:	GEORGE CHARLES HAMNETT	1F0063432

Address:	2-4 Zouch Road, DENHAM COURT NSW 2565	
Born:	25/09/1924, RED HILL SURREY, UNITED KINGDOM	
Appointment date:	23/06/1994	
Cease date:	19/12/2009	
Name:	WALTER MAXWELL LLOYD	00286122G
Address:	2-4 Zouch Rd Denham Court, INGLEBURN NSW 2565	
Born:	10/12/1930, GEELONG, VIC	
Appointment date:	29/07/1985	
Cease date:	17/10/2002	
Name:	WALLACE HENDRIE BAXTER	00286122D
Address:	2-4 Zouch Road, DENHAM COURT NSW 2565	
Born:	30/11/1896, GREENOCK, UNITED KINGDOM	
Appointment date:	29/07/1985	
Cease date:	21/06/1994	

Previous Secretary

Name:	GORDON DOUGLAS KING	1F0274231
Address:	12-14 Zouch Road, DENHAM COURT NSW 2565	
Born:	01/05/1924, HURSTVILLE, NSW	
Appointment date:	29/07/1985	
Cease date:	03/12/2011	

Appointed Auditor

Name:	HARRY GEOFFREY BROWN	028384118
Address:	12 The Close FRANKSTON VIC 3199	
Start date:	15/08/1985	
Name:	PETER JENS MITCHELL	028735925
Address:	114 Poplar Parade YOUNGTOWN TAS 7249	
Start date:	22/12/2012	

Previous Appointed Auditor

Name:	HARRY G BROWN A.S.C.P.A. PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT	00286122B
Address:	12 The Close FRANKSTON VIC 3199	
Start date:	04/08/1989	
Cease date:	10/10/2012	

Financial Reports

Balance date	Report due date	AGM due date	Extended AGM due	AGM held date	Outstanding	Document number
31/08/1999	31/12/1999				no	016087648
31/08/2000	31/12/2000				no	016840675
31/08/2001	31/12/2001				no	017716269
31/08/2002	31/12/2002				no	018334943
31/08/2003	31/12/2003				no	019768392

31/08/2004	31/12/2004				no	020830962
31/08/2005	31/12/2005				no	022394860
31/08/2006	31/01/2007				no	015321898
31/08/2007	31/12/2007				no	024216736
31/08/2008	31/12/2008				no	025224834
31/08/2009	31/12/2009				no	026130888
31/08/2010	31/12/2010				no	027426653
31/08/2011	31/12/2011				no	027755824
31/08/2012	31/12/2012				no	028384118
31/08/2013	31/12/2013				no	028735925

Documents

Note: Where no Date Processed is shown, the document in question has not been processed. In these instances care should be taken in using information that may be updated by the document when it is processed. Where the Date Processed is shown but there is a zero under No Pages, the document has been processed but a copy is not yet available.

Date received	Form type	Date processed	Number of pages	Effective date	Document number
15/01/1991	316 (AR 1990) Annual Return 316E Corrections 316J Annual Return - Company Holds S383 Licence Or Similar Type Of Company	14/03/1991	15	15/01/1991	0286122A
23/01/1992	316 (AR 1991) Annual Return 316E Corrections 316J Annual Return - Company Holds S383 Licence Or Similar Type Of Company	13/04/1992	13	23/01/1992	00286122B
28/01/1993	316J (AR 1992) Annual Return Annual Return - Company Holds S383 Licence Or Similar Type Of Company	18/02/1993	13	23/01/1993	00286122C
04/01/1994	316J (AR 1993) Annual Return Annual Return - Company Holds S383 Licence Or Similar Type Of Company	11/01/1994	14	25/12/1993	00286122D
27/06/1994	304A Notification Of Change To Officeholders Of Australian Company	04/07/1994	2	21/06/1994	007514254
20/01/1995	316J (AR 1994) Annual Return Annual Return - Company Holds S383 Licence Or Similar Type Of Company	20/02/1995	14	24/12/1994	00286122E

09/01/1996	316J (AR 1995) Annual Return Annual Return - Company Holds S383 Licence Or Similar Type Of Company	12/01/1996	14	30/12/1995	00286122F
06/01/1997	316J (AR 1996) Annual Return Annual Return - Company Holds S383 Licence Or Similar Type Of Company	06/02/1997	16	28/12/1996	00286122G
30/12/1997	316J (AR 1997) Annual Return Annual Return - Company Holds S383 Licence Or Similar Type Of Company	15/01/1998	16	20/12/1997	00286122H
23/12/1998	316J (AR 1998) Annual Return Annual Return - Company Holds S383 Licence Or Similar Type Of Company	30/12/1998	16	21/12/1998	00286122I
31/12/1999	316J (AR 1999) Annual Return Annual Return - Company Holds S383 Licence Or Similar Type Of Company	18/01/2000	3	25/12/1999	00286122J
31/12/1999	388A (FR 1999) Financial Report Financial Report - Public Company Or Disclosing Entity	18/01/2000	15	31/08/1999	016087648
02/01/2001	316J (AR 2000) Annual Return Annual Return - Company Holds S383 Licence Or Similar Type Of Company	06/02/2001	3	23/12/2000	00286122K
02/01/2001	388A (FR 2000) Financial Report Financial Report - Public Company Or Disclosing Entity	17/01/2001	16	31/08/2000	016840675
10/01/2002	316J (AR 2001) Annual Return Annual Return - Company Holds S383 Licence Or Similar Type Of Company	11/01/2002	3	24/12/2001	00286122L
10/01/2002	388A (FR 2001) Financial Report Financial Report - Public Company Or Disclosing Entity	11/01/2002	18	31/08/2001	017716269
02/01/2003	316 (AR 2002) Annual Return 316C Change To Officeholders 316J Annual Return - Company Holds S383 Licence Or Similar Type Of Company	09/01/2003	3	27/12/2002	00286122M
02/01/2003	388A (FR 2002) Financial Report Financial Report - Public Company Or Disclosing Entity	06/02/2003	20	31/08/2002	018334943
03/10/2003	388A (FR 2003) Financial	21/10/2003	20	31/08/2003	019768392

	Report Financial Report - Public Company Or Disclosing Entity				
22/11/2004	388A (FR 2004) Financial Report Financial Report - Public Company Or Disclosing Entity	23/11/2004	21	31/08/2004	020830962
03/10/2005	388A (FR 2005) Financial Report Financial Report - Public Company Or Disclosing Entity	11/10/2005	22	31/08/2005	022394860
06/12/2006	388A (FR 2006) Financial Report Financial Report - Public Company Or Disclosing Entity	29/01/2007	23	31/08/2006	015321898
24/09/2007	484 Change To Company Details 484B Change Of Registered Address 484C Change Of Principal Place Of Business (Address) 484A1 Change Officeholder Name Or Address	25/09/2007	4	25/09/2007	1F0063432
11/10/2007	388A (FR 2007) Financial Report Financial Report - Public Company Or Disclosing Entity	13/10/2007	22	31/08/2007	024216736
01/12/2008	388A (FR 2008) Financial Report Financial Report - Public Company Or Disclosing Entity	08/12/2008	23	31/08/2008	025224834
19/11/2009	388A (FR 2009) Financial Report Financial Report - Public Company Or Disclosing Entity	07/12/2009	22	31/08/2009	026130888
08/01/2010	484E Change To Company Details Appointment Or Cessation Of A Company Officeholder	08/01/2010	3	08/01/2010	026163231
19/07/2010	484 Change To Company Details 484B Change Of Registered Address 484C Change Of Principal Place Of Business (Address) 484A1 Change Officeholder Name Or Address	21/07/2010	4	20/07/2010	1F0274231

26/07/2010	9206 Pre 1991 Annual Return And Other Documents	26/07/2010	57	26/07/2010	026328392
26/07/2010	9205 Pre 1991 Regd Office/place Of Business, Agent,Officeholders Shares-Allotment, Prospectus, Report Of Affairs, Trust Deed	26/07/2010	3	26/07/2010	026328391
26/07/2010	9204 Pre 1991 Memorandum And Articles	26/07/2010	26	26/07/2010	026328390
01/12/2010	388A (FR 2010) Financial Report Financial Report - Public Company Or Disclosing Entity	13/12/2010	22	31/08/2010	027426653
24/10/2011	388L (FR 2011) Financial Report Financial Report - Pub Co Ltd By Guarantee Qual Under Tier 2	25/10/2011	22	31/08/2011	027755824
23/12/2011	484E Change To Company Details Appointment Or Cessation Of A Company Officeholder	18/01/2012	4	23/12/2011	027746607
23/01/2012	484E Change To Company Details Appointment Or Cessation Of A Company Officeholder	27/01/2012	3	27/01/2012	027746693
25/10/2012	315A Notice Of Resignation Or Removal Of Auditor Resignation Of Auditor	18/12/2012	1	10/10/2012	028226239
19/11/2012	388 (FR 2012) Financial Report 388E Company - Appoint Change Name/address Of Auditor 388L Financial Report - Pub Co Ltd By Guarantee Qual Under Tier 2	20/12/2012	22	31/08/2012	028384118
22/11/2013	388 (FR 2013) Financial Report 388E Company - Appoint Change Name/address Of Auditor 388L Financial Report - Pub Co Ltd By Guarantee Qual Under Tier 2	19/12/2013	22	31/08/2013	028735925
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Current & Historical Company Extract

WATCHTOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA
ACN 002 861 225

Annual Return Document List

Year	Return due date	Extended due date	AGM due date	Extended AGM due date	AGM held date	Outstanding
1986					06/12/1986	no
1987	31/01/1988		31/12/1987			no
1988	31/08/1988		31/07/1988			no
1989			31/12/1989		25/11/1989	no
1990	28/02/1991		31/01/1991		22/12/1990	no
1991	29/02/1992		31/01/1992		18/01/1992	no
1992	28/02/1993		31/01/1993		23/01/1993	no
1993	28/02/1994		31/01/1994		25/12/1993	no
1994	28/02/1995		31/01/1995		24/12/1994	no
1995	29/02/1996		31/01/1996		30/12/1995	no
1996	28/02/1997		31/01/1997		28/12/1996	no
1997	28/02/1998		31/01/1998		20/12/1997	no
1998	31/01/1999					no
1999	31/01/2000					no
2000	31/01/2001					no
2001	31/01/2002					no
2002	31/01/2003					no

Note: Where the expression 'Unknown' is shown, the precise date may be available from records taken over on 1 January 1991 and held by ASIC in paper or microfiche.

*****End of Extract of 8 Pages*****

WATCHTOWER
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LLA October 10, 2002

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS IN AUSTRALIA

Dear Brothers:

Some questions have arisen concerning the statement on page 2 of our letter To All Congregations in Australia dated August 28, 2002: "We have long instructed elders to report allegations of child abuse to the authorities where required by law to do so, even where there is only one witness." This statement needs to be understood in the following context: (1) This was a general letter addressed to the congregation and not specifically to the elders; and (2) the Society has long instructed elders to follow the following procedure:

> "When elders receive reports of physical or sexual abuse of a child, they should contact the Society's Legal Department immediately. Victims of such abuse need to be protected from further danger."–See letter AB:AS To All Bodies of Elders, August 25, 1989, page 3.
>
> "When a member of the congregation is accused of child molestation, the elders should contact the Society immediately. Some states make it mandatory that elders report an accusation to the proper authorities but other states do not. ... Before speaking to the one accused, the elders should contact the Society."–See letter SA To All Bodies of Elders, November 1, 1995, page 1.

It must be appreciated that the question of child abuse is a complicated matter and that there can be no blanket direction given to the elders throughout the country, or even state by state. Whether or not they are "required by law to do so," can only be determined at the time when elders contact the Society after receiving a report of child abuse. If the law requires them to report the matter, the Society has always, at that time, advised elders to do so. Since there is no clear precise legal definition of "child abuse," and since laws may vary from state to state and are changed from time to time, it is only when all the facts of a particular case are available that proper direction can be given in such matters.Some elders have been concerned about the question of confidentiality, having in mind what the Scriptures say on the subject. (Proverbs 11:13; 15:22) If, after contacting the Society, it is determined that the elders should report a matter such as child abuse to the authorities, it wouldnot be considered to be a breach of confidentiality to make such a report. At times, there may be other Bible principles that must be weighed against the need for confidentiality. (For example, see *Awake!* January 22, 1985, page 8.) Nevertheless, elders should always be conscious of their Scriptural responsibility to keep matters confidential. In this way they can be "like a hiding place from the wind and a place of concealment from the rainstorm." (Isaiah 32:2; See also *The Watchtower* April 1, 1971, pages 222-224.) However, there are times when elders must reveal confidential matters in order to protect the sheep. For example, *Our Kingdom Ministry*, April 1999, on page 7, stated:

> "The question has been asked whether elders should supply information to secular authorities when they learn that a brother or sister has been involved in a serious crime. ... If an elder learns of some serious crime on the part of a member of the congregation, they may, in some circumstances, be obliged to report the matter, or provide information to secular authorities."

In all such cases, the elders would want to reach any decision to report the matter or provide information to secular authorities only *after* consultation with the Society, as stated in *Our Kingdom Ministry*:

> "Even in such cases, it is important that the elders maintain confidentiality to the extent possible, and elders should *always* contact the Society *before* providing any information on confidential matters to secular authorities."

We also want to encourage you to continue providing follow-up assistance for those who have been victims of child abuse. From time to time, the Society has provided assistance to elders to help them to become more effective shepherds, genuinely interested in the welfare of individuals under their care. (1 Peter 5:2.) For example, some helpful articles are: "Help for Victims of Incest"–*The Watchtower*, October 1, 1983; "Child Molesting–Every Mother's Nightmare"–*Awake!* January 22, 1985; "How Can We Protect Our Children?" and "Prevention in the Home"–*Awake!* October 8, 1993; and "Let Us Abhor What Is Wicked!"–*The Watchtower*, January 1, 1997. While we do not take a secular approach in this regard, by imitating the tender qualities of our loving heavenly Father, Jehovah, and his Son, Jesus, much good can be accomplished in rendering assistance to those who have experienced abuse, or who have other distressing circumstances to deal with.–Matthew 11:28, 29.

To assist in protecting our young children, we are now asking the body of elders to write to the Society before allowing a former child molester to receive any privileges in the congregation that would indicate congregational approval. This would include the handling of microphones, being an attendant, working with the literature, volunteering at a convention or assembly, or even auxiliary pioneering.

We appreciate the time and effort you brothers expend in shepherding the sheep. Please accept our very warm Christian love and greetings.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B. & T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

CIRCUIT OVERSEER MEETS WITH ELDERS AND MINISTERIAL SERVANTS
PROGRAM FROM SEPTEMBER 1998 THROUGH FEBRUARY 1999

Theme: Serving With a Self-Sacrificing Spirit (Ro 12:1)

Note to circuit overseer: Ministerial servants will be present for the first 45 minutes of this meeting. An additional 30 minutes will be spent with the elders only, covering pages 118-21 from the 1991 Kingdom Ministry School textbook. In advance, encourage elders to review this material and to bring their Kingdom Ministry School textbooks with them. The entire meeting, including the discussion of other matters on the agenda with the elders, should not exceed two hours

TRODUCTION (5 min.)
To sacrifice means to give up or surrender something valuable
From early times, sacrifices have been a part of pure worship (Ge 4:3, 4)
Self-sacrificing spirit of willing service has always been evident among Jehovah's loyal servants, like the prophet Isaiah, the apostle Paul, "Bible" Brown, John Cutforth, and so on (Isa 6:8; Ac 16:9, 10; *jv* 433, 527-8)
Christ's love compels us to sacrifice self-interests for Jehovah (Mt 16:24; Ro 12:1; 2Co 5:14, 15)
What are some areas wherein elders and ministerial servants can display a self-sacrificing spirit?

SET EXAMPLE AS A SELF-SACRIFICING EVANGELIZER (10 min.)
Giving up time that might be used for personal pursuits to share in the ministry is self-sacrifice
Jesus set the pattern, taking time to help others late into the evening and early in the morning (Mr 1:32-39)
How much do we exert ourselves in the evangelizing work?
Could you arrange to auxiliary pioneer at least once a year? (Eph 5:15, 16)
Requires discipline and good scheduling (1Ti 4:10)
By word and example, are you teaching your family to make sacrifices for Jehovah?
Can family work together to help wife or children to pioneer instead of working full-time?
...e goal of each Christian should be to conduct at least one home Bible study with someone outside of his own household (*km* 8/90 1)
A number do not conduct Bible studies because of the commitment of time and effort involved
Could we make the adjustment and sacrifice an hour or two a week for this rewarding activity?
By comparison, how much time is used for pleasures or entertainment?
What is your spirit toward the Bible study activity?
Do you hold back or put forth real effort to cultivate interest?
Do you regularly pray for a Bible study?
Such sacrifices to help others please Jehovah
To a great degree, the congregation relies on your positive example
Help others to enjoy what they are able to do; commend and encourage them (1Th 1:2, 3)
Your good example will allow freeness of speech
Joys outweigh any inconveniences suffered

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DO NOT NEGLECT SACRIFICES OF PRAISE AT CHRISTIAN MEETINGS (10 min.)
Primary purpose of meetings is to praise Jehovah (Ps 26:12; *w*98 3/1 14)
Public expressions of praise at Christian meetings are a part of our sacrifice (Heb 13:15)
Requires sacrificing personal interests to prepare well and attend regularly
In many lands, brothers put forth extraordinary effort to attend and to help others to do so (*yb*97 235-6)
Faith in Jehovah is involved in our willingness to sacrifice
How could lack of faith in the living God affect meeting attendance?
Weighing ourselves down with unnecessary things—excessive recreation, entertainment, extra secular work to obtain personal comforts—could interfere (Heb 12:1)
Many must work hard just to get the necessities of life—food, clothing, and shelter
Some allow secular work to take priority over attendance at meetings
Jesus' counsel to 'seek first the Kingdom' meant not allowing anxiety over providing the necessities of life to interfere with spiritual interests (Mt 6:31-34)
If we exercise faith in him, Jehovah will help us care for family responsibilities without our neglecting worship of him at congregation meetings (1Ti 5:8)
Does your conduct demonstrate faith worthy of imitation? (Heb 13:7)
Hebrews 10:24, 25 says to gather together, "all the *more* so," especially in these critical times hard to deal with (2Ti 3:1)

LF-SACRIFICING LOVE CONTRIBUTES TO UNITY (10 min.)
Some congregations have had their peace disrupted by disunity among bodies of elders and lack of cooperation on part of ministerial servants (Isa 54:13)
It also interferes with preaching of good news and caring for congregation; impedes flow of God's spirit
Satan directly opposes unity under Christ; aim is to cause division (Eph 1:22; 4:26, 27)
We "allow place for the Devil" if we permit him to play upon our imperfections and fleshly weaknesses, such as keeping account of injuries, pride, feelings of self-importance, resentment at not getting prominence we feel we deserve
When elders and ministerial servants work unitedly within congregational structure, demonstrating self-sacrificing love for one another, great strength results (Ec 4:12)
Christian modesty, meekness, and humility will prevent one from trying to dominate his brothers and impose his opinion (Pr 11:2; Col 3:12; *w*88 10/1 17, par. 9)
One possessing wisdom from above not only avoids being contentious and belligerent but goes out of his way to establish good relations with others
Recent Kingdom Ministry School emphasized need to be receptive to counsel (Heb 12:5, 6)
Rather than wait for someone to offer suggestions, take initiative, and ask for counsel where you perceive you need help
Do not let resentment or pride keep you from listening to observations and counsel from others
A yielding spirit will help us avoid any tendency to retaliate or resort to recrimination
By submitting to headship of Christ and treating one another with love and respect, elders and ministerial servants will protect peace and unity of congregation (Read Philippians 1:1, 27)

LOCAL NEEDS (8 min.)

CONCLUSION (2 min.)
Warmly commend elders and ministerial servants for sacrifices made to serve Jehovah and brothers
In new world, we will be able to look back with satisfaction, knowing that during this urgent time, we did our part, willingly setting aside personal interests for Jehovah's interests (Ps 54:6)

[At this point the ministerial servants should be dismissed. The following material will be considered with the elders only]

HANDLING CASES OF WRONGDOING WITH WISDOM AND MERCY (*ks91* 118-21) (30 min.)

[Cover Unit 5(c), "Handling Cases of Wrongdoing With Wisdom and Mercy," page 118, down to but not including the section on page 121 entitled "If the Decision Is to Disfellowship." Encourage elders to follow along in their textbook. Allow time to look up and apply key scriptures. As you cover this material, include the following questions]

INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPHS (2 min.)

1. What important lessons are to be learned from the way Jehovah handled the rebellion in Eden? (Elders should imitate Jehovah, taking prompt action according to Bible principles and laws)
2. Before the hearing itself, what should each member of the committee do? (*ks91* 118, par. 2)

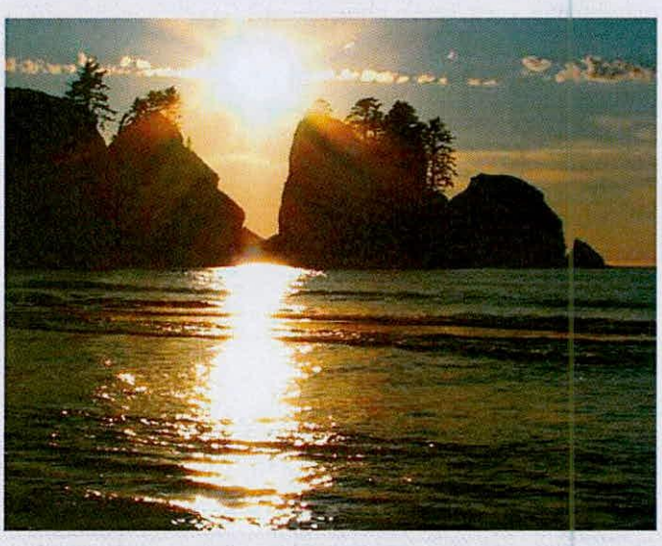
BEFORE FORMING A JUDICIAL COMMITTEE (4 min.)

1. How can the person who is a witness to a serious sin aid both the wrongdoer and the congregation? (The witness should make sure the responsible elders become aware of it. Usually best to approach the person involved first, though it is not wrong to go directly to elders. He should encourage the wrongdoer to approach the elders, then after a reasonable period of time check with the elders to be sure they know) (*w*97 8/15 27, par. 7)
2. When is it not advisable for the witness to confront the accused alone? What should the elders do? (When he is a party to the wrongdoing, is a victim, or is extremely timid. Children who are victims of molestation should not be required to confront the accused. In some cases two elders or an elder and the witness can confront the accused)

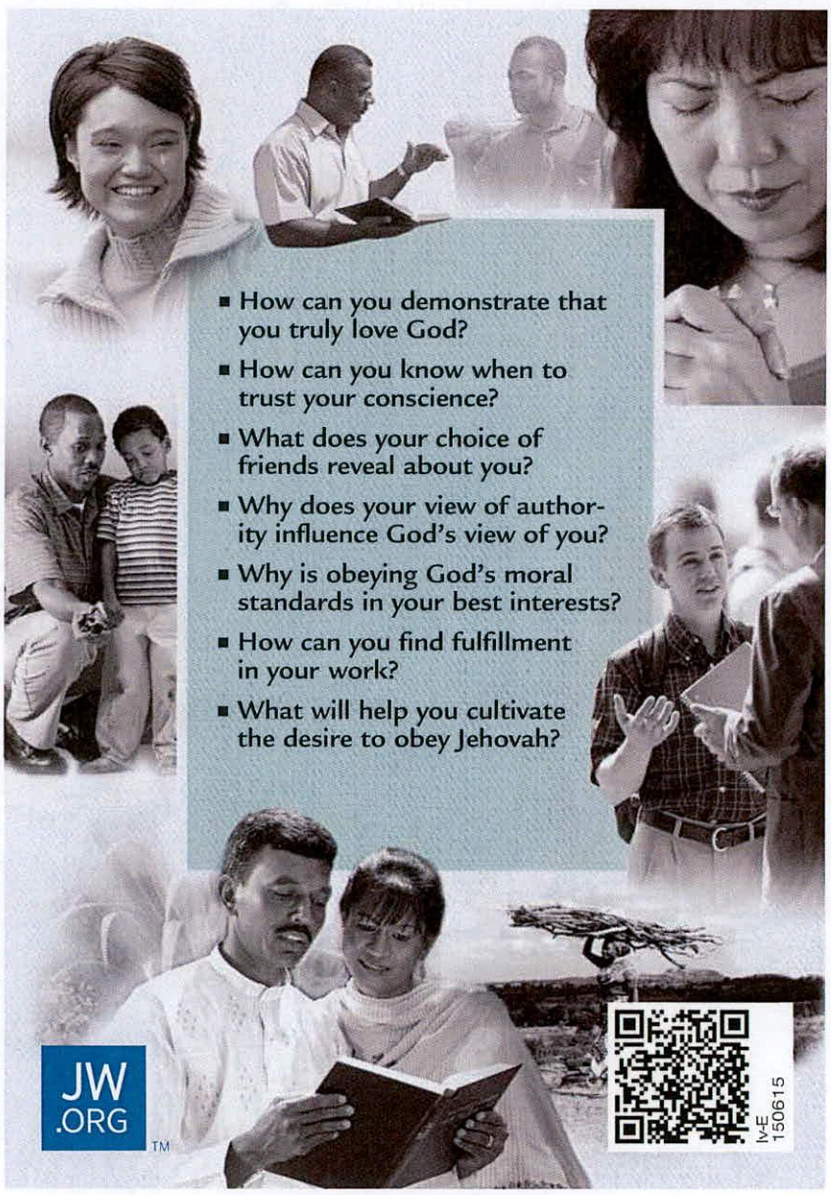
DICIAL COMMITTEE HEARING PROCEDURE (24 min.)

1. After opening with prayer, what should the chairman do? How? (State reason for meeting, clearly indicating they are a judicial committee. Best to open with Scriptural point, setting tone. Endeavor to put accused at ease, assuring him of elders' desire to be helpful)
2. Explain what is to be done if the accused person does not admit guilt. (The alleged wrongdoer has right to face his accusers. In most cases, he will have opportunity to hear their testimony and reply. After presenting accusation and its source, the committee will give the accused opportunity to respond. However, if, perhaps due to distance, it is impractical for the witnesses to be present, this should not prevent committee from proceeding)
3. Why is it important for the committee to be skillful in asking questions and in using God's Word? (Skillful use of Bible may reach wrongdoer's heart and move him to repentance. Skillful questions are important to establish facts and discern wrongdoer's attitude. Generally best to avoid such questions as, 'Have you prayed to Jehovah for forgiveness?' Instead, perhaps a more skillful question is, 'What have you done to repair your relationship with Jehovah?' The Kingdom Ministry School textbook, page 112, paragraph 2, says: "Probing questions should not go into needless details, especially in regard to sexual misconduct, unless this is *absolutely* necessary, such as in determining whether *por-nei'a* had been committed")
4. How can members of the committee avoid giving the impression of being biased? (They should be quick to listen. Wait until all facts have been heard before making decision)
5. Discuss the various factors to be considered by the committee in their deliberations after all the evidence has been presented. (Additional reference material: *ks91* 112, par. 7; 113, par. 3; 114, par. 10; 115, par. 3; *w*81 9/1 25-6, pars. 21-3; *w*95 1/1 30, par. 3; *it*-2 771, par. 5, first sentence)
6. What is to be done if disfellowshipping is necessary? (Inform the wrongdoer of decision *orally*; do not inform him in writing)

[After covering the above material, consider other necessary matters needing the attention of the body of elders for 45 minutes]



"KEEP YOURSELVES IN GOD'S LOVE"


How can you demonstrate that you truly love God?
How can you know when to trust your conscience?
What does your choice of friends reveal about you?
Why does your view of authority influence God's view of you?
Why is obeying God's moral standards in your best interests?
How can you find fulfillment in your work?
What will help you cultivate the desire to obey Jehovah?
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"Keep Yourselves in God's Love"
English (*lv*-E)

Made in the United States of America

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How to Treat a Disfellowshipped Person

Few things can hurt us more deeply than the pain we suffer when a relative or a close friend is expelled from the congregation for unrepentant sin. How we respond to the Bible's direction on this matter can reveal the depth of our love for God and of our loyalty to his arrangement.* Consider some questions that arise on this subject.

How should we treat a disfellowshipped person? The Bible says: "Stop keeping company with anyone called a brother who is sexually immoral or a greedy person or an idolater or a reviler or a drunkard or an extortioner, not even eating with such a man." (1 Corinthians 5:11) Regarding everyone who "does not remain in the teaching of the Christ," we read: "Do not receive him into your homes or say a greeting to him. For the one who says a greeting to him is a sharer in his wicked works." (2 John 9-11) We do not have spiritual or social fellowship with disfellowshipped ones. *The Watchtower* of September 15, 1981, page 25, stated: "A simple 'Hello' to someone can be the first step that develops into a conversation and maybe even a friendship. Would we want to take that first step with a disfellowshiped person?"

Is strict avoidance really necessary? Yes, for several reasons. First, it is a matter of loyalty to God and his Word. We obey Jehovah not only when it is convenient but also when doing so presents real challenges. Love for God moves us to obey all his commandments, recognizing that he is just and loving and that his laws promote the greatest good. (Isaiah 48:17; 1 John 5:3) Second, withdrawing from an unrepentant wrongdoer protects us and the rest of the congregation from spiritual and moral contamination and upholds the congregation's good name. (1 Corinthians 5:6, 7) Third, our

* Bible principles on this subject apply equally to those who disassociate themselves from the congregation.

EXH.029.027.0007

firm stand for Bible principles may even benefit the disfellowshipped one. By supporting the decision of the judicial committee, we may touch the heart of a wrongdoer who thus far has failed to respond to the efforts of the elders to assist him. Losing precious fellowship with loved ones may help him to come "to his senses," see the seriousness of his wrong, and take steps to return to Jehovah.—Luke 15:17.

What if a relative is disfellowshipped? In such a case, the close bond between family members can pose a real test of loyalty. How should we treat a disfellowshipped relative? We cannot here cover every situation that may arise, but let us focus on two basic ones.

In some instances, the disfellowshipped family member may still be living in the same home as part of the immediate household. Since his being disfellowshipped does not sever the family ties, normal day-to-day family activities and dealings may continue. Yet, by his course, the individual has chosen to break the spiritual bond between him and his believing family. So loyal family members can no longer have spiritual fellowship with him. For example, if the disfellowshipped one is present, he would not participate when the family gets together for family worship. However, if the disfellowshipped one is a minor child, the parents are still responsible to instruct and discipline him. Hence, loving parents may arrange to conduct a Bible study with the child.*—Proverbs 6:20-22; 29:17.

In other cases, the disfellowshipped relative may be living outside the immediate family circle and home. Although there might be a need for limited contact on some rare occasion to care for a necessary family matter, any such contact should be kept to a minimum. Loyal Christian family members do not look for excuses to have dealings with a

---

* For more information about disfellowshipped minor children living in the home, see *The Watchtower* of October 1, 2001, pages 16-17, and November 15, 1988, page 20.

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disfellowshipped relative not living at home. Rather, loyalty to Jehovah and his organization moves them to uphold the Scriptural arrangement of disfellowshipping. Their loyal course has the best interests of the wrongdoer at heart and may help him to benefit from the discipline received.*—Hebrews 12:11.

* For more information about how to treat disfellowshipped relatives, see the Scriptural counsel discussed in *The Watchtower* of April 15, 1988, pages 26-31, and September 15, 1981, pages 26-31.

Head Coverings—When and Why?

When and why should a Christian woman wear a head covering in connection with her worship? Let us consider the apostle Paul's inspired discussion of this subject. He provides the guidance we need in order to make good decisions, ones that honor God. (1 Corinthians 11:3-16) Paul reveals three factors to weigh: (1) the *activities* that call for a woman to wear such a covering, (2) the *settings* in which she should do so, and (3) the *motives* for her to apply this standard.

The activities. Paul mentions two: prayer and prophesying. (Verses 4, 5) Prayer, of course, is worshipful address to Jehovah. Today, prophesying would apply to any Bible-based teaching that a Christian minister does. Is Paul suggesting, though, that a woman should cover her head whenever she prays or teaches Bible truth? No. The setting in which a woman prays or teaches makes all the difference.

The settings. Paul's words suggest two settings, or spheres of activity—the family and the congregation. He says: "The head of a woman is the man; . . . every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered shames her head." (Verses 3, 5) In the family arrangement, the woman's husband is the one whom Jehovah designates as her head. Unless she gives due recognition to her husband's authority,

THE CHAIR: What I will do at the moment is I will allow publication of chapters 1, 2, 3 and 7, and if you can give me and the Commissioner a submission tomorrow, I will rule in chambers in relation to the matter on Friday.

MR TOKLEY: Thank you, your Honour.

THE CHAIR: So the whole document is exhibit 29-028, but I order that the chapters other than 1, 2, 3 and 7 at this stage not be published. Yes?

EXHIBIT #29-028 DOCUMENT HEADED "BRANCH ORGANIZATION JANUARY 2015" (CHAPTERS OTHER THAN 1, 2, 3 AND 7 ARE NOT TO BE PUBLISHED AT THIS STAGE)

MR STEWART: I have no further questions of this witness, your Honour.

THE CHAIR: Does anyone else have any questions?

MS DAVID: Yes.

<EXAMINATION BY MS DAVID:

MS DAVID: Q. Mr O'Brien, my name is Ms David, and I appear on behalf of [BCG] in these proceedings. Just one area of concern that in my view has been highlighted through these proceedings, and that is the manner in which the scriptures are used to assist a victim. Of course, it is accepted that it is an important part of the healing process --
A. Particularly spiritually, yes.

Q. Spiritually. Again, I want to emphasise that I would think that you would agree that the Commission proceedings highlight the need for, really, a comprehensive approach, including spiritual, that must have psychological or other care given to the particular person abused, so not just spiritual guidance?
A. True, yes, I agree.

Q. What concerns me - and I don't mean any of this as a criticism - is the way in which, sometimes, the scriptures have been used, for example, in the case of [BCG]. She has given evidence that she doesn't recall, in her particular case, receiving any scriptural guidance,

BRANCH ORGANIZATION
January 2015

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PROLOGUE

Dear Committee Member:

This publication is designed to provide unified theocratic direction to Branch and Country committee members worldwide. This manual also serves as a helpful reference for Governing Body members, helpers to Governing Body committees, and headquarters representatives. Each brother who is provided with a copy of this manual should read it thoroughly from time to time so as to stay up-to-date with theocratic policies and procedures. Elders at Bethel should be foremost in recognizing theocratic instructions, studying them, and applying them diligently.—Gen. 6:22; Ex. 7:6; 39:32; Josh. 1:8; 14:5; Prov. 1:5; John 14:31; 1 Cor. 4:17; Jas. 1:22.

Branch and Country committee members should especially be well acquainted with organizational instructions so that they can help others at Bethel and in the field to accomplish their ministry fully. (2 Tim. 4:5) If because of legal restrictions or some other exceptional circumstance it appears to the committee that a particular organizational policy or procedure cannot be implemented locally, the committee should explain matters clearly in writing to the Governing Body or to the appropriate Governing Body committee and await further direction.

Each Branch and Country committee member is to be provided with a printed personal copy of this manual. If it will be helpful to him, a committee member may also obtain a personal copy of *Branch Organization* in another language if available. If a brother who serves as a secretary to your committee or to a committee member needs the manual for his work, he too may receive it. This approval applies to printed or electronic versions of *Branch Organization* in any language, including access in the Bethel edition of *Watchtower Library*. Care should be taken to ensure that the material is made available only to these authorized brothers, since the content of this manual is confidential and is not to be shared with those outside of Bethel.

The portions of this manual that apply to a Bethel department should be made available to the department overseer. In turn, any *Branch Organization* instructions that apply to those working in the department should be made available to the members of the department.

When revisions to this manual are received, the updated pages should be placed in the manual and the old pages promptly destroyed. At times, a letter from the Governing Body or one of its committees will set forth updated direction that will supersede the direction herein until revised *Branch Organization* pages are made available. All should be alert to follow the latest instructions.

In addition to being acquainted with this manual, committee members should keep up-to-date with the Scriptural principles and theocratic direction provided in *Dwelling Together in Unity*, the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines, *Our Kingdom Ministry*, *Organized to Do Jehovah's Will*, *"Shepherd the Flock of God"—1 Peter 5:2*, *Circuit Overseer Guidelines*, *Correspondence Guidelines*, and other policy materials. This includes letters that are sent to all branch offices and letters sent to individual branch offices in response to local needs.

Please be assured that we appreciate your hard work in looking after Kingdom interests in your part of the world field. (1 Pet. 5:2, 3) It is our prayer that Jehovah will grant you "the wisdom from above" to care properly for your many responsibilities, all to the praise of our Great Shepherd.—Jas. 3:17, 18; Ps. 23:1.

Your brothers,

Governing Body
of Jehovah's Witnesses

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GOVERNING BODY AND GOVERNING BODY COMMITTEES

1. Governing Body: The Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses is made up of brothers who are anointed servants of Jehovah God. They have the responsibility for giving direction and impetus to the Kingdom work. (Matt. 24:14, 45-47; Rev. 12:17) Like its first-century counterpart, the Governing Body today looks to Jehovah, the Universal Sovereign, and to Jesus Christ, the Head of the congregation, for direction in all matters. (1 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:23) The Governing Body is organized to take the lead as Jehovah directs it by holy spirit. The members of the Governing Body do not regard themselves as the leaders of Jehovah's people. Rather, like all anointed Christians on earth, they "keep following the Lamb [Jesus Christ] no matter where he goes." —Rev. 14:4.

2. The Bible says: "Let all things take place decently and by arrangement." (1 Cor. 14:40) The Governing Body obeys this direction by putting in place various helpful procedures and guidelines that ensure the smooth and orderly operation of the branch offices and the congregations. Responsible Christian men do their part by setting an example of obedience as they put such arrangements into effect. All Christians, especially overseers, should look to Jehovah for guidance and should pray regularly for his direction and blessing. All should show themselves "reasonable, ready to obey" those placed in oversight. (Jas. 3: 17) Thus, each group, congregation, circuit, and branch is blessed with a united, orderly body of believers who reflect well on the happy God.—1 Cor. 14:33; 1 Tim. 1:11.

3. While the Governing Body delegates certain details or responsibilities to committees made up of its own members, to committees made up of other dedicated servants of God, or to instruments such as corporations and legal agencies, the Governing Body always takes the lead in promoting the smooth functioning of the organization and the unity of all of God's people.—Acts 6:1-6; 1 Tim. 1:3; Titus 1:5; Heb. 13:17; *w01* 1/15 pp. 28-31.

4. The Governing Body gives final approval for new publications as well as new audio and video programs.

5. The Governing Body cares for the appointment and deletion of Branch and Country committee members and designates the brother who will serve as the coordinator of the committee. It also appoints circuit overseers and country representatives. In most cases, such appointments are made based on recommendations received from the Branch Committee. The Governing Body also appoints helpers to Governing Body committees as well as headquarters representatives qualified to make branch visits.

6. The Governing Body may arrange for qualified men to care for theocratic assignments in any locality at any time. It is not bound by recommendations received from other elders. Such recommendations serve merely as a guide and may even be rejected for reasons known to the Governing Body. The Governing Body has the prerogative to use its discretion and look into any matters it deems necessary to examine with regard to the Kingdom work.

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7. To oversee various aspects of the Kingdom work, six administrative Governing Body committees have been established. **[See Chart 1.1.]** Their responsibilities are as follows.

8. Coordinators' Committee: This committee oversees legal matters and the use of the media when necessary to convey an accurate picture of our beliefs. It responds to disasters, outbreaks of persecution, and other emergencies affecting Jehovah's Witnesses anywhere in the world. In general, all computer-related issues are also cared for by this committee. However, the Writing Committee oversees matters having to do with the development and maintenance of computer programs and tools used to process and translate publications and to publish them in electronic format, including MEPS, the Watchtower Translation System (WTS), *Watchtower Library,* and jw.org.

9. Personnel Committee: This committee oversees the arrangements for the physical and spiritual welfare and assistance of Bethel family members earth wide. (Eph. 4:3; Phil. 2:1-5; Jas. 5:14-16) It oversees the selecting and inviting of new members of Bethel families, Bethelites in foreign service, construction servants and volunteers, Assembly Hall servants, part-time and full-time commuters, and temporary volunteers and handles questions regarding their service. Those in the aforementioned groups who become members of the Worldwide Order of Special Full-Time Servants and are under the vow of poverty are appointed by the Personnel Committee.

10. Publishing Committee: This committee supervises the printing and shipping of Bible literature worldwide. It has oversight of printeries and properties owned and operated by the various corporations used by Jehovah's Witnesses. Funding for branches is approved and arranged for under the direction of the Publishing Committee. It has oversight of issues involving accounting, auditing, allowances, insurance, taxes, and other financial matters for branch facilities throughout the world, such as the purchase or sale of real estate, equipment, and vehicles. All *Branch Requests, Nonliterature Branch Requests,* and other budget approvals are processed and approved under the direction of this committee. It oversees arrangements for the construction, renovation, and maintenance of all the organization's facilities, including branches, remote translation offices, missionary homes, schools, Kingdom Halls, and Assembly Halls.

11. Expenditures of up to USD 2,000,000 will be approved by the Publishing Committee. The Governing Body, however, is responsible for approving major real estate transactions and significant construction projects involving the expenditure of more than USD 2,000,000. In most cases, Branch Committees will present the details of such projects to the Publishing Committee, and thereafter, the matter will be presented to the Governing Body.

12. Service Committee: This committee supervises all areas of the evangelizing work comprising the activity of publishers, pioneers, and missionaries, as well as congregation organization and the shepherding activities of elders and circuit overseers. It appoints field missionaries and assigns them to areas of need. The Service Committee also provides guidance to branch offices as to the responsibilities of the Service Department and supervises the preparation of *Our Kingdom Ministry.* Hospital Information Services at world headquarters as well as the activity of Hospital Information Desks, Hospital Liaison Committees, and Patient Visitation Groups is supervised by the Service Committee. Instructions on field service reporting are given by the Service Committee. It also assigns geographic locations to a particular branch office and outlines the program for periodic branch visits by headquarters representatives

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and branch shepherding visits by Governing Body members.

13. Difficult service-related questions having to do with the formation of judicial, appeal, and special committees as well as problems involving congregation members, elders, and circuit overseers that cannot be handled by a Branch Committee are referred to the Service Committee. Specific cases in which the standing of those in the congregations might be affected are to be referred to this committee.

14. While the Teaching Committee oversees the preparation of the *curriculum* for theocratic schools, the Service Committee provides direction to the branches on the *operation and scheduling* of the schools that are conducted within their branch territories. The Service Committee determines who may be invited to attend the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead and the School for Branch Committee Members and Their Wives.

15. Teaching Committee: This committee supervises the production of spiritual food that is delivered orally for the benefit of the worldwide brotherhood and supervises the format that is to be followed at congregation meetings. For example, it is directly involved in preparing talk outlines, convention costume dramas and sound-only drama scripts and recordings, convention chairman's introductions, as well as audio and video publications that are distributed on DVD, posted on jw.org, or broadcast through other means. These materials are used for dispensing instruction at Bethel spiritual programs, Public Meetings, circuit assemblies, and regional conventions. The Teaching Committee also oversees the organization of international, special, national, and regional conventions around the world as directed by the Governing Body. In addition, this committee supervises the Scriptural curriculum for nine theocratic schools, namely:

Watchtower Bible School of Gilead

School for Branch Committee Members and Their Wives

School for Circuit Overseers and Their Wives

School for Kingdom Evangelizers

School for Congregation Elders

Kingdom Ministry School

Bethel Entrants' School

Pioneer Service School

Theocratic Ministry School

16. The Theocratic Schools Department works under the supervision of the Teaching Committee and assists in instructing students of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead and the School for Branch Committee Members and Their Wives.

17. Besides reviewing and approving all new recommendations of Morning Worship chairmen and instructors of the School for Kingdom Evangelizers, the Teaching Committee also handles inquiries from branches regarding the above matters, including queries about alternate source material for the Congregation Bible Study in languages into which the main study publication has not yet been translated. The Teaching Committee reviews and approves programs for the dedication of new Assembly Halls and branch facilities, providing helpful guidelines for these events. Guiding principles are also given to the branches on how to conduct morning worship and the Bethel family *Watchtower* Study. In addition, outlines for Monday night lectures presented to the worldwide Bethel family each service year are reviewed and approved by this committee.

18. Assisted by Audio/Video Services, the Teaching Committee looks after the audio/video needs of all branches grouped under various Regional Audio/Video Centers. The Teaching Committee also oversees the Theocratic Schools Department, the WHQ Travel Department, and the Broadcasting Department. More

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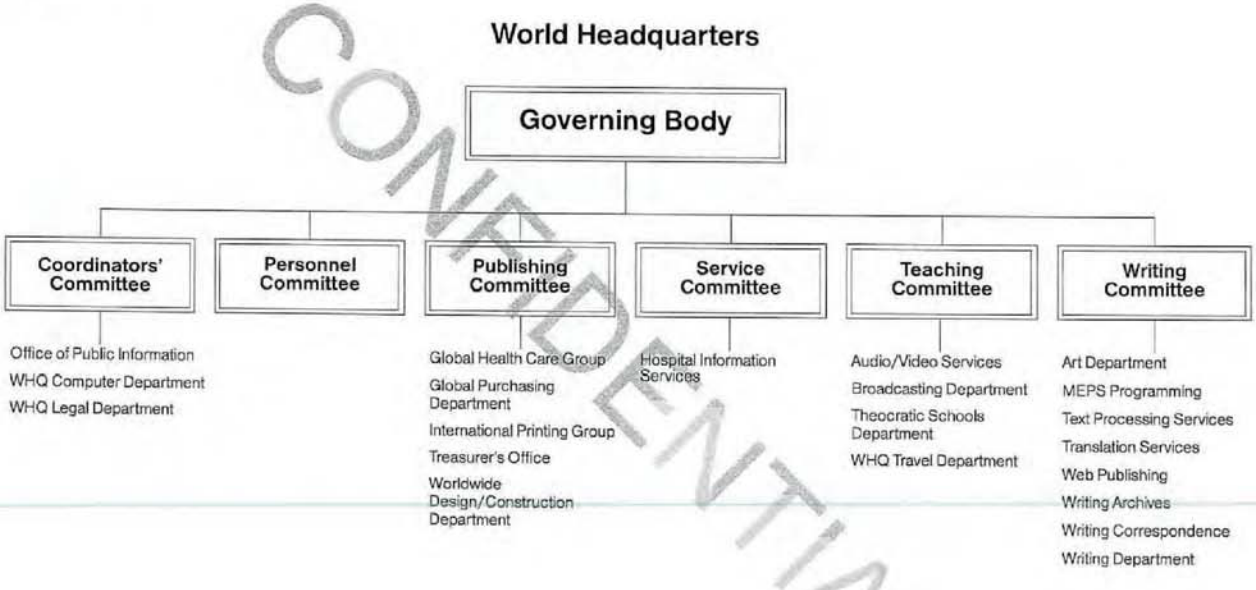
specific information about each department is located in Chapter 7.

19. Writing Committee: This committee supervises the production of spiritual food in written and electronic form for our brothers and for the public in general. It also develops and maintains the organization's Web sites and oversees the translation work done throughout the earth. This includes giving approval for the translation of audio and video programs from English into additional languages.

20. The publications that the Writing Committee supervises include Bibles, the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines, all bound books, booklets, brochures, tracts, invitations, final copy for *Our Kingdom Ministry,* and any revisions of these. It also supervises the production of public witnessing posters and unique branch materials, such as dedication and tour brochures and public relations materials. This committee also approves scripts for dramas, talk outlines, and manuscripts. Additionally, the Writing Committee responds to questions about the meaning of certain scriptures and points presented in the publications, including general questions about doctrines or morals that do not deal with specific cases in which the standing of those in the congregations might be affected.

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CHART 1.1



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RESPONSIBILITY OF BRANCH COMMITTEE MEMBERS

1. The Governing Body appoints well-qualified elders to serve as members of a Branch Committee. Each Branch Committee oversees the preaching work in the field and the work in the branch office within its assigned territory. As the representatives of the Governing Body in their assigned territory, Branch Committee members must faithfully implement and follow the direction coming from God's Word and "the faithful and discreet slave."—Matt. 24:45-47.

2. Each Branch Committee member must feel a deep sense of responsibility to Jehovah. Thus, he must work diligently to fortify and maintain his good relationship with God. He must be a diligent student of the Bible and be governed by its laws and principles in his personal and public life. (Josh. 1:8; Ps. 1:2) He must be zealous for the ministry. (2 Tim. 4:2) He must be a fine example in following Bethel rules, never feeling that he is above them. (Heb. 13:17) His deep love and respect for Jehovah fuels his desire to be faithful in little and in much. (Luke 16:10; 1 John 5:3) He recognizes that his appointment by holy spirit is a privilege and that it will be taken away if he neglects his spirituality. (1 Tim. 4:14-16) His humble mental attitude moves him to seek out and listen to the opinions of others, to take the lead in showing honor, and to be a peacemaker. (1 Ki. 22:19-23; Matt. 5:9; Rom. 12:10; Phil. 2:5-8; Jas. 3:17, 18) Like Christ Jesus, he finds joy in unselfishly serving the interests of his brothers. (Mark 6:31-34; John 13:14, 15; Phil. 2:4) Such dedicated spiritual men are truly gifts from Jehovah to shepherd his precious sheep.—Eph. 4:8, 11, 12; 1 Pet. 5:2, 3.

3. Each Branch Committee member should be able to give as well as to follow direction. He must keep up-to-date with the policies and direction from the Governing Body and help others in oversight at the branch office to do likewise. While he will set a fine example in being willing to work along with his brothers at any task, he will not try to do all the work himself. He will delegate work in a responsible way, helping other spiritual men to be trained and to gain experience so that they too can shoulder weighty responsibilities.

4. Branch Committees also have the responsibility to keep the organization clean. (1 Cor. 5:11-13) They must be courageous in seeing to it that all unrepentant ones are removed from the congregation. Such courageous action builds up respect for the branch office and the Branch Committee. Our brothers should always feel welcome to come to the branch office with any concerns or problems that they may have and be confident that they will receive a hearing ear. —Prov. 21:13.

5. Dealing With People: Each member of the Branch Committee should always treat his fellow servants with love, kindness, respect, and dignity. (Eph. 4:32; 1 Pet. 4:17) He must manifest a warm and friendly disposition, being careful never to be harsh or unkind. (Eph. 4:31; Col. 3:8) If, on account of imperfection, he errs in word or deed, he will be quick to admit his fault and apologize. (Matt. 5:23-25) Following in the steps of Christ Jesus, he provides an example in honoring others and pursuing peace.—Rom. 14:19; 1 Pet. 2:21.

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6. Branch Committee members do not view themselves as superior to their brothers and thus do not desire to be served or feel entitled to special treatment. (Matt. 20:25-28; 23:6-12; 2 Cor. 1: 24) As they seek to imitate Christ Jesus, their lowliness of mind makes them refreshing and upbuilding to those working under their oversight.—Matt. 11:28-30; Phil. 2:3.

7. Members of the Branch Committee should be willing to handle problems, taking time to hear both sides and being cautious never to leave even the impression of partiality or favoritism. (Deut. 13:14; Jas. 2:9) They must keep confidential those matters told them in confidence and not talk to their wives or others about individuals' problems or confidential matters of the organization. —Prov. 25:9.

8. Counsel should not be given hastily. (Prov. 18:13) If unsure of the counsel of God's Word, it is best to consult with others and do research before answering. (Prov. 15:22, 28) If a Branch Committee member has a tendency to speak hastily and later to change his mind as to the course he first advised, the brothers will soon lose confidence in his soundness of judgment. If we read directly from the Scriptures when offering counsel, we make clear that God's Word is the authority for making decisions and that we are not simply giving a personal viewpoint.—2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

9. If a Branch Committee member is a foreigner in the country where he serves, he should recognize that the local people have a measure of pride in their land, their culture, and their way of doing things. Whether a foreigner in the country or not, a Branch Committee member should never take the position that the people he serves are beneath him, speaking to them as inferiors. Instead, as their humble fellow servant, he must work hard to develop appreciation for the local people and their culture, being willing to adapt himself so as to win their love and respect.—1 Cor. 9: 20-23.

10. Nothing contributes more to the happiness of our brothers than the conviction that they are loved and appreciated. (1 Cor. 8:1; 13:4-8) Continue to reflect Jehovah's great love for his sheep. To that end, **committee members should make regular personal visits to each department, speaking briefly with each worker, sharing words of appreciation and encouragement.**

11. Makeup of a Branch Committee: In small branches, it may be sufficient to have three members form the Branch Committee. However, in large branches with printing operations, extensive territories, or a variety of languages, five or more members may be needed. It is desirable that one or more members of the Branch Committee be citizens of the country where the branch is located. Nevertheless, in all cases, spiritual qualifications should be viewed as of greatest importance.

12. The appointment as a member of the Branch Committee or to a position of oversight in the branch organization is not for any specified period of time. Having in mind the advancement of the Kingdom work, the Branch Committee may at any time recommend to the Governing Body a new appointment, a removal, or the reassignment of individuals.

13. Oversight Responsibilities: The Branch Committee prayerfully determines the distribution of oversight responsibilities for the individual members of the committee. These assignments should take into consideration each brother's age, strengths, experience, and personal circumstances. (Rom. 12:3-8; Rev. 1:20) A Branch Committee member would usually serve as the day-to-day overseer or assistant overseer of a key department. The members of the committee may also serve as Branch Committee contacts for additional Bethel departments. A committee

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member should serve as the overseer of the Service Department. (See 6:35) Usually another Branch Committee member would serve as the Translation Department overseer. A committee member would usually serve as the Bethel overseer in a larger branch office, since his role involves the general oversight of all Bethel Home operations. In printing branches, the printery overseer is usually a member of the Branch Committee. The Branch Committee should consider these matters carefully so that there is a balanced distribution of oversight responsibilities. Adjustments should be made as needed in order to promote good order, the peace of the Bethel family, and the advancement of the Kingdom work.—1 Cor. 14:33, 40.

14. When adjustments in oversight are made, the brothers and sisters working in each Bethel department should be clearly informed as to the brother serving as the department overseer, the assistant overseer(s) and, if applicable, the Branch Committee member designated as the contact for the department. Each Branch Committee member should take an active interest in those working in the departments that he is overseeing. He should endeavor to meet weekly with the department overseers under his oversight.

15. Because of age or infirmity, some members may become unable to accept all assignments in connection with the Branch Committee. If so, the committee may wish to recommend an additional member to help with the workload. Nevertheless, the older and experienced members may be retained on the committee to share their wisdom and insight. (Prov. 16:31) In line with the above, it is not necessary for every member to take the chairmanship in rotation. Brothers 80 years of age or older are not to serve as coordinators of Branch or Country committees or as overseers of departments, nor are they to serve as contacts for departments. However, dignified assignments should be found for these older brothers. (1 Tim. 5:1, 17) For example, they may serve as assistant overseers if their circumstances permit. Older brothers should be keenly interested in passing on their wisdom and experience to those with whom they work. (2 Tim. 2:2) In larger departments, two brothers could serve as assistant overseers if needed. A department overseer or Branch Committee coordinator who is not yet 80 years of age might modestly decide that it would be best to have a younger brother take on that role. (Mic. 6:8) If so, it would be good for the Branch Committee to take the request into consideration to ensure a smooth transition.—See 6:35.

16. Branch Committee Coordinator: Each Branch Committee has a coordinator appointed by the Governing Body. He is responsible for coordinating the work of the committee and for any departments that the Branch Committee places under his oversight. He is responsible for sending reports and correspondence to the Governing Body and also for keeping the Branch Committee informed of all communications received from the Governing Body. Branch Committee coordinators and those overseeing various departments will find it helpful to keep a calendar of activities. This will assist them in making sure that important matters will be handled on schedule and not be overlooked. The Branch Committee coordinator is responsible for seeing that the minutes of each Branch Committee meeting are kept, showing the date of the meeting, those present, the points considered, and the decisions reached.

17. Branch Committee Chairman: There is a chairman at each Branch Committee meeting. The chairmanship rotates annually on January 1. The rotation is usually handled alphabetically. The chairman arranges for the agenda to be prepared and distributed to each member of the Branch Committee. The members should receive the agenda well in advance of the meeting so that they have sufficient time to prepare

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thoroughly and to give meaningful input. The chairman should notify all members as to the time of the meeting. He will also indicate on the agenda who is assigned to open and close the meeting with prayer. He ensures that there is good order and, along with the Branch Committee coordinator, sees that committee decisions are carried out in a timely manner.

18. Branch Committee Meetings: The Branch Committee decides when to hold its regular meetings. The committee should not postpone giving attention to its responsibilities or delay in providing direction needed to expedite the work. In nearly all cases, the Branch Committee will meet weekly, but special meetings may be held when needed. In small branches, meetings can be held less frequently according to what may be practical and also depending on the location of the members of the Branch Committee. For obvious reasons, it is good if all members of the Branch Committee can live close enough to the branch to be generally available for such meetings. Minutes should be kept of all Branch Committee meetings. If a member is indisposed or absent, the committee can still function if a majority is present.—See 2:38.

19. The Branch Committee may invite other individuals to come to its meetings for consultation or to present information that will help the committee in reaching decisions.

20. Branch Committee decisions should be unanimous. In any significant case in which a decision is not unanimous, the Branch Committee should write to the appropriate Governing Body committee for direction. Pertinent details should be provided, including an explanation as to why some members of the Branch Committee are for a matter and why some members are against it. Providing the names of those who are for and those who are against a certain decision is helpful. The committee should prepare one letter and send it to the appropriate Governing Body committee. If individual members wish to submit additional comments, these should be sent along with the letter from the Branch Committee. If needed, the Governing Body committee will seek direction from the entire Governing Body. If, in rare cases, the urgency of a situation does not allow sufficient time for the Branch Committee to send a letter to the Governing Body explaining the details and differing points of view, the majority decision of the Branch Committee should stand until further direction is received.

21. If the Branch Committee determines that a particular decision is of major importance, it should not decide the matter but send it to the appropriate Governing Body committee with its observations and recommendations. (Ps. 19:13; Prov. 11:2) This procedure is to be followed even when the committee is unanimous as to how the matter should be handled. When the Branch Committee writes about a weighty matter, the coordinator should make it clear in the letter that the Branch Committee members who were present have read the letter and that they are in agreement with its content. The names of any Branch Committee members who were absent should be indicated as well.—See 2:39; 3:3; 6:40.

22. Unity on Branch Committees: From time to time, Branch Committee members may experience personal differences with one another. This often occurs when a brother imposes his personal opinion or preference on others. Of course, responsible brothers may occasionally have a difference of opinion. Despite such differences in thinking, they must continue to work together in love and with mutual respect.—Col. 3: 13, 14.

23. Branch Committee coordinators should especially be conscious not to impose their opinion or preference on others in decisions that should be made by the entire Branch Committee. If a

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member of the Branch Committee lives outside of Bethel, he should be part of the decision-making process to the extent possible and not simply be informed after the fact about decisions that were made.

24. If the peace and unity of the committee are threatened, each member must examine himself carefully to determine what adjustments he must personally make in order to display "the wisdom from above." (Jas. 3:17, 18) While it is easy to see the faults of others, it takes a mature Christian man to look carefully into the mirror of God's Word and see his own faults clearly and then work to change. (Jas. 1:23-25) While one or more members of the committee may feel that they are not part of the problem, all must be part of the solution. Therefore, each one should supplicate Jehovah for His divine help to resolve the problem, never allowing place for the Devil.—Eph. 4:26, 27.

25. Continue to work together unitedly as a committee in peace and unity, cooperating closely as a body of mature brothers. (Ps. 133:1; Phil. 2:1-4) "Take the lead" in honoring one another. (Rom. 12:10) Much is expected of those who have been put in charge of much. (Luke 12:48b) The Bethel family notices the way you deal with one another and imitates your example, whether positive or negative.

26. Recommendations to the Governing Body: If the Branch Committee wishes to recommend the appointment or deletion of a circuit overseer or a country representative, the form *Recommendations to Governing Body* should be completed and sent to the Governing Body. While the Branch Committee should give careful and prayerful consideration to the qualifications of each brother being recommended (and, if married, the brother's wife), extensive additional comments in a separate letter are not needed unless there is something significant to report about the brother (or his wife) that the Governing Body should know when considering the recommendation. The wives of such brothers should not be listed on the recommendation form.—See 2:49; 6:139.

27. All members of the Branch Committee who are in agreement should have their names listed at the bottom of the recommendation form. If a member of the Branch Committee was not present when the recommendations were considered, then the word "absent" should be shown next to that brother's name at the bottom of the recommendation form. A copy of the form will be returned to the branch office if the appointments and/or deletions are approved by the Governing Body.—See 2:30.

28. Appointments and Deletions of Branch and Country Committee Members: It is preferred that brothers being considered for appointment to the Branch or Country committee attend Gilead School before the recommendation is made. In the case of Bethel brothers with such potential who are not able to read, write, and speak English fluently, such brothers and their wives, if married, could be invited to attend a future class of the School for Kingdom Evangelizers so that their potential can be further evaluated and their spirituality deepened. If a branch visit is planned in the coming months, it is usually best to discuss recommendations about prospective committee members with the headquarters representative before submitting a recommendation form to the Governing Body. In addition to the recommendation form, the Branch Committee should supply the Governing Body with a covering letter explaining the reasons for the recommendation and, if available, the headquarters representative's comments.

29. A newly appointed Branch or Country committee member who is fluent in English and, if married, whose wife is also fluent in English will be scheduled by the Service Committee to

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attend a future class of the School for Branch Committee Members and Their Wives.

30. Appointments and Deletions of Circuit Overseers: See 6:99, 137-139, 148-154 with regard to the qualifications and training of prospective circuit overseers. In cases of death, judicial action, pregnancy, or resignation for health reasons, the Branch Committee is authorized to process the deletion. Thereafter, the Governing Body should be informed of the deletion on the next recommendation form that is submitted. For all other reasons, the Branch Committee should submit to the Governing Body the usual form with a covering letter explaining the recommendation to delete a circuit overseer. The Branch Committee must await approval from the Governing Body before informing him about his appointment or deletion.—See 2:26-27.

31. Know the Organization: Branch Committee members, whether in a large or a small branch, should seek to become acquainted with all the operations carried on at the branch. They should research how the work can be done in the most effective and beneficial way and do all they reasonably can to help it to be done in that way. A Branch Committee should know if the brothers are accomplishing the best work they can and, if they are not, the committee may be able to show them how to do better. The members of the Bethel family should love their work and want to see it improve and increase.

32. Branch Committee members should also be interested in all facets of the Kingdom work in the field and should seek to expand the preaching work and carry it out in the most effective way.

33. Communication During Difficult Times: If a country should become isolated by war or other adverse conditions and it is impossible, at least for a time, to have any communication with the Governing Body, the Branch Committee will carry on in looking after Jehovah's sheep. Especially in a time of trouble, it is important for the sheep to have spiritual food and guidance. Encouragement should be given them to have regular meetings and continue worshipping Jehovah. If conditions allow, publications will be provided. If new publications are not available, direction can be given to review past publications and to study the Bible itself, not forsaking assembling together, even though it may be in small groups.—Heb. 10:24, 25.

34. If conditions develop to the point that any members of the Branch Committee are taken away, those who remain should consider the qualifications of other elders who have proved themselves and have years of experience in the work and, if there is a possibility of communication, make the recommendation of these to serve as replacement Branch Committee members. If communication with the Governing Body is not possible, the replacement elders can be asked to serve temporarily, and they can be made familiar with the functions of the branch organization and share in the shepherding of the flock. Every effort should be made to have committee meetings from time to time, depending on the conditions. If any individual member of the Branch Committee should find himself under surveillance and it is not advisable for him to try to meet with other members of the committee, he may be able to send word to them concerning his situation. In that event, another elder may be asked to step in temporarily to share in the activities of the committee. If conditions develop to the point that it is impossible to hold meetings because the committee has been scattered, then each individual should continue to do what he can to shepherd the flock, having in mind what Jesus said as recorded at John 10:11-15 and remembering to seek the guidance of Jehovah through prayer.

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35. Every effort should be made to communicate with the Governing Body if conditions will allow and if it will not jeopardize the interests of the work. The Branch Committee in each land will know what the circumstances are and will seek the guidance of Jehovah in making a decision as to what is the best course of action at the moment. The Governing Body desires to receive the reports and news concerning Christians scattered throughout the world, but because difficult conditions may develop, these provisions are set forth in connection with the functioning of the Branch Committee.

36. It will be practical if communications sent to the Governing Body are in English. Circumstances in some lands may prevent this. If one who knows English is taken away, the Governing Body will be pleased to receive communications in any language.

37. Country Committees: The Governing Body may determine that a Country Committee should be established in certain lands to work under the oversight of a Branch Committee. A Country Committee is composed of mature Christian elders appointed by the Governing Body. Usually the recommendations for Country Committee members are made by the Branch Committee. The brothers on the Country Committee are responsible for the administration of the office, Bethel Home, remote translation offices, and literature depots in the country where they serve, as well as for handling correspondence, finances, and reports. Even if there is no office in a particular country because of legal restrictions, the Governing Body may appoint a Country Committee to assist a Branch Committee to care for the Kingdom work in that land.

38. The Governing Body designates one brother to serve as the Country Committee coordinator. That brother is responsible for coordinating the daily routine of work. A chairman will serve in a rotational arrangement for a period of a year, following the same pattern as that for a Branch Committee. Generally, a Country Committee will meet each week, or perhaps every second week, depending on matters needing attention.—See 2:16-18.

39. While a Country Committee should be guided by the same Scriptural procedures and policies established for Branch Committees, it must remember that it does not have the same authority as a Branch Committee. Therefore, the Country Committee members should be modest and work cooperatively with the overseeing Branch Committee for the advancement of the Kingdom work in the country where they serve. (Prov. 11:2; 15:22) Any major problems or questions that the Country Committee cannot resolve in line with *Branch Organization* or other policy materials should be referred to the Branch Committee. The Country Committee will contact the Branch Committee if there is a disagreement about how a matter should be handled, even as a Branch Committee inquires of various Governing Body committees when the brothers on the Branch Committee have differing viewpoints on how something should be done. (See 2:20-21.) The overseeing Branch Committee should feel free to provide the Governing Body and its committees with supplemental comments or observations it wishes to make with regard to recommendations being made by a Country Committee.

40. A Country Committee is authorized to answer questions that local elders and circuit overseers may submit in writing to the office regarding judicial and other congregation or circuit matters. However, if there is any uncertainty as to how a complicated or delicate matter should be handled, the Country Committee should communicate with the overseeing Branch Committee.

41. Country Committees may arrange for locations and times for circuit assemblies and regional conventions. The

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Country Committee may care for the selection of convention and assembly speakers as is done by Branch Committees.—See Chapter 7.

42. With regard to appointing or deleting special pioneers, the Country Committee is to make its recommendations to the overseeing Branch Committee and await its approval. Whether the Country Committee will tabulate the field service reports or send them directly to the Branch Committee for handling will be determined by the overseeing Branch Committee. Literature distribution to the congregations should be handled as directed by the Branch Committee.

43. The overseeing Branch Committee will forward to the Governing Body any recommendations submitted by the Country Committee for the appointment or deletion of circuit overseers.

44. The general oversight of missionaries and missionary homes is under the direction of the Country Committee. However, such problems as illness and leave of absence and any difficulties that require attention by a Governing Body committee should be reported to the Branch Committee with the recommendations of the Country Committee. The Branch Committee, in turn, will write to the appropriate Governing Body committee, providing full details.

45. The handling of legal matters and the registration of legal entities will be under the direction of the Branch Committee. However, the Country Committee will be consulted as needed.

46. All correspondence from the Country Committee intended for other branch or country offices is to be sent to the overseeing Branch Committee for forwarding. When necessary, the Country Committee may write a letter to the Governing Body or to one of its committees. However, the letter should first be sent to the Branch Committee so that, if necessary, the Branch Committee may add its comments before forwarding the letter to world headquarters.

47. In a rare situation in which communication with the Branch Committee is not possible, it may be necessary for the Country Committee to send information directly to world headquarters or to other branch offices. In cases where communication with the Branch Committee or with headquarters is not possible, the Country Committee will give the needed supervision to the Kingdom work until conditions return to normal and contact with the Branch Committee or headquarters can resume. If there are any relief measures to be taken in behalf of the brothers, the Country Committee will give the needed oversight, bearing in mind the direction that is provided herein related to such aid.—See 3:17.

48. Country Representatives: In countries where there are a significant number of publishers but where there is no Branch Committee or Country Committee, three qualified elders are appointed by the Governing Body to serve as country representatives. As a group, the country representatives serve as advisers, helping the Branch Committee to stay in close touch with the local situation in the lands that the branch office oversees. The brothers serving as country representatives are not considered a Country Committee and do not function in any supervisory capacity. Country representatives do not qualify to attend the School for Branch Committee Members and Their Wives. Nevertheless, the Branch Committee should **view them as a helpful resource and periodically inquire of them,** perhaps sending a list of questions for them to consider. (Prov. 15:22) The country representatives should be discerning men who can provide meaningful input on the Kingdom work and local needs in the country where they live. (Prov. 27:23; Acts 6:3) Their input will be especially helpful when they notice conditions or trends that endanger the brothers or that threaten the Kingdom work in the country. Those recommended could include special pioneers or circuit overseers. Elders who formerly served on a

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Branch Committee or a Country Committee in that land may be particularly qualified. It is preferred that at least one of the country representatives be native to the country. In a country with a remote translation office, one of the three country representatives might include the language overseer, the maintenance overseer, or the home overseer.

49. Recommendations and deletions of country representatives are submitted to the Governing Body using the form *Recommendations to Governing Body.* (See 2: 26.) One of the three brothers should be recommended to serve as the chairman of the group. Once the Governing Body confirms the appointment or deletion of a country representative, the Branch Committee should update the Admin person record to reflect the start or stop date of this role. The branch office should provide newly appointed country representatives with a letter that explains their appointment and the basic operation of the group as well as the names and contact information of the other two country representatives.

50. The country representatives may meet at a convenient time and place whenever there is a need or as directed by the Branch Committee. The group is not given permanent office space or computer equipment. Their periodic meetings should be arranged at any convenient location that is available, such as a Kingdom Hall, Assembly Hall, or the home of one of the brothers as long as confidentiality can be maintained. Such meetings should not interfere with normally scheduled meetings or assemblies. Upon request, the branch office may reimburse reasonable travel expenses for country representatives to participate in their periodic meetings. The group should open and close their meetings with prayer. A typed report, usually no more than one to two pages in length and addressed to the Branch Committee, should be sufficient to convey their key observations. The chairman of the group should keep a confidential file of these reports for two years. Reports older than two years should be destroyed, since the branch office will have its copies on file.

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COORDINATORS' COMMITTEE

CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMUNICATION

1. This section provides direction for handling correspondence and communication between branch offices and with world headquarters. For guidelines on the handling of correspondence with congregations and individuals in the field, see Chapter 6.

2. Branch Committee's Role: A Branch Committee should feel free to ask the Governing Body or one of its committees any question related to the Kingdom work in the territory under the oversight of the branch office. It is best that such questions be expressed clearly and carefully in writing rather than by telephone. The Branch Committee should ensure that it has an arrangement for handling correspondence efficiently.

3. The Branch Committee coordinator should be especially attentive to matters sent to and from the Governing Body and its committees. Good communication between the coordinator and other Branch Committee members is essential so that all are involved and are aware of direction being provided. Numbered letters sent to the Governing Body or its committees should be signed by the coordinator on behalf of the Branch Committee. (See 2:20-21.) Correspondence should not be delayed unnecessarily. The urgency of some matters may require that another committee member sign the letter if the Branch Committee coordinator is not available. See Chapter 2 for more information regarding correspondence sent to the Governing Body and its committees.

4. Branch offices are authorized to write to other branch offices and to headquarters. However, branch offices should not write to offices under the oversight of *another* Branch Committee, such as country offices, translation offices, literature depots, and so forth. In such cases, the correspondence should be sent to the branch office that has oversight. Country offices are authorized to write to the branch office that oversees their work.

5. Desk Symbols: If many people in the branch or country office prepare correspondence to be sent to other departments, to the field, to other branch offices, or to headquarters, it may be practical for the branch office to use desk symbols on such correspondence. The use of desk symbols serves to help the branch office identify the author and/or his secretary who prepared a particular letter or memorandum. When a reply is received that refers to the correspondence by desk symbol(s) and date, the reply can be promptly routed to the appropriate desk. The Branch Committee may determine the desk symbol system that works best locally. No more than three letters should be combined to form each desk symbol, such as ABA, SCA, HID. The Branch or Country committee should see that a confidential listing of the branch office's desk symbols is kept up-to-date. The desk symbol list is to be provided only to those who need to consult the listing for their Bethel work. It is not to be distributed to anyone outside of Bethel.

6. Correspondence Standards: All correspondence should be dated and include the desk symbols of the writer(s) as well as a subject or a regarding ("Re:") line. Since correspondence is sent electronically via the Branch File Transfer (BFT) system, it is not necessary to indicate at the top "Via BFT." However, if it is necessary to send the correspondence

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by more than one means, this should be indicated at the top, for example, "Via Hard Copy and BFT." (See 3:16) If the correspondence is truly urgent or time-sensitive, this should be clearly indicated under the date. If the subject involves another country or geographic location, this should be indicated at the beginning of the subject line. For example, if the Russia branch office writes about a matter in Belarus, the subject line should commence with "Belarus—" followed by the subject.

7. When only a very brief reply to correspondence is needed, it is appropriate to reply using a brief note at the top of the received correspondence. This note could convey an approval, a confirmation, or other minor detail. The note should show the intended recipient, those being copied, and the sender, as well as the desk symbol(s) and date.

8. File Naming: A numbered letter or memorandum and its attachments must be given a proper file name so that the documents are handled together when received through BFT. Files produced using the Correspondence Module in Admin are named in accord with the standards set forth in this chapter. A word or brief phrase may be added *after* the required file-name prefix. Care should be taken so that the file name does not reveal confidential information. In most cases, correspondence and the associated attachments should not be sent in a compressed folder.

9. Numbered Letters: All correspondence **between a Branch Committee and the Governing Body or one of the Governing Body committees** should be sent by means of numbered letters. **[See Chart 3.1.]** Branch Committees should address a numbered letter to one Governing Body committee only. The letter number, letter date, and desk symbols serve as a helpful reference to specific correspondence. For numbered letters sent to the Governing Body and its committees, each branch office uses a number series that starts at 101 and continues sequentially until 9999. The letter number series is not reset or restarted each year. It is reset to 101 after letter number 9999 has been used. Unique letter numbers will be used on letters *sent to* Branch Committees but will not necessarily be sequential. When the Governing Body or one of the Governing Body committees sends the same letter (a circular letter) to various branch offices, the same letter number will be used. Additionally, to identify easily circular letters from headquarters, the letter number will begin with a "C-" prefix, such as "No. C-1234P."

10. File Names for Numbered Letters: The required file-name prefix for numbered letters is FROM+TO+LETTER NUMBER. FROM represents the *three-letter code* of the sending office. TO represents the *three-letter code* of the receiving office. For example, the proper file name for a letter numbered 2345 from the Germany branch office to the Service Committee at headquarters is DEUWHQ2345.docx. The file name of any associated attachments to a numbered letter are appended with letters "a," "b," and so forth. In the example cited above, two attachments would have such file names as DEUWHQ2345a.docx and DEUWHQ2345b.pdf.

11. Memorandums: Correspondence **between branch offices** is sent by means of memorandums, not numbered letters. Memorandums are also used for correspondence **between branch offices and headquarters departments. [See Chart 3.1.]** The word "MEMORANDUM" needs to be shown above the name of the sending branch. In addition, for the recipient, the department should be specified under the name of the branch, for example, "Attention: Shipping Office." A memorandum does not need to be signed by the Branch Committee coordinator.

12. File Names for Memorandums: The required file-name prefix for memorandums is FROM+TO+DESK SYM-

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BOL+SEQUENTIAL NUMBER. FROM represents the *three-letter code* of the sending office. TO represents the *three-letter code* of the receiving office. SEQUENTIAL NUMBER represents the number of the memorandum sent on a given day. For example, the proper file name for the first memorandum that Desk AY at the Brazil branch sends to the Art Department at headquarters on a given day is BRAWHQAY01.docx. The file name of any associated attachments to a memorandum are appended with letters "a," "b," and so forth. In the example cited above, two attachments would have such file names as BRAWHQAY01a.docx and BRAWHQAY01b.pdf.

13. Branch File Transfer: BFT is the principal means by which branch offices and headquarters departments send and receive correspondence and other electronic files. It is not a correspondence tracking system. Most branch offices find it advantageous to use a correspondence tracking system, such as the Correspondence Module in Admin.

14. E-Mail: In addition to the use of numbered letters and memorandums, departments at headquarters and at the branch offices may be approved by oversight to use e-mail to communicate directly with departments or individuals in other lands about *technical and routine matters.* However, e-mail does not replace numbered letters or memorandums. Recommendations, direction, and decisions are to be communicated through numbered letters or memorandums, as explained above. In most cases, authorized e-mail communications between departments or individuals serve the purpose of expediting the clear communication of technical and routine details having to do with previously approved projects. If such e-mail communication is approved between a department at headquarters and at the branch offices or between branch offices, oversight should ensure that such e-mail communications are limited to their authorized technical purpose. E-mail should not be used by anyone to bypass official communication. A department overseer should be sure that his oversight on the Branch Committee is kept abreast of the nature of work-related e-mail communications that he or others in the department send to anyone outside the branch office or to those at other branch offices or at headquarters.—See 6:44.

15. Telephone Calls: The telephone may be used to communicate with headquarters or with another branch office if necessary. This is especially true when a sudden emergency or other urgent matter arises. Usually, urgent matters handled over the telephone should be followed up with official communication in a numbered letter or a memorandum. For technical and routine matters, the guidelines outlined above with regard to the use of e-mail also apply to telephone calls. Department overseers should authorize any international phone calls before they are made.

16. Faxes and Hard-Copy Mail: Whenever possible, correspondence and attachments should be sent electronically only through BFT, as this expedites the handling and assists in the tracking and routing of items once they have been received. If BFT is temporarily unavailable and emergency communication is needed, fax transmissions may be used. Correspondence sent by fax should be resent using BFT as soon as it is available. It is preferred that hard-copy correspondence be scanned and then sent electronically. If a matter must be sent by hard copy and BFT, please indicate this at the top of the correspondence as described in 3:6.

DISASTER RELIEF AND EMERGENCIES

17. From time to time, emergency situations arise throughout the world. Sometimes there are violent storms, damaging floods, or strong earthquakes. At other times brothers may be forced to flee from their homes because of

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warfare or mob violence. When such problems occur, the Branch Committee should communicate with the Coordinators' Committee to explain what is happening and set forth recommendations as to what needs to be done. On occasion, it may not be possible for the branch office to communicate with the Coordinators' Committee. Or a need may suddenly arise to do something for brothers affected by a disaster. In such circumstances, the branch office is permitted to spend up to USD 5,000 immediately to provide temporary relief and assistance to brothers involved in a major disaster. When funds are spent, an explanation should be included in the letter sent to the Coordinators' Committee. The letter should state what the local brothers are able to do and what materials or facilities are available to take care of the immediate needs of the brothers affected. Further instructions are found in the *Disaster Relief Guidelines*.—See 2:47.

18. Safety of Those in Foreign Service: If such emergencies as civil unrest, acts of terrorism, or war threaten the safety and well-being of foreign nationals, the Branch Committee must be alert and quick to provide practical assistance and clear direction. The Branch Committee must take a special interest in the welfare of all those who are members of the Worldwide Order. If the Branch Committee determines that there is an urgent need to evacuate special full-time servants in foreign service to a safer location or to relocate them, the branch office should immediately contact the Coordinators' Committee by letter or by telephone and explain the situation, setting forth specific recommendations. The Coordinators' Committee will consult with the Personnel and Service committees and provide further direction. If it is not possible for the Branch Committee to communicate with the Coordinators' Committee, then the Branch Committee should do what is needed to protect the lives and safety of those in foreign service. A report on what transpired should be provided to the Coordinators' Committee as soon as possible. For these reasons, each branch office should have and periodically review an emergency action plan. (Prov. 21:5) The branch should maintain up-to-date contact information for all of those in special full-time service so that they can be reached quickly in an emergency. While some in foreign service may feel either that they should or that they should not relocate or evacuate, ultimately the decision is a personal one. No one should judge others in this regard. (Matt. 7:1; 10:23; Rom. 14:10, 19; Gal. 6:5) Nevertheless, in most cases, it is best that Christians quickly heed the warnings and direction issued by the secular authorities and the responsible elders during times of civil unrest or emergency.—Rom. 13:1; Heb. 13:17.

LEGAL DEPARTMENT

19. Official opposition to the advancement of Kingdom interests, particularly the preaching of the good news, is to be expected. As foretold, there are those who 'frame trouble in the name of the law' and who resort to the courts in an effort to silence the spread of the Bible's lifesaving message. (Ps. 94:20; Matt. 10:16-19) While the theocratic organization does not need legal status to form congregations or engage in the field ministry, being legally recognized affords a degree of protection, which is why efforts are made to 'defend and legally establish the good news.'—Phil. 1:7.

20. The Branch Committee should promptly inform the Coordinators' Committee of serious legal challenges, providing dates and times of occurrences, names of individuals involved, and a thorough but concise explanation. This includes outlining what the charges against the brothers may be and sending a copy of the laws involved, translated into English. The Branch Committee should not assume that the Coordinators' Committee is up-to-date on the situation in a given country just because

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there was correspondence with world headquarters about the situation in the past.

21. It is advisable to have a Legal Department in larger branch offices, particularly where printing is done or where there is significant ongoing legal opposition to theocratic activities. If possible, it is good to have a licensed attorney serving with the department. It is the responsibility of the entire Branch Committee to be aware of legal challenges to our worship.—Esther 3:5-15.

22. When legal controversies arise, the branch Legal Department may consult, if necessary, with a lawyer who is not serving at Bethel. The lawyer's opinion and recommendation should be included in the letter sent to the Coordinators' Committee. If it seems necessary to hire a lawyer, the lawyer should explain the legal remedies available, the likelihood of a favorable result, how long it will take, and an estimate of his costs. In explaining matters to the Coordinators' Committee, the Branch Committee should outline the lawyer's opinion on whether a favorable outcome will be achieved, his reasoning, and the recommendation of the Branch Committee.

23. To minimize the use of non-Witness attorneys, it is beneficial to maintain a list of brothers and sisters in the field who are lawyers. Legal matters can periodically be referred to spiritually qualified attorneys who are willing and feel privileged to help. They are generally pleased to assist without charge.

24. Action against Jehovah's Witnesses is often preceded by negative propaganda in the media and derogatory statements by government officials. The Branch Committee should promptly inform the Coordinators' Committee if events indicate that the authorities are considering the imposition of restrictions or an outright ban on true worship. With comments from the branch office and the help of the WHQ Legal Department, the Coordinators' Committee will prepare an approach to the appropriate officials. Written materials explaining our activities and refuting falsehoods may be prepared. The objective is to inform responsible officials of the true position of Jehovah's Witnesses. To ensure that the best approach is made, the branch office should always communicate with the Coordinators' Committee before setting up such meetings. Any meetings that are approved to be held with officials should be cared for by a member of the Branch Committee and, if available, someone from the branch Legal Department.

25. Most governments have committed themselves to respecting human rights, including freedom of worship. (Rev. 12: 16) National and international organizations monitor governmental compliance with these commitments. It may be helpful to inform such agencies about the arrests of publishers, lawsuits, or proposed legislation against true worship. The Branch Committee should communicate with the Coordinators' Committee before doing so, explaining which organization is to be approached. A draft of what the branch office wishes to submit should be sent to the Coordinators' Committee. The Coordinators' Committee will then decide whether the approach should be made.

26. The branch office should always ask for any court action to be delayed or adjourned to allow ample time for a complete report to be sent to the Coordinators' Committee and to allow time to receive instructions from headquarters. If possible, a two-month delay or extension should be requested.

27. In the event of an adverse ruling or decision, the Branch Committee should immediately inform the Coordinators' Committee and specify the time limit for making an appeal. The Coordinators' Committee will want to know the opinion of the branch Legal Department about the advisability of appealing, the reasons for or against making an appeal,

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as well as the costs. The letter to the Coordinators' Committee should also state any possible negative effects on the legal status of the Kingdom work if the matter is not appealed or if the appeal is lost.

28. If the Branch Committee does not have time to write to the Coordinators' Committee to receive instructions because of a deadline that cannot be extended, a legal update should be provided as soon as possible. If necessary, the Branch Committee coordinator or another member of the Branch Committee may telephone headquarters about the matter.

29. If the Branch Committee believes that an action taken against true worship should be publicized, the branch office should write to the Coordinators' Committee with a recommendation of what could be prepared, making sure that all of the facts are fully substantiated.

30. Legal Status: Obtaining legal status or registration facilitates the entry of missionaries, the organization of assemblies, the importation of literature, the entitlement to tax exemptions, and other benefits. The Branch Committee should give careful attention to obtaining and maintaining legal registration. Of course, the organization will never compromise principles of pure worship merely to obtain legal status. Attention should be given to the type of legal status being sought. Some religions have a very favorable status, whereas others are merely tolerated. It is necessary to examine carefully the law in each country to determine which form of legal status would be most beneficial for theocratic purposes.

31. Legal Entities and the Worldwide Order: Branch Committee members should have a clear understanding of the relationship among the Governing Body, the Branch Committee, the legal entities used by branch offices, and the Worldwide Order of Special Full-Time Servants of Jehovah's Witnesses ("Worldwide Order").

32. The Governing Body has delegated a measure of oversight of the spiritual and material welfare of "the flock of God" to Branch Committees throughout the world. These Branch Committees also oversee administrative and legal activities of the organization in their designated territories. Of course, all Branch Committees serve under the spiritual direction of the Governing Body.—See *w01* 1/15 pp. 28-31.

33. Branch Committees are encouraged to register and use a recognized legal entity to carry on the legal affairs of the branch office. Depending on the local laws and circumstances, a branch office may need to use more than one legal entity to further the work in its territory. Any recommended adjustments in the use of legal entities are to be presented to the Coordinators' Committee. This would include recommendations for the appointment or deletion of directors or officers of legal entities. Some countries do not allow the registration of religions or the formation of a legal entity of a religious nature. In such countries, it may be necessary to use a legal entity that is of a general nonprofit nature or, in a rare instance, a for-profit nature. In either case, the Branch Committee must not lose sight of the primary objective to spread the good news of God's Kingdom under Christ Jesus. Our principal activities as an organization are religious even though some aspects may be viewed as educational or charitable in nature.

34. Members of the Worldwide Order serve at all branch offices. The Worldwide Order provides ministers for the legal entity or entities used by the branch offices to carry out the spiritual activities of Jehovah's Witnesses. (Matt. 24:14; 28:19, 20; Acts 1:8; Rom. 12:1) For this reason, it is important that Branch Committees understand what the Worldwide Order is and the relationship between it

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and the legal entities branch offices may use.

35. The Worldwide Order is an unincorporated association made up of all those in special full-time service throughout the world. Members of the Worldwide Order are baptized ministers in special full-time service who perform whatever assignment they receive from the Worldwide Order. Each member of the Worldwide Order signs a Vow of Obedience and Poverty ("Vow"), which is a voluntary commitment made by each member.

36. Members of the Worldwide Order are not compensated and do not receive in-kind benefits for any services they perform. The support a member receives is based on the member's commitment to the Order and is not related to any service performed or the nature of any assignment. Members of the Worldwide Order receive food, shelter, and other basic necessities. Regardless of the nature of their privilege of service, all receive modest, yet appropriate, support. In view of the foregoing, the activities of any legal entity used by the Branch Committee are not to be viewed or regulated as a "commercial" enterprise or as involving an employer/employee relationship between any legal entity and members of the Worldwide Order.

37. At times, authorities attempt to categorize the endeavors of those in special full-time service as 'secular work.' As Christians, we do have a "work" commissioned to us. (John 4:34; 5:17; Acts 13:2; 1 Cor. 15:58; 16:10; 2 Tim. 4:5) However, members of the Worldwide Order are motivated, not by financial gain, but by the desire to accomplish the will of Jehovah and Jesus Christ in helping all "to attain to repentance." (2 Pet. 3:9) Even so, in keeping with Jesus' admonition, Branch Committee members and those who serve under their oversight need to exercise caution when asked to describe the nature of our activities. (Matt. 10:16) While we do engage in "work," even as Jesus and his first-century disciples did, we are certainly not secularly employed or motivated.

38. If a Branch Committee feels that it should describe itself, its legal entities, or the Worldwide Order differently than set forth above, it must first provide details of the proposed adjustment to the Governing Body in order to receive direction.—See 6:50.

39. The Branch Committee should consider whether to register Jehovah's Witnesses as a local entity. However, registration as a local branch of the Pennsylvania corporation may be preferable. Regimes in developing countries are less likely to expropriate property belonging to an American corporation. In other countries, having legal ties to an American legal entity is not desirable. If the Branch Committee recommends pursuing legal registration in a particular country, the details should be sent to the Coordinators' Committee. The WHQ Legal Department will provide assistance in preparing a charter and bylaws needed for registration.

40. There may be other laws in the country regulating those who transact business on behalf of local or foreign corporations. To ensure that the branch office is operating legally, a lawyer should be consulted so that the legal requirements are known. Each member of the Branch Committee should be familiar with the laws of the country as they pertain to corporations or business matters.

41. Power of Attorney: This is a legal document authorizing an individual to act as a legal agent or representative of another person or legal entity (such as the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania). The Power of Attorney names an individual to handle 'necessary business matters.' (Acts 6:3) The Branch Committee may write to the Coordinators' Committee if a Power of Attorney is needed to

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conduct corporation business, to register the corporation, or to obtain legal recognition as a branch of a foreign corporation.

42. In some countries, the law requires anyone holding a Power of Attorney to register it with the government. If that is the case, it should be done, thus avoiding the severe complications for not complying with such laws. Each member of a Branch Committee should be aware of the legal requirements regarding Powers of Attorney, including time periods for renewal or expiration.

43. Lawsuits for Libel, Damages, or Injunctive Relief: Before initiating any such legal actions, the Branch Committee must receive approval from the Coordinators' Committee. The recommendation from the Branch Committee should include a description of available legal remedies, the cost for such legal action (including estimated attorney's fees), an estimate of the likely time from the initiation of the action to the conclusion, and the likelihood of success and the recovery of an award. In libel actions, the Branch Committee should consider whether the suit will further advertise the false accusations. If it is believed that failure to initiate a lawsuit will lead to other difficulties, these concerns should be explained.

44. Printed Matter Against Jehovah's Witnesses: As a general policy, the organization does not publish responses or retaliate legally if another organization or individual circulates printed matter that contains falsehoods about Jehovah's Witnesses. It is usually best to concentrate on the positive activity of Kingdom preaching. If the Branch Committee thinks that the wise course is to take steps to counteract negative reports that may adversely affect our activities, the committee should set forth recommendations to the Coordinators' Committee.—See 6:19.

45. Refusal of Blood Transfusions: If our brothers' refusal of blood transfusions is being disregarded or overridden by health-care providers, legal action may be warranted. If the Branch Committee recommends such, a complete overview of the matter should be presented to the Coordinators' Committee. The recommendation should clearly state what is hoped to be accomplished by taking legal action. We are not inclined to get involved if a favorable result will not help the brotherhood in general.

46. Child-Custody and Visitation Disputes: At times, publishers are involved in child-custody or visitation disputes in which our beliefs are attacked. Unfavorable child-custody decisions in which our beliefs and activities are misrepresented can adversely affect our reputation in the community, even our legal status. With prior approval of and subsequent review by the Coordinators' Committee, some branch offices have prepared and made available information to assist publishers whose beliefs are attacked in such disputes.

47. Personal Decisions: The Legal Department at the branch office is set up to assist the Branch Committee in "the defending and legally establishing of the good news." It is inappropriate for the Legal Department to take time from these "more important things" to assist individuals with their personal legal matters. (Phil. 1:7, 10) The Legal Department should limit its work to legal matters affecting the advancement of Kingdom interests rather than personal requests for legal advice or services.

48. Protecting the Organization's Copyrights: The organization has a long-standing policy of copyrighting its publications. Copyright is a tool that can be used to protect dedicated materials from being misused, such as by apostates or false religious organizations as well as by those who attempt to commercialize our artwork, photographs, or text. We do permit some uses of our copyrighted material, such as use or re-

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production by Jehovah's Witnesses for the personal use of family members, use of the organization's artwork by the congregation at a Kingdom Hall, and use by authors and others for educational purposes with specific permission granted on a case-by-case basis. However, approval is not given for the general or widespread distribution of our publications, including artwork, photographs, and text, for posting on the Internet or any other electronic network or for reproduction or distribution in exchange for money. If the branch office learns that the organization's copyrighted material is being misused, the Branch Committee should write to the Coordinators' Committee, providing full details, including the action that the committee recommends be taken against the violator.

49. Tax Matters: Although many countries provide tax exemptions for religious entities, some countries do not. Tax exemptions are generally created by law and are usually not a legal right. Where required to do so by Caesar, legal entities used by branch offices should pay the taxes legally required of them, even if other religious entities do not follow the law. Conversely, legal entities used by branch offices should not pay taxes where there is an accepted legal basis for not doing so. Every Branch Committee should take full advantage of any legal exemption from taxation. Branch Committees should keep in mind that how they handle tax and legal matters (including the tax or legal status of those in the Worldwide Order) could have implications for other branch offices, the worldwide organization, and the Worldwide Order. In addition, individuals engaged full-time in religious activities may be entitled to tax exemptions. Such exemptions relieve the branch offices of some financial obligations and indirectly constitute legal recognition of our activities. The Branch Committee should keep the Coordinators' Committee informed when exemptions currently enjoyed by the organization or members of the Worldwide Order may be in danger of being lost.

50. To respond effectively in times of emergency or war, Branch Committee members should be familiar with all decrees affecting our work and the operation of the branch office. The Branch Committee should watch carefully so that the work will be protected and the brothers will be given necessary direction. The Branch Committee should be alert as to what is going on in the country and keep the Coordinators' Committee duly informed.

51. Keep Proclaiming the Good News: In some places, opposers make every effort to stop the Kingdom work. Nevertheless, true Christians continue preaching, even if this means doing so in a quiet manner. If literature is not available, the brothers can talk about the truth using only the Bible. Dedicated servants of Jehovah should be thoroughly acquainted with the Word of God so that they can continue to preach no matter what circumstances might arise.

NEWS SERVICE AND PUBLIC INFORMATION

52. It is beneficial for the branch office to establish good relations with the public news media wherever possible and practical. Branch Committees should be prepared to provide accurate information about our activities and beliefs to newspapers, magazines, radio, and television where appropriate.—Col. 4:5, 6.

53. Office of Public Information (OPI): This office at world headquarters works under the direction of the Coordinators' Committee to publicize accurate information about and to correct misconceptions and prejudices about our organization and work. OPI produces content about our worldwide activities in the form of news releases, video news releases (VNRs), and other related materials for the Newsroom section of jw.org. Rather than focusing

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primarily on human rights and legal matters, these news items highlight positive developments that have broad appeal to the general public and the media, such as Witnesses' receiving official recognition for fine conduct or another significant achievement publicly acknowledged by the local community. (Please review our letter dated HCA: NC April 12, 2012, No. C-6266C.) This office makes direct contact with media professionals, academics, and other non-Witnesses to provide this information. Additionally, if a branch office needs help with media-related issues, the Branch Committee may submit the details of the situation to the Coordinators' Committee. If there is a major development or a fast-breaking news item in the branch territory about which it may be helpful to have accurate information posted on jw.org (particularly in the case of a disaster or other emergency), the Branch Committee may submit a request to the Coordinators' Committee and include documented, relevant details about the matter. OPI may prepare fast-breaking news items as "News Alerts" for the Newsroom.—See 6:19.

54. Public Information Desk (PID): This desk is responsible for providing major media outlets in the branch territory, such as national networks or newspapers and academic professionals, with an accurate picture of our beliefs and activities. They should be referred to the media resources and other official information available on jw.org. The PID should also be used to correct misconceptions and prejudices about us and our work to the extent possible. Discernment should be used in deciding whether or to what extent inquiries should be answered, especially if the reporter has a reputation for being antagonistic toward our work. The PID should also periodically provide information to OPI on positive news stories related to Jehovah's Witnesses in the branch territory. The PID may subsequently work directly with OPI in verifying the details of these stories to facilitate OPI's preparation of a news release and/or video news release (VNR). The PID will obtain approval from the Branch Committee to forward the information and related materials—including video clips—to OPI as source material. Additionally, those assigned to the PID should have a working knowledge of both English and the language used by local media, so as to assist those who translate materials appearing in the English-language Newsroom as needed. News items currently appearing on the Newsroom landing page on jw.org can serve as a guide to the PID for ideas on positive news stories. Each Branch Committee should appoint a brother at the branch to care for media matters and oversee the PID. The brother should be humble as well as capable and tactful. He should have a good knowledge of the truth. He should be able to articulate our beliefs clearly in a personable yet professional manner, particularly when dealing with non-Witnesses. The brother should be prepared to care for news interviews and other inquiries from media outlets, serving as the official spokesman for Jehovah's Witnesses in the branch territory with the full knowledge and support of the Branch Committee. He will also serve as the permanent branch media contact for news releases prepared by OPI. Please keep OPI informed of the current staffing of the PID and whether it is staffed full- or part-time.

55. News Service Representatives: A news service representative is selected for each circuit by the circuit overseer. A *Circuit News Service Representative* card (S-304) showing the name and address of this brother is then sent to the branch office to update its file. This brother should be available to provide accurate information to the media. He will cooperate closely with the circuit overseer and the branch office. A regional news service representative may be assigned by the local Convention Committee in harmony with direction from the branch office. It is appropriate for this brother to invite the local media to

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report on the convention each year. The Teaching Committee provides an annual news service kit to branch offices for use in connection with regional, national, and international conventions. Ordinarily, no newspaper advertising or radio or television time is used for conventions unless it is free. However, if it seems advisable to pay to publicize our convention activities in the country in some way, the Branch Committee may submit a recommendation to the Teaching Committee.

56. Videos for Use by the Media: The Teaching and Writing committees have selected certain videos that are especially appropriate for public broadcast. This list is updated from time to time. If a station is willing to broadcast one of our videos, the branch office representative should be sure to review our public broadcasting guidelines with the station management. If the station agrees to adhere to the conditions outlined, a broadcast may be arranged and a copy of the video provided to the station.

57. As a general rule, we avoid controversy when it comes to minor misconceptions that appear in the media. However, if some in the media spread false information of a serious nature about Jehovah's organization, what can be done? The Branch Committee generally knows the situation in the country and will often be able to judge whether it would be wise to try to contact the media and counter the misinformation or to ignore the matter. There is "a time to be silent and a time to speak."—Eccl. 3:7; see *w98* 12/1, pp. 17-18, pars. 15-18.

58. Handling Media-Related Emergencies: In a media-related emergency, such as criminal activity involving Jehovah's Witnesses or a slanderous campaign that could have repercussions on our preaching work, the Branch Committee has the responsibility to handle the matter quickly. It should communicate with the Coordinators' Committee for suggestions and direction, particularly if it is expected that problems will quickly spread to other countries because of media reports. If slanderous or lying reports appear in the media, it may be appropriate for the PID, in consultation with the branch Legal Department, to review these reports and submit a recommendation to the Branch Committee. The Branch Committee may write to the Coordinators' Committee to provide details on the matter or to request additional direction on pursuing the matter legally. Please note that as an exception, the branch Legal Department should handle media queries related to ongoing court cases or major legal issues involving Jehovah's Witnesses. In these instances, the PID would be consulted as needed and kept informed of the details.

DATA PROTECTION

59. The organization of Jehovah's Witnesses respects individuals' rights of privacy, based on principles set forth in the Bible. The organization recognizes the necessity for open and frank communication and the collection of personal and sensitive personal data in order to administer to the needs of Jehovah's Witnesses and accomplish its religious and charitable activity. The organization also recognizes the corresponding necessity to maintain confidentiality and ensure that information is adequately protected. (Prov. 15:22; 25:9) Confidentiality is highly valued.—Prov. 20:19.

60. Various countries have enacted data protection laws to ensure individuals' rights of privacy. The organization of Jehovah's Witnesses has a long-standing history of respecting privacy rights and maintaining confidentiality, even before the enactment of such data protection laws. The organization will continue to protect information disclosed to it in harmony with its long-standing practice, now recorded in this policy.

61. Scope of Application: This policy applies to the entire organization of

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Jehovah's Witnesses, as represented by branch offices located throughout the world.—See 6:19.

62. Data Protection Policy: The organization of Jehovah's Witnesses handles all personal data in accordance with the following principles:

a. Personal data will be processed in a fair and lawful manner.

b. Personal data will be collected, processed, and used only to the extent necessary to fulfill Jehovah's Witnesses' religious and charitable purposes.

c. Personal data will be accurate and kept up-to-date. Any error will be corrected as soon as possible after the organization becomes aware of it.

d. Personal data will be kept only for as long as is necessary for the legitimate purpose(s) of the organization.

e. Due consideration will be given to respecting the rights of data subjects.

f. Appropriate technical and organizational measures will be taken to prevent unauthorized or unlawful disclosure of personal data. All computer-held personal data is held on password protected computers to which only authorized users hold passwords. Offices are locked after office hours and only authorized staff may gain entry.

g. Personal data will not be transferred between branches unless necessary to accomplish the religious or charitable purposes of the organization of Jehovah's Witnesses, to which all of Jehovah's Witnesses have consented by virtue of their free and willing decision to become Jehovah's Witnesses and identify themselves as such.

63. Rights of the Data Subject:

a. A data subject's right to the protection of personal and sensitive personal data and to the correction or deletion of personal and sensitive personal data is to be granted according to the practice of Jehovah's Witnesses as set forth in this policy.

b. Whoever makes a request according to this section must provide sufficient evidence of his identity.

c. If a data subject requests access to, correction of, or deletion of personal data or sensitive personal data about himself, the organization will fairly consider granting the request by balancing the interests of the individual in gaining access or correcting or deleting data against the legitimate religious interests of the organization, including whether granting the request would endanger the organization's right to religious freedom and practice.

d. The organization has an interest in permanently maintaining data regarding an individual's status as one of Jehovah's Witnesses. Deleting such information would unduly infringe on the organization's religious beliefs and practices.

64. Right of Appeal: If a person believes that his rights have been infringed, he can appeal to the Branch Committee by means of a written personal letter. The letter must be sent within two weeks of the action that forms the basis of the appeal.

COMPUTER DEPARTMENT

65. The WHQ Computer Department oversees the work of all branch Computer Departments worldwide, under the supervision of the Coordinators' Com-

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mittee. This includes setting standards, providing global shared services, specifying new equipment, designing and maintaining computer networks, and supporting commercial enterprise software and software developed by headquarters.

66. The WHQ Computer Department has technicians working under its direction in various branches in order to provide timely assistance to branches around the world. These technicians closely follow the standards and policies that apply to all areas under the supervision of the WHQ Computer Department, such as networking, servers, and software.

67. For detailed information on organizing local computer operations, the Branch Committee and the branch Computer Department should consult *Computer Department Guidelines.*

68. Branch Computer Department Responsibilities: The Branch Committee should appoint a capable, trustworthy brother and perhaps an assistant to oversee the Computer Department. The principal responsibility of the Computer Department is to supply branch departments with computers, servers, software, telephones, radio communication, data communication, telecommunication, and related technologies. In addition, this department provides helpful support to keep equipment in good working order. Most important, it ensures that all the electronic data belonging to the branch is available only to those authorized to use it and is protected against tampering or accidental loss.

69. Standards and Guidelines: In order to maintain reasonable uniformity among branches, headquarters provides standards and technical guidelines. The branch Computer Department should endeavor to keep up-to-date with such information as provided in correspondence to the branches, *Computer Department Guidelines,* and the Technical Support Library located on the Extranet. There is usually no need for branch members to experiment with or pioneer the use of the latest technologies available; rather, they should concentrate on using what has been approved.

70. If the branch Computer Department feels that it needs assistance in evaluating whether to replace equipment, in using new software, or in similar matters, the branch office may submit a request for help and direction to the WHQ Computer Department.

71. Data Backups and Disaster Recovery: A good data-backup strategy is extremely important and should be viewed as one of the first priorities of the Computer Department. Backup procedures should be performed at least on a daily basis and should be verified periodically by restoring the data to a test computer. At least weekly, backups should be moved to a secure place that is not in the same building as the data being backed up. This ensures that in case of a major disaster, such as a fire or a flood, data could be retrieved and reinstalled on new equipment.

72. The Computer Department is responsible for having recovery procedures in place in case critical equipment, such as a server, fails. The procedure will vary according to the size and location of the branch and may include having a limited supply of spare equipment readily available.

73. Approvals: Any purchase of new computer hardware or software that goes beyond normal supplies, such as printer cartridges, and small items, such as memory sticks, needs approval from headquarters. This includes replacements for equipment that is taken out of service because of failure or because of the need for upgrading. Approval is obtained by submitting a *Nonliterature Branch Request.* For a list of recommended equipment, consult the Technical Support Library.

74. Security: Much of the information that is stored electronically is of a

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confidential nature. The Branch Committee should have an up-to-date list of all brothers who have access to such data. A meeting at which the importance of confidentiality is emphasized should be attended by each brother who is given such rights. ***A branch member may lose his Bethel service privilege if confidential data is accessed or copied without authorization.*** All users accessing branch data should first sign the *Watchtower Information Resources Confidentiality Affirmation* (available in the Technical Support Library). If changes are needed for legal reasons, this document may be adjusted by the Branch Committee.

75. The Computer Department is responsible for regular network administration tasks, such as data backup, user and group maintenance, server monitoring, and upgrading. Some network administration tasks require "system administrator" permission to accomplish this work. This type of network permission should be limited to a small number of trusted brothers. For the protection of the branch, local laws may require that such brothers sign a specific nondisclosure agreement. An up-to-date list of all system passwords should be placed in two envelopes, which should then be sealed. One should be securely stored by the overseer of the Computer Department and the other by the coordinator of the Branch Committee. For additional information relating to the security and management of confidential data, see the Information Security and Acceptable Use Policy and the Records Management Policy, both available in the Technical Support Library.

76. Infrastructure: The Computer Department would generally specify, install, and maintain the cabling for the voice and data networks of the branch. The Branch Committee may decide that another department, such as Maintenance, should handle cable installation. The Computer Department will set up and maintain any routers, switches, and servers. The standards for setting up and maintaining a network and the servers on it are contained in the Technical Support Library. All design, specifications, operation, and maintenance of the computer data network should be coordinated by the Computer Department in each branch. The Computer Department will meet with each department that has devices connected to the computer network to make sure that department requirements are being taken into consideration in the design and operation of the network. Branches planning major upgrades or changes to the computer network should have these design proposals reviewed by headquarters.

77. An air-conditioned room should be designated where servers containing the branch data can be installed. The telephone system would usually also be installed in this room, along with all the communications equipment needed to connect the branch to the outside telephone system and to the Internet. Access to this room should be limited to those who have been authorized by the Computer Department overseer and the Branch Committee.

78. Training and Support: The Computer Department must be service-oriented. Its goal is not only to provide computer equipment and software but also to help branch members make good use of the equipment and software that have been approved and provided for translation, publishing, and administration.

79. The complexity of the technology in use today makes it very important that thorough training be provided for those working in the Computer Department. This includes understanding the office productivity software and server products currently being used. It is also necessary to train backup people. When a computer system is installed, training is often provided. Ongoing training is required to get the most benefit from the computer equipment and to reduce

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the frustration that results from members not knowing how to use the equipment or software.

80. Depending on the size of the branch, the Computer Department might choose to establish a help desk that brothers can contact to receive help with using computer equipment and software. The brothers or sisters assigned to the help desk should be well-trained so that they can resolve the majority of problems without involving other technicians. In addition, those working on the help desk should be patient and kind with those needing assistance, showing a willing spirit. In most cases, it is good for those who support the hardware and software to deal directly with the brothers using the hardware and software. This promotes good understanding and cooperation and usually leads to better support. The help desk is not to provide assistance for or to repair personally owned computers.

81. Admin: The WHQ Computer Department is responsible for the development and support of the Admin software, the standard administrative software used by all branch offices worldwide. Unless approved to do otherwise, branch offices should use Admin or request enhancements rather than develop other administrative software locally. The Admin program is kept up-to-date with organizational procedures as these are adjusted from time to time. –See 3:87.

82. Admin is a large program with thousands of different features. Since it is used by both large and small branch offices, not all features are appropriate for each branch office. Simplification in branch operations also means simplifying our use of computers wherever possible. The Branch Committee in each branch is responsible for deciding which features of Admin should be used. Balance is required to ensure that the features of the software being used contribute to productivity and accuracy without placing a burden of unnecessary work on those using it. If a Branch Committee is unsure about using a particular feature of the program, it should consult with the WHQ Computer Department.

83. Selected brothers in various branches serve on the Admin Regional Support Team. In this assignment, these brothers make sure to follow direction from the WHQ Computer Department when providing support to the branches. Therefore, branches should e-mail the WHQ Computer Department to request Admin support. The WHQ Computer Department may then assign a Regional Support Team member to assist. If a branch office needs assistance to install a major update or a new module for Admin, the requesting branch office should send a memorandum to the WHQ Computer Department, outlining the need.

84. The Branch Committee should organize **Admin support.** The branch Computer Department will maintain the Admin server and database, make regular backups, apply necessary updates, and administer user security. The Branch Committee is responsible for determining which users are granted various Admin permissions. However, it is not necessary for Admin administrators to be members of the Branch Committee, as this is a technical role.

85. User training is best done by the most experienced Admin users in the branch. In many branches, this will be experienced users within a department. In branches that do not have experienced users within a department, a department overseer may ask the branch Computer Department for such training. Those assigned to support Admin should be alert to new features as described in the Admin documentation and should make sure that new features are made available to software users after discussing these features with the Branch Committee and the respective department overseers.

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86. The WHQ Computer Department provides the branch offices with resources to assist in giving support. In addition, the Admin support site on the Global Bethel Intranet contains helpful information, training material, and program updates. Branch offices can also e-mail the WHQ Computer Department for technical assistance or to report bugs in the program.

87. Programming: Computer software can be a valuable tool in getting our work done. However, simplification in our operations includes simplifying our software requirements where possible. Standard software packages are developed and maintained under the direction of headquarters, and as far as possible, branches should work with the standard software tools provided, such as Admin, jw.org, MEPS, and the Watchtower Translation System (WTS). This software should be kept up-to-date as directed by headquarters. —See 3:81.

88. It is generally not necessary for a branch to develop custom software, and most branches do not require a separate programming group in the Computer Department. All software projects must be approved by the Branch Committee and the WHQ Computer Department. When the Branch Committee recommends a local programming project, it should write to the WHQ Computer Department for approval. The WHQ Computer Department will consult with other headquarters departments and seek approval from the appropriate Governing Body committee as needed.

89. Where a local need is not addressed by a standard software package, such as Admin, jw.org, MEPS, or WTS, it is best in most cases to request an enhancement to the existing software. In this way, other branches with the same needs may benefit. Enhancement requests for existing software should be submitted in writing to the headquarters department or Governing Body committee that cares for the software package. —See 8:1.

90. At times, because of some specific local situation, a department at the branch office might not be able to care for its assigned work exactly as desired using the Admin program. In such cases, the Branch Committee should usually adjust the way the department does its work. If it is believed necessary, the Branch Committee may send an enhancement request to the WHQ Computer Department. If it is not possible for a department to use the standard software because of local legal requirements or other unique circumstances, the Branch Committee should write to the WHQ Computer Department for direction.

91. All branch offices are approved to make a few specific customizations to the Admin program. Before making other customizations or local extensions, the Branch Committee should write to the WHQ Computer Department for approval and direction. Branches should not submit enhancement requests and then customize Admin to match what they requested while waiting for the enhancement to be programmed. All local customizations that are approved by the WHQ Computer Department must be documented carefully, since they must be reapplied when upgrades to the Admin program are sent from headquarters.

92. Admin **enhancement requests** should always be entered on the appropriate document template, approved by a Branch Committee member, and then sent to the WHQ Computer Department. If the benefit of an enhancement request justifies the amount of work required, it will be approved by the WHQ Computer Department. Enhancement requests that would involve significant work or would change an organizational procedure will be referred to the appropriate headquarters department or Governing Body committee for consideration.

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93. Commercial Software: The Computer Department is responsible for making sure that commercial software is not used without proper licensing. Personally owned software should not be used on branch computers. If software is needed, it should be properly purchased and licensed by the branch. This means that records have to be kept to show clearly all available licenses at the branch and who is using them. Discrepancies must be resolved either by removing the program or by obtaining a proper license. No software should be installed on any branch equipment without prior approval from the Computer Department.

94. Use of the Internet: The Internet should remain logically separate from the branch network in a manner that is in harmony with the latest direction from headquarters. Internet access should be monitored and filtered. Access to the Internet during working hours should be granted only to those who require it for their work. Periodically, reminders should be given about using this access for work-related matters only.

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CHART 3.1

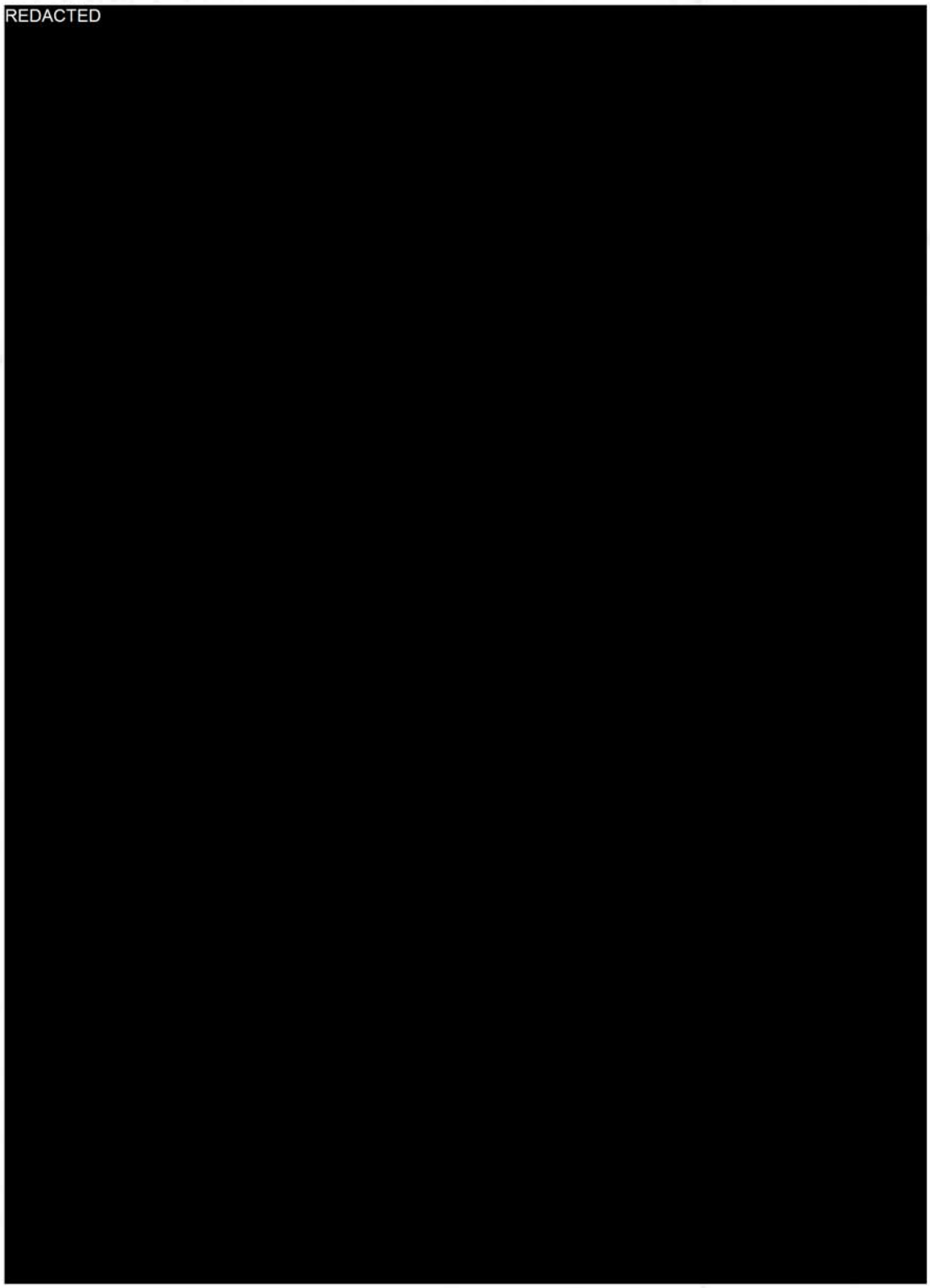
CORRESPONDENCE FORMATS FOR COMMITTEES AND DEPARTMENTS AT WORLD HEADQUARTERS

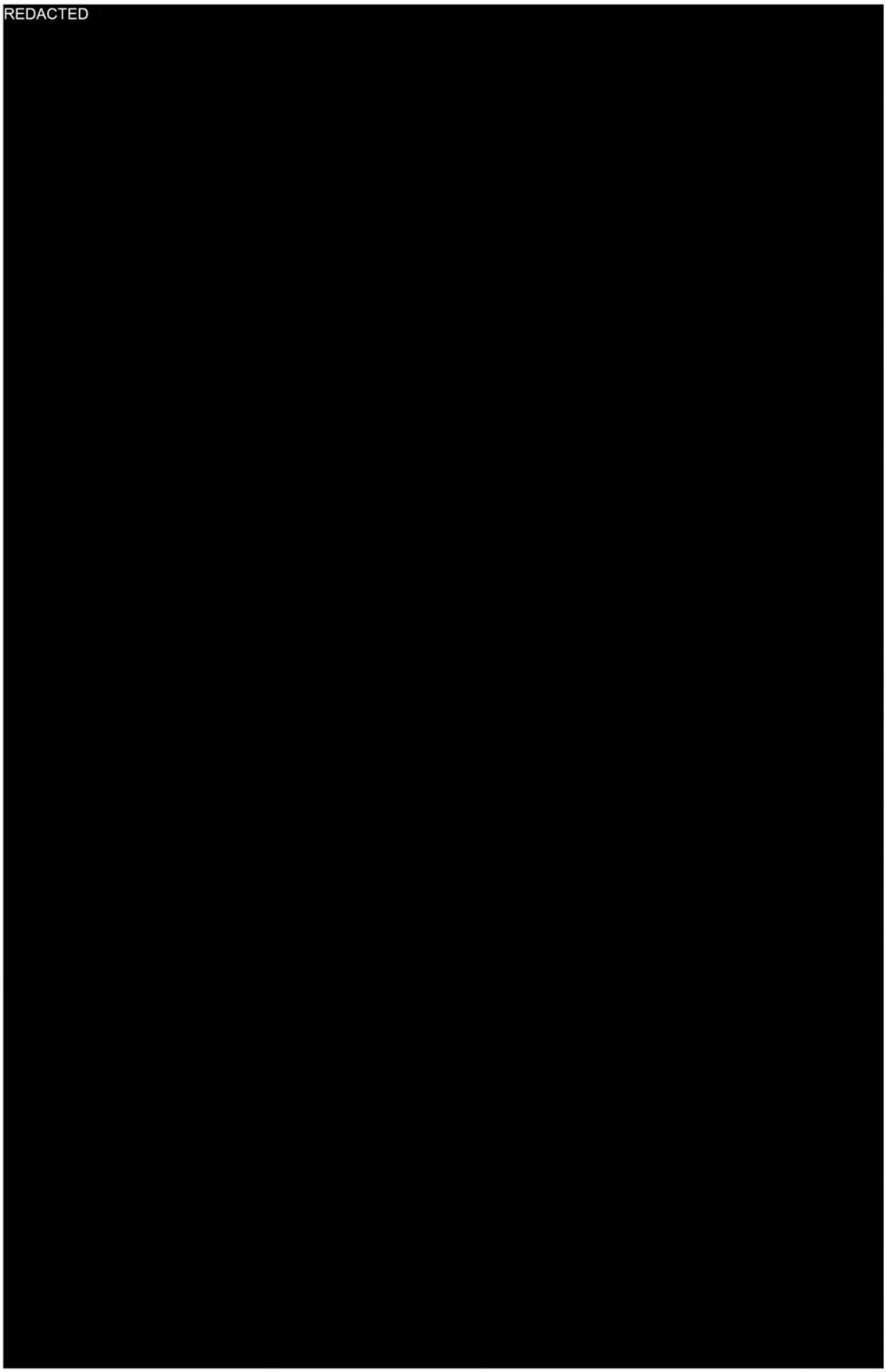
Governing Body and Committees	Correspondence Format
Governing Body Coordinators' Committee Personnel Committee Publishing Committee Service Committee Teaching Committee Writing Committee	**Numbered Letter**
Headquarters Departments	
Art Department Audio/Video Services Broadcasting Department Global Health Care Group Global Purchasing Department Hospital Information Services International Printing Group MEPS Programming Office of Public Information Text Processing Services Theocratic Schools Department Translation Services Treasurer's Office Web Publishing WHQ Computer Department WHQ Legal Department WHQ Travel Department Worldwide Design/Construction Department Writing Archives Writing Correspondence Writing Department	**Memorandum**

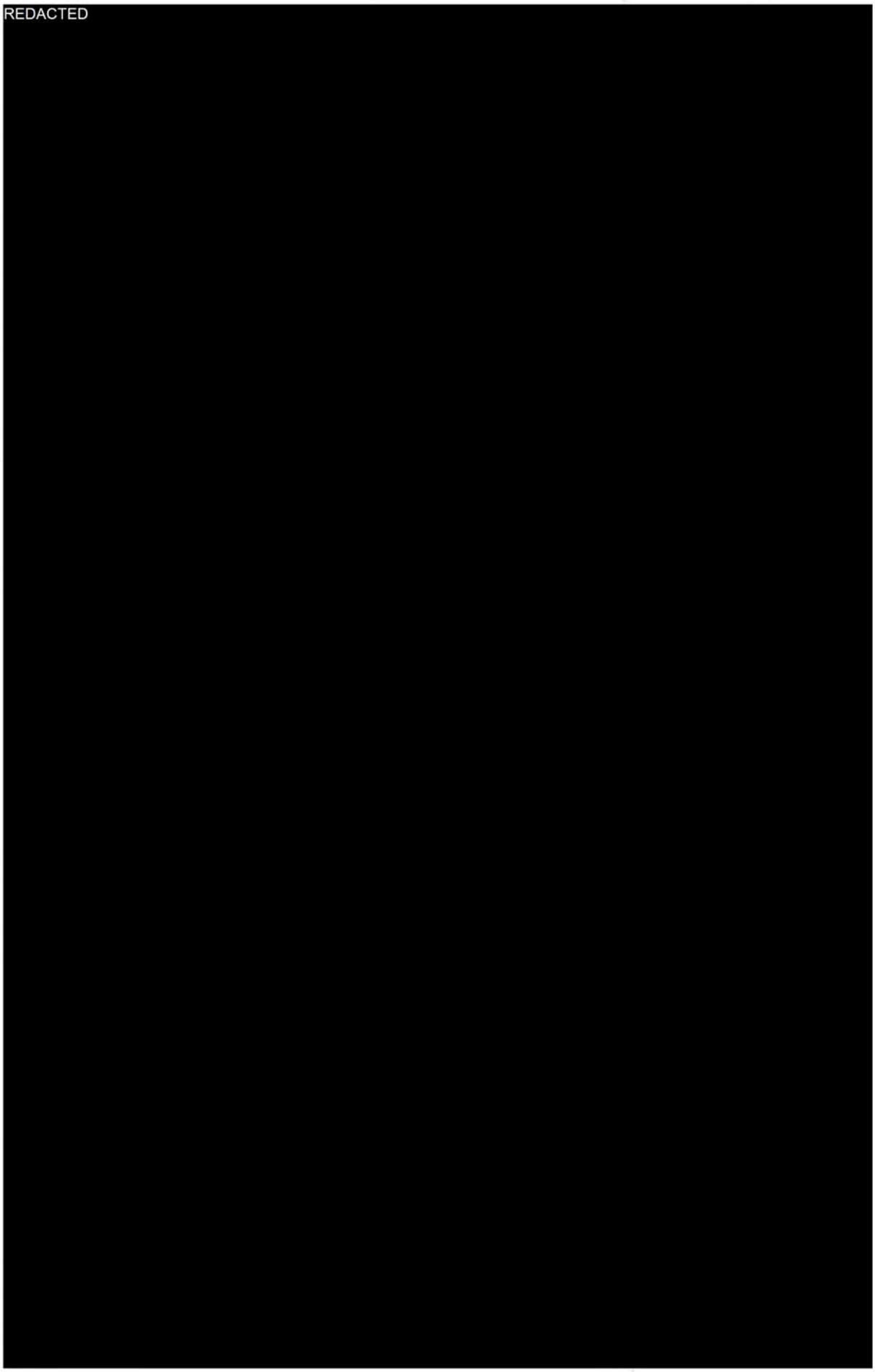
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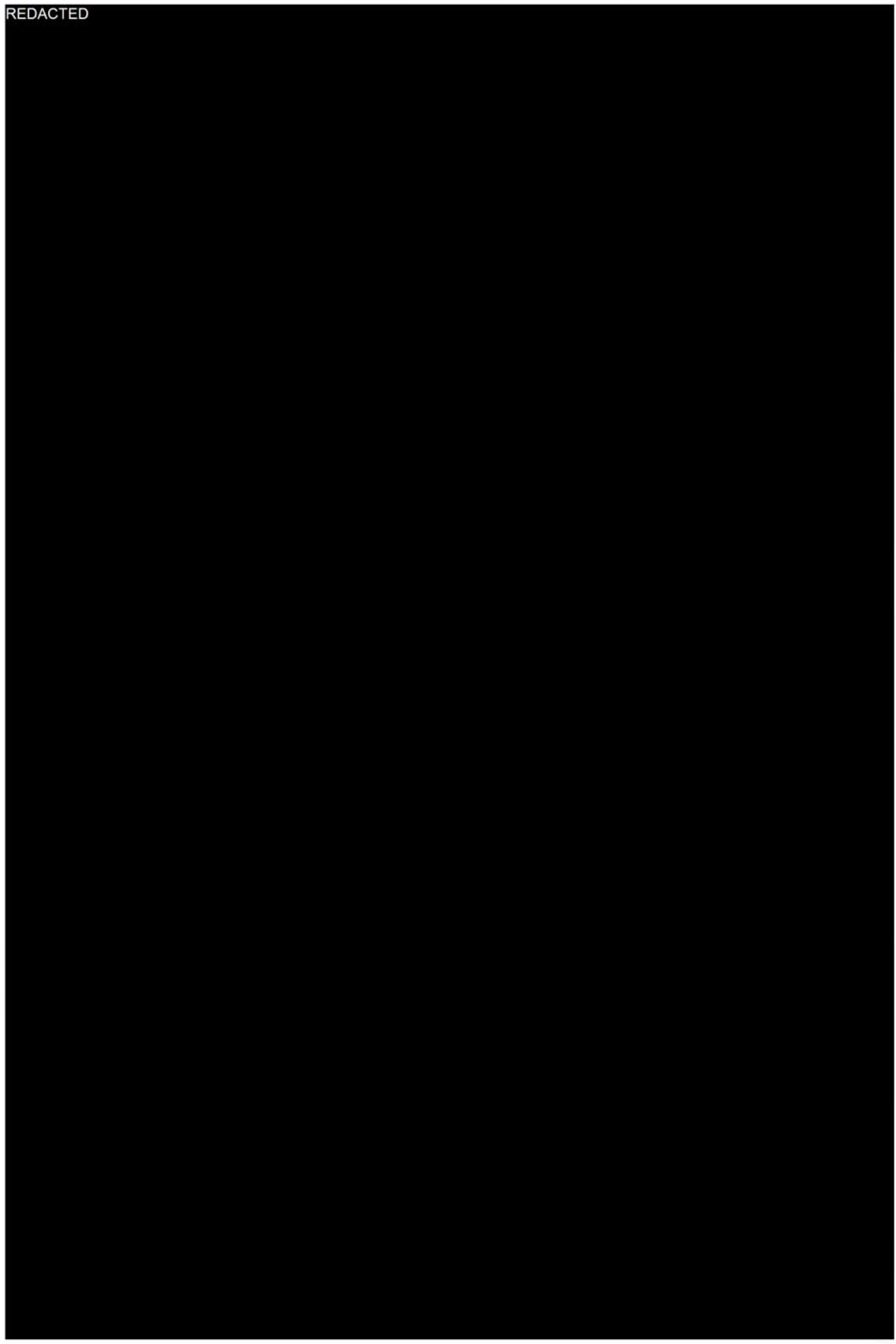
CHAPTER 4

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

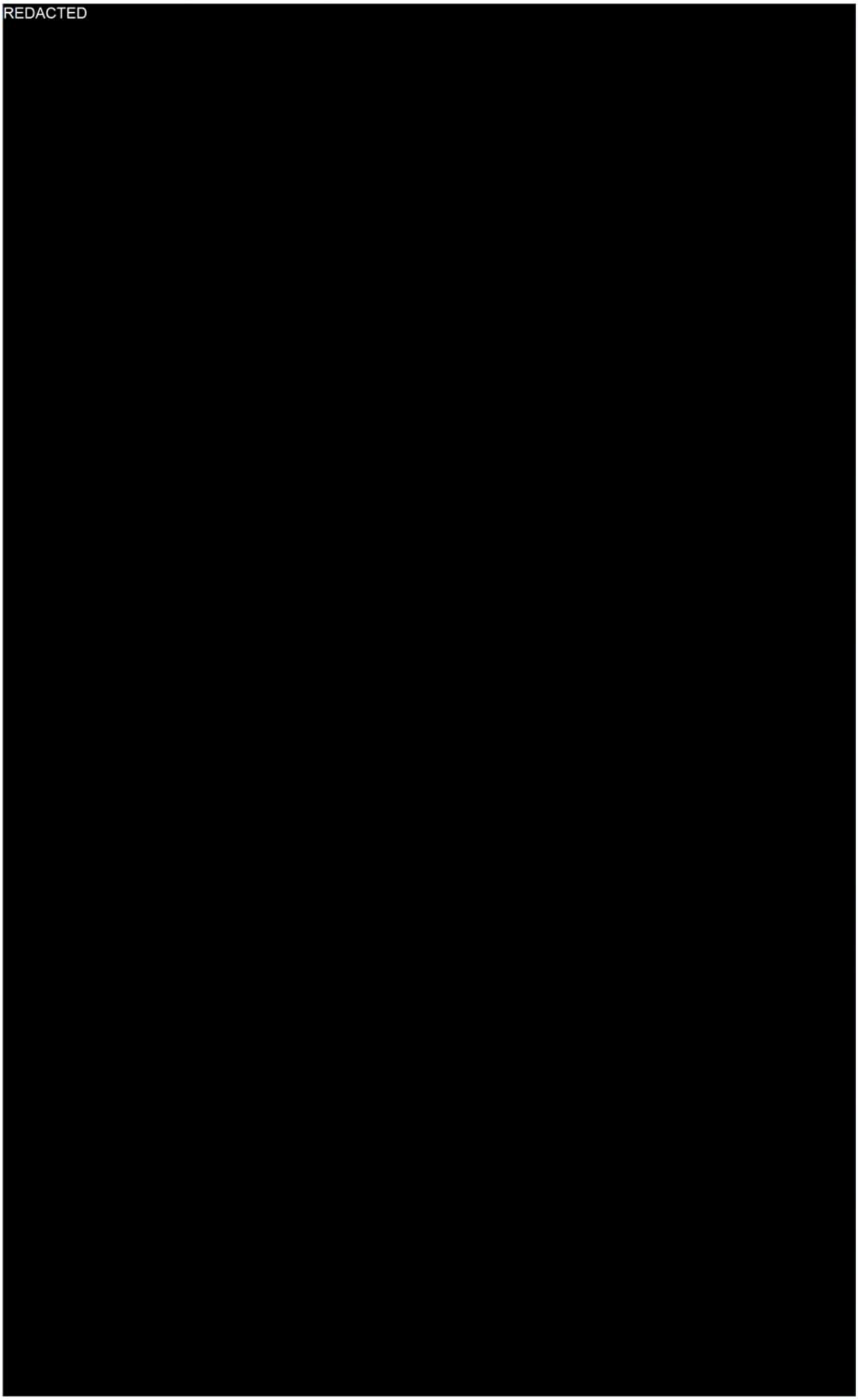



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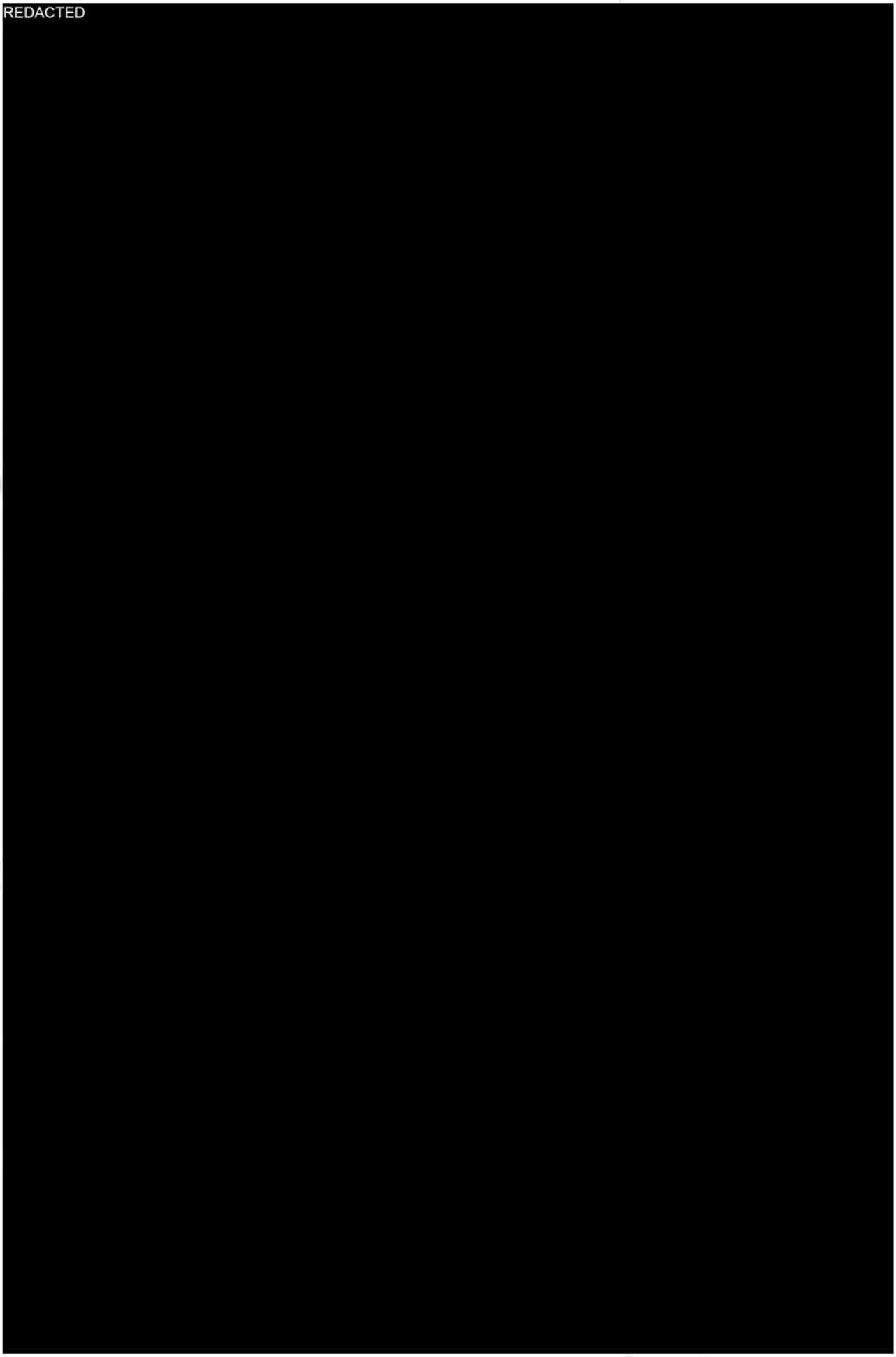

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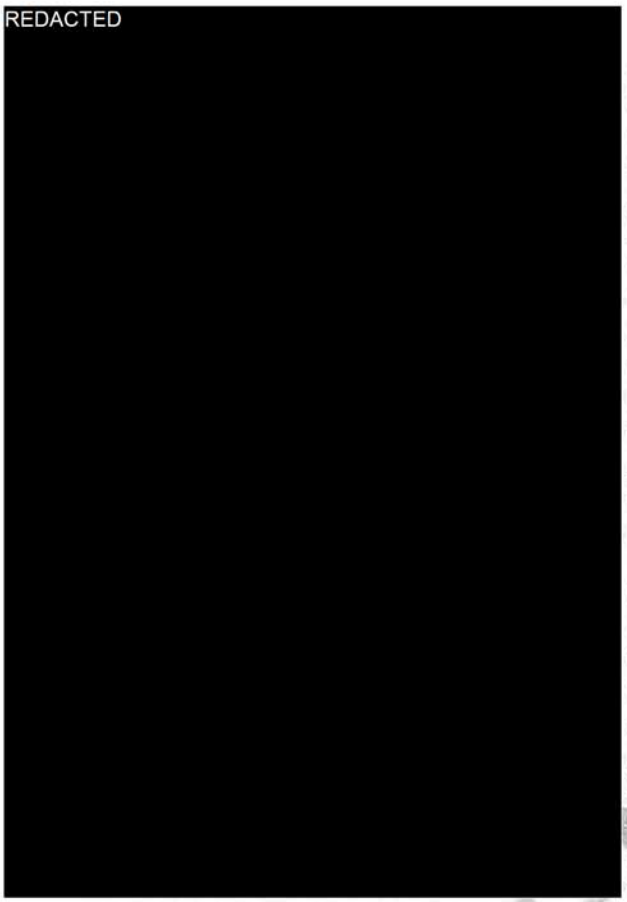

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JUDICIAL COMMITTEES

34. Anyone coming to know of **serious misconduct** on the part of a member of the Bethel family should advise the offender of his obligation to bring this to the attention of a member of the Branch Committee or another elder. The one having knowledge of the offense should also make a report to the Branch Committee so that the organization will be kept clean. (Lev. 5:1) This should be done whether the offender reports the matter or not.

35. Investigation Procedure: If the elders of the congregation that a Bethel family member attends become aware of an accusation against the Bethelite, they should immediately contact the branch office for direction. If the accusation involves the Bethelite's conduct with someone in his congregation or if the offense was committed in his congregation environment, the Branch Committee may determine that it will be most practical to have the local elders investigate and handle the case to the extent necessary. Otherwise, the matter will be handled at Bethel. In either case, two elders will investigate the allegation. If the accused is under consideration for a theocratic assignment, it should be held in abeyance pending resolution of the case. If upon investigation the elders determine that the charges have no substance or that no further action is needed, they should inform the Branch Committee in writing of their findings. If the elders determine that a disfellowshipping offense has been committed, the Branch Committee will appoint a judicial committee.

36. Judicial Committees Involving Bethelites in the Congregation: If it has been established that a Bethel family member has committed a disfellowshipping offense **involving his congregation**, the congregation body of elders should inquire of the branch office immediately as to how to proceed. **The branch office will determine whether the local body of elders should convene a judicial committee or whether the case should be handled by a judicial committee at Bethel.** If the local elders are directed to appoint the judicial committee, the case will be handled in an expeditious manner, just as a judicial case would be handled for any publisher in the local congregation. The judicial committee should immediately advise the branch office of the final decision.

37. Judicial Committees at Bethel: These are appointed **to handle offenses that are the basis for disfellowshipping,** just as they would be handled in the congregation. The judicial committee and its chairman are appointed by the Branch Committee. Qualified elders who are in a good position to render a balanced and just decision should be appointed. Though the judicial committee is usually made up of three elders, it could include four or five because of the gravity of the offense and other factors. Branch Committee members should not serve on judicial committees if other qualified brothers are available to do so. Thus, if needed, some Branch Commit-

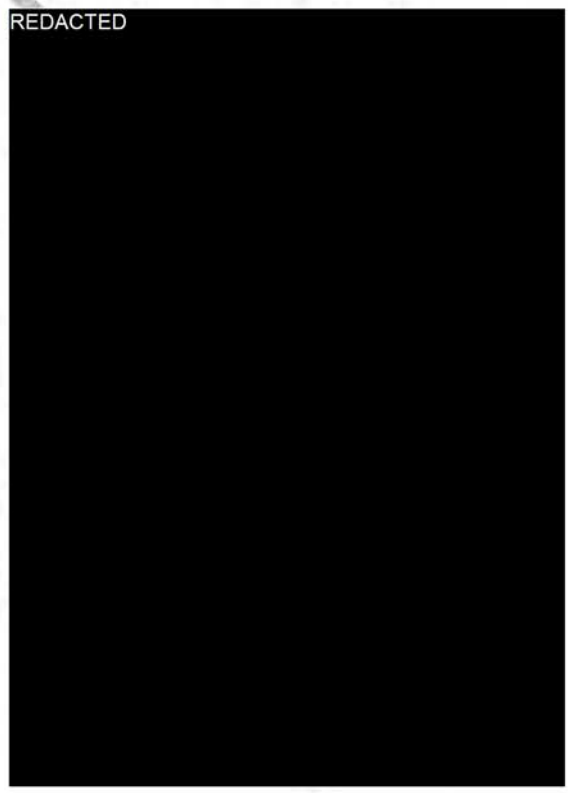
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tee members would be available to serve on an appeal committee. Although the judicial committee may want to consult with members of the Branch Committee before reaching a conclusion, the judicial committee alone should make the decision. The report to the Branch Committee will be made out using the form *Judicial Committee Summary at Bethel* (A-7).

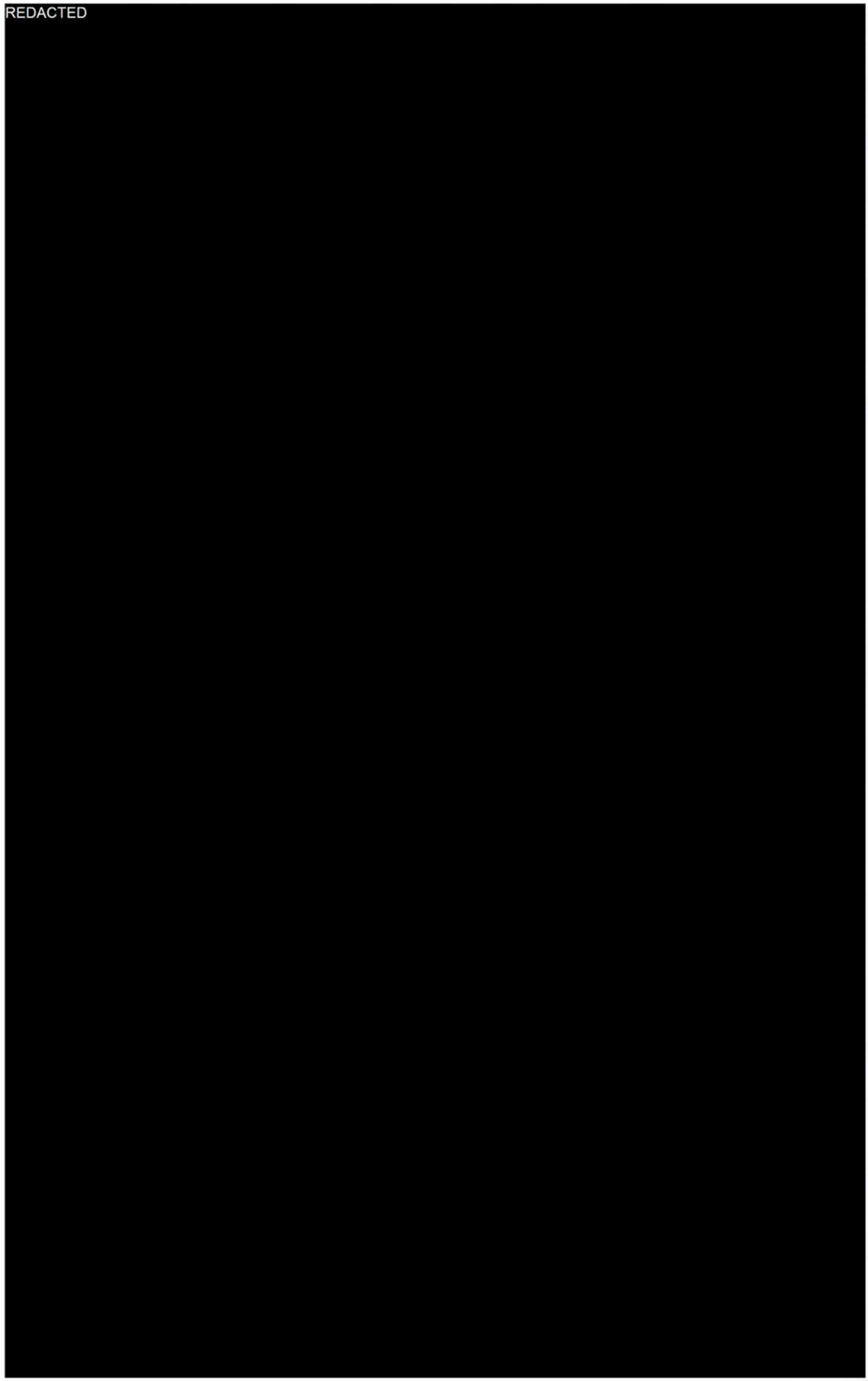
38. Appeal Committees: If the judicial committee (either at Bethel or in the congregation) decides that the Bethel family member should be disfellowshipped, **he may make an appeal in writing to the Branch Committee.** The Branch Committee will select an appeal committee of qualified elders at Bethel, one of whom will be appointed to serve as chairman. **The appeal should be heard in an expeditious manner even if the basis for the appeal does not appear to be sound.** In the case of disfellowshipping, the wrongdoer should be given the usual seven days to make this appeal, even though he would normally leave Bethel on the day the original judicial committee advises him of the decision to disfellowship. No announcement of the disfellowshipping should be made until seven days have elapsed since the appeal was handled.—*ks10* 8:1-20.

39. When the disfellowshipping is upheld, there is no further arrangement for appeal. However, **if an individual persists in believing a serious error in judgment has occurred,** the appeal committee should inform him that he may submit his allegations in writing to the appeal committee within seven days for transmittal to the Branch Committee. *The appeal committee should not mention this provision unless the individual indicates that he believes a serious error in judgment has occurred.* If he indicates a desire to submit a letter of appeal to the Branch Committee, the announcement of disfellowshipping should be delayed. The appeal committee should submit the wrongdoer's letter, the report from the judicial committee, and a report from the appeal committee to the Branch Committee. No announcement should be made until a reply is received from the Branch Committee.—*ks10* 8: 14-15.

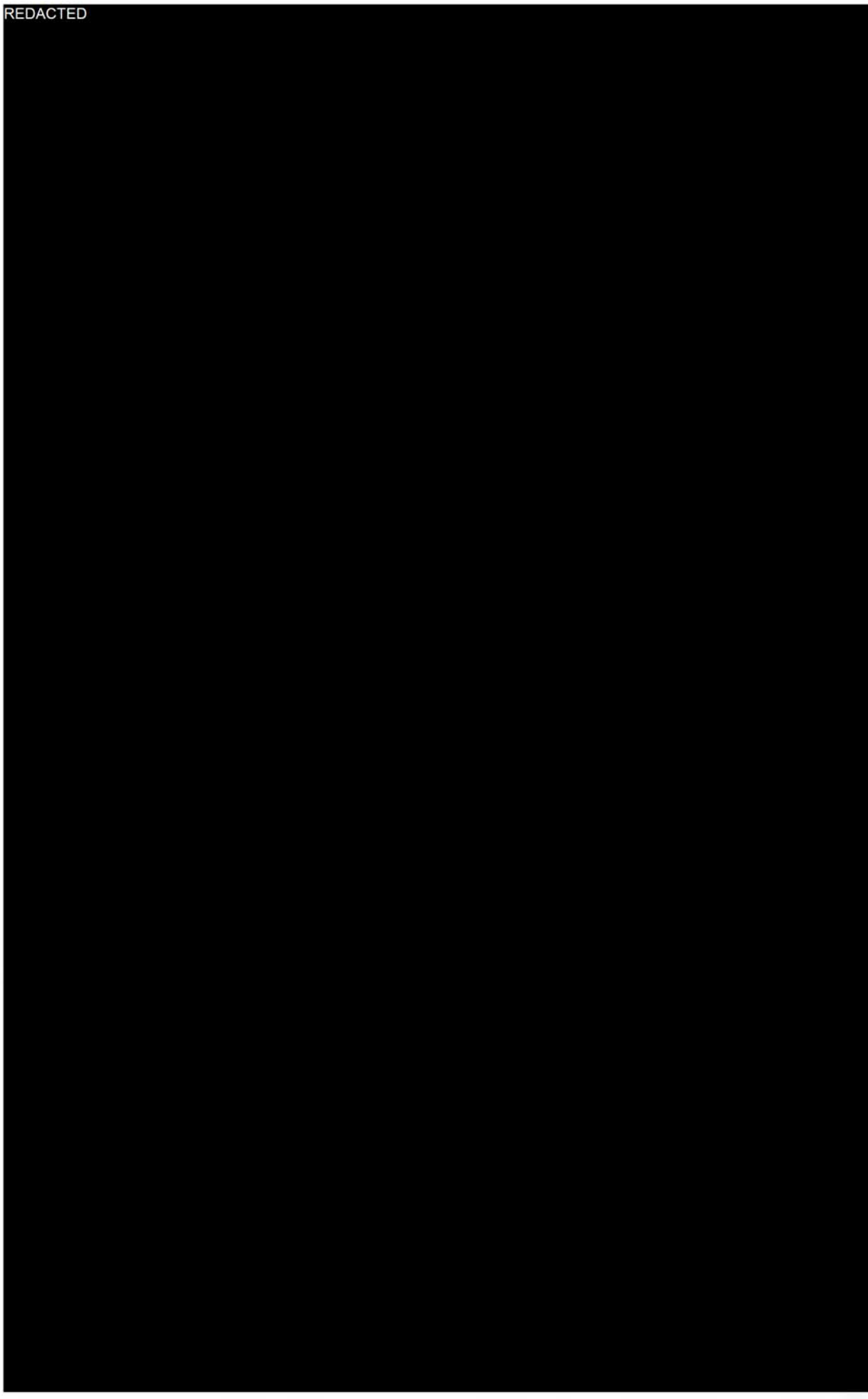
40. If someone is judicially reproved and therefore must leave Bethel, a letter should be sent to the body of elders of the congregation that he will attend so that the elders may be able to assist him to regain his spirituality. A copy of the judicial committee's report (either from Bethel or from the congregation) should be sent to the Service Department, which will write the letter to the body of elders. In the case of disfellowshipping, the form *Notification of Disfellowshipping or Disassociation* (S-77) should also be included in the report to the Service Department. If the person is reinstated, the S-77 form should be signed and returned to the Service Department. An announcement should be made to the Bethel family in the case of a disfellowshipping. (*ks10* 7:31) In the case of someone who is judicially reproved, the Branch Committee should use good judgment in determining whether an announcement should be made or not. —*ks10* 7:21.

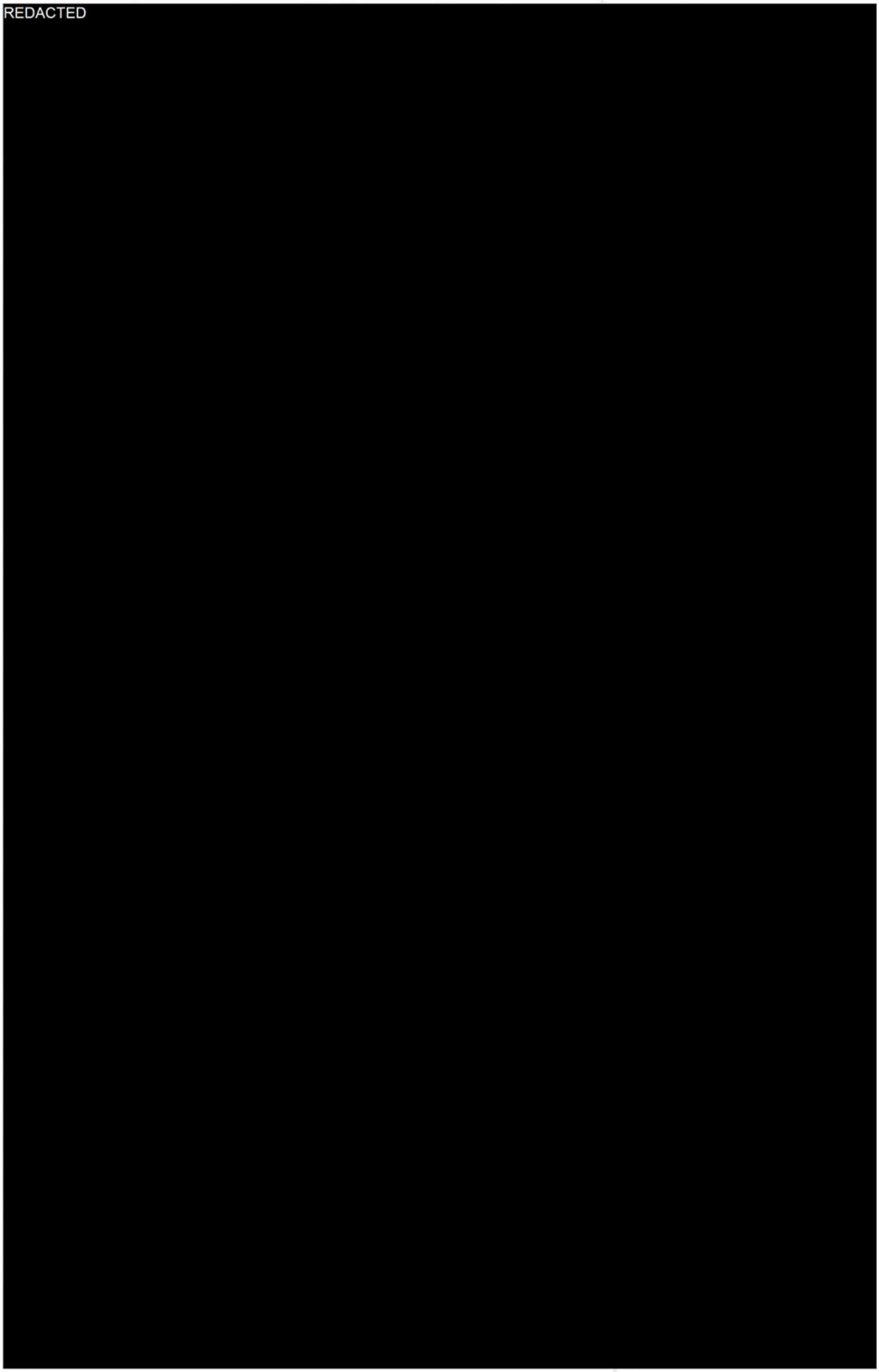


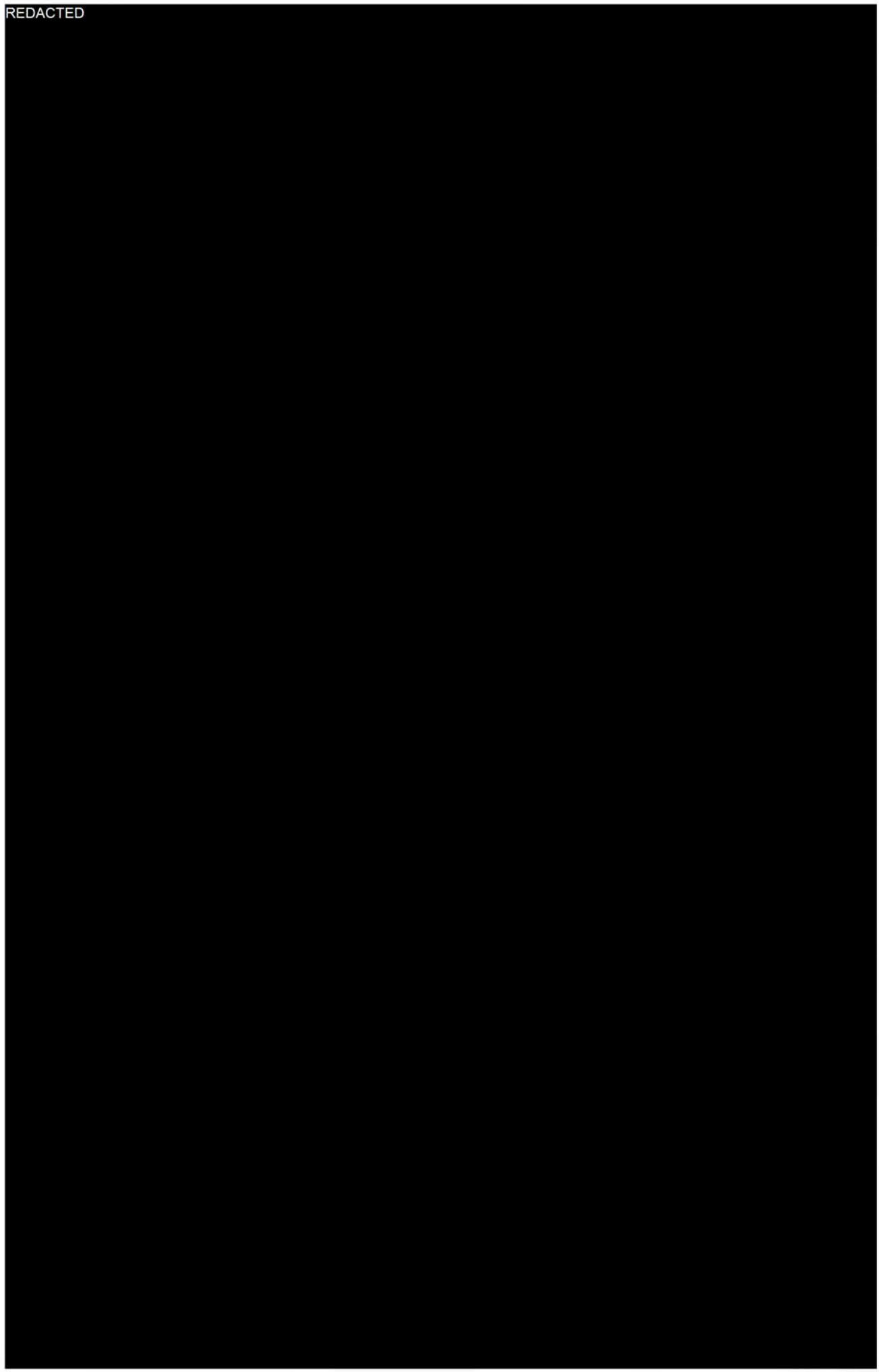
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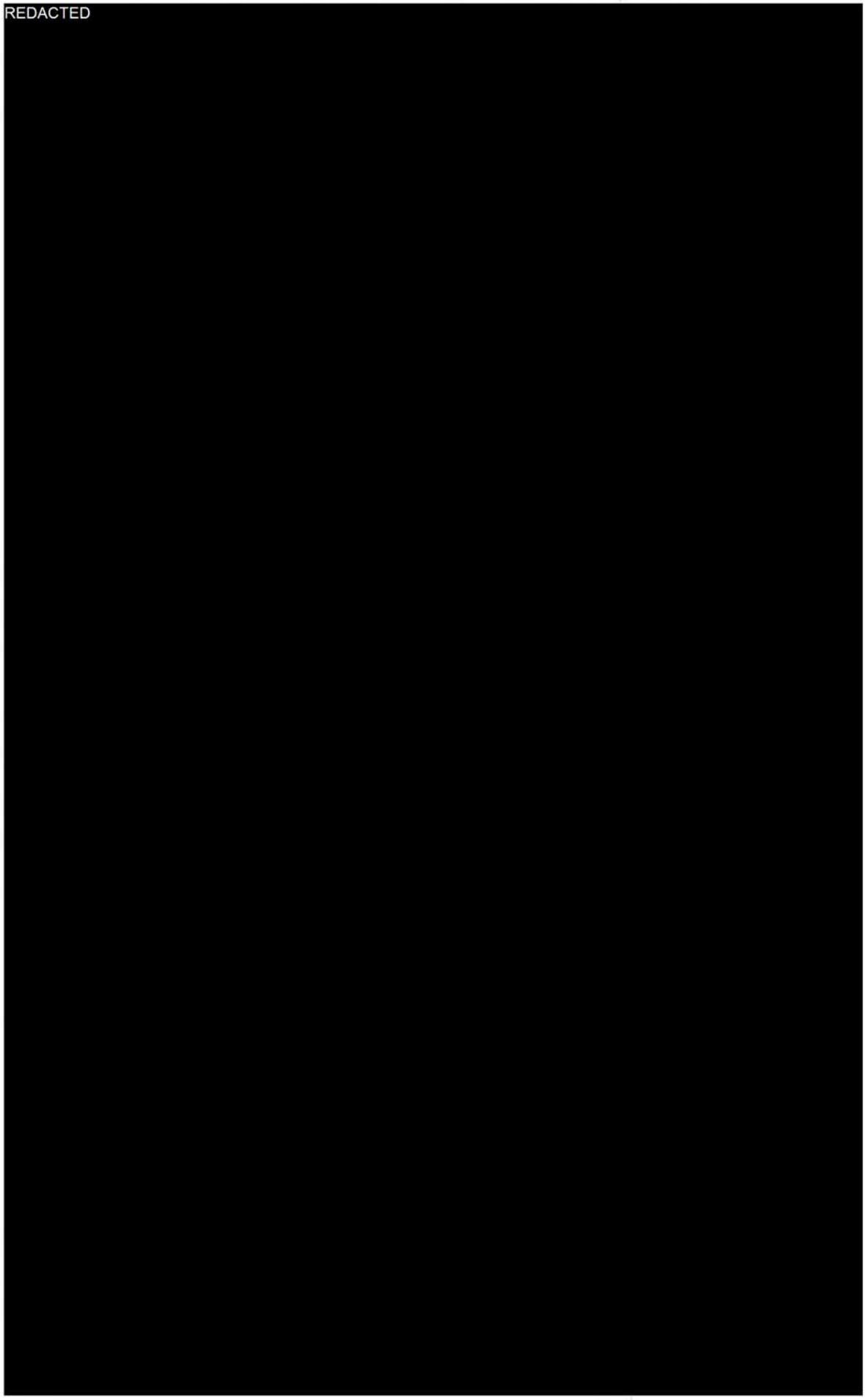

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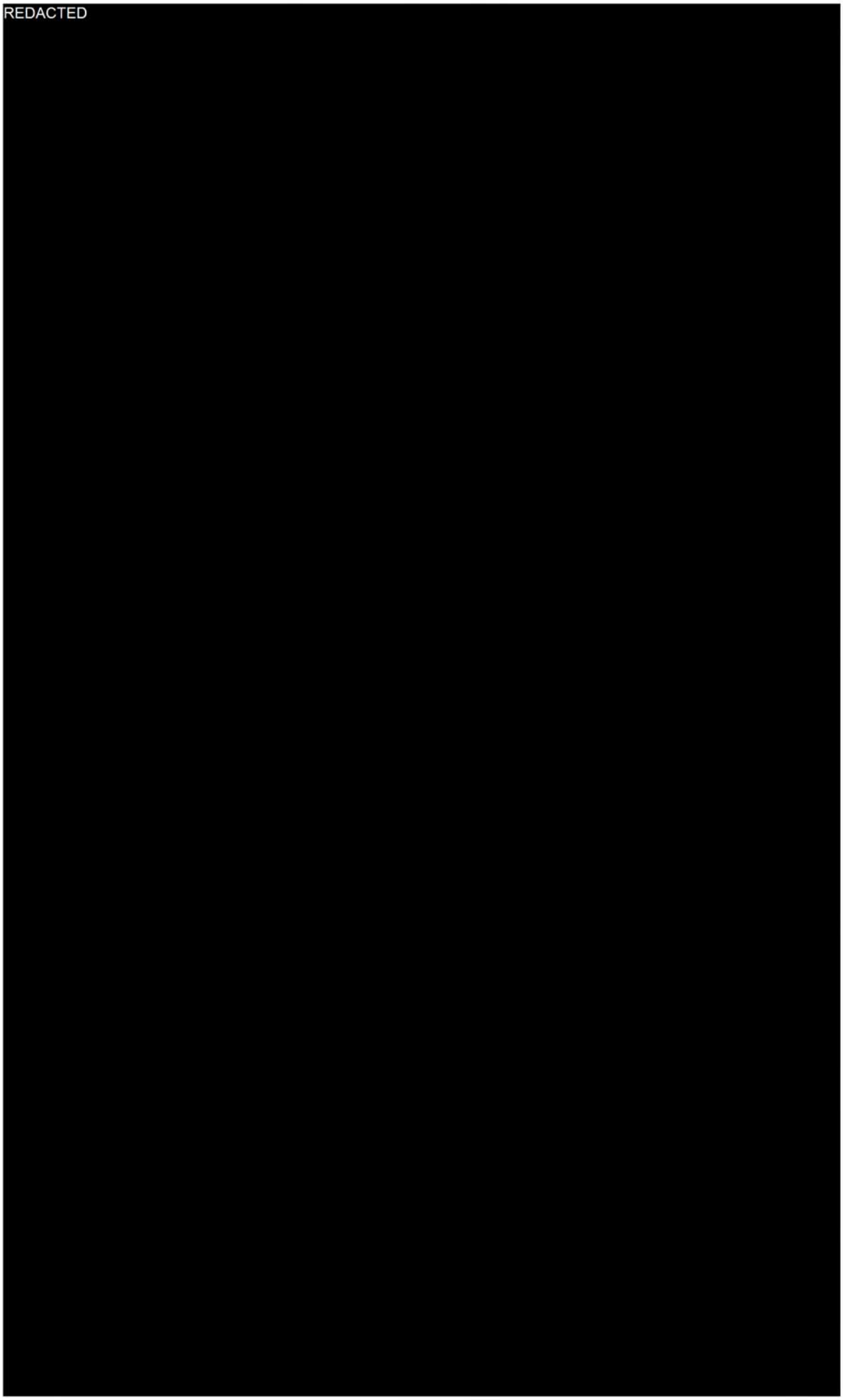
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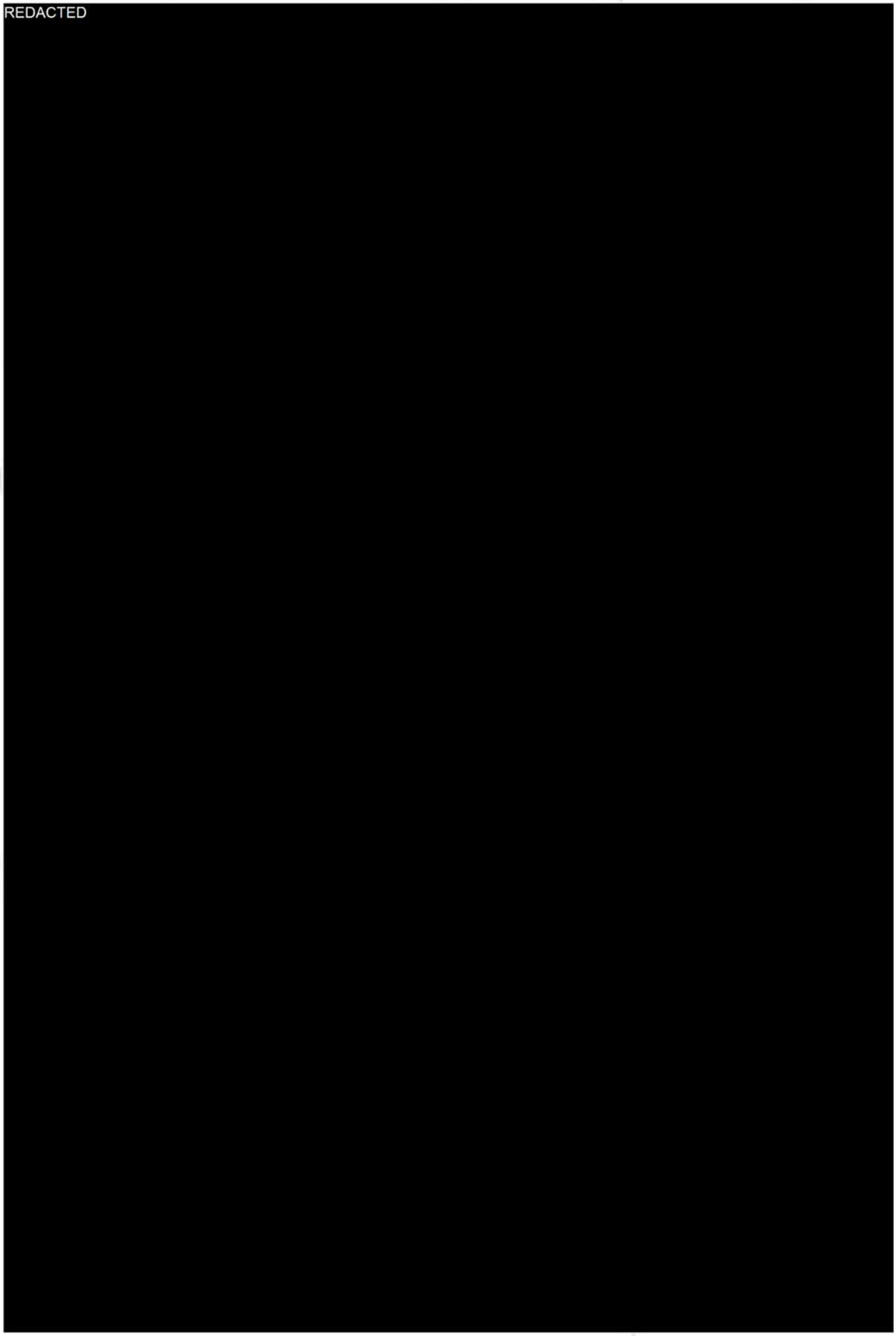

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SERVICE COMMITTEE

FIELD MISSIONARIES

1. The Service Committee appoints field missionaries and determines the lands to which they will be assigned. Branches that wish to request additional field missionaries should submit the *Request for Field Missionaries* (S-218) form to the Service Committee by April and November of each year.—See 6:5-6.

2. Hour Requirement: The field missionary hour requirement is 130 hours a month. Sisters who are 40 years of age or older have a requirement of 120 hours a month. It is understood that a field missionary who serves as a congregation elder may at times be needed for additional short-term theocratic assignments. For example, he may need to serve on a special committee or a Disaster Relief Committee, help with circuit or convention organization, assist in the construction or renovation of his own Kingdom Hall, or serve as a substitute circuit overseer. In addition, he may be needed for a brief period of time to train local elders to care for their responsibilities on a Hospital Liaison Committee. In exceptional situations, the travel time to attend an assigned circuit assembly, regional convention, or Kingdom Ministry School may be unusually long. If such assignments prevent him from making his hour requirement, a brief explanation as well as the number of hours spent should be included on the monthly report submitted on jw.org or on his monthly S-212 report. An explanation should also be written in the "Remarks" column of the *Congregation's Publisher Record* (S-21) card. However, the hours spent should not be included in the "Hours" column. The branch will also mark the Admin records accordingly.

- If a missionary with less than 15 years of special full-time service is consistently unable to meet his monthly hour requirement because of serious and debilitating health problems, perhaps for six months or so, then the Branch Committee should follow the direction outlined in 6:10. For those who are 50 years of age or older or who have 15 or more years in special full-time service, **a reduced hour requirement** may be appropriate. To determine a reasonable hour goal, the branch office should receive a recommendation from the missionary's body of elders and one from the circuit overseer before submitting the recommendation to the Service Committee. For reporting purposes, a field missionary with an approved reduced hour quota will continue with the FMF enrollment code. Periodically, the branch should review the field missionary's circumstances to determine whether the reduced hour quota is still needed or whether a further reduction should be recommended to the Service Committee. In most cases, a reduced hour requirement is better than no hour requirement at all. The recommendation that a field missionary have no hour requirement is usually reserved for field missionaries who have extremely limiting circumstances because of advanced age or life-threatening health issues and whose hour requirement has already been progressively reduced.

3. Marriage: If a single field missionary becomes engaged to be married, he or she should inform the branch office right away. If the field missionary indicates that he or she wishes to continue

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in the missionary work along with his or her prospective mate, the branch should immediately request a confidential *Personal Qualifications Report* (S-326) from the missionary's body of elders and one from his or her circuit overseer.

- **If the prospective mate lives in the branch territory,** the branch may send him or her a *Questionnaire for Prospective Field Missionary* (S-214) to fill out. In addition, the prospective mate's body of elders and circuit overseer should be asked to complete separate *Personal Qualifications Reports* (S-326). The Branch Committee will review the missionary's qualifications and those of his or her prospective mate, taking into consideration the reputation and the physical health and stamina of each one. Whether favorable or otherwise, all the reports (translated into English) along with the Branch Committee's recommendation and the prospective mate's S-214 questionnaire should be submitted to the Service Committee, which will make the final decision.
- **If the prospective mate does not live in the branch territory,** the Branch Committee should submit the S-326 reports for the missionary to the Service Committee along with its recommendation based on the Branch Committee's knowledge of the missionary. In turn, the Service Committee will obtain the needed reports from the prospective mate's branch office. **In all cases, the Service Committee will make the final decision as to whether someone continues as a field missionary following his or her marriage.**

4. Pregnancy: A field missionary couple who learn that they are to be parents should inform the branch immediately. The couple should be given a period of three months to get settled, during which they will continue to receive their monthly allowance. During this three-month period, the couple will need to locate suitable accommodations and find employment, so it is not expected that they will meet their monthly hour requirement. If one or both mates wish to become regular pioneers, they will have an additional three months to make the transition and their full-time service history would continue uninterrupted. If requested, the branch office is authorized to assist a departing missionary with the cost of return travel to his home country and the costs associated with shipping his basic personal belongings. For information on transitional financial assistance, see 6:130.

5. Missionary Assignments: Field missionaries are a valuable resource, and the Branch Committee must give careful consideration to where they will be assigned. Assignments should enable the missionaries to accomplish the most good in stabilizing and strengthening preaching and congregation activities in densely populated areas. Missionaries should not be assigned to areas where their health and safety will be endangered. The Branch Committee should thoroughly consider such factors as the publisher-to-population ratio, the language fields that need to be targeted, and the availability of suitable housing. Specific congregation assignments for field missionaries are made by the Branch Committee. Missionaries do not select their own congregation assignments. Before any reassignment of field missionaries is finalized, a branch representative, preferably a member of the Branch Committee, should discuss the proposal with the missionaries involved to address any questions or concerns. There is no need to consult with the Service Committee about such reassignments unless the field missionaries raise a concern about the proposed move. (Prov. 13:10; 15:22) The Service Committee should be consulted when submitting requests to transfer a field missionary to Bethel for more than three months.—See 4:7.

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6. Housing for Field Missionaries: Generally, branches should endeavor to house a field missionary couple or two single brothers by themselves in a modest apartment or house. Branch Committees will follow the guidelines and options below:

- Field missionaries should be assigned to **densely populated areas** where their efforts may have a profound impact in stabilizing and strengthening preaching and congregation activities. After the Branch Committee has identified an area where field missionaries can be used effectively, a qualified brother should be assigned to research available housing options and the costs involved. This could include identifying Kingdom Hall apartments or apartments that local brothers are renting out. The Branch Committee should guide those who are assigned to research the matter so that the needs of foreign missionaries, such as safety, the distance to the territory, and the availability of public transportation, are kept in mind. Have in mind that some locations may be a little more costly but would allow the field missionaries to be more centrally located in their assigned territory. **The Branch Committee, not the field missionaries, will make the final decision as to which accommodations should be rented.**
- Consider the **health and safety** of the field missionaries. Are there apartments or small dwellings suitable for a couple and available in a reasonably safe location? A larger apartment or home to house more than one couple would be recommended only when safety and/or health issues require it or when providing separate housing is considerably more costly. For example, an older single or widowed missionary sister may not need to be assisted by local publishers as outlined in 6:11. However, for her safety and peace of mind, it may be advisable for her to share accommodations with a younger missionary couple. Additionally, in some lands it would be very expensive to set up smaller missionary homes in areas where electricity, water, and other basic utilities are not available. Therefore, the Branch Committee should exercise good judgment when considering these factors.
- The Branch Committee is authorized to spend up to USD 1,000 per month per couple for missionary accommodations. Please note that this approval limit includes the monthly cost of utilities. **In most lands, a suitable apartment and utilities for two people would cost USD 200 to 500 per month.** Higher expenditures would be viewed as quite exceptional and possibly extravagant in developing lands. This approval level on rental agreements has been established on the premise that the Branch Committee will be careful to ensure that field missionaries are located where they can accomplish the most good and where the cost of accommodations and utilities will not be prohibitive. If you need further direction on this matter, please write to the Publishing Committee. The branch office should care for the payment of rent and utilities and help the field missionaries handle any legal agreements that may be needed to secure accommodations. If local circumstances require paying the owner several months of rent up front, this may be done up to a maximum of one year's rental. Rental agreements that exceed USD 1,000 per month or USD 12,000 per year or recommendations that involve the construction of new missionary homes should be sent to the Publishing Committee. If it is concluded that a branch-owned missionary home should

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be used for some other purpose or sold, the recommendation should be sent to the Publishing Committee.—See 5:192.

- In cases where it might be less expensive for the individual renter to pay the rent instead of the organization, the branch office may provide the missionary with the funds to cover the rent. As long as the monthly rent and utilities for field missionaries is less than USD 1,000 per month for two people, there is no need to show this on the *Record of Allowances* (A-29) form.—See 5:192.

7. Home Equipment Needs: Branch Committees must be **practical, kind, and generous** in the supplying of suitable home equipment for the field missionaries. A standard approach will not work in all countries. Some field missionaries may have personal linens, furniture, and equipment that they want to use in their assignment. Newer missionaries may have very little and may need more assistance in obtaining these items. A rented apartment in one location may have heating, air conditioning, appliances, and access to laundry facilities. In other locations, the apartment may lack these provisions, and field missionaries will need to be provided with these basic necessities. The local situation and circumstances must be carefully considered. The branch office should **avoid installing expensive equipment,** such as water-filtration devices and backup electrical systems, **in rented missionary homes.** For rented accommodations, it is preferred that any additional equipment that the branch office obtains be limited to what is practical and what could be moved easily to another rented home. For example, while the branch office should not install expensive generators in a rented missionary home, a less-expensive portable generator that provides backup power for the refrigerator and air-conditioning may be obtained if needed. The same principle applies to other equipment, such as water filters. If there is a legitimate need for something beyond that, then please write to the Publishing Committee. If the Branch Committee feels that it is reasonable to provide **Internet service for a missionary home** and the missionaries agree to cover the monthly costs, it may submit the recommendation with the details to the Publishing Committee for consideration, explaining the cost of installation and the monthly cost per person.

8. Shepherding Visits: The Branch Committee assigns members of the committee to make annual shepherding visits on field missionaries. Such visits are not made on circuit overseers in foreign service nor on field instructors in foreign service. If it is practical, the visit could be arranged in conjunction with another assignment, such as a circuit assembly or a Kingdom Hall dedication, perhaps using Friday or Monday to meet with the missionaries. Apart from travel time, usually no more than a day or two should be needed to meet with all of the field missionaries in a particular city. After his meeting with the field missionaries as a group, the branch representative may spend any remaining time with the missionaries on an individual basis. The branch representative should make it his goal to provide each missionary couple or single missionary with specific, warm commendation. (Prov. 12: 25; 1 Thess. 5:11) Following the visit, the branch representative will provide the Branch Committee with a completed *Personal Qualifications Report* (S-326) on each field missionary. If problems or concerns arise, the branch representative should not try to handle these on his own. Rather, he should report his observations to the Branch Committee, which will follow up as needed. If the branch representative is married, his wife may be given time off from her Bethel assignment to accompany him. While her husband is making the shepherding visits, she could spend time in the ministry, perhaps with other missionaries or with some of the local publishers.

- While it is strongly preferred that Branch and Country committee

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members make such annual visits, other mature and exceptionally kind elders working in the Service Department may be assigned to assist the committee members. This exception is made primarily for lands where there are a large number of field missionaries or where some members of the committee cannot care for this assignment because of age or health.

9. Travel Expenses: If a field missionary needs some assistance to cover his actual round-trip travel expenses to attend his assigned circuit assembly, regional convention, or Kingdom Ministry School, the Branch Committee may reimburse actual travel expenses upon request. This provision is not to be advertised and is intended only to cover unusually high travel expenses that may be involved to reach the assigned assembly or school.

10. Recommending the Deletion of a Field Missionary: Occasionally, a Branch Committee finds it necessary to recommend the deletion of a field missionary, perhaps because of prolonged problems in getting along with others or chronic health issues that prevent him from fulfilling the requirements for field missionaries. Before sending the recommendation to the Service Committee, the Branch Committee should arrange for a meeting with the field missionary to explain the reasons for recommending his deletion. If the missionary disagrees and wishes to provide his comments to the Service Committee, he may submit a letter that should be forwarded with the Branch Committee's recommendation. If he agrees with the recommendation, this should be indicated in the Branch Committee's letter. The Service Committee will consider the matter and provide further direction. If requested, the branch office is authorized to assist a departing missionary with the cost of return travel to his home country and the costs associated with shipping his basic personal belongings.

11. Long-Term Care of Field Missionaries: At times, field missionaries who have served faithfully in their foreign assignment for decades begin to experience chronic health problems or the limitations of old age or disease. The organization is pleased to care for their needs. (Ps. 71:9) While there is no arrangement to provide housing and long-term care for field missionaries at Bethel, the Branch Committee will take the lead in thoroughly investigating other options with the objective of providing the field missionary with personal and/or medical care while the field missionary *remains in a field assignment.* For example, could the local congregation provide needed assistance? (Mark 10:28-30) Are qualified local publishers or pioneers with medical training and experience available to assist? (1 Thess. 5:14) In some cases, consideration could be given to hiring a publisher or a pioneer to care for the long-term needs of the brother or sister. If a pioneer is involved, the branch may direct the congregation elders to show the pioneer consideration regarding his annual hour requirement. Simply put, the Branch Committee should consider what can be done locally, in the foreign assignment, to meet the long-term needs of the elderly field missionary in the best way possible.—See 6:6; Eccl. 5:18.

12. In some cases, a longtime field missionary may request to live closer to fleshly or to spiritual family members who are eager to care for his physical or medical needs; this is appropriate and appreciated. (1 Tim. 5:3, 4) However, what if long-term specialized health care cannot be provided in the foreign assignment and the field missionary has no family members available to assist him? In such cases, thorough consideration will be given by the Service Committee to transferring the field missionary to another country, such as his home country, where health care can be provided while he serves in the field. As noted above, it may be possible to utilize the services of qualified brothers and sisters in the field who can provide the personal assistance

that is needed. In an exceptional case that seems to necessitate transferring a field missionary to Bethel for long-term health care, the Governing Body will need to be consulted.

HOSPITAL INFORMATION SERVICES

13. Under the supervision of the Service Committee, Hospital Information Services (HIS), a world headquarters department, provides direction and practical assistance to branch Hospital Information Desks (HIDs) and Hospital Liaison Committees (HLCs). This arrangement (1) supports the Bible-based position to 'abstain . . . from blood' and (2) helps to correct misconceptions about the position of Jehovah's Witnesses on medical care.—Acts 15:29.

14. HIS provides periodic training for the branch HID and the HLCs. HIS maintains a database of current medical articles on transfusion-alternative treatment strategies from respected medical journals. HIS also supplies HIDs with useful medical publications, medical article citations lists, video programs on transfusion alternatives, and favorable court decisions involving patients' rights. Therefore, branch HIDs should not do extensive searches for medical information or begin working on any other materials related to HID or HLC activity without permission from the Service Committee. When emergency cases or other urgent situations arise requiring such information, HIS should be contacted immediately by e-mail or by telephone, following up with official correspondence, which would normally include the *Medical Emergency Worksheet* (hlc-7-E). HIS will provide any needed materials. To accommodate urgent requests for information on medical alternatives to transfusion, HIS maintains 24-7 telephone accessibility. A branch HID should also be accessible to HLCs and hospital professionals in its branch territory on a 24-7 basis.

15. If a branch HID becomes aware of a high-quality, peer-reviewed, local-language medical article and the Branch Committee believes that the article would be useful, such an article, along with a brief English summary, may be sent to HIS for approval. Articles should focus on one or more of the following: (1) drugs, devices, or techniques that reduce or eliminate the use of (donor) blood transfusion; (2) ethical/legal concerns, patients' rights, or informed consent issues; (3) transfusion hazards; (4) the cost-effectiveness of transfusion alternative strategies; or (5) an outline of how to perform a specific medical or surgical procedure without the use of donor blood.

16. Hospital Information Desk (HID): An HID is established at each branch to oversee the HLCs within its assigned territory. The Branch Committee directs the work of the HID. The department name Hospital Information Desk is to be used when communicating with the HLCs and other departments within the branch office and when writing to other branches and to headquarters. However, when the HID communicates with doctors and secular professionals, its letterhead and business cards should describe the department as "Hospital Information Services (Country) for Jehovah's Witnesses." An HID should also use this designation when it uses exhibit booths at medical conferences. While there is no arrangement for HID representatives to visit HLCs, the Branch Committee may grant approval on a case-by-case basis for an HID representative to visit an HLC that is in urgent need of training or that is finding it difficult to assist the brothers to obtain medical care without blood transfusions. The support and medical information provided by HIS is primarily in English. Therefore, if possible, the HID overseer or his assistant should be reasonably proficient in spoken and written English, in addition to the local language.—See the Service Committee's

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letter to all branches dated HSA:HIA February 13, 2014, No. C-26033S.

17. The HID maintains a list of *consulting* doctors who are respected, highly skilled, well-known advocates of nonblood management and who are willing and able to explain effectively to less experienced doctors the use of transfusion alternatives. When emergencies or complicated cases arise, the HID may provide an HLC with the name of a consulting doctor. If there are no consulting doctors available in the country, the HID may contact HIS or a nearby branch HID for assistance. **Each HLC maintains a list of *cooperative* doctors** in its local area who have agreed to care for Witness patients. (In smaller branches with few cooperative doctors, the HID may decide to keep on file the HLC lists of cooperative doctors.) Thus, when Witnesses seek a cooperative specialist or medical facility, the HLCs can supply the names of several doctors or medical facilities that can provide the needed specialized care. (HLCs may provide indirect humanitarian assistance through Witness relatives or local elders to disfellowshipped individuals.) HLCs refrain from endorsing doctors, medical procedures, medical facilities, pharmaceuticals or herbal products, and alternative therapies. In all matters of health care, members of the HLCs avoid imposing their conscience on others. For cooperative physicians and facilities outside their assigned area, HLCs may consult with neighboring HLCs or with the branch HID. Only the HID should consult a nearby branch or HIS as needed. —See the Service Committee's letter to all branches dated GAO:HIA October 2, 2006.

18. Hospital Liaison Committees (HLCs): The Branch Committee determines the number of HLCs needed in its branch territory. When an HLC needs additional brothers to help care for the workload, the HLC determines who should be recommended. Qualifications for HLC members are outlined in *Circuit Overseer Guidelines* (*tg*). The HLC should consult the circuit overseer to ensure that the recommended brother is qualified to serve in this capacity. The HLC then sends the recommendation to the HID, using the *Hospital Liaison Committee Recommendation* (*hlc*-21) form. If in agreement, the HID forwards the recommendation to the branch Service Department for comments. If there is no objection to the appointment, two members of the Branch Committee may approve it.

19. HLCs are set up in most major cities to (1) act as a liaison between healthcare providers and Witness patients and their families when requested; (2) assist Witness patients in locating doctors willing to provide treatment without blood transfusion; (3) provide medical articles to doctors, in accordance with copyright laws; (4) arrange consultations between local doctors and experienced specialists; (5) assist Witness patients in transferring to another medical facility if this becomes necessary; (6) make presentations to medical staffs, health ministries, social welfare officials, legal personnel, and others about our position on medical care and/or blood transfusions; and (7) appoint elders to serve as Patient Visitation Group (PVG) members. HLCs coordinate the activity of the PVGs and meet with the members at least once a year to review needs, offer encouragement, and keep these elders abreast of HLC activity. During a local blood-related medical crisis, the branch may designate HLC members to respond to media inquiries. The Branch Committee would likely direct the HID and the HLC members to work closely with the branch Legal Department and the Public Information Desk on such media matters. (See 3:44, 52-53, 56-61.) Annually, toward the beginning of the year, bodies of elders receive a letter from the branch with an updated list of members of the local HLC, unless the elders have access to regular updates on jw.org.

20. Patient Visitation Groups (PVGs): HLCs organize PVGs in key cities to provide spiritual support for hospitalized Witness patients from

outside the local area. HLCs may consult with the circuit overseers for recommendations of elders to serve as PVG members. An HLC member is assigned to oversee PVG activity, especially in metropolitan areas. At least once a year, HLCs meet with the PVGs to review needs and offer encouragement. During hospital visits, the PVG elders endeavor to provide emotional and spiritual support and, at appropriate times, pray with Witness patients and relatives. When a PVG finds a patient from a local congregation who needs assistance and support, it facilitates contact with the elders in the patient's congregation. PVG activities do not replace the responsibility of the local congregations to visit and care for the needs of their publishers who are in the hospital.

21. Bloodless Medicine and Surgery Programs (BMSPs): Hospitals in some lands have established BMSPs, blood conservation programs, and patient blood management programs. This means that the hospital administration, the coordinator(s) within the hospital, and/or various specialists have made a commitment to provide medical or surgical care without donor blood transfusions to patients who request such care. At times, business organizations make contracts with hospitals to develop and maintain BMSPs. Even when staffed by Witnesses, such organizations are not spokesmen for Jehovah's Witnesses.

22. HLCs should not endorse or participate in the meetings of BMSPs or share with them the HLCs' confidential lists of cooperative doctors. The activity of these entities must remain separate from HIDs, HLCs, and the congregations. (See *km* 9/87 p. 4 and 6/77 p. 4.) The branch should write to the Service Committee if there are some unusual circumstances warranting a different approach.

23. Medical Conferences: The Branch Committee should be very selective as to the type of conferences and the number of conferences it approves for the HID to attend each year, so that Bethel members are not away from their regular assignments too frequently. Only conferences directly related to the blood issue should be considered. However, conferences featuring blood conservation or transfusion-alternative strategies will often discuss Jehovah's Witnesses and having an HID or HLC representative present may help to correct any misinformation. If a conference is held in another country, the Branch Committee should seek in writing the approval of the Service Committee to have a representative attend.

24. If the HID or an HLC is invited to present information on the position of Jehovah's Witnesses on medical matters and the Branch Committee agrees, a copy of the proposed presentation should be sent to the Service Committee for approval. This is not necessary if the brother uses the standard HID/HLC *PowerPoint* presentation.

25. The branch should not sponsor a medical conference or symposium. If cooperative doctors consent to their names being given to the sponsors as potential presenters, this may be done. If the Branch Committee believes that more involvement is warranted, the Service Committee should be consulted. There is no objection to HLC members verbally informing cooperative doctors of such events if the HLC believes that the doctors may wish to attend. However, HLCs should not initiate a special campaign to invite doctors in their area to the event and should refrain from advertising or giving the impression that they endorse or promote an event, even when Witnesses are organizers. Furthermore, the branch should not incur transportation, registration, or lodging expenses for physicians to attend these events. If further consideration is warranted, the Branch Committee should write to the Service Committee.

26. Exhibit/Display Booths: The branch should be very selective regarding the type and the number of medi-

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cal conferences for which it will seek approval to set up a booth. Only conferences attended by doctors who regularly deal with the blood issue are to be considered. Before contracting with the sponsors to exhibit, the branch office should seek approval from the Service Committee, submitting the name of the conference, its location, expected attendance, total costs, and other relevant information concerning the event. Only the approved booth graphics and signage should be used. The Service Committee should approve any modifications. When a booth is requested from a custodial branch, sufficient lead time should be allowed (at least three months). Only the approved presentation kits should be used as handouts. Branches may write to HIS for suggestions on what to include in the information packages for doctors.—See the letters to all branches dated HIM:HIO August 23, 1999, and HIM:HIP December 22, 2000.

27. Medical Devices and Supplies: Hospitals in developing countries may ask the branch to donate medical devices, equipment, or other supplies. Before making any commitment, the Branch Committee should write to the Service Committee for direction.

- **Pharmaceuticals:** In developing lands with limited access to basic pharmaceuticals, a branch may wish to store a small supply of specialized medicine (such as EPO or iron) and/or other basic medical supplies. However, before requesting permission from the Service Committee, the branch should check with regulatory health agencies in the country to determine the legal requirements that regulate storing these items. If the Service Committee approves the request, the branch should be judicious in the amount of medicine kept on hand, perhaps storing only a six-month supply or enough for two or three patients. The branch should submit a *Nonliterature Branch Request* to replace any items used. Brothers may express their appreciation for this arrangement by donating financially to defray the cost of replenishing the stock of medicine and supplies, though such a donation is not a requirement to benefit from this arrangement.

28. Web Sites: Neither the branches nor the HLCs should place information about HID/HLC activity on any public Web site unless the Service Committee grants approval.

OUR KINGDOM MINISTRY

29. Branch Committees are authorized to make necessary adjustments to the local edition(s) of *Our Kingdom Ministry* or to outline adjustments in a letter to the affected congregations. However, rather than preparing new material for *Our Kingdom Ministry* to address a local problem, the branch office should **try to use material that has already been published.** In some cases, it may be best for the branch to send a letter to the bodies of elders explaining the concern that needs attention and instructing the elders to make local application of certain published references during a local needs part on the Service Meeting.

30. If there are unique situations that cannot be addressed as described above, the Branch Committee may submit a draft *Our Kingdom Ministry* article to the Service Committee for consideration. This would need to be done **several months in advance of scheduled printing.** What is written about should deal primarily with the field ministry and other activity pertaining to the preaching and teaching work. Generally, it is not wise to prepare new material featuring Scriptural direction on topics such as local marriage or funeral customs or superstitious practices common in the branch territory. If the Branch Committee feels that there are unique circumstances that need to be addressed during the Service Meeting, it is best to write to

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the Service Committee for direction before preparing new material.

31. Foreign-Language Editions: It is recommended that branches **use the foreign-language edition of *Our Kingdom Ministry* prepared by the translating branch.** This reduces the amount of work for translation teams and makes for a unified approach for presenting the good news to certain language groups. Rather than adjusting *Our Kingdom Ministry,* the branch office may send a letter to congregations and groups with any needed direction that applies to their territory when a specific need arises for a particular foreign-language field. In an exceptional case, an article prepared by the branch office for the local foreign-language edition may be sent to the Service Committee for review and approval, in harmony with the guidelines outlined above.

32. Literature Offers: Literature offers are established to meet the needs of the territory, with the objective of helping many more people learn about the good news of the Kingdom. (1 Cor. 9:26; 14:9) All Branch and Country committees should carefully review the offers set forth by the Service Committee in the Governing Body's annual letter and determine which items will best suit local needs. Branch Committees are authorized to make needed adjustments and announce these adjustments in the local edition(s) of *Our Kingdom Ministry* or, if necessary, in correspondence to the affected congregations. If a suggested presentation in the base edition of *Our Kingdom Ministry* does not fit local circumstances, the branch office should replace it with a more fitting one.

33. Field Service Highlights: The Branch Committee may decide what notable field service highlights will appear in the local edition of *Our Kingdom Ministry.* This may include new peaks reached in the number of publishers or pioneers, the total number of Bible studies conducted, the number of new ones baptized, or the fine results achieved during a special campaign. The objective of such highlights is to encourage *all* members of the congregation, including those whose field service activity appears to be small. (Mark 14:8, 9; Luke 21:1-4) The highlights should not report on averages, such as hours, placements, return visits, or Bible studies. If many lands are served by a particular edition of *Our Kingdom Ministry,* the Branch Committee(s) will likely find it advantageous to alternate country reports month by month.—See 5:84.

SERVICE DEPARTMENT

34. Under the direction of the Branch Committee, the Service Department cares for matters related to the preaching work and the activity of congregations, elders and ministerial servants, circuit overseers, and pioneers. It also arranges assemblies and conventions and various theocratic schools. Brothers in the Service Department prepare responses to reports and inquiries from the field that relate to the preaching work and congregation activities. The Service Department works closely with the Local Design/Construction Department to determine where Kingdom Halls and Assembly Halls are needed and their priority. The Governing Body provides direction on such matters through the latest publications on congregation organization, various guidelines, and letters. If there is no clear policy on a matter, the Service Department should forward its questions to the Branch Committee. The Branch Committee may need to consult with the Service Committee or another Governing Body committee for direction.

Department Organization

35. Overseer: A member of the Branch or Country committee will be appointed to serve as the Service Department overseer. (See 2:13.) In most branches, an assistant overseer should be appointed to care for the workload, especially when the overseer is away

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from the office. In larger branches, two brothers may be appointed by the Branch Committee to serve as assistant overseers.–See 2:15.

36. Deskmen: In a small branch office, the overseer may be able to handle the work of a Service Department deskman. In most branches, however, the Branch Committee will appoint other qualified elders to serve in the Service Department as deskmen who will care for the reports and correspondence from a number of circuits. The number of circuits assigned to a deskman varies according to the brother's workload, capabilities, health, and age limitations.

37. A deskman should be an experienced elder known for his loyal adherence to theocratic direction. He must be courteous, loyal, and courageous in giving sound Scriptural direction. He must be well-organized and diligent in caring for his responsibilities. He may have gained experience as a Service Desk secretary for several years. Experience has shown that there are benefits for some of the deskmen to have served in the traveling work prior to Bethel. Deskmen should give thorough training to the secretaries in the department with the objective of helping them to take on greater responsibility in the future. (2 Tim. 2:2) In most cases, such a training program would make it unnecessary routinely to transfer circuit overseers to Bethel to serve in the Service Department. However, if there is a need to transfer a circuit overseer to Bethel to serve as a Service Department deskman, the request, along with a complete explanation, should be submitted to the Service Committee. If the Service Committee agrees to release the circuit overseer for Bethel service, the recommendation will then be sent to the Personnel Committee. (See 4:7) When considering this option, the Branch Committee should keep in mind that not all circuit overseers and their wives will be able to adapt to Bethel life.

38. A deskman should be careful to avoid giving his own opinion on service-related matters. His counsel must be sound, based on the Bible and theocratic guidelines. (1 Cor. 4:6) To ensure that proper theocratic direction is relayed to the field, a **proofreading system** should be established. One deskman may proofread the work of another.

39. Service Desk Secretaries: As the workload increases, a brother may be assigned as a secretary to a deskman. Although he may be younger in years and may not have the same level of experience, a secretary must have the spiritual qualities required of a deskman. While it is preferred that a Service Desk secretary be an appointed elder, he would generally not need to be an older brother with many years of Bethel service or field experience. A modest young brother with fine spirituality and the potential to qualify in time to serve as a deskman may be used. His duties would include opening and sorting mail, attaching relevant background material, typing letters, filing, entering information into the computer, and so forth.

40. Desk Groups: As the number of deskmen increases, it may be practical to arrange them in groups of five or six and have them circulate difficult cases. The more-difficult cases can be considered at a weekly meeting. (Prov. 13:10) At the discretion of the Branch Committee, the more experienced Service Desk secretaries could be included in the group meetings in order to further their training. If those in the Service Department cannot resolve a complex issue by using published direction or if a case is of major importance, they will refer the matter to the Branch Committee. The Branch Committee, in turn, may need to consult with the Service Committee for direction.–See 2:21; 6:55.

Handling Telephone Calls and Correspondence

41. Telephone Calls: A telephone call should *always* be answered in a kind

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and loving way. Even though the brother taking the call is busy and it may interrupt his work, reflecting warmth, respect, and concern for the brothers and others is important. One should be as helpful as possible to the individual calling. If the caller is from outside of Bethel, it is not wise for a deskman or his secretary to give his name unless the caller is a circuit overseer. However, there is no objection to providing an outside caller with the desk symbol of the deskman.

42. A telephone memorandum should be made for all telephone calls that deal with important matters and for calls in which direction is given and a record is necessary. The memorandum should include the name of the caller, the caller's telephone number, the congregation, the nature of the call, who took the call, and any direction that was given. This can be filed in the General Correspondence section of the congregation's file or in the HOLD file if a letter is forthcoming. If the caller presents a weighty matter, he should be requested to write to the branch office.

43. Incoming Mail: In smaller branches, the Service Department overseer may be able to handle routine mail. In most branches, it may be necessary to have a mail desk or a correspondence clerk assigned to open postal mail. A similar arrangement may be needed to process and route incoming electronic correspondence. Incoming mail is handled in the date order of receipt and according to its urgency. If at all possible, those working in the Service Department should make it their goal to reply to correspondence within two weeks.

44. Requests for Kingdom Hall Addresses and Meeting Times: In most cases, the branch office may provide any inquirer with basic information about Kingdom Hall addresses and meeting times. There is no objection to replying by e-mail to written requests for such basic information.—See 3:14; 6:48.

45. Correspondence From Other Branches: When another branch writes to an individual in the branch territory, the letter will usually be sent to the Service Department for forwarding to the addressee. In most cases, such letters can be sent directly to the addressee. If there are any concerns about the information being provided or about the addressee, it would be best to send the letter through the congregation, with appropriate direction to the elders.

46. If the letter to the individual is accompanied by a courtesy copy for the branch, the original should be sent to the addressee, as directed above, and the courtesy copy filed in the BRANCH CORRESPONDENCE FILE. If the letter to the individual *is not* accompanied by a courtesy copy to the branch, this means that it was received electronically and printed in the office. The letter may be mailed as outlined above. A photocopy does not need to be made for the BRANCH CORRESPONDENCE FILE, as the electronic file copy will be retained according to the retention policy.

47. Letters sent to those living outside the branch territory are usually not mailed directly to the individual. Rather, after the letter is approved, it is sent to the overseeing branch office to be forwarded to the person or his congregation body of elders. (See 6:44-46.) Exceptions to this general policy are outlined in 6: 48-49.

48. Inquiries From Publishers in Other Countries: It is important that all those who consider moving to a foreign land prayerfully count the cost and seek Jehovah's direction. (Luke 14:28; Jas. 1:5; *od* p. 111; *km* 8/11, pp. 4-6) The branch office should be helpful and respond promptly to any publisher who inquires about serving temporarily or permanently where the need is greater. If a written inquiry is accompanied by a favorable letter of recommendation from the Congregation Service Committee, the Service Department may provide such information as Kingdom Hall addresses, meeting times, and contact in-

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formation of the coordinator(s) of the body of elders. The Service Department should be sure that any areas being recommended for assistance are safe for foreigners. The reply letter may be sent directly to the publisher via e-mail or surface mail. If the branch office is uncertain about the qualifications of a particular publisher, the letter should be sent to the inquirer's branch office, indicating that the letter should be forwarded to the individual or to his body of elders.—See 6:44.

49. While branches are authorized to provide general information to publishers about the country and congregations needing assistance, the branch is not authorized to provide extensive additional assistance, such as issuing sponsorship or guarantee letters; supplying residency, visa, or other legal forms; locating pioneer partners; and arranging suitable accommodations. These are personal matters that require careful investigation by the publisher before he or she moves to another country. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the individual publisher, not the branch office, to obtain information about visa requirements and work permits.—Gal. 6:5.

50. Certificates or Letters for Jehovah's Witnesses: On occasion, publishers and others associated with a local congregation may request that the body of elders or the branch office provide them with a signed letter or certificate that confirms or explains in some way the person's relationship with the Christian congregation. For example, local authorities in some areas may require that an elder who performs weddings or one who conducts meetings in prisons register and provide some proof of his ordination as a minister. A publisher or pioneer who is moving to serve where the need is greater in another country may request that the body of elders or the branch office provide him with a letter confirming that he is one of Jehovah's Witnesses in good standing. The immigration authorities in some countries may ask a person who is regularly attending congregation meetings to provide a signed statement from the body of elders confirming that fact. In some lands, baptized Christians are called upon to explain to the authorities their personal and conscientious objection to military service. In neutrality cases, it may be helpful for the authorities to receive a letter or a certificate from the congregation or the branch office confirming that the conscientious objector is an ordained and baptized minister of Jehovah's Witnesses or a full-time preacher of the good news. **The Branch Committee is responsible for carefully determining (1) if the elders or the branch office should be involved in replying to such requests; (2) if so, the approved wording to be used; and (3) for whom such letters and certificates may be provided.** In most cases, the elders or the branch would issue such documents only for publishers in good standing. Any such letters or certificates approved by the Branch Committee should be limited to explaining the facts and not go into detail about a brother's or a sister's personal convictions. (1 Pet. 3:15) Furthermore, any document provided by the branch office on the letterhead of one of the organization's local legal entities should not in any way imply that the organization is sponsoring the person financially or legally. (Gal. 6:5) Publishers and pioneers who move on their own to another land should not be represented to immigration authorities as "missionaries" because they are not sponsored by the organization as is done for those who are in the Worldwide Order of Special Full-Time Servants of Jehovah's Witnesses. If the Branch Committee needs further guidance on such matters involving publishers, pioneers, or others in the field, it should write to the Service Committee. Matters related to the support of members of the Worldwide Order are further described in 3:34-38.

51. Circuit Overseer's Report on a Congregation: The *Report on Circuit Overseer's Visit With Congregation* (S-303) is used by the circuit overseer to give

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the Service Department a brief report on the spirit of the congregation and any encouragement or counsel given. It is necessary to acknowledge the circuit overseer's report only if further correspondence would be helpful.

52. Appointments of Elders and Ministerial Servants: Circuit overseers are appointed by the Governing Body to care for the appointments and deletions of elders and ministerial servants. (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5) The procedures are outlined below and in *Circuit Overseer Guidelines* (*tg*).—See 6:67.

- ***Preliminary check before circuit overseer's visit:*** At least one month prior to the circuit overseer's regular visit to a congregation, the Congregation Service Committee will send to the Service Department and the circuit overseer the full name, date of birth, and date of baptism of each brother the body of elders will be recommending for appointment as an elder or a ministerial servant. Congregations with Internet access can provide this information by means of the *Recommendation for Elder/Ministerial Servant* (S-62) form using the Inbox feature on jw.org. Branches where Internet access is limited may allow congregations to submit the information by means of a phone call or text message. Once a check has been performed, the Service Department will inform the circuit overseer whether there are any legal reasons a brother should not be considered.
- ***During the circuit overseer's visit:*** During his meeting with the elders, the circuit overseer will discuss the Scriptural qualifications of each brother recommended. (*ks10* 3:1-10) The circuit overseer should take adequate time to ensure that the consideration is thorough and complete, asking pertinent questions during his meeting with the body of elders until he is convinced that the recommended brother qualifies for appointment. If the circuit overseer determines that the brother does not measure up to the Scriptural requirements to a reasonable degree, he will advise the elders accordingly and inform them how they can help the brother to qualify in the future. At any time, the circuit overseer should feel free to consult with the Service Department or another experienced circuit overseer.

Only when a brother is (1) being appointed for the first time as a ministerial servant or (2) being reappointed as an elder or a ministerial servant for reasons other than his move from one congregation to another is it necessary for him to be asked the following questions: "Is there anything from your past, even before baptism, or in your personal or family life that disqualifies you or that would prevent you from accepting this appointment? Is there any reason why your appointment should not be announced to the congregation? Have you ever been involved at any time in the past with child sexual molestation?" In the situations mentioned above, the circuit overseer along with another elder will meet with the brother sometime following the circuit overseer's meeting with the elders but before the end of the visit to ask these questions. If the brother answers "No" to the questions, the circuit overseer will provide the elders with a signed appointment letter that includes the names of all those appointed during his visit. The circuit overseer will inform the Service Department of the appointments using the *Notification of Appointment or Deletion* (S-2). The appointments made during the visit will be announced to the congregation at the next Service Meeting. In all cases, a brother who has been appointed (or re-

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appointed) as an elder or a ministerial servant should be informed of his appointment before it is announced to the congregation.

If the brother approved for appointment is not present at the conclusion of the visit and thus the necessary questions cannot be asked, the circuit overseer will not include the brother's name in the appointment letter left with the elders at the end of his visit. Rather, when the brother returns, two local elders will ask the brother the questions mentioned above. The coordinator of the body of elders will then inform the circuit overseer of the brother's answers to those questions. If the brother answers "No" to the questions, the circuit overseer will provide the elders with a signed appointment letter. The circuit overseer will inform the Service Department of the appointments using the S-2 form. At the Service Meeting following the receipt of the appointment letter, the brother's appointment will be announced to the congregation.

In the event that a substitute circuit overseer is serving the congregation, he should forward his recommendation(s) and those of the body of elders to the regular circuit overseer for consideration. Such recommendations will be handled as are other recommendations for appointment or deletion between visits. If the regular circuit overseer will be away from the circuit for **(1) less than a month,** he may hold the recommendations in abeyance until he returns; **(2) one to three months,** the branch office should designate another circuit overseer (perhaps a neighboring circuit overseer or one who recently served the circuit) to consider any recommendations received from substitutes; or **(3) more than three months,** the branch office should assign another circuit overseer to visit congregations in the circuit. If the regular circuit overseer is unable to communicate with the affected congregations and substitutes before leaving his assignment, the branch office should take the lead in informing them.

- ***Appointments between regular visits to a congregation:*** When a brother moves into the congregation with a favorable letter of recommendation for reappointment and the next visit of the circuit overseer is not in the near future, the Congregation Service Committee of the new congregation may send the S-62 form to the circuit overseer, informing him that the body of elders recommends the brother's immediate reappointment. A copy of the letter of recommendation signed by the Service Committee of his former congregation must be included. If the circuit overseer agrees based on the favorable recommendation of both bodies of elders, he will generate an appointment letter to be sent to the new body of elders and will inform the Service Department of the appointment using the *Notification of Appointment or Deletion* (S-2). If there are disqualifying factors mentioned or questions raised in the letter of introduction from the brother's former congregation, the circuit overseer may encourage the elders to wait until his visit to make the recommendation so that they have an opportunity to observe the brother for a time.
- ***Appointments recommended by the branch office:*** At times, the branch office will assign an appointed elder, such as a special pioneer or a graduate of the School for Kingdom Evangelizers, to serve in a particular congregation. In such cases, they will write to the circuit overseer to advise him that they recommend the

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appointment. Thereafter, the circuit overseer may generate an appointment letter to the new congregation and will inform the Service Department using the *Notification of Appointment or Deletion* (S-2).

- ***Other appointments:*** The circuit overseer is responsible for the appointment of coordinators of the body of elders, assembly overseers, and assistant assembly overseers.—See 6:179.

53. Deletions of Elders and Ministerial Servants: The procedures are outlined below and in *Circuit Overseer Guidelines* (*tg*).

- ***During the circuit overseer's visit:*** Recommendations for deletion because of poor judgment not of a judicial nature are usually best considered with the elders during the visit of the circuit overseer. At the start of the circuit overseer's visit, the elders will provide any background information that will help the circuit overseer have a complete view of the qualifications of the brothers recommended for deletion. During his meeting with the elders later in the week, the circuit overseer will discuss the Scriptural qualifications of each brother. (*ks10* 3:15-21) He must not be hasty but should take adequate time to ensure that the consideration is thorough and complete. At any time, the circuit overseer should feel free to consult with the Service Department or another experienced circuit overseer. If the circuit overseer agrees with the recommendation, sometime following the discussion with the elders but before the end of the visit, the circuit overseer along with another elder will meet with the brother to inform him of his deletion. If the brother agrees with the decision, the circuit overseer will generate a deletion letter to the body of elders and inform the Service Department using the *Notification of Appointment or Deletion* (S-2). If the brother disagrees with the decision, he will be informed of his right to appeal. The announcement to the congregation will be held in abeyance.—See 6:54.
- ***Deletions between regular visits to a congregation:*** If serious questions arise concerning a brother's qualifications and the next visit of the circuit overseer is not in the near future, the Congregation Service Committee may send the recommendation of the body of elders to the circuit overseer immediately. The letter should provide complete details and indicate whether the brother agrees with the recommendation or not. If the circuit overseer agrees with the recommendation and believes it should be processed immediately, he will generate a letter of deletion to be sent to the body of elders. If the brother accepts the decision, the announcement will be made at the next Service Meeting and the circuit overseer will inform the Service Department using the *Notification of Appointment or Deletion* (S-2).

If the brother disagrees with the recommendation for his deletion or it is an issue of poor judgment that is not widely known, the circuit overseer may decide to wait until his regular visit to consider the matter. However, if the circuit overseer believes it should be processed immediately, he will do as outlined above. If the brother does not accept the decision, he will be informed of his right to appeal. The announcement to the congregation will be held in abeyance. —See 6:54.

- ***Resignations and deletions for judicial reasons or death:*** The Congregation Service Committee will immediately inform the circuit

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overseer of deletions of elders or ministerial servants because of judicial reproof, disassociation, disfellowshipping, or death. The circuit overseer will thereafter inform the Service Department using the *Notification of Appointment or Deletion* (S-2). In cases of reproof, he will also generate a deletion letter to the body of elders. If the Congregation Service Committee notifies the circuit overseer that a brother desires to resign for personal reasons and the circuit overseer accepts the resignation, the same procedure should be followed.

54. Appeals Involving Deletions of Elders and Ministerial Servants: If an elder or a ministerial servant disagrees with his deletion by the circuit overseer, he should be asked immediately to write a brief letter to the Service Department, with a copy to the body of elders and the circuit overseer, explaining why he disagrees with the deletion. The announcement of deletion will be held in abeyance. Thereafter, the Service Department will select an experienced circuit overseer who will then rehear the entire matter *with the original circuit overseer.* These two brothers will listen to the brother carefully and deal with him kindly and justly. They may consult with the Service Department for advice. After the two circuit overseers have heard the elder's concerns and reached a joint decision, there is no further appeal. If it is decided that the brother should be deleted, the announcement will be made at the next Service Meeting and the circuit overseer will inform the Service Department using the *Notification of Appointment or Deletion* (S-2).

55. In ***very rare situations,*** the Service Department oversight may see a need to select a **special committee** to consider an appeal involving the matter of brothers' qualifications to continue serving as elders. For example, a special committee may be needed in unusual and complex cases that involve the qualifications of *multiple elders* or perhaps even an *entire body of elders.* The deskman, in consultation with Service Department oversight, will select the special committee from names provided by the circuit overseer and then provide direction to the special committee on its handling of the matter. (See 6:40.) After a thorough investigation and a meeting with the brothers involved, the special committee will then submit its comments and provide a recommendation to the *original circuit overseer and the other experienced circuit overseer.* (See 6:54.) If needed, the circuit overseers may consult with the Service Department. However, the *two circuit overseers,* not the special committee nor the branch office, will make the final determination regarding the qualifications of the brother(s) in question and inform the Service Department accordingly.

56. Distributing Documents on jw.org: Branches are notified when new and revised forms, letters, and outlines are posted on MDS. The Branch Committee will determine whether the item can be used in the branch territory without any adjustments. If so, it may be possible for the Service Department to create a link to the item under the *Documents* tab on the Web site. If only minor adjustments are needed, such as the insertion of letterheads, signature stamps, and the like, the Service Department may make the necessary adjustments and then upload the document to the local jw.org directory and create a link on the site. If the version posted on MDS requires significant adjustments, the Branch Committee should request approval from the appropriate Governing Body committee.

Processing Judicial Reports

57. Disfellowshippings and Disassociations: The elder serving as the chairman of a judicial committee (or "a committee" in the case of disassociation) is to submit one copy of the *Notification of Disfellowshipping or Disassociation* (S-77) to the Service Department. Usually there is no need for the elders serving

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on the committee to submit additional correspondence about the case.

58. Role of Service Desk Secretary: The Service Desk secretary will be responsible to review the S-77 form to make sure it is complete. If there is anything on the form that is not clear or is missing, the secretary will contact a member of the committee that submitted the form. It may be possible to obtain missing information by means of a telephone call. Once the Service Desk secretary has verified that the form is complete, he will enter the record into the electronic file used by the branch office. If the S-77 form is scanned into an electronic file, there is no need to keep a hard copy. Depending on local circumstances, it is left to each branch office to decide whether there is a need to send a brief acknowledgment to the chairman of the committee that the S-77 form has been received.

59. Role of Service Department Deskman: Though it is not necessary for the deskman to review all S-77 forms, the secretary should be trained to alert the deskman to any unusual or weighty cases. The following list is not comprehensive but simply provides some examples of cases that should be forwarded to the deskman for consideration and careful handling:

- There is a question as to whether there is a valid judicial charge or sufficient evidence to support the charge.—*ks10* 5:2-37.
- The S-77 form reveals that the committee did not inform the individual of the decision.—*ks10* 6:9-10; 7:29-30.
- The individual does not agree with the decision of the original committee and the appeal committee and is now appealing his case to the branch office.—*ks10* 8:14-15.
- The original committee and the appeal committee do not agree on the decision.—*ks10* 8:16-18.
- The committee has submitted correspondence about the case in addition to the S-77 report.

60. The Service Department deskman and desk groups should not be quick to second-guess how a committee cared for a particular matter unless it is clear from the S-77 form and any additional correspondence submitted that the published guidelines in the *Shepherding* textbook and current letters to bodies of elders were not followed. In such cases, the deskman should write to the committee in an effort to help them bring the matter to a conclusion. Thereafter, the deskman or the secretary will update the branch office's files accordingly.

61. With reinstatements, the deskman would not usually need to review the information submitted unless there are some unusual factors. One exception is when it appears that sufficient time was not allowed for the individual to prove that his repentance is genuine. (*ks10* 11:3-5) Depending on the nature of the matter, the deskman may determine to provide the committee with some helpful reminders.

62. Use of Admin and jw.org Inbox Feature: Branches using these tools will be able to process and store S-77 forms electronically. The following is a brief explanation of the procedure that they may choose to use:

- A member of the committee submits the S-77 form using the jw.org Inbox feature.
- Upon receipt, the S-77 form is assigned to a Service Desk secretary for review.
- When the secretary has determined that the form is complete, he will enter the record in the electronic file used by the branch office, such as *Tracking Persons*. An incident could be created linking the form to the tracked person. In the case of a reinstatement, the secretary would update the electronic record and retain the notification in the electronic file system.

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- If the S-77 form needs further review by a deskman, the secretary will pass this on to him. After the deskman has completed his review, he will return the correspondence to the secretary who will then update any electronic record of the matter.
- If needed, hard copies of S-77 forms can be scanned into Admin. A record of the matter can be entered into *Tracking Persons*. Any hard copy should be shredded.

63. Rescissions: On occasion, the deskman may determine that the elders have erred in announcing a disfellowshipping. Perhaps the wrongdoing committed did not warrant a judicial committee or some other error in judgment occurred. The disfellowshipping may need to be ***rescinded.*** Before proceeding, the Branch Committee should review the case. If the Branch Committee agrees that the judicial action should be rescinded, then the deskman will write to the judicial committee to explain the errors in judgment. The letter to the judicial committee should explain that the announcement to the congregation should state: "The announcement that [name of person] is no longer one of Jehovah's Witnesses has been rescinded." The letter to the judicial committee will request that the committee reply in writing to the branch office, providing the date when the rescission was announced. Once the date is received, the records should be updated.

64. Appeal Committees: The circuit overseer is authorized to appoint an appeal committee. For details on the formation of an appeal committee and the correspondence to be received from it, see *Circuit Overseer Guidelines*, chapter 14.

Forming Congregations

65. A circuit overseer will assist in organizing the formation of a new congregation if and when it is advisable to do so. A completed *Congregation Application Information* (S-51) form may be submitted to the branch office. Generally, the circuit overseer will sign the application.

66. In congregations with no appointed elders, one or more experienced ministerial servants (or a baptized sister if a baptized brother is not available) may be designated to handle the work in lieu of an appointed coordinator of the body of elders until one can be appointed.

67. When the Service Department gives approval for the **formation or dissolution of a congregation,** the circuit overseer will proceed with the appointment of elders and ministerial servants in their respective congregations, using the *Notification of Appointment or Deletion.* (See 6:52.) Care should be taken to see that all elders and ministerial servants are accounted for and appointed to serve with one of the congregations involved. The territory assignment for each respective congregation should be provided. In addition, various printed letters that the new congregation needs for its files should be sent. If there is a large amount of literature on hand, it would be best for the congregations to divide it instead of requesting additional literature for the new congregation. The branch office will determine how many copies of *Our Kingdom Ministry* to send, based on the number of publishers and pioneers associated with each respective congregation.

Territories

68. Territory Assignments: The Service Department gives each congregation an assignment of territory to work. The Branch Committee and the deskmen monitor the preaching activity in the field, making all reasonable efforts to ensure that the branch territory is thoroughly covered.—See 6:168.

69. Congregations With Seldom Worked Territory: If congregations are in need of assistance in working their assigned territory, the congregations and circuit overseers will report this to the branch office. The deskman will consider what can be done to provide assistance. If it is not possible to

make arrangements to assist the congregation to cover its territory and the territory has not been worked for two years, the circuit overseer should recommend to the branch office which sections of the congregation's territory should be assigned to other nearby congregations or listed as unassigned territory.

70. Caring for Unassigned Territory: The Branch Committee should make all reasonable efforts to cover all unassigned territory at least once a year. A letter may be sent each year to congregations, inviting publishers to apply to work unassigned territory. This letter should include a list of the territories that need to be worked. Individuals willing to assist may indicate to the branch office which territory they would like to work, the number in their group, and the amount of time they can spend in an assignment. (Groups should not be made up solely of single brothers and single sisters.) A group captain should be designated. This information is to be given to the Congregation Service Committee for approval and forwarding to the branch. The Service Department considers the information, makes an appropriate territory assignment, and informs the group captain. After the assignment is completed, the group captain should submit a report to the branch office, outlining what was accomplished and any outstanding experiences.

71. In countries where there are few publishers and large densely populated areas to cover, the Branch Committee may feel that a **special campaign** would be beneficial. In some cases, it may be possible to invite native publishers who are living in other lands to return and share in the special campaign. Publishers in other countries who speak the local language may also be invited. The Branch Committee should send a recommendation to the Service Committee for its consideration and approval.

72. Publishers Living in Isolated Territory: The Service Department should send the names of isolated publishers to the congregations nearest them. Perhaps an elder or pioneer can visit them from time to time to encourage them and to work with them in the field ministry. The branch office should make arrangements for them to receive literature and *Our Kingdom Ministry*, along with any other necessary information. If practical, they could send their field service reports through the nearest congregation and obtain literature there as well. Otherwise, they may request literature from the branch office and report their field service directly to the branch each month, marking "isolated publisher" or "isolated pioneer" on the report. Only one person in the group should make arrangements for obtaining literature.

73. The role of the circuit overseer in caring for isolated publishers and pioneers is outlined in *Circuit Overseer Guidelines*. If reasonably possible, the circuit overseer should adjust his schedule in order to visit such ones each year. After receiving the circuit overseer's report for the annual visit, the Service Desk will send the isolated publisher, pioneer, or group a warm and encouraging letter. **A record should be kept of all such publishers and groups,** with a separate file for each, until such time as they can either be associated with a nearby congregation or be organized into a new congregation. Then the information in this file is put into the file for that congregation.

74. Special pioneers have been assigned to visit isolated publishers and groups, with good results. Where there is potential to form a new congregation, temporary special pioneers or special pioneers could be assigned.

75. When a regular pioneer requests a permanent assignment to care for an unassigned territory, the branch office will write a letter, enclosing an *Isolated Territory Assignment* (S-63). Only one regular pioneer would be given a certain isolated territory assignment. If more than one pioneer will be working in the

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same isolated assignment, the other pioneers are assigned by a letter from the office to work with the pioneer holding the territory. The pioneer holding the territory is responsible for making the necessary reports to the branch office on the progress being made in the territory.

76. Foreign-Language Territory: The Branch Committee and the deskmen should be aware of immigrant communities or indigenous language groups that need to receive a witness. The Service Department and circuit overseers should be guided by what is published on this subject in *Circuit Overseer Guidelines, Circuit Organization Guidelines,* the letter to all bodies of elders dated October 2, 2014, and the letter to all circuit overseers dated October 3, 2014.—See also *km* 11/09, pp. 3-5.

77. If there is a sizable population of foreign-speaking people in the branch territory and few publishers are available who speak their language, a **foreign-language class** may be held to train capable publishers and pioneers. Before a language class is held, the branch must identify and train language instructors. Potential instructors must meet the qualifications outlined in *Instructions for Organizing Language Classes* (S-367). A request to train the recommended foreign-language instructors should be submitted to the Service Committee for approval. The Service Committee will arrange for those who have been approved to attend the course "Teaching Methods for Accelerated Language Learning." Following the training course, the branch may arrange to hold the foreign-language classes. (Helpful forms for organizing the classes are posted on MDS.) These classes should not be held at the branch office. They should be conducted in the foreign-language territory that is being targeted.—See 7:131; *tg* chap. 17.

78. Prison Witnessing: The Service Department should organize the preaching work in prisons according to the latest direction received from the Service Committee. (See the letter to all bodies of elders dated September 8, 2011.) A record should be maintained of congregations assigned to care for each prison facility in the country. It should also be noted whether literature can be taken into the prison by the publishers or must be mailed directly from the branch office.

79. Harbor Witnessing: The Service Department should organize harbor witnessing in harmony with the guidelines provided by the Service Committee. (See "Materials for Harbor Witnessing" on MDS as well as the letter to all bodies of elders dated July 15, 2014.) Each branch office may need to adapt the material to the local circumstances of its territory. In most cases, official authorization to enter port terminals and to board ships must also be obtained. Fees for processing applications and making photo identification may be required, which is the personal responsibility of the applicant. Publishers should not get involved with seaman's missions or other religious organizations in carrying out harbor witnessing.

Conventions and Assemblies

80. Regional Conventions: Annually, circuit overseers submit the *Convention Program Participant Ratings* form (S-306) to the branch office. This form identifies the **elders who are qualified as convention speakers** and their individual ratings. In larger branch offices, these records are kept in Admin. Brothers who are approved Bethel speakers may be invited to inform the Service Department of the convention(s) that they will attend so that they may be assigned talks. If Bethel speakers volunteer to attend additional conventions using their own personal time away and at their own expense, they may be assigned where there is a need for convention speakers. —See 7:13-32, 71-72.

81. The Service Department will make assignments based on each brother's speaker ratings and the convention speaker grid provided annually by the

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Teaching Committee. Generally, the chairman and the drama directors are assigned and notified first, followed by the Bethel speakers, and then local speakers are assigned the remaining parts. Service Department oversight will approve all convention speaker assignments before assignment letters are mailed out. –See 7:30, 71-72.

82. Circuit Assemblies: Two one-day circuit assemblies will be held each year. One assembly (*CA-br*) will have a visiting branch representative assigned to speak. The other assembly (*CA-co*) will be served by the circuit overseer without a branch representative being assigned. Arrangements are made according to the guidelines provided each year by the Teaching Committee. Helpful guidance is also found in *Circuit Organization Guidelines* (S-330).–See 7:2-12, 73.

83. The branch will assign the dates of circuit assemblies based on the number of publishers in a circuit and the size and availability of meeting locations. It may be necessary to divide a circuit into two or more sections and have separate assemblies. Circuit overseers will be notified preferably one year or more in advance in order to obtain assembly facilities. If possible, the two annual circuit assembly programs should be separated by at least three or four months. *Circuit Overseer Guidelines* has additional information.

Regular Pioneers

84. Direction regarding the appointment and activity of pioneers is found in the latest publications on congregation organization and in the letter to all bodies of elders dated August 25, 2014. Those leaving an assignment of special full-time service will not experience an interruption in their full-time service history if they are appointed as regular pioneers within three months. Regular pioneers who are sentenced to prison because of their Christian neutrality will have their full-time service history recorded as uninterrupted if they resume the full-time ministry within three months of their release from prison. (See 4:24-25.) Regular pioneers who accept alternative civilian service may continue serving as regular pioneers if they can reasonably meet the requirements for regular pioneers. When reviewing their overall activity, the elders should show consideration for their unique circumstances when determining whether they qualify to continue serving as pioneers. A person who is performing alternative civilian service may be appointed as a regular pioneer if he is otherwise qualified and is able to fulfill the hour requirement.

85. Transfers to Other Branch Territories: When a pioneer moves to another country, the local branch should send to the new branch the regular pioneer record from Admin. If questions arise about the pioneer's history, the new branch may communicate with the other branch offices that are involved.

86. Infirm Regular Pioneers: When recommendations are received and an individual meets the requirements as outlined in *Circuit Overseer Guidelines*, chapter 19, he may be designated as an infirm pioneer. The Service Department will write to the pioneer, explaining the arrangement, and a copy of this letter will be sent to the body of elders. This adjustment in the pioneer's enrollment should be noted in the records of the branch office.

Temporary Special Pioneers

87. Temporary special pioneers serve in the same manner as special pioneers. However, they are appointed to serve in **one-year increments** for up to a maximum of three years. This temporary assignment will enhance their qualifications, allowing them to gain experience and to be further evaluated by the branch office. It could be a stepping-stone to a future assignment as a substitute circuit overseer, a special pioneer, a circuit overseer, or a field missionary or to Bethel service. Temporary special pioneers receive their assignment from the Service Department; they do not se-

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lect their own. Individuals do not apply to become temporary special pioneers. Rather, well-qualified, local single regular pioneers and married regular pioneer couples without children are identified and invited to submit a *Questionnaire for Prospective Temporary Special Pioneer* (S-207).—See 6:110.

88. Assignments: Single temporary special pioneers will ordinarily be assigned in pairs. If married, both mates would need to qualify to serve together as temporary special pioneers. Generally, temporary special pioneers are assigned to remote areas with a ratio of 1 publisher to at least 3,000 or more inhabitants to open up new territories, including those in foreign- or indigenous-language fields. Most branches have territories that are seldom worked or are remote and isolated where there are interested ones and where there is good potential for forming a congregation. Many countries have densely populated urban centers with few publishers in the inner cities. In many lands there is a great need for qualified brothers to help men reach out to become ministerial servants and elders or where the brothers need more training to care for their congregation responsibilities.—See 6:110.

89. Qualifications: A prospective temporary special pioneer is a well-qualified and effective regular pioneer and is usually a graduate of the School for Kingdom Evangelizers or a graduate of the former Bible School for Single Brothers or Bible School for Christian Couples. **The candidate should be a citizen or legal resident, must be between 21 and 45 years of age, baptized three years or longer, in full-time service at least two years, in good health, and able to maintain an active schedule.** Any exceptions must be approved by the Service Committee. If a branch has additional needs in the field, circuit overseers may recommend others who are not graduates of the above-named theocratic schools by submitting a *Personal Qualifications Report* (S-326) to the branch office for review. There is no arrangement for appointing as temporary special pioneers those who have a minor child still living at home. It is preferred that the focus be on appointing single men and married couples who have the potential for taking on greater responsibility. However, if such ones are not available, well-qualified single sisters may serve as temporary special pioneers. If there is an exceptional need that cannot be cared for locally, then the Branch Committee should submit a *Request for Field Missionaries* (S-218) form to the Service Committee. Unless directed to do so by the Service Committee, the Branch Committee should not request help from other branch offices to fill special needs in the field.—See 6:106.

90. Quota: The Service Committee establishes the total number of temporary special pioneers that may be appointed in each country. If the Branch Committee sees a need to increase the quota of temporary special pioneers, a request should be sent to the Service Committee, stating the number to be added, why they are needed, the number expected to graduate from the School for Kingdom Evangelizers in the coming year, and the publisher-to-population ratios of the language fields where they would be assigned.

91. Graduates of the School for Kingdom Evangelizers: Based on the recommendations of the instructors, the Service Department will determine which graduates in each class could be recommended to the Branch Committee to serve as temporary special pioneers. For more details, see chapter 10 of *School for Kingdom Evangelizers Office Guidelines.*

92. Nongraduates of the School for Kingdom Evangelizers: A candidate who is a local regular pioneer will be evaluated by the Service Department, based on the *Personal Qualifications Report* (S-326) and any recommendation submitted by the circuit overseer. The Service Department will decide whether to recommend to the Branch Committee that a regular pioneer be appointed as a

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temporary special pioneer. If approved, the regular pioneer can be sent a letter (S-225) explaining the temporary special pioneer arrangement with the request that he fill out a *Questionnaire for Prospective Temporary Special Pioneer* (S-207). The completed questionnaire is to be carefully checked by the Service Department and thereafter reviewed by two members of the Branch Committee. If they approve, the Service Department will prepare a letter (S-220) appointing the temporary special pioneer and informing him of the location of his assignment, copying the elders of the congregation he will be working with and the circuit overseer.

93. File: A file folder is made to hold a copy of the assignment letter, the questionnaire, and other correspondence related to the temporary special pioneer. His enrollment code in Admin is adjusted to show his start date as a temporary special pioneer (FTS). A record of his monthly field service is maintained in Admin.

94. Hour Requirement: The temporary special pioneer hour requirement is 130 hours a month. Sisters who are 40 years of age or older have a requirement of 120 hours a month. It is understood that a temporary special pioneer who serves as a congregation elder in a remote area may at times be needed for additional short-term theocratic assignments. For example, he may need to serve on a special committee or a Disaster Relief Committee, help with circuit or convention organization, assist in the construction or renovation of his own Kingdom Hall, or serve as a substitute circuit overseer. In addition, he may be needed for a brief period of time to train local elders to care for their responsibilities on a Hospital Liaison Committee. In exceptional situations, the travel time to attend an assigned circuit assembly, regional convention, or Kingdom Ministry School may be unusually long. If such assignments prevent him from making his hour requirement, a brief explanation, as well as the number of hours spent, should be included on the monthly report submitted on jw.org or on his monthly S-212 report. An explanation should also be written in the "Remarks" column of the *Congregation's Publisher Record* (S-21) card. However, the hours spent should not be included in the "Hours" column. The branch will also mark the Admin records and consider the remarks when performing the annual review.

95. Evaluation Program: All temporary special pioneers are enrolled in an evaluation program that includes an annual review by the Service Department. The purpose of this evaluation program is to allow the Branch Committee to test the fitness, abilities, circumstances, and effectiveness of a temporary special pioneer and to determine how he may best be used in the future. It is not expected that all temporary special pioneers will be given an extension for a second or a third year. During the annual review, the Branch Committee should extend only those who are effective in this role and who are qualified to take on greater responsibility. For more information, see chapter 13 of *School for Kingdom Evangelizers Office Guidelines*.

96. After a temporary special pioneer has been in his assignment for ten months, the Service Department should request and review the *Personal Qualifications Reports* (S-326) submitted by the circuit overseer. The department will determine whether the temporary special pioneer is reaching his hour requirement, is productive in starting and conducting Bible studies, is showing a keen interest in aiding those associated with the congregation, and is enjoying and promoting good relations with others. If the report is positive, two members of the Branch Committee can extend the temporary special pioneer appointment for another year. Only productive individuals obtaining good results should be given an extension in the temporary special pioneer work for an additional year. If the report is negative or if it is clear that a brother, a sister, or a married cou-

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ple is not able to serve effectively in the temporary special pioneer work, it would be appropriate for the Service Department to write a letter directing that the individual or the couple return to the regular pioneer work. The letter would also express appreciation for their service.

97. At any time, the branch office may determine that a temporary special pioneer could be used more effectively in some other form of special full-time service. For example, brothers who are graduates of the School for Kingdom Evangelizers may qualify to receive training in the circuit work.–See chapters 10 and 13 of *School for Kingdom Evangelizers Office Guidelines.*

98. Completion of Evaluation Program: It is understood that temporary special pioneers who have successfully completed the three-year evaluation program have proved themselves and have potential for greater service. The Branch Committee must determine how best to use them.

99. Some temporary special pioneers who have successfully completed the three-year evaluation program may be appointed as special pioneers. Other individuals may qualify for the circuit work, and the branch may appoint such individuals as special pioneers, inviting them to complete the *Questionnaire for Prospective Circuit Overseer* (S-323). If after reviewing the questionnaire the Branch Committee agrees that the individual qualifies to be a circuit overseer, it may submit a recommendation to the Governing Body.–See 2:30.

100. In exceptional cases, the Branch Committee may feel that certain temporary special pioneers who have completed the three-year evaluation program have the circumstances and stamina to serve well as field missionaries in another country. In most cases, each mate must be between the ages of 25 and 45. Fluency in English is not a requirement. **In addition to their spiritual qualities, they may speak a foreign language or be adept at learning new languages or their ethnic and family background or citizenship might equip them to fill a specific need in another land.** The branch may appoint such individuals as special pioneers and send them the cover letter for field missionary candidates (S-251), inviting them to complete the *Questionnaire for Prospective Field Missionary* (S-214). The completed questionnaire and, if needed, an English translation of the candidate's responses along with a numbered letter should be submitted to the Service Committee, explaining in detail the qualifications, language abilities, ethnic and family background, and citizenship(s) of each individual. Please include an English translation of the latest *Personal Qualifications Report* (S-326) that was submitted by the circuit overseer.–See 6:117.

101. Those who have completed the three-year evaluation program and who are fluent in English may in time be included in the Branch Committee's consideration of exceptional candidates to be recommended for additional training at Gilead School.–See 6:190.

102. Allowances: Temporary special pioneers receive the same monthly allowance as special pioneers. (See 6:121.) In addition to the regular monthly personal allowance, temporary special pioneers may request a travel and housing allowance up to the amount approved for the country by the Publishing Committee. The housing allowance may be given to temporary special pioneers according to the actual amount they pay for housing and utilities up to the maximum shown on the *Record of Allowance* form (A-29). Any exception for high-rent areas should be referred to the Publishing Committee. Temporary special pioneers who are using personal time away or who are ill are eligible to continue to receive their regular monthly allowance. Temporary special pioneers are allowed to do limited secular work as long as it does not interfere with their meeting the hour requirement. If a temporary special

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pioneer needs some assistance to cover his actual round-trip travel expenses to attend his assigned circuit assembly, regional convention, or Kingdom Ministry School, the Branch Committee may reimburse actual travel expenses upon request. This provision is not to be advertised and is intended only to cover unusually high travel expenses that may be involved to reach the assigned assembly or school.

103. Temporary special pioneers receive the same Personal Expense Account (PEA) credits as special pioneers. (See 5:22.) They may also benefit from an Automobile Expense Account (AEA) if that arrangement is available in the country.—See 5:14.

104. Moving Expenses: If it is necessary to reassign temporary special pioneers, it is usually best to select a territory that is not too distant from their preceding assignment in order to avoid unnecessary expenses. If a temporary special pioneer cannot personally cover the expense of the transfer, he may request assistance from the branch. The Branch Committee may reimburse each temporary special pioneer up to USD 500, depending on his needs. If the cost is more, then the recommendation for reimbursement should be referred to the Service Committee.

105. Experiencing Difficulties: If a temporary special pioneer falls short of his hour requirement for two or three months or encounters serious health issues and is physically unable to meet the requirement, the Service Department may submit a recommendation for his deletion to two members of the Branch Committee for approval. It would be appropriate for the Service Department to write a letter to the temporary special pioneer, expressing appreciation for his service and encouraging him to continue working hard but directing that he return to the regular pioneer work. If the temporary special pioneer objects to the recommendation, he may submit a letter of appeal to the Branch Committee. The entire Branch Committee is responsible for making the final determination.

106. Marriage: If a single temporary special pioneer becomes engaged to be married, he or she should inform the Service Department right away. If the temporary special pioneer indicates that he or she wishes to continue in the temporary special pioneer work along with his or her prospective mate, the branch should immediately request a confidential *Personal Qualifications Report* (S-326) from the temporary special pioneer's body of elders and one from his or her circuit overseer.

- **If the prospective mate lives in the branch territory,** the branch should send him or her a *Questionnaire for Prospective Temporary Special Pioneer* (S-207) to fill out. In addition, the prospective mate's body of elders and circuit overseer should be asked to complete separate *Personal Qualifications Reports* (S-326).
- **If the prospective mate does not live in the branch territory,** the Branch Committee should obtain the S-207 and S-326 forms from the respective branch office along with their recommendation.

The Branch Committee will review the temporary special pioneer's qualifications and those of his or her prospective mate, taking into consideration the reputation and the physical health and stamina of each one. (See 6:89.) If there is a great difference in age between the two who are planning to marry, the Branch Committee should carefully consider whether this would cause negative talk or be a stumbling block to others. If the temporary special pioneer and the prospective mate are qualified, the Branch Committee may enroll them as temporary special pioneers together, effective the date of their marriage. Otherwise, the temporary special pioneer should discontinue his service prior to his marriage. (See 6:130.) It could be that, in time, the couple would qualify to serve together as temporary special pioneers.

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107. Pregnancy: A temporary special pioneer couple who learn that they are to be parents should inform the branch immediately. The couple should be given a period of three months to get settled, during which they will continue to receive their monthly allowance. During this three-month period, the couple will need to locate suitable accommodations and find employment, so it is not expected that they will meet their monthly hour requirement. If one or both mates wish to become regular pioneers, they will have an additional three months to make the transition and their full-time service history would continue uninterrupted.

108. Personal Time Away: A sample letter to all special pioneers that explains the personal time away arrangement is available on MDS. A copy of this letter should be sent to newly enrolled temporary special pioneers along with their appointment letter (S-220).

Special Pioneers

109. As members of the Worldwide Order, special pioneers are provided with a modest allowance to assist them with their living expenses. They receive their assignment from the Service Department; they do not select their own. Individuals do not apply to become special pioneers. Rather, qualified temporary special pioneers are identified and approached as to their willingness and availability to accept an assignment.

110. Assignments: Single special pioneers will ordinarily be assigned in pairs. For married couples, both mates would need to qualify to serve together as special pioneers. Generally, special pioneers are assigned to open up new territories, including those in foreign- or indigenous-language fields in remote areas that have a ratio of 1 publisher to at least 3,000 or more inhabitants. Most branches have territories that are seldom worked or are remote and isolated but have interested ones and good potential for forming a congregation. Many countries have densely populated urban centers with few publishers in the inner cities. In many lands there is a great need for qualified brothers to help men reach out to become ministerial servants and elders or where the brothers need more training to care for their congregation responsibilities.

- If there is an exceptional need, the Branch Committee may assign temporary special pioneers, special pioneers, and circuit overseers to any country *overseen by the branch office.* Care should be taken so that the costs involved in such transfers and the acquiring of legal residency are kept to a minimum. Since a key objective of the School for Kingdom Evangelizers and the temporary special pioneer arrangement is to help more local brothers and sisters to reach out to meet the needs *within their own country,* those who are assigned by the branch office to serve in another country should keep that focus in mind. Any exceptional situations should be referred to the Service Committee.—See 6:87-88.
- Branch offices are not authorized to transfer special pioneers to *other branch territories.* Such requests or recommendations should be referred to the Service Committee.

111. Qualifications: Care should be exercised in appointing special pioneers. Since temporary special pioneers will fill most needs, any who are appointed as special pioneers should be exceptional individuals who have proved themselves as temporary special pioneers for three years. The Branch Committee also needs to consider carefully the age, health, and circumstances of an individual before appointing him as a special pioneer.

- There is no automatic arrangement for transferring those serving at Bethel or in some other form of special full-time service into the special pioneer work. The branch office has the weighty responsibility of appointing *qualified* candidates to serve as special

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pioneers. As an exception, the Branch Committee may appoint as special pioneers those who have been in special full-time service for many years (usually 15 years or more). Some might have less than 15 years of special full-time service but are in good health and have the stamina and spiritual qualifications to serve anywhere the branch office may need them. All circuit overseers reaching 70 years of age will be transferred to serve as special pioneers.—See 6: 152-153.

112. Consideration should be given to those who have demonstrated a genuine interest in helping people, an ability to get results, and a determination to stick with an assignment when things are difficult. We want dedicated, hardworking brothers and sisters to be special pioneers, not those who may be disinterested in the work or who are more concerned about material benefits than about the privilege of sharing in this spiritually upbuilding work. We desire to appoint those who are devoted to God and who take seriously their commission as ministers. The primary purpose behind the special pioneer work is to add impetus to the preaching of the good news in areas where little is being done. In addition, the rigorous schedule requires stamina and good health. In isolated areas, upbuilding association may be limited. Appointees should be encouraged to view themselves and their circumstances realistically.

113. Quota: The Service Committee establishes the total number of special pioneers that may be appointed in each country. If the Branch Committee sees a need to increase the quota of special pioneers, a request should be sent to the Service Committee, stating the number to be added, why they are needed, and the publisher-to-population ratios of the language fields where they would be assigned.

114. Appointing New Special Pioneers: If the Service Department identifies a need in the field that cannot be met by the use of temporary special pioneers, it can consider appointing special pioneers. A candidate for special pioneer service should be selected from those who have successfully completed three years in the temporary special pioneer work. If the Branch Committee approves the recommendation from the Service Department, the temporary special pioneer should be sent a letter explaining the special pioneer arrangement, with the request that he fill out a *Questionnaire for Prospective Special Pioneer* (S-208). The completed questionnaire is to be carefully checked by the Service Department, and if all is in order, it is forwarded to the Branch Committee for approval. If the appointment is approved, the Service Department sends the special pioneer an assignment letter, copying the elders of the congregation he will be working with and the circuit overseer.

- In branch territories with just a few circuits, the branch office may have in mind assigning an appointed circuit overseer to serve temporarily as a special pioneer. Before doing so, please provide the Service Committee with information about the brother you plan to reassign. If the brother and his wife, if married, could be used in the circuit work in another land for perhaps up to three years, provide a recent *Personal Qualifications Report* (S-326), translated into English, along with a cover letter describing his qualifications, his citizenship, and the language(s) in which he is fluent. It may be that he could be used in a nearby country where there is a need for circuit overseers.

115. File: A file folder is made to hold a copy of the assignment letter, the questionnaire, the vow of poverty, and other correspondence related to the special pioneer. His enrollment code in Admin is adjusted to show his start date as a special pioneer (FS). A record of his monthly field service is maintained in Admin.—See 6:181.

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116. Hour Requirement: The special pioneer hour requirement is 130 hours a month. Sisters who are 40 years of age or older have a requirement of 120 hours a month. It is understood that a special pioneer who serves as a congregation elder in a remote area may at times be needed for additional short-term theocratic assignments. For example, he may need to serve on a special committee or a Disaster Relief Committee, help with circuit or convention organization, assist in the construction or renovation of his own Kingdom Hall, or serve as a substitute circuit overseer. In addition, he may be needed for a brief period of time to train local elders to care for their responsibilities on a Hospital Liaison Committee. In exceptional situations, the travel time to attend an assigned circuit assembly, regional convention, or Kingdom Ministry School may be unusually long. If such assignments prevent him from making his hour requirement, a brief explanation, as well as the number of hours spent, should be included on the monthly report submitted on jw.org or on his monthly S-212 report. An explanation should also be written in the "Remarks" column of the *Congregation's Publisher Record* (S-21) card. However, the hours spent should not be included in the "Hours" column. The branch will also mark the Admin records and consider the remarks when performing the annual review.

117. Annual Review: Each September, the Service Department should review the activity of all special pioneers to see whether they are productive and are fulfilling the requirements of their special form of service. The Branch Committee may feel that certain younger special pioneers with a minimum of three years in special full-time service could serve well as field missionaries in another country. The factors to be considered and the steps to be followed to make such recommendations are outlined in 6:100.

118. If concerns about the activities of a special pioneer are reported, the Service Department may write to the elders and/or the circuit overseer to obtain their observations. Once the facts are known, the Service Department may write a letter of counsel and offer helpful suggestions or may direct the circuit overseer to approach the pioneer privately about the area of concern. If the special pioneer is a single sister, the circuit overseer should be accompanied by a local elder.

119. The special pioneer should be given the opportunity to improve over a reasonable period of time and be commended on any progress made. If there is no response to repeated efforts to assist the special pioneer and the Service Department is convinced that he no longer qualifies, a recommendation can be made to the Branch Committee that he be deleted from that privilege of service. In most cases, a special pioneer with less than 15 years of special full-time service who is consistently unable to meet his monthly hour requirement because of serious and debilitating health problems, perhaps for six months or so, should leave special full-time service. If married, careful consideration needs to be given as to whether the other mate should continue as a special pioneer. What would be in the best interests of the couple and of the organization? Would it be good to transition both of them out of special full-time service? (See 6:130.) If the Branch Committee feels that one mate should continue as a special pioneer while the other should not, then please provide your recommendation to the Service Committee. Extra consideration should be shown to those who are 50 years of age or older, or who have 15 or more years in special full-time service.—See 6:124.

120. Reassignment: If necessary, special pioneers may be moved after three years. However, there is no need to adjust an assignment of a special pioneer unless circumstances necessitate such a move. If a special pioneer requests to be assigned to another congregation, the Service Department should consider the needs of the field, factoring in any extenuating circumstances.

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121. Allowances: A special pioneer's personal, travel, PEA, and housing allowances are established for each country by the Publishing Committee. (See 5:10.) A special pioneer may also benefit from an Automobile Expense Account (AEA) if that arrangement is available in the country. (See 5:14.) A special pioneer may not receive a double allowance unless exceptional approval is given by the Service Committee. The housing allowance may be given to special pioneers according to the average of the actual amount they pay for housing and utilities up to the maximum shown on the *Record of Allowance* form (A-29). Any exception for high-rent areas should be referred to the Publishing Committee. Special pioneers who are on an approved leave of absence, who are using personal time away, or who are ill are eligible to continue to receive their regular monthly allowance and PEA as long as they continue as special full-time servants. If a special pioneer needs some assistance to cover his actual round-trip travel expenses to attend his congregation's assigned circuit assembly, regional convention, or Kingdom Ministry School, the Branch Committee may reimburse actual travel expenses upon request. This provision is not to be advertised and is intended only to cover unusually high travel expenses that may be incurred in order to reach the assigned assembly or school.

122. Allowances and PEA credits are given regardless of the time spent in the field service month by month. Special pioneers are allowed to do limited secular work as long as it does not interfere with their meeting the hour requirement.

123. Moving Expenses: When reassigning special pioneers, it is good to select a territory that is not too distant from their preceding assignment, in order to avoid unnecessary expenses. If a special pioneer cannot personally cover the expense of the transfer, he may request assistance from the branch. The Branch Committee may reimburse each special pioneer up to USD 500, depending on his needs. If the cost is more, then the recommendation for reimbursement should be referred to the Service Committee.

124. Infirm Special Pioneers: If a special pioneer with less than 15 years of special full-time service is consistently unable to meet his monthly hour requirement because of serious and debilitating health problems, perhaps for six months or so, then it may be best for the person to leave the special full-time service. On the other hand, for those who are 50 years of age or older or who have 15 or more years in special full-time service, a **reduced hour requirement may be appropriate.** To determine a reasonable hour goal, the branch office should receive a recommendation from the special pioneer's body of elders and one from the circuit overseer before submitting the recommendation to the Service Committee. For reporting purposes, **all special pioneers with an approved reduced hour requirement should be given the FSI enrollment code.** Periodically, the branch should review the circumstances of the special pioneers to determine whether the reduction is still needed or whether a further reduction should be recommended to the Service Committee. If an infirm special pioneer is once again able to reach the full hour requirement, the branch may adjust the person's enrollment to FS without consulting with the Service Committee. In most cases, a reduced hour requirement is better than no hour requirement at all. The recommendation that a special pioneer have no hour requirement is usually reserved for special pioneers who have extremely limiting circumstances because of advanced age or life-threatening health issues and whose hour requirement has already been progressively reduced.—See 6:119, 128.

125. Marriage: If a single special pioneer becomes engaged to be married, he or she should inform the Service Department right away. If the special pioneer indicates that he or she wishes

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to continue in the special pioneer work along with his or her prospective mate, the branch should immediately request a confidential *Personal Qualifications Report* (S-326) from the special pioneer's body of elders and one from his or her circuit overseer.

- **If the prospective mate lives in the branch territory,** the branch should send him or her a *Questionnaire for Prospective Special Pioneer* (S-208) to fill out. In addition, the prospective mate's body of elders and circuit overseer should be asked to complete separate *Personal Qualifications Reports* (S-326).
- **If the prospective mate does not live in the branch territory,** the Branch Committee should obtain the S-208 and S-326 forms from the respective branch office along with their recommendation.

The Branch Committee will review the special pioneer's qualifications and those of his or her prospective mate, taking into consideration the reputation and the physical health and stamina of each one. The prospective mate **should be at least 21 years old, baptized three years or longer, in full-time service for at least two years, in good health, and able to maintain an active schedule.** If there is a great difference in age between the two who are planning to marry, the Branch Committee should consider carefully whether this would cause negative talk or be a stumbling block to others. If the special pioneer and the prospective mate are qualified, the Branch Committee may enroll them as special pioneers together, effective the date of their marriage. Otherwise, the Branch Committee will need to consider carefully whether it would be best for the special pioneer to discontinue his or her service prior to marriage. If the special pioneer does not agree with the Branch Committee's decision or if the case is unusual, the Branch Committee may submit the matter along with its recommendation to the Service Committee. If the prospective mate does not qualify, then the engaged special pioneer should be informed that he or she will need to discontinue special full-time service prior to his or her marriage. If there is a situation that merits an exception to this policy, please provide details to the Service Committee. It is understood that in some exceptional situations it may be appropriate for one mate to continue as a special pioneer while the other mate does not.—See 6:130.

126. Pregnancy: A special pioneer couple who learn that they are to be parents should inform the branch immediately. The couple should be given a period of three months to get settled, during which they will continue to receive their monthly allowance. During this three-month period, the couple will need to locate suitable accommodations and find employment, so it is not expected that they will meet their monthly hour requirement. If one or both mates wish to become regular pioneers, they will have an additional three months to make the transition and their full-time service history would continue uninterrupted.

127. There is no provision for former special pioneers to be reappointed when a minor child is still living at home. If in the past the branch allowed a special pioneer couple to continue in that work while raising one or two children, it would be good to review the special pioneers' activity to determine whether they are still effective in their ministry. In all cases, it is up to the Branch Committee to evaluate the circumstances of special pioneers to decide whether they should remain in special full-time service. For information on transitional financial assistance, see 6:130.

128. Personal Time Away: A sample letter to all special pioneers that explains the personal time away arrangement is available on MDS. A copy of this letter should be sent to newly enrolled special pioneers along with their assignment letter and supply of forms. There may be no need for the Service Department to maintain personal time away records for infirm special pioneers who because of

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advanced age or chronic ailment no longer have a specific monthly hour requirement. That matter can be decided by the Branch Committee.—See 6:124.

129. Leave of Absence: The branch office is authorized to grant leave of absence time to all special full-time servants in the field, such as special pioneers, circuit overseers, field missionaries, and field instructors. If a **serious health matter or a family emergency** arises, the person should write or telephone the branch office and explain the situation in detail. There is no need for the person to use all of his accumulated personal time away to care for a serious health matter or a family emergency. However, it may be reasonable for the person to combine some of his personal time away with a leave of absence granted to him by the branch office. The Service Department overseer *or* his assistant is authorized to grant special full-time servants in the field **up to 14 calendar days, including Saturdays and Sundays, of leave of absence** in any service year. The Service Department overseer or his assistant *and* a member of the Branch Committee may grant these individuals **up to 30 calendar days of leave** in any service year. Any additional request for leave of absence should be handled by the Branch Committee. Though the granting of leave of absence to special full-time servants in the field is left to the Branch Committee to handle, any case that would involve granting **more than 90 calendar days of leave of absence** in any service year should be referred to the Service Committee. **The Branch Committee should grant leave of absence time progressively,** based on the circumstances, rather than immediately granting the person a full 90 calendar days, including Saturdays and Sundays, of leave time in any service year. In some cases, the Branch Committee should consider whether it would be better for a person or a couple to terminate special full-time service and inform the branch office when their circumstances have changed. These situations must be carefully reviewed and handled on a case-by-case basis.—See 5:23.

- During an approved leave of absence, the person's permanent enrollment code will remain the same. While on emergency leave, the person is not expected to meet a monthly hour requirement. If needed, the branch office is authorized to increase a circuit overseer's monthly allowance up to the amount provided to special pioneers during the time that he and his wife, if married, are on an approved leave of absence.

130. Transitional Financial Assistance: At the time that it is determined that an individual will **discontinue special full-time service,** the Branch Committee may see a need to provide the person, depending on his circumstances, with some **transitional financial assistance.** The amount given is not to exceed the equivalent of a special pioneer's allowance per month for a period of up to three months. This arrangement is confidential and is not for the general information of those in special full-time service. It is not expected that the Branch Committee would need to extend this provision to every person departing special full-time service. If the branch office has an arrangement to provide basic health-care support to those in the Worldwide Order, the Branch Committee may feel that it is appropriate to allow the person to continue benefiting from this arrangement as well. **The Branch Committee is authorized to grant up to three months of such transitional financial assistance.** If at the end of the three-month period there is an urgent need for transitional assistance to continue, the Branch Committee may consider approving up to three additional months. In a rare case, when this period has elapsed and it is felt that additional transitional assistance is needed, a recommendation and detailed explanation should be sent to the Service Committee for consideration. A person is not expected to meet an hour requirement

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in the ministry in order to receive transitional financial assistance.—See 5:150, 213; 6:4, 106, 119, 125, 127, 143, 155.

Circuit Overseers

131. *Circuit Overseer Guidelines* and the latest correspondence from the Service Committee provide detailed information regarding the activity of circuit overseers.

132. Substitute Circuit Overseers: The qualifications for substitute circuit overseers are outlined in *Circuit Overseer Guidelines.* Generally, substitute circuit overseers are given access to *Circuit Overseer Guidelines* and to the letters addressed to all circuit overseers. Substitute circuit overseers should not be used on a *regular basis* to care for an entire circuit. Thus, branches will want to have a reasonable number of approved circuit overseers available for use when needed, such as when a circuit overseer will be away for more than three months. Perhaps such brothers could serve as temporary special pioneers while waiting for the next permanent assignment to become available.

133. Circuit overseers may submit recommendations for new substitute circuit overseers using the *Personal Qualifications Report* (S-326). Before a brother is recommended to serve as a substitute circuit overseer or a circuit overseer, he must have attended the Ministerial Training School, the Bible School for Single Brothers, the Bible School for Christian Couples, the School for Kingdom Evangelizers, or the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead. The Service Department should check to see whether he is qualified to serve on special committees and has been recommended as a convention speaker. After the S-326 is evaluated and if everything is positive, the body of elders should be asked to provide its observations and its recommendation of the brother and, if married, his wife, using the S-326 forms. If a positive recommendation is received from both the body of elders and the circuit overseer, the brother may be sent a *Questionnaire for Prospective Substitute Circuit Overseer* (S-324).

134. Substitute circuit overseers are **appointed by the Branch Committee.** The Service Department should submit the completed questionnaire and the S-326 forms from the circuit overseer and the body of elders, as well as any other information that would be helpful to the Branch Committee for its evaluation. If the brother is appointed, a letter should be sent to him informing him of this. A copy of the letter is sent to the circuit overseer with instructions that he provide two weeks of training.

135. *Circuit Overseer Guidelines* outlines how circuit overseers can assist substitute circuit overseers who are not meeting the high standard expected of those serving in this capacity. If a substitute circuit overseer is reproved or disfellowshipped or is removed as an elder for any other reason, the date of his **deletion** as a substitute circuit overseer should be entered in Admin. The Service Department may refer complex cases involving a substitute circuit overseer's qualifications to the Branch Committee for consideration.

136. Circuit Overseers: In view of the great trust placed upon circuit overseers, the Branch Committee must give these recommendations very careful and prayerful consideration.—Luke 12:48b.

137. Qualifications: The qualifications for circuit overseers are outlined in *Circuit Overseer Guidelines.* Since the responsibility that is entrusted to circuit overseers of appointing and deleting elders and ministerial servants is a weighty one, those recommended should be kind, impartial, and just. (Ex. 18: 21) When handling recommendations, whether for appointment or deletion, the circuit overseer must avoid imposing his personal viewpoints and opinions or setting arbitrary rules. (1 Cor. 4:6) Before being recommended to serve as a circuit overseer, he should have proved that he strives to imitate Jehovah and His Son by caring for matters with love and

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patience. (Deut. 10:17; 16:18, 19; Isa. 42: 1-4) In this way, he demonstrates deep respect and submission to Jehovah and to the Head of the Christian congregation, Jesus Christ.—Eph. 1:22.

- All brothers recommended as circuit overseers should be graduates of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead, the School for Kingdom Evangelizers, the Bible School for Christian Couples, or the Bible School for Single Brothers.
- Those being recommended should display evidence of good judgment, spiritual depth, loyalty to God's Word and organization, and soundness of mind. Such qualities are more important than having a compelling, charming personality.
- Those recommended for circuit work should have served as congregation elders for a minimum of three years and have at least two years in full-time service, preferably longer.
- Brothers who are 25 years of age or younger and those 50 years of age or older would usually not be recommended.—See 6:139.
- If the brother is married, his wife should be at least 21 years old, baptized three years or longer, and in full-time service for at least two years.

138. Circuit overseers may submit recommendations of substitute circuit overseers for circuit work, using the S-326 form. After the S-326 is evaluated and if everything is positive, the body of elders should be asked to provide its observations and its recommendation of the brother and, if married, his wife, using the S-326 forms. If a positive recommendation is received from both the body of elders and the circuit overseer, the brother should receive two weeks of training with an experienced circuit overseer. If all is well, he may be sent a *Questionnaire for Prospective Circuit Overseer* (S-323). See *School for Kingdom Evangelizers Office Guidelines* with regard to providing circuit training to graduates. **Before a recommendation is sent to the Governing Body, the substitute circuit overseer should have served congregations a minimum of ten full weeks.** An exception would be when a brother has previously served in circuit work or is a graduate of the Bible School for Single Brothers, the Bible School for Christian Couples, the School for Kingdom Evangelizers, or the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead and has already received ten weeks of training and may have served only a few weeks as a substitute circuit overseer since then.

139. Appointments: Circuit overseers are appointed by the Governing Body. (See 2:26, 30.) There is no need to supply more information than what is requested on the recommendation form unless there are unusual factors that the Governing Body should know. For example, if the Branch Committee is recommending a brother who is not yet 25 years old or a brother who is 50 years of age or older, the reasons for making such an exceptional recommendation should be fully explained. Because of the rigors of this assignment, it is the Governing Body's preference that brothers under the age of 50 be trained to care for this responsibility. If a brother being recommended previously served as a traveling overseer, the reason for his deletion from that privilege of service should be explained. Once the branch office has received an approved recommendation form from the Governing Body, the Service Department will then send the brother an appointment letter (S-308) along with instructions concerning his new assignment.—See 6:137.

140. Correspondence: Circuit overseers should be kept up-to-date with access to copies of all form letters, such as letters to pioneers, bodies of elders, and so forth. Any of the circuit overseer's personal mail received at the branch office should be forwarded to his current address. At the close of each month, circuit overseers send in a *Monthly Report*

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(S-301), which shows their assignments that month, their expenses, their field service report, and dates of personal time away.

141. Size of Circuits: Circuits are generally made up of approximately 16 to 20 congregations, including isolated groups. One factor to take into consideration in determining the number of congregations to be placed in each circuit is the availability, capacity, and distance to the nearest Assembly Hall. In most cases, a circuit overseer should cover his circuit twice annually.

142. Routing: The circuit overseer submits his routing to the branch office three months in advance using the *Circuit Overseer's Route Sheet* (S-300). At the same time, he will send the congregation a *Notice of Visit of Circuit Overseer* (S-302) advising of the dates of his visit. Once the branch office and the congregations have been informed, the circuit overseer should adhere to the routing he submitted. If he feels that a change needs to be made to the routing, he should contact the Service Department and request permission.

143. Death: If a circuit overseer dies, the Service Department should inquire about any expenses incurred for the funeral arrangements. The Service Department can recommend to the Branch Committee that the expenses be covered, giving complete information. Branch Committees may approve the cost of a modest funeral according to local circumstances but should write to the Service Committee for additional approval if the cost will exceed the local approval threshold. The Service Department and Branch Committee should take an active interest in comforting the widow. If the widow has been in the special full-time service for many years, the Service Department can recommend to the Branch Committee that she be appointed as a special pioneer. The Service Department should also assist her with housing and see whether there are any other needs she may have. In the case of a widow who has not been in the special full-time service for many years, the Service Department may recommend to the Branch Committee that she serve as a regular pioneer and that consideration be given to offering her some transitional financial assistance.–See 6:130.

144. When a circuit overseer loses his wife in death, every effort should be made to comfort him. The Service Department may need to allow him a leave of absence from his assignment. (See 6:146.) If he wishes to continue in the circuit work, the Service Department should monitor matters, bringing any concerns or recommendations to the attention of the Branch Committee.

145. Allowances and PEA Credits: See 5:6-8, 18-21, 23-24.

146. Leave of Absence: Situations that may necessitate granting a circuit overseer or his wife a leave of absence are discussed at 6:129 and in *Circuit Overseer Guidelines*.–See 5:23.

147. Questions About the Qualifications of Circuit Overseers: The branch office should follow up on any concerns or complaints received about a circuit overseer that raise serious questions about his qualifications. First, the office needs to obtain the facts. (Prov. 18: 13, 17) In some cases, it may be best to write to the circuit overseer, informing him of what has been reported, and provide him with the opportunity to reply. Serious matters should be referred to the Branch Committee.

148. If what was reported is valid and has raised serious questions about a circuit overseer's qualifications, it may be that a kind letter that outlines the observations and provides loving Scriptural counsel will be sufficient to address the concern. (Prov. 27:9; 1 Tim. 5:1; *w99* 1/15 pp. 21-24) If needed, the Service Department may ask an experienced circuit overseer or branch representative to discuss the matter privately with the circuit overseer and provide him with appropriate Scriptural counsel during the

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next scheduled shepherding visit. (See 6: 158) If the matter needs to be handled sooner, an experienced circuit overseer could be asked to care for the matter. When a personal visit is made, the assigned brother should submit a report to the Service Department that includes a summary of the counsel he provided to the circuit overseer. The report should also comment on how the circuit overseer responded to any counsel given. Following the visit by an experienced circuit overseer or by a branch representative, the branch office could follow up in writing to express sincere appreciation for the circuit overseer's efforts in making improvement and to reinforce the counsel given. (1 Thess. 4:1) If this is not the first time that a similar concern has been brought to his attention, the letter from the Service Department could remind the brother of the previous counsel and encourage him to make a more concerted effort to improve. In such cases, the Service Department should copy the Branch Committee on such letters sent to assist the circuit overseer. If, over a reasonable period of time, the circuit overseer does not improve in spite of repeated efforts to assist him, it may be necessary for the Branch Committee to recommend to the Governing Body his deletion as a circuit overseer. A brief summary of the efforts made to assist him should be included in a numbered letter that is sent along with the *Recommendations to Governing Body* form.—See 2:30.

149. On occasion, complaints may be received involving **the wife of a circuit overseer.** Out of respect for the headship principle, the Service Department will write to the husband, informing him of the negative report and asking for his comments. He may be encouraged to help his wife. (The brother assigned to make the next shepherding visit on the circuit overseer and his wife should receive a copy of any correspondence to the circuit overseer so that the brother can offer assistance and counsel if needed.) Appropriate follow-up should be in harmony with the general principles outlined in the preceding paragraph.

150. When an allegation of serious wrongdoing is made about a circuit overseer, the Service Department should appoint two experienced circuit overseers to investigate. If it is established that there is substance to the report and evidence is available that a serious sin has been committed, the two brothers should notify the Service Department so that a judicial committee can be appointed. If there is insufficient evidence to prove that the allegations are true, the two brothers will make a full report of their findings to the Service Department for evaluation. Although a gross sin may not have been committed, it may be that the circuit overseer's conduct is seriously in question. In such cases, the report should be referred to the Branch Committee for its consideration and direction.—See 2:30.

151. If a circuit overseer confesses to serious wrongdoing, two experienced circuit overseers should be directed by the Service Department to investigate. After confirming the nature and extent of the sin(s) committed, they should report back to the Service Department. The Service Department will appoint a judicial committee consisting of three circuit overseers. Likely, the two who investigated the matter would serve on the committee. The committee's decision, whether reproof or disfellowshipping, is reported to the branch in the normal way. The Service Department would designate a congregation that would hold the records in its confidential file. (It may be the congregation where the former circuit overseer indicates that he will attend meetings.) An announcement of reproof or disfellowshipping would also be made in that congregation. If the former circuit overseer seeks reinstatement, a local congregation judicial committee should hear the plea for reinstatement and seek observations from the branch office before reaching a final decision. If the decision is to reinstate, the appropri-

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ate notification should be sent to the Service Department.

152. Age and Health of Circuit Overseers: Circuit overseers will discontinue their assignment on August 31 of the service year that they reach 70 years of age. The brother and his wife, if married, will be transferred to serve as special pioneers.—See 6:111.

153. If a circuit overseer who is not yet 70 years of age is experiencing challenges because of age, chronic health problems, or other circumstances, the Service Department should review the situation. If he is a longtime special full-time servant, an encouraging letter can be sent acknowledging his challenges along with the assurance that he will be assisted with his needs if he transfers from the circuit work. This may move him to request an adjustment in his service. He should be invited to contact the Service Department for direction in making the transfer to serve as a special pioneer. The letter may outline what special pioneers receive by way of financial assistance and health care. If the circuit overseer is not inclined to discontinue, it may be good to address the matter during the next scheduled shepherding visit by an experienced circuit overseer or by a branch representative. If the circuit overseer accedes and decides to discontinue, he should submit his decision in writing. The Branch Committee will review any recommendation from the Service Department regarding a reduced special pioneer hour requirement, his allowance and housing, appointment as a substitute circuit overseer, and so forth. When the Branch Committee approves the recommendation, the Service Department will write the circuit overseer a warm, encouraging letter acknowledging his many years of faithful service, the date that his (and his wife's) special pioneer appointment will become effective, and the arrangements that have been made for him and his wife.—See 2:30; 6:111.

154. In cases where the circuit overseer feels strongly about remaining in the work even though this would prove detrimental to his health, the Service Department should present the matter to the Branch Committee. If it agrees, the Branch Committee should submit its recommendation for deletion to the Governing Body. (See 2:30.) If the Governing Body determines that the circuit overseer should discontinue, the Branch Committee may direct that the Service Department draft a letter for the Branch Committee's review, empathizing with his struggles and informing him of the decision made that is in his best interests and those of the congregations. The letter would provide information about a new assignment and arrangements in place that will help him and his wife in connection with the transition.

155. When **a circuit overseer with less than 15 years of special full-time service** needs to discontinue his service, perhaps to care for parents or because of a health problem afflicting him or his wife or because of pregnancy, he should notify the Service Department. The Service Department could recommend to the Branch Committee that they be encouraged to serve as regular pioneers and that consideration be given to offering them some transitional financial assistance.—See 6:130.

156. Marriage: If a single circuit overseer becomes engaged to be married and desires to continue in the circuit work, he should inform the Service Department right away. The Service Department will send a questionnaire (S-323) for him and his fiancée to fill out. Additionally, the Service Department will make discreet inquiries, confidentially writing to the body of elders of the sister's congregation and to her circuit overseer about her qualifications. (If the sister is in her fiancé's circuit, another circuit overseer who knows the sister could be contacted.) In addition to their letters, the elders and the circuit overseer should submit separate *Personal*

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Qualifications Reports (S-326). These reports, whether favorable or unfavorable, and the questionnaire should be submitted to the Branch Committee with a recommendation. The Branch Committee will review the sister's qualifications, her reputation in the congregation and circuit where she serves, and her physical health and stamina. She should be at least 21 years old, baptized three years or longer, and in full-time service for at least two years. If there is a great difference in age between the two who are planning to marry, the Branch Committee should carefully consider whether this would cause negative talk or be a stumbling block to others. **In all cases in which the circuit overseer has requested to stay on in the circuit work after he gets married, the Branch Committee should submit its comments and recommendation to the Service Committee for its decision.** This should be done well ahead of the wedding date if at all possible. If the Service Committee approves that the circuit overseer continue in the circuit work following his marriage, then his wife would immediately be enrolled as the wife of a circuit overseer and they would start serving congregations right away. The Service Department will write the circuit overseer and inform him of the decision.

157. If it is decided that a longtime circuit overseer should not remain in the circuit work after he gets married, he can be appointed as a special pioneer. However, if the sister he is engaged to marry does not have many years in the special full-time service, she may continue as a regular pioneer. Any exceptional cases should be referred to the Service Committee.

158. Shepherding Visits: Circuit overseers and their wives, if married, should receive a shepherding visit at least once every two years. Such visits should be made during a circuit overseer's regular visit to a congregation, not during the week of a circuit assembly. In larger branches, most circuit overseers will receive a visit from another experienced circuit overseer. The experienced circuit overseer in turn will receive a shepherding visit from a branch representative. In smaller branches, branch representatives may visit all the circuit overseers. The Branch Committee is responsible for selecting the brothers who will be used to make such shepherding visits. As soon as the branch representative or the experienced circuit overseer is provided with the names of the circuit overseers he is to visit, he should contact those brothers to determine the best time for the visit.—See 6:148.

159. Circuit overseers assigned to shepherd other circuit overseers should be men who are older in years and experienced as traveling overseers. They should be known as ones who maintain a good personal schedule of Bible study and meditation and who keep up-to-date with published information from 'the faithful slave' and with letters from the branch office. (Matt. 24:45) They should be balanced in judgment, show genuine humility, have a sincere interest in helping others, and have a high regard for the importance of the disciple-making work. (Phil. 4:5; Jas. 3:17; 1 Pet. 5:5) It is especially important that they be men who are compassionate and who are able to be encouraging and helpful to others.—Isa. 32:1, 2; Col. 3:12.

160. Branch representatives assigned to shepherd circuit overseers may be members of the Branch Committee, experienced Service Department deskmen, or responsible brothers in the branch office who have had experience in the traveling work. Each branch representative would normally make no more than one or two such visits per year.

161. Writing Letters to Former Traveling Overseers: In many countries, there are faithful brothers who formerly spent many years in the traveling work. To encourage such older brothers, branch offices may write a personalized letter from time to time. This shows that the organization is interested in their welfare and appreciates what they ac-

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complished in the traveling work during a big part of their life.—Phil. 2:4; 1 Pet. 5:12.

Other Desks in the Service Department

162. Convention Desk: In larger branch offices, a Convention Desk is assigned to ensure that practical and beneficial arrangements are made for holding conventions. Helpful guidance is found in *Convention Organization Guidelines* (CO-1). The desk maintains all files pertaining to regional conventions, including speaker ratings (S-306), convention volunteer reports (CO-53), and so forth.

163. Kingdom Halls and Assembly Halls: A brother in the Service Department should be designated as the contact for the Local Design/Construction Department (LDC). His responsibility will be to determine where Kingdom Halls and Assembly Halls are needed. He will work closely with the LDC to develop a master plan of the number of Kingdom Halls and Assembly Halls that are needed and their priority. The master plan is submitted for approval to the Branch Committee. Once approved, the LDC will use this plan to prioritize and administer construction, renovation, and maintenance projects for Kingdom Halls and Assembly Halls in the branch territory. The brother in the Service Department will work closely with the LDC to review and study regularly the needs for Kingdom Halls and Assembly Halls in order to update the master plan.—See 5: 172.

164. Speaking Assignment Desk: The Teaching Committee provides letters and direction that outline the arrangements for Bethel speakers. These guidelines should be followed regarding assignments, expenses, and so forth.—See 7:71-80.

165. Territory Desk: Territory maps should be prepared using the best map available in the country. Indicate on the state or province maps the territory assigned to each congregation and the boundaries of all circuits. Unassigned territory should also be indicated on this map or on a separate map. The names of circuit overseers followed by the circuit numbers may be placed within the boundary of the area they serve. A territory assignment letter (S-54) is sent to each congregation with the exact written description of the outlined territory. It may also be possible to send a map clearly outlining the congregation's assigned territory. The procedure for congregations to follow in adjusting territory boundaries is outlined on the form *Territory Adjustment Request* (S-6).

166. Theocratic Schools Desk: This desk cares for the various theocratic schools, such as the Pioneer Service School, the School for Kingdom Evangelizers, the Kingdom Ministry School, the School for Congregation Elders, and language seminars.

167. Circuit Overseer Desk: In larger branch offices, a desk may be designated to care for circuit overseers and their needs in harmony with organizational guidelines. The desk assists with the identification, training, and recommendations for appointment of substitute circuit overseers and regular circuit overseers.

Service Reports

168. Monthly Field Service Report: Branch offices should follow the instructions provided in Admin for compiling and sending the *Field Service Report* (S-81) to the Service Committee. The figures for the S-81 are taken from a careful compilation of the *Congregation Reports* (S-1), *Special Pioneer Reports* (S-212), *Home Reports* (A-24), and circuit overseers' *Monthly Reports* (S-301). All publishers are encouraged to report through a congregation. Isolated publishers and pioneers send their reports on the publisher's *Field Service Report* (S-4), indicating that it is from an "isolated publisher" or "isolated pioneer." The figure for the "Public by Mail" column on the S-81 can be obtained from the month-to-month record of books, brochures,

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and magazines sent from the branch to the non-Witness public. In addition, all magazines or literature sent out in response to coupons are listed as "Public by Mail." Comments about new peaks in publishers, general highlights of the work, or trends may be submitted in the "Remarks" column. Questions or significant figures should be sent to the Service Committee in a separate letter.—See 6:68.

169. A separate *Field Service Report* (S-81) should be submitted monthly for each political entity under the oversight of the branch. Reports should be sent no later than the 28th of the following month. Late or missing reports may be included in the report for the following month. Be sure that any peaks shown do not include reports in excess of the total number of congregations for that month.

170. Annual Field Service Report: Branch offices should follow the instructions provided in Admin for compiling and sending the end-of-year figures.

Files and Filing

171. Since the files in the office are used by many to do their work, **all correspondence must be promptly and correctly filed** so that it can be readily located. As a general guideline, items should be filed within one week of their being completed. The secretary has the responsibility for this and should have a regular routine for filing.

172. Permanent congregation files are stored in a very secure, locked area of the branch. Each congregation file has four sections: (1) circuit overseers' reports, (2) general correspondence, (3) reinstatements, and (4) disfellowshippings and disassociations. **[See Chart 6.1.]**

173. Circuit Overseers' Reports: S-303 and S-2 forms and supplemental letters are kept in the front of the file in date order with the most recent at the front. When a new report is received, a red mark is made on the upper right corner of the preceding report, and the new report is inserted in front of it. If the first report in the file has this red mark, then the most recent report has been removed.

174. General Correspondence: This material is filed directly behind the circuit overseers' reports in date order with the most recent at the front of the general correspondence. The *Congregation Application* (S-51), or in its absence the oldest *Report on Circuit Overseer's Visit With Congregation* (S-303), is filed at the back of the general correspondence. If the last circuit overseer's report prior to the elder arrangement in 1972 is available, it should be stamped "DO NOT DESTROY" and retained just in front of the S-51 form. Correspondence regarding an individual accused of child abuse should be marked "DO NOT DESTROY."

175. Reinstatements: Whether recorded on S-77 forms or in letters from judicial committees, correspondence related to reinstatements is filed directly behind the general correspondence and S-51 form in the date order of reinstatement, with the most recent reinstatement in the front of this section. The S-77 form and attached correspondence about those reinstated are kept at least five years. The S-77 form may be marked "DO NOT DESTROY" by the Service Desk if the material should be kept longer.

176. Disfellowshippings and Disassociations: These are kept at the back of the file. The most recent disfellowshipping record is filed at the very back of the folder. When an individual is reinstated, the date of reinstatement is recorded on the S-77 form, which is then filed with the reinstatements, as noted above.

177. Hold File: Each Service Desk maintains a HOLD FILE for pending items. This file typically contains correspondence on matters for which the deskman has requested further information or comments from circuit overseers or elders. It may be best also to keep in

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the hold file a complete copy of any material routed to Service Department oversight or to the Branch Committee. Every month the secretary should go through the hold file, checking to see whether a response has been made. If the office has not received the requested information or comments within three months, he should check with the deskman to see whether a reminder letter should be sent. When sending a reminder letter to a body of elders, a courtesy copy is provided to the circuit overseer with a blind PS asking him to make certain that the elders respond promptly.

178. Files for Isolated Pioneers and Publishers: When it is not feasible for an isolated group of publishers to be cared for by a congregation, a file folder for each isolated publisher group that cannot yet be formed into a congregation is made and arranged alphabetically according to the name of the place where the publisher receiving mail for the group resides. All correspondence to and from the group, as well as reports from the circuit overseer for his visits to the group, is placed in this file. When a group is established as a congregation, the contents of the folder are added to the CONGREGATION FILE. A file folder is also made for ISOLATED PIONEERS. The S-4 forms from isolated pioneers are kept for a year in this folder. These files are kept together and not with the congregation files.

179. Circuit Files: The S-2 forms showing the appointment of assembly overseers and assistant assembly overseers are kept in these files.—See 6:52.

180. Branch Correspondence Files: When other branches send correspondence to your branch for forwarding to individuals in the field, they usually include a courtesy copy for your branch file. Such copies are filed in the appropriate folder of the BRANCH CORRESPONDENCE FILES, not in the congregation files. If much mail is received from other branches, it may be helpful to sort the mail into categories, such as Branch Accommodations, Donation Letters, Kingdom Hall Information Requests, and Miscellaneous. The respective retention policy should be followed for each category.

181. Special Pioneer Files: A file folder is made for each special pioneer or, if married, for each couple. The files are arranged alphabetically. The special pioneer's current congregation assignment, his *Application for Regular Pioneer Service* (S-205), and the S-208 are a permanent part of the file. Also filed here are the two most recent S-326 forms submitted by the circuit overseer and the file copy of the personal annual encouragement letter sent by the Service Desk. (The personal encouragement letter is sent after the receipt of the first S-326 form each service year.) General correspondence may be disposed of when the files are weeded according to the branch's document retention policy.—See 6:115, 186.

182. Active and Inactive Circuit Overseer Files: An *active* file folder is made for each circuit overseer by the secretary. This folder contains correspondence from the circuit overseer pertaining to his circuit as a whole, including any S-326 forms that were submitted on the circuit overseer and his wife, the file copies of correspondence written to the circuit overseer in connection with these reports, and correspondence regarding his field activity or his personal affairs. When a circuit overseer discontinues the circuit work, the folder is placed in the *inactive* file.

183. Active and Inactive Substitute Circuit Overseer Files: An *active* file folder is made for each substitute circuit overseer. This folder contains the correspondence regarding his appointment, including the S-324, any S-326 forms, and so forth. When a substitute circuit overseer discontinues the circuit work, the folder is placed in the *inactive* file.

184. "Declaration Pledging Faithfulness" Files: If used, a "Declaration Pledging Faithfulness" is filed by the last name of the person on the declaration. A

separate list of names of those in the file should be maintained.—See *Correspondence Guidelines*, pp. 73-74.

185. Files for Those Disfellowshipped and Disassociated: A permanent file of those disfellowshipped and disassociated is kept. If S-79a/b cards are used by the branch office, they are filed alphabetically by last name, first name, and middle name and should be stored in a very secure, locked room.

186. Weeding Section Files: Deskmen are responsible for weeding the congregation files for their section. Not to be weeded are any S-2 or S-52 forms. These are to be kept indefinitely in the congregation file. Any correspondence dealing with the transfer of appointed brothers from one congregation to another should also be kept indefinitely. At least the last five copies of the S-303 forms and supplemental letters are kept. Older S-303 forms marked "DO NOT DESTROY" are also kept. The schedule for file retention is to be followed. A secretary may weed the files if directed to do so by the deskman. However, the deskman must carefully check the items slated for shredding within a short time of their being weeded by the secretary so that nothing of significance is discarded. The secretary should not shred anything from the files without getting the approval of the deskman.—See 6:181.

187. Electronic Files: The work of the Service Department should be maintained on a computer network system, which is backed up regularly. Admin supports scanning documents into the Correspondence and Workflow modules. However, before undertaking a project to scan large volumes of historical documents, please first consult with the WHQ Computer Department. Once hard copy paperwork has been scanned and verified, then it can be shredded. Electronic files not stored in Admin should be labeled and kept in the following structure. In the work folder, a subfolder should be designated for the YEAR (2010, 2011, and so on) and a subsubfolder for each MONTH (January, February, and so on). Each file should be labeled with the year, month, day, desk symbols, state or province abbreviation, city name, congregation number, and name of individual or brief description of the matter. For example: 2009_02-16_SASSA_NY_Pawling_12345_John_Publisher.docx and 2009_02-16_SFSSF_CA_Los_Angeles_West_98765_BOE_Korean Group.docx.

WATCHTOWER BIBLE SCHOOL OF GILEAD

188. Purpose of the School: The purpose of this 20-week school is to provide intensive training in Bible study and theocratic organization for experienced and well-qualified special full-time servants who have already proved that they are mature Christians. With this additional training, these individuals should be able to do more to stabilize and strengthen the field and branch organization.

189. Basic Requirements:

- Married couples, single brothers, and single sisters between the ages of 25 and 50 who have been in special full-time service for at least three consecutive years.
- Candidates must have the potential for strengthening and stabilizing the field or branch organization to a greater degree and must have demonstrated that they enjoy serving their brothers and can help others in a kind way to learn and adhere to Scriptural and theocratic direction.
- They must be exemplary in all aspects of Christian living.
- Married couples must have served the last three years together in special full-time service.
- A brother must be an elder who has been serving for a minimum of two consecutive years.
- Must be able to read, write, and speak English fluently.

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- Must be in good health. Those who have chronic ailments, who have physical or emotional disorders, who require regular visits to a doctor or a chiropractor, who suffer from severe allergies, or who require a special diet should not be recommended for Gilead training.
- Neither past graduates of Gilead nor current members of a Branch or Country committee should be recommended.
- Circuit overseers must have already attended the School for Circuit Overseers and Their Wives.

190. Selecting Candidates: When considering candidates to be recommended for Gilead School training, the Branch Committee should have clearly in mind the current and long-term needs at Bethel and in the field. (See 6:101.) The following points should be considered:

- In reviewing a candidate's strengths and limitations, spiritual qualities such as humility and submission to theocratic instruction are more important than a person's age, seniority, nationality, or secular education.—1 Sam. 16:6, 7; Acts 16:2; Jas. 3:17; 1 Pet. 3:4.
- It is the Governing Body's preference that brothers who are being considered for appointment to the Branch or Country committee attend Gilead School.
- Which special full-time servants would readily apply themselves to the intensive training at Gilead and, as a result, be spiritually strengthened so as to be of *greater use* to the organization?—Phil. 2: 20-22; 1 Tim. 4:15.
- With Gilead training, which brothers would serve as effective and discerning overseers in key Bethel departments, as deskmen in the Service Department, as field instructors, or as circuit overseers?
- Since the spirituality of translators is critical to the production of high-quality spiritual food, which translators would benefit the most from an in-depth study of the Bible and organizational matters at Gilead?
- In the field, which special full-time servants have proved themselves to be outstanding evangelizers, maintaining their joy despite challenging circumstances?
- Among the single sisters, which ones are excellent teachers in the field, balanced, modest, respectful of authority, sound in mind, and able to get along well with all types of personalities?
- In lands where the Kingdom work is well-established and where there are many spiritually mature brothers and sisters, the Branch Committee should give consideration to recommending those who could fill needs in *other* lands after Gilead training.

191. Processing Questionnaires: Gilead recommendations are to be submitted to the Service Committee each year during the month of December. In December, each branch should submit recommendations for four married couples and four single persons. If a person indicates on the questionnaire that he does not have the circumstances to be sent to another country, he may still be recommended for Gilead training if the Branch Committee firmly believes that the person will make a major contribution to the Kingdom work locally.

192. Qualified candidates being considered should be provided with (1) a copy of the *Questionnaire to Attend the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead* (G-12), (2) a copy of the G-16 cover letter, and (3) the A-63 letter. To ensure that the Branch Committee has a complete picture of the strengths and limitations of those being considered, a *Personal Qualifications Report* (S-326) should be obtained from the candidate's local body of elders and

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circuit overseer. If the candidate is serving at Bethel, a report should also be obtained from his department overseer and elder group. Before the Branch Committee reviews the completed G-12 questionnaires, it should confirm that each question has been answered correctly and completely. The Branch Committee should review the G-12 questionnaires and other reports very carefully before making final selections. Each recommendation should be sent electronically to the Service Committee with a very brief covering numbered letter that includes the following attachments:

- *Gilead Student Recommendations* (G-7) form. The branch should provide specific comments on each candidate's qualifications and future potential and how the person would be used after Gilead. Gilead recommendations are valid until the following December.
- *Questionnaire to Attend the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead* (G-12). In addition to this completed questionnaire, a quality full-length color photo should be included as an electronic file or scanned document.

BRANCH VISITS

193. Branch Visits: The Service Committee assigns headquarters representatives to make branch visits. Such visits are usually arranged each year. The headquarters representative's primary work is to encourage the Bethel family, to aid the members of the Branch Committee in caring for their assignments, and to see that matters are being conducted in accord with the Scriptures and in harmony with direction from the Governing Body. (Acts 16:4, 5; Rom. 1:11, 12; Phil. 1:8-11) During his visit to the Bethel departments, the headquarters representative makes himself available to the members of the Bethel family who wish to speak about their service or personal matters. To get a firsthand report of the progress of the Kingdom work in the field, the headquarters representative will meet with some of the circuit overseers. During the visit, he will also arrange to meet with all of the field missionaries. Following his review of branch operations, the brother will provide a brief report to the Branch Committee, outlining points of commendation. As needed, the headquarters representative will also report on any significant matters that he feels may be adversely affecting the progress of the preaching and disciple-making work as well as the smooth operation of the work at the branch.—1 Cor. 14:40.

194. The Branch Committee should prepare well for the branch visit in harmony with direction received from the Service Committee. (See 7:67-70.) Prior to the headquarters representative's arrival, the Branch Committee should already have completed the *Branch Visit Questionnaire* (A-26) for the current service year. At the end of his visit, the headquarters representative will provide his additional comments on the form and give to the Branch Committee a letter providing his observations, commendation, and counsel, if needed. The A-26 questionnaire, as well as his letter to the Branch Committee, is then sent to the Service Committee, which in turn will send each respective section of the report to the appropriate Governing Body committee. The Governing Body committees will not send routine acknowledgments of the report. If a matter is raised that requires specific direction from world headquarters, the Branch Committee should write further about it to the appropriate Governing Body committee.

195. Shepherding Visits: Governing Body members are assigned to make two shepherding visits per year to selected branches for the encouragement of the Branch Committees and Bethel families. (1 Pet. 5:2, 3) Such visits are about one week in length. Usually, a shepherding visit and the annual branch visit will be scheduled some months apart from each other. The shepherding visit will require

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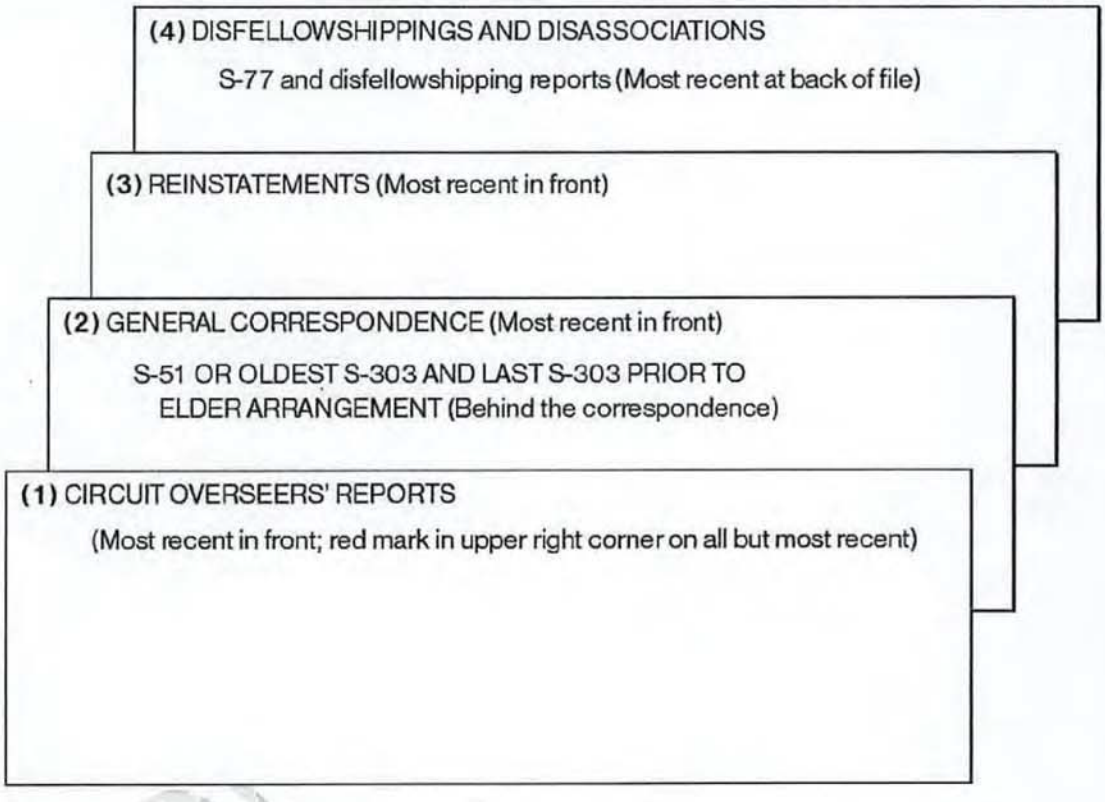
less preparation than a typical branch visit. For example, field missionaries and Bethelites serving in remote offices are not invited to the branch office during the shepherding visit. In addition, prior to the visit, there will be no need for the Branch Committee to complete a *Branch Visit Questionnaire* (A-26). A copy of the latest *Branch Visit Questionnaire* (A-26) should be made available to the Governing Body member on his arrival. There is no need for the branch office to arrange an extensive schedule of visits to Bethel departments. Rather, at the time of the arrival of the Governing Body member, he will inform the Branch Committee of how he will carry out the visit.

196. A feature of the shepherding visit is a special program for congregations. If possible, the special program should be streamed to locations throughout the branch territory. In years when both a branch visit and a shepherding visit are scheduled, the special program held during the branch visit will be kept smaller, perhaps being held at a nearby Assembly Hall. That program will not be streamed to other locations.

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CHART 6.1

ORGANIZATION OF PERMANENT CONGREGATION FILES



TEACHING COMMITTEE

1. The Teaching Committee's focus is on providing instruction that highlights the practical value of the fine spiritual food that we receive from "the faithful and discreet slave." (Matt. 24:45; 1 Tim. 4:16) This committee's general scope of operation is summarized at the end of this chapter. **[See Chart 7.1.]**

CIRCUIT ASSEMBLIES

2. Circuit assembly programs and outlines are provided yearly by the Teaching Committee. These events are to be conducted in accord with *Circuit Organization Guidelines* (S-330). Taking into account the recommendations of the circuit overseers, the Branch Committee will arrange to hold two one-day circuit assemblies a year for each circuit or section of a circuit. Normally, a visiting speaker will be sent from the branch to serve one of the events (*CA-br*). A circuit overseer will handle the main talk(s) for the other assembly (*CA-co*). Where practical, the Branch Committee may assign visiting speakers from the branch to serve circuit assemblies in other countries under its oversight, following the guidelines given in 7:9-10. Only circuit overseers or regular members of the Bethel family (BBR) who are currently appointed as visiting speakers at circuit assemblies may be used for these assignments. (See 7:73 for guidelines on these appointments.)

3. If it is felt that the published *CA-br* program should be adjusted for a certain locality, a proposal should be sent to the Teaching Committee for approval. In countries with only one circuit or where publishers are very poor and cannot afford to travel to three events in a year, the Branch Committee could consider any of the following optional arrangements: (1) obtaining a DVD of an earlier *CA-br* program in the language of the circuit for showing at the Kingdom Hall(s) where the affected publishers meet, (2) merging the two yearly events for the affected circuit into one weekend, or (3) not holding the *CA-br* program. In countries where restrictions make it impossible to hold regional conventions or circuit assemblies, arrangements may be made to present abbreviated programs in Kingdom Halls or at other appropriate locations.

4. Foreign-language circuit assemblies are organized when at least 200 attendees can convene in that language and if there are enough qualified speakers to hold the program. If the Branch Committee feels that an exception is needed, a request may be sent to the Teaching Committee.

5. For the benefit of smaller foreign-language congregations and groups, assemblies may be interpreted simultaneously. When a foreign-language session has been approved, the circuit overseer assigns qualified speakers to present selected parts, such as the baptism talk and the *Watchtower* Study summary, in the foreign language of the audience. This session is held concurrently with the program in the primary language of the event. Depending on the availability of interpreters, other parts can be interpreted simultaneously for the benefit of the foreign-language audience. (Branches without enough fluent speakers in a particular foreign-language field may request a branch where assemblies and conventions are held in that language to provide DVDs of a video file of such events. If a branch can provide such a recording, it should display only what transpires on stage. Footage of the audience

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or other areas of the venue should not be shown. Moreover, while reasonably good video is desired, high-quality audio is of foremost importance.) Portions of the recorded program may be shown interspersed with live presentations by the available speakers or interpreters. These sessions are usually held in a separate room or area of the venue and are organized so that they will not distract the audience attending the main program. (Where possible, an FM transmitter and small FM receivers with earphones may be used. The circuit may have to purchase the FM transmitter.) If a circuit overseer for a foreign-language field feels that enough qualified speakers and interpreters are available, he should recommend to the branch office that sessions be held in that language. This request should be sent well in advance of the scheduled event. In his report he should answer the following questions: How many publishers and interested persons would benefit from this program? How many elders and ministerial servants qualify to give talks or interpret the program? How many parts could the appointed brothers realistically present? How many other publishers qualify to interpret the program? —See 7:15.

6. If simultaneous interpretation is approved for circuit events, a qualified brother should oversee the arrangement, under the direction of the assembly overseer. If possible, the brother selected should know the foreign language. The circuit overseer should meet with this brother to decide on such matters as a practical location for the foreign-language session, lighting, and sound.

7. Interpreters should be exemplary publishers approved by the Congregation Service Committee to assist in this way. Accurate knowledge of the truth of God's Word is required in order to interpret Scriptural thoughts correctly into another language. It is essential that an interpreter have a good comprehension of both languages, particularly of the target language.—See 7:53, 70.

8. The brother overseeing the interpretation should schedule the assignments well in advance. If at all possible, qualified brothers, rather than sisters, should be used for the principal talks, particularly those of the circuit overseer or the visiting speaker from the branch. When qualified sisters must be used, they should be referred to the published direction given on this matter. (*w09* 11/15 pp. 12-13) A copy of the talk outline may be given in advance to the assigned interpreter, who will use it for preparation purposes only. In addition, the speaker may be able to give the interpreter a copy of his personal notes prior to the presentation. Either way, those copies are only to be used by the interpreter to prepare for his assignment. Neither one of the copies nor a translation thereof should be used by the interpreter during the actual presentation of the talk. Rather, he should listen carefully to the speaker's delivery and convey to the audience in his own words an accurate interpretation of the speaker's statements. (See *be* p. 55.) Any copies of the talk outline or the speaker's notes given to the interpreter beforehand should be returned to the speaker or destroyed after the program. Before the actual delivery of the talk, the speaker would do well to meet with the assigned interpreter to discuss pertinent details of his presentation. This guideline may be followed for all interpreted events. If a Governing Body member or a helper to a Governing Body committee is present and he is comfortable with the arrangement, his prayer may be interpreted, either consecutively or simultaneously. In all other cases, the prayer should be said by a brother fluent in the target language. However, if the brother speaks another language that most in the audience also understand, he could give the prayer using that common language. —See 7:15, 53.

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9. Travel Expenses Associated With Circuit Assembly (*CA-br*) Assignments: The circuit should cover the transportation expenses of the visiting speaker and his wife (if married) even if he uses a branch vehicle to travel to his assignment. The branch is authorized to fund or supplement any financial shortfall for circuits unable to cover these travel expenses. In any case, a visiting Bethel representative should be assigned every year. Even if the branch must initially cover the travel expenses of the visiting speaker and his wife (if married), the insolvent circuit might still be able to contribute "something" to assist. (1 Cor. 16:1, 2) As a possible option, Branch or Country committee members could serve such circuits in conjunction with their annual visits to nearby missionaries or remote translation offices.—See 7:2.

10. Time Away for Circuit Assembly (*CA-br*) Assignments: Generally, Bethel speakers would need no more than a total of two days to travel to and from most circuit assembly (*CA-br*) assignments. (For these assignments, wives would be granted the same amount of time away from work as their husbands.) Those closer to Bethel may require little or no time away. In some branches overseeing vast territories that span many time zones or in lands where travel is very difficult, more than a day's time might be needed for a speaker to reach his assignment. In such rare cases, the visiting speaker should make a reasonable determination of the amount of travel time needed, considering such local circumstances as the reliability of the transportation, the schedules, and the travel costs. (See 7:2.) Occasionally, a brother from Bethel might be assigned to serve a circuit assembly (*CA-br*) in a remote area if he will be able to reach the assembly either en route to or returning from another distant assignment, such as a visit to a remote translation office. Also, if a brother will be taking personal time away in a distant part of the branch territory, some thought might be given to having him care for a circuit assembly (*CA-br*) being held in the vicinity.

11. If the circuit assembly (*CA-br*) is scheduled on Sunday and reaching the site will require a significant amount of travel time, the brother would usually travel on Saturday as long as suitable transportation is available and travel costs would not be much higher than on Friday. Typically, he would travel back to Bethel on Monday. When the event is scheduled on Saturday, the speaker would normally leave from Bethel on Friday so as to reach his accommodations for that evening at a reasonable time. Likely, he will return to Bethel on Sunday, providing circumstances allow for a reasonable itinerary that day. If it is normally possible to keep to the aforementioned travel schedule but a speaker opts to leave earlier or return later, he is expected to use personal time away from Bethel.

12. If the above guidelines do not answer questions that could arise regarding this subject, the Branch Committee should feel free to contact the Teaching Committee, explaining what is involved in a particular situation.—See 6:82.

CONVENTIONS

13. In its annual letter to all branches, the Governing Body sets out the program for the coming year, including information about future conventions and general arrangements for holding regional, national, international, or special conventions. **Special conventions** are held every year unless international conventions have been scheduled for that year. They take place in smaller venues that hold from 7,000 to 12,000 attendees, including about 1,500 foreign delegates (1,000 from the United States and 500 from nearby lands.) Branch-planned activities also take place before and/or after the convention. **International conventions** are held every four or five years. They take place in larger

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venues that hold a minimum of 20,000 attendees, including about 3,000 foreign delegates (2,000 from the United States and 1,000 from other countries around the globe). Branch-planned activities also take place before and/or after the convention. An arrangement is made for those in foreign service to be funded to attend the convention of their choice. For more information on how these events should be conducted, please see *Convention Organization Guidelines* (CO-1). Also, when international or special conventions are held, please note that a special provision of time away is made for special full-time servants who are **selected as delegates.** (This is separate and in addition to the usual personal time away or hour credits that are granted to attend one annual regional convention. The two provisions of time away are different and cannot be combined to attend only one event.) The special provision of time away is as follows: Bethel family members and circuit overseers and their wives who are selected as delegates to attend a special or an international convention will be granted one and a half days of personal time away in order to attend all program sessions at one such event. This provision also applies to field instructors and their wives, Assembly Hall servants, and construction servants who are selected as delegates. As for special pioneers, temporary special pioneers, and field missionaries who are selected as delegates to a special or an international convention, they will receive a five-hour credit for each day of the special or international convention.

14. Programs: Convention programs address concerns from Branch Committees regarding specific needs in their part of the field. If a Branch Committee desires to adjust a program because of local needs, it should write the Teaching Committee for direction before proceeding. An abbreviated regional convention program is sent to all branches, as this may be helpful to smaller language groups and territories.

15. Conventions and assemblies should be practical and in good taste and should prove to be a spiritual blessing to those in attendance. These events should be held at a time of year when the majority of the brothers will be able to attend. If the Branch Committee approves simultaneous interpretation into a foreign language for some or all of the parts of the program, a qualified brother should oversee that arrangement. He should work under the oversight of the convention chairman. As with circuit events (see 7:5), if a circuit overseer for a foreign-language field feels that a sufficient number of qualified speakers are available, he may recommend to the branch office that a foreign-language session be held in conjunction with a regional convention in that area. This request should be sent by mid-January, at least one year in advance of the scheduled event. He should inform the branch how many publishers and interested persons would benefit from this arrangement, how many qualified brothers would be available to give talks, and how many parts each of them could handle. (If there are enough publishers, consideration might also be given to presenting the drama at the foreign-language session.) This arrangement would require a program overseer for the foreign-language session who would work under the direction of the Convention Committee. Therefore, the circuit overseer should recommend a qualified brother for this responsibility. Based on the ratings received from the field, the branch office will assign the speakers for all foreign-language sessions. The program overseer appointed to serve the foreign-language sessions will oversee the functioning of the sessions. If approval is given to hold a foreign-language session concurrent with a regional convention program on the same premises where a member of the Governing Body, a helper to a Governing Body committee, or a Branch Committee member is assigned to share on the program in the primary language, such talks should be simul-

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taneously interpreted for the benefit of the foreign-language session. If qualified interpreters are not available, those talks will be assigned to local brothers and presented in the foreign language of the session.–See 7:8.

16. Location of Conventions: When national, international, or special conventions are arranged, one of the larger cities in the country should be selected. Regional conventions should be held in cities that can accommodate the anticipated attendance. For the sake of the witness that will be given, it is best to hold conventions in as many different large cities as possible and practical.

17. Expenses: The branch will cover the expenses involved in holding conventions in its territory and will accept contributions from those in attendance. Well-organized conventions are a real stimulus to the brothers and an encouragement to interested people. If the convention runs smoothly because of good organization and loving oversight, the brothers will generally support it well. It is appropriate to remind the brothers that it is a privilege to support the convention and the worldwide work monetarily.–Luke 16:9-13; 2 Cor., chaps. 8-9.

18. Attendees are encouraged to bring their own food and beverages. If because of local circumstances a branch finds it necessary to provide some basic food items or a beverage at regional conventions or circuit events, a request should be sent to the Teaching Committee clearly explaining why this is needed and how the expenses will be covered. The Teaching and Publishing committees will consider the request.

19. Releasing Newly Translated Publications: When an approved translation is completed on a publication that was not released simultaneously with the English edition, the Branch Committee will need to determine how best to release the item. If the publication will not be available when regional conventions are held, it may be released by means of a general letter to the congregations or with a brief announcement in *Our Kingdom Ministry*. There is no provision for releasing a newly translated publication at a circuit assembly or a special meeting held in connection with a branch visit.

20. If a newly translated publication will be available before the regional convention, the Branch Committee may write the Teaching Committee, recommending that the item be released at that time. This should be recommended only for new publications in the primary language(s) of the branch territory. Along with their recommendation, the Branch Committee would need to supply the title and language of the publication, the proposed ratio of distribution at the regional convention, and at what point during the program they recommend making the announcement. For some items, such as songbooks, the release announcement would likely be made early in the program so that the brothers could begin using them right away. Most often, however, it would be more practical to announce such releases during the final talk of the convention.

21. If it is known that a newly translated publication will be ready for distribution shortly after the local regional conventions, a release announcement could be made during the final talk on the program, stating when the item will be available for request through the congregations. The wording for such brief announcements may follow the pattern used on past convention talk outlines or manuscripts.

22. If regional conventions of the same language will be held in various countries, the release announcement for a new edition of the *New World Translation* should be made first at a regional convention in the country overseeing that language. However, for any

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other translated publication, its release may be announced at the first convention of the season, regardless of the country, as long as the item is available in the language of the convention. (See 7:19-21.) Good communication and cooperation between the branches involved is encouraged. If you desire to have a member of the Governing Body release the Bible, please write and make this request. You should answer the following questions: (1) What is the estimated timetable for printing and shipping? (2) What are the scheduled dates for the first regional convention in that language? (3) In what city will the event be held, and what will be the venue? (4) What is the estimated attendance figure? (5) Will other locations be tied in with the main venue for the talks of the Governing Body member? (6) Will you be able to tie in other regional conventions? (7) What transportation arrangements would need to be made to get to the convention city? Is travel safe? (8) Where will the Governing Body member be accommodated? (9) Are you aware of any local regulations that would impede the participation of a member of the Governing Body on the program? (10) If so, do you foresee the possibility of requesting an exemption from the local authorities? Please note that if the Bible is ready for release at a time other than your convention season, a special program similar to what was organized for the release of the revised English edition may be organized. Such an event may be scheduled as soon as printed copies of the new Bible are available for distribution. In this way, a branch would have two options: (1) Release a revised edition in conjunction with a regional convention whenever that is practical or (2) hold a special event. When a special event is arranged, a large venue may be rented from which the program will originate. The program may be video streamed to Assembly Halls and Kingdom Halls within the branch territory so that as many publishers as possible can benefit. If the language of the release is also the primary language of a country outside the branch territory where the program is being held, arrangements can be made for Assembly Halls and Kingdom Halls in those areas to be tied in as well. The video stream could be delayed as needed for the benefit of locations in different time zones. In this way, many publishers fluent in the language of the release will hear the news simultaneously instead of over a period of months. The program could start at 9:30 a.m. or 10:00 a.m. and last for about three hours, but it might run a bit longer if the talks by a visiting Governing Body member require interpretation. The program will have the following format:

10 min: Opening song and prayer. The chairman follows with a warm welcome to the audience and a few encouraging comments.

30 min: *Watchtower* Study summary. (To be included when the event is held on a Sunday or when a program held on Saturday will need to be video streamed also on Sunday and regular congregation meetings will not be held that weekend.)

15 min: As an optional feature, the 15-minute video presentation entitled *A Precious Gift From God*, about the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*, could be included as it was when the revised English edition was released. Of course, this would need to be translated in advance.

10 min: Group interview of two or three local publishers who remember the original release of the *New World Translation* in the local language.

25 min: Release talk by the visiting Governing Body member.

5 min: Song.

10 min: After inviting the audience to be reseated, the chairman announces that the new Bible will be distributed at this time.

15 min: Talk by a Branch Committee member, based on an outline provided by the Teaching Committee.

15 min: Talk by a Branch Committee member, based on an outline provided by the Teaching Committee.

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40 min:	Talk by the visiting Governing Body member on a topic of his choice.
5 min:	Brief closing comments by the chairman, followed by song and prayer.

23. Convention Committee: The branch office should appoint a Convention Committee made up of the Convention Committee coordinator, the program overseer, and the rooming overseer. These elders should be good organizers and have the time available to care for the assignment. A circuit overseer may be assigned if necessary. It is essential that these brothers be spiritual men who fully manifest the fruitage of the spirit, even under pressure. The Convention Committee should be alert, capable of dealing with officials and other business concerns. In addition to providing oversight to the overall convention operation, the Convention Committee assigns all other department heads.

24. The committee members should be well-respected by the publishers and exhibit good teaching ability. If a brother appointed to a Convention Committee is rated as an average speaker, he should be used on the program in harmony with his speaking ability. If a brother is recommended to serve on a Convention Committee because of outstanding spiritual and organizational qualifications but is not recommended to give a talk on the program because of his limitations as a speaker, the Branch Committee will need to think carefully about whether to appoint him. If he is appointed, perhaps he could be assigned to serve as a session chairman or to offer one of the prayers.

25. Accident Prevention and Security: Give attention to safety when setting up and dismantling at conventions. Do so also when transporting equipment, chairs, or groups of brothers to and from the convention site. Make sure that well-trained and responsible adults are selected in connection with any installation or the use of potentially dangerous equipment, including electrical equipment. Be aware of the danger of theft and vandalism. Ensure that alert brothers are assigned to keep watch over money and valuable equipment, such as sound equipment, at the convention site.

26. Regional Convention Assignments for Branch Committee Members: Branch Committee members should attend one or more regional conventions of their selection at their own expense or through private funding. Please note that as is the case with all Bethel family members, a day and a half of time away from work will be granted to Branch Committee members and their wives in connection with only one yearly regional convention of their choice.

27. In addition, particularly in larger branches, Branch Committee members are encouraged to **attend two additional conventions assigned by the branch.** For these two special assignments, convention and travel time necessary will be granted to the brothers and their wives. At times, because of location or other circumstances, a number of regional conventions might not be visited by a Branch Committee member or another responsible Bethel representative. Where that is the case, the talks given by a Branch Committee member could be video streamed to such regional conventions as long as the technology is available. This provision would allow the audiences at those locations to have some exposure to a Branch Committee member.

28. Convention funds may not be used to defray the Branch Committee member's travel costs resulting from these two additional conventions. However, if no local private funds are offered, the related travel expenses incurred by the Branch Committee member and his wife, if she accompanies him, may be reimbursed by the organization.

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29. If it were practical for a Branch Committee member to use a branch vehicle in order to attend any of the two additional conventions to which he is assigned, the fuel charge would be noted as an organizational expense. Such factors as the distance to be traveled and the length of time a brother would be away from his Bethel assignment would need to be weighed to determine whether it would be practical to use a branch vehicle. In case the Branch Committee member is unable to drive, a Bethel driver may need to be assigned to assist him. If so, the driver would be granted the necessary time away from work.

30. Speakers Attending a Convention in Another Country: At times Bethel speakers, missionaries, and circuit overseers make personal plans to attend a regional convention outside of their branch territory. If a qualified speaker serving in one of these forms of special full-time service will be attending a regional convention in another country, using his personal time away and private travel funds, his speaker's ratings may be forwarded to that branch office. (It is not necessary to survey the brothers to find out if they will be attending conventions in other lands.) The responsible brothers in the country that he will be visiting may assign him a part on the program in harmony with his qualifications. Or he may be interviewed during one of the parts. However, a branch need not feel obligated to include such a visiting speaker on the program.—See 6:81.

31. News Service for Circuit and Regional Events: Each year an updated package containing timely guidelines is made available to all branches via the Materials Distribution System (MDS).

32. Annual Report to Teaching Committee: An annual report should be sent to the Teaching Committee, outlining the total number of conventions held in the branch territory, the peak attendance, and the baptism figure. If a branch oversees the work in other countries, a separate report should be submitted for each country. This information should be listed in two columns —one showing the figures for the current year and the other showing the figures for the preceding year. Please also state in one paragraph which features of the program were particularly effective for your field and why.

CONGREGATION MEETINGS

33. Unless there are extreme extenuating circumstances, congregations worldwide hold one midweek meeting sometime Monday through Friday. This meeting is formatted as follows: After an opening song and prayer, the Congregation Bible Study is conducted for 30 minutes, followed by the Theocratic Ministry School for 30 minutes. Then, after an introductory song, the Service Meeting is held for 30 minutes. The entire meeting is closed with song and prayer. The aforementioned three meetings should not be combined with the Public Meeting and *Watchtower* Study, which are to be held on the weekend (Saturday or Sunday), unless extreme circumstances exist.

34. For the Public Meeting, after an opening song and prayer, a 30-minute public talk is presented from one of the approved outlines on the list "Public Meeting Talk Titles" (S-99) or as otherwise provided by the organization for special occasions, such as the circuit overseer's visit. Normally, following the Public Meeting and after an introductory song, the scheduled *Watchtower* Study article is reviewed by the congregation as a question-and-answer session lasting one hour. The discussion includes the reading of all the paragraphs and all the scriptures marked "read," as well as a brief consideration of the review box. The scriptures marked "read" should not be read before the reading of the paragraph unless the lesson is a verse-by-verse discussion with the scrip-

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ture cited at the very beginning of the paragraph. Paragraph reading should be uninterrupted.

35. The above-mentioned format varies only during the visit of the circuit overseer as outlined in *Circuit Overseer Guidelines* (*tg*), chapter 4. When several congregations meet in one Kingdom Hall, those not being visited will adjust meeting times as needed for that week. Any schedule of meeting times that involves rotation is worked out through the elders in a spirit of mutual concern and brotherly love.—Phil. 2:2-4; 1 Pet. 3:8.

36. Audio transmissions of our regular congregation meetings may be made for those truly unable to attend. Official audio recordings are another option. (Helpful comments appear on MDS regarding the technical aspects associated with this provision.) Video transmission of our meetings over the Internet is not approved. Easy Internet video access to our meetings could stifle live attendance and increase the potential for misuse of the information being transmitted. However, if the technical means is available and the body of elders knows that a member of the congregation is truly housebound on a long-term basis, the elders may decide to make available a **video recording** of the meetings for that person.

37. Meetings for Foreign-Language Groups: When there are only a few publishers working a foreign-language field, a group can be formed under the supervision of a host congregation. (*km* 11/09 p. 5 par. 10; *tg* chap. 17) Such foreign-language groups may hold their Congregation Bible Study in a separate room at the Kingdom Hall at the same time as the meeting of the host congregation. In cases of severe space constraints, the group may hold this 30-minute meeting just prior to the host congregation's midweek meeting. If this is not possible, a less preferred option would be to have the group meet just before or after the host congregation's Public Meeting and *Watchtower* Study. A foreign-language group that has grown in size may be transferred to another host congregation that meets at a Kingdom Hall with a larger auxiliary room. In any event, the foreign-language group should be encouraged to attend the midweek meeting of the congregation officially appointed as its host.

- **Audio and video tie-in:** Conducting congregation meetings locally is preferable. However, if such is not yet possible and the congregations are willing to obtain the necessary equipment, a pregroup, group, or small congregation may request permission from the circuit overseer to tie in to the meetings of a foreign-language congregation holding meetings in the target language. The circuit overseer will approve which pregroups, groups, or small congregations in his circuit will tie in to the meetings of another congregation and to what extent. The circuit overseer must consider all of the factors surrounding the request in deciding whether to give approval for such an arrangement or not. If a small congregation is approved to tie in to the meetings of another congregation periodically, it is expected that the small congregation will strive to conduct all of its own meetings as soon as possible. Congregations transmitting video should not transmit footage of the audience or any other areas of the Kingdom Hall.—See letter to all bodies of elders, October 2, 2014, regarding "Foreign-language field."

38. If a group is making good progress, has responsible ones available to take the lead, and has reasonable prospects for further growth, consideration may be given to forming a congregation. (*tg* chap. 13) Meetings should be conducted in the language of the group

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even if only a few publications are available. For example, the Congregation Bible Study and the Theocratic Ministry School may be conducted using just the first few publications on the translation priority list. Understandably, the schedules and the content of such meetings would differ from those of the major languages.

39. In the event that no responsible brothers in the group are available to conduct the meeting on a particular day, an interpreter could be used so that most would be able to understand the comments of the assigned conductor or public speaker for that occasion. This would harmonize with the precedent found in 1 Corinthians chapter 14. Also, it should be noted that many languages have a suitable vernacular Bible translation or at least a portion of it. The brothers should be encouraged to use these Bibles at their meetings and in the field ministry.

40. When no publications are available in a certain language, meetings could be conducted using our publications in another language as long as most in the group are able to follow along. For example, an indigenous group may also understand a major language in which publications are readily available. However, all talks, prayers, question-and-answer sessions, and meetings should be conducted in the language of the group. As mentioned above, if the assigned conductor does not speak the language of the group, a qualified interpreter may assist him. Also, when a group is started, it may be possible for the brother assigned as reader for the Congregation Bible Study or the *Watchtower* Study to make a personal translation of the material under discussion, although this is not ideal. Once meetings are held regularly in the language of the group and the formation of a congregation is imminent, the Branch Committee should contact the Writing Committee, outlining the needs of the congregation and providing the names of any baptized Witnesses who could be used as translators.—See 8: 25-27.

DEDICATION PROGRAMS

Branch Dedications

41. Dedication programs are special occasions of great spiritual encouragement for Jehovah's people. These programs are held in connection with newly acquired or newly built facilities that are fully owned by the organization. Months in advance of a branch dedication, an overview of the plans, including details about the program content, rooming for guests, feeding, and so forth, should be sent to the Teaching Committee for final review and approval. If an exception to the following guidelines is necessary, the Branch Committee should contact the Teaching Committee before proceeding.

42. If a four-page printed program is planned, the branch should submit the recommended text and a PDF of the proposed design directly to the Writing Committee. The text in the program sample will be reviewed and approved by the Teaching Committee, while the actual design of the program will be reviewed and approved by the Writing Committee.

43. Day and Time for Program: It seems practical that a branch dedication program be held on a Saturday. A program approximately three hours in length should be arranged. If one or more talks need to be interpreted, the program may take another 30-40 minutes. The following may be adjusted to fit local circumstances.

44. Sample Program Format:

10 min:	Opening song and prayer.
20 min:	History of work in the country. (Includes interview of two or three longtime missionaries if available.)
30-40 min:	Construction project and experiences. (May include interviews with key workers.)

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20 min:	Reports from other branches. (If available.)
15 min:	Song, announcements, and greetings.
45-60 min:	Dedication talk. (If interpreted, additional time may be needed.)
10 min:	Closing song and prayer.

45. The chairman will give the opening words of welcome. Then for about **20 minutes,** a member of the Branch Committee should relate the history of the Kingdom work in that country, followed by how Jehovah opened up the way for a new branch to be constructed. If there are longtime missionaries present, approximately **eight minutes** can be dedicated to interview them. They may comment on their share in the early development of the work and relate any personal experiences involved. Then **30-40 minutes** should be used to discuss the construction project itself. A member of the Branch Committee who served on the construction committee is usually assigned this part. It could be developed as a discussion by three brothers, two of whom would be members of the construction committee. It may include a few interviews with key workers on the project. These interviews could highlight problems that were overcome, relate any outstanding experiences that took place in obtaining equipment and accomplishing the work, or indicate how a witness was given to the community. This discussion could conclude by referring to the fine cooperation of the local brothers and the way Jehovah blessed the activity.

46. If there are a few Branch Committee members present from nearby branches, a representative from each may use from **four to six minutes** to relate outstanding experiences and reports about the progress of the work in those countries. This segment could be about **20 minutes** in length. It would be followed by song, announcements, and the reading of any greetings, all of which should take no longer than **15 minutes.**

47. Dedication Talk: If a member of the Governing Body is assigned to attend the dedication, he will give the dedication talk. This discourse is usually about an hour in length, but if interpreted, it may take 90 minutes or more.

48. Invitations and Seating: The program will generally originate from the branch's main auditorium. Overflow seating may be set up in a Kingdom Hall or an Assembly Hall on the property of the branch being dedicated. Extra chairs may also be set up in dining rooms and in other locations on the premises. The number invited will depend on the size of the facilities, the number in the Bethel family, the size of the construction staff, and the number of visitors from other branches. In some branches, those in the field who have served faithfully in the truth for 40 or more years have been included.

49. What is outlined herein for the dedication program on Saturday (and the special meeting on Sunday, as discussed later) should produce a program that will be spiritually upbuilding. A tour of the facility and association with the Bethel family and others can encourage visitors to continue doing Jehovah's will. However, there is no need to arrange for a family night program. Family night should be scheduled at another time, exclusively for the Bethel family and any approved guests. Entertainment programs for visitors require many hours of rehearsal and therefore should not be approved for presentation. By keeping the arrangements simple and on a high spiritual level, such occasions will be delightful and beneficial for all.

50. Printed Invitations: Some branches have printed badge cards for attendees, similar in size to the badge cards used at regional conventions. This helps to ensure that only those invited will be permitted entry. This can also be done for the special program on Sunday if seating is limited.

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51. Food Arrangements: If Saturday morning is devoted to tours, there could be a light buffet meal at noon or light packed lunches for the visitors. The dedication program could begin at 1:30 p.m. or 2:00 p.m. A light buffet meal in the evening would be appropriate for the Bethel family, the construction staff, and any overnight guests staying at the branch. However, there should be no elaborate arrangements for feeding everyone who attends the dedication program. If there are questions about this, please write to the Teaching Committee before plans are finalized.

52. Special Meeting on Sunday: If practical, a special program may be held on Sunday at a larger hall or stadium. The program could begin at 9:30 a.m. or 10:00 a.m. The format for this special meeting may be as follows: After an introductory song and prayer, the chairman will extend a warm welcome to the audience and make a few encouraging comments. Then he will introduce a 30-minute summary of the *Watchtower* Study for that week. Afterward, a 20-minute review of the dedication program that was held on the preceding day may be presented as a discussion between two Branch Committee members. Next, Branch Committee members or representatives from other branches may present four or five reports, as they did the day before. This segment could last up to 30 minutes, depending on whether interpretation is needed. After another song, announcements can be made along with the reading of any greetings. Then the visiting speaker will give a one-hour service talk. (If interpreted, this talk may take 90 minutes or more.) The special meeting would end with a closing song and prayer.

53. Use of Interpreters: It is preferred that the most qualified brothers be assigned to interpret talks given by members of the Governing Body, even if it is necessary to use younger brothers. A brother's depth of experience in theocratic and organizational matters does not necessarily make him the finest choice of interpreter. Those assigned should be able to communicate the emphasis, intensity, and emotion of the speaker into the target language, while not calling undue attention to themselves. Those who are selected for this privilege should be reminded of the principles expressed at Romans 12:3 and 1 Corinthians 12:28-31 so that they maintain a humble disposition while carrying out this special responsibility. —See 7:7-8, 70.

Assembly Hall Dedications

54. When a new Assembly Hall is built or an existing facility has undergone extensive renovation resulting in a significant change of its floor plan and overall appearance, a dedication program would be in order. Generally, there would be only one guest speaker assigned to an Assembly Hall dedication. Organization funds may be used to cover the travel expenses of only one Branch Committee member and his wife. Also, only one Branch Committee member should share in the dedication program. When the dedication speaker is a member of the Governing Body, the program should be held on a Saturday. In this case, one Branch Committee member may be assigned to present a report on the advancement of the Kingdom work in the country, while focusing on the progress of the work in the area of the Assembly Hall. (See 7:56.) As described below, an additional special program should be arranged for Sunday of the same weekend. During that program, the same Branch Committee member may be assigned to present a 30-minute summary of the *Watchtower* Study for that week or an additional report on the work in the local branch territory. Other Branch Committee members may attend both programs if they wish, but they would not be assigned a part and their travel expenses should be covered by private funds. Please note that a visiting Governing Body member would not nor-

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mally be assigned to visit the branch and conduct morning worship in conjunction with the dedication of an Assembly Hall unless the facility is ***very close*** to Bethel. Any exceptions would need to be approved by the Teaching Committee.

55. The dedication program may be video streamed, if possible, to the Kingdom Halls of the congregations that will make use of the Assembly Hall. If video streaming is not possible, only those who can be accommodated in the Assembly Hall would be invited to the dedication program on Saturday. (In order to make it possible for more brothers to attend, the visiting Governing Body member may agree to give his dedication talk again during a second program that would be presented later on Saturday, but this decision is left to the visiting Governing Body member.) The Branch Committee determines who will be invited.—See 7:62.

56. The dedication program need not be longer than two and a half hours. A brief history of the progress of the Kingdom work in the area may be presented, possibly including an interview of one or two longtime Witnesses. Experiences and comments by those being interviewed should be to the point. Participants should emphasize, not so much how the building was constructed, but how Jehovah blessed the work and the effect the project has had on the community and on the brothers. —Acts 14:27.

57. Slide or video presentations should be no more than 15 minutes in length. Just a few of the main construction phases should be featured. The presentation should be dignified and the content in good taste, forasmuch as the program is an occasion to praise Jehovah for his blessing on the project.

58. The dedication talk may be up to one hour in length. If interpreted into another language, it will be somewhat longer.

59. The Assembly Hall is to be dedicated only once, by means of a prayer. When it is practical to schedule a second program later in the day or on the next day, the speaker will explain that the building was dedicated at the preceding program.

60. A tour of the Assembly Hall or an open house may be arranged before the dedication program. If the program is scheduled in the afternoon, the open house could be organized in the morning. Or, if more convenient, it may be arranged on the day before or even one or two weeks prior to the dedication. If practical, arrangements can be made to serve light snacks or refreshments but no alcoholic beverages. Many brothers have found this to be a fine time to invite businessmen and officials who may have become familiar with our work and who may have expressed a desire to see the completed building. It is appropriate for an elder to be assigned to escort these individuals and to make their visit informative and pleasant. Other guests may also be given a brief tour by one of the attendants. Such tours are generally scheduled for the morning or early afternoon prior to the dedication program.—See 7:64-65.

61. Program participants should be exemplary, active Jehovah's Witnesses. There is no provision for government officials or others to address the audience on any occasion, just as is the case at any theocratic meeting. If an official wishes to make a brief speech or offer expressions of appreciation at a dedication program, he may be received hospitably and given audience by a few responsible brothers in a separate room before or after the program.

62. Seating: The hall should be filled for the dedication program, but it may be necessary to limit the number invited in order to avoid overcrowding. In some cases, those invited are limited to those in special full-time service, elders, ministerial servants, regular pioneers, and their families, along with those who have been baptized for a

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certain number of years. Invitations are often extended to those who contributed much in the way of time, effort, or materials toward the construction.—See 7:55.

63. Sunday Program Format: If the visiting dedication speaker is a Governing Body member, an additional special program lasting about two hours (or two and a half hours if interpretation is required) should be arranged for Sunday. Depending on local circumstances and the practicality of the arrangement, the special Sunday program could be video streamed from the Assembly Hall being dedicated to the Kingdom Halls of the congregations that will make use of the new facility. If local circumstances do not allow video streaming of the special program to most of the publishers in the congregations making use of the Assembly Hall and the country is one seldom visited by a member of the Governing Body, a larger facility could be rented for a special Sunday program if that is practical. The program will have the following format:

5 min:	Opening song and prayer, followed by a few encouraging comments by the chairman.
30 min:	*Watchtower* Study summary. (To be presented by a Branch Committee member if a report about the work in the branch territory will not be included on the program.)
20 min:	(Optional) If the Branch Committee has a report about the work in the branch territory, it can be presented by the Branch Committee member sharing the program. (Another experienced local brother could be assigned to handle the *Watchtower* Study summary.)
10 min:	Song and any needed announcements.
60 min:	Talk by the visiting Governing Body member. (When interpreted, this service talk could take 90 minutes or more.)
5 min:	Closing song and prayer.

Dedications of Remote Translation Offices (RTOs)

64. A dedication program may be organized in connection with a new remote translation office (RTO) as long as the premises are owned by the organization. Hence, no dedication program will be arranged when a rental facility is being used. A visiting Governing Body member, a Branch Committee member, or another qualified brother could be assigned to give the dedication talk in conjunction with a scheduled trip to the region, such as a visit to the missionaries or the translation team. The program may be held at the Kingdom Hall closest to the RTO and should follow a format similar to that used for Kingdom Hall dedications. If necessary, the dedication program could be held at a rented facility near the RTO. Appropriate arrangements should be made for all in attendance to tour the RTO, preferably prior to the dedication program. —See 7:60.

Kingdom Hall Dedications

65. The most up-to-date guidelines on this subject, as provided to all bodies of elders and circuit overseers, should be followed when arranging for these events. (See 7:60.) Travel expenses for a Bethel speaker must be covered by the congregation or by private funds. If it is not possible to invite a speaker from Bethel, a circuit overseer or a local elder should be assigned to deliver the Kingdom Hall dedication talk.

66. Normally, other facilities will not be tied in for these programs. But if there are extenuating circumstances warranting an exception, the Branch Committee may decide to give approval. For example, when several congregations share in a project, it may not be possible to include all the publishers who worked on the building. Hence, it might be necessary to tie in a neighboring Kingdom Hall so that all can benefit from the dedication program. The Teaching Committee should be contacted for approval if the Branch Committee feels that something more than what is outlined above will be necessary.

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BRANCH VISITS

67. Special Program: Arrangements should be made to hold a special program at a suitable location for the brothers living in the branch territory. Since this is a special event, branches may arrange for an audio or audio/video tie-in to Assembly Halls even in other countries under their oversight so that as many publishers as possible may hear the program. Please note that dedication programs for newly acquired or newly built facilities should not be scheduled during a branch visit. Normally, all such events are arranged at a different time. If a Branch Committee feels that extenuating local circumstances would warrant an exception in this regard, an inquiry including all pertinent details may be submitted to the Teaching Committee.

68. If the cost is not excessive, the branch may rent **one** large facility, such as a stadium or a sports hall, relatively close to the branch office to accommodate a larger crowd. With a rented facility, if possible and the costs are not excessive, Kingdom Halls or Assembly Halls in other parts of the branch territory may be connected by an audio or audio/video tie-in. The rental of additional facilities for tie-in purposes is viewed as an exception based on extenuating circumstances. The Teaching Committee will decide on a case-by-case basis.

69. If the branch territory spans many time zones, the program may be delay-streamed or recorded for broadcasting later on the same day or on the very next day at Assembly Halls and Kingdom Halls located in other time zones. This would especially be true if a Governing Body member is making a branch shepherding visit. Any questions or unusual circumstances related to the special program should be sent to the Teaching Committee.

70. The program should include a 30-minute summary of the *Watchtower* Study for that week. A 20-minute report on the progress of the Kingdom work in the country can be included as well. The total time for the program would be approximately three hours, especially if the headquarters representative's talk needs to be interpreted. (See 7:7, 53.) In such instances, the headquarters representative may give a copy of his talk outline or notes in advance to the assigned interpreter. This copy is to be used only for preparation purposes. It should not be used by the interpreter during the actual presentation of the talk. The notes should be returned to the speaker or destroyed after the program. Before delivery of the talk, the headquarters representative should meet with the interpreter to cover pertinent information. While the headquarters representative may speak from an outline, it is best if the interpreter does not follow a translated copy of that outline. Rather, the interpreter should listen carefully to the speaker's delivery and convey an accurate interpretation to the audience. (*be* p. 55.) Branches that may have more than one language group represented at these occasions should make arrangements to hold the program in the language of the majority. At times, if practical, it may also be possible to arrange for simultaneous interpretation into any other language(s) represented, as long as this would not serve as a distraction to the rest of the audience. Generally, with the exception of the headquarters representative (who may not know the language of the land), all speakers should present their talks uninterrupted in one language for the benefit of the majority present. Since the program would include the *Watchtower* Study summary and it is a spiritually rich program, the scheduled public talk and *Watchtower* Study for the invited congregations will be suspended for that week. Therefore, depending on the itinerary of the headquarters representative, it might be advantageous to schedule this program on a Sunday if possible. Even if the special program is scheduled during the week,

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the publishers can be encouraged to concentrate on sharing in the field ministry on the weekend, since there will be no meeting.—See 6:194.

BETHEL SPEAKERS

71. Evaluation and Selection of Bethel Speakers: Pertinent guidelines for bodies of elders and circuit overseers about "Recommending Local Elders as Regional Convention Speakers" and "Regional Convention Speaker Ratings" are posted on MDS. Yearly evaluations received from the circuits for all brothers recommended as regional convention speakers can be used as a basis for selecting new Bethel speakers. All elders serving at Bethel should be rated even if they have had only limited exposure on circuit assembly programs. Those serving in foreign-language congregations should be rated both for the language of their congregation and for the primary language of the country. Usually, those appointed as Bethel speakers would be ones who were rated higher than average in their circuits and have served at Bethel for some years, as noted in 7:72. Brothers called to Bethel from the circuit work, however, may be appointed as Bethel speakers upon completing Bethel Entrants' School.

72. An elder serving as a regular Bethel family member (BBR) who has been on a regional convention program for two years will be eligible for consideration as a Bethel speaker, as long as he meets the following additional criteria: (1) His speaker rating is B or higher; (2) he has served at Bethel for a minimum of three years, including consecutive periods of temporary service; (3) he has a reputation worthy of representing Bethel; and (4) he is able to hold an audience's attention for one hour. Furthermore, when a brother is first notified of his appointment as a Bethel speaker, it is recommended that about six months be allowed to pass before his first assignment so that he may have time to prepare a suitable one-hour service talk. In view of this, when deciding whether a brother should be appointed as a Bethel speaker, those recommending Bethel speakers should give serious consideration to whether he could give an effective one-hour service talk. Since a brother's qualifications for presenting a one-hour talk would need to be much higher than for presenting a nine-minute convention talk, an individual might be qualified to serve as a regional convention speaker but not as a Bethel speaker. As an example, those recommending Bethel speakers would do well to ask themselves if they view the brother in question as qualified to address their own congregations for one hour. Hence, as a general rule, a brother would qualify to be used on a regional convention program before he could serve as a Bethel speaker. Temporary volunteers serving at Bethel during the convention season may be asked to indicate the convention they will attend. Talks may be assigned to them according to the need and their qualifications. —See 6:80-81.

73. Circuit assembly branch representatives are selected from among the better qualified and highest rated Bethel speakers. In large branches, those considered for this privilege have served at Bethel for many years. At smaller branches, the Branch or Country committee may need to consider using brothers who have served for fewer years, bearing in mind that Bethel representatives should nonetheless be exemplary in their conduct and public speaking.—See 6:82; 7:2; 1 Tim. 4:12.

74. Weekend Speaking Assignments: Congregations near the branch office may request that approved Bethel speakers be assigned to give a service talk and public talk. A Speaking Assignment Desk may be set up in the Service Department for scheduling these assignments. When an assignment is made, the "Notice to Congregation of Bethel Speaker Assignments" (S-35) is sent to the congregation and the "Notice to Bethel Speaker of Assignments" (S-37) is sent to the speaker.

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75. Generally, Bethel speakers would not receive more than three weekend speaking assignments per year. Likewise, individual congregations will be officially assigned only three Bethel speakers each year. Bethel speakers may not be requested by name for these assignments. They may be sent to congregations within 200 miles (320 km) of Bethel, if that distance is practical. Whatever the radius from Bethel, the speaker should be able to travel safely to and from the assignment with minimal impact on his Bethel work. The brother (and his wife) should be able to arrive back at Bethel and get a good night's sleep on Sunday evening. If the Public Meeting is held late on Sunday and the location is a considerable distance from Bethel, the speaker may return early Monday morning without taking personal time away as long as he is back at his work assignment after lunch.

76. Brothers who are regular Bethel family members serving at remote translation offices may be appointed as Bethel speakers and assigned to visit congregations within 200 miles of their location. However, the branch office may opt to make the travel radius less than 200 miles if local circumstances would make it difficult for the brothers to travel that far in a weekend and still return in good time to carry out their weekly Bethel routine.

77. The speaker's travel expenses should be covered by the local congregation. If that is not possible, the branch may reimburse the speaker's travel expenses, having in mind the cost of public transportation, the distances involved, and the current price of fuel if a personal vehicle is used. If the speaker's wife travels with him and they use public transportation, he would not submit her fare for reimbursement. If the congregation does not supply meals, the speaker may be reimbursed for that expense. However, when a congregation chooses to invite a particular Bethel speaker for a special weekend of activity apart from those arranged by the Speaking Desk, all travel expenses for the speaker (and his wife) should be covered either with private contributions or with congregation funds as approved by a resolution. Also, the Bethel speaker (and his wife) would need to deduct personal time away from work if their trip to or from any such private commitments must be done during Bethel workdays.

78. Bethel speakers are expected to share with the congregation in field service on the weekend of their public talks, according to local arrangements.

79. Slide shows, *PowerPoint*, or video presentations are not approved for use on Bethel speaking assignments. Saturday service talks should be Scriptural and encouraging discussions, generally only one hour in length. Such talks may be shortened to 30 minutes if they must be presented after the regular one-hour *Watchtower* Study.

80. Only approved Bethel speakers are to present service talks to the congregations. As an exception, visiting missionaries who are qualified may present a *special service talk* but only at the Kingdom Hall and at a time other than that scheduled for regular congregation meetings. For these special presentations, a missionary could use a few visual aids, including pictures from the area where he serves. However, such pictures should not overshadow the Scriptural message of his talk. Visiting missionaries might also give a brief report during a local needs part on the Service Meeting or after an unabbreviated *Watchtower* Study, if requested.

MORNING WORSHIP AT BETHEL

81. General Guidelines: Diligence is essential in preparing information that is of benefit to the Bethel family. Those entrusted with this serious assignment ought to handle it in accord with the

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principle found at Romans 12:8. The assigned chairman should arrive at the table approximately ten minutes before the start of the program so that he can settle in and get any needed observations from the sound technicians or other responsible brothers at Bethel.

82. In most branches, morning worship begins at 7:00 a.m., with the chairman taking no more than a few seconds to welcome the family. He then calls on the brother assigned to offer a brief opening prayer of one minute or less. This prayer should include giving thanks for the breakfast meal to follow. Thereafter, the daily text is read, and the chairman calls on each of those assigned to offer a one-minute comment. Although it is appropriate to acknowledge each comment, care should be exercised not to exalt any one participant over the others. After the last one on the panel has commented, the chairman takes eight or nine minutes to develop a few Scriptural thoughts for the encouragement of the family. Quoted scriptures should be read directly from a hard copy of the Bible or from an electronic device rather than from printed notes except when paraphrasing certain verses.

83. The chairman should strive to conclude his comments by 7:15 a.m. at the latest. Then, he calls on the brother assigned to read the printed comments from *Examining the Scriptures Daily*. Next, he invites the family to enjoy their breakfast.

84. At approximately 7:30 a.m., the chairman makes announcements. Selected greetings may be read once a week at the discretion of the Branch or Country committee. Greetings and table announcements should be approved by the Bethel Office or by a member of the Branch Committee. Next, an assigned brother will read a scheduled segment from either the Bible or the *Yearbook*. On Wednesdays, Bible highlights are presented. Bible highlights will be five minutes in duration, while department or branch visit reports may be up to ten minutes in length and presented after the Bible highlights. The chairman should make announcements regarding memorial services or judicial action just before his concluding prayer. He should kindly allow a few seconds for the family to stand up before saying the concluding prayer. This format for morning worship at Bethel should be followed at other sites outside of Bethel, such as remote translation offices (RTOs). While this same general format can be followed at the various field schools, the brothers should be guided by the instructions provided in the *School for Kingdom Evangelizers Office Guidelines* (*skeog*).

85. Transmissions to Other Sites: Inasmuch as Morning Worship programs are designed exclusively for the spiritual benefit of regular members of the Bethel family and temporary volunteers at the branch, such programs should not be transmitted to outside locations other than as explained below. Although local Morning Worship programs may be held at remote translation offices (RTOs) as long as sufficient qualified personnel are on hand, transmissions to and from the branch may be arranged if such would not require a great expenditure. Where implemented, such a local arrangement should give all RTO personnel an opportunity to share in the program in a way similar to what is done at the branch. (Approved overnight guests staying at the branch may attend morning worship along with the Bethel family.) Those in special full-time service working on remote construction projects, primarily construction servants (BCS), expatriate construction servants (BCF), and construction volunteers (BCV), may be tied in to the Bethel Morning Worship program up to four days each week. Each location should arrange for at least one local Morning Worship program each week. The Branch Committee may determine how many times a week those on a specific project will benefit from the Beth-

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el program. If there are also local volunteers working on the same project, they are permitted to enjoy the program along with those who are in special full-time service. If because of time-zone differences the program will be delay-streamed or a recording of the program is made, prayers should be said locally. Assembly Hall servants (BAS) are also permitted to view morning worship under the same arrangements as outlined above for construction workers in special full-time service. However, BAS are not to invite local volunteers to join them for the program.

86. Visiting Morning Worship Chairman: A brother visiting from another branch is not to be invited to serve as chairman for morning worship —even if he is used in that capacity at his home branch—unless he is a member of the Governing Body or an appointed helper to one of the Governing Body committees and serves as Morning Worship chairman at world headquarters. A headquarters representative will preside over the program on the days that he is assigned to visit the branch.

87. Additionally, a brother visiting a remote translation office under the oversight of his home branch may be asked to conduct morning worship only if (1) the branch has assigned him to make the visit, (2) he already serves as Morning Worship chairman at the branch, and (3) there are very few local brothers approved to conduct.

88. Recommendations of Morning Worship Chairmen: These should be submitted on the most current *Recommendations to Teaching Committee* form. This is true for ones who will serve in this capacity at the branch or at an RTO. The details requested on this form should guide the Branch Committee and the Teaching Committee in evaluating who is qualified for this special privilege. Elders may be considered who have served in an exemplary way at Bethel for a number of years, who enjoy the respect of the Bethel family, who are viewed as solid spiritual men, and who are good teachers. Brothers serving as construction servants may be recommended as well if they are qualified. In addition, time spent in some form of special full-time service before coming to Bethel may be taken into account. Those recommended should be capable of giving good Scriptural encouragement to the Bethel family.

89. Selection of Other Morning Worship Participants: Brothers and sisters who are regular members of the family (BBR), as well as those serving as temporary Bethel family members (BBT), may be assigned to give a one-minute text comment upon completion of Bethel Entrants' School or their first year of Bethel service, whichever comes first. Construction servants (BCS), expatriate construction servants (BCF), and construction volunteers (BCV) should be assigned to give comments at morning worship during their stay at the branch regardless of the length of time they have been assigned to serve at Bethel. Full-time commuters (BBL) may also be assigned as commenters during morning worship. Part-time commuters (BBV), on the other hand, may attend on the days they work at Bethel but would not usually be approved as commenters.

90. If the Branch or Country committee feels that an exception is warranted in the case of a potential Morning Worship commenter, the matter should be brought to the attention of the Teaching Committee for review. In smaller branches where commenters are not specifically assigned in advance, the Branch Committee can determine whether part-time commuters may participate.—See 7:98.

91. After a sister has given her first text comment, she has the option of sending a note to the Bethel Office requesting to be exempted from a future Morning Worship assignment.

92. Bethel Family Prayers: At larger branches, noon prayers are generally assigned to elders who have served at Bethel for at least one year. After serving at Bethel and as an elder for five years, a brother may be assigned to represent the family in prayer at morning worship.

93. Readings and Bible Highlights: Generally, Bethel speakers are used to read assigned portions of the Bible at morning worship, present Bible highlights, and read at the Bethel Family *Watchtower* Study.

94. At times, a Branch Committee may decide that circumstances warrant using other qualified elders not yet appointed as Bethel speakers for these assignments.

95. Text and *Yearbook* Readings: Ministerial servants who have served at Bethel for one year and who have passed the reading evaluation test may be assigned to read the daily text and printed comment and the *Yearbook* at morning worship.

BETHEL FAMILY *WATCHTOWER* STUDY

96. The weekly *Watchtower* Study is a customary feature of Bethel family life at all branches. Conductors are usually circuit assembly branch representatives. In smaller branches, Bethel speakers may also be assigned.

97. General Guidelines: It is especially important for those assigned as Bethel family *Watchtower* Study conductors to adhere closely to published direction, and these brothers should be encouraged to review such direction periodically. (*ks10* 2:24-25; *w03* 9/1 pp. 21-22) Elders who conduct the *Watchtower* Study in their congregations view the Bethel family *Watchtower* Study as a model to follow. The conductor should prepare thoroughly. He should not introduce additional material from his own personal research, as it could overshadow what has been published in the study article. Extensive research has already been done in producing the study material, and the points to be emphasized are those included in the paragraphs under consideration. He should not comment excessively. In some branches, the *Watchtower* Study starts at 6:15 p.m. with the conductor's welcoming expressions and introduction to the opening song and prayer. The call for the concluding song and prayer is at 7:15 p.m. Therefore, the Bethel *Watchtower* Study is conducted within 55 minutes (including appropriate brief comments on the artwork and good use of the teaching boxes). This requires that the conductor apportion the time carefully so as to allow for balanced coverage of the material. The conductor should prepare well, maintain eye contact with the brothers as they offer their comments, and warmly commend the participants. Conductors are to be reminded of these points as needed. Readers for the Bethel family *Watchtower* Study should be chosen from among appointed Bethel speakers.

98. In larger families, about 20 brothers may be assigned to participate as commenters. Regular Bethel family members (BBR), temporary Bethel family members (BBT), construction servants (BCS), and full-time commuters (BBL) may be used for these assignments. Part-time commuters (BBV) may attend but would not usually be approved as commenters. (See the exception in 7:89-90.) As an additional exception, believing marriage mates of BBLs and BBVs may attend the Bethel family *Watchtower* Study and other spiritual programs typically held on Monday evenings, whether at Bethel or at a remote translation office. Also, well-behaved children still residing at home may join their parent(s) for such programs if there is adequate space for all such ones to attend. (This provision does not include morning worship.) Each week, those in special full-time service working on remote construction projects

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(primarily BCS, BCF, and BCV) may be tied in to the Bethel family *Watchtower* Study (and any additional spiritual program on that evening). Local volunteers working on the project who are not in special full-time service would not be invited to this program. If because of time-zone differences the program will be delay-streamed or a recording of the program is made, prayers should be said locally. Assembly Hall servants (BAS) are also permitted to tie in to the Bethel family *Watchtower* Study under the same arrangements as outlined above for construction workers in special full-time service.

SCHOOLS FOR THEOCRATIC TRAINING

99. Watchtower Bible School of Gilead: This 20-week course provides intensive training in Bible study and theocratic organization. Invitations to attend this school are issued by the Service Committee. The Teaching Committee is responsible for the curriculum.

100. School for Branch Committee Members and Their Wives: The Service Committee invites qualifying members of Branch and Country committees and their wives to this eight-week course in accord with current guidelines. The Teaching Committee is responsible for the curriculum.

101. School for Circuit Overseers and Their Wives (SCOTW): Unless the Service Committee has granted an exception, this school is not to be held on branch property. If permission was given in the past to hold this school at the branch and it has not been verified that this is still acceptable, the Service Committee should be informed of the current circumstances and, if desired, the branch may request that this arrangement continue. The Service Committee oversees the scheduling of SCOTW worldwide. However, any questions regarding the curriculum for this four-week course should be directed to the Teaching Committee. In the event that an exception has been granted and the school is held at the branch, arrangements should not be made for class introductions to the Bethel family. Instead, a general Morning Worship table announcement welcoming the new class as a whole can be made to the Bethel family at the beginning of the schooling period. If desired, a parting announcement could also be read to the Bethel family on the last day of class. None of the students should be assigned to give a report to the Bethel family. Additionally, only the ***brothers*** attending the SCOTW on branch property should be assigned to give a one-minute comment at morning worship. The Teaching Committee is responsible for the curriculum.

102. School for Kingdom Evangelizers (SKE): All reasonable efforts should be made to hold the SKE in the field. Exceptions have at times been made, but only when special circumstances have warranted them. In such cases, however, none of the students attending this school on branch premises would be invited to present reports to the Bethel family or to offer Morning Worship comments. Any questions regarding these matters should be addressed to the Teaching Committee. Qualified single brothers and sisters as well as couples between the ages of 23 and 65 who have been married for at least two years and have been in full-time service for at least the last two consecutive years may apply to attend this eight-week course. (Ps. 68:11) Any applicants between the ages of 50 and 65 must be able to provide for themselves and be in no need of financial or medical assistance from the organization. If enrolled in this school, they will continue to serve as regular pioneers wherever they are assigned by the organization but will not be invited to become members of the Worldwide Order of Special Full-Time Servants.

103. Application forms and related material may be requested from the

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congregation secretary. Procedures for holding this course as well as for arranging graduations have been outlined in the *School for Kingdom Evangelizers Instructor Guidelines* (*skeig*) and the *School for Kingdom Evangelizers Office Guidelines* (*skeog*). While the Service Committee oversees the scheduling of these classes worldwide, any questions regarding the curriculum should be directed to the Teaching Committee.

104. Graduations: When Kingdom Halls are not available for holding SKE graduations, a multipurpose room at an Assembly Hall may be used as long as its use does not interfere with any other scheduled event. If it is believed that circumstances warrant the use of the main auditorium of an Assembly Hall and such use would not interfere with a scheduled circuit assembly, the Branch Committee can make the decision without inquiring of the Teaching Committee. Attendance at these graduations should not exceed 350.

105. A Bethel representative may be assigned to serve an SKE graduation *only when* it is possible to care for his travel expenses in one of the following ways: (1) the graduation occurs on the same weekend as a circuit assembly served by the branch representative and the circuit covers the travel expenses; (2) brothers defray the travel expenses from private funds; (3) the Bethel representative uses his own funds to cover the travel expenses; (4) organization funds are used to cover expenses in conjunction with an official work assignment for the branch, such as visiting a remote translation office or missionaries near the graduation site. Where it is not possible to have a Bethel representative present, one of the regular class instructors will serve as chairman for the program, give the graduation talk, and hand out the graduation certificates.

106. In the event that a Bethel representative is present for the graduation, he might be able to conduct morning worship on Saturday from 7:45 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.; yet, it is up to him to decide if he can accept this responsibility, taking into account his other assignments that weekend—especially if he is also the visiting speaker at a circuit assembly (*CA-br*).

107. After breakfast and perhaps commencing at 8:30 a.m., the Bethel representative might also be able to present an encouraging talk to the class on a theme of his choice. Or he may prefer to give this talk toward the end of the morning, perhaps commencing at about 11:40 a.m. If serving a circuit assembly (*CA-br*) on Saturday, he would need to give this discourse either before or after his first talk to the circuit. This Scripturally upbuilding talk may be up to 45 minutes in length.

108. On Sunday, the Bethel representative would ordinarily serve as chairman for the graduation program, although there may be times when it would be better to have the A instructor serve as chairman. In either case, the Bethel representative would present a 20-minute graduation discourse.

109. School Instructors: The Teaching Committee appoints the instructors for the SKE, based on recommendations from Branch Committees. In order to help local brothers qualify as instructors, the Branch Committee appoints them as observers of the class instruction. To appoint a new instructor, the Branch Committee must send its recommendation to the Teaching Committee. All field instructors turning 70 years of age should be transferred to special pioneer service as soon as reasonably possible without adversely impacting any previously scheduled classes. Additional instructors for the SCOTW would be selected from among the most qualified instructors of the SKE. Some who are over 70 years of age might still be qualified as instructors for the one-week School for Congregation Elders (SCE). Hence, if an SCE class is held near a brother's special pioneer as-

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signment, he may be assigned to teach it on occasion.—See 7:123.

110. Bethel Entrants' School (BES): The Teaching Committee has prepared a series of lectures and classroom discussions designed to give new Bethelites a spiritual outlook on their new form of service while quickly acquainting them with the Bethel arrangement. Regular Bethel family members (BBR), temporary Bethel family members (BBT), expatriate Bethel family members (BBF), visiting members (BBB), full-time commuters (BBL), or construction servants (BCS) who are approved to serve at Bethel for one year or longer and who have not attended BES in the past ten years may be enrolled, whether serving at a Bethel complex or a remote translation office. Moreover, in cases where a wife would qualify to attend this school at Bethel in accord with the aforementioned guidelines, her husband would also be automatically enrolled. This instruction is to be presented on 16 Mondays, following the Bethel family *Watchtower* Study. Bethelites should commence this school very soon after their arrival. If there are not enough new members to form a full class, instructors may cover the curriculum informally with those on hand.

111. The curriculum may be adjusted to fit a less formal setting if the intent of the material is not compromised. Some branches find it practical to ask the students to give only one five-minute presentation instead of two while covering sessions 2, 4, 6, 8, and 10 and excluding the presentation for session 12. The rest of the reports may be discussed during the appropriate session. The few participants and the instructor could be seated around a table after the *Watchtower* Study. These classes are not to be held during working hours.

112. Before completing their first year at Bethel, new members are expected to read the entire Bible, from Genesis to Revelation. The branch office should maintain a record of when each new member completes his Bible reading. Bethel family members often express appreciation for this arrangement.

113. If a Bethelite is getting married to someone not serving at Bethel and the couple are approved for regular Bethel service, both would be enrolled in this course. They should be informed of this when they are interviewed for possible Bethel service. If a marriage takes place between two regular Bethel family members, they would not be enrolled in the course or be required to complete the one-year Bible-reading program for new arrivals. This also applies to regular Bethelites transferring from one branch to another.

114. Additional Provisions: New family members are also given a series of lectures related to Bethel life, work habits, health, study, dress and grooming, and other topics. Branch Committees may adjust these lectures as needed.

115. Pioneer Service School (PSS): This school provides training for regular pioneers and special full-time servants. These include regular Bethel family members (BBR), expatriate Bethelites (BBF), temporary Bethel family members (BBT), full-time commuters (BBL), construction servants (BCS), expatriate construction servants (BCF), and Assembly Hall servants (BAS). Special pioneers, field missionaries, and wives of circuit overseers who have served as such for at least a year may attend the school again. Field classes should be held at central locations, usually Kingdom Halls. Regular pioneers are invited to attend PSS toward the end of their first year of pioneering. Multiple invitations may be extended to one who is in the aforementioned forms of service as long as he or she has not attended in at least the last five years and classes are not full. There should generally be 20 to 25 students in a class. However, in branches with a sizable number of pioneers, consideration may be given

to increasing the class size to as many as 50 students.

116. The curriculum for this school is based on the textbook *"Fully Accomplish Your Ministry"–2 Timothy 4:5.* (*pt14*) Capable instructors, usually circuit overseers, will conduct the course. This course is designed to be covered in six days. However, if local circumstances require an adjustment, the Branch Committee should consult with the Teaching Committee about the matter.

117. Since some special pioneers and others attending PSS may have to travel some distance, the school instructors may need to organize rooming accommodations. It may be that local publishers will be happy to provide temporary accommodations. Where possible, students will not be asked to come from too great a distance.

118. The branch will care for the travel and food expenses of special pioneers and field missionaries attending the schools. Congregations may also wish to contribute in some measure. The local circuit will cover the circuit overseer's expenses. (See S-330 2:5.) The organization does not wish anyone to be unduly burdened in financing a PSS. Instructors should inform the branch office of the needs at each school location.

119. The Service Committee oversees the preparation of the annual pioneer session that is held in conjunction with the circuit assembly (*CA-co*).

120. School for Congregation Elders (SCE): This one-week school is for the benefit of appointed elders. Its curriculum is posted on MDS. Circuit overseers and Branch Committee members are generally not invited to this school, since they attend either the School for Circuit Overseers and Their Wives or the School for Branch Committee Members and Their Wives. All other elders serving at Bethel and in the field should be invited. Bethelites will be granted time away from work so that they may attend. Also, a time credit may be given to elders serving as special pioneers equivalent to one quarter of their monthly hour requirement. Regular pioneers may receive a 20-hour credit.

121. It is preferred that a student attend the school to which he is assigned. Exceptions may be made if the Branch Committee feels that such are warranted. For example, if a brother requests permission to attend an SCE being conducted in a different language within the branch territory and the Branch Committee agrees that his request is reasonable, the brother may be authorized to do so. If a student wishes to attend a school in another land and there is a good reason for this exception, the two branch offices may work out the necessary details. The brother should be informed that he will be assigned to one SCE only and that he will be responsible to cover all travel expenses involved.

122. On occasion, someone in special full-time service may request permission to attend an SCE in a nearby country where a class is scheduled in his dominant/preferred language. Such may be approved. The branch office may cover the brother's travel expenses and all entry visa costs. In determining where the brother will attend the SCE, the branch office should select the country with the most economical round-trip travel fares. If expenses would be unusually high, the branch office should send its recommendation to the Teaching Committee for consideration. If the brother is married and he chooses to bring his wife along, the couple would be responsible for the wife's travel expenses inasmuch as the husband's attendance at the SCE is not a branch work assignment. The sister would also need to take personal time away for the extent of the trip.–See 4: 113; 7:125.

123. The Branch Committee selects the instructors for this school from

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among experienced circuit overseers in the local territory, preferably those who serve as SKE instructors, if they are available.—See 7:109.

124. Kingdom Ministry School (KMS): The curriculum for this program is prepared for appointed elders and, at times, ministerial servants. It is presented in the form of lectures, demonstrations, interviews, and class discussions. Circuit overseers and, at times, Bethel representatives are assigned to conduct this school.

125. Because the Service Committee schedules these schools, it will answer any questions about the inviting of students. Wherever practical, all elders in a given area will convene for the school over a two-day period; when invited, ministerial servants will meet for one day. The school may be conducted on a weekend or for three hours per evening for five nights. In some cases, midweek daytime classes may be preferable, with the course running for two days. The entire body of elders of a congregation should attend at the same time. Requests for permission (as an exception) to attend elsewhere may be handled in harmony with the guidelines given in 7:121-122. The branch office may schedule school sessions in harmony with what is best locally, keeping in mind that all elders in the branch territory should attend the course in a comparatively short time, spanning perhaps three to five weeks. The branch should make arrangements for adequate facilities. Assembly Halls may be used where practical.

126. The most recent KMS textbook is entitled *"Shepherd the Flock of God" —1 Peter 5:2.* (*ks10*) Refresher courses may be offered periodically, using other suitable material provided by the Teaching Committee. In countries under ban or serious restrictions, Branch Committees may supply congregations with at least one copy of the current textbook to be kept in a safe place for the local elders to use and study on their own. When the circuit overseer visits, he can help the elders by teaching them from the material they already have on hand.

127. Theocratic Ministry School: Instructions on how the school is to be conducted appear on page one of the Theocratic Ministry School Schedule each year. That schedule indicates which publications are to be used during the year. Branches do not have to request permission from the Teaching Committee to use alternative source material for the school if they select publications available in the local language. This direction applies to the preparation of both the Theocratic Ministry School Schedule (*ss*) and the Theocratic Ministry School Answer Sheet (*sa*). If the cited reference material for the Theocratic Ministry School Review is not available in a language used in the local territory, the branch office may formulate new questions and answers based on references that are available in that language, without receiving specific approval from the Teaching Committee.

128. Literacy Classes: The Branch Committee should inform congregations of the provision for learning how to read and write, and they should make definite arrangements for assisting those needing help. In multilingual societies, the best results usually come from teaching people to read and write the primary language spoken at home and in the community where they live. Classes may be held using the brochure *Apply Yourself to Reading and Writing.*

129. Different options are available for organizing literacy classes. Each body of elders should carefully survey the needs of any associated with their congregation and then make arrangements as needed. Material from the weekly Bible reading or from a publication such as *My Book of Bible Stories* may be used for these classes.

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130. Oftentimes, classes are held in conjunction with the Theocratic Ministry School. When this is done, the class would be held in a separate room in the Kingdom Hall after the Bible highlights. The Kingdom Hall could also be used at other times during the week, as long as the arrangements would not conflict with another congregation's meeting. Those needing additional help may be tutored on a personal basis. Keep in mind, however, that it would be ill-advised for two individuals of the opposite sex to meet alone unless they are close relatives.

131. Foreign-Language Classes: For details regarding this provision, see 6: 76-77.

AUDIO AND VIDEO PRODUCTION

132. The Teaching Committee oversees the work of Audio/Video Services (AVS) at world headquarters, which involves the following areas of responsibility:

133. Audio publications include magazines, books, brochures, dramas, dramatic Bible readings, and choral and orchestral music recordings. The Teaching Committee oversees the recording and distribution of audio publications, whereas the Writing Committee gives approval to translate and record an audio publication because most of these programs are based on printed publications. Thus, new requests for approvals should be addressed to the Writing Committee.

134. The Teaching Committee prepares and produces live-action dramas, sound-only dramas, and dramatic Bible readings and will answer any questions regarding the production of these items.

135. Video publications include general-release videos, jw.org-posted videos, and all sign-language publications. The Writing Committee gives the initial approval to translate and produce a new video publication, whereas the Teaching Committee cares for both the content and the production of all general-release video publications. Because most sign-language publications are based on a printed publication, the content of these videos is the responsibility of the Writing Committee.

136. Audio and Video Equipment and Facilities: The Teaching Committee approves the type of equipment and the design of facilities for producing audio and video publications. This committee works in concert with the Publishing Committee and the Worldwide Design/Construction Department regarding equipment purchases and construction of audio and video studios.

137. Regional Audio/Video Centers (RAVCs): Under the Teaching Committee, AVS cares for the audio and video needs of the world field. AVS supervises the work of RAVCs in four branches, namely, Brazil, Japan, Netherlands, and South Africa. These branches support the production of audio and video publications in their region of the world. While a number of branches have audio equipment for producing their own vernacular audio publications, an RAVC is available to assist if technical problems arise. The RAVC also assists, as needed, in recording and mixing the vernacular audio for general-release videos and thereafter conveying the necessary assets to AVS for authoring to DVD, uploading for replication, and posting on jw.org.

138. RAVC Support of Sign-Language Publications: The RAVC supports the production of the various sign-language publications in its region. The level of support varies, depending on the number of deaf publishers using the language. Branches with fewer than 200 deaf publishers and a temporary translation team are considered entry-level branches and receive a workstation on loan with minimal RAVC support. Branches with more than 200 deaf publishers and one or

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more permanent translation teams are termed mid-level branches and receive the full support of the RAVC. Branches approved to produce the study edition of *The Watchtower–On DVD* in sign language are considered advance-level branches and are thoroughly equipped and trained to care for their own sign-language production, though still under the general direction of the RAVC.

139. Audio and Video on jw.org: After Web Publishing creates a Web page for a publication, AVS is responsible for uploading audio and video publication files in the various languages. Unless directed otherwise, the RAVC will assist entry- and mid-level branches in preparing the files for this purpose. Generally, if a language has already been approved for release of an audio or video publication on physical media (CD, DVD, or other), no additional approval is needed to have these posted on the Web site.

140. Branch Tour Videos: Branches desiring to produce an on-site tour video for visitors should request approval from the Teaching Committee. These videos should not describe the history of the work in the country but should show what currently transpires at the branch in support of the preaching work. A branch tour video should last ten minutes or less. When submitting a new proposal, please keep the following in mind:

- New audio or video equipment should *not* be purchased for this purpose. If none is available at the branch, it may be possible to use the equipment and expertise of a local brother.
- Please send the Teaching Committee a narrative script in English and a description of the proposed visuals for review and approval before recording.
- If prerecorded music will be included, *Kingdom Melodies* are often used. For any original music donated for such a project, the branch should obtain a signed release from the owner.

RADIO AND TV PROGRAMS

141. Questions concerning such programs may be sent to the Teaching Committee.

142. Periodically, all branches receive an updated listing of approved videos with guidelines on how to use them.

143. Approved programs should be shown unedited and without interruption except for station identification. No editing of any sort should be done without prior authorization from the Teaching Committee. None of the approved programs should be shown for commercial purposes. Permission will be granted to show our programs only in public service, educational, or noncommercial venues. They should not be shown in a context that could make it appear that we endorse any political or interfaith movement, hospital, or group.

144. The above guidelines should be provided to the broadcasting station for compliance every time one of the approved programs is to be aired. All branches have been sent a formatted sample of these guidelines for use as intended.

BROADCASTING DEPARTMENT

145. The Teaching Committee oversees the work of the Broadcasting Department at world headquarters, which involves the following areas of responsibility: (1) assisting branches with technical issues involving video streaming so as to link various venues to one originating location and (2) answering branch questions about convention and Assembly Hall audio and video sound equipment. This includes specification and installation issues.

WHQ TRAVEL DEPARTMENT

146. The Teaching Committee oversees the work of the WHQ Travel

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Department, which involves the following areas of responsibility: (1) researching and securing air travel for headquarters personnel caring for their organizational assignments, (2) researching and securing air travel for those in foreign service who are eligible to be funded to a convention of their choice, (3) overseeing the collection and management of accrued hotel reward points and other headquarters travel activities, and (4) reviewing convention venue rental expenses and assisting with hotel negotiations and usage.

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CHART 7.1

General Scope of Operation

Assemblies

Prepares circuit assembly outlines and programs

Conventions

Prepares outlines, manuscripts, dramas, and chairman's introductions for regional conventions

Organizes international and special conventions

Approves *Convention Organization Guidelines* (CO-1) and the yearly News Service Kit

Meetings

Gives direction concerning congregation meeting programs and procedures

Approves schedules for the Congregation Bible Study

Prepares outlines for regular public talks, special talks, and public talks by circuit overseers

Oversees branch dedications worldwide

Oversees Assembly Hall dedications worldwide

Oversees dedications of remote translation offices worldwide

Provides guidelines for Kingdom Hall dedications

Provides guidelines for special meetings held in connection with branch visits

Oversees Bethel speaker arrangement worldwide

Provides guidelines for Bethel morning worship

Appoints all Morning Worship chairmen worldwide

Prepares Bible reading schedule for the Bethel family worldwide

Prepares schedule for the Memorial Bible reading

Gives direction concerning Bethel family *Watchtower* Study

Approves Monday night Bethel lectures

Oversees Gilead graduation programs, including the selection of speakers and songs

Assists in the organization of the annual meeting programs, selecting appropriate songs

Schools

Watchtower Bible School of Gilead

School for Branch Committee Members and Their Wives

School for Circuit Overseers and Their Wives

School for Kingdom Evangelizers

Appoints instructors for all schools listed above, worldwide

Bethel Entrants' School

Pioneer Service School

School for Congregation Elders

Kingdom Ministry School

Theocratic Ministry School

Literacy classes

Theocratic Schools Department

Audio/Video

Audio programs

General-release videos

Audio/Video Services (AVS)

JW Broadcasting

Regional Audio/Video Centers (RAVCs) in Brazil, Japan, Netherlands, and South Africa

Recordings in branches

Radio and television programs

Broadcasting

Assists branches with technical issues involving video streaming and audio/video equipment at assembly and convention venues

News Service for circuit and regional events

WHQ Travel

Researches and secures air travel for those caring for WHQ assignments and for those in foreign service eligible to attend international conventions

Oversees the collection and management of accrued hotel reward points

Reviews convention venue rental expenses and assists with hotel negotiations and usage

Answers queries from translators concerning all of the above, often responding by means of WTS

Corresponds with branches concerning all of the above

Interaction with other committees and departments

				AVS proofreads and posts translation and production packages to MDS AVS transfers video files by posting these to AVMD
Writing Committee proofreads materials and posts to MDS	Writing Committee proofreads materials and posts to MDS		Writing Committee proofreads materials and posts to MDS	Writing Committee oversees content of sign-language publications
Service Committee is responsible for the yearly meeting with regular and special pioneers held in conjunction with circuit assemblies (S-312)		Service Committee oversees *Our Kingdom Ministry*	Service Committee invites Gilead and branch school students and determines assignments of Gilead graduates. It provides branches with guidelines for organizing and scheduling other schools locally	

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WRITING COMMITTEE

Web Publishing

1. The Web Publishing Department maintains the organization's Web sites. (See 3:89.) It works with departments at world headquarters and in the branches to develop Web content in many languages. This material includes answers to questions raised about the Bible by the public, information about our headquarters and branches, and news releases about events involving Jehovah's Witnesses. Selected publications can be read online or downloaded in various digital, audio, and video formats.

Writing Archives

2. The Writing Committee oversees Writing Archives, which is responsible for gathering, cataloging, and preserving material related to our theocratic history. Archival records and artifacts come from branches, congregations, individuals, and secular institutions. The Archives collection includes publications, clippings, documents, photographs, audiovisual recordings, and other items of historical value. Detailed life histories of longtime servants of Jehovah are also kept on file. Over time, such material is being digitized in order to provide electronic access and avoid damage to the original items. Archival research is used in preparing material for publication, display, and other educational purposes.

3. Many branches have assembled similar items during the preparation of *Yearbook* accounts and for other projects. The Writing Committee is interested in the preservation of such material, either at individual branches or at world headquarters. Consideration should be given to the proper organization and storage of such items, thus increasing their potential value for future research and publication.

Writing Articles for *The Watchtower* and *Awake!*

WRITING DESKS

4. The Governing Body has approved the setting up of Writing Desks in a number of branch offices. This arrangement has these objectives: (1) publish articles that reflect an understanding of local cultures found in various parts of the earth, (2) distribute the writing workload, and (3) **find additional individuals who are qualified to write.**

5. All Writing Desks come under the oversight of their respective branches. Thus, the branch can decide whether additional staff is needed to handle replies to inquiries received from the field that deal with Scriptural doctrine and our published material. However, Branch Committees need to obtain approval from the Writing Committee before adding permanent writers whose main work is to handle writing assignments for our publications.

6. The Writing Desk overseer is to supply copy to the Writing Department according to the schedule and instructions received from the Assignment Desk at world headquarters. If the Writing Desk overseer contacts other branches to request information not available locally, copies of such correspondence should be sent to the Assignment Desk in the Writing Department.

7. Those privileged to write articles should have writing ability and must be baptized, spiritually mature, and in good standing. They should be balanced, exemplary, modest, and not inclined to talk freely about their writing

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activity. In most cases, writers should be elders. (Qualified sisters may be used to write certain articles, especially on subjects of interest to women. However, they should not be used to prepare material on cover subjects or articles that are expositions of Scripture.) Anyone assigned to write an article for *The Watchtower* or *Awake!* should be given a copy of the memorandum "Writing for Our Journals." Although it is not required that the writer read the English *Standards Manual,* he might find it beneficial to become familiar with some of its content. The brother in the branch who is responsible for sending in articles should be well-acquainted with it and should apply its standards to copy that is submitted to the Writing Department.

PREPARING MATERIAL

8. All writers should be conscious of the target audience for each of our journals:

Awake!

Readers of *Awake!* typically have little or no knowledge of the Bible. They may know nothing about Christian teachings, they may be somewhat distrustful of religion, or they may be unaware that the Bible has practical value. A primary objective of *Awake!* is to convince its audience that God exists. This journal also aims to help the reader to build faith in the Bible and to understand that Jehovah's Witnesses are different from other religious groups.

Awake! articles may deal with such subjects as animals, plants, customs, geography, history, religion, science, natural history, and occupations. Since the articles will be read by people of many cultures, the subjects and titles should have broad appeal. The articles do not have to be about the country where the writer is located, although they may contain material reflecting the relationship of that land to the subject. This can be accomplished by doing research in books and periodicals published in that country and by mentioning places and customs peculiar to it if doing so is appropriate.

The Watchtower—Public Edition

This journal focuses more on spiritual matters because its target audience may have a measure of respect for God and for the Bible. They have some knowledge of the Bible but do not accurately understand its teachings. Many readers of the public edition are not familiar with Witness terms and concepts. If such are used in articles, they should be explained.

The Watchtower—Study Edition

This edition is written primarily for Jehovah's Witnesses as well as for those who attend our meetings, are familiar with the Scriptures, and understand Witness terms and concepts.

9. Preview outlines are usually submitted for approval before articles are written. A template is used for submitting a preview outline. In a branch that has a Writing Desk, the overseer of the desk is expected to work closely with the Writing Department at world headquarters and should be convinced that an outline is satisfactory before submitting it. **[See Sample 8.1.]** When a writing assignment is made, the length of the article is specified. Suggestions may also be made as to what the article may include. The writer may make limited changes in the outline as he works on the article. Preview outlines should be sent to the Assignment Desk with a covering memorandum.

10. Time to do the work of writing varies. Those not in full-time service can do their writing in the time they have available. The Writing Desk overseer and anyone who may be working with him full-time are expected to do such work during working hours. Other Bethel family members assigned to write articles may be asked whether they can do so on their own time or will need to use

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some work time. Evenings or weekends may be used for this work, but no one should be discouraged from asking permission to use some work time for such an important assignment. The Branch Committee can grant a missionary, a special pioneer, or a regular pioneer a time allowance for writing. Some writing assignments may not require much time, whereas more time may be needed for others. It is best for a missionary or a special pioneer to care for a writing assignment within a single calendar month.

11. Field experiences and life stories submitted for our magazines often reflect the circumstances, attitudes, and customs of people living in the country where the material originated. Be sure that a worthwhile point is made by the experience or life story. Regarding the qualifications of those featured in life stories, see the memorandum "Writing for Our Journals."

12. Other articles may be suggested that would benefit our readers. Even if there is no one in the branch territory in a position to write articles, the Writing Department is glad to receive suggested topics or questions that can be handled in Scriptural or other articles. Remain alert to what is happening in the branch territory. When an event occurs that would be of interest to our readers (for example, if a natural disaster strikes), **quickly send the Writing Department at least a report and copies of news clippings** (with a good English translation if needed). At such times, the Assignment Desk may assign a writer to submit a completed article through the Writing Desk and/or Branch Committee. Act quickly when a newsworthy event occurs, as we may want to publish the article as soon as possible. Of course, copy submitted under these circumstances should be well-written and ready for publication. Articles based on personal experiences and interviews have human interest that cannot be conveyed by an article based only on other news sources. Be careful when covering political events, since we are neutral and must avoid taking sides.

13. Send noteworthy news clippings to the Writing Department. By observing the material appearing in shorter articles and in the feature "Watching the World," determine what kinds of clippings are likely to be useful. Items and quotations from periodicals and books originating in the local branch territory should be accompanied by the full name of the author, the publication, and the publisher as well as the place of origin, the date, and the page number(s) involved. Indicate the specific article, and put a mark in the margin next to statements of particular interest. Send the entire clipping to the Writing Department along with a **good English translation of any foreign-language material.** Direct such correspondence to the Writing Department, Clippings Desk.

DOCUMENTING ARTICLES

14. Throughout an article, **place reference numbers in brackets** after quotations and facts requiring documentation. Attach separate reference pages listing the sources after the corresponding numbers. **[See Sample 8.2.]** This information is useful in many ways, and having it may even determine whether an article is published. For details, see the memorandum "Writing for Our Journals." With articles containing quotations from newspapers, magazines, books, or sources other than the *New World Translation*, send photocopies, with English translations if needed. Keep the originals for translation work or other use. If a certain quotation appeared previously in our literature, state where it was used. **An article must be accurate in every detail,** and that responsibility rests chiefly with the writer. Use only writers who do dependable research and carefully present the facts. When the Branch Committee coordinator or the Writing Desk overseer reads the article and sees something that

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raises a question, that point should be checked with the writer or looked up to make sure it is correct. If it is wrong, delete it or make a correction. Clarify ambiguous statements.

SUBMITTING ARTICLES

15. Before submitting an article to the Writing Department, the Writing Desk overseer should **read the article very carefully** and appraise it in the light of what is said in the memorandum "Writing for Our Journals." The article should be worthy of publication. Also have in mind the possible **effect of the article on people living in the local territory.** Sometimes it is best not to say certain things, even though they are true. Do not submit material for publication that might cause difficulty for our brothers locally or elsewhere. Many things can be written that will not hurt our work and may even engender goodwill. The truth should be presented, of course, but in a tactful way.

16. An occasional article of local interest may be prepared for use in certain language editions of *Awake!* If such an article is written, include nothing that could put Jehovah's people in a bad light or cause us legal or other problems locally or elsewhere. The article must have Branch Committee and Writing Committee approval before it is scheduled for a magazine. Therefore, send it (with a good English translation) to the Writing Committee for approval. Completed articles must be submitted through the Branch Committee coordinator.

17. If possible, **send photographs with an article,** as these help the Art Department to prepare good illustrations. Photographs should be accompanied by signed releases, as explained in "Writing for Our Journals." If you learn that a model in a photograph that you supplied has become disqualified, please follow the guidelines provided in the letter dated HWC:HWG November 12, 2014, No. C-33346W.

18. Articles and related materials should be submitted electronically via the Materials Distribution System (MDS) by accessing "Transfers" under the "Writing Transfer" section. Detailed submission guidelines are available on MDS. If electronic submission via MDS is not possible, articles and related materials may be submitted with a covering numbered letter via branch mail.

19. Every article sent to the Writing Department must be dated and must bear the **names of the branch and the writer and the name or signature of the Branch Committee coordinator and the Writing Desk overseer.** These signatures or names indicate that the article is approved for publication.

Translation Responsibilities

OVERVIEW

20. While the Writing Committee oversees the translation of our publications worldwide, the Branch Committee oversees the translation work that has been assigned to its branch.

Note: ***Bracketed references can be found at the end of this chapter.*** **[See List 8.1.]**

DECIDING WHAT TO TRANSLATE

21. In addition to publications that will be printed, the Branch Committee supervises the production of audio and video material and publications for the deaf and the blind. They also coordinate the translation of materials for our Web site.

Languages That Have Literature

22. Before making recommendations to the Writing Committee:

a. Consult the Priority List issued annually. Written languages and sign languages have separate Priority Lists. **[1]**

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b. The Writing Committee regularly informs all branches of new publications under development, provides contents listings, and explains the purpose of each publication.

c. The Branch Committee decides whether a new publication should be translated into a language. The committee consults with the respective language overseers to determine whether the translation team would be able to translate additional publications. Dated publications and seasonal work (*Yearbook, Examining the Scriptures, Research Guide,* publications *Index,* assembly and convention outlines, and drama scripts) take precedence over new publications.

23. The Translation Department translates only publications used for field service, meetings, assemblies, and conventions. Materials needed by Legal, Construction, Maintenance, Hospital Information Services, Correspondence, and the Service Department are translated by individuals in those departments or by commuters.

24. These workers who are not part of the Translation Department may have access to the section of the Watchtower Translation System (WTS) that deals with general translation, and they are welcome to attend weekly team meetings of the Translation Department to stay up-to-date with the latest techniques and guidelines of translation. **[2]**

Starting Translation Into a New Language

25. The Branch Committee regularly reviews the spiritual needs of every language group under its care. The Service Department initiates the request to provide publications in a language into which we have not previously translated. The following information should be provided to the Branch Committee for its consideration:

- Are publications needed although meetings are not regularly held in a language?
- Even though a group may use publications and/or attend meetings in another language, do the publishers find it difficult to participate in the meetings?
- Is there a language field that we do not reach because there are few, if any, publications in that language?

26. If we arrange meetings, assemblies, and conventions in a language and there is a large enough publisher base, we are committed to providing a steady supply of publications, namely, *The Watchtower, Our Kingdom Ministry,* a songbook, public talk outlines, and study material for the meetings. **[See Chart 8.1.]**

27. When the Branch Committee decides that a language group needs publications, the Service Department takes the lead in investigating what publications are needed.–See 7:40.

Procedure to investigate needs:

a. Download the latest version of *New Language Translation Request,* available on the Publication Processing Documentation (PPD) site, under Translation>Translation and Language Overseers>General. Gather and review available information about the language and those who use it. Consult circuit overseers, pioneers, and publishers.

b. Present findings to the Branch Committee.

c. If the Branch Committee agrees to provide some literature, make sure that you have potential candidates who could qualify to be trained for translation work.

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d. **The candidates should** (1) be baptized, (2) know the target language very well—it should preferably be their mother tongue—and (3) be available for some weeks to receive training and to translate their first publications. You may invite publishers of varying backgrounds as candidates for training (male, female, older, younger, well-educated, having basic education, single, married, and so forth).

Procedure to start translation:

e. Request permission from the Writing Committee to translate some publications, and include the completed *New Language Translation Request* form in the correspondence. Specify the format(s) being recommended for the publications (audio, print, video, Web).

f. Once permission is granted, arrange for training to be given where the translators are located so that they do not need to travel far. Where possible, it is practical to train more than three candidates in order to have a larger pool of translators for future projects.

g. Provide equipment and accommodations for the trainer. The trainer teaches the candidates basic translation techniques and works closely with them as they translate the first publications.

h. The translated publications are reviewed by a panel of native speakers to ensure natural language.—See 8:49c.

i. The translation is corrected and proofread, and the project team gives the translated publications a final check.

j. The publications are composed at the branch or by the trainer. Audio recordings are made if equipment and appropriate readers are available.

k. When the project is completed, the temporary translators return to their previous assignments.

l. The Service Department informs the congregations that publications are available in a new language, provides guidelines on how to use the publications, assigns pioneers and publishers to the territory where the language is spoken, monitors the response from the field and, after a few months, provides a report to the Branch Committee.

m. When the Branch Committee requests additional publications in a new language, the request should be accompanied by a report of (1) how many copies of each publication in that language are left in stock, (2) how many Bible studies are being conducted in that language, and (3) if congregation meetings are held in that language.—See 7:40.

28. When giving permission to begin translation, the Writing Committee provides specific direction on how to train the prospective candidates. The publication is printed at the printing branch. In exceptional cases, it may be printed locally, with approval from the Publishing Committee. Audio publications are usually recorded locally.

29. Sign-Language Translation: When starting translation in a sign language, the same procedure is followed as with spoken languages. The Writing Committee provides a separate Priority List for sign languages and arranges specialized training when permission is given for the first publication in a sign language. If needed, additional training may be requested. **[3]**

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Special Publications

30. Bible: The *New World Translation* is high on the Priority List, and translating it involves years of work. Branch Committees need to ensure that they have enough qualified translators to translate the Bible and at the same time keep up with the other approved publications. In some cases, however, it may be necessary to change a nonstudy magazine to a ***less frequent*** edition or to delay the release of other publications in order to complete Bible translation first. For example, a monthly edition of the public *Watchtower* or *Awake!* could become a bimonthly or a quarterly edition. When the Writing Committee gives permission to translate the Bible, it arranges initial and periodic training for the Bible translators by Writing Committee representatives. Branch Committees may ask for additional training when needed. A **Bible translation team** is composed of a minimum of one project team, a secretary, and an elder to serve as the translation coordinator. The Branch Committee usually recommends the most qualified translators for Bible translation, including brothers and sisters. It is permissible to use younger translators if they have special abilities. **[4]**

31. Nonstandard Magazine Editions: If a nonstandard edition of *The Watchtower* or *Awake!* (combination, bimonthly, or quarterly edition) is produced, the Branch Committee approves suitable articles that have been selected from a number of issues. **[5]**

32. Braille Publications: Braille publications can be transcribed using WTS. A large field of blind people is not required in order to justify making Braille publications in any language in which we have printed publications.

33. A branch desiring to transcribe publications into Braille should first request approval from the Writing Committee. The approval will be followed up with direction on how to proceed.

- While there is no Priority List for Braille publications, it is best to begin with a small nondated item, such as a tract or a brochure.
- Publications that can be transcribed into Braille generally include tracts, invitations, brochures, books, the *New World Translation*, *The Watchtower*, *Awake!*, and *Our Kingdom Ministry*.
- Specialized publications can also be transcribed, such as public talk outlines, invitations, programs, the *Pioneer* textbook, and the *Shepherding* textbook.
- On request, electronic text may be provided for blind and visually impaired readers who use Braille notetakers or computers with screen readers. These files can be posted on jw.org in notetaker (BRL) format and RTF format. **[6]**

34. Simplified Editions [7]

35. Songbook [8]

36. Multimedia Publications [9]

DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION

37. Each language overseer assigns individuals to specific project teams.

38. Translation Capacity: The workload must be scheduled in such a way that team members do not have to work overtime for months on end. The Branch Committee carefully monitors the workload of the translators to make sure that they are not burdened with unreasonable schedules.

39. The Branch Committee requests permission for each new publication before translation work can begin. When requesting permission to translate a dated journal, specify which edition will be produced. When permission is granted, obtain the source text of the publication from MDS. The master copy of the

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English Final mailing contains all corrections and approved updates.

40. Schedules: Local schedules for translating new and dated publications are based on the schedules for English publications provided by the Writing Department. For most publications, the Writing Department sends two different mailings:

(1) **Early mailing:** This contains early text to start translation and a preliminary PDF of the composed pages. At this point the text and artwork **are subject to change.** Nevertheless, translators should start working on these publications as soon as possible after this mailing is received. The compositors prepare the early composition pages for an audible reading check and a mechanical check of the translation.

(2) **Final mailing:** This mailing contains the finalized text and artwork. The project team compares the final adjustments of the English text with its translation to check whether any changes will affect the translated text.

41. Correction notices should be handled according to the guidelines provided by the Writing Committee. **[10]**

42. Translation errors in publications that have already been published in any format may be corrected with the approval of the Branch Committee. The printing date on the publishers' page should be updated. Complete retranslations requiring new copyright dates, corrections of serious translation errors that call for destroying copies in stock, and corrections to videos already produced need to be approved by the Writing Committee. **[11]**

Local Adjustments (Text and Art)

43. The Branch Committee recommends replacement material if the material in the English could cause problems in the local field. The Writing Committee will review recommendations for replacement text.

44. The Branch Committee may give local approval for adjustments in the following matters:

- Replace illustrations or examples in the text that may be inappropriate for the local field.
- Replace references to our publications that are not available in the target language.
- Replace Scripture citations if the cited scriptures in the vernacular language do not support the point being made in English. **Replacing "read" scriptures** requires approval via the Translator Help Desk unless the change involves simply the citation range. **[12]**

45. When adjusting the text to adapt it to the local field, care must be exercised that **facts are not distorted.**

46. In rare instances, artwork may be unacceptable for some cultures. The Writing Committee will provide alternate artwork only if an image would endanger the safety of the brothers. **[13]**

Translation Questions

47. The Writing Committee handles the bulk of the translation questions. These are submitted using WTS. They are sent directly via e-mail by the language overseer to the Translator Help Desk Inbox.

48. Before sending a translation question to the Translator Help Desk, the project team first checks to see whether the question has already been submitted by another team. The language overseer reviews the question for clarity and completeness.

a. During the translation process, editorial, cultural, legal, organizational, linguistic, procedural, and other questions need to be resolved.

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b. It is important that questions are submitted using WTS. This program packages the questions in the proper format so that they can be registered in the central database for efficient handling.

c. The Translator Help Desk sends answers to all translation teams in daily hyperlink packages.

d. Answers for one language may be applied to another language that has the same question. Project teams do not need to ask permission to apply such answers. [14]

e. Questions should be submitted as early in the translation process as possible to avoid delays. All queries must be resolved prior to final composition.

f. Teams should not be discouraged or hindered from sending questions.

Ensuring High-Quality Publications

49. The goal of the Governing Body is that all our publications be accurate, easy to read, and clearly understood by common people.

a. The language overseer makes sure that each project team has the necessary training, experience, and maturity to produce a natural, accurate translation.

b. Each translation team should actively seek feedback from the audience for whom they translate.

c. Publications to be used extensively in the field should be reviewed by a small group of selected publishers who are representative of the field and of an age appropriate to the publication. The members of the review panel should preferably use the target language as their first language.—See 8:27h. [15]

d. It is necessary that project teams keep in touch with how people in the field use their language.

e. Personal preferences are not to be imposed on the project team. The language overseer has the responsibility to ensure that all project teams produce translations that are appealing and at the same time in harmony with the way the language is generally used.

f. Project teams must take care not to use out-of-date expressions that are not understood by the majority of the readers.

50. Branch Committees rarely need to override the translation decisions of teams that have been carefully selected and thoroughly trained.

Workflow

51. All procedures for translation, checking, proofreading, composition, and mechanical checking should be performed as directed in *Translation Workflow* and *Composition and Mechanical Checking Workflow*. All in the department should be familiar with the latest version of these documents, which are posted on PPD.

52. The language overseer ensures that every publication is clean and press-ready before it is mailed to the file maintenance branch. He does this by making sure that all the necessary steps in the workflow are properly followed and that all involved in the process are thoroughly trained. Once the text leaves the translators for final composition, it should not be recalled for translation adjustments, except for changes needed because of correction notices. The goal is to send to the printing branch press-ready materials that can be printed without further correction.

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53. Printing branches do not proofread or perform mechanical checks on publications they print for other branches. The printing branch may make necessary adjustments to the publishers' page to meet local legal requirements.

Office Equipment

54. Translators need a quiet office environment. Project teams should have sufficient office space to work without disturbing others. Everyone in the department should have:

- A suitable desk and comfortable chair
- Adequate lighting
- Good ventilation
- A computer as specified by the Computer Department at world headquarters
- Access to the research library for translators, which should be updated regularly

55. Reference Materials: All translators should have ready access to reference works that are frequently needed. The following is a partial list:

- Standard vernacular Bible(s)
- The latest electronic English dictionaries
- An up-to-date English-vernacular dictionary
- Target-language grammar books and dictionaries
- The revised English *New World Translation* (2013 Edition)
- *Watchtower Research* (English, plus vernacular library synchronized)
- A dictionary of English idioms
- The team dictionary **[16]**
- Where possible, translators should have Internet access on their computer. **[17]**

56. All members of the department should have full access to guidelines, translation training material, and correspondence that apply to their work. To this end, make sure that the members of the department are added to the role groups that correspond to their assignments so as to have access to PPD.

57. *Standards Manual:* All languages should endeavor to compile a *Standards Manual* for the target language that sets out grammar rules and style guidelines. It will differ from the English *Standards Manual.* **[18]**

58. Confidentiality: Translators must keep confidential what is being translated and who works on each publication. The following materials are confidential and are strictly for the use of the Translation Department:

- Publications being translated
- Correction notices
- Translator comments
- Translator Help Desk questions and answers
- Research information
- Training materials

59. The above items are not for personal use and should not be distributed outside of the department. Every precaution should be taken to make sure that confidential material, either on paper or by electronic means, is not divulged to and cannot be accessed by anyone who is not authorized. ***Failure to comply with these guidelines could lead to the termination of one's Bethel service.***

60. All members of the Translation Department, including temporary volunteers, must sign the *Watchtower Information Resources Confidentiality Affirmation Statement and Acknowledgement of Use of Work Software* before they start to work in the department.

TRANSLATION ORGANIZATION

61. The following functions are necessary for translation:

- Translation overseer (and assistants if needed)
- Language overseer(s)

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- Team secretary(ies)
- Translation project team(s)
- Compositor(s)
- Digital publisher(s), Technical Support [19]

Note: Translators serving Service Department, Legal Department, and Printery needs are part of their respective departments and not part of the Translation Department.

Translation Overseer

62. He supervises the Translation Department and usually serves on the Branch Committee. He cares for the following matters: the size of the translation team (number of permanent workers and commuters), offices (recommends where they are located and whether facilities are rented or owned), language needs (sign language, Braille, Web site translation, composition, digital publishing), training (procedures, techniques, production), and all translation personnel. Although it would be preferable, it is not necessary for the translation overseer to have translation experience. However, he must be up-to-date with translation guidelines, translation techniques, production workflow, and be thoroughly familiar with the circumstances and needs of the languages under his oversight. If his workload is too heavy, an assistant(s) may be appointed to help him. If an assistant translation overseer is needed, a brother who is reliable and responds in good time to the needs of the translation teams should be selected. He cooperates with the language overseers to ensure that schedules are met and that directives from the Branch Committee and the Governing Body are implemented. Capable language overseers may be used in this capacity. [20]

Language Overseer

63. He works under the direction of the translation overseer. The language overseer should have translation experience. He must speak the language well (ideally a native speaker), understand translation principles, have good oversight skills, and be able to organize the work efficiently. He must be communicative, loving, and kind. When a temporary team is formed, a temporary language overseer should be appointed to work with the team.

64. Responsibilities: Each language overseer keeps the translation overseer informed on worker needs and issues, translation recommendations, and production matters.

- His role is not simply administrative; it is a full-time assignment requiring interaction with the project teams on a daily basis. His office should be located where the project teams are to facilitate such communication.
- He thoroughly understands the translation process as set forth by the Writing Committee, and he is thoroughly familiar with translation principles and procedures.
- He does not institute his own workflow procedures.
- He ensures that proper procedures are followed when assigning responsibilities to Translation Department workers.
- He assigns work to the project teams, and he schedules production.
- He is responsible for ongoing translation training.
- He should be sensitive to direction and feedback from his oversight and the field, and he should be able to give clear direction.
- He should always be on the lookout for prospective translators.
- He should have access to MDS and PPD, as well as be given a printed copy or electronic access to this chapter of *Branch Organization*.

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- At times, he will sit in with project teams as they translate in order to ensure that they function well and are following proper procedures.

Assistant Language Overseer

65. When three or more project teams are needed, it is necessary for the language overseer to select an assistant. One of the brothers serving on a project team should be trained to substitute for the language overseer when he is ill, away, or otherwise unavailable.

66. Responsibilities: The language overseer keeps his assistant **fully informed** of all matters concerning the department so that he will be able to replace the overseer seamlessly when circumstances require it. The assistant has access to MDS and PPD, just as the overseer has.

67. The assistant language overseer is authorized to make decisions in the absence of the overseer.

Team Secretary

68. This is a **well-organized** brother who must be able to keep track of translation files, schedules, and correspondence.

- The secretary should be capable of communicating clearly in written correspondence.
- This assignment requires some skill in organizing and maintaining accurate electronic files.
- If a brother is not available, a sister may be assigned as secretary.

69. Responsibilities: The team secretary is responsible for downloading and organizing electronic source materials from MDS, updating team dictionaries, backing up publications, and sending completed materials to the printing branch, as well as keeping track of other correspondence.

70. At least one other person in the department should know the basic functions of the secretary and be kept up-to-date with procedures so as to be able to replace the secretary on short notice if necessary.

Project Teams

71. A project team is made up of three members who perform the roles of translator, checker, and proofreader. A detailed description of the various responsibilities of each member is presented in the *Translation Workflow* document. If possible, each language team should have the full number of project teams as specified by the Governing Body. **[21]**

72. Responsibilities: Working as a team of three (or four in some cases), the team translates, checks, and proofreads its own work. It is therefore a requirement that the team members be **able to work cooperatively in a team setting.**

- Although the project team translates, checks, and proofreads together, each member performs a specific function in the process.
- Each member must have a good command of his or her own language, and at least two members of the team must clearly understand the source language. It is not expected that one individual will have all the skills needed to translate, check, and proofread.
- Project team members also serve as audio coaches and followers.
- Each project requires different skill levels. Select individuals who will fit into a project team according to their skill level.
- Sisters can be used for most translation assignments, including the Bible.
- Whatever the translation assignment, each member of the project team must have a thorough understanding of Scriptural truth so that accurate and faithful translations can be produced.

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73. It is expected that the cooperative translation process, as set forth in the *Translation Workflow* document, will be followed by the project team.

74. It is recommended that the project team members attend congregations that have meetings in their language and are using the target-language literature. This enables them to keep up-to-date with the language. It also means that they will personally use the target-language literature in the field.

75. Because brothers have the responsibility to teach in the congregation, at least one brother, preferably an elder, should work on each project team if at all possible. Branch Committees should search for qualified brothers who can be assigned to serve on project teams.

Compositors

76. The compositor must be familiar with computers, be a quick learner, and be attentive to detail. He or she should have an eye for making the text appealing in appearance and layout. The compositor needs to work in close cooperation with the translation team and be able to follow instructions carefully. Each language team needs a regular compositor and a backup compositor.

77. Responsibilities: The compositors must become completely familiar with all computer programs related to making publications. One compositor prepares early and final composition of the translated material. The second compositor does publication checking of the composed pages.

- Both compositors need to work regularly in composition to maintain their skills at a high level.
- Compositors may be given other work assignments within the department, such as digital publishing or Braille transcription, especially when few publications are being translated and composition is not a full-time assignment.
- Thorough training is required and is available on request to the Writing Committee.

78. Composition is part of the Translation Department, not the Printery or Graphics. The compositors should work in the same physical vicinity as the translators to facilitate good communication. Remote translation offices will usually have on-site compositors.

Technical Support

79. A well-qualified computer support person must be assigned to the Translation Department. He has to be familiar with WTS and other programs used by the translators. The person must be available whenever needed to assist the translators and be personable in his dealings.

80. Responsibilities: He maintains the Translation Department's computer program data files. He backs up the production files every day. He trains all workers to use the translation programs provided by the organization.

81. Remote translation offices must have resident computer support to guarantee security and reliable service.

Digital Publisher(s)

82. Research libraries need to be well maintained and up-to-date. They are needed to produce EPUB and WPUB files for the Web site, the *Research Guide, Watchtower Library, Watchtower ONLINE LIBRARY,* the *Watch Tower Publications Index,* and Braille transcription.

83. As more publications become available in a language, it will be necessary to assign enough personnel to care for the items listed in 8:82. Training for this specialized work is available on request from the Writing Committee.

84. Additional workers are needed to produce the *Watch Tower Publications Index.* Those working on research libraries should not be assigned to work simultaneously on a translation project team.

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Finding New Translators

85. Only baptized publishers in good standing are used as translators.

a. Check to see if there are regular Bethelites who may qualify.

b. Check new Bethel applications for prospective translators.

c. Meetings held at regional conventions for those interested in Bethel service provide a good opportunity to locate prospective candidates. Those interviewing the prospective applicants should be alerted to the need for translators. **[See Chart 8.2.]**

Evaluating Prospective Translators

86. When evaluating prospective translators, please follow the latest instructions from the Writing Committee.

a. The spirituality of the applicant needs to be carefully assessed. Humility and modesty are essential.

b. The prospective translator must be able to work in a team environment.

c. It is rare to find a translator who is highly skilled as a translator, checker, and proofreader.

d. The testing process should reveal **potential in one of the areas.** Training will be required, since it is not expected that fully qualified translators will be found. Individuals who have good basic skills can be trained.

e. When searching for sign-language translators, look for individuals who have keen insight into the way deaf people think and communicate.

Training New Translators

87. It drains valuable resources to train someone who does not have the aptitude. Potential will usually be evident after an initial three-month training period. However, it usually takes 12 to 24 months for new members of a project team to find their place in the team and to make a substantial contribution.

- New translators may at times be assigned to work on a project team as a fourth member.
- After approximately three months, qualified translators meet with the language overseer to decide whether the trainee exhibits sufficient progress to warrant further training.
- If it becomes clear during the initial training period that the trainee does not have the necessary aptitude, he could be reassigned to another department in Bethel or to the field.

88. Training too many people at the same time places an unreasonable load on experienced workers.

Replacement and Backup Workers

89. When a member of the Translation Department needs to be replaced, it normally takes some years before a replacement reaches the desired level of proficiency. This loss can take a heavy toll on the other members of the department and on the quality of translation.

90. Even if the team already has its required quota of workers, backup workers may be given training. They may be available to help out on a temporary basis when a regular member of the team is sick or away. They would therefore be able to fill in should someone leave unexpectedly.

91. When a department member gets married and asks to remain at Bethel, the Branch Committee should seriously consider what can be done to retain him if the prospective mate qualifies for Bethel. There must be available accommodations and a work assignment for the mate. In some cases, the branch is able to retain the services of a translator

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as a commuter Bethelite while the mate serves in the field.

Training Members of the Department

92. Everyone in the Translation Department needs ongoing training, since it is important that the workers do not get into a rut and stagnate in their abilities.

- The language overseer and his assistant are responsible for directing and monitoring the training of every individual under their oversight.
- Please ensure that you select those who have specialized skills or, at least, have the aptitude to serve as compositors, translators, checkers, proofreaders, secretaries, computer technicians, research indexers, coaches, or overseers.
- Project teams should keep up-to-date with their language, the source language and, more important, stay up-to-date with the truth as revealed through the faithful and discreet slave.
- All must **have direct access** to the training materials provided by the Writing Committee.
- Compositors must stay up-to-date with the latest methods and style adjustments made by the Writing Committee.

Training at Weekly Meetings

- Material from translation questions and answers, translator comments, current translation problems, policy letters from the Writing Committee, and *Translating for Our Publications* and its appendixes can be considered. [22]
- Letters and comments from the field on the quality of the vernacular translation can be discussed.
- Refresher courses can be presented by experienced workers on how to use WTS, research tools, and reference materials.
- Suggestions that would improve work habits, productivity, accuracy, and so forth should be scheduled for general discussion.
- In addition to their initial training, members of the department should be helped to stay up-to-date with the latest computer tools, policies, techniques, and directives from the Writing Committee.

93. Those working on the *Watch Tower Publications Index*, the *Research Guide*, and *Watchtower Library* need to review carefully all aspects of their work for every new edition they produce.

94. The team secretary should alert the language overseer of new directives so that he can arrange appropriate training.

Training Resources

- Training courses are provided by the Writing Committee. Such courses include training in translation techniques, indexing, workflow, composition, and organizing the department.
- The Branch Committee may ask the Writing Committee to provide this or other specialized training.
- The Writing Committee automatically arranges training for new translation teams and for Bible projects.

REMOTE TRANSLATION OFFICES (RTOs)

95. The Branch Committee locates RTOs where the target language of the translation team is predominant. It is best to relocate a translation team if the branch office is situated where the translators cannot attend meetings using their language and they are rarely exposed to that language. When considering an RTO, the branch should review the latest *Remote Translation Office Facility Guidelines.* [23]

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WORKERS AT A REMOTE TRANSLATION OFFICE (RTO)

96. The Branch Committee should recommend three elders to take the lead at the RTO—a language overseer, a home overseer, and a maintenance overseer.

Language Overseer

97. The language overseer ensures that the translation work is well-organized.

Home and Maintenance

98. The home overseer cares for the personal needs of all workers at the RTO. He is also responsible for purchasing, cleaning, and meals. The maintenance overseer cares for buildings, security, and property. These brothers may be part-time commuters. **For larger teams,** it may be necessary for these brothers to work full-time, depending on the need. If some need to reside at the RTO, it may be good if the language overseer is one of the residents.

Part-Time Commuters and Temporary Volunteers

99. Part-time commuters, often regular pioneers, may serve at the RTO on an ongoing basis. In order to translate assembly and convention materials, experienced translators may be invited for a few days, some weeks, or even a month or two. If a volunteer is expected to serve more than a total of six months in a year, his application needs to be reviewed by the Personnel Committee. [24]

Full-Time Commuters and Permanent Members

100. The branch arranges living quarters for some workers, while others commute. If rooming at the RTO is limited, priority should be given to the language overseer and to other members of the translation team. Full-time commuters work five days a week and receive many of the same privileges as regular members of the Bethel family, with the exception that they do not live at the RTO. Whenever a recommendation is made to the Personnel Committee for someone to serve as a full-time commuter, the branch should include a recommendation for an appropriate allowance to cover housing, transportation, and personal expenses.

Spiritual Programs

101. Ensure that all the Bethel spiritual programs are provided at the RTO. Morning worship and the Bethel family *Watchtower* Study should be conducted regularly. Where possible, RTOs can be tied in with the branch office for these programs.

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LIST 8.1

Bracketed References:

A copy of the following documents can be found on the Publication Processing Documentation (PPD) site.

1. See the latest translation priority lists.

2. Letter dated GED:ETA June 29, 2010.

3. Document *Producing Sign-Language Publications*, dated March 2010.

4. Document *Guidelines for Bible Translation*.

5. Letter dated HWC:HWG July 24, 2012, No. C-9466W.

6. Document *Caring for the Needs of the Blind and Visually Impaired*.

7. Letter dated HWC:EHA April 28, 2011, provides direction on how translators may use the simplified English edition of *The Watchtower* in their work. Letter dated HWC:ETA January 2, 2014, No. C-24522W, clarifies use of the simplified layout.

8. Documents *Translating Sing to Jehovah* (ESA January 24, 2008), *Guidelines for Preparing Lyrics for Sing to Jehovah*, *Composition Guidelines for Sing to Jehovah* (EHA February 14, 2009), and *Translating "Sing to Jehovah" Into Sign Language*.

9. Appendix Outline No. 12.

10. Letter dated GEA:ESA October 17, 2007, provides comments on handling correction notices. See "Application of corrections" guidelines dated HWG August 15, 2012. Letter dated HWG:EHA October 9, 2012, No. C-11673W, explains how to process correction notices for older publications. Letter dated HWC:HWG October 17, 2013, No. C-22385W, explains when and how to update audio publications.

11. Letter dated HWC:HWG June 30, 2014, No. C-29965W.

12. Letter dated HWB:ETA July 9, 2014, No. C-30231W.

13. Letter dated HWC:HWG March 4, 2013, No. C-15758W.

14. Letter dated GEA:ETA October 10, 2007, explains how translators benefit from translation questions and answers provided for other languages.

15. Appendix Outline No. 2h.

16. Information on maintaining the team dictionary can be found in the Appendix outlines.

17. Letter dated GED:ETA May 17, 2010, regarding Internet access for translators.

18. Document *Standards Manual* (for English publications) is available in the Translation section of PPD.

19. Letter dated HWC:HWB July 10, 2013, No. C-19448W.

20. Letter dated HWC:HWB June 20, 2013, No. C-18924W.

21. Letter dated HWB:ETA April 18, 2014, No. C-27795W.

22. Letters: GEA:ETA October 10, 2007, explains how translators benefit from translation questions and answers provided for other languages; GEA:ETA September 8, 2009, explains how to use translator comments; GEA:ETA June 26, 2003, includes the documents *Translating for Our Publications* and Appendix 1 and provides instructions on using the appendixes in weekly team meetings.

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23. Letters HWB:ETA July 20, 2011, HPA:HT July 3, 2012, No. C-8894P, and the *Remote Translation Office Facility Guidelines* provide direction on establishing and supporting RTOs. Letter HT:HBB February 1, 2012, No. C-4195P, sets a preapproved budget for short-term rentals of RTOs. See also the document *Remote Translation Office Computer Equipment Guidelines.*

24. Letter from the Personnel Committee dated HWC:HLB December 6, 2013, No. C-23837L, outlines the policy regarding the approval process for recommending temporary volunteers.

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SAMPLE 8.1

PREVIEW OUTLINE

Prepared by: [writer's name]				**Location: [branch]**	
Approved by: [Branch Committee member]				**Date submitted: [10/15/11]**	
Magazine edition for which the article is recommended: (choose one)					
	Awake!	✕	*Watchtower* **(public edition)**		*Watchtower* **(study edition)**
Which category best sums up the primary objective of the article? (choose one)					
	Inform the reader about a particular subject, belief, or way of life.—See *g* 9/11 12-13.				
✕	**Persuade** the reader to change his belief about the subject.—See *wp11* 9/1 21-23.				
	Motivate the reader to take a certain course of action.—See *w11* 5/15 11-15.				
	Warn the reader against taking a certain course of action.—See *g* 12/09 28-29.				

Article Title: Was There Really a Garden of Eden?

Provide a one-sentence summary of the proposed article: Many say that the Eden account in Genesis is mere myth, but the facts show that we can trust this record, which is essential to understanding the rest of God's Word.

Briefly outline below the main points and the secondary points the article will cover:

Introduction: People the world over know of the garden of Eden but may dismiss it as a myth

Discuss and answer four common objections to the Eden account

1. Was the garden a real geographical place?
2. Is it realistic to say that God made Adam from dust and Eve from a rib?
3. Do the trees of life and of knowledge seem more mythical than real?
4. Does not a talking serpent seem like the stuff of fairy tales?

Why does it matter whether the garden of Eden was real?

The garden reveals much about God's original purpose for the earth

God intended that mankind fill the earth as a perfect, united family

Jesus referred to that hope as a real one (Lu 23:43); God's purpose never changes

To examine and value the Eden account is to embrace a thrilling hope for the future

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SAMPLE 8.2

[DO NOT SET] References

1. *Scientific American,* (magazine; New York), Special Issue 2008, entitled "Majestic Universe," pp. 6-10;

   Rare Earth: Why Complex Life Is Uncommon in the Universe, by Peter D. Ward and Donald Brownlee, ©2000, (Copernicus, an Imprint of Springer-Verlag New York, NY), heading "Habitable Zones of the Universe," pp. 28-29.

2. *Scientific American,* Special Issue 2008, p. 11.

3. *Perfect Planet, Clever Species—How Unique Are We?* by William C. Burger, ©2003, (Prometheus Books, Amherst, NY), pp. 32, 34, 40.

4. *World Book Encyclopedia,* ©2005 (World Book, Inc., Chicago, IL), "Earth [Planet]," electronic ref., p. 1.

5. *Perfect Planet, Clever Species—How Unique Are We?* pp. 24, 34.

6. *Insight on the Scriptures,* Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, 1988, (Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., Brooklyn, NY), Vol. 2, heading "Sun," p. 1043;

   NASA, Earth Fact Sheet, April 19, 2007, subhead "Bulk Parameters," (http://nssdc.gsfc.nasa.gov/planetary/factsheet/earthfact.html), accessed March 13, 2008, (of 3) p. 1;

   Encarta Reference Library 2005 DVD, ©1993-2004, (Microsoft Corporation), "Moon Facts and Figures," p. 1.

7. The Victoria College, (Victoria, Texas), heading "Marine Ecology," subhead "Tides," (http://www.victoriacollege.edu/), accessed April 11, 2008, (of 5) pp. 2-3.

8. *Mikołaj Kopernik i jego nauka,* (Nicolaus Copernicus and His Theory), by Stanisław R. Brzostkiewicz, ©1973, (Nasza Księgarnia, Warszawa), p. 118.

ORIGINAL POLISH: [strona 118:] Powrócił [Kopernik] do przyrządów, jakich do obserwacji nieba używali starożytni, a ponieważ nie były one wówczas w powszechnym użyciu, musiał sam odtwarzać ich wygląd.

TRANSLATION: [page 118:] He [Copernicus] reverted to using the instruments of ancient astronomers, but as they were not commonly used in his time, he had to reconstruct them from pictures.

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CHART 8.1

How to Determine the Needs of a Language

Established Translation

- What is next on the Priority List?
- Review Writing Committee's description of the content and the purpose of a new publication.
- For publications yet to be released, discuss with the language overseer any details that have been provided as well as the workload.
- Are there any special needs? (Bible, *Insight,* audio, video, Braille, large-print, simplified, Internet distribution, *Watchtower Library*)
- Before recommending a new project, review the *Publications and Formats* document on PPD.

New Translation

- How many publishers speak the language?
- Are meetings regularly held in this language?
- How many are dependent on this language for spiritual food?
- In what language do those attending comment?
- See additional questions on the *New Language Translation Request* form on PPD.

Make recommendations to the Writing Committee.

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CHART 8.2

Factors to Consider When Requesting Additional Workers for Translation

- Do you have the full number of workers allowed by the Governing Body? (See letters dated HWC:HWB July 10, 2013, No. C-19448W, and HWB:ETA April 18, 2014, No. C-27795W.)
- Is the recommended individual qualified for the assignment?

Regular Production
(Dated materials)

The Watchtower

Awake!

Our Kingdom Ministry

Convention material and releases

- Does every worker have a specific assignment?
- Can you use full-time commuters?
- Can the work be handled by part-time commuters?
- If requesting a deaf worker, review the letter dated HWC:HWB July 22, 2011.
- If recommending someone as a permanent team member, has he been properly evaluated?

Specialty Items

Songbook

New World Translation

Insight

- For Bible translation, did you assign the most experienced translators?
- Did you assign replacement workers?
- Can experienced translators be invited as temporary workers for these items?

Technical Services

Daily backup

Software updates

Computer security

Research indexing

User support

Digital formats (EPUB, WPUB)

Braille production

Composition

Publications *Index* production

Watchtower Library, Research Guide, WOL

- Do you have a trained backup compositor?
- Do the RTOs have resident computer support?
- Do you update Watchtower research libraries regularly?
- Do you have full-time workers assigned to research indexing?

When requesting permission to add workers to the Translation Department, follow the standard procedure. To avoid unnecessary correspondence, provide complete information. Letters: HWC:HLB December 6, 2013, No. C-23837L, clarifies the procedure for requesting temporary workers; HWC:HLB December 6, 2013, No. C-23838L, clarifies the procedure for recommending potential translators.

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KALAMUNDA CONGREGATION OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

REDACTED

March 27, 2011

The Body of Elders
Loganholme Congregation of
Jehovah's Witnesses - QLD

Re: BCH - Request for reinstatement

Dear Brothers

We met with BCH and explained what he needed to do for reinstatement. He is very repentant about what he did in the past and is willing to take whatever steps are necessary to restore his relationship with Jehovah.

There are some things he feels he has been accused of that were not true and therefore, would be a lie to admit to them. Jehovah is the one who knows all and is the one he wants to restore his relation with. It would be simple for him to confess to everything. Although that might satisfy us, it would not be right with Jehovah. Hence we appreciate his reluctance to confess to things he feels were not true.

We suggested he supply some information to explain his feelings and to offer proof of his claims. We are sending on to you his new plea for reinstatement and some of the information he has provided. You will notice references to various documents. This is a large file which we have not enclosed, however it is available should need it. We are also enclosing a comment from his wife who is an active, faithful sister in the congregation.

We appreciate that we are only hearing one side of the case. Obviously there are other matters and questions that the committee who dealt with this case would know of or would like to ask about. However it is our belief that the man displays the degree of repentance commensurate with the degree of deviation of his sins. He is cooperative with any direction provided and is regular with his meeting attendance. We have observed the man and feel that he could be reinstated.

Yours Brothers

Ormonde Blakeney

Nigel Hubbard

Steve Johnson

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

Loganholme Congregation Of Jehovah's Witnesses

C.O. Neil Harrop. REDACTED

To The Watchtower,
Box 280,
Ingleburn, 1890.
16th March 2009.

COPY

Dear Brothers,

We are writing in regard to your letter reference; LLD February 5, 2009.
Under the sub heading; FURTHER INFORMATION REQUIRED, you stated that you have no record of the original S-77 form for BCH and requested that we send this to you. This form is enclosed with this letter, along with another case that was overlooked at the time of going through all the forms in the file.

Over the time involved with the preceding case, much correspondence went back and forth with your legal department in relation to BCH case, so they might be able to assist with further inquiries. If more information is required from Loganholme congregation, please let us know how we can assist you in any way.

We take this opportunity to pass on the Christian love of the Loganhome congregation to you all.

From your brothers
Loganhome Congregation

N Harrop ....

Neil Harrop (PO) John Sumpton (SO) John O'Regan (Sec)

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

Loganholme Congregation Of Jehovah's Witnesses

C/O : Neil Harrop
REDACTED

Legal department
Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia
P.O. Box 280
Ingleburn NSW
1890

29th April 2011

Subject: BCH request for reinstatement

Dear Brothers

We write to you regarding a recommendation for reinstatement for BCH that we have received from the Kalamunda congregation. We have enclosed a copy of the Kalamunda Committees letter along with Mr BCH request for reinstatement. We felt it was prudent to keep you up to date with this latest development and also we would greatly appreciate your observations & comments.

We note that Mr BCH has now confessed to immoral dealings with one of his daughters, yet still is maintaining his innocence of improper dealings with his other daughters. He claims there were either, extenuating circumstances, or his daughters are themselves guilty of lying.

We also note Mr BCH makes repeated references to court cases, and events that happened throughout his life with his daughters, that we find confusing and difficult to understand, since we were not present at the court proceedings and have very limited knowledge of his past.

However it appears to us that Mr BCH has only partially admitted to his sins and has not made restitution with his daughters. Hence we are of the opinion that Mr BCH is still continuing his lies and is not demonstrating true repentance worthy of reinstatement.

As already stated our knowledge of these unsavoury events is very limited and hence we seek your assistance. We would greatly appreciate any comments you may deem appropriate that will assist us in making our decision.

We thank you for your continued assistance and look forward to your reply

Your fellow servants

Neil Harrop

P. Beasy

J. Sumpton

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

NOTIFICATION OF DISFELLOWSHIPPING OR DISASSOCIATION

(Please type or print neatly in ink.)

PERSON'S DETAILS

BCH (First name) | (Middle name) | BCH (Surname)

☒ Male ☐ Female

REDACTED (Birth date)

11/03/03 (Date of announcement of disfellowshipping or disassociation)

Congregation: LOGAN HOLME (Name) | BRISBANE (City) | QLD (State)

Appointment: ☐ Elder ☐ Ministerial servant ☐ Special pioneer ☐ Regular pioneer (Include S-202 form with this form.)

☐ Listed as a person to receive literature and/or magazine shipments for congregation (Send S-36 and/or M-206 form.)

DISFELLOWSHIPPING

Specify offence(s) including all Scriptural reference(s) applicable to the offence.

MALICIOUS LYING (PROV 6:16,19; COL 3:9; REV 22:15)

PROOF OF WRONGDOING

☐ The person confessed ☒ Two or more witnesses

☐ Other (please explain)

APPEAL

☒ Decision was not appealed ☐ Decision was appealed

DISASSOCIATION

☐ Oral resignation before two witnesses ☐ Signed letter of resignation (Original letter attached)

☐ Other: Specify offence including all Scriptural reference(s) applicable to the offence.

PREVIOUSLY DISFELLOWSHIPPED OR DISASSOCIATED

BCH (Full name at that time)

MAREEBA (Name of congregation that took the action)

1989 (Date of previous action)

1992 (Date of previous reinstatement)

THE APPOINTED COMMITTEE

Type or print name of committee members: NEIL HARROP (Chairman) | JOHN SUMPTON | JOHN O'REGAN

Signatures: N Harrop | J Sumpton | J O'Regan

ORIGINAL COMMITTEE - ALLAN PENCHEFF, ALBERT HAYDEN, DAVID GEE.

NOTIFICATION OF REINSTATEMENT OR DEATH

(If the individual is reinstated or dies, the secretary should sign and date the *stamped copy* of this form and return it to the branch office in a special blue envelope.)

☐ Reinstated (Date) | (Signature of Secretary)

☐ Deceased

Office use only

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY

The primary purpose for recording and retaining this information is to enable the entity responsible for the religious activities of Jehovah's Witnesses in Australia ("the Entity") to supervise those activities both individually and collectively. This includes:

(1) Being aware of anyone who is no longer one of Jehovah's Witnesses;

(2) Knowing what spiritual help and assistance has been given to the individual concerned;

(3) Providing whatever direction is needed to ensure that the Scriptural standards, as set out in God's Holy Word, the Bible, are maintained in the congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses; and

(4) Ensuring that the individual concerned is given whatever spiritual help and assistance is needed if he or she wishes to again become one of Jehovah's Witnesses in the future.

OFFICE USE ONLY

Additional comments:

[redacted] SD 20 MAR 2009

INVOLVES CHILD ABUSE
MULTIPLE VICTIMS
CRIMINAL RECORD

[redacted]

CONGREGATION USE

(The chairman of the appointed committee will complete this section when the date stamped copy of this form is returned by the branch office.)

This is the only record retained by the LOGAN HOLME Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses regarding this matter. All other records (with the exception of any letter of disassociation) were destroyed.

Date: 2/4/2009

Name: NEIL HARROP Signature: N. Harrop

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

WATCHTOWER
BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

PO BOX 280, INGLEBURN, NSW 1890 AUSTRALIA ABN 42 002 861 225

PHONE: (02) 9829 5600
FAX: (02) 9829 3616

SD:SSA May 5, 2011

The Body of Elders
Loganholme Congregation of
Jehovah's Witnesses—Brisbane QLD

Dear Brothers:

We received your letter of April 29, regarding BCH request for reinstatement, and trust the following comments will be helpful.

Your letter states, "It appears to us that BCH has only partially admitted to his sins and has not made restitution with his daughters. Hence we are of the opinion that Mr BCH still continuing his lies and is not demonstrating true repentance worthy of reinstatement." As highlighted in our previous correspondence, at least three of Mr BCH daughters have provided clear and credible allegations of sexual abuse by their father. In addition, there are unsubstantiated accusations of him sexually abusing others. We also note in his current 'Plea for reinstatement' letter, that, after admitting to "touching" one of his daughters, Mr BCH now blames her for the incident.

Therefore, as the situation appears to be unchanged, we can only repeat the comments from our letters to the Kalamunda elders dated November 9 and December 21, 2010:

> You mention that BCH "admits to one occasion in which he molested one of his daughters." Nonetheless, other daughters also accused him of sexually abusing them, and he has both admitted to and denied these accusations on different occasions. In this regard, a judicial charge of lying was connected to his denying the allegations of child abuse in court. We note his current admission to you that "he has a tendency to stretch the truth at times." In fact, over many years the various committees established a pattern of lying. ***Until he fully acknowledges to Jehovah and the judicial committee his sins of child abuse and of lying in connection with these offences, it would be difficult for a committee or the victims to consider that he was repentant.*** In view of this, and in harmony with the new *ks10* elders' textbook, on page 118, "two members of the committee should acknowledge receipt of the request and briefly inform him."

While we understand BCH refuses to admit to allegations he *now* claims are not true, there is overwhelming evidence that he did commit the offences and now continues in a pattern of lying. In view of the nature and extent of Mr BCH offences and the established pattern of lying, extreme caution should be exercised in considering his requests, particularly until he provides an open and honest confession to the judicial committee.

We trust these observations will be helpful and commend your handling of this difficult matter. Please accept our warm Christian love and greetings.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B. & T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

c: Body of elders, Kalamunda

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

WATCHTOWER
BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA
BOX 280, INGLEBURN, NSW 1890 AUSTRALIA ABN 42 002 861 225
PHONE: (02) 9829 5600
FAX: (02) 9829 3616

SD:SSA November 9, 2010

The Body of Elders
Kalamunda Congregation of
Jehovah's Witnesses—Perth WA

Dear Brothers:

We received your letter of October 30, regarding BCH s request for reinstatement. Further to our letter of October 30, 2010, and the Loganholme body of elders' letter dated March 26, 2010, to your body of elders, we are pleased to add the following direction.

You mention that BCH "admits to one occasion in which he molested one of his daughters." Nonetheless, other daughters also accused him of sexually abusing them, and he has both admitted to and denied these accusations on different occasions. In this regard, a judicial charge of lying was connected to his denying the allegations of child abuse in court. We note his current admission to you that "he has a tendency to stretch the truth at times." In fact, over many years the various committees established a pattern of lying. Until he fully acknowledges to Jehovah and the judicial committee his sins of child abuse and of lying in connection with these offenses, it would be difficult for a committee or the victims to consider that he was repentant. In view of this, and in harmony with the new *ks10* elders' textbook, on page 118, "two members of the committee should acknowledge receipt of the request and briefly inform him."

Thank you for seeking our further advice in this matter. We count it a privilege to be associated with you in caring for congregation interests. Please accept our warm Christian love and best wishes.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B&T Society
OF AUSTRALIA

c: Body of elders,
Loganholme—Brisbane QLD

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

WATCHTOWER
BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

PO BOX 280, INGLEBURN, NSW 1890 AUSTRALIA ABN 42 002 861 225 PHONE: (02) 9829 5600 FAX: (02) 9829 3616

SD:SSA May 11, 2010

The Body of Elders
Kalamunda Congregation of
Jehovah's Witnesses—Perth WA

Dear Brothers:

We received your letter of April 24, regarding BCH For your information, earlier this year, BCH sent a letter directly to the branch asking for advice on being reinstated. As he appeared to be associating with Wattle Grove Congregation at that time, we forwarded his letter and our response to the body of elders there, providing the following brief direction.

BCH was accused of sexually abusing all four of his daughters. He confessed to this at the appeal committee hearing. While he claims one of the daughters has forgiven him, we understand that he has never apologised to his daughters. A charge of lying was connected to his denying the allegations of child abuse in court. He has served time in prison for his offences. Until he acknowledges his sins, namely child abuse, which constituted *por·nei´a*, and lying in connection with these sins, it would be difficult to consider that he was repentant.

We are not asking you to approach BCH to discuss these matters, and have provided this information so that you will be aware of his past if he does request reinstatement. While at some point a local judicial committee may need to respond to his request for a meeting, we would not recommend that the committee meet repeatedly with Mr BCH while he continues to deny the allegations. You should not hesitate to contact the Loganholme judicial committee for further details if there is a question over any future request for reinstatement.

Thank you for seeking our advice in this matter. We count it a privilege to be associated with you in caring for congregation interests. Please accept our warm Christian love and best wishes.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B&T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

c: Body of elders,
Loganholme—Brisbane QLD

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

WATCHTOWER
BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

BOX 280, INGLEBURN, NSW 1890 AUSTRALIA ABN 42 002 861 225

PHONE: (02) 9829 5600
FAX: (02) 9829 3616

SF September 16, 2008

The Body of Elders
Loganholme Congregation of
Jehovah's Witnesses—Brisbane QLD

Dear Brothers:

Thank you for your August 28 letter regarding BCH. Mr BCH should be well aware of his daughter's accusations of sexual molestation against him. We understand that is why he is in prison. We would not recommend that you continue to meet with Mr BCH while he continues to deny these allegations. In July, 2008, we wrote the following which we believe still applies in his case:

> You mentioned that after hearing that there are pending allegations of sexual abuse he "is still claiming his innocence and then expressed despair at not being able to approach his daughters about these allegations due to a court order that prohibits him from making contact with them for 10 years." You seek our comments since he is "unable to make contact with his daughters to either confront this new allegation of abuse, or to apologise and make restitution."
>
> Since BCH continues to claim his innocence, it is obvious that he has not repented from his sins. As mentioned in our previous correspondence, these sins are clearly established. Therefore, we do not see how his being unable to contact his daughters has any bearing on his application for reinstatement. Surely, he must first confess his sins to Jehovah and before the judicial committee. After he has genuinely taken this initial step, any works befitting and evidencing repentance, such as apologising to his daughters, can be evaluated by the judicial committee. The judicial committee will then determine if his claimed repentance and accompanying works are commensurate with his degree of deviation.—Please refer to our letter dated LLD June 14, 2007.

We hope that these few comments are of assistance to you and take this opportunity to convey our best wishes and warm Christian love.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B. & T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

WATCHTOWER
BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

PO BOX 280, INGLEBURN, NSW 1890 AUSTRALIA ABN 42 002 861 225 PHONE: (02) 9829 5600 FAX: (02) 9829 3616

SD:SSD September 19, 2011

The Body of Elders
Kalamunda Congregation of
Jehovah's Witnesses—WA

Dear Brothers:

After reviewing your letter of August 27, we are pleased to provide the following comments on BCH 's further request for reinstatement.

Your letter states that Mr BCH was asked, "Did he also mean he confessed to the charges that he had abused his other daughters besides BCG ? His answer was that he did not abuse them and that this is not what he intended to convey." You ask "if there are some other sins that he is accused of that have not yet been settled, is it possible to know what they are? . . . Why would he continue to deny abuse of other daughters if they were true? It would be so easy for him to admit and confess and finish the matter?

As highlighted in our previous correspondence of May 5, 2011, at least three of Mr BCH 's daughters have provided clear and credible testimony of sexual abuse by their father. This includes the daughter who serves as a missionary. Her testimony is balanced and reliable, as opposed to Mr BCH 's long-established pattern of lying to elders and judicial committees. In addition to the conclusions drawn by various judicial committees, his deceitfulness is well known to responsible brothers here at the branch. As the matters have been clearly established judicially, and despite his repeated requests, there is no need for the local committee to review the original case with him. Rather, as the situation remains unchanged, we can only repeat the comments from our previous letters:

> ***Until he fully acknowledges to Jehovah and the judicial committee his sins of child abuse and of lying in connection with these offences, it would be difficult for a committee or the victims to consider that he was repentant.*** In view of this, and in harmony with the new *ks10* elders' textbook, on page 118, "two members of the committee should acknowledge receipt of the request and briefly inform him."

Despite his persuasiveness and the difficulty of the situation, we again advise extreme caution in recommending the reinstatement of a child abuser who has a proven history of dishonesty. If responding to future requests, two elders could briefly remind him that the only basis for reinstatement would be "genuine repentance" over the sexual abuse of his daughters and the associated lying.—*ks10* 11:4; 7:10; Prov. 6:16-19.

We trust these observations will be helpful. Please accept our warm Christian love and greetings.

Your brothers,
Watchtower B. & T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

c: Body of elders, Loganholme—QLD

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

WATCHTOWER
BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

BOX 280, INGLEBURN, NSW 1890 AUSTRALIA ABN 42 002 861 225

PHONE: (02) 9829 5600
FAX: (02) 9829 3616

SD:SSA December 21, 2010

The Body of Elders
Kalamunda Congregation of
Jehovah's Witnesses—Perth WA

Dear Brothers:

In response to questions regarding BCH as raised by the circuit overseer on his S-303 report dated December 19, we are pleased to provide the following observations.

In his report, Brother Roberts asks whether anything can be done to assist BCH BCH and reference is made to our May 11 letter to the body of elders. The question is raised, "if he can't confess to his daughters personally, because they don't want anything to do with him, then would it be appropriate for him to do so in writing to the elders and they could pass it on (to) the daughters? If he feels there is any misunderstanding in regards to the situation where he is accused of lying, then the burden of proof is upon him not the elders."

Until now, BCH has not acknowledged the extent of his offenses to the judicial committee or his daughters and has continued in a pattern of lying. Rather than there being a "misunderstanding in regards to the situation where he is accused of lying," he was disfellowshipped for lying. Nonetheless, if he now proposes to submit a written confession and apology for the elders to forward to his daughters, he may choose to do so. He should also provide a copy for the judicial committee.

By way of reminder, please note the following recent direction provided to the body of elders in our letter dated November 9, 2010:

> You mention that BCH "admits to one occasion in which he molested one of his daughters." Nonetheless, other daughters also accused him of sexually abusing them, and he has both admitted to and denied these accusations on different occasions. In this regard, a judicial charge of lying was connected to his denying the allegations of child abuse in court. We note his current admission to you that "he has a tendency to stretch the truth at times." In fact, over many years the various committees established a pattern of lying. ***Until he fully acknowledges to Jehovah and the judicial committee his sins of child abuse and of lying in connection with these offenses, it would be difficult for a committee or the victims to consider that he was repentant***. In view of this, and in harmony with the new *ks10* elders' textbook, on page 118, "two members of the committee should acknowledge receipt of the request and briefly inform him."

In view of the nature and extent of BCH offenses and his pattern of lying, caution should be exercised in considering his requests, particularly until he provides an open and honest confession to the judicial committee. We trust these further reminders will be helpful and take the opportunity to send our warm Christian love and greetings.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B&T Society
OF AUSTRALIA

c: L. Roberts
Body of elders,
Loganholme—Brisbane QLD

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

WATCHTOWER
BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

BOX 280, INGLEBURN, NSW 1890 AUSTRALIA ABN 42 002 861 225

PHONE: (02) 9829 5600
FAX: (02) 9829 3616

LLD August 28, 2007

The Body of Elders
Loganholme Congregation of
Jehovah's Witnesses—Brisbane QLD

Dear Brothers:

Thank you for your letter dated 28 July, 2007, regarding Mr. BCH

You mentioned that after hearing that there are pending allegations of sexual abuse he "is still claiming his innocence and then expressed despair at not being able to approach his daughters about these allegations due to a court order that prohibits him from making contact with them for 10 years." You seek our comments since he is "unable to make contact with his daughters to either confront this new allegation of abuse, or to apologise and make restitution."

Since BCH continues to claim his innocence, it is obvious that he has not repented from his sins. As mentioned in our previous correspondence, these sins are clearly established. Therefore, we do not see how his being unable to contact his daughters has any bearing on his application for reinstatement. Surely, he must first confess his sins to Jehovah and before the judicial committee. After he has genuinely taken this initial step, any works befitting and evidencing repentance, such as apologising to his daughters, can be evaluated by the judicial committee. The judicial committee will then determine if his claimed repentance and accompanying works are commensurate with his degree of deviation.—Please refer to our letter dated LLD June 14, 2007.

We hope that these few comments are of assistance to you and take this opportunity to convey our best wishes and warm Christian love.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B. & T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

QP125.E 6/96 QUEENSLAND POLICE SERVICE
STATEMENT OF WITNESS

Statement No.		Date	11/10/2000

STATEMENT OF

Name of Witness (in full)	James Ible BENNETT			Age	73 years
Occupation	Church Minister			Date of Birth:	13/4/1927
Police Officer taking Statement:	N.M. BENNETT	Rank & Reg. No.	PCC 10597	Station	Child & Sexual Assault Investigation Unit

James Ible BENNETT states:

1. My full name is James Ible BENNETT and I am known as Jim. I am 73 years of age and live at an address known to police. I am a Church Minister with the Jehovah Witnesses and have been an Elder within the congregation for approximately 50 years.

2. I know BCH I met him about twelve to ten years ago for only a brief period. I refer to him as BCH

3. In 1985 I moved from Papua New Guinea to live in Cairns with my wife Joan who has since passed away. Some years after moving to Cairns I was involved in a meeting with other Elders from Jehovah's Witnesses relating to BCH position in the congregation.

4. I am unable to remember the exact year of when this meeting was I do recall that I came over to Mareeba congregation from Cairns for this discussion with the other elders and BCH for a meeting that lasted all day and into the evening.

5. Towards the end of the meeting I remember one of his daughters made a statement in BCH presence concerning his conduct towards her. I can not recall which daughter it was. I can remember two things that she said that her father had done.. One was that he would come into the bathroom whilst they were showering and that he had interfered with her in someway. I am unable to recall the

REDACTED

Witness
Jim BENNETT

Justice of the Peace (Qual) / Commissioner of Declarations

Police Officer
N.M. BENNETT

exact words that she used or the extent of how he had interfered with her.

6. When BCH was confronted by the statement made by his daughter BCH admitted that they were true.

7. BCH was disfellowshipped from the Christian congregation.

8. Since this time I have had no further dealings with BCH.

9. I would like it known because of my role as a Christian Minister that I am extremely uncomfortable discussing matters that have come to me in my capacity as a Minister.

Jim BENNETT

Justices Act 1886

'I acknowledge by virtue of section 110A(5)(c)(ii) of the Justices Act 1886 that:

(1) This written statement by me dated 11/10/2000 and contained in the pages numbered 1 to 2 is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and

(2) I make it knowing that, if it were admitted as evidence, I may be liable to prosecution for stating anything that I know is false.

.....Signature

Signed at Mareeba this.....11th.....day of.....OCTOBER.....2000

REDACTED

Witness	Justice of the Peace (Qual) /	Police Officer
Jim BENNETT	Commissioner of Declarations	N.M. BENNETT

Vincent Toole

Solicitor

Vincent J. Toole Dip. Law (S.A.B.), Grad. Dip. L.P.
(Admitted in New South Wales, Queensland & Victoria)

Associate:
Susan M. Hondrokostas, B.Com (Hons), LL.B (Hons)
(Admitted in New South Wales & Queensland)

P.O. Box 5950,
MINTO, N.S.W. 2566
2-4 Zouch Road,
DENHAM COURT, N.S.W. 2565
Tel: (02) 9829 8914
Fax: (02) 9605 9435

MY REF: VT:X01204
YOUR REF:

9 July, 2001

Corrective Services
Investigation Unit
Facsimile No. (07) 3225 1813
Number pages: 5

Attention: Constable Natalie Bennett

Dear Sir/Madam:

Re: R v. BCH

I refer to telephone discussions between myself and Constable Bennett concerning the above matter and now provide you with draft statements from the following persons along with a telephone number where each of them can be contacted:

(1) Joseph Miraziz REDACTED

(2) Donald Angus Wilson REDACTED

(3) Alan John Wood REDACTED

Yours faithfully,
Vincent Toole

Vincent Toole

Attachments

Vincent Toole

Solicitor

Vincent J. Toole Dip. Law (S.A.B.), Grad. Dip. L.P.
(Admitted in New South Wales, Queensland & Victoria)

Associate:
Susan M. Hondrokostas, B.Com (Hons), LL.B (Hons)
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Tel: (02) 9829 8914
Fax: (02) 9605 9435

MY REF: VT:X01204
YOUR REF:

9 July, 2001

Corrective Services
Investigation Unit
GPO Box 1054
Brisbane Qld 4002

Attention: Constable Natalie Bennett

Dear Sir/Madam:

Re: R v. BCH

I refer to telephone discussions between myself and Constable Bennett concerning the above matter. In response to her request for various documents, I have contacted my client and received a favourable response. As a result, I now provide you with the following documents:

(1) Letter to me from Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia dated 6 July 2001.

(2) An 11 page letter from BCG dated 19 December 1995.

(3) A one page report from the original committee that handled the case involving Mr BCH

(4) A one page report dated 23 July 1989 from the appeal committee that handled Mr BCH case.

I draw you attention to the points made in paragraph 4 of the Society's letter and ask you to do all you can to respect the request made. You will also note the Society's request in paragraph 5 for the return of these documents once the case against BCH has been concluded. I therefore ask that the documents be returned as requested.

Yours faithfully,
Vincent Toole

Vincent Toole

encls.

QP125.E 6/96 QUEENSLAND POLICE SERVICE
STATEMENT OF WITNESS

Statement No.		Date	17/8/2001

STATEMENT OF

Name of Witness (in full)	Donald Angus WILSON			Age	56
Occupation	Church Minister			Date of Birth:	16/8/1944
Police Officer taking Statement:	N.M. BENNETT	Rank & Reg. No.	PCSC 10597	Station	Corrective Services Investigation Unit

ADMITTED UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF SECTION 110A OF THE JUSTICES ACTS 1886-1980
R. QUINLAN
MAGISTRATE

Donald Angus WILSON states:

1. I am 56 years of age and live at an address known to police.

2. I am a travelling minister with the Jehovah's Witnesses religion involved in visiting and serving different congregations each week in and around the Canberra area in New South Wales.

3. I first met BCH when I attended the Mareeba Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses in around 1983. I served there as an appointed elder for approximately one year. During this time, I continued living in Atherton and travelling to Mareeba each week.

4. In the late 1980's, I served as a member of a committee of elders who heard an appeal from BCH concerning a decision made by three of the local elders to disfellowship BCH from the Mareeba Congregation. The two other elders making up that committee along with me were Jim BENNETT and Joe MIRAZIZ. I recall that Jim BENNETT was the chairman for that meeting.

5. I also remember that Ron de ROOY and Kevin BOWDITCH were also present during the appeal with BCH There was also a third elder present but I am unable to remember his name.

6. At some point during the course of our meeting with BCH BCH I remember that his daughter, BCG raised an

Witness	Justice of the Peace (Qual) / Commissioner of Declarations	Police Officer
Donald Angus WILSON		N.M. BENNETT

allegation that her father had gone into her bedroom and sexually interfered with her by touching or fondling her inappropriately. While I do not recall the details of what she alleged that he did do to her, or how many times it had occurred, I do recall that it involved touching and fondling her inappropriately in a sexual way.

7. Initially BCH denied his daughter's allegation, but I recall that he finally admitted that he had done what BCG alleged.

8. We as a committee upheld the original committee's decision to disfellowship BCH from the Mareeba Congregation.

x

Donald Angus WILSON

Justices Act 1886

I acknowledge by virtue of section 110A(5)(c)(ii) of the Justices Act 1886 that:

(1) This written statement by me dated 17/8/2001 and contained in the pages numbered 1 to 2 is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and

(2) I make it knowing that, if it were admitted as evidence, I may be liable to prosecution for stating anything that I know is false.

x .....Signature

Signed at Canberra this 17th day of August 2001.

x

Witness	Justice of the Peace (Qual) /	Police Officer
Donald Angus WILSON	Commissioner of Declarations	N.M. BENNETT

"A"

SCHEDULE OF FACTS

R v BCH

V000776

CPA - COMMITTALS

Brisbane Magistrates Court Ref Nos.: 38273/01

COUNT	DATE	OFFENCE	PARTICULARS	PARTICULARS	COMPLAINANT
CT 1	On a date unknown between 29/4/88 – 31/10/88 at	S.352 - Sexual assault	**A CRUCIAL FACTOR IN THIS TRIAL IS THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT CREATED BY THE CONGREGATION OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES WHICH HAS STRONGLY INFLUENCED THE BEHAVIOUR OF THE DEFENDANT AND ALL WITNESSES**		BCG
CT 2 ALT	REDAC (According to the Qld Yearbook for 1988 – World Expo '88 was held between 30/4/88 – 30/10/88 – Pg. 121).	S.347 – Rape	The complainant is REDACTED /71) and is the natural daughter of the defendant . She is separated and resides with her three children.	All incidents happened at the family home at REDACTE	
CT 3		S.222 – Incest	The complainant generally describes her father as a dominating, violent man who she was in constant fear of., during her childhhod.	They happened over a two week period, during Expo '88, probably late in the year.	
CT 4		S.350 – Indecent assault	On the 12th of September, 2000 the complainant made a statement to police from the Child and Sexual Assault Investigation Unit (Brisbane) at Townsville Police Station outlining a number of incidents that occurred over a two week period in 1988 between herself and the defendant. The complainant could not recall the dates of the two week period, but said that she was between 16 – 17 years of age at the time, and that she thought that it happened during the later part of the year (See pg. 40, Ln1 – 10). (see also XXN Pg. 50, Ln 20 – 60, Pg.51, Ln 1 -55).	The complainant's mother took her younger siblings to Expo '88 – so only the complainant and her father occupied the family dwelling during that period.	
CT 5		S.350 – Indecent assault	PLEASE NOTE – I will also get a calendar of the school holidays for 1988 – the smaller children might have been on holidays at the time.		
CT 6 ALT		S.349, 535 – Attempted rape	The complainant recalled that her mother and her 3 brothers and 3 sisters went to Brisbane in 1988 to attend World Expo. The complainant was at least sixteen (16) years of age at this time and stayed at the family home at REDACTED with the defendant. It was during this two week period that the complainant recalled her father sexually assaulting her on a number of occasions.	All of the incidents happened before the defendant was disfellowshipped by the congreagation of Jehovah's witnesses (7/8/89 – refer to record signed by, Kevin	
CT 7		S.222, 535 - Attempted incest	**"GUILTY PASSION" EVIDENCE** (not charged on basis that it is a "wilful exposure" at the highest) The complainant recalls not long after her family left for Brisbane EXPO the defendant		

COUNT	DATE	OFFENCE	PARTICULARS	PARTICULARS	COMPLAINANT
CT 8		S.350 – Indecent assault	called her into his bedroom and had the following conversation with her. He said, BCG I want you to do something for me." She said, "What?' He said, "I know that you wax and I want you to wax this bit here for me." At the time of the defendant asking her to do this he has pulled his shorts down and exposed part of his penis at the complainant. She was unable to see the head of his penis but she saw the shaft of his penis and the pubic hair. The complainant said, "No, do it yourself or get someone else to do it, I'm not doing it." He said, "I want you too." She said "No" and walked away (See Pg. 31 EIC). **"GUILTY PASSION" EVIDENCE** (not indicted as unable to be particularised – a number of other incidents of same nature – 2 or three separate, indistinguishable occasions) The complainant recalls the defendant coming into her bedroom when she was asleep and being awoken by feeling someone lying next to her in her bed. The complainant felt the defendants arm over her arm and his hand touching her breasts over the top of her clothing and feeling something hard pushing against the top of her legs and bottom. The complainant said, "What are you doing?" The defendant said, "I'm cold." She said, "Get some clothes on." He said, "I just want to snuggle up, I'm lonely." The defendant moved his body closer to the complainant and moved his hand under her pyjamas and rubbed her breasts. The defendant also sucked her nipples of her breast and the complainant protested with the defendant to stop touching her. The defendant said, "Shhhhhh, it's okay I'm your father." She said, "No don't." He said, **"Be** obedient to your father." The complainant recalls that she used to wear underpants to bed and remembers that she wasn't wearing any and has no memory of how they came off. The defendant put his hand between the complainant's legs and started rubbing her vagina with his fingers. The complainant felt and saw the defendants finger going in and out of her vagina. During the whole incident the complainant recalls protesting and defendant telling her to be quiet, to be obedient to him because he was her father. The complainant kept pushing his hand away and telling him "Don't." The complainant can not remember why the defendant stopped but she stated it went on for about an hour. Complainant recalls that this happened on two or three other occasions (refer to pages 31 – 33 EIC, particularly lines 1 – 30 on Pg.32) (See also XXN at pg. 51, Ln.60, Pg. 52, Ln.1 – 35). **"GUILTY PASSION" EVIDENCE** The complainant also described how the defendant had obtained a sexually explicit videotape to watch – she said that it showed two people having sex in a shower (NB sounds like a scene from "The Kentucky Fried Movie" – an R-rated general release video tape of around that vintage). He showed her the video while they were eating their dinner (See EIC Pg. 33, Ln.10-20), (See XXN Pg. 60 – 61).	Bowditch, Dino Ali and Ron de Rooy)	

COUNT	DATE	OFFENCE	PARTICULARS	PARTICULARS	COMPLAINANT
			"GUILTY PASSION" EVIDENCE The complainantn recalled that she would have to get dressed up for meetings and that her father would make comments to her like, "Oh you're sexy BCG , you've got it. BCK hasn't" (See EIC Pg. 31, Ln.50). "GUILTY PASSION" EVIDENCE The complainant also recalls that the defendant would perve on her in the shower during this time and she recalls catching him one day looking though the bathroom window and him smiling at her (See EIC at Pg. 37). **"GUILTY PASSION" EVIDENCE** *XXNof witness* BCJ Please note the witnesses answer at Pg. 110, Ln.50 in relation to him noticing the defendant's taking liberties with his teenage daughters, that he considered inappropriate. **GENERAL VIOLENCE AND DOMINANCE** (displays part of a pattern carried on during the sexual assaults) ...when he used to call you at that time you'd have to be there in an instant, you couldn't just like let – if he called you twice you got a belting for it (See EIC at Pg. 31, Ln.20 -30) You can't backchat to my father. It's very likely you'd get knocked down (Pg. 59, Ln.5) Complainant describes beatings given to her by father (Pg.59, Ln.20 - 40) My father was not the type of person you would punch (Pg. 60, Ln.20) See evidence of BCJ at Pg. 108, Ln. 30 – "...she was really scared because he did belt her , he kicked the bathroom door in , in her face, she had black eyes at some stages...he was ver physical with her at times..." (HEARSAY – see XXN page 113, Ln.25) **COUNT 1** The complainant recalls the defendant calling her into the main bedroom (where her parents slept) to say goodnight. The defendant asked the complainant to come over to give him a kiss goodnight. She went to the queen size bed and remembers giving him a kiss on the cheek and then being on her back on the bed on top of the covers. The defendant started to touch her breasts above her clothing and put his hands underneath her pyjama top and touched her breasts with his hands and also sucked her nipples. The complainant recalls protesting the whole time with the defendant and telling him to stop. He kept telling her to be quiet and to stop talking and to be obedient as he was the father (Pg. 33, Ln 40 – 50 EIC).	Only incident of this nature to happen in main bedroon (involving general sexual assult and then contact between penis and vagina).	

COUNT	DATE	OFFENCE	PARTICULARS	PARTICULARS	COMPLAINANT
			COUNT 2 ALT 3 The defendant moved up and down and pushed the bottom half of his body very hard against her vagina she could feel his penis against her vagina above her pyjamas. The complainant could feel the defendant pushing his penis through her pyjama bottoms and underpants and **felt his penis a little inside her but felt her clothing being forced into her vagina from the pressure of the defendant's penis**. At the same time as the defendant was trying to force his penis into the complainant vagina he was touching her breasts. The defendant took the complainant pyjama pants off and climbed on top of her and tried to put his penis in her vagina through her underpants. **The complainant could feel the defendant's penis in her vagina and it was hurting her.** The complainant was telling the defendant to stop and kept saying to her to be obedient and to be quiet. The complainant recalls the defendant trying to remove her underpants off at the same time and she kept protesting with him and wouldn't let him remove her underpants. Throughout the whole incident the complainant recalls saying "No" and telling the defendant to stop. The complainant managed to move away from the defendant and was facing the other end of the bed was lying on her side trying to get off the bed. The defendant put his right arm over her right side of her body and moved her legs apart. The defendant pushed his body against the complainant's back and she could feel his penis (which was still hard) against her bottom and between the top of her legs. The complainant felt the defendant's penis trying to go through her underpants and he was pushing very hard against her. She stated she was telling him to stop and he was telling her to be obedient to him that he was her father. The complainant felt the defendant's penis sitting between her legs on her skin and could feel him pushing his penis against her skin. The complainant can not recall why it stopped but recalls telling him that she wanted to go to bed (See Pg. 33 Ln.51 – 60, Pg.34, Ln. 1- 20 EIC). **NB Under XXN at Pg.53, Ln.20 the complainant said "...it probably went past the entrance". At Ln.25 she says that she was positive that the penis did go past the entrance because it was hurting her.** Undoubtedly the defence will argue that she can not be sure whether she was penetrated – my view is that the complainant's answer on this point is not inconsistent with her evidence in chief, and she remains adamant that he pushed his pnis into her vagina, albeit her underwear was forced inside her. **COUNT 4** The complainant said that she and the accused travelled to Cooktown to participate in a working bee to build a new Kingdom Hall. She said that she travelled with the accused to Cooktown on a motorbike. She said that the return trip was very bumpy and she got a sore back. She said that the accused offered to massage her back for her - he told her to lay	SEE ABOVE Incident happened directly after trip to Cooktown.	

COUNT	DATE	OFFENCE	PARTICULARS	PARTICULARS	COMPLAINANT
			down on his bedroom floor, and began to massage her back - he started to pull her pants down below her waist onto her hips when she pulled them back up. The accused said, "Oh no you've got to massage this part too". The complainant said, "No". The accused continued pulling her pants down until her whole bottom was exposed. The accused then used a massage device that her mother had for her neck. The accused touched her between them cheeks of her bottom and touched her on her skin and her vagina – she kept saying –"No don't", and she kept trying to pull her pants up – the accused said, despite her repeated protests, "Be obedient to your father". She said that the accused just stopped and she got up (Pg. 36, Ln. 30 – 50). **COUNT 5** The complainant recalls the last occasion the defendant tried to have sexual intercourse with her was just before her mother and siblings returned from Expo 88. It was in the morning sometime. The defendant called to the complainant whilst he was in her sister BCK bedroom. The complainant went into the bedroom and saw her father standing just inside the bedroom with no clothes on from the bottom down. The defendant said to the complainant, "I want you to touch it." At this time the defendant grabbed the complainant's hand and was pulling it towards his penis which she could see was circumcised. The complainant touched the defendant's penis only because the defendant was forcing her to touch him, she was trying to pull her hand away and told him "I don't want to touch it." The defendant started to touch his penis in front of the complainant. He was stroking his penis with his hand back and forth saying, "Like this." She recalls that he didn't do this for long he then said, "I want you to do something else for me." The complainant. recalls seeing money in the defendant's hand he said, "I'll give you $300.00 to help you with your car and $300.00 after if you bend over on the bed." **COUNT 6 ALT 7 ALT 8** She said, "I don't want to do it. I don't need your money." The defendant became angry and grabbed the complainant around her waist and moved her to side of her sister's bed and he said, "Bend over." At the same time the defendant pushed the complainant in the back and forced her down on the bed. The complainant recalls feeling the defendants penis pushing between her legs and trying to force his penis into her vagina through her underpants. At this time the complainant remembers going "berserk" and telling her father to stop touching her and hurting her. She managed to get out of the room and run from the house. She ran to a friends house and returned sometime later. **Under XXN at Pg.53, Ln 35, the complainant** acknowledged that this incident was different from the first incident because she freaked out and the defendant was trying to	In main bedroom of house at Biboohra Only incidents to have happened in BCK bedroom at Biboohra house. SEE ABOVE	

COUNT	DATE	OFFENCE	PARTICULARS	PARTICULARS	COMPLAINANT
			remove her pants – she struggled and got away from him – whereas she was **certain** that during the first incident in the main bedroom that he did penetrate her vagina. The complainant recalls that after each incident with her father he seemed to act as if everything was normal and never said anything to her, he acted as if nothing had happened which seemed to confuse the complainant more. **ADMISSIONS BY ACCUSED** During the 1980's the accused and his family were members of the Jehovah's witness congregation of Mareeba. In 1989 the accused was being investigated by a group of Elders of the Jehovah's witnesses in relation to another matter (infidelity on his part). As part of that investigation the accused met with the elders on several occasions. The complainant approached one of the elders (**Dino ALI**) during this process, and advised him of the assaults committed upon her by the accused (See EIC Pg. 41, Ln.20 – 40). The complainant also told her then boyfriend (and future husband) BCJ of the assaults (See EIC Pg. 42). She said that she and BCJ actually spoke to Dino ALI together – she did not tell him of the specific incidents , only about generalised touching (ALI was a friend of her father) (See EIC Pg. 43, Ln.1 - 20). Dino ALI organised a Jehovah's Witnesses Committee meeting (constitued by Dino ALI, Ron BOWDITCH, Ron De ROOY) between the elders of the local church and the accused, and the complainant was invited. The complainant confronted the accused with the allegations (she describes the content of her accusations at Pg, 43 of EIC – apparently she was asked if the accused tried to have sexual intercourse with her – the complainant said that she replied that she didn't know - because of her relative innocence about things sexual), and the accused denied the allegations and called the complainant a liar, a troublemaker – he threatened to belt her after the meeting (See EIC Pg. 44, Ln.1 – 20). Thje elders found that there was insufficient evidence to substantiate her claims – no action was taken. **PLEASE NOTE** – defence subpoenaed docucuments from Jehovah's Witnesses which arrived on final day of CH – none were separately admiited into evidence. **NOTES OF CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS** Among these documents are note of various congregational meetings held to discuss the defendant's actions in many respects, including allegations made by the complainant – refer to pages 4 - 6f the notes in this respect – it is recorded on Pg. 4 that the complainant alleged molestaion on 4 – 5 occasions. On Pg. 5 – the defendant's denial is recorded –		

COUNT	DATE	OFFENCE	PARTICULARS	PARTICULARS	COMPLAINANT
			however it is also recorded that he admitted that he had kissed his daughter on the mouth and hugged her "tightly" – he said that it was all part of his parental training of the complainant. In relation to her allegatio that he looken in on her as she was showering – he said that he may have been walking past, In relation to an allegation that he chased his daughter – he said that they were playing with a bucket of water. In relation to the allegation that he broke into the bathroom – he said that he may have been in a hurry to bathe, or his glasses may have been inside with a note "despite nakedness of BCG See also the second last page of the notes – where the complainant was admonished not to talk about "family matters" with other people!!!! On Pg. 6 the defendant is reported to have said – if any improper acts, then BCG was looking for the opportunities Another meeting was held only a couple of days later and the same people were present , but no action was taken (see EIC Pg. 160, Ln.20 - 35) The complainant said that the defendant was shortly thereafter disfellowshipped in relationship to his committing adultery with another woman (Pg. 44, Ln. 25). **CAUTION** – the notes are littered with mention of inadmissible and highly prejudicial matters [particularly offences alleged in relation to other children of the family, and the issue of his infidelity]– must be carefully edited. **LETTER TO JUDICIAL COMMITTEE AT BEENLEIGH FROM RON DE ROOY AND DINO ALI – dated 23/4/90** The letter is a good summary of all of the allegations levelled against the defendant, and the punishment meted out to him – it also makes it quite clear that the defendant was considered deceitful. **LETTER BY DEFENDANT TO SERVICE DESK WATCHTOWER SOCIETY SEEKING EXPLNATION FOR NOT BEING RE INSTATED– dated 7/7/91** The defendant's letter acknowledges that he was justly disfellowshipped. In the second paragraph he says that he is remorseful for having disappointed Jehovah and said that he stopped his wrongdoing. On page 2, par 2, he admits that he has sinned and says "I was not disfellowshipped for nothing". I expect that these references are not specific enough in relation to the actual offending – and if admitted would give rise to the possible admission of the later more self serving correspondence		

COUNT	DATE	OFFENCE	PARTICULARS	PARTICULARS	COMPLAINANT
			LETTER FROM BEENLEIGH CONGREGATION EXPLANING WHY DEFENDANT WAS NOT RE-INSTATED – dated 16/8/91 The letter makes it clear that the defendant denied the "porneia" – molestation of the complainant – and told the congreagetion that he considered that he had been forced into making the admissions. It is very clear from all of the internal correspondence from Jehovah's witnesses that the defendant moved about from congregation to congregation desperately seeking to be re-instated NB – *I have spoken to Vincent Toole – solicitor for Watchtower – he will see if a Director of the Watchtower will be wiling t o provide s S.93 Evidence Act Statement in relation to the entirety of the documents subpoenaed by defence – which should cover the admissibility of the documents allegedly authored by the defendant and by congregational members from Beenleigh, St.George and the Service desk – where no witness statements have been obtained.* See also evidence of: **Dino ALI** – said that complainant told elders that defendant had touched her on the breasts and other parts of her body. That he had come into her bedroom late at night and was touching her then. On another occasion when she was showering he had looken through the window. On another occasion he had come in through the door – or he had smashed the door down and entered the bathroom while she was showering (see EIC Pg. 157, Ln.30 – 60). Defendant was present when accusations were made - and denied them - saying that if anything had happened that it was all part of his parental training and in response to her questions about sex (EIC Pg. 158, Ln.1 - 20). **Kevin BOWDITCH** – he said that the complainant told the meeting that her father came into the bedroom wearing only a towel and that her father grabbed her and molested her. He admitted that the complainant may have said that the defendant touched her breasts and genitals (EIC Pg. 169, Ln. 15 – 35). He said that the defendant admitted entering the room but not to touching the complainant (EIC Pg. 170, Ln.15). Under XXN the witness agreed that the complainant made no mention that the defendant had sexual intercourse with her (Pg. 175, Ln.30). He described the defendant's demeanour as uptight and the complainant's as weepish and upset (Pg. 177, Ln.20 – 30). **Ron De ROOY** - He remembered that the complainant told the meeting that the defendant		

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			would look at her in the shower, that he would come to her at night in her bedroom and sexually interfere with her – he remembered that the defendant made the comment that he was teaching her things to do with marriage (EIC Pg.180, Ln.20). The defendant denied her accusations (See Pg. 180, Ln.45). During a later meeting (approximately one or two weeks after the first) the complainant repeated the allegations, in the presence of the accused, the original elders, and on this occasion an appeal comitte of elders (**James BENNETT, Joseph MIRAZIZ, Donald WILSON**) - the accused admitted that what the complainant had alleged was true. The minutes of the meeting, held on 23 July 1989, revealed that the accused had admitted to "... gross sexual acts against his teenage daughter (five or six times) during the latter part of last year." See also the evidence of: **James BENNETT** – (Statement admitted per S.110A) – paragraph 5 – one of the defendant's daugters told the meeting that the defendant would come into bathroom while she was showering and that he had interfered with her in some way – could not recall the exact words. Par 6 – when the defendant was confronted with the allegations he admitted they were true. ***XXN*** – the witness agreed that the complainant did not use the word "rape". However he did believe that the allegation did involve sexual intercourse (Pg. 193, Ln. 10 – 20). **Joseph MIRAZIZ** - (Statement admitted per S.110A) - Par 4 – he recalled that the complainant made some very serious allegations aginst the defendant – they involved him sexually interferring with her. He recalled that she said that her father came into her room during the night and sexually abused her by fondling and massaging her private parts. Hen also recalled that the complainant's sister BCK also made allegations that the defendant had sexually interfered with her. Par. 5 – he recalled that during the meeting the defendant acted in a very menacing way toward his daughters – even standing up and raising his voice and pointing his finger at them He recalled that on two occasions he asked the defendant to cease his actions and to sit down. Par. 6 – he said that he told the defendant that based opn the evidence of the complainants that it had been established beyond doubt that he did molest them -. Par 8 – the defendant replied – "yes, yes, yes. Ok. Get on with it". The witness said that he		

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			was completely satisfied that his reply was an admission that he had done the things alleged. ***XXN*** – the witness did not recollect that the complainant ever said that she had been raped He could not remember mention of sexual intercourse – but did rember her saying that he had fondled and massaged her private parts (Pg. 207, Ln.10 - 20). ***RXN*** – I asked the witness to describe the **defendant's demeanour** – see Pg.208, Ln.1-20. **Donald WILSON – (NB statement not tendered at CH and witness not called)** – Par 6 - witness remebered that the complainant raised an allegation that the defendant had gone into her bedroom and sexually interferred with her by touching or fondling her inappropriately – he did not recall any further details – but did remember that the allegation involved touching and fondling the complainant ina sexual way. Par 7 – the defendant initially denied his daughter's allegation – but finally admitted that he had done what the complainant alleged. **PRETEXT PHONE CALL BETWEEN COMPLAINANT AND DEFENDANT** Peter Godsall has already read the transcript and formed a view in relation to its usefulness. On Tuesday the 27th of February, 2001 Detectives from the Child and Sexual Assault Investigation Unit attended at the defendant's home. The defendant sought legal advice and as a result was advised not to partake in a formal interview. The defendant was arrested and conveyed to the Brisbane City Watchhouse were he was formally charged.		
			OTHER WITNESSES BCJ – ***FRESH COMPLAINT?*** **(**boyfriend and former husband of complainant) – lived with complainant's family for a short time in 1987 – developed, then revealed to defendant, romantic feelings for complainant – was then asked to move out. Kept up a clandestine – but non-sexual – relationship with complainant, and claimed that complainant was often punished by father as a result of real or imagined contact with him (Refer to Pg. 104 – 107 EIC). Said that for a period in 1988, while part of complainant's family was away in Brisbane for Expo 88, he house sat a property close to and behind the complainant's dwelling for as period of about four days (Pg. 107, Ln.1 -10). Said that the complainant told him that her father had tried to rape or molest her – he said		

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			that **she did not use the word rape – but she said something to the effect that he tried to have sex with her** (Pg.106, Ln.10 - 30 EIC). He couldn't remember when she told him this information – he said that he remembered that she said it at a meeting he attended at the congregation in REDAC (EIC Pg.106, Ln. 10 – 20). He said that the complainant told him about the incident [in late 1988 or early 1989 – par 6 of statement] sometime after it happened. Her explanation for the delay in telling him of the assault – was that she was afraid of her father and that he would not let her talk to him (EIC Pg. 106, Ln.45). He said that he had another discussion with the complainant the following day – [she told him that it happened while the rest of her family was away at Expo 88 and that it happened over a few different nights. He remembered that she said that he tried to get her to watch dirty movies and that he tried to have sex with her. Statement Par.10]. The complainant also said that that she had tried to run to see him at the house (EIC Pg.107, Ln.10). He said that he spoke with the defendant on the telephone the following day and questioned directly about the complainant's allegations. He said that at first the defendant denied her allegations – said that she was mental and dreaming it up. After a while he said that it was nothing to be concerned about, (EIC Pg.107, Ln.45). He also recalled that the defendant admitted that the complainant had tried to seduce him (EIC Pg.108, Ln.1) [he also recalled that the defendant said that the complainant had seduced him – that they were playing around and that she got the wrong idea and was curious about things – statement Par 13] He thought that the delay between the assaults and the complainant telling him was a matter of months, a couple of months (EIC Pg. 108, Ln.30). *XXN* – Please note the witnesses answer at Pg. 110, Ln.50 in relation to him noticing the defendant's taking liberties with his teenage daughters, that he considered inappropriate. Please note that the witness was asked about the complainant's mental state after he revealed that she had seen a psychologist – Merilee Frankish – the witness did not agree that the complainantconfused reality with fiction – he did agree that she had bee prescribed Zoloft and posibly Prozac in order to treat her condition (XXN Pg.124) The witness also said that the complainant purchased her car, a Morris 1100, AFTER Expo'88 (see XXN Pg.125 – 126 – **please note that this ties in with the complainant's assertion that the accused offered her money to purchase a car during the final assault**) **PLEASE NOTE – TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE THE COMPLAINANT'S PSYCH**		

COUNT	DATE	OFFENCE	PARTICULARS	PARTICULARS	COMPLAINANT
			HISTORY HAS NOT BEEN SUBPOENAED BY DEFENCE (I HAVE NOT RAISED IT WITH COMPLAINANT). CORRESPONDENCE FROM AO REVEALS THAT NO NOTES/FILES HELD AT INNISFAIL COMMUNITY CENTRERELATING TO ANY COUNSELLING SESSIONS – RE COUNSELLOR DENISE ZELL. **RECORDS HELD BY CENTACARE CAIRNS WILL NOR BE RELEASED WITHOUT SUBPOENA –RE DR MERILEE FRANKISH** NB No notes made at time by witness. BCI - (former wife of defendant, mother of complainant) – Witness thought that the family trip to Expo'88 was in about October for a period of two weeks (EIC Pg.130, Ln.1 – 20). Said that her husband left the family home to move away in about April 1989. She said that a couple of days after he left he returned home again – she said that she tried to convince the defendant not to leave. There was an argument between the defendant and complainant in the hallway of the dwelling – the complainant said, "Mum, dad's been rude to me" – the witness said that the defendant then tried to hit the complainant.. The defendant then suggested that the witness should believe him rather than the complainant – the witness said that she told him that she believed the complainant (she then referred to a complaint made by the complainant's sister BCK some years earlier) (See EIC Pg.131, Ln. 10 – 20). She said that the complainant later went into some detail in a later conversation – possibly on the same day – the complainant said that the defendant tried to break into her room a few times and he fondled her breasts a few times (XXN Pg.132, Ln.20). The witness remembered that the complainant obtained her car after Expo'88 (XXN Pg.139, Ln.10 – 25). The witness recalled the shower door incident - she did not see it happen but heard the yelling and saw the complainant's bruised eye afterward (XXN Pg.140 – 141). **NB I HAVE NOT SUMMARISED THE EVIDENCE OF THE POLICE**		
			PRE-TRIAL ISSUES 1. **Admissibility of alleged admissions made in Congregation meeting** – Paul Smith has already advised that he will object to the admissions being led. The basis for this objection will surely be that (1) they were co-erced in the sense that there was an obligation in the Jehovah's witness faith to admit guilt before a person could be forgiven; and (2) that the content of the admission (based on witness recollections) is of a character to suggest that it was made in order to end the		

COUNT	DATE	OFFENCE	PARTICULARS	PARTICULARS	COMPLAINANT
			meeting and obtain a favourable outcome, rather than being a truthful statement (see EIC of De Rooy Pg. 184). The prosecutor must have reference to the evidence of the elders who were present at the meetings: Dino ALI – was aqsked about the powers of the committee – he agreed that it had the power to disfellowship a person from the congregation "if it was necessary and if the person was unrepentant" (XXN Pg. 162, Ln.50). **Please note the further XXN at Pg. 166 – the witness agreed that an individual's willingness to repent was an important factor in the decision as whether or not they were to be disfellowshipped. At Pg. 167 the witness agreed that if a person was repentant and admitted to what he had done then it made it easier for them to remain in the church.** **The above is particularly relevant given the actual wording of the record of the result of the meeting where the complainant's accusations were upheld – the document signed by BENNETT, WILSO and MIRAZIZ dated 23/7/89 record the decision thus: "1. Porneia, in the form of gross sexual acts against his teenage daughter (five or six times) during the latter part of last year. *Under pressure of witnesses he confessed to this charge.*"** 2. Admissibillity of pretext "admissions – Paul Smith has already advised Peter Godsall in relation to this point and Peter does not require any further instruction.		
			LIST OF EXHIBITS 1. ROI conducted with defendant by AO Bennett (27/2/01) – transcript and tape; 2. Pretext telephone conversation Complainant / defendant (4/10/00) – transcript and tape; 3. Original minute of congregatiobnal meeting conducted by BOWDITCH, ALI and DE ROOY – seemingly dated 7/8/89; 4. Original minute of appeal congregational meeting conducted by BENNETT, WILSON and MIRAZIZ, dated 23/7/89; 5. Diagram drawn by complainant (Pg.74 XXN – Ex 7) in relation to incident in shower; 6. Letter written by complainant to congreation on 19/12/95 – details offences against her and a lot of in admissible material (Ex 5); 7. Letter to complainant from Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia in response to above letter – dated 26/2/96 – **truly nauseating reponse;** 8. Complainant's birth certificate; 9. Original notes of meeting conducted by BOWDITCH, ALI and DE ROOY (unsure who made notes – should be shown to witnesses to advise)		

COUNT	DATE	OFFENCE	PARTICULARS	PARTICULARS	COMPLAINANT
			10. Colour photographs supplied by complainant - of her , the accused and other family members at around the time of the offences		

BERND KLOOS
REDACTED

12-5-03

THE PRESIDING JUDGE
BRISBANE DISTRICT COURT.

CHARACTER REFERENCE

MY NAME IS BERND KLOOS. I HAVE LIVED IN ST.GEORGE FOR PAST 30 YEARS. I WORK AS A CONTRACTOR DELIVERING MAIL FOR AUSTRALIA POST.

I AM A FAMILY MAN WITH 4 CHILDREN,ONE WORKING FOR AN ACCOUNTENCY FIRM, THE OTHER WORKED IN THE HOSPITAL IN THE ADMINISTRATION OFFICE.

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS PROVIDED IN BEHALF OF BCH FOR COURT PROCEEDINGS REGARDING THE RELEVENT CHARGES.

I HAVE COME TO KNOW BCH THRU BUSINESS DEALINGS AS HE WAS MANAGING THE LOCAL REDACTED STORE WHEN I FIRST CAME TO ST.GEORGE. I FREQUENTLY VISITED THE FAMILY AT THEIR RESIDENCE ON SOCIAL & RELIGIOUS OCCASIONS AS I HELPED THE FAMILY TO LEARN & APPLY BIBLE PRINCIPLES.

ALTHOUGH BCH MOVED FROM ST.GEORGE AFTER ABOUT 4 YEARS I HAVE PERIODICALLY KEPT IN TOUCH WITH HIM SEEING HIM AT LEAST ONCE A YEAR AT RELIGIOUS CONVENTIONS, AT WHICH BIBLE PRINCIPLES DEALING WITH MORALITY WERE DISCUSSED.

BCH HAS AN EXCELLENT RECORD OF DOING COMMUNITY SERVICES AT CONSIDERABLE EXPENSE TO HIMSELF. I HAVE BEEN WITH HIM AS FAR AS BUDABERG DOING VOLUNTARY CONSTRUCTION WORK OF KINGDOM HALLS(CHURCH BUILDINGS)

I HAVE NEVER HEARD ANY COMMENTS ABOUT BCH REGARDING THE ALLEGED ALLEGATIONS. I AM AWARE OF BCH FUTURE PLANS TO DEVOTE MORE TIME TO HELP PEOPLE LIVE BY BIBLE STANDARDS. I FIND THE CHARGES LAID AGAINST BCH INCONSISTANT WITH BCH CHARACTER & THE VOLUNTARY EDUCATIONAL WORK THAT HE SPENDS SO MUCH TIME IN DOING.

YOURS TRULY

Bernd Kloos

DO NOT DESTROY

WATCHTOWER
BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

BOX 280, INGLEBURN, N.S.W. 2565 AUSTRALIA A.C.N. 002 861 225

PHONE: (02) 605 1099

FAX: (02) 829 3616

SD:SSB July 25, 1996

Pfile

The Body of Elders
Mareeba Congregation of
Jehovah's Witnesses—QLD

now Loganholme We Cong

Dear Brothers:

We are writing in connection with our correspondence SD:SSB February 26, 1996. One of the elders telephoned the Society in March regarding this matter involving Brother BCH Brother BCH daughter says that he has not apologized for sexually, mentally, and physically abusing her, and the elder confirmed that this was the case.

Was this factor taken into consideration when hearing his plea for reinstatement? If Brother BC BCH is genuinely repentant for his wrong conduct, he ought to do what he can to assist his family members who have suffered because of his wrong actions. In our letter to Sister BCG we mentioned that this matter would be pursued. Please reassure her that this is the case.

We look forward to hearing from you shortly and send our warm Christian love and best wishes.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B. & T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

WATCHTOWER
BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA
BOX 280, INGLEBURN, N.S.W. 2565 AUSTRALIA A.C.N. 002 861 225
PHONE: (02) 605 1099
FAX: (02) 829 3616

SD:SSB February 26, 1996

Mrs BCG
REDACTED
Mareeba Qld 4880

Dear Sister BCG

Your letter of December 19, 1995 has just been received in our office. We were saddened to hear of the very serious circumstances which you outline in your correspondence. In response, we have made enquiries into the matters you raised from the brothers who handled the situation.

We are sure you have appreciated Jehovah's loving attention to your situation in various *Watchtower* articles to help victims of child abuse. You will no doubt also very much appreciate the article in *The Watchtower* April 1, 1996, with the theme, "Always Throw Your Burden On Jehovah." You can be confident that Jehovah knows the truth about every matter and considers you precious, especially as you are using your life to worship him. He is not insensitive to what you have gone through. The heart warming prayer of David is appropriate where he entreated Jehovah to preserve his tears in his "skin bottle." As David had confidence that Jehovah would not overlook the extreme suffering that he had experienced, you can have the same trust. (Ps. 56:1, 5, 8, 11) As you correctly say, you were victimised, just as someone who was raped. However, in Jehovah's sight, you are viewed as one who is loved and spiritually clean.

We note your reasons for concern that your father may have been reinstated prematurely. As mentioned, we will follow through on the points you have raised. By continuing to keep active in Jehovah's service and close to him, you will be assisted to cope with your emotional wounds so that these do not dominate your thinking. With Jehovah's help and your own efforts, you can look forward to the new world of peace. Even now, you will continue to be able to have the "peace of God that excels all thought."—Philippians 4:6-9.

Do not overlook the help that can come from those who have been appointed to oversight in the congregation. (Isa. 32:1, 2) Be assured of our prayers on your behalf to the end that you will continue to rely on the strength "beyond what is normal" from Jehovah. (2 Cor. 4:7) With our letter we are pleased to send an expression of our warm Christian love and best wishes.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B.&T. Society OF AUSTRALIA

Blind c and PS to: Body of elders
Mareeba Congregation

Dear Brothers: We are sending you a copy of Sister BCG letter. Could we please have your comments on the specific points she makes with regard to the reinstatement of her father. If, as she states, he has never apologised to her, we wonder about the basis for reinstating him into the Christian congregation. Kindly reassure Sister BCG your desire to support her. Thank You. We send our warm Christian love and greetings.

Encl.

BCG

REDACTED

19.12.95

Dear Bros,

I'm writing to you on a matter of great importance. I rang the Bros at the Spruce desk last week + it was suggested I write a letter.

My name is BCG at Moreton congregation.

Some years back I was sexually, mentally + physically abused by my stepdad father BCH who is now in Logan Long. Who at the time was serving as a Ministerial Servant in Maroochy Long (1988).

A little history. My father appeared to be a very spiritual man. He drummed into our heads never to trust anyone (except him of course) Never to speak to the elders unless he would be there, + if we disobeyed him we would be kicked out + treated like a disfellowshipped person.

I never had any close friends my father kept us secluded. So I have a strong nature + he had 'training' for me.

1988 towards the end of the year it started. Ranging from touching me everywhere to offering me money (like a prostitute) to engage in relations. + trying to have intercourse with me.

Let me explain how you feel in a situation like that.

First of all you have a numb paralysed feeling from head to toe. Then eventually your mind says that

this can't be happening - he is your father, a ministerial servant, your role model. So you try to stop it + he says "I'm your father, I'm your father, be obedient." But still protesting you say stop, 'don't', you try locking your door, trying to run away, asking, excuse. ect.

The next day comes + it haunts you - but your fathers back to normal, telling you your stupid, + your a troublemaker + best of all Mental. ect. I was told that so many times it is still in my head, so essentially I believed it. I convinced myself that they were nightmares and that it was all in my head. But there allway a part of me who knew what really happened.

One day he wanted to get in the shower, when I was already in there. He started violently banging on the door, I had just enough time to grab a towel then went to open the door just as he kicked it + busted the lock + hit me in the face - I had a black eye. No, he said he was not sorry. The next meeting Zini Ali (one of our elders) asked what happened to my eye? I told him that 'My father kicked the bathroom door in my face. Zini just laughed + said 'Oh did he.' - He obviously thought I was joking. I'm mentioning things like this to show how even elders can be fooled.

I have never felt so trapped, alone confused + frightened in all my life. Except I had Jehovah. I used to cry + pray to Jehovah at night + beg him to help me + to put his angels all around my bed to protect me from my father.

But it just kept happening each time getting bolder + more brazen about it. I felt there was no way out I tried to cut my wrists to run away, even get runted over by the trucks. And as a result of the stress I suffered from facial hives, lost a lot of weight, developed a nervous cough, migraines that made me be sick + mysterious pains in the stomach. I was also very erratic in my emotional behaviour.

To outside looking in, I looked mental. It was that bad; that all my family nicknamed me 'Nutty Fruit Cake' + 'Mental'. On that basis no one would believe anything I had to say or even take me seriously.

Months went by + Much to my surprise my father left us 7 children + Mother. Of course Mother was devastated & the congregation was in complete shock.

Since he had left; my safety was not an issue + now I thought I should do my part to keep the congregation clean as well as for my own piece of mind. It was then that I told your Brother in the cong' (now my husband) I thought surely he'd believe me. When I told him his reply was 'Are you trying to get back at your father?' As it was common knowledge to a lot of people that I took the brunt of his anger. I lost all hope again. But to my surprise BCJ came back the next day (he'd done some research) + had confronted my father + he admitted it to BCJ but tried to 'weasel' his way out + said that it wasn't his fault, So we then

approached the elders who insisted on hearing every detail about 3 times before they started the committee — I was a wreck Bro Keen (P.O at the time) told me I'd have to tell my mother. Thing were definatly going from bad to worse. When I spoke to Mother I found out that she already knew he was like that. As she caught him molesting BCK when I was a baby. But thought it wouldnt happen again My father got the truth about 4 years after that Incident, at St George.

I was devasted that she knew and took it so lightly. She never once warned us girls or even told us what to do if it ever happened. I spoke to my older sis BCK and she said it happened all along while he was in the truth. And then I found out he abused my little sister as well BCL 4 + BCM 2½, + I hadn't stopped him!

Hoping to find comfort + understanding from my mother, I got just the opposite She was angry at me, said that I wanted it to happen + blamed me as to the reason he left + broke up the family. Yet she still tried to get him to come home. I felt abandoned + just wanted to die.

My father eventually admitted in the appeal committee to the incest — the first + only time I actually heard it.

My father hated me with a vengence was continually threatning me, following me + demanding I get in his car + talk to him about what I said. By this stage I feared for my life, even the sight of him collapsed me both physically and emotionally — My knees would

literally knock together! All the time denying that anything of that nature had ever happened.

On the other hand, Mother told the whole congregation + most of the town what had happened. Now my 'greatest fear' was alive and running and not one thing I could do about it.

After 2 Meely years he got re-instated in the congregation of St George. I really think that a very, very, small price to pay for scheming to leave his wife + children for a younger woman. Not to mention what he did to his 4 daughters in sentencing them for life, trying to heal the wounds + memories.

When he got reinstated I asked the elders. why??? They said, there comes a point when they can no longer hold him back, as they can't read hearts!

* According to the columns doesn't it say that more is involved than just doing all the right things. (meetingsect)
- Anyone can do that.
- Insight Book Pg 773 Comparing Judas to the apostle Peter .... note the different types of repentance Mt 26:75 compare Luke [redacted]. 22:31,32
- Pg 774 Paragraph 2. Righting the wrong 'Absence of concern for rectifying the wrong shows lack of TRUE REPENTANCE.' Compare Eze 33:14,15. Luke 19:8
+ the Insight Book sums it up when it says that the heart motive is the determinative.

My father is only interested in pleasing men, not Jehovah other wise he would not have done the following

1. Abused all his 4 daughters - men couldn't see as Jehovah could.

2. Be so proud of himself when he returned (early last year) to Mareeba long. Shaking everyones hand as though he'd done nothing. He also brought REDACTED his wife.

3. After his reinstatment continued on with his scheme to marry REDACTED the younger woman.

4. When he came to Mareeba last year he made a point of going out witnessing in Mareeba - even though he stayed in Cairns. This happened on several occasio - only for show to man.

5. Made no attempt to apologise to any of the children (except BCK his favourite) for what he had put them through.

6. Craftily 'wiseled' his way out of paying an ongoing maitance for his children. He had a special order made up saying he could only pay maitance when he work full-time. Do children only eat when your working full-time?
Would not a repentant attitude move you to go without computers + new cars in order to feed your children?
- Once again only for Man - not Jah as he says in the bible that, 'those not caring for their own are worse than those without faith.'

7. Continuing to deny that he did anything at all to his daughters, surely shows a haughty unrepentant spirit. Once Again Jehovah knows, men can't. If you want proof at this there is a letter enclosed from my father, to my mother. He is starting to make mistakes again.

8. Here he has taken Jehovah's laws lightly an dsneering.

9. Not concerned in the slightest what affect he has had on Marcella Corp. On the way he so arrogantly came back shaking everyones hand.

10. And last but most important, what it's done to Jehovah's name.

11. Not once apologising to me - but rather the haughtiness, pride + refusal to accept that he did any wrong. Quite the opposite from what you would expect from a repentant child molesterer. See magazine on Child Abuse.

May I also a few questions?
If you were in his shoes - now .... what would you do?
And what if a brother previously before knowing the truth - raped someone. Then became a 'witness' raped another young sister in the corp, then another who were too scared to say anything. This brother then raped another - this time the sister spoke up + told the

elders. The elders then found out about the 3 previous 'rapes' + And also found out he left his wife for a younger woman. And abandoned seven children. How would you handle it?

The same as what has happened already - with my father?

In effect that is what he has done? The article on 'abuse' says 'incest is worse than rape'.

• Four times → all of his daughters - he then denies it verbally, but is very careful not to have anything written.

• The way he doesn't come out and say that he was disfellowshipped strongly: but suggests it.

Wouldn't you be cautious of a man like this - I am quite shocked that the way he fooled the brothers and got reinstated - only after 2 yrs. Has Jehovah's organization got loopholes for 'crafty wicked men' like my father?

I know I can't expect justice now. But hasn't + shouldn't Jehovah's organization have more of a measure of justice than, worldly churches + Authorities.

I feel as though what he has done to me + my sisters is just swept under the carpet. — He WILL DO IT

AGAIN! + in Jah's Organization if he is permitted to stay.

In the 'Watching The World' it says that even these TYPE of people do receive professional help - not many are cured of this revolting sickness. And been likend to an alcholoic. THEY ALWAYS HAVE A PROBLEM, STILL.

I'm very very very concerned of about who will be the next victims + Jehovahs Name AGAIN.
* I honestly think that his reinstatement committee may have overlooked a few areas.

Right through this whole matter I have always prayed things scriptually.

I felt it my obligation to warn you of what most likely will happen again in the Logan Cong.

- And to let you know how cunning he is. And that I have done all in my scriptual power to protect the unwary, new people in the cong. Now whatever he does again is on your heads.

Please don't consider me abrupt and disrespectful. As unless you have been through my situation I am only trying to stress the importance of this issue. And of how it affects you in the years to follow. I NEVER

want anyone else to go through what I am still battling.

I am still a faithful servant of Jehovah + plan to be as long as I live.
I'm only 24yo old + have a very supportive loving husband. Together we have Two young boys. Jehovah has blessed me in that way.

But I am still battling - you see I've had 3 nervous breakdowns, on the verg of being labelled 'schizophrenic'. And diagnosed as major depression.
To this day I still have terrible nightmares - that I have difficulty in believing that they are not real.
And the ongoing guilt feelings that come from such an experience.
I'm still living in Mareeba, where all of the past is 'Common' Knowledge to everyone in the comg.
So as a result of that I find it difficult to sit through the meetings, and coping with the frequent panic attacks! for which I'm on medication too
I have often contemplated suicide as the pain is so great. The memories pictures, + voices [redacted] are always there to haunt me, just as I start to get on my feet.
My heart truly feels crushed + broken all up inside. And only wish it had never happened.
And I hurt all the more when I see my little sisters, BCL + BCM now 13yo + 10yrs starting to come to grips

with what their own father did to them. I've enclosed a letter BCM sent to her father. (NOT ENCLOSED)

And I only wonder what decision they are going to make when it comes to Jehovah or the world.

Unfortunatly they have only seen hypocricy when it comes to the kind of families that they were and are now in. My mother + REDACTED are not good examples of loving parents.

I can relate: as looking back on my childhood I feel cheated and failed of having parents who were supposed to love and protect you. Instead I had to protect myself from my parents.

I hope + pray that the end of the system is not too far away. Where the former things will not be called to mind.

And that along with my husband + children, my little sisters will be there too. (in the system)

Now I can only leave the matter in your hands + Pray Jehovah directs the outcom what ever it may be.

Please don't just read this letter, and not reply to me. As I would really apreciate your reassurance that the matter has been handled. And that I've done all I can. Thank you very much for your time + hearing my concerns.

P.S My husband has always given my father the opportunity to talk but only with 2 elders present.

Your Spiritual Sister BCG

SA SSA

CA 18 JAN 1993

Mareeba Congregation
of Jehovah's Witnesses

P.O.Box 387

MAREEBA QLD. 4880

January 12, 1993

Watchtower Society
Box 280
INGLEBURN N.S.W. 2565

Dear Brothers,

As requested,we are forwarding to you the original S-77 form regarding the disfellowshipping and the reinstatement of BCH

With this short note,we take the opportunity to convey to you Brothers our greetings and Christian love.

Your fellow servants,

A.R.Derooy (P.O.)

Z.Ali (Secretary)

RE/- BR BCH RESTRICTIONS

BODY OF ELDERS LOGAN HOME CONG.

C/- BR. BERT HATTON

REDACTED

LOGAN HOME, 4129.

JUDICIAL COMMITTEE
MAREEBA CONG.
C/- BOX 387 , MAREEBA, 4880
PH 923487

17.12.92

DEAR BROTHERS,

DURING A VERY RECENT PHONE CALL FROM BR . BERT HATTON ASKING US WHAT RESTRICTIONS SHOULD BE IMPOSED TO HELP BR. BCH TO SEE THE NEED AS THE K.S. BOOK SAYS MAKE STRAIGHT PATHS FOR HIS FEET (HEB. 12 : 13) WE AS THE JUDICIAL COMMITTEE FEEL BECAUSE OF THE GRAVITY OF THE WRONGS COMMITTED FULL RESTRICTIONS SHOULD APPLY , SUCH AS , NOT COMMENTING AT MEETINGS

BEING INVOLVED IN PARTS ON THE PLATFORM

OFFERING PRAYER

BEING USED FOR ANY PRIVLIGES

WE THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR COOPERATION IN THIS AND THE CONCERN ON THE PART OF YOU BRS. TO SEE JEH'S WILL CARRIED OUT.

AS THE KS. BOOK ON PAGE 131 SAYS IT WILL BE UP TO YOU BRS. TO DECIDE WHEN CERTAIN PRIVILGES CAN BE RESTORED.

THANK YOU BROTHERS

YOUR FELLOW WORKERS

BR. R. de ROOY(CHAIRMAN)

BR. Z. ALI

BR. D. ALI

COPY ONLY

MAREEBA CONGREGATION OF
JEHOVAHS WITNESSES
P.O. BOX 387
MAREEBA Q. 4880

NOVEMBER 4,1992

ST.George Congregation
of Jehovah's Witnesses
P.O.Box 27
ST.George 4487

Body of elders,

Dear brothers,

We thank you for your letter concerning BCH and his appeal for reinstatement.

From your comments and observations of BCH it appears that he is earnstly seeking Jehovah's forgiveness by"works befitting repentance" (2 COR.7:8-11)

Because of the complexity of the case involving BCH and others involved,we have been hesitant about recommending his appeal for reinstatement in the past.

However,your comments in your letter show that you are satisified that he is demonstrating Godly sorrow and true and genuine repentance..

Therefore we,the Judicial committee in Mareeba go along with your recommendation for reinstatement

Brothers,we realize the responsibility of judging matters that affect peoples lives and relationships is certainly a weighty one. So we must rely on Jehovah's guiding spirit in these matters knowing that ultimately all will be accountable to him through our saviour Jesus.

We take this opportunity to send you our love and greetings!

Your brothers,

.....
R.De rooy

.....
Z.Ali

COPY ONLY

.....
D.Ali

St. George Congregation of
— Jehovah's Witnesses —

KINGDOM HALL
ROBERT STREET
ST. GEORGE.

PRESIDING MINISTER
P.O. BOX 27
ST. GEORGE
QUEENSLAND, 4487.

The Judicial Committie
Mareeba Congregation
P.O.Box 387
Mareeba Qld 4880

19th October 1992.

Dear Brothers.
Greeting from St.George.

The purpose of this letter is in regards to BCH appeal for re-instatement.

After ten months of observation and after applying the counsel received from the society inletters SD:SSA April 3 ans SD:SSA May 16 1992, we feel that there is ample reasons for his re-instatement. Acts 26:20.

Since our meetind with him after receiving the above letters we have noticed a marked change in his attitude towards the brothers who have been appointed to positions of oversight by Holy spirit.

He has also expressed his sincere remorse over his past conduct and has seen the truthfulness of Gal.6:7 and has humbly accepted scriptural counsel given him.

Since January 1992 he has been living in a tent in the council caravan park which is very simple and by no means comfortable in the hot months or the cold months out here.

He has moved here to distance himself from the enviroment in Beenleigh that was not good for his circumstances .

The fact that he has lived under these conditions,in itself, indicates to us that he has a sincere desire to return to Jehovah,s organization at any cost to his personal comfort.

He has rarely missed a meeting since moving here and has observed ll restrictions placed upon a disfellowshiped person.

He witnesses to all and sundry in the caravan park and at his work in an informal way and has actually brought along an interested person to the Public talk.

We wish you Jehovah,s rich blessing as you responsibly care for this matter.Your continued coorperation with other mature brothers will assure Jehovah,s willis accomplished.(Matt.18:18-20). We know you will keep this matter before Jehovah in prayer, looking for his direction. Be assured of our desire to be of assistance and we send our very warm Christian love and Greetings.

"YOU WILL BE WITNESSES OF ME TO THE MOST DISTANT PARTS OF THE EARTH" ACTS 1:8

Your Brothers

St.George Service Comittee
Presiding overseer ..... Bernd Kloos .....
Secretary Overseer ....
Field Overseer ....

Mareeba Congregation
P.O.Box 387
Mareeba Qld. 4880

April 16. 1992

Judicial committee
St.George congregation

Dear brothers,
We have received a letter from the Elders in the Beenleigh East congregation as well as a letter from the Society (April 3.1992) regarding BCH and your recommendation for his reinstatement.

In their letter,the Beenleigh judicial committee has outlined a number of areas that concerned them in the case of BCH

One area of concern is that BCH is still holding to a pattern of deceit. It seems that on a number of occasions he has changed his story or denied certain events that he had already admitted before a Judicial Committee(s) in the past. On the subject of 'Judgement related to Repentance', the R.S Scot (page 114) says; "Is the person cooperative? When questioned are his answers forthright?" Our concern is that over the years this problem of deception still exists. During his hearing BCH the Mareeba judicial committee, the Appeals Committee and always understood before the Beenleigh Committee. BCH was continued a pattern of admitting or denying stories depending on whom he is talking to.

We concur with the observations and remarks made to you brothers by the Beenleigh Judicial Committee also with the comments and suggestions made in the Society letter regarding this case that caution be exercised. We feel also that it would not be wise to recommend BCH at this time.

Because of the complexity of this case we would encourage you brothers to contact the Beenleigh Committee for further information that they have compiled in this matter. This may help you to get a 'clearer picture' of things. However if more information is required please let us know and I will gladly assist you in whatever way we can.

Thank you brothers for your consideration of the above comments. The

The responsibility of judgement is a weighty one and we pray that Jehovah's holy spirit will guide you brothers as you judge this matter.We also take this opportunity to send you our warm Christian love and greetings.

Your fellow brothers.
Mareeba Judicial Committee

Ron DeRooy Tini Ali Dino Ali

WATCHTOWER
BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

PHONE: (02) 605 1099

BOX 280, INGLEBURN, N.S.W. 2565 AUSTRALIA A.C.N. 002 861 225 FAX: (02) 829 3616

SD:SSA April 3, 1992

The Judicial Committee
St. George Congregation
of Jehovah's Witnesses — Qld

Dear Brothers:

We have received a letter from the elders in the Beenleigh East congregation with regard to BCH We were a little surprised to hear that you have recommended his reinstatement seeing that he has only recently moved into your area.

The elders in the Beenleigh East congregation have encouraged caution in recommending the reinstatement of this person due to his persistent pattern of deception. Of course, while we do not want to hastily reinstate a person, if he is Scripturally qualified for reinstatement we would not want to delay his return to the Christian congregation. Pages 114-115 of the textbook *"Pay Attention to Yourselves and to All the Flock"* provides fine Scriptural guidelines for judging matters related to repentance. Genuine, godly repentance should be in evidence before considering reinstatement. We would like you to consider the Bible principles on these pages in relation to BCH Perhaps he wishes to be reinstated quickly so that he can marry REDACTED

With regard to his past wrong conduct, he seems to change his story depending upon whom he is talking to. Do you believe he has a genuine regret over his wrong conduct and the reproach he has brought upon Jehovah's name and congregation? Does he have a heart-motivated rejection of his wrongdoing? Page 130 of the above-mentioned publication mentions: "Where there is evidence of *conspiracy* between individuals to put away their mates and marry each other, considerable time should elapse before a hearing for reinstatement may be held." The length of time that has elapsed since a person was disfellowshipped is not the chief determining factor in deciding when a person may be reinstated. Rather, a person should prove his profession of repentance and his overall pattern of life should indicate that he wishes Jehovah's approval.

Thank you for considering these matters and the comments of the brothers from Beenleigh East congregation. No doubt the judicial committee from the Mareeba congregation will be in contact with you shortly as well. May Jehovah bless you with insight and wisdom by means of his holy spirit as you endeavour to effect his will. (Matt. 18:18-20) Be assured of our warm Christian love and greetings.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B. & T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

cc: The Judicial Committee
Mareeba Cong. — Qld
c/- R. de Rooy

St. George Congregation of
— Jehovah's Witnesses —

KINGDOM HALL
ROBERT STREET
ST. GEORGE. Q
PHONE: 076/253590

Bernd Kloos
PRESIDING MINISTER
REDACTED
ST. GEORGE
QUEENSLAND, 4487.
22/3/92

Mareeba Congregation
Judicial Committee.

Dear Brothers,

Greetings from the St.George Congregation. We are writing this letter with regard to the written plea for re-instatement that we have received from BCH

Some three months ago he moved into our congregation from Beenleigh.He has conducted himself in all respects as a person wishing earnestly to come back into Jehovah's organization.

He has not missed a meeting since his arrival here and even travelled 400 k.m. to attend a circuit assembly within weeks of arriving here.

In talking to brother Monte Baker from Beenleigh he mentioned that they too felt that his conduct of late met with their approval and they were contemplating a favorable recommendation too.

As BCH is now in our congregation the brothers asked us to observe him and make the recommendation when we saw fit.

As his recent letter to us indicated it is his earnest appeal and desire to return to Jehovah's organization we therefore unitedly request that you give this matter your earliest,heartfelt and prayerful consideration.

We look forward to your early reply so that we know how the matter has been decided.

Your fellow servants upholding Jehovah's sovereignty.

Bernd Kloos
Presiding Overseer

Field overseer

Secretary

2 SEP 1991

29/8/91

BCH

REDACTED

Watchtower Bible
and Tract Society

Attention Service Desk

Dear Brothers

Thank you for your time regarding my case.

Unfortunately, things are no better than before. No mercy has been shown only a keen bent to review the past case.

I have for the last 27 months had the same experience as King David, referred to in the magazine article (April 15 page 20, par 1)

" Jehovah IS more merciful than humans"

The committee meeting last night (along with others), has confirmed that yet again. No mercy.

The brothers wanted to go through everything I did wrong 2 or 3 years ago and exact a point by point admission that, everything had occurred as charged.

Everything had NOT occurred as charged, that is why I appealed.

I tried to help them see the point that the society has said that "instead of reviewing the past case they... should warmly reflect their merciful concern" (page 23 par 14), but to no avail.

They misintrepreted my desire to follow the socitey's article as not wanting to "come clean" with all my sins. The Mareeba Brothers did exactly the same, because I was concerned that the truth was not being told by my accusers they thought I was not coming clean and not repentant. I was concerned about the facts.

In the end because of the pressure they were putting me under I came clean with even things I did NOT do. It is EXTREMELY TRAUMATIC to face 3 more human judges (They have your life in their hands) wanting to review the case all over again.

Since I have been in Beenleigh East congregation I have been forced to review the case in part or whole, with a total of 6 different judges. It is nothing to them, they do this every other day.

Brother Clarkson misinterpreted my nervousness and emotional trauma (after more than 2 years of being kept in limbo), not knowing whether to rejoice or to die. And he expects me to be calm cool and collected. Also in

extreme anxiousness since writing to the society 2 months ago waiting, not knowing what is going on.

He thought I was holding back. That was NOT the case
The truth is my life. I cannot work and help support my family. I cannot concentrate like I used to. I cry a lot over it all still. My doctor gave me a certificate for 3 months sick leave, because of "acute anxiety and depression"

I'm sorry if I have not got the casual "not be worried" attitude you think I should have had bro clarkson.

It is NOT TRUE (as the elders have said many times) that if you are telling the truth you have nothing to be nervous about. A person who has repented of a lying charge is ten times more concerned about getting every statement evry thought correct because if he makes a mistake in one thing, he is immediately branded a liar. This extreme concern makes one nervous.

Because of the EXTREME, EXTREME, EXTREME, pressure that a disfellowshipped person is put under, emotional, mental and spiritual, in every case they are willing to say they DID things which they did in fact NOT do.

This is what has happened with all the "disfellowshipped" brothers I had spoken to in times past. See below.

[I did not want to write a chronology of events because the Mareeba brothers said the beenleigh brothers had been sent ALL the information already.

I did not write down notes of every meeting like they did. And to detail EVERY SINGLE event over the last 3 years was impossible for me as my memory is not what it used to be. I knew it would be used against me, the same as it was in mareeba]

The brothers interpreted this as bad, and seemed to me to be of the opinion that if I thought I had been "wrongly done by", I may not be the type of person they want in the congregation as I may be a disruptive influence, because of being hurt and resentful.

....A legitimate...., but mistaken concern.

If I were of that inclination would I be informal witnessing now? Would I be attending meetings? Would I have taken my mother to a circuit assembly 2 months ago? Hardly! Also this weekend one person I have witnessed to a few times, intends coming to a meeting for the first time.

Some time ago, I had spoken to a number of people who had been once disfellowshipped in times past, and it seems they were correct when they all said,

"the elders are not interested in the TRUTH of what really happened. Even if you didn't do half the things you were accused of, you have to say yes you did it otherwise they think you are not repentant"

Is this how the faithful slave wants things to operate?

I had repented and ceased the wrongdoing a NUMBER OF YEARS AGO. It had all been gone through and confessed and dealt with then.

page 23, end of par 12, says "When that man had repented and ended his immorality. Paul directed the congregation to reinstate him." likely no more than 6 months after he ended his ONGOING immorality.

Why did the congregation have to be "directed"? His repenting and leaving his wrong course was not understood by the elders.

I hate and loathe the wrong things I did and would never entertain even the thought of doing those things again or allowing my spirituality to get to such a low ebb to be influenced by bad association and desires as a result. I repented and ceased the wrongdoing BEFORE I was disfellowshipped, 27 months ago.

Since then I have led a clean life. I have abstained from fornication, drugs, drunkeness, bad association etc.

Every day I am at the meetings and do some bible study, the day text and pray. I am extremely discouraged by the mercilessness of the brothers and their requiring me to review the case again though not in every minute details, verbally.

At our previous meeting I was reluctant to review the case again as it was going against the society's direction. At the elders request I nevertheless supplied them with a written statement of events that occurred. At the meeting last night instead of reading the scripture recommended on page 23 par 14 namely James 5:20 about "covering" sins, the brothers were more interested in "exposing" the sins which I had already confessed to years ago.

PLEASE WRITE AND TELL ME WHAT IS WHAT. If I am wrong let me know so that I can adjust my thinking. I may be misunderstanding the article that indicates a point by point rehashing of sins is not the wise thing to do.

Please write and tell me..did I make a mistake? Are the present judges supposed to review the case or are they not? I have said I was willing to go to Mareeba to have my reinstatement dealt with by the original brothers.

"It is very distressing to me. Please, let me fall into the hand of Jehovah for many are his mercies; but into the hand of man do not let me fall."

I have not been told when I can reapply, could you please let me know so I will not be kept in Limbo again.

BCH [redacted]

Ron de Rooy
Presiding Overseer
Mareeba Congregation
Jehovahs Witnesses

5/6/91

I am writing to ask for your help.

As you are already aware, I went to Mackay as a disfelowshipped person over two years ago. I had repented and stopped the wrong nearly a year before that, and two years ago in the case of Sis REDACTED when we parted company.

During the past two years I have "never missed" a meeting. I read a few chapters of the Bible nearly every day. I read the magazines from cover to cover, and meditate on what I learn.

I have moved away from beenleigh, at Bro. Bakers suggestion. He spoke to me again and suggested to move away because it may help me to be reinstated. Also I pray to Jehovah for many hours every week.

IN HARMONY WITH THE WATCHTOWER OF APRIL 15 p23 par 14 COULD YOU "KINDLY EXPLAIN WHAT STEPS I SHOULD TAKE" IN ADDITION TO WHAT I AM ALREADY DOING, SO THAT I CAN BE RE INSTATED.

Please write it down for me in a letter so there will be no mis understanding as my life is at stake. (After more than two years of this terrible punishment I dont want to live any more - if Jehovah doesnt want you it is no use living - is it?

Incidentally, the man in Corinth, according to the Society was re instated 6 MONTHS AFTER HE LEFT HIS SINFUL COURSE. Read the SI book.

REDACTED

My new address is REDACTED

BCH

BCH REDACTED

Beenleigh East Congregation
of Jehovahs Witnesses.

02/09/90

Dear Brother Baker,

This is a plea for reinstatement. The fact that I now have evidence (since May this year) of BCI repeated acts of adultery, will no doubt help you to view my reinstatement plea in a different light. She admitted these to me back in Mareeba in May 89 and vowed she would "never admit it to the Elders."

She LED me to believe there had been only one act. Whereas there had been multiple acts. The evidence shows that she says "I dont know how many times" it occurred. I had forgiven her one act of adultery already, thanks to the strength and merciful example of Jehovah.

Jehovah is a merciful and a loving God, he does not forever keep finding fault and even though I made some mistakes a year or two ago I abandoned the "sinful course of conduct" back then, and kept my integrity to Him."If errors were what you watch, O Jah, O Jehovah, who could stand? For there is the true forgiveness with you, in order that you may be feared."

(My coming to Brisbane turned out for the better because I was able to be here when my mother was given a 50/50 chance of living a few months ago, when she had a heart attack. She had been complaining of travelling chest pains since last December, [That's when I decided to come down] and even up till the morning she collapsed, but the doctors tests she had since January, did not show a heart problem).

I am sure you are aware of the fact too, that I.. AM desirous of having a good relationship with Jehovah and his organization. I appreciate the meetings as a valuable source of corrective counsel, together with Jehovahs word and the publications of the "faithful and discreet slave".

I "devour" every Watchtower and Awake and Jehovah has opened the way for quite a number of opportunities for informal witnessing and has blessed those efforts enabling the placing of a number of publications, (aside from family). Also I have the older magazines displayed in the waiting room at work (some, not many, have been taken)

I am really and truly sorry that I have wronged Jehovah and am before Him just as the tax collector in Jesus' illustration...

"who was not even willing to raise his eyes heavenward...

but kept beating his breast, saying...

' O God ... be gracious to me .....a sinner ' "

BCH

BEENLEIGH EAST CONGREGATION OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

Judicial Committee
Beenleigh East Cong.
C/- Monty Baker
REDACTED
Qld. 4128
Ph. REDACTED

To: Judicial Committee
Mareeba Congregation.
C/- Ron DeRooy
P.O. Box 387
Mareeba 4880.

March 19, 1990

Dear Brothers,

Re: Reinstatement request by BCH

Enclosed is a further request for reinstatement by BCH As you can see by the date of the request we have held on to it for a couple of months. We have done this for a couple of reasons, as follows:

1. So that we can make further investigations as to whether BCH is having any further communications with REDACTED

2. We felt it was almost too soon after the earlier request which was subsequently declined by your committee. Especially in view of the notoriety of the case and the deception that was involved in the hearings. Therefore, we agree with Bro. Bennett, that some time should lapse before he is considered again.

In relation to the above point No.1. We have not found any evidence of either REDA or BCH purposefully making any effort to contact each other, but we gather there must at least be eye contact with each other as both congregations do share the same Kingdom hall and there are times when our arrivals and departure times do clash. Also up until September 1990 both congregations were in the same circuit.

Interestingly, even though we were in the same circuit, the congregation REDAC attends was in a different section, thus they actually had a different asembly date and even a different assembly site. Nevertheless, whilst giving a talk in that section, I did notice BCH present. Just as to why he attended her assembly and not ours I really can not say. He may have had good reason to do so, or he may still be wanting to keep eye contact with her.

BCH seems to be doing all the right things for one who desires to be reinstated; coming to all the meetings, observing the rules of conduct for a disfellowshipped person and so forth, but unfortunately we cannot read the hearts of men. So we can not honestly make a recommendation to your committee just yet as to how we feel about his reinstatement. We feel you brothers are far more aware of gravity of his wrongdoing than we are. So we would like you Brothers to reply to us, as soon as you wish, as to your decision on his reinststement.

May Jehovah's spirit continue to guide your thoughts and deeds as you serve the brothers in your area.

Your Brothers

M.J.Baker

M.J.Baker (Committee Chairman)

7/9/89.

Body of Elders
Moreba Cong.

BCH

caravan Mk
Mackay.

Dear Brothers,

I felt I must write to ask your forgiveness for the trouble I have caused & the reproach on Jehovahs name & the Congregation.

Please forgive me,

love BCH

Bro Rod De Jong
Bro Alf Keevin.

BCH

No Congregation Upt.
(Moreton)?

Dear Brothers,

I have left that cong. & intend to stay at Bruce & Dads temporarily, they are both pretty crook. The reason for this letter is to make a plea for re-instatement. I can see clearly that my attitude back then was haughty & my thinking was way off. I really regret believing that way, for some time now.

I can't believe that I was so stupid, I'm really shocked at what I did.

I showed disrespect for Jehovahs way, & hurt the most precious relationship I had. I want to show him I regret for that way of thinking. Please give me a chance. I have gone to every meeting and am usually the first one there (except book study) They told me I couldn't go (at the hall) Warmest Regards

BCH

P.S. Its a full time job when dads back is crook, He can't get out of bed But you can reach me at REDACTED I may not get to a meeting for a little while, while they are sick. You can leave a message at that number I go there at times.

REDACTED

QLD.0068.001.1474_R

Office Memo GO4RAB - 4/83	To RCMI DE - Perry, Kiran Bandilah, Lucas ALT	From BCH	Ext	Copies to

Subject:

APPEAL – on Point of Repentance

Dear Brother,

I wish to appeal unto say I was right, because I can see my thinking was all wrong. Being on my own the last few days has enabled me to put my heart to Yahweh & beg for his mercy. I have brought reproach on his name & from the one taunting him. Who I think I was getting involved with another woms wife, I don't know how I could allow myself to get led along by my own heart to that situation.

I really feel shaken up by what I allowed to happen. I want Yahweh Holy Spirit with me is more important than that. That is why I am determined to follow through on this wicked curse.

I am thankful to Yahweh & you brother for being enough to discipline me & bring me to realize the stupid thing I was doing & every time I think of it they come to my eyes & I find it difficult to work or eat. Thankfully at last I can sleep very well sometimes 10 - 12 hours the ground is read through.

I am sorry for causing you all this trouble & to the approach on friends Name. For going into determination to follow through on your counsel & Prayer that with your willact manifestly turned this situation. I should have followed through on your counsel more thoroughly earlier not given a cause for the brethren or outsiders to gossip I am sorry.

BCH

Love

Signature

Date 19/7/89.

Notes of Investigating Committee

1.6.89:

(Ron De Rooy – Chairman; K. Bowditch; D. Ali)

Meeting with REDACTED REDACTED BCH BCI BCK BCG

REDACTED

Due to marriage problems, REDACTED sleep separately for 2 months and about 1 May 89, REDACTED discusses leaving REDACTED, who feels he is failure in providing for household.

(Many years ago, both had committed fornication).

- Plan is formulated between REDACTED and BCH first that, since REDACTED marriage has broken down and BCH and BCI similar, that REDACTED should consider BCH as marriage partner – and REDACTED and BCK could do same (once free).

REDACTED feels that, ignorance in knowing that resuming sexual relations sufficient to divorce, free himself and REDACTED to consider new mates.

- BCH considers this a good idea _ tells REDACTED that BCK has liked him etc.
- All plan to leave Mareeba, start fresh elsewhere.

perhaps Mackay or Brisbane!

Incest of BCH to BCG is now exposed – BCJ phones BCH wants him to approach elders. BCH denies.

(In meantime, BCG and BCJ approach Dino about this problem).

On 1.6.89 (meeting at K.H.) meeting already set up to meet with all concerned. Events develop where BCH tells REDACTED of him not attending. All meet REDACTED BCH at C.E.S that day; REDACTED visits Dino to confirm meeting to go ahead, goes back to BCH and REDACTED then all three drove back to REDACTED caravan – BCH and REDACTED drive off together from there, all day and comes home late.

Have a get together for tea – includes BCH BCK REDACTED where they pair off - BCH and REDACTED leave soon and REDACTED BCK hold hands

---

About middle of May '89; BCH comes with divorce papers to REDACTED and REDACTED for REDACTED to help fill out.

- Later, REDACTED lies down leaving BCH and REDACTED alone.

REDACTED sees BCH and REDACTED kissing, hugging, whispering about intimate things e.g. where to kiss after [married?].

(REDACTED doesn't think anything wrong of above actions).

REDACTED and BCK desperate to get married – have discussed prospect although REDACTED not proposed. He plans to go to Brisbane to finalise parting, earn money while REDACTED goes to Mackay to live.

Seems BCH intends to help them move.

NOTE: Unbelievable of level of immaturity of all part. REDACTED yet REDACT has been honest, straight forward with evidence.

Seems BCH and REDACTED have spent time together in van with REDACTED in back asleep. BCK invited to go with REDACTED to Mackay.

With REDACTED

Denies any serious involvement. Has spent time with BCH but always with others. Trying to support BCH she claims!

(Also mentions failure of her marriage and intention to separate).

Helped fill divorce papers for BCH of marrying BCH herself = possible but not definite; only idea!

- About 2 weeks ago, REDACTED and BCH discussed marriage plans to each other.

- Admits that her and BCH drove off alone together to Cairns and back (1.6.89) to discuss accusations

(over)

against BCH

Asked of any intimacy with BCH - denies it.

(At the time, BCH walks in with chips and coffee for REDA only).

Of BBQ on Sat night last?

- BCH and REDACTED were in van alone with REDACTED – sick and REDACTED asleep inside.

  Shortly, BCH and REDACTED leave.

BCG and BCI - molesting! 4 – 5 times.

- BCJ knows; perhaps too REDACTED - REDACTED

  BCG very shaken and upset, therefore, during BCI holiday to expo BCH fondles BCG and this happens several times after and during which BCG claims she runs to REDACTED home where BCJ REDACTED are living, to expose BCH BCH also looks through shower window when BCG taking bath, sees him and tells him to go; "stop perving" (???)

  BCG has tried to talk to REDACTED only talks of her anger to her dad – counsel = respect father.

BCI

- that BCH has gone to REDACTED [with?] story of V.D = fornication of BCI

  ?

  REDACTED tells REDACTED tells BCI

  BCH filing for divorce on this basis – BCH awaits medical results).

- Says BCH has abused 2 younger children, possibly - BCK too at age 2.

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[1] REDACTED –The Queen v BCH Transcript of Proceedings, 20 May 2003 (Day 2) – Dino Ali, examination in chief on voir dire **(Day 2 Transcript)**, Page 76, Line 22.

[2] Spelt REDACTED in Day 2 Transcript, Page 76, Line 22.

[3] Gavin Belcher – he was an elder in the congregation at that time, Day 2 Transcript, Page 76, Lines 33-34.

BCK (by herself)

- Tells of problems at home, of REDACTED as secretary and her mum's jealousy and BCI abuse of BCH with punching and episode with knife.

On attachments of BCH and REDACTED – admits it came and was discussed by BCH REDACTED and BCK

- Says REDACTED have grounds for divorce

- Says plans between self and REDACTED

On abuse of BCG – didn't know really but that BCH explained it as BCG wanting to learn.

On abuse to BCK

Yes, at age 3 (remembers vividly).

Also mentions that REDACTED appears to know of BCG abuse!

BCH BCG BCI

When faced and hears accusations; denies all.

- Says all part of parental training and yes kissed on mouth and hugged tightly but that's all!

  That BCG asked questions about subject.

- On looking into shower: - walking past perhaps? and remembers BCI was home.

- Chasing BCG to REDACTED - playing with bucket of water!

- Breaking down bath door? – hurry to bathe as glasses may have been in there (despite nakedness of BCG

BCH also stated that IF any "improper acts"

- BCG looking for the opportunities!

About BCM and BCL

- Father bathes children, wipes backsides etc i.e. normal parenthood responsibilities

---

BCH (-about REDACTED

- Denies firmly any involvement. Good friends only.
- Maintains problems in own marriage and BCI subjections.
- Said about REDACTED and marriage that anything is possible but not really considering it. Only discussed plans with REDACTED and self and then only during trucking for Atherton assembly.
- Denies any kissing, hugging.

BCH maintains own conduct above reproach due to physical abuse/ headship not respected / BCI low spirituality.

NB → Told by Committee of dangers and standing to cong.

[End of Meeting] Pt: (BCK and REDACTED sitting very close together – cuddling?

Pt: all go to REDACTED place, pick up children, and as we hear later, proves to be an eventful evening with REDACTED staying at REDACTED until about 7:00am and with BCK while BCH and REDACTED drove off in car for several hours on their own, BCH returning about 5:00am alone, claimed to have taken REDACTED home.

BCK REDACTED later individually tell of same events and all quite accurately. It seems that BCH and REDACTED are at tennis courts when police pull up to investigate.

Later when REDACTED encourages BCH to talk to elders, he feels there is no need since he can speak to any sis whenever!

REDACTED not happy with all these happenings under her roof and finds out involvement too with REDACTED and BCK

Next day, REDACTED leaves home and kids to REDACTED to disappear for couple of days to sort herself out, she says to a telephone call to Dino.

That night, Ron and Dino go to REDACTED to consider scriptural principles of his actions, being married and talk on material from WT 80 Aug 1, P.30,31 and WT 81 Mar 1 P31, upon which he gets very emotional, hearing of Jehovah's attitude to such circumstances. He seems to comply and we encourage reconciliation and help for the marriage. We indicate a meet with both of them might be appropriate.

[While there BCH calls in and asks after REDACTED who is not home].

Note too that REDACTED had called Kevin for bros involved to come out there so he can bring up to date on events at REDACTED

Same night, we visit BCK for some talk on WT articles

over

Commendably, she responds honestly of the involvement with REDACTED and BCH with REDACTED Also speaks of BCH insisting her relationship with REDACTED is good. Again we recommend caution in involvement and although visibly upset, appreciates information and notes how different it is from her Dad's.

- She does not like what her dad is doing with REDACTED and commendably, when pulled up before REDACTED by BCH to deny charge of molestation to BCK she insisted on the truth despite BCH efforts to the contrary.

(3.6.89)

On a later phone call to Dino (and subsequently after discussion with her sister BCG who recommended she report it to the elders concerned). BCK admits to BCH and REDACTED having kissed on several occasions, once on cheek and another time on mouth. She did not witness this personally but that BCH had told her that during conversation that he had never really felt like this with a woman (meaning REDACTED

BCK readily admitted also that she had done some with REDACTED and that when BCH heard, said that was alright.

3.6.89: Go to see REDACTED and REDACTED

They see no future for their marriage. Given up all hope.

Yet discussion revealed serious problem – sexual perversion.

As to the exact nature we were not explicitly told but it was serious enough that REDACTED broke down emotionally.

We continued to show from scriptures the scriptural position of the marriage and the need for BOTH to work on role of husband/wife. However, the sexual perversion seemed only one of a number of problems involved.

More encouragement is needed here with very frank discussions. REDACTED still seemed determined to separate, even for a little while.

- Advised also that of need to be conscious of contact with BCH

31st May – met as judicial committee with BCH and REDACTED separately and together).

- REDACTED admitted kissing had occurred between herself and BCH Comments otherwise were same as at other meetings.
- BCH on other hand, denied any wrong associations despite counsel to quit association with REDACTED Maintained a hard attitude and continued to reiterate innocence.

Despite shown articles from W.T., he felt justified in his course, presenting a letter of notification of divorce and reasons for it.

Commented on elders in Cairns had been consulted and agreed with him.

(over)

[Even?] when REDACTED asked if BCH could continue studying with her children and was asked not to go ahead with that but do it herself. BCH expressed some opposition to it.

We felt that to counsel BCH on his actions before REDACTED about their personal contact and [unclear] may impress on [mind & heart?] of seriousness once again of principle of conscience of bros and sis and Jehovah's view on "courting".

12.6.89: with BCK again, further impressed [unclear] to break any contact with REDACTED We felt there was strong feeling when she wept over counsel. She asked if future held any possibility with REDACTED after "divorce".

We again reinforced suggestion strongly not to consider it but break contact, advising that even if REDACTED may make further contact, she should stop it at once [unclear] employing us to approach REDACTED to quit.

- Met also with REDACTED today.

  Informed us BCH had told them of his intention of

leaving family and over fornication on BCI part.

Mentioned [Mt Isa?] as event on which to proceed on divorce.

- BCH has asked Mt Isa hospital for any records of V.D. on his part and perhaps on BCI too – for both would have had to be treated; if this was really the case!

Attitude of BCH was very clam, deliberate as if all planned according to REDACTED

Definitely had told REDACTED of having VD!!

- ([unclear] being BCI therefore, BCI had fornicated)

Seems this event and perhaps another one has happened before BCI in truth.

NOTE: REDACTED had attempted to get REDACTED against BCH

On Tues last (5.6.89) had mentioned in book study to REDACTED REDACTED that REDACTED had left Mareeba and "that it was the best thing" etc. (in a loud manner, according to REDACTED – also a comment from REDACTED that if anyone wished to discuss the subject (and take BCH 's side) she would "tear them to pieces".

17.6.89

- Met with BCI and BCG

Counsel given on confiding matters of family to cong. members – used articles and scriptures.

Counsel given to BCG also of same matters using above articles.

- Also on attitude to mother; encouragement also given for her honesty and in seeking help (1 Tim 5:4)

Counsel given to BCI on her part as subjection to BCH could have helped cause separation and consequent matters. Used article and scriptures of her responsibility – encouragement to help family.

Interesting that both mentioned BCK as admitting to another "attempt" of molesting by BCH when going to school at later age (primary?) Need to check statement.

Quest: Should one be studying with younger children – even for short time until thing settle?

BCH took BCK hand to place it on his private parts.

– she pulled hand away and refused to speak with him for some time.

28.6.89 – Met as committee with North Cns elders to discuss BCH and REDACTED and involvement and comments about REDACTED and his comments to BCH about Alan.

(Seems BCH was gaining (?) support for his actions).

[unclear] disfellowshipping and [unclear]
due to wrongful action on elders part in this matter.

After discussing with us about the goings-on, elders left to meet with BCH and possibly phone us to be witnesses. Not called in – elders counselled BCH on his conduct with REDACTED – using same articles as we had.

Met on 10.7.89 to discuss disfellowshipping on BCH through charges of "LOOSE CONDUCT" and "Lying".

Appointment made with REDACTED and BCH – who were in Mackay – over phone (and we spoke to both of them) for appointment to meet on 12.7.89, 7.30pm at Kingdom Hall. Both accepted and determined to be there.

Our discussion as Judicial Committee also involved removal of privileges for REDACTED and BCK over their previous conduct though they have complied with counsel given since. To be invited to meeting = REDACTED BCK [lock?], REDACTED REDACTED and REDACTED BCI as witnesses to charges made.

(12 – 7 – 89)

REDACTED –
Most upset with BCH 1. Domination of REDACTED
2. Running around with wife, REDACTED

Questions in certain matters:
Eg: time of plot (6.5.89) visited BCH in Cns:

On trip from Mackay to Mt Isa tonight – carried on together from time in [Lemonts?]; kids told REDACTED BCH REDACT smooching etc.

- REDACTED raided bank, cleared out of $50.

- of arrangement, one most spiritual to get caravan, kids.

1 – 5 - 89
NB: REDACTED [instituted?] separation etc in [Mt Isa?]
Initially.

- Couple days later visited BCH

- (- occasions BCH RE DA CTE spent alone (NOTES [AT FRONT?]).

- On beach 6.5.89 BCH REDACTED = BCH REDACT held hands spoke confidentially of family problems.

- Later BC H E A held hands, arms over shoulders walking together along beach, while REDACTED waits.

- Arrangement from previous nite and day on beach to form alliances BCH idea to team REDACTED with BCK For she likes REDACTED

- Says "why don't you get to know BC K better" and urged/suggested REDACT to seriously think.

REDACTED on nite in caravan BCH RED ACT hugging and RE DA reclining against BCH kissing and discussing where to kiss etc.

When married RE DA discusses to RE DA next morning on immoral way RE DA apologises that RE DA saw it. Approaches BCH and expresses disgust at scene.

On other occasions of kissing etc RE DA admits to REDACTED when he comes from Brisbane and asks her, have been [unclear?]

On trip here, kids say BCH RED ACT arm around neck of BCH

[- Note BCH has lied to us about NOT TOUCHING REDACTED in any way immorally]

BCH uses [unclear] W.T.
(W 74 671, 672 QFR - using articles on divorce when speaking to us)

Supposedly shown elders in CNS to shut them up.

REDACTED

- Check if BCH RE DA in same van?
- Ask RE DA what occasions kissed etc with BCH

REDACTED (use script Heb 13:17,18) - BCH sits behind us and REDACTED
- so as not to influence REDACTED

How coping? Not sure which way to go – confused.

Romantic notions between BCH REDACTED in future perhaps.

Occasions of kissing, holding hands? – holding hands but not in public.

Kissing? Goodnight kiss every night

(over)

Believes Dad: [redacted] script free but not legally.

Discussed W68 P255 and AID book (divorce) to clarify position.

Again asked how often kissing? At least twice!

In tropical van park – [redacted] in tent [redacted] in van.

[redacted] Heb 13:17:

Asked of occasions where kissed/cuddled?

- Several occasions but not passionately
- Kissed yes and on mouth
- Yes in caravan and discussed with [redacted] about intimacys to be after marriage!
- We've become closer but not physically.

On why ignored our counsel? - needed time!

- Read WT 74 P671 [redacted] marriage dissolved due to not forgiving.
- Didn't keep counsel in mind
- (Reads W1968 on dating) + 1974 P671

Stressed seriousness of being together even at work.

"work + coupled with kissing and cuddling etc = loose conduct

- Seemed shocked.

BCH - told of charges "Loose conduct + lying"

Asked on our counsel? – could not remember much.

Also said clearly CNS[4] elders are wrong, inaccurate in what they told BCH at their meeting with him – "browbeaten", "threatened".

Been together? – maybe! / on several occasions (as REDACTED said).

Dating? No (eventually admitted grudgingly)

Kissing, embracing? – yes, in caravan, again grudgingly admitted. Felt bad BCI was there - would do it without REDACTED

Didn't think it was really wrong!

Discussed marriage recently on a few occasions.

Lying! – On V.D. and fornication on BCI part; had mentioned to REDACTED

No; BCI has not admitted to another act.

Call in REDACTED tells BCH he tells her about V.D. and BCI

BCH has admitted to all things and also said that whatever BCG had said on molesting was true

discuss REDACTED and BCI

[4] Cairns – Day 2 Transcript, Page 81, Line 23.

[5] REDACTED are friends of the REDACTED family – Day 2 Transcript, Page 82, Line 22.

Cns Bros: Case prior to truth [unclear] now comes to light because BCI supposedly admitted to him!

BCH - about BCI that BCH asked BCI about acts of adultery of which one can count on one hand, she supposedly admitted.

In early March, other acts came to light – then separated.

When came home, BCI admitted <u>fornication</u> before marriage (Jan 15 1980)

Yet during our meeting, denied any admission on BCI part.

Ron explains to BCH on seriousness of [<u>courting?</u>] and loose conduct WT18 P255.

Tell BCH of decision to disfellowship! on GROUNDS OF "LOOSE CONDUCT" and procedure to take for reinstatement.

REDACTED shown Gal. 5:19 – again as above.

Not disfellowshipped yet.

Told not to have ANY CONTACT WITH BCH <u>AT ALL</u>

19.7.89 = BCH APPEALS, fax to Kevin.

19.7.89:

(cong)

To discuss with REDACTED on decision to public reprove.

- along with restrictions such as commenting at meetings and participating in demos/parts.

- also encouragement to work on marriage.

1 Tim 5:20 = pt to REDACTED of script. procedure of reproof
(REDACTED understands procedure)

Heb 12:11 = discipline = limits/restrictions placed.

Noted too that in body in another cong. will note advancement made by REDACTED to restore privileges in time.

Encouraged to cont. meetings and preaching And elders apply study program by mature person to help progress.

Discussion with REDACTED

About BCK on any personal contact?

- Appears to have broken contact.

- (Pt on REDACTED – appears REDACTED rys into business by ringing REDACTED at least twice).

Ron explains reason of being misled due to spiritually low! – REDACTED understood.

We show REDACTED W68 P255 on QFR on not being free and dating not approved.

REDACTED comments has no present intention to apply for divorce.
but see on developments with REDACTED

Due to positive response to counsel given in previous discussions with Judicial Committee RED ACT ED has restrictions placed re: no commenting, prayer, parts or privileges with meetings, pioneering etc for time until progress made to extent restrictions lifted/removed – cont. witnessing etc.

On above shown Heb 12:11 = discipline.

REDACTED – encourage to maintain marriage relationship (WT 74 P511-12.)

- We emphasise P512 (actually read and explain scriptural viewpoint on last 3 paragraphs).

- Consider seriously Jah's standard together, separately/privately + seek help of elders – here or in CNS.

- Told both of restrictions on each other being husband and wife out of consideration for each other.

BCK

Discipline on dating WT68 P255

- shown incorrectness of dating with above WT
  to again establish counsel previously given.

- James 5:14,15 = spiritually low person
  needing attention to progress spiritually.

  Therefore, program instituted to help e.g. STUDY with
  spiritual sister.

- Informed of restrictions = comments at all meetings
  and parts or demos.

  encouraged to attend and prepare for all meetings
  and field service.

Personal observation

(Reluctance about returning home, due to family problems could be slightly "jealous" (?) of BCG and BCJ future marriage. Too, freedom enjoyed in these 2 months to be curtailed perhaps by her mum).

Worried about announcement from platform – assured no!

BCG

To counsel BCG on talking too much to many others (including writing letters to friends about situation.)

1 Tim 5:13 applies – even of talking of family matters to BCJ unloving to other members.

(-letter written to Mackay prior to counsel given)
about gossiping!

Therefore, demo's response since talked to and cautioned.

- BCI has talked to REDACTED about BCG being molested; seems REDACTED has asked leading quests about BCG feelings on it, discussing topics she has no right to.

BCI

On Gossip: 1 Thess 5:13

(I disagree) ?? WT 81 1 Sept P.20

→ slander → serious enough – disfellowshipped.

BCI denies talking to REDACTED (as BCG stated) about molesting!!

Rom 15:2 = speak upbuildingly, therefore, not gossip.

BCI mentions BCG and BCJ been together very often, holding hands, walking up street during tobacco festival as such, but spending huge amounts of time at home together. BCI has restricted this to about 2 or 3 times/week.

BCH has told BCI she's not his wife!!

CLOSE!

REVISED COPIES ISSUED
State Reporting Bureau
Date: 15 December, 2004

DISTRICT COURT

CRIMINAL JURISDICTION

JUDGE SHANAHAN

THE QUEEN

v.

BCH

BRISBANE

..DATE 03/12/2004

SENTENCE

HIS HONOUR: Would you stand up, please? BCH the jury have convicted you of five counts of unlawful and indecent assault and one count of attempted rape. The offences occurred in September or early October of 1988 and the complainant, the victim, is your daughter. She was aged around 17 years at the time. You were 40 years old at the time.

In my view the offences have clearly an element of hypocrisy about them. You were purporting to the community to be a

God-fearing man and member of your church but at home you were subjecting your daughter to unwanted and unwarranted sexual advances.

Those sexual advances and contact were repeated over a number of occasions. They were in the face of her resistance. They involved fondling, digital penetration, and as the jury has found one count of attempted rape where you must have intended to have sexual intercourse with your daughter.

They are very serious offences in my view. They obviously involve contact, sexual contact with your own daughter and have had a lasting and lifelong impact upon her from the victim impact statement placed before me.

In my view, the seriousness of the offences themselves outweigh your personal circumstances and I take into account the fact that you have got no previous convictions, and I take into account these references that have been tendered on your behalf, but in my view the serious nature of these offences outweigh those and other matters personal to you.

There is some element of delay in this. The offences occurred in 1988. You faced trial on a number of occasions and through no fault of your own the matter has continued for quite some time. It's obviously caused not only difficulties to you, but also to the witnesses, particularly the complainant.

Taking all those matters into account, I am of the view that

imprisonment of three years is warranted in relation to the offence of attempted rape. I set that sentence in terms of the entire conduct involved here which, as I say, involved repeated sexual assaults upon your daughter.

In relation to count 5, I order that you be imprisoned for a period of three years.

In relation to each of counts 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 I order that you be imprisoned for a period of 18 months.

Those sentences are to be served concurrently with each other.

I see no reason to ameliorate that sentence in any way.

I am also satisfied it is appropriate to make the order sought by the Crown in relation to you having no contact with the complainant and her sister, your other daughter. My order is as initialled by me and placed with the papers.

The content of that order is that you are to have no contact directly or indirectly with the complainant or

BCK for a period of 10 years from your release from custody. It also involves prohibiting you from attending within 1,000 metres of either women's place of residence or work for that period of time.

Royal Commission
into Institutional Responses
to Child Sexual Abuse

Statement

Name	BCG
Address	Known to the Commission
Date	10 July 2015

1. This statement made by me accurately sets out the evidence that I am prepared to give to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

2. Where direct speech is referred to in this statement, it is provided in words or words to the effect of those which were used, to the best of my recollection.

3. I was born BCG in Brisbane, Queensland, REDACTED 1971. My full name is now BCG a name my children chose for me. I had previously been known as BCG and BCG having taken the surnames of my partners at the time. I am 43 years old and have four children, the oldest of whom is 23 years old.

4. I am currently in my final year of a law degree and I work in the hairdressing and beauty industry.

5. I was formally baptised as a Jehovah's Witness when I was about 16.

Early life in the Jehovah's Witnesses Church

6. My father is BCH (sometimes called BCH and my mother is BCI Together my mother and father had seven children, of whom I am the second eldest. I have an older sister who is two years older than me. I also have three younger brothers and two younger sisters. REDACTED

7. I don't know exactly when my parents became Jehovah's Witnesses, but I think my father joined a congregation in St George in Queensland when I was very young. My mother joined the same Jehovah's Witnesses congregation a short time after my father. My father initially worked as a REDACTED and later worked as an REDACTED My mother stayed at home to look after the children.

8. When I was about ten years old, my family moved to REDACTED of Mareeba in Queensland. My parents joined the Mareeba Jehovah's Witnesses Congregation.

9. My father was a very strict and highly regarded Jehovah's Witness. When I was about 13 he was appointed as a Ministerial Servant at the Mareeba Congregation. Jehovah's Witnesses believe that when a man is appointed as an Elder or a Ministerial Servant, he is appointed by God's (Jehovah's) Holy Spirit to judge others. My father took his role as a Ministerial Servant very seriously. He used to quote the scriptures constantly, both at the Congregation's Kingdom Hall and at home. He regularly delivered talks from an elevated platform at the Jehovah's Witnesses meetings at the Kingdom Hall. My father was also given special responsibilities by the Congregation Elders, including conducting private bible studies with other congregation members, managing groups of Jehovah's Witnesses for Field Service (or door-to-door preaching), and teaching and counselling the Congregation.

10. When I was a child my father made me and my siblings attend meetings at the Kingdom Hall at least three times a week. There was a two hour meeting every Sunday, another two hour meeting on a Friday, and usually a one hour meeting mid-week. The meetings involved the Elders and Ministerial Servants teaching and counselling the Congregation about keeping the Congregation "clean" and righteous. In order to prepare for the meetings, my brothers and sisters and I had to study the bible and read daily scriptures.

11. During the meetings my father would pressure me and my siblings to offer answers to questions posed by the Elders and Ministerial Servants leading the meetings. He would also make me deliver scriptural talks before the Congregation from the platform in the Kingdom Hall and take part in Field Service.

Jehovah's Witnesses rules

12. In the Jehovah's Witnesses Church, men are at the top of the hierarchy and hold all of the authority next to Jehovah. Man is the head of the house and his wife and children have to obey him and refrain from questioning his authority. Adult females are next in line, and then children are at the bottom of the hierarchy.

13. There were many rules to comply with and things that I had to do in order to be a good Jehovah's Witness. As head of the household, my father was the person who dictated and enforced compliance with the rules in our house. He was also answerable to the Elders in the Congregation and I think he was therefore really keen to impress the Elders and show how obedient his family was. In our house for example, we were only allowed to watch certain television programs and listen to certain radio programs. We were not allowed to read anything other than Jehovah's Witness material.

14. As a child growing up in a strict Jehovah's Witness family, the Church and my father dictated who I was and wasn't allowed to associate with. I certainly wasn't allowed to associate with anybody outside of the Jehovah's Witnesses community, other than the children at the school I attended. Even when I was at school, the Jehovah's Witnesses Church decided which lessons I could and couldn't attend. For example, I was not allowed to attend sex education lessons at school as the Jehovah's Witnesses counselled that it was the responsibility of Jehovah's Witness parents to

teach their children about sex. My father also never allowed me to attend any form of extra-curricular activity (for example, sports) because the Church advised against it.

15. In the late 1980s, school attendance in Years 11 and 12 was not compulsory. My parents didn't allow me to stay at school after Year 10 because choosing higher education over Jehovah was frowned upon by the Church. Even after I finished school in Year 10, I wasn't allowed to pursue full-time work because I needed time to dedicate to preaching.

Isolation and the threat of disfellowshipping

16. My father used to tell me I was headstrong and that I needed more training to be more obedient, but it didn't matter how hard I tried, I was never good enough. He used to tell people in the Congregation and my family that I was a troublemaker. To the Congregation he appeared righteous and spiritual, but at home my father had a very short fuse and could become violent and abusive. He used to beat me frequently, often using a black leather strap that left welts on my skin. Out of my siblings, I was the one who bore the brunt of his aggression.

17. As a Jehovah's Witness I was taught to love and fear Jehovah and to respect my father and be obedient to my parents. I was taught never to question my parents or their decisions.

18. My father always threatened to kick me out and treat me as though I was disfellowshipped if I ever disobeyed him. A person would be disfellowshipped if they had sinned and did not adhere to the counsel given by Elders in a committee meeting. Disfellowshipped means excommunicated from the Church and nobody (family and friends included) would be allowed to associate with or talk to you until you were reinstated. Disfellowshipped people were ostracised and actively avoided by members of the congregation.

19. I was always terrified of being kicked out of home or disfellowshipped because I feared what Jehovah would do to me. I was taught from a young age that people outside the Church (referred to by Jehovah's Witnesses as "worldly people") were bad and not to be trusted as they served Satan. Even the prospect of speaking to the police was extremely scary as they were also considered to be very bad people.

20. I felt enormous pressure from the Church and from my father to be a perfect obedient child. By the time I was in my early to mid-teens, I felt very isolated and alone. I became quite depressed and at times suicidal. I was allowed to see a "worldly" doctor about my depression, but I was forbidden from speaking about the Church as it would bring reproach on Jehovah's name.

21. By the time I was about 16, I was determined to leave home for many reasons, including that I wanted to escape the Jehovah's Witnesses without being disfellowshipped; I wanted to do it on my own terms. By this I mean that I wanted to fade away from the Church and become inactive while retaining my faith as this course was less likely to result in punishment from Jehovah. It is hard to explain, but I didn't want to be shunned by the only people that I knew as well as live in fear of Jehovah.

Sexual abuse

22. I think my father abused me when I was about five years old. I don't remember anything specific from that time, but I do recall feeling extremely uncomfortable and scared when my father put a nappy on me at night before bed. That memory made a lot more sense to me once I discovered what my father did to my sisters at a similar age.

23. When I was in Year 7, I recall my father asking me and my older sister to give him a kiss. It was a really sloppy kiss on the lips and I remember thinking that it wasn't right. I didn't like it at all. My

father used to tell me I was "sexy" and would sometimes say to me *"You have it, but your sister doesn't"*. My father often removed my bedroom door because I would either shut it to get dressed or lock it to try to keep him out.

24. I don't remember any other clear instances of feeling so uncomfortable again until I was 17. I suspect that I may have blocked a lot of things out.

25. In October of 1988, my mother took my siblings to Brisbane to see Expo '88. They were away for about two weeks. I had just turned 17 years old and I wanted to save money to buy a car, so I stayed at home with my father. Although my father beat me a lot, he could also treat me like a normal person. I wanted him to be proud of me, to accept me, and to recognise that I wasn't bad or evil. I thought it would be a good idea to stay at home with him and cook for him whilst my mother was away. I didn't think anything of staying alone at home with him because he was my father.

26. While my mother and siblings were away at Expo '88, my father sexually assaulted me on a number of occasions. The first time that he tried to have sex with me, he came naked into my bed at night whilst I was sleeping and touched me all over my body. When I protested I remember him saying to me *"Shhhh, it's okay I'm your father. Be obedient to your father"*. I couldn't believe what was happening. After the first time, I tried to lock my bedroom door but this made him so angry. While my mother was away, my father touched me and tried to have sex with me on at least four or five different occasions. I resisted as much as I could each time, but he was a violent man and prone to snap. I was absolutely petrified of him and tried not to make him angry. While my father sexually assaulted me, he quoted bible scriptures and referred to the scriptures about being more obedient that he made me put up on my bedroom wall. He said to me while he sexually assaulted me *"You have to be obedient to me"*.

27. While my mother was away my father also gave me alcohol and made me watch pornographic movies with him.

28. After my father had touched me and tried to have sex with me, he behaved completely normally towards me, as if nothing had happened. I convinced myself that it was all nightmares, but I always knew that it was real. I used to pray to Jehovah to put angels around my bed to stop my father from coming to me, but he didn't help me and my father didn't stop.

29. While my mother and siblings were away at Expo '88, my father took me on a motorbike to a Jehovah's Witness working bee in Cooktown. When we got home, my back was really sore from the motorbike ride and my father told me he would massage my back for me. He started massaging my back, but moved down and started touching me where I didn't want him to. I told him I didn't want him to do that, but he said *"Shhh, be quiet. I am your father. Be obedient"*.

30. On the last occasion that I remember my father sexually assaulting me while my mother and siblings were away in Brisbane, he started touching himself and tried to make me touch him as well. When I refused, he said to me with money in his hand, *"I'll give you $300 to help with your car and $300 after if you bend over the bed"*. I said to him *"I don't want to do it. I don't need your money"*. My father became very angry and pushed me onto the bed. I managed to get away from him and ran outside the house. My father chased me through the backyard of our house, but I managed to escape to a neighbour's property.

31. Once my mother and siblings returned from Expo '88, my father started to tell everyone that I was *"mental"*, a *"nutcase"*, and that I *"served the devil"*. He also continued to tell everyone I was a "troublemaker". I think that because he was so respected in the Congregation, the way he treated me dictated how everybody else in the Congregation, including my own mother and family, treated me. My father also tightened his control over who I could talk to in the

Congregation, forbidding me to speak to anybody who he thought I might tell about the abuse. If I broke his rules, he flogged me.

32. I knew that as a Jehovah's Witness it was my duty to report any wrongdoing to the Elders in the Congregation. Although I wanted to tell them, I was terrified of doing so. My father had threatened to beat me and to kick me out of home if I ever spoke to anyone without him present.

Physical abuse

33. I am sure that everyone in the Congregation knew that my father was a violent man and beat me frequently. I was often forced to attend meetings having just been beaten by my father with his belt and still bleeding from the welts.

34. On one occasion after my mother returned from Expo '88, I remember that my father wanted to get into the bathroom when I was in there. He couldn't get in because I had locked the door, which I wasn't allowed to do. He bashed so violently on the door that it finally broke down. Just before the door broke, I had managed to grab a towel to cover myself and I was standing just behind the door. The door hit me in the face. Not long after that, I went to a meeting at the Kingdom Hall with a black eye. I remember that one of the Elders, Zini Ali (Dino Ali's brother), asked me *"What happened to your eye?"*. I replied to him *"My father kicked the bathroom door in my face"*. Zini just laughed in response and said *"Oh did he!"*. I felt that Zini was dismissing what I had told him as though it were a joke.

35. After my mother returned from Expo '88 the sexual abuse stopped but my father kept knocking me around. He took the door to my bedroom off its hinges. There was no privacy and no safety for me at home, not even in the toilet, which had no lock or properly closing door.

36. Some months after the sexual abuse that happened while the rest of my family was away, I started to leave Watchtower magazines open around our house so that my father could see the articles on misconduct. I remember saying to him on one occasion *"I know what you did to me and it's wrong"*. He said to me in reply *"You're mental"*.

Reporting my father's abuse

37. My father left home some eight or nine months after October 1988. Before my father left, I tried to talk about the abuse to Lyn Bowditch, who was married to one of the Elders at the Congregation, Kevin Bowditch. Kevin was a friend of my father's who had helped build parts of our house. I said to Lyn *"I need to talk about some stuff that's happened between me and dad"*. Lyn spoke to Kevin and reported back to me *"Kevin says that he can't speak to you without your father present"*.

38. I also tried speaking to another Elder called Dino Ali. Dino was also a good friend of my father's. I remember calling Dino on one occasion from the pay phones near the Post Office in Mareeba while on my lunch break from my part-time job. I remember sobbing and saying to Dino *"I want to talk to you about things in my family that you don't know about. What my father is doing"*. Dino said to me *"No, you have to talk to your father first or he must be present"*. I said to him *"I can't do that"*. All I can remember after that is crying. I called Dino to try to talk to him about my father at least twice.

39. In May or June of 1989 — about eight months after my father sexually abused me while the rest of my family was away — my father left my mother for another woman and moved out of the family home. Once my father left, I found the courage to tell my friend (who later became my husband), BCJ about the abuse. I told him that *"My father has been rude to me"*.

BCJ 's first response after I said this was *"Are you making this up to get back at your father for belting you all the time?"*. I said to BCJ *"No and if you don't believe me then no one will"*. The next day when I saw BCJ again he told me he had spoken to my father, and he said to me *"It all makes sense now"*. BCJ did not tell me everything that he and my father spoke about. I don't recall what BCJ said to me, but I do remember getting the impression that my father had admitted to BCJ that something had happened. After that BCJ said to me *"We need to go to the Elders"*. At the time, BCJ and another friend of mine were probably the only people in the whole congregation who treated me nicely.

40. Soon after I told BCJ he arranged a meeting between us and Dino Ali at Dino's workplace. I remember saying to Dino Ali *"My father has been rude to me"*. He seemed incensed and said to me *"You do know that this is a very serious allegation you are making"*. I said to Dino *"I know; that's why I'm saying it"*. I assume that Dino then spoke to Kevin and to another Elder called Ron de Rooy because within the next couple of days they wanted me to attend what I understood to be a "Committee Meeting".

41. I didn't tell my mother about what had happened because she was an emotional wreck after my father had left.

The Committee Meetings

42. I remember meeting with the Elders (Dino, Ron, and Kevin) by myself on a number of occasions for a couple of hours at a time. On one occasion, they brought my father into the room so that I could tell him what I had told the Elders. I cannot recall exactly how many times I had to meet with the Elders. I didn't want to be there and I felt so uncomfortable. I had nobody to support me. I don't remember anyone really explaining the purpose of the Committee Meetings to me, but I understood at the time that the Elders were investigating what I had alleged.

43. At the first Committee Meeting, the Elders sat me in a room at the Kingdom Hall and came in one at a time and asked me to tell them what had happened. After that they came in together and asked me more questions. They repeated this process several times. It felt like I was being interrogated and that the Elders were trying to find inconsistencies in my story to catch me out. Now in hindsight I understand that the Elders were investigating whether or not I was a credible witness and if my allegations could have been truthful.

44. Because the Elders were all male, and all were friends of my father's, I was reluctant to speak to them about what had happened. Unless they asked me a direct question, I didn't really offer the full detail of the sexual abuse.

45. I never felt as though any of the Elders believed me. In fact, they seemed incensed by what I was saying and took the allegations personally. They asked me questions like *"Did you enjoy it?"* and *"How did you react to that?"*. At times, it felt as though they were getting off on what I was telling them.

46. The Elders told me that I had to tell my mother about my abuse. When I told her that my father had abused me, she asked *"Really? What did he do?"*. I didn't want to tell my mother any detail so I said to her *"He has been rude to me"*. She said to me *"He did that to [your older sister] when she was two"*. I was absolutely gutted and upset. I asked my mother "*How could you have left us alone with him knowing what he had done to my sister*?". My mother said to me *"I didn't think he would do it again because he had become a Jehovah's Witness"*.

47. After my mother told me about what my father had done to my older sister, it occurred to me that I should check with my two younger sisters if he had ever done anything to them. Together my mother and I spoke to my younger sisters. They were about five and seven or eight at the time. Both of them said to me *"Yes, dad has been rude"*. I remember my youngest sister saying

words to the effect of *"He put his penis between my legs when we were laying down in the lounge room watching TV"*. I remember my other younger sister saying words to the effect of *"He made me have a shower with him and he touched me and massaged my pee in the shower"*.

48. My mother came with me to tell the Elders about my younger sisters. I remember that Ron de Rooy said to us *"We don't want to talk to your sisters because they are too young to know what they are taking about"*. This response made me so upset because irrespective of their ages, my sisters were victims too and the abuse should have been considered by the Elders.

49. At some point after I told the Elders about my younger sisters, the Elders told me that I had to meet with my father and put my allegations of sexual abuse to him. I remember being in the room at the Kingdom Hall when they brought my father into the room. They sat him down at the opposite end of the table at which I was sitting. I was extremely terrified but I was trying to be strong and brave; I kept thinking of my little sisters. I remember my hands shaking and my knees knocking together with fear.

50. The Elders asked me to tell my father what I had told them, which I did. My father became angry and I remember him saying to me *"I will flog you"*, *"I'll hit you"*, and *"Just wait till I get you out of this room"*. The Elders didn't stop him from saying all of those things. I remember that later in the meeting my father said to me *"You seduced me"*. I responded by saying to him *"You are my father, you are big and fat, why would I want to seduce you?"*.

51. Then I confronted my father about my sisters. I said, *"You touched my little sisters. I suppose you are going to say that a four year old and a six year old seduced you as well. How could you do that? You always taught us not to lie and here you are sitting here lying! You are a hypocrite"*. My father got very angry and said to me *"I will kill you!"*. He stood up and started to move towards

me but the Elders stopped him. I felt very intimidated and anxious about the threats that he made and I didn't feel at all protected by the Elders.

52. The Elders decided to disfellowship my father. I remember that Ron de Rooy came to visit me at home and said to me *"We want to make it very clear that we are not disfellowshipping him for what he did to you, but for other 'loose conduct'"*. I asked in reply *"Why?"*. Ron said to me *"Well, we need to have two or more witnesses to the same event"*. I said in reply *"What about my sisters though?"*. Ron said to me *"It has to be the same event"*.

53. I was mortified and devastated. It felt so wrong that my father's abuse affected me so much yet it did not even qualify as something wrong in the eyes of the Jehovah's Witnesses, who professed to be acting with the authority of Jehovah and the Holy Spirit, which is considered to be above Australian law. I felt betrayed by my mother because she didn't protect my sisters and me or warn us when she knew what my father was capable of. I consider her to be complicit in my abuse and in the abuse of my sisters.

The Appeal Committee Meetings

54. About a week after he was disfellowshipped, my father appealed the decision of the Elders. In or around July 1989, I remember that an Appeal Committee was formed. Three Elders from other congregations in the area, Joe Mirarziz, Don Wilson, and Jim Bennett, sat on the Appeal Committee. Don Wilson was the father of my best friend at the time. The Elders from the first Committee Meetings, Kevin, Dino, and Ron, also attended the Appeal Committee meetings.

55. I was called back to appear alone before the Appeal Committee, although no one explained to me why. This time my father was sat in a corner of the room and was not allowed to speak to me or threaten me. The Appeal Committee Elders asked me questions and I had to say everything

about the abuse all over again. This time, they were not as accusing as the Elders in the original Committee Meetings.

56. Towards the end of the Appeal Committee meeting, I remember that Kevin Bowditch said to the room *"Can* BCH *confirm what he did to* BCG *for her sake?"*. My father said words to the effect of *"Yes, I stepped out of line"*. At the time I understood that in saying this, my father was admitting to having sexually abused me.

57. At some point not long after the Appeal Committee finished their meeting, one of the Elders came and told me that my father's disfellowshipping had been upheld. I don't remember which Elder spoke to me or exactly what he said.

58. After his appeal was rejected, my father moved away from Mareeba to live in Cairns. Before he left, he used to stalk me and tamper with my mail by opening it and adding handwritten notes, which I tore up and never read. I remember telling Kevin Bowditch about what my father was doing as it was very intimidating. At one point I moved out of home to stay with another Jehovah's Witness couple to try to escape my father's stalking and intimidation, but he still managed to find me.

59. I am aware that my mother told a lot of people in the Congregation about what my father had done to me. After he was disfellowshipped, many people said things to me like *"I don't believe this happened"*, and *"I think you lied"*. I felt worthless, helpless, and embarrassed.

60. I continued to live in Mareeba and remained a member of the Jehovah's Witnesses Mareeba Congregation. In November 1989, I married BCJ Not long after I married BCJ still felt worthless and alone and I tried to commit suicide by taking an overdose. I had to report my suicide attempt to the Elders as it was a sin against Jehovah. I remember that I spoke to Ron

de Rooy about it and I was chastised because attempting suicide is viewed as a serious wrongdoing within the Church.

Reinstatement of my father

61. A few years later, I can't recall exactly when, Ron de Rooy came to tell me that my father was going to be reinstated. Nobody had ever asked me if my father had apologised to me so I said to Ron *"Why are you letting him be reinstated?"*. Ron replied to me *"There comes a time when we can't hold him back any more. He is doing all the right things."* I asked Ron *"What right things?"*. Ron replied, *"He's attending meetings"*. I said to Ron *"How can you say that? He was attending all the meetings and giving talks from the platform while he was touching all four of his daughters. He's been tampering with my mail. He's been stalking me. He's not sorry"*. Ron said to me *"We can't judge that"*.

62. After Ron de Rooy told me about my father's reinstatement, I said to Ron *"Well, I want to take it to the police because the congregation is not safe. Children are at risk"*. Ron replied to me *"He is now a Brother again"* and he quoted me the scripture that says that we don't take brothers to court. Ron said to me *"So if you take it to the police, you will bring reproach upon Jehovah's name and you will be disfellowshipped for doing that"*. I was very upset and disappointed. It seemed that there was to be no justice or acknowledgement for what my father had done to my sisters and me. I felt like we didn't matter; that the abuse was not considered bad enough in the eyes of Jehovah. Once again I felt helpless because I feared Jehovah and I feared being disfellowshipped; my life would be worse than it already was.

63. In or around November 1992, my father returned to Mareeba to be reinstated. I remember that when it was announced to the Congregation, all of the Brothers crowded around my father, shaking his hand and patting him on the back. Despite many people in the Congregation knowing

what he had done to me and my sisters I heard members of the Congregation say *"Welcome back* BCH *"* and *"Congratulations* BCH *it's good to see you"*. I was petrified to be so close to my father, but I stood my ground and refused to acknowledge him.

64. On 19 December 1995, I wrote a letter to the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society about the reinstatement of my father. In my letter I described what he had done and the way in which the Elders had responded to my allegations. That letter is at QLD.0068.001.1410. In response I received a letter from the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society dated 26 February 1996, which said that the Watchtower would look into the points of concern that I raised in my letter. The letter also counselled faith in Jehovah. That letter is at QLD.0068.001.1409.

65. I did not believe that the Watchtower would or could do anything and I considered the letter to be a token gesture only. I had already put my faith in Jehovah and prayed to him to protect me from the abuse when it was happening, and he didn't. I had already put my faith in the Elders when I reported the abuse to them and they didn't protect or support me either. I felt angry, upset and let down, and I began to feel suicidal again because I felt as though there was no way out for me.

Reporting to the police

66. In or around 1998 or 1999, my then husband BCJ and I moved to Townsville with our two sons. Not long after I had my third son in Townsville, BCJ and I separated and I left the Jehovah's Witnesses Church. I couldn't stand the hypocrisy anymore and I was finding it hard to believe that the Elders and Ministerial Servants were really appointed by the Holy Spirit. Once I left the Church my three children and I were completely shunned, ostracised and actively avoided by members of the Townsville Jehovah's Witnesses Congregation.

67. The very first thing I did after I left the Church was call the police. I was initially scared of the police because I had grown up being taught that everyone outside of the Jehovah's Witnesses Church was to be feared. But the officer in charge of my case, Natalie Bennett, had an awesome manner and was very supportive. Throughout the court cases, my only support was from the police and a support person assigned by the court.

68. I gave a statement to police in about September 2000. In my statement I limited what I said to the police about my interactions with the Elders. I didn't include in my statement that I had tried to speak to Dino Ali and Kevin Bowditch whilst my father was still at home, and I didn't go into detail about the Committee Meetings. When I made that statement to the police, I had only just left the Jehovah's Witnesses Church and I was still very fearful that if I said too much about the Elders at the Mareeba Congregation I would bring reproach upon Jehovah's name. I was still scared of making Jehovah angry and suffering punishment from him. I didn't immediately give my letter to the Watchtower of December 1995 to the police for the same reason.

69. At trial my father denied all charges against him. It took six years and three trials before he was finally convicted for the indecent assault of me. The Elders who presided over the Committee Meetings and the Appeal Committee Meeting gave evidence at the committal and at a voir dire during the first trial, but that trial resulted in a hung jury. The second trial was declared a mistrial. My father was convicted at the third trial at the end of 2004. He was sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

70. The trials were easy compared to what I had been through with the Elders during the Committee Meetings. I would go through it twenty more times if I had to. At least the court has rules when questioning survivor witnesses; the Jehovah's Witnesses can do and insinuate whatever they want and there are no protections for the victim at all.

71. I have had no contact with any of the Elders involved in the Committee Meetings, or from the Mareeba Congregation, or from the Watchtower since my father was convicted.

Impact of the abuse

72. During my teens I was at times depressed and suicidal and this became worse after my father's sexual abuse of me while my mother was away at Expo '88. I also attempted suicide several months after the Committee Meetings in 1989 as a result of my experience of the Committee Meetings with the Elders. I couldn't bear the judgement of those around me, the public vilification and ostracism. I wanted to dig a hole and die.

73. My relationship with my mother is now strained, but civil. This is because I still hold her partly responsible for the abuse of my sisters and me. To this day, I never felt I had her full support or protection. The only time I felt my upset feelings were heard was when I went to police. Nobody else, up until that point, had acknowledged that what my father did to me was wrong and that he should be made to answer for it.

74. I have at times lived a life in fear of being ostracised, shunned, and vilified by those around me. I have always lived in fear of my father. I have lived in fear of Jehovah. I thought I had done all the right things. I had put my trust in Jehovah, but nobody protected me. They only made it worse.

75. During the criminal trials, I felt as though all of my nightmares had gathered together in the one place and I was terrified that Jehovah would kill me for having reported to the police and for bringing reproach upon his name.

76. I now have four children of whom I am fiercely protective. When I separated from my partner last year, I felt like I didn't belong anywhere and didn't really have a name that wasn't associated with an unhappy past. I talked to my eldest son about it and he suggested that he make up a

name for me. He did this REDACTED and made up my current surname.

Victims of child sexual abuse within the Jehovah's Witnesses Church

77. Jehovah's Witnesses Elders sit in judgment of congregation members in relation to matters of wrongdoing. My experience is that when a person reports wrongdoing, the Elders judge that person's credibility as a witness by reference to his or her position within the congregation, their age, their sex, and their outward displays of spirituality. In assessing spirituality, the Elders will take into consideration how frequently a person attends and offers answers at congregation meetings, how well they know the bible, how they are treated by their family and that family's reputation within the congregation, how often they go out preaching, and how submissive they are to the Elders.

78. I had reported my father's abuse to the Elders because that was what I believed I was supposed to do in accordance with Jehovah's expectations. I thought Jehovah and the Elders would protect me and my sisters. Instead I felt that rather than protect me as the victim, the Elders primarily sat in judgment of me and of my credibility as a witness. The Elders refused to speak to my younger sisters because of their ages at the time and did not even entertain consideration of their credibility as witnesses to their own abuse.

79. Even when a victim is assessed by Elders as a credible witness, if an alleged abuser denies an allegation then the Elders will only believe the victim's testimony if there are two or three credible witnesses to the same incident of abuse (see Deuteronomy 19:15; John 8: 17).

80. Although they receive reports and investigate wrongdoing, and then make assessments as to a witness's credibility, it is my understanding that Elders have no training in interviewing

techniques, counselling, or psychology. Elders interview and interrogate child victims of sexual abuse and, in my experience, cause more damage to the victim. In my case the Elders, who were friends of my father, interrogated me, offered me no emotional support or protection, and made me feel as though I was insulting them and that I was to blame.

81. The Jehovah's Witnesses believe that they should not take one another to court (see 1 Corinthians 6:1-8). I understand that this includes reporting child sexual abuse to the police. I was told and believed that to take such matters outside the Church would bring reproach upon Jehovah's name. Child sexual abuse is a crime. The Church and the Elders have no right to interfere with, prevent or threaten victims of abuse if they choose to report their abuse to the police. I felt unable to report my father to the police when the events were was fresh in my mind, and in the minds of others who were or could have been witnesses. If I hadn't been so scared of reporting to police, I don't think I would have been subjected to such a drawn out criminal process in which I had to relive the abuse and the subsequent interrogation by the Elders over and over again.

82. I feel that the children in the Jehovah's Witness Church are vulnerable and will continue to be easy targets. This is because in my experience, the Church's current beliefs and practices — such as the rule requiring two witnesses to the same event, the practice of dealing with allegations privately and within the Church, and the factors that are taken into consideration by Elders when determining whether to reinstate a person against whom an allegation of child sexual abuse has been made — appear to favour and even protect paedophiles. I think it is paramount that uniform mandatory reporting laws are introduced across Australia to apply to institutions like the Jehovah's Witnesses Church in order to protect children. I believe that making the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society and the Church financially accountable is essential for the protection of

children and to redress the suffering of past, present and future victims of child sexual abuse within the Church.

83. I hope that my traumatic experience of abuse and of the Jehovah's Witnesses Church beliefs, practices, and processes can be used in a positive way. I have come forward today because I want to advocate for all victims who have been sexually assaulted within the Jehovah's Witnesses Church. I know so many victims of sexual abuse within the Church whose fear of repercussion prevents them from coming forward. I would like to promote change and set a precedent by exposing the way my case of sexual abuse was handled and encouraging other victims to speak out.

Statement

Name	RODNEY PETER SPINKS
Address	12-14 Zouch Road Denham Court NSW 2565
Occupation	Service Desk at Branch Office of Jehovah's Witnesses
Date	10 July 2015

INTRODUCTION

1. This statement is in response to a letter dated 26 June 2015 addressed to me from the Commission, as attached (marked "Annexure 1").

2. My statement sets out the evidence that I wish to give to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The statement is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

3. I am pleased to answer the questions raised in connection with my role in the Service Department and matters that I am personally aware of. In my statement, I have followed the format of the questions in the letter, using the headings set out in (A) - (H) below.

A. MY BACKGROUND

4. I have associated with Jehovah's Witnesses since 1965 and been a baptised member for over 40 years. (Public baptism indicates an individual's personal decision to dedicate their life to God as one of Jehovah's Witnesses.)

5. I was born in Tasmania in 1959 and have five siblings. After my parents moved to Victoria, they both studied the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses. They were baptised as Jehovah's Witnesses when I was 6 years old.

6. I went to primary school and high school in country Victoria. After high school, I completed a 4 year trade apprenticeship in the transport industry.

7. Following my marriage, I moved to Queensland where I was trained for various management roles in the transport industry. During this time, our son was born.

8. I became the National Operations Manager for a large interstate transport company during the 1980s. In my role I was responsible for the human resource issues of several hundred employees.

9. Commencing in 1989, I operated my own family business in the transport industry for a number of years. This enabled me to divide my time equally between operating our business and becoming more fully involved with my volunteer responsibilities with Jehovah's Witnesses.

10. As part of my greater participation in the activities of Jehovah's Witnesses, I have now spent many years teaching others the value of a balanced Christian life. Together with my wife, I have found that Scriptural principles are still very relevant in assisting others to deal with modern family challenges.

11. As a result of our increased involvement, since January 2007, my wife and I have been based at the Branch Office of Jehovah's Witnesses in Sydney, where we are able to devote our full time and energy to our faith-based activities.

12. In more recent years, I have become a grandparent to two grandchildren and enjoy being a part of their lives.

13. As a parent and grandparent, I am genuinely concerned with the prevention of and appropriate response to the sin and crime of child sexual abuse. As an elder in the faith of Jehovah's Witnesses, I have personally assisted a number of individuals suffering from past sexual abuse. I have also worked closely with fellow elders to ensure allegations of sexual abuse are promptly addressed and that victims of sexual abuse are given support and care.

i. Congregations

14. I have been a member of the following congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses:

    a. 1965–1978 Bairnsdale Congregation in Victoria;

    b. 1978–1990 Beenleigh (later Beenleigh East) Congregation, Queensland;

    c. 1990–1995 Rockhampton West Congregation, Queensland;

    d. 1995–2000 Rockhampton South Congregation, Queensland;

    e. 2000–2004 Blaxland Congregation, New South Wales;

    f. 2004–2007 Western New South Wales as a circuit overseer (ie. an experienced elder who serves full-time with his wife as a travelling overseer visiting approximately 20 congregations twice a year for a week at a time);

    g. 2007–2011 Campbelltown Congregation, New South Wales;

    h. 2011–2013 Green Valley Australian Sign Language Congregation, New South Wales;

    i. 2013–2015 Auburn Congregation, New South Wales;

    j. 2015–present Illawong Congregation, New South Wales.

ii. My Roles

15. I served as a ministerial servant from the early 1980's and as a congregation elder since 1987. In 1999, I was trained to visit congregations as a travelling overseer on a part-time basis. Then from September 2004 until January 2007, I was a full-time travelling overseer.

16. From January 2007, I have worked in the Service Department at the Branch Office. I respond to telephone and written inquiries from travelling overseers, congregation elders, congregation members, the general public and the media on all aspects of our preaching work and organisational arrangements.

B. MY KNOWLEDGE OF THE SYSTEMS, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES IN THE PREVENTION OF AND RESPONSE TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

Overview

17. I understand that Mr O'Brien will address the organisation's overall structure and approach in relation to the prevention and handling of child sexual abuse and Mr Toole will address the role of the Legal Department in advising elders as to their mandatory reporting obligations.

18. From when I was appointed as an elder in 1987 until 2007, I was provided with access to all letters from the Branch Office to local bodies of elders. This included all letters that provided spiritual advice and guidance on how to handle child abuse matters over that period that have now been replaced with the letter of October 1, 2012 (WAT.0001.004.0066 – WAT.0001.004.0071).

19. An important article "*Abhor What Is Wicked*" (WAT.0001.004.0306 – WAT.0001.004.0309) was published in 1997. It concerned the congregation implications for a former child abuser. As a result of this article and in harmony with our long standing policy based on the Scriptures, it was emphasized that a former child abuser would not be irreprehensible and therefore not qualified for a congregation appointed position. (See also paragraph 81 below.)

20. In my Service Department role since 2007, I have been responsible for assisting congregation elders to implement the Branch Office's spiritual advice and the guidelines for handling child abuse allegations and in providing victim support. In this way, I am able to answer the questions set out in the letter dated 26 June 2015.

21. In particular, I provide support and guidance to elders:

    a. in actively promoting the long-held Scriptural view that Jehovah's Witnesses abhor child sexual abuse;

    b. ensuring that congregation elders provide spiritual support and comfort to victims of abuse; and

    c. in taking reasonable measures to safeguard children from abuse.

22. This is in harmony with what is stated in the letter dated October 1, 2012, para. 9 – (WAT.0001.004.0068) as follows:

> *We abhor the sexual abuse of children and will not protect any perpetrator of such repugnant acts from the consequences of his gross sin. (Rom. 12:9) Elders should take seriously their responsibility in this matter so that the congregations will be safeguarded from any valid accusation of neglect in protecting children from sexual abuse.*

23. I am responsible for advising congregation elders in their support of victims of abuse and in ensuring that Scriptural procedure is followed when dealing with any accusation of child sexual abuse involving a congregation member or meeting attender.

24. These procedures are set out in

    a. the Bible (in this statement I refer to the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*);

    b. the Elders' Handbook, entitled *Shepherd the Flock of God*, and referred to in letters by the mnemonic *ks10* (WAT.0003.001.0001 – WAT.0003.001.0143);

    c. Watch Tower Society publications, such as the *Organized to Do Jehovah's Will* book (WAT.0003.001.0296 – WAT.0003.001.0519); and

    d. in letters sent to all bodies of elders, in particular the letter of October 1, 2012 (WAT.0001.004.0066 – WAT.0001.004.0071), which consolidated into one letter the spiritual advice and guidance provided in various letters from preceding years as to how Jehovah's Witnesses handled allegations of child abuse.

25. The Service Department assists congregation elders in identifying offences that constitute child sexual abuse, as outlined in paragraph 3 of the October 1, 2012 letter (WAT.0001.004.0066):

> *Child sexual abuse generally includes sexual intercourse with a minor; oral or anal sex with a minor; fondling the genitals, breasts, or buttocks of a minor; voyeurism of a minor; indecent exposure to a minor; soliciting a minor for sexual conduct; or any kind of involvement with child pornography. Depending on the circumstances of the case, it may also include "sexting" with a minor. "Sexting" describes the sending of nude photos, seminude photos, or sexually explicit text messages electronically, such as by phone.*

26. If congregation elders become aware of a child abuse allegation, they are instructed to contact the Legal Department in relation to reporting requirements and then the call is transferred to the Service Department [October 1, 2012 para. 4 & 5 (WAT.0001.004.0066 – WAT.0001.004.0067)].

27. I have prepared and attached to my statement (marked Annexure 2) a document called *Summation of Branch Office Handling of Child Abuse Matters* which summarises our response to allegations of child sexual abuse, together with the references from our publications and

letters. A number of the significant procedures are highlighted between paragraphs 28 and 47 of my statement.

Branch Office response: Victim Safety and Support

28. The first thing I ask the elders is the current age and circumstances of the victim. If there is a possibility that a victim may remain in danger of further abuse, I advise the elders to immediately go back to the parent/guardian to ensure that the child is physically protected, as they would for their own child.

29. This is in harmony with paragraph 10 of the October 1, 2012 letter (WAT.0001.004.0068), which states:

> *Regardless of whether the law requires the elders to report an accusation to the authorities, steps need to be taken to protect children.*

30. I explain that, as a father and grandfather, if this was my child or grandchild, I would do everything necessary to ensure that the child is safe. For the elders, that may involve supporting the parent/guardian in contacting the authorities or personally contacting the authorities. The August 28, 2002 letter (WAT.0004.001.0001 – WAT.0004.001.002) that was read to all congregations stated:

> *We have long instructed elders to report allegations of child abuse to the authorities where required by law to do so, even where there is only one witness. In any case, the elders know that if the victim wishes to make a report, it is his or her absolute right to do so.*

31. In relation to supporting a victim of child sexual abuse, my role involves advising congregation elders as to how they may provide spiritual refreshment and encouragement, as it states in the Bible that they *"speak consolingly to those who are depressed, [and] support the weak."* (1 Thessalonians 5:14) I encourage the elders to review the Bible-based resources we have provided to assist them in supporting the parent/guardian and the victim. These references, which have been provided to the Commission, are quoted in the Elders' Handbook (WAT.0003.001.0001 – WAT.0003.001.0143) and are updated and indexed in WT Library, which is available both online and in CD-ROM format.

32. Spiritual comfort provided by elders to a victim is not viewed as a substitute for professional therapy. As stated in the Elders' Handbook page 54, paragraph 22 (WAT.0003.001.0055), *"It must be recognized that elders as such are not mental-health professionals or therapists but are spiritual shepherds. (1 Pet. 5:2)"* Elders are encouraged to support the parent/guardian in reassuring the victim that he or she is in no way to blame, that they are loved by God, and that they have the care and full support of the elders and the congregation.

33. I often quote the *Awake!*, January 22, 1985, page 8 (WAT.0001.004.0210), which states:

> *[T]he child must be given a lot of love and emotional support. Parents must make it very clear that the little victim is not to blame. The crime and anything that happens as a result of*

it—even if a close relative goes to prison—is not her (or his) fault. But that reassurance will have to be given many times, so that the victim comes to believe it—and to believe that the parents believe it too!

Responding to Reports and Allegations

34. When an allegation is made against any congregation member of a gross violation of God's law, especially child sexual abuse, the body of elders is instructed to investigate according to Bible guidelines. To do so, they select two elders to look into the allegation. [Elders' Handbook pg. 72, para. 38 (WAT.0003.001.0073)]

35. The two elders, with the consent of the parent/guardian, would talk to the victim with the parent/guardian present. If the victim is a very young minor, the two elders would talk just with the parent/guardian alone to ascertain the exact nature of the allegation. The elders would also privately talk to the alleged offender, without the victim being present. The elders would ask the accused questions about the allegations, and if necessary, seek information from any other witnesses.

36. The two elders investigate whether a sin has been committed and report to the body of elders. In line with Bible principles, the evidence may be in the form of an admission, the testimony of witnesses, compelling circumstantial evidence, or a combination of these factors.

37. If there is insufficient evidence to proceed in accordance with Bible principles and the matter has to be held in abeyance at the time, then a record is kept in the event that further evidence becomes available in the future. In any case, our October 1, 2012 letter, Para. 11 (WAT.0001.004.0068) directs that *"the elders should remain vigilant with regard to the conduct and activity of the accused."*

Congregation Judicial Committee

38. If sufficient evidence is discovered, the body of elders arranges what Jehovah's Witnesses refer to as a 'judicial committee'. [Organized to Do Jehovah's Will book pg. 151, para. 2 (WAT.0003.001.0446)]

39. A judicial committee is a special congregation arrangement for handling matters where an individual is allegedly involved in a serious violation of God's law. The Bible-based procedure for a congregation judicial committee is outlined in chapters five, six and seven of the Elders' Handbook (WAT.0003.001.0059 - WAT.0003.001.0103).

40. As directed in our letter of October 1, 2012, paragraph 11 (WAT.0001.004.0068), the elders contact the travelling overseer to designate an experienced elder from the circuit to serve as chairman of any judicial committee involving child sexual abuse. Two or more elders from the congregation are also appointed to serve on this committee. I comment below on the possible outcomes.

41. *Unrepentant individual disfellowshipped*: Where the judicial committee determines that the offender is unrepentant, he is disfellowshipped from the congregation in accordance with the Scriptural principle at 1 Corinthians 5:13, which states to *"Remove the wicked person from among yourselves."* Following a disfellowshipping, an announcement of the decision is made to the congregation informing them that the perpetrator is no longer one of Jehovah's Witnesses. A disfellowshipped person will be treated by all Jehovah's Witnesses in harmony with the Bible's admonition: ". . . *do not receive him into your homes or say a greeting to him.*" (2 John 10) So, in the case of child sexual abuse, disfellowshipping is clearly a strong measure toward protecting the congregation [Elders' Handbook pg. 100-101, para. 26-34 (WAT.0003.001.0101 - WAT.0003.001.0103)].

42. *Reinstatement after disfellowshipping:* If the individual eventually qualifies for reinstatement as a member of the congregation, the final decision is made by a judicial committee in the congregation that took the disfellowshipping action. This applies regardless of the congregation to which the individual submits his request for reinstatement. If he has moved congregations, a unanimous decision of two committees is required: a judicial committee in the present congregation and a judicial committee in the congregation that took the disfellowshipping action [Elders' Handbook pg. 120-121, para. 7-10 (WAT.0003.001.0121 – WAT.0003.001.0122)].

43. *Individual repentant and publicly reproved*: Even if the offender is determined by the judicial committee to be genuinely repentant of past offences, the committee will follow the Scriptural procedure to *"Reprove before all onlookers those who practice sin, as a warning to the rest."* (1 Timothy 5:20) This includes an announcement made to the congregation that the wrongdoer "(Name of person) has been reproved." [(Elders' Handbook pg. 96-98, para. 18-21 – WAT.0003.001.0097 – WAT.0003.001.0099)]

44. *Warning lecture:* Soon after an announcement of reproof is made, a warning lecture about the type of sin and how to prevent it will generally be presented to the entire congregation. [(Elders' Handbook pg. 99, para. 23 – WAT.0003.001.0100)] In cases of child sexual abuse, this will serve as a warning to help parents protect their children from any potential danger. Therefore, whether the judicial committee disfellowships or reproves the wrongdoer, congregation members are aided in their ability to protect children from child sexual abuse.

Congregation Judicial Restrictions

45. In every instance, an individual who is judicially reproved or who is disfellowshipped and later reinstated does not qualify for privileges and is subject to congregation restrictions. Initially, these restrictions include commenting at congregation meetings and sharing in any congregation assignments. [(Elders' Handbook pg. 97, para. 19 - WAT.0003.001.0098)]

46. Also, whenever discussing restrictions with the elders, I remind them of the direction provided in our letter of October 1, 2012, para. 12 (WAT.0001.004.0068- WAT.0001.004.0069), that the individual must be instructed to:

. . . refrain from displaying affection for children, to avoid hugging or holding children on their lap, never to be alone with a child (other than their own), not to allow children to spend the night in their home, not to work alone in field service (hence, they should always be accompanied by another adult), and not to cultivate friendships with children.

47. Elders are instructed to contact the Service Department if a former child abuser does not follow the restrictions from the elders or is considered to be acting in a predatory manner. If this is the case, the Service Department directs the elders to immediately meet with the parent/s of minor children in the congregation to provide a warning. [October 1, 2012, letter, para. 13 (WAT.0001.004.0069)] In addition, depending on the circumstances, instructions are then provided to the elders to either strongly counsel the individual or take congregation judicial action to determine whether the individual should be disfellowshipped on the Scriptural basis of "brazen conduct." (Galatians 5:19; Elders' Handbook pg. 60-61, para. 9-10 (WAT.0003.001.0061 – WAT.0003.001.0062)

Preventing Child Sexual Abuse

48. I have read and distributed articles published by Jehovah's Witnesses for the general public, from as far back as the 1970s, which have addressed the issue of preventing child abuse. Recently, the jw.org website has also provided worldwide coverage to educate parents and young people in the prevention of child abuse. From my position as an elder, my work in the Service Department, and as a parent and grandparent, I have come to appreciate that loving and well-informed parents are in the best position to prevent child abuse, as explained in many of our publications.

49. The Branch Office and Service Department continue to ensure that all meetings and conventions of Jehovah's Witnesses are designed for families. Children are not separated from their parents for any activities of Jehovah's Witnesses. The ongoing efforts by Jehovah's Witnesses to educate parents and children about child abuse, and the fact that Jehovah's Witnesses do not sponsor programs that separate children from their parents, are pivotal aspects of Jehovah's Witnesses' beliefs and practices for the prevention of child abuse.

C. FUNCTIONS OF THE SERVICE DEPARTMENT

50. Please see my explanation under section B.

D. SERVICE DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL

51. Eleven out of the 13 current members of the Service Department are elders with many years of practical experience in the application of Scriptural principles and there are administrative assistants who are responsible for administrative support.

52. The Service Department cares for all aspects of our spiritual activities in Australia as follows:

- Kingdom Hall and congregation details - one elder and his assistant;
- arrangements for regular conventions – two elders;

- processing of general correspondence – two elders;
- training seminars for travelling overseers and elders - one elder;
- data entry – one assistant;
- Service Desks – three Service Desk elders and two assistant elders.

53. I serve as the senior Service Desk elder and, amongst other duties, am specifically responsible for inquiries related to child sexual abuse. Over many decades, this Service Desk role has been cared for by spiritually experienced elders who have volunteered to work at the Branch Office for varying periods of time.

54. In addition, I am assisted in my role in responding to child abuse allegations by an experienced elder, Joel Hurley, who has been associated with Jehovah's Witnesses for 40 years.

55. Mr Hurley has a Diploma in Education (Teaching), Bachelor's Degree in Arts (majoring in Linguistics) and a Master's Degree in Education (Honours). Prior to joining the Service Department in August 2011, Mr Hurley worked as a teacher in government schools in New South Wales, Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory. He was also a university lecturer in Education at Macquarie University.

56. During Mr Hurley's career as a teacher and lecturer, he was trained in child protection awareness, which included training in relation to reporting requirements and supporting children and young people, as well as monitoring and evaluation. Specifically, he was trained to be aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect and to assist in complying with mandatory reporting requirements.

E. TRAINING

57. While I have no formal qualifications, my approach to dealing with child sexual abuse allegations is based on my extensive experience as an elder and as a travelling overseer in providing spiritual counsel to families, using Scriptural principles and publications based on the Bible.

58. Over the past 30 years, I have also attended regular Bible-based seminars known as Kingdom Ministry Schools for elders, including a two-month intensive course for travelling overseers in 2005. I have also been involved in presenting various training seminars for congregation elders and travelling overseers over a number of years.

59. During those years, local congregation elders' meetings, meetings conducted by travelling overseers with elders, and the various schools and seminars scheduled by the Branch Office, have included sessions addressing the issue of child sexual abuse and victim support.

F. ROLE OF SERVICE DEPARTMENT IN PROCESSES THAT RELATE TO OR INVOLVE CHILD ABUSE

i. Baptism

60. The Service Department is not involved in the consideration of individual prospective members of a congregation for baptism. Rather, this is the responsibility of the body of elders in each congregation who have observed and assisted the spiritual progress of the candidate over many months or years.

61. However, as an elder I am fully aware of the processes involved in baptism. In addition to meeting with the individual in the course of his or her extensive Bible study program and after receiving a request for baptism, the local body of elders reviews with him or her the detailed *Questions For Those Desiring To be Baptized* as set out in the Appendix of the publication entitled *Organized To Do God's Will*. (WAT.0003.001.0477 – WAT.0003.001.0510)

62. These questions and Scripture references gauge the candidate's understanding of: 1. *Elementary Bible Teachings*; 2. *Jehovah's Righteous Requirements*, which deals with the Bible's high moral standards; and 3. *Jehovah's Arrangement of Things*, which considers family life and congregation organisation. (WAT.0003.001.0477 - WAT.0003.001.0510)

63. This screening process, to determine whether an individual is qualified for baptism, is conducted by three different elders in harmony with the '*Instructions For Congregation Elders*' located in the Appendix of *Organized To Do God's Will* (WAT.0003.001.0512 - WAT.0003.001.0513).

64. One year after baptism, two elders again meet with the person to review their progress and provide appropriate encouragement and suggestions. [Elders Handbook p. 17, para. 12 (WAT.0003.001.0018).

65. If a former child abuser, after studying the Bible and harmonising his life with Bible principles, eventually qualifies for baptism, the same restrictions and warnings set out in paragraphs 46 and 47 would also apply [letter of October 1, 2012, para. 12 (WAT.0001.004.0068-WAT.0001.004.0069)].

ii., iii., vi., vii. Congregation Appointments and Deletions

66. *Regular Pioneer:* Refers to an exemplary congregation member who has volunteered to spend a certain amount of time in the public preaching activity each month. An *Application for Regular Pioneer Service* form, which is annexed to my statement (marked "Annexure 3"), must first be completed by an individual which includes two questions as follows:

- *"Have you ever engaged in child sexual molestation?"*
- *"If yes, when? (w97 1/1 pp.26-29; w97 2/1 p.29)"*

67. This application form is reviewed by three congregation elders and an assessment is made of an individual's qualifications. The elders then submit a request for the Service Department to check whether anything might affect the application, in particular any record of child abuse. If there is nothing on record, the local body of elders is then responsible for approving regular pioneers.

68. Any regular pioneer involved in child abuse would be immediately deleted by the local body of elders. An announcement would be made to the congregation and the Branch Office informed. Any perpetrator would also be subject to congregation judicial action, as previously outlined in my statement.

69. *Special Pioneer:* Serves full-time in the preaching work. The Service Department selects special pioneers from among experienced long-serving regular pioneers.

70. Any special pioneer involved in child abuse would be immediately deleted and an announcement would be made to the congregation. Any perpetrator would also be subject to congregation judicial action, as previously outlined in my statement.

71. *Ministerial servants:* are appointed by the local body of elders and the travelling overseer in consultation with the Service Department, to care for administrative support tasks in the congregation, such as Kingdom Hall cleaning, literature supplies and accounting. They do not have a shepherding role in the congregation. They must meet the Scriptural requirement to be "free from accusation" and have a "fine standing". (1 Timothy 3:10, 13)

72. Any ministerial servant involved in child abuse would be immediately deleted by the local body of elders and the travelling overseer and an announcement would be made to the congregation that "Brother [name of person] is no longer serving as a ministerial servant." The travelling overseer would advise the Branch Office in writing of the deletion. [Elders' Handbook pg. 42, para. 26, 27 (WAT.0003.001.0043)] Any perpetrator would also be subject to congregation judicial action, as previously outlined in my statement.

73. *Elders:* are appointed by the local body of elders and the travelling overseer in consultation with the Service Department. Elders must be experienced men who have displayed a pattern of integrity in their lives over a period of time as ministerial servants. Some of the requirements to serve as an elder are listed in the Bible, in Scriptures such as 1 Timothy 3:2-13 and Titus 1:5-9:

    - irreprehensible
    - moderate in habits
    - qualified to teach
    - not a drunkard
    - not violent
    - presiding over his own household in a fine manner
    - not a newly converted man
    - fine testimony from outsiders
    - lover of goodness
    - self-controlled

74. Any elder involved in child abuse would be immediately deleted by the local body of elders and the travelling overseer, and an announcement would be made to the congregation that "Brother [name of person] is no longer serving as an elder." The travelling overseer would advise the Branch Office in writing of the deletion [Elders' Handbook pg. 42, para. 26, 27 – (WAT.0003.001.0043)]. Any perpetrator would also be subject to congregation judicial action, as previously outlined in my statement.

Service Department Involvement

75. In relation to the appointment of elders and ministerial servants, for many decades, *after* receiving a unanimous recommendation from a body of elders and the travelling overseer (during one of his six-monthly visits to each congregation), the Service Department reviewed the recommendation. After checking available records and, more recently, subject to the individual receiving a Working With Children Check ("WWCC") where required to do so under relevant State or Territory legislation, the Service Department would confirm the appointment and an announcement would be made in the congregation if the individual was considered qualified.

76. As a further refinement, since September 2014, *prior* to any recommendation being considered by the body of elders with the travelling overseer, a written request is submitted to the Branch office where a check is made to determine if there is anything that may disqualify an individual from being considered as an elder or ministerial servant, including any record of child abuse.

77. The Service Department then provides written confirmation to the travelling overseer as to whether there is any reason within our records that prevents the travelling overseer from considering the recommendation of the individual with the local body of elders. [Letter July 14, 2014 para. 3 – (WAT.0002.001.0039 – WAT.0002.001.0040)]

78. If the local body of elders and travelling overseer unanimously agree to proceed with the appointment, arrangements are then made for the travelling overseer and a representative of the local body of elders to meet with the individual at which time he is informed of the recommendation and asked the following questions as outlined in the letter July 14, 2014 – (WAT.0002.001.0039 – WAT.0002.001.0044):

    "Is there anything from your past, even before baptism, or in your personal or family life that disqualifies you or that would prevent you from accepting this appointment?

    Is there any reason why your appointment should not be announced to the congregation?

    Have you ever been involved at any time in the past with child sexual molestation?"

79. If, following that meeting, it is determined that there is no obstacle to the appointment proceeding, the individual is advised that before his appointment can be confirmed he must obtain a WWCC in States and Territories where that is required. Once there is confirmation that the process with the WWCC is complete, an announcement of the appointment can be made in

the local congregation. The appointment is confirmed in writing to the Branch Office and to the congregation by the travelling overseer.

iv. Judicial Reproof

80. Please see my detailed explanation in paragraphs 43 & 44 above.

v. Privileges

81. Even in the case of child abuse that took place many years ago, the Service Department must be consulted before an individual would be considered for any privilege, if ever. This would include even smaller privileges, such as assisting with literature supplies or other non-teaching Kingdom Hall duties. This is explained in the letter dated October 1, 2012, paragraphs 22-24 (WAT.0001.004.0070 WAT.0001.004.0071) as follows:

> *Elders should keep in mind what is stated in the January 1, 1997, Watchtower article "Let Us Abhor What Is Wicked," page 29, paragraph 2: "Child sexual abuse reveals an unnatural fleshly weakness. Experience has shown that such an adult may well molest other children. True, not every child molester repeats the sin, but many do. And the congregation cannot read hearts to tell who is and who is not liable to molest children again. (Jeremiah 17:9) Hence, Paul's counsel to Timothy applies with special force in the case of baptized adults who have molested children: 'Never lay your hands hastily upon any man; neither be a sharer in the sins of others.' (1 Timothy 5:22).*
>
> *Hence, privileges of service should never be extended hastily. Considerable time should always pass before one who has sexually abused a child is recommended, if ever. It would be up to the local body of elders to determine whether such a recommendation should be made to the branch office, taking into account all factors in each individual case. Please note that unless specifically approved by the branch office, one who has sexually abused a child should not be used to conduct any meetings held in the congregation or in a prison, and he does not qualify to work on any Kingdom Hall project other than one involving the congregation where he serves as a publisher.*
>
> *If the elders as a body conclude that one who has sexually abused a child in the distant past may now qualify for privileges, they should assign two elders to call the Service Department.*

H. BCH **- *My Experience***

82. In relation to the Commission's question regarding the case involving BCH I first came into contact with him early in 1990 while I was serving as an elder in the Beenleigh East Congregation, in South East Queensland. BCH started to attend public meetings at our Kingdom Hall. As a disfellowshipped person, in harmony with our Bible based principles and practices he was not allowed to communicate with any congregation members.

83. After some months, he applied to the body of elders to be reinstated into the congregation and I was one of the three elders appointed to the local judicial committee to review his request.

84. As is the standard procedure for all judicial committees prior to meeting with an individual, we reviewed the relevant guidelines to bodies of elders and then conducted an extensive interview with BCH

85. After our meeting with BCH and in line with the guidelines, we communicated with the original judicial committee that disfellowshipped him in Mareeba. As a result of the discussions of both committees, it was determined that BCH did not display "godly sadness" nor have a record of "works that befit repentance" for his established offences. (2 Corinthians 7:10 and Acts 26:20) Therefore, he did not qualify to be reinstated into the congregation and our committee informed him accordingly.

86. Later in 1990, I shifted to Rockhampton in Central Queensland and did not have any further contact with BCH or involvement with his requests for reinstatement until after 2007.

G. BCH – *Service Department*

87. In January 2007, I began working in the Service Department at the Branch Office of Jehovah's Witnesses in Sydney. Since that time, I again became aware of BCH who was in a disfellowshipped state in relation to the sexual abuse of his daughters and his denial of those offences. In processing correspondence, I noticed that he had been convicted by a court of law in relation to sexual offences against his daughters.

88. While he has repeatedly requested reinstatement into a congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, the Service Department has assisted the local judicial committee in the congregation where he attends meetings in Western Australia, and the judicial committee where he was disfellowshipped in Queensland, to closely follow published procedure in reviewing his situation.

89. Clear direction has been provided to the elders that, until he fully acknowledges his sins of child abuse and of lying in connection with these offences, it would be difficult for the committees or the victims to consider that he was repentant. He remains disfellowshipped at this time.

SUMMARY

90. In summary, the Service Department guides and assists congregation elders in supporting child and adult victims of sexual abuse, and in addressing the prevention of and response to child sexual abuse. As with the wider community, the worldwide procedures of Jehovah's Witnesses have been refined over the years. We will continue to pursue the best possible approach for protecting children from the crime and sin of child sexual abuse.

Signed: .....

Date: 10 JULY 2015

Witness: .....

Date: 10 JULY 2015

Annexure in the matter of Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia
Annexure 1 to Statement of Rodney Peter Spinks

Royal Commission
into Institutional Responses
to Child Sexual Abuse

26 June 2015

Mr Rodney Spinks
Service Department
Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia
12-14 Zouch Road
Denham Court NSW 2565

By email: InboxLGL.AU@jw.org

Dear Mr Spinks,

Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (Royal Commission)
Case Study 29 (Jehovah's Witnesses) – request for statement

As you are aware, the Royal Commission is holding a public hearing in Sydney commencing on 27 July 2015 to inquire into the response of the Jehovah's Witnesses Church and the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia Ltd (**Watchtower Australia**) to complaints of child sexual abuse within the Jehovah's Witnesses Church in Australia.

The scope and purpose of the public hearing is to inquire into:

1. The experience of survivors of child sexual abuse within the Jehovah's Witnesses Church in Australia.

2. The responses of the Jehovah's Witnesses Church and the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia Ltd to allegations, reports or complaints of child sexual abuse within the Church.

3. The systems, policies and procedures in place within the Jehovah's Witnesses Church and the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia Ltd for raising and responding to allegations of or concerns about child sexual abuse within the Church.

4. The systems, policies and procedures in place in the Jehovah's Witnesses Church and the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia Ltd to prevent child sexual abuse within the Church.

5. Any related matters.

Request for statement
The Royal Commission requests that you prepare a statement which addresses the following matters:

A. An overview of your involvement with the Jehovah's Witnesses Church, including but not limited to an overview of:
   i. the congregations of which you have been a member; and

ii. the roles you have held within the Church, including your current role within the Service Department and the length of time that you have been in that role.

B. Your knowledge and understanding of the systems, policies, and procedures in place within the Jehovah's Witness Church to:

i. respond to allegations or complaints of child sexual abuse made within the Church; and

ii. prevent child sexual abuse within the Church,

including, but not limited to, your understanding of those systems, policies, and procedures as they relate to your role as a member of the Service Department.

C. The function(s) of the Service Department in relation to the response of Jehovah's Witnesses Church to allegations of child sexual abuse, and in preventing and/or detecting child sexual abuse within the Church.

D. The membership or staffing of the Service Department, with specific reference to the number of members/staff and their qualifications, if any.

E. 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.

F. The role of the Service Department in the following processes as they relate to or involve allegations, reports, or history of child sexual abuse:

i. consideration of prospective members of the Jehovah's Witnesses Church and their subsequent suitability for baptism;

ii. selection and appointment of elders, ministerial servants, pioneers, special pioneers, and/or any other position of status within the Church;

iii. the deletion or removal of elders, ministerial servants, pioneers, special pioneers, and/or any other position of status within the Church;

iv. the public or private reproval of members of the Church;

v. the awarding and removal of congregational privileges to members of the congregation, including the nature of those privileges;

vi. the disfellowshipping and/or disassociation of members of the Church; and/or

vii. the reinstatement of individuals as members of the Church.

G. The role of the Service Department in relation to the case of child sexual abuse by BCH

H. A summary of your experience of responding to allegations of, and preventing and/or detecting, child sexual abuse within the Church, including but not limited to, your involvement in the consideration of BCH request(s) for reinstatement by the Beenleigh East Congregation between about 1990 and 1992.

The above matters are not intended to limit you in any way, and you should provide any other information that you consider to be relevant. We ask that you please provide copies of any documents not already produced to the Royal Commission which record the matters referred to above.

We ask that you prepare your statement by no later than **10 July 2015**. At such time, the Royal Commission will issue a notice for its production, and may summons you to give evidence in the public hearing.

Please do not hesitate to contact Joanna Blair on (02) 8284 2448 if you would like to discuss any aspect of this matter.

Yours sincerely,



Tony Giugni
Solicitor Assisting the Royal Commission
Telephone: 02 8284 2431
Email: tony.giugni@childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au

ANNEXURE 2 - SUMMATION OF BRANCH OFFICE HANDLING OF CHILD ABUSE MATTERS

1. ALLEGATION PROCEDURE

1.1 An allegation is made to an elder of child sexual abuse [October 1, 2012 letter, para. 4 (WAT.0001.004.0066)] or that an individual has viewed child pornography [October 1, 2012 letter, para. 14 (WAT.0001.004.0069)].

1.2 Every such allegation of child sexual abuse is spiritually investigated [October 1, 2012 letter, para. 11 (WAT.0001.004.0068)]. Elders are to act promptly when they receive a report of serious wrongdoing so as to spiritually safeguard the congregation and provide spiritual assistance to the wrongdoer [October 1, 2012 letter, para. 4 (WAT.0001.004.0066); Elders' Handbook Chapter 12, para. 18 (WAT.0003.001.0132)].

1.3 The elder to whom an allegation of child abuse is made contacts another elder.

1.4 All elders have been informed that they should never suggest to anyone that they should *not* report an allegation of child abuse to the police or other authorities [Elders' Handbook Chapter 12, para. 19 (WAT.0003.001.0132)]. This decision is "a personal one" for each individual to make and "there are no congregational sanctions for either decision" [Elders' Handbook Chapter 12, para. 19 (WAT.0003.001.0132-0133)].

Legal Department

1.5 The two elders who learn of the allegation of child abuse "should immediately" contact the Legal Department [October 1, 2012 letter para. 4 (WAT.0001.004.0066). The Elders' Handbook [Chapter 12, para. 18 (WAT.0003.001.0132)] states that "You should **immediately call the branch office**".

1.6 The Legal Department gives advice only about legal issues, such as mandatory reporting requirements: *"We have long instructed elders to report allegations of child abuse to the authorities where required by law to do so, even where there is only one witness"* [Letter read to all Congregations in Australia August 28, 2002 (WAT.0004.001.0002)].

1.7 It is the Branch Office approach to encourage the elders to fully co-operate with the authorities. Congregation elders are instructed to abide by any request from the authorities to not investigate the matter until they have completed their investigation.

1.8 Regardless of legal requirements, the Branch Office informs congregation elders that steps need to be taken to protect the child – "whatever the cost" [October 1, 2012 letter, para. 10 (WAT.0001.004.0068) and January 22, 1985, *The Awake!* (WAT.0001.004.0210)].

Service Department

1.9 The two elders who called the Branch Office are then directed by the Legal Department to the Service Department "regarding theocratic or judicial aspects of the case or regarding how to protect children"[October 1, 2012 letter para. 5 (WAT.0001.004.0067)].

2. SPIRITUAL INVESTIGATION

2.1 When "elders first hear reports of serious wrongdoing on the part of a baptized member of the congregation, an initial investigation will be made by two elders" [Organized to Do Jehovah's Will book pg. 151, para. 2 (WAT.0003.001.0446)]. The Elders' Handbook states that "**If wrongdoing has not been established but serious questions have been raised** the body of elders should **appoint two elders to investigate the matter promptly**" [Elders' Handbook Chapter 5, para. 38 (WAT.0003.001.0073)].

Evidence

2.2 For internal congregational purposes, regard is to be had to Biblical direction, and thus there is no authorisation to take "congregational action" unless:

(a) "there are two credible witnesses" to the incident or two persons are witnesses to two separate incidents of the same kind [October 1, 2012 letter para. 11 (WAT.0001.004.0068); Elders' Handbook Chapter 5, para. 37, bullet point 3 (WAT.0003.001.0072-0073)]; or

(b) the accused confesses [October 1, 2012 letter para. 11 (WAT.0001.004.0068)]; or

(c) there is strong circumstantial evidence "testified to by at least two witnesses [Elders' Handbook Chapter 5, para. 11 (WAT.0003.001.0062)]; or

(d) in some instances a combination of the above criteria may be used as a basis for taking congregational action.

3. CHILD ABUSE ALLEGATION NOT SCRIPTURALLY ESTABLISHED

3.1 If the elders are not Scripturally authorised to take judicial action because there was insufficient evidence, elders are directed to "remain vigilant with regard to the conduct and activity of the accused" [October 1, 2012 letter, para. 11 (WAT.0001.004.0068)].

3.2 If such an individual moves congregations, elders are to consult the Branch Office before sending any information regarding the accusation that has not been Scripturally established to the elders in the new congregation [Elders' Handbook, Chapter 12, para. 21 (WAT.0003.001.0133)].

3.3 The elders are to provide to the Branch Office "a detailed summary of the matter" [Elders' Handbook, Chapter 12, para. 21 (WAT.0003.001.0133)].

3.4 After consideration the Branch Office will provide direction as to what information about the allegation (that has not been Scripturally established) should be shared, if any, with the elders of the new congregation [Elders' Handbook, Chapter 12, para. 21 (WAT.0003.001.0133)].

4. SCRIPTURALLY ESTABLISHED CHILD ABUSE ALLEGATION

4.1 If sufficient evidence is discovered by the investigating elders, the information is presented to the body of elders in the local congregation. [Elders' Handbook Chapter 6, para. 1 (WAT.0003.001.0082)].

4.2 A decision is then made by the body of elders to determine whether a disfellowshipping offence has actually been committed and whether or not to form a judicial committee [Organized To Do Jehovah's Will book pg. 151, para. 2 (WAT.0003.001.0446)].

4.3 The judicial committee is a special shepherding arrangement comprised of three or more elders to determine if the individual is guilty or not and to determine whether he or she is repentant [Organized To Do Jehovah's Will book pg. 151, para. 2 (WAT.0003.001.0446); [Elders' Handbook Chapter 8, para. 9 (WAT.0003.001.0107)]. "An elder who is a close relative or has been in business with the accused or has had a special friendship with him would not normally serve on the committee" [Elders' Handbook Chapter 6, para. 2 (WAT.0003.001.0082)].

4.4 If a judicial committee is formed in relation to child abuse, the circuit overseer responsible for the congregation appoints an experienced elder from the congregations in his circuit to act as chairman on the judicial committee [October 1, 2012 letter para. 11 (WAT.0001.004.0068)].

4.5 Firstly, the judicial committee of three or more elders assesses the available evidence in accordance with the Elders' Handbook Chapters 5, 6 and 7 (WAT.0003.001.0059 - WAT.0003.001.0103) and the October 1, 2012 letter, para. 11 (WAT.0001.004.0068) to confirm that a disfellowshipping offence has taken place. Denial of an established disfellowshipping offence or a failure to accept responsibility will result in disfellowshipping [Elders' Handbook Chapter 7, para. 10, bullet point 8 (WAT.0003.001.0094)].

4.6 Secondly, the judicial committee must also determine whether there is genuine repentance "commensurate with the degree of deviation" [Elders' Handbook Chapter 7, para. 8 (WAT.0003.001.0092)].

4.7 If the accused is unrepentant then disfellowshipping is warranted [October 1, 2012 letter para. 11 (WAT.0001.004.0068); Elders' Handbook Chapter 7, para. 26 (WAT.0003.001.0101)].

4.8 In the case of a practice of child abuse, the individual would unlikely "be able to demonstrate sufficient repentance to the judicial committee at the time of the hearing. If so, he must be disfellowshipped" [Elders' Handbook Chapter 7, para. 9 (WAT.0003.001.0093)].

4.9 If the judicial committee is convinced that there is genuine repentance of past sins, a judicial reproof will be administered [October 1, 2012 letter para. 11 (WAT.0001.004.0068); Elders' Handbook Chapter 7, para. 18 (WAT.0003.001.0097 – WAT.0003.001.0098)].

4.10 In the case of child abuse, a reproof must be announced to the congregation, which "serves as a protection to the congregation" [October 1, 2012 letter para. 11 (WAT.0001.004.0068)].

4.11 Sometime after the public reproof, a warning lecture is generally given to the entire congregation as to the wrongness of the conduct and how to avoid it [Elders' Handbook Chapter 7, para. 23 (WAT.0003.001.0100)].

4.12 The record of child abuse, proved or otherwise, is marked "Do Not Destroy" and kept indefinitely in congregation confidential files. This includes any "*Notification of Disfellowshipping or Disassociation* (S-77)" notice [October 1, 2012 letter para. 11 (WAT.0001.004.0068)].

4.13 Steps are taken to protect children when a judicial committee determines that a former child abuser should be judicially reproved [October 1, 2012 letter para. 12 (WAT.0001.004.0068)].

4.14 Steps are taken to protect children if a disfellowshipped person is later reinstated [October 1, 2012 letter para. 12 (WAT.0001.004.0068)].

4.15 These steps include ensuring newly appointed elders know of a person's past wrongdoing, cautioning the person not to cultivate friendships with children (other than their own), not to allow children to stay alone in their house and not to work alone in field service (ie. he must always to be accompanied by an adult) [October 1, 2012 letter, para. 12 (WAT.0001.004.0068-WAT.0001.004.0069)].

4.16 In all cases of judicial reproof and reinstatement restrictions are imposed [Elders' Handbook Chapter 7, para. 19 (WAT.0003.001.0098); October 1, 2012 letter para. 12 (WAT.0001.004.0068 – WAT.0001.004.0069)].

4.17 If an individual does not follow the elders' directions in relation to these restrictions, the Service Department is immediately called by the elders [October 1, 2012 letter para. 13 (WAT.0001.004.0069)].

4.18 The Service Department is also called if the elders believe that the individual is acting in a predatory manner [October 1, 2012 letter, para. 13 (WAT.0001.004.0069)].

4.19 The Branch Office determines whether a person is considered a predator [October 1, 2012 letter para. 13 (WAT.0001.004.0069)].

4.20 If a determination that the individual is a predator is made by the Branch Office, two elders inform and warn all parents with minors in the congregation. At the same time, the elders also inform the individual that this is occurring [October 1, 2012 letter para. 13

(WAT.0001.004.0069)] Where there is no response to the further strong caution the individual will face further judicial action for the disfellowshipping offence of 'brazen conduct' [Elders' Handbook Chapter 5, para. 9 (WAT.0003.001.0061)].

4.21 If a former child abuser moves to another congregation, the elders "send a letter of introduction with full and complete information about his background and current situation" [Elders' Handbook, Chapter 12, para. 20 (WAT.0003.001.0133)].

Annexure in the matter of Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia

Annexure 3 to Statement of Rodney Peter Spinks

APPLICATION FOR REGULAR PIONEER SERVICE

(Please print all answers in ink or use a typewriter.)

1. Full name: Miss / Mrs. / Mr. ..... (Last name) (First name) (Middle name) ☐ Male ☐ Female

2. (a) Date of birth: ..... / ..... / ..... (Month) (Day) (Year) (b) Date of baptism: ..... / ..... / ..... (Month) (Day) (Year) (c) ☐ Single ☐ Married ☐ Separated ☐ Divorced ☐ Widowed

3. If married, give mate's full name: .....

4. Full mailing address: ..... (Street address or route and box) (City) (Province or state) (Zone or code)

5. (a) Have you been reinstated or reproved by a judicial committee for wrongdoing within the last year? .....

   (b) What congregation were you associated with at the time? .....

   (c) Date reinstated or reproved: ..... (d) When were the restrictions removed? .....

6. (a) Do you listen to music that features sexual immorality, violence, spiritism, profanity, or other subject matter inappropriate for a Christian? (*w10* 5/15 p. 32; *yp2* pp. 255-256, 259-260) .....

   (b) In the past year, have you viewed material inappropriate for Christians, such as movies or videos featuring violence, spiritism, or sexual immorality? Or pornography in printed form, on the Internet, or otherwise? (*w12* 3/15 pp. 30-31) .....

   (c) Have you ever engaged in child sexual molestation? .....

   (d) If yes, when? (*w97* 1/1 pp. 26-29; *w97* 2/1 p. 29) .....

7. Are you now of good moral standing and habits? .....

8. Do you truly believe that spiritual food from Jehovah is being provided through the faithful and discreet slave, and are you in harmony with its teaching? (Matt. 24:45-47) .....

9. If appointed, when do you desire to begin to serve as a regular pioneer? The first of ..... (Month) (Year)

10. (a) Were you ever previously in full-time service? ..... (b) When? ..... (c) Under what name? ..... (d) Where? ..... (e) Identification number: .....

11. Have you organized your personal affairs so that you can reasonably expect to reach the yearly requirement of 840 hours? .....

READ THE FOLLOWING CAREFULLY

I am applying for regular pioneer service because of my own desire to share in this activity. Having dedicated myself without reservation to Jehovah God, I am interested solely in the doing of his will and magnifying his name. I am well aware that sharing to a greater extent in the field service does not relieve me of other Scriptural responsibilities, that I must continue to be diligent to work what is good toward those who are already in the congregation, and that I must at all times apply in both speech and conduct the high moral standard of God's Word. As I carry on my service, I will be diligent to cooperate with the legal corporations used by the faithful and discreet slave and to follow through on the instructions that are issued for those sharing in the regular pioneer service. (Give the completed application to the coordinator of the body of elders.)

Date: ....
(Personal signature of applicant)

TO BE FILLED OUT BY THE CONGREGATION SERVICE COMMITTEE

The service committee should review this application together, discussing the qualifications of the applicant in harmony with what is outlined in the *Organized* book, pages 112-114, and the most recent direction provided for elders regarding the appointment of regular pioneers. Comments should be obtained from the appropriate group overseer. **The applicant must be baptized at least six months before appointment.** Those who discontinue pioneer service must be off the pioneer list a full six months before starting again. The applicant must not have been reproved or reinstated within the past year, and all restrictions must have been lifted. If the person is appointed, each member of the service committee should sign this application and then print his name on the same line. If the applicant does not qualify, kindly explain to him the reason why. **The secretary should make sure that all questions have been answered.**

Congregation number: .....

..... (Congregation) (City) (Province or state)

..... (Coordinator of the body of elders—Sign and print name)

..... (Secretary—Sign and print name)

..... (Service overseer—Sign and print name)

S-205-E 8/14

Second Statement

Name	RODNEY PETER SPINKS
Address	12-14 Zouch Road Denham Court NSW 2565
Occupation	Service Desk at Branch Office of Jehovah's Witnesses
Date	24 July 2015

INTRODUCTION

1. I refer to my first statement dated 10 July 2015.

2. I have been asked to elaborate on the changes made to Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia's ("WTA") document retention policy to comply with the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth) following WTA's acceptance in February 2009 that it fell within the jurisdiction of the *Privacy Act*.

IMPLEMENTATION

3. The implementation of the document retention policy was handled by the Service Department in a four-stage process as follows.

4. **Stage 1**: On November 20, 2008 a letter was sent from the Branch Office to all bodies of elders in Australia explaining a 'New Arrangement for Notification of Disfellowshipping and Disassociation' [WAT.0001.004.0047 - WAT.0001.004.0048].

5. The November 20 letter outlined the simplified procedure that would apply for processing and filing future judicial matters in general and introduced a revised 'Notification of Disfellowshipping or Disassociation' (S-77) form [WAT.0012.001.0027 - WAT.0012.001.0028] and Instructions (S-77) [WAT.0004.001.0060 - WAT.0004.001.0061] for use in Australia.

6. **Stage 2**: On November 21, 2008 a letter regarding 'Retention of Confidential Records' was sent out which addressed the process for reviewing existing judicial records held by the congregation to *"minimise the unnecessary accumulation of confidential information."* (November 21, 2008,

para. 1) [WAT.0001.004.0049 - WAT.0001.004.0050] This stage involved transferring necessary information from existing records to the simplified S-77a form and/or a one page summation.

7. The November 21, 2008 letter stated, in the context of reinstatement, that certain records were to be destroyed [WAT.0001.004.0050]:

> *"unless there is a good reason for retaining it (For example, a matter involving child abuse).*

8. The direction in relation to child sexual abuse documents was

   a. in keeping with to the long-standing policy (recorded , for instance, in Letter to all bodies of elders dated July 20, 1998) [WAT.0002.001.0003] that:

      > "any correspondence put in the confidential congregation file about an individual accused of child molestation, proven or otherwise, should be marked "Do Not Destroy" and kept indefinitely."

   b. (which was) subsequently restated in the letter of October 1, 2012, paragraph 11 [WAT.0001.004.0068], as follows:

      > "Information concerning an individual accused of child molestation, proved or otherwise, should be placed in the congregation confidential file and marked "Do Not Destroy" and kept indefinitely. This includes Notification of Disfellowshipping or Disassociation (S-77) forms on individuals who have been disfellowshipped for child sexual abuse and then later reinstated."

9. **Stage 3**: On February 1, 2009 a further letter was sent to all bodies of elders dated [WAT.0002.001.0015] regarding 'Retention of confidential records' which introduced the next stage of the document review process under the heading "Child abuse matters." In paragraph 4 it stated:

   > "All documents relating to the matter should be sent to the branch office, instead of being destroyed. This will facilitate the congregation retaining only a stamped S-77 form in matters resulting in disfellowshipping, or a single page summation for all other situations."

   Also, paragraph 6 of the letter added that [WAT.0002.001.0016]:

   > "any letter of introduction that refers to matters of child abuse should be retained in the confidential file for as long as the accused person remains in the congregation."

10. **Stage 4**: In addition to ensuring that the records of judicial matters conformed to the requirements of the *Privacy Act*, the Service Department merged the child abuse records submitted by the congregations with the records held at the Branch Office.

11. Duplicate or unrelated documents were destroyed and documents material to the matter were retained as a permanent case file at the Branch Office.

Signed: .....

Date: 24 July 2015

Witness: .....

Date: 24th July 2015.

Statement

Name	Terrence John O'Brien
Address	12-14 Zouch Road Denham Court NSW 2656
Occupation	Minister, Director
Date	10 July 2015

INTRODUCTION

1. This statement is given in response to a letter of 26 June 2015 (which is attached and called Annexure 1), in the matter of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. I address the matters set out in the letter in my statement below and have used (A) – (M) as my headings in an effort to follow the same structure as the questions.

2. I believe this statement is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

3. As a director of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia and member of the Branch Committee, I am qualified to answer the questions in the letter from the Commission from an administrative perspective. However, some of the questions concern technical details about the procedures in the Legal Department and Service Department. Whilst I can provide a general overview of those matters, I understand that the statements of Mr Toole for the Legal Department and Mr Spinks for the Service Department will provide specific responses. I do not work in either of those two departments. I should add that I am not the Branch Committee member who has direct responsibility for the Service Department.

4. Just a little about my background. I am 63 years old. I grew up on the Gold Coast in Queensland and am one of six children. My family were nominal Catholics but non-practicing. I became interested in the Bible and the understanding that Jehovah's Witnesses had of it at age 20. None of my family members are or have ever been Jehovah's Witnesses.

Despite the difference in religious beliefs, I have a close relationship with my three sisters and their grown children. My parents and two brothers have passed away. I completed my year 10 high school education and left school to complete an apprenticeship as a baker-pastry cook, working for a time as a TAFE lecturer in Adelaide School of Food, before accepting an invitation to become a circuit overseer, visiting congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses with my wife.

A. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

5. The modern organization of Jehovah's Witnesses had their beginnings in the 1870's with small Bible groups in the United States, England and Europe, later establishing more groups in different countries. You can read much more about Jehovah's Witnesses by accessing the jw.org website, the official website provided by Jehovah's Witnesses.

6. *History of Jehovah's Witnesses in Australia:* Jehovah's Witnesses have been active here since 1896, with a Branch Office first established in 1904. At present there are 821 congregations in Australia with over 68,000 active members. We base our teachings on the Holy Bible using a variety of translations and Bible commentaries. The quotations in this submission are from the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*, English language edition. The Bible book of Acts relates the history of the early structure of the Christian Congregation which received direction and teachings from a central body, the apostles and other elders in Jerusalem. (Acts Chapter 15) Today we follow that pattern and accept direction from a Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses, based at our world headquarters in New York.

7. We believe that the structure of the organization of Jehovah's Witnesses and the individual congregations today is essentially the same as it was in the first century when it was established by Jesus Christ and his apostles.

8. Perhaps the most significant change in structure today is that the Governing Body assigns a large measure of responsibility to more than 90 Branch Offices, Australia being one of these. The Branch Office of Jehovah's Witnesses based in Sydney, has a Branch Committee which coordinates the activities of the 821 congregations in Australia. As you know, the laws of governments vary considerably from country to country, and this is true of laws regarding child sexual abuse. Despite this, the theocratic or Scriptural direction that the Governing Body provides, is the same in every branch and for all of Jehovah's Witnesses, worldwide.

9. Each congregation is cared for by a body of elders. The majority of elders are themselves family men and maintain secular employment to support their families. Our congregation structure does not involve a salaried clergy and as such, our organisation has no employees. Therefore, we have no contractual arrangement that enables us to direct such persons to move from one congregation to another.

10. Governing Body members, Branch Committee members and elders have no special titles such as 'Reverend', 'Father' etc., but follow Jesus counsel that "all of you are brothers."—Matthew 23:8.

11. Regarding your question as to the relationship between the Governing Body and The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, the Governing Body is the theocratic body of elders located at our world headquarters in New York. They oversee the spiritual activities of Jehovah's Witnesses worldwide.

12. The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania is a legal corporation in the United States used by Jehovah's Witnesses. No member of the Governing Body serves as an officer, director or member of this legal entity or any other corporation.

B. OVERVIEW OF THE ROLE AND FUNCTIONS OF THE CURRENT GOVERNING BODY – STRUCTURE, MEMBERSHIP AND SUB-COMMITTEES

13. The Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses is made up of Christian elders, presently numbering seven members from various countries. The Governing Body publishes spiritually encouraging literature in many languages. This teaching is based on God's Word. So, what is taught is not from men but from Jehovah God.—Isa. 54:13. Matt. 24:14, 45-47.

14. The members of the Governing Body also serve on various committees. In caring for spiritual interests of the world wide faith of Jehovah's Witnesses, each committee has its own area of oversight. Here is a summary of their responsibilities.

15. **Coordinators' Committee:** The elders serving on this committee respond to disasters, outbreaks of persecution, and other emergencies affecting Jehovah's Witnesses anywhere in the world. They also oversee legal matters as well as the use of the media when it is necessary to convey an accurate picture of our beliefs.

16. **Personnel Committee:** This committee is entrusted with the oversight of arrangements for the physical and spiritual welfare and assistance of members of Bethel families' earth wide. Bethel families are full time, unpaid volunteers who care for the various work assignments at branch offices. Each volunteer is a member of the Worldwide Order of Special Full-Time Servants of Jehovah's Witnesses.

17. **Publishing Committee**: Those serving on this committee supervise the printing and shipping of Bible literature worldwide. They oversee printeries and properties owned and operated by the various corporations used by Jehovah's Witnesses, as well as all construction worldwide, including the work of building meeting places of Jehovah's Witnesses known as Kingdom Halls.

18. **Service Committee:** The elders who make up this committee oversee all areas of the evangelizing work and matters affecting congregations and their members.

19. **Teaching Committee:** This committee oversees the instruction provided at assemblies, conventions, and congregation meetings. It also has oversight of various schools used for spiritual training, none of which isolate children from parents. In addition, this committee oversees the development of audio and video programs.

20. **Writing Committee:** The elders serving on this committee supervise the preparation of spiritual instruction in written and electronic form for fellow believers and the general public. Additionally, this committee responds to questions about the meaning of certain scriptures and points presented in the publications.

C. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WATCHTOWER AUSTRALIA AND OTHER PARTS OF THE ORGANISATION:

21. **The Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania** is a corporation used by Jehovah's Witnesses in the United States. Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia is a company limited by guarantee that is used by Jehovah's Witnesses in Australia. They are two separate legal entities. Neither of these organisations formulates spiritual teachings.

22. **The Governing Body** is entirely separate from any legal corporations; no members of the Governing Body are directors or members of the Australian corporation, as stated in paragraph 11.

23. **Legal connection between the congregations in Australia and Watchtower Australia.** Each congregation in Australia is a separately registered charity with the Australian Taxation Office ("ATO") and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission ("ACNC"). They each have an autonomous committee that administers the secular affairs and business of the congregation. Each congregation is an unincorporated association made up of members who collectively choose to follow the religious beliefs of the Jehovah's Witness faith as set out in the Scriptures.

D. OVERVIEW OF SOME OF THE BELIEFS OF THE JEHOVAH'S WITNESS FAITH

24. I am happy to provide a brief overview of the beliefs of Jehovah's Witnesses on the subjects you have asked about. I have attempted to answer these questions as best I can, given their doctrinal complexity. I must admit I found it difficult to see the relevance of these doctrinal questions to the topic of child sexual abuse, nonetheless I have attempted to answer them as simply as I can. If you would like more information on our beliefs, our website, jw.org, has much more information. I have also attached as an annexure, a more detailed answer based on published information from Jehovah's Witnesses for your further consideration (Annexure 2).

i. Separateness from the world (see pages 1 -5 in Annexure 2)

25. Being separate from the world does not mean Jehovah's Witnesses do not have any association with those who do not profess our faith. Most of us either work with non-witnesses, have relatives who are non-witnesses and our children go to school with other children of many religious and non-religious persuasions. And of course we share our message with everyone in our community.

26. However, we do avoid mixing with persons who would try and influence us to pursue a course that we believe is in violation of Bible standards. As an example, we would encourage our children and teenagers to avoid those who may promote a drug or alcohol

culture, or sexually permissive lifestyle. I am sure many parents and grandparents who are not Jehovah's Witnesses feel the same as we do.

27. But what we principally understand separateness from the world to involve is to remain politically neutral, based on what the Bible teaches. This means we do not lobby, vote for political parties or candidates, run for government office, or participate in any action to change governments. We believe that the Bible gives solid reasons for following this course.

28. As an example, Jesus Christ refused to accept political office. (John 6:15) He taught his disciples to be "no part of the world" and made it clear that they should not take sides in political issues.—John 17:14, 16; 18:36; Mark 12:13-17.

29. Since we avoid political divisions, we are united as an international brotherhood. (Colossians 3:14; 1 Peter 2:17) It is for this reason, as well as other Scriptural commands, that Jehovah's Witnesses in every land do not join in armed conflicts, but are conscientious objectors. Nonetheless, we also respect the rights of others to make their own decisions in political matters. For example, we do not disrupt elections or interfere with those who choose to vote.

ii. Role of evangelizing (see pages 5 – 8 in Annexure 2)

30. Jehovah's Witnesses evangelize to glorify God and to make known his name. (Hebrews 13:15) This is in obedience to Christ Jesus' command to: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of people of all the nations, . . . teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you."—Matthew 28:19, 20.

31. Jehovah's Witnesses view evangelizing as a personal responsibility and the extent to which they engage in this activity is a personal decision that they make as an expression of their love for God and neighbour. (Matthew 22:39) Of course, we realize that most people have their own religious beliefs and that not everyone is interested in our message. Still, we feel that Bible teachings are lifesaving. That is why we continue "without letup teaching and declaring the good news about the Christ," as did the first-century Christians.—Acts 5:41, 42.

32. Last year, well over 8.2 million individual Jehovah's Witnesses preached the "good news of the kingdom" in 239 lands. The vast majority of that 8.2 million were parents, grandparents,

and young people. Almost 9.5 million people studied the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses, many making major changes for the better in their lives. Last year alone, Jehovah's Witnesses collectively spent almost 2 billion hours in the evangelizing work. All of this activity was done on a voluntary basis.

iii. Purported belief of "End Times" (see pages 8 - 11 in Annexure 2)

33. I have not been able to locate any reference to a doctrine of Jehovah's Witnesses termed "End Times." So my comments are based on the assumption that this is referring to our doctrinal understanding of Bible prophecies to do with the "conclusion of the system of things", which is also referred to as "the last days." (Matthew 24:3; 2 Timothy 3:1)

34. Much information has been published on the subject 'last days" that can be readily located on the official jw.org website. Whilst it is true that the Bible foretells the end of the present system of things, the message that forms part of the sign indicating the nearness of the end was the preaching work just described. Rather than focusing on the troubles of the last days, the message is one of "good news."

35. Immediately following the end of the present system, Jesus taught that God's Kingdom will cause God's will to "be done on earth, as it is in heaven." (Matthew 6:10) This is the kingdom millions have prayed for over many centuries. This is the good news that Jehovah's Witnesses preach in fulfilment of one significant part of an overall sign Jesus gave.

36. Some of the noteworthy prophetic features mentioned in the Bible about the conclusion of this system of things can be found in the article in Annexure 2.

iv. Male headship (see pages 11- 13 in Annexure 2)

37. Today the idea of headship may seem to be an offensive notion. However, the Bible's view is quite the opposite. When properly understood, headship in the family and congregation is not an arbitrary, domineering or authoritarian rule by husbands over family or in the congregation by elders over the flock. On the contrary a husband is instructed to treat his wife and children "as the Christ does the congregation." (Ephesians 5:25-29) Likewise elders are to treat the congregation in a kind and loving way, "becoming examples to the flock" — 1 Peter 5:1-3

38. First Corinthians 11:3 says simply that *". . . the head of every man is the Christ, in turn the head of a woman is the man . . ."* This applies in the marriage arrangement, where we accept this divine standard.

39. Today, Jehovah's Witnesses—male and female—have an active share in carrying out the evangelizing work as Jesus foretold: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come."—Matthew 24:14.

40. In the congregations, mature men are Scripturally appointed as elders with the God-given responsibility to care for the flock of God. This is clear from Scriptures such as Titus 1:5, 6 which says *"For this reason I left you in Crete, that you might . . . make appointments of older men in city after city."* It further says *"if there is any man free from accusation, a husband of one wife."* Similar instructions are set out at 1 Timothy 3:1, 2: *"If any man is reaching out for an office of overseer, he is desirous of a fine work. The overseer should therefore be irreprehensible, a husband of one wife . . ."*

E. MY INVOLVEMENT WITH JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

41. I have been one of Jehovah's Witnesses for 40 years. I began actively serving with Jehovah's Witnesses in 1975 and was baptized in January 1976. The congregations I have served with have been

    a. Southport, Qld (1975-77);
    b. Townsville South Qld (1977-81);
    c. Cabramatta NSW (1981-84);
    d. Mount Druitt NSW (1984-1986);
    e. Parafield Gardens SA (1986-1987);
    f. Ingleburn NSW (2003);
    g. Penshurst NSW (2004-8) and
    h. Minto NSW (2008-present).

42. I served as a ministerial servant from 1977-1980 and since 1980 as an elder.

43. During the years 1987-1997 I served as a circuit overseer visiting congregations in most states of Australia. A circuit overseer travels weekly to different congregations in a circuit, usually comprising about 20 congregations. This means a circuit overseer visits each congregation in his assigned circuit at least twice each year. During the week, he will work in the preaching activity with the congregation and have meetings with the congregation and with the elders.

44. From 1997 until 2003 I served in the India branch of Jehovah's Witnesses as a member of that Branch Committee.

45. Since 2003 I have served at the Australia Branch in Sydney. I presently serve as the coordinator of the Australia Branch Committee, having been a member of the Branch Committee since March 2, 2005. I have also been a member of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia since July 1, 2005 and a director since December 19, 2009.

46. As a Branch Committee member I care for a number of administrative responsibilities as I do also in my role as a director for Watchtower Australia. In addition to those responsibilities, part of my role is to deliver speaking assignments at conventions throughout the year and also to visit congregations in other states from time to time. As I have time, I also have the role of Branch Committee contact with a number of Branch Office departments. This primarily involves bringing matters from those departments that require Branch Committee decisions to the Branch Committee meetings. The departments that I am contact for include our Correspondence, Computer, Legal and Writing Departments. However, I do not play an active day-to-day role in those departments.

F. SYSTEMS, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES IN PLACE WITHIN JEHOVAH'S WITNESS IN AUSTRALIA

47. Jehovah's Witnesses regard child abuse of any kind as a violation of every standard of righteousness that the Bible upholds for Christians.

48. Having said that, you ask for my comments on four aspects of our procedures in dealing with allegations or complaints of child sexual abuse. I can say that the following established procedures have been provided to every congregation elder in this country, but think Mr Spinks can provide a more comprehensive and specific statement, since this falls more into

his area of responsibility at the Branch Office's Service Desk. So as an elder, I am able to comment as follows.

i. Response to allegations

49. In my 35 years as an elder I have not been involved in a case of child abuse of any kind. However, I know that the procedure in handling cases of child abuse has been consistently the same for many years. If an allegation had been reported to an elder it would have been investigated by two elders. If a person was proven to have sexually abused a child, a judicial committee would have been formed and the person either disfellowshipped or reproved if judged as being repentant. If the person had held any position of service in the congregations, such as an elder, he would have been removed from that immediately. While direction to contact the assistance of the Branch Office's Legal and Service Departments may not have been so clear in the 1980's, the action by the elders was basically the same as it is today.

50. As far as published direction on how to handle child abuse, many of the letters that were sent to bodies of elders were mailed after I moved to India (1997-2003). However, the previous handbook for elders which I received after being appointed as an elder in 1980, entitled *Pay Attention to the Flock.* On page 93 [WAT.0003.001.0232] it provided the following explanation as to sins for which a judicial committee should be formed: *"Also included are sexual abuse of children, including practices that involving a catamite (a boy kept for purposes of sexual perversion.)"*

51. The same reference page included the following in caring for the victim. *"Victims of sexual abuse need to be treated with extreme thoughtfulness and kindness. Elders should always do what they reasonably can to protect children from further abuse; follow the Society's directives on such matters (g85 1/22 p.8)"* [WAT.0003.001.0232] This reference, g85 1/22 p.8, refers to the comments in the *Awake!* of January 1, 1985 issue on page 8 where the two paragraphs in a feature box on that page gave the following comments [WAT.0001.004.0210]:

> *"First, the child—and other children too—must be protected from any further abuse. This must be done, whatever the cost. In many cases the accused molester will have*

> *to be confronted. But whatever it takes, it is important that the child should feel confident that the molester will never be able to get at her (or him) again. Second, the child must be given a lot of love and emotional support. Parents must make it very clear that the little victim is not to blame. The crime and anything that happens as a result of it—even if a close relative goes to prison—is not her (or his) fault. But that reassurance will have to be given many times, so that the victim comes to believe it—and to believe that the parents believe it too!"*

52. I make specific mention of these references to show that the procedure in elders and parents being helped to be aware of what they needed to do in caring for the prevention and handling of child abuse was made clear. As with society in general though, as the issue of child abuse achieved a greater awareness, our organization gave more attention to helping parents and elders to try and meet the challenges child abuse presents.

53. I can also recall one letter that was sent to all Bodies of Elders dated August 1, 1995 [WAT.0001.004.0005-0006] which gave direction that when an accusation of child abuse was made to an elder, the elders were to contact the Branch Office immediately. The letter also directed elders in providing care for any victims and how a former child abuser should be cautioned and how restoring privileges of any kind should be handled. I recall that letter very well as I used it in discussions with bodies of elders when I visited a number of congregations as a circuit overseer.

54. The most recent direction on the subject was in a letter to the Bodies of Elders dated October 1, 2012, paragraph 11 [WAT.0001.004.0068], which states "*. . . the elders should investigate every allegation of child sexual abuse.*" Upon receiving a complaint, elders are directed to have two elders contact the Branch Office's Legal Department immediately they learn of an allegation of child abuse. This is done to ensure that elders understand and will fully comply with any legal requirements that may be applicable in the State in which they reside. They then will speak to the Service Department as well to ensure that the matter is fully dealt with according to theocratic procedures.

ii. Prevention

55. For decades, *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* journals and other Bible-based publications have featured articles designed to educate both Jehovah's Witnesses and the general public on how to protect children from sexual abuse and to be alert to any inappropriate behaviour. In recent years, our jw.org website has also made such resources accessible to a wider audience. These resources include advice for parents on how to initiate an age-appropriate conversation with each child concerning what to do if confronted by any inappropriate behaviour. We believe that parental education of children about sex and the dangers of child sexual abuse in this way can be a major factor in helping to prevent child sexual abuse.

56. Concerning reporting of child abuse to the authorities, we believe that a victim or parent/guardian has the absolute right to do so. As far back as January 1985, *The Awake!* [WAT.0001.004.0210] magazine informed elders that in any circumstances, where they learn that the victim remains in danger of further abuse, the direction is *"First, the child—and other children too—must be protected from any further abuse. This must be done, whatever the cost."*

57. In 1997, a pivotal article "*Abhor What Is Wicked*" [WAT.0001.004.0306-0309] was published, clarifying the long-term implications for an individual who has been involved in child sexual abuse with a view to further protecting the congregation.

58. A letter dated August 28, 2002, was sent to every congregation in Australia, outlining various issues everyone should take notice of in the matter of preventing child abuse. This was because we were then, and still are, concerned that congregation members were aware of their right to report child abuse to the authorities. For example, a letter was sent to all congregations and read at a congregation meeting. In part it said *"We have long instructed elders to report allegations of child abuse to authorities where required by law to do so., even where there is only one witness. (Romans 13:1) In any case, the elders know that if the victim wishes to make a report, it is his or her absolute right to do so."* [WAT.0004.001.0002]

59. Later *The Watchtower*, August 1, 2005, page 14 (Please refer to Annexure 2), stated: *"In our time, rape is also a major crime with severe penalties. The victim has every right to report the*

matter to the police. In this way the proper authorities can punish the offender. And if the victim is a minor, the parents may want to initiate these actions."

60. Then in 2010, elders have been given clear instruction in this regard in chapter 12 of the Shepherding Book ("Elders' Handbook"), page 131, paragraph 19 [WAT.0003.001.0132-0133], which states:

> *Child abuse is a crime. Never suggest to anyone that they should not report an allegation of child abuse to the police or other authorities. If you are asked, make it clear that whether to report the matter to the authorities or not is a personal decision for each individual to make and that there are no congregation sanctions for either decision. Elders will not criticize anyone who reports such an allegation to the authorities. If the victim wishes to make a report, it is his or her absolute right to do so.*

61. More recently, in 2012, a very detailed letter was sent to all elders which detailed how reports, investigations and handling of child abuse should be handled according to the Scriptures. Also, how help should be extended to victims of abuse was discussed.

62. Elders have been directed that any Jehovah's Witness who sexually abuses a child is either to be disfellowshipped from the congregation or is to receive severe discipline, part of which will always include a public announcement for the protection of the congregation. In the case of being reproved the announcement will read *"[Name of the person] has been reproved."* If disfellowshipped the announcement will read *"[Name of the person] is no longer one of Jehovah's Witnesses."* (1 Corinthians 5:13) However, if the guilty individual serves in any appointed capacity in the congregation, such as an elder, even prior to any decision being made as to whether or not he is to be disfellowshipped, he will immediately be removed from any appointed position and an announcement will be made to the congregation confirming his removal. —1 Timothy 3:1-7, 10; Titus 1:7.

iii. Record allegations of child sexual abuse

63. The letter to All Elders, October 1, 2012 par 11 [WAT.0001.004.0068] states the following: *"Information concerning an individual accused of child molestation, proved or otherwise, should be placed in the congregation confidential file and marked "Do Not Destroy" and kept*

indefinitely. This includes Notification of Disfellowshipping or Disassociation (S-77) forms on individuals who have been disfellowshipped for child sexual abuse and then later reinstated."

iv. Identifying child sexual abuse:

64. This is a difficult question for me to answer. Congregation elders are not given training in this specific area, other than in what has been published in our literature. However, as most elders are themselves family men, they have read our publications and would be observant to any suspicious signs. Of course, parents who are not elders, both mothers and fathers along with any congregation member who felt a need to report suspicions to elders would have their reports taken seriously.

65. As far back as the 1970s, in harmony with growing community awareness, our publications increasingly drew attention to behavioural aspects of perpetrators, dispelled misconceptions about who could be an offender, created awareness and highlighted the shocking impact that child sexual abuse inflicts on victims. Over the decades our publications have continued to focus on the need to take strong measures to educate parents and to identify, prevent and respond appropriately to child sexual abuse.

66. Our approach has been refined over time, resulting in our current way of dealing with the matter as outlined in the Elders' Handbook [WAT.0003.001.0001-0143] and the letter to All Bodies of Elders, October 1, 2012 [WAT.0001.004.0066-0071].

67. I believe our congregation structure and meetings for worship arrangements further minimise the potential for child abusers. We do not have any programs in which we take custody of children from their parents. We do not have Sunday Schools, youth groups, camps or social activities that separate children from parents. All of our congregation meetings involve entire family groups. Children, even teenagers, are not separated into groups from parents. Nor do we have secular educational schools, orphanages, hospitals, day care centres and the like. We believe that loving and protective parents are the best deterrent to child abuse. We continue to educate parents and provide them with valuable tools to help them educate and protect their children.—Deuteronomy 6:6, 7.

G. MECHANISMS TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH SYSTEMS, POLICIES OR PROCEDURES

68. As a Branch Committee, we ensure the clear instructions set forth in correspondence to elders are followed up with meetings with circuit overseers when they meet with all bodies of elders in their circuit, at seminars with elders and through correspondence.

69. As noted in paragraph 53, elders are directed that on hearing any allegation of child sexual abuse, they are to immediately contact the Branch Office. Firstly, they speak to the Legal Department to determine what their reporting obligations are and then they are transferred to the Service Department to review the published procedures in relation to handling child abuse allegations.

70. Also, when an individual who is found guilty of child abuse moves congregations, a copy of the letter of introduction is forwarded to the Service Department for review, to ensure the new congregation body of elders is fully apprised of the persons background and any counsel, warnings and restrictions that he has received from his previous congregation.

71. In addition, prior to extending any congregation privilege, the elders are instructed to contact the Service Department to review the case. The Branch Office takes an active role in ensuring that local elders comply with the current procedures.

H. TRAINING IN RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS, PREVENTION AND/OR DETECTION OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

72. The training that we can provide is that with which we are qualified to give and that is the Scriptural principles that relate to this problem of response, protection and help for victims and their families.

73. To that end, regular classes are conducted for elders, and at times ministerial servants. These are known as Kingdom Ministry Schools. Following the distribution of our October 1, 2012 letter to all Bodies of Elders (**WAT.0001.004.0066-0071**), we conducted seminars with over 5,500 elders throughout Australia to ensure that they were thoroughly familiar with the spiritual directions provided therein. Since then, we have conducted additional classes with elders, again reviewing some of these points including training on our procedures.

74. Thousands of congregation elders in this country are parents or grandparents. Even for those who are not, as Christians, we want to do whatever we can to protect children from all forms of abuse. Personally, if I felt the protection of a child necessitated reporting a matter to the authorities, I would do so, regardless of whether or not there was a mandatory reporting requirement.

I. INDEPENDENT EXPERTS

75. Although I understand that secular research has been undertaken and is incorporated into our published information on child abuse as with many other matters, greater regard is given to Scriptural principles and guidance.

J. MY UNDERSTANDING OF OBLIGATIONS THAT JEHOVAH'S WITNESS HAVE IN RELATION TO:

76. Since much of this section pertains to Legal aspects of our procedures, I will give a brief outline of what I understand and leave a more detailed explanation to Mr. Toole.

i. Reporting

77. My understanding is that there are different requirements in various states. This is one of the reasons we ask elders to contact the Branch Office's Legal Department as soon as they hear an accusation of child sexual abuse. As an organisation, our approach has been that where mandatory reporting laws apply to congregation elders, they are instructed to comply with the law.

ii. Working With Children Checks

78. We comply fully with the legislative requirements to ensure all relevant persons have the necessary Working With Children Checks in those States and Territory where we are required to do so. If those States that do not presently require elders to obtain a WWCC, were to change the law requiring them to do so, then we will fully comply as we currently do in other states.

iii. Sharing Information

79. Importantly, the direction is given to elders regarding what information should be shared with congregations and/or parents in order to prevent future child sexual abuse. The

October 1, 2012 letter to All Bodies of Elders, paragraphs 13 and 16 (**WAT.0001.004.0069**) sets out the direction for elders to follow.

K. ROLE OF WATCHTOWER AUSTRALIA AND/OR THE AUSTRALIAN BRANCH OFFICE IN SPECIFIED PROCESSES

80. As a congregation elder, I am able to provide an overview on these points. However, since Mr. Spinks cares for these matters in his function as the senior Service Desk elder, he will be able to provide a more detailed response in his statement.

i. Baptism (*Organized to Do Jehovah's Will* book, pages 180-218 - WAT.0003.001.0475-0513)

81. This is not a matter for either Watchtower Australia or the Australian Branch Office. Every candidate for baptism undergoes a course of Bible study where they are taught the moral standards of anyone who wants to have a dedicated relationship with God. These Bible studies are conducted under the oversight of a local congregation body of elders. If the person of their own volition requests baptism as one of Jehovah's Witnesses, they undergo a series of questions with the elders to ensure they clearly understand God's requirements regarding what is moral and acceptable, along with other doctrinal matters. It is the responsibility of the congregation's body of elders to approve persons for baptism, since they know them personally.

ii. Elders and Ministerial Servants (*Organized to Do Jehovah's Will* book, pages 29-37 - WAT.0003.001.0324-0332)

82. Firstly, the individual must meet the Scriptural requirements for an elder (1 Timothy 3:1-7,Titus 1:6-9) or ministerial servant (1 Timothy 3:8-10, 12-13). If the local body of elders and the circuit overseer all agree that he qualifies, before an individual can be appointed as an elder or ministerial servant he must answer the following three questions (WAT.0002.001.0034-0035):

- *"Is there anything from your past, even before baptism, or in your personal or family life that disqualifies you or that would prevent you from accepting this appointment?*

- *Is there any reason why your appointment should not be announced to the congregation?*

- *Have you ever been involved at any time in the past with child sexual molestation?"*

83. If the answers are acceptable and the individual is appointed, the Branch Office is notified.

84. In those States and Territory where an appointed minister must have a Working With Children Check, his appointment is neither confirmed nor announced to the congregation until the process involved with such a check is completed.

Regarding other congregation assignments

85. The Branch office checks the background of any who apply to serve as pioneers, special pioneers and/or any other position of status in the congregations.

iii. & iv. Deletions and public or private reproval (Elders' Handbook page 96 paragraphs 18-25 - WAT.0003.001.0097-0101)

86. This is a decision for the local body of elders in line with the Scriptural guidelines to this effect. However, if it involves an elder, ministerial servant, pioneer, special pioneer and/or any other position of status in the congregations, the Branch Office is notified since a person who is reproved by a judicial committee of elders automatically ceases to qualify for such assignments.

v. Congregation privileges

87. Congregation privileges (such as handling of microphones during meetings, serving as an attendant, caring for congregation accounts) are decisions for the local body of elders to make. For the body of elders it would also include determining which teaching parts an elder may handle, which duty of service each would perform on behalf of the congregation.

88. However, if it concerned anyone who had been guilty of child sexual abuse, it would be many, many years, if ever, before he would be given any small privilege and this would be done only after consultation with the Branch Office (October 1, 2012, paragraphs 22-24 - WAT.0001.004.0070).

vi. Disfellowshipping and/or disassociation (Elders' Handbook Pages 58-72 WAT.0003.001.0059-0073; Pages 89-96 - WAT.0003.001.0090-0097)

89. The Scriptural process known as disfellowshipping is a matter that is handled by congregation elders. A person may be disfellowshipped if they commit what the Bible has determined are serious sins such as those outlined in the 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 and is judged as being unrepentant.

90. If a person is disfellowshipped a simple announcement is made to the congregation as I mentioned in paragraph 62.

91. The Elders handbook, Chapter 5, paragraphs 5 [WAT.0003.001.0060] and 10 [WAT.0003.001.0061] explains that child sexual abuse would include "fondling of breasts, an explicitly immoral proposal, showing pornography to a child, voyeurism, indecent exposure, and so forth." Paragraph 5 [WAT.0003.001.0060] discusses more serious types of sexual abuse that would also be considered as disfellowshipping offences.

92. In the case of child sexual abuse, both the Legal Department and the Service Department are involved in accordance with the instructions set out in our Guideline letter. A record is maintained in the congregation and also sent to the Branch Office.

93. Disassociation is an action taken by an individual for whatever reason they choose. This is handled by a local body of elders who appoint a committee of three. If the person is adamant that they no longer want to be known as one of Jehovah's Witnesses, the same simple announcement is made and the Branch Office is notified in the same way as one who is disfellowshipped.

94. A disfellowshipped or disassociated person may apply to be reinstated into the congregation. If so, it will be decided by a judicial committee of the original congregation that handled the case. The judicial committee will meet with the individual and determine if they have abandoned the reason(s) for which they were removed from the congregation. If they have done so and are truly repentant the individual may be reinstated. If they still need to make necessary changes to qualify to be one of Jehovah's Witnesses again, the elders will help them see what they need to do in this regard.

vii. Reinstatement (Elders' Handbook Page 118-122 paragraphs 1-15 - WAT.0003.001.0119-0123)

95. If a formerly disfellowshipped or disassociated person is reinstated the Branch office is notified of that.

L. ROLE OF WATCHTOWER AUSTRALIA AND/OR THE AUSTRALIAN BRANCH OFFICE IN THE CASE OF BCH

96. As I understand, the Branch Office was not involved in the 1989 disfellowshipping case of BCH I have not personally been involved in anything to do with this case. I understand that both Mr Spinks and Mr Toole will explain their dealings with BCH in their statements.

M. CLAIM(S) FOR COMPENSATION OR REDRESS

97. I am not aware of any claims for redress or compensation having been made in relation to child sexual abuse concerning Jehovah's Witnesses in Australia.

SUMMARY

98. Jehovah's Witnesses do not believe we have all the answers to the prevention of child sexual abuse. As with a number of other organisations, we have undergone a system of revision on our procedures for some decades. We will continue to do so in making every effort to protect children. We are repulsed by this crime against conceivably the most defenceless members of society. We share with you the hope that this Royal Commission will be able to provide answers to some of the most disturbing and complex questions confronting every community, in how to prevent this from happening.

Signed: .....

Date: 10 JULY 2015

Witness: .....

Date: 10 JULY 2015

Annexure in the matter of Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia

Annexure 1 to Statement of Terrence John O'Brien

Royal Commission
into Institutional Responses
to Child Sexual Abuse

26 June 2015

Mr Terrence O'Brien
Director / Branch Overseer
Watchtower Bible and Tract Society Australia Ltd
12-14 Zouch Road
Denham Court NSW 2565

By email: InboxLGL.AU@jw.org

Dear Mr O'Brien,

Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (Royal Commission)
Case Study 29 (Jehovah's Witnesses) – request for statements

As you are aware, the Royal Commission is holding a public hearing in Sydney commencing on 27 July 2015 to inquire into the responses of the Jehovah's Witnesses Church and the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia Ltd (**Watchtower Australia**) to complaints of child sexual abuse within the Jehovah's Witnesses Church in Australia.

The scope and purpose of the public hearing is to inquire into:

1. The experience of survivors of child sexual abuse within the Jehovah's Witnesses Church in Australia.

2. The responses of the Jehovah's Witnesses Church and the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia Ltd to allegations, reports or complaints of child sexual abuse within the Church.

3. The systems, policies and procedures in place within the Jehovah's Witnesses Church and the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia Ltd for raising and responding to allegations of or concerns about child sexual abuse within the Church.

4. The systems, policies and procedures in place in the Jehovah's Witnesses Church and the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia Ltd to prevent child sexual abuse within the Church.

5. Any related matters.

Request for statement

The Royal Commission requests that you prepare a statement which addresses the following matters:

A. An historical overview of the Jehovah's Witnesses Church, including but not limited to:

   i. the establishment of the Church and its practices;

ii. the structure of the Church including any significant changes to that structure over time; and

iii. the history of the relationship between the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses (the **Governing Body**) and the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania.

B. An overview of the role and functions of the current Governing Body, including but not limited to, the structure and membership of the Governing Body and any sub-committees of that Governing Body.

C. The relationship, including any legal relationship, between Watchtower Australia and:

i. the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania;

ii. the Governing Body;

iii. the various congregations of the Jehovah's Witnesses Church around Australia.

D. An overview of the key beliefs of the Jehovah's Witnesses faith, including but not limited to:

i. the doctrine of separateness from the world;

ii. the role of evangelizing;

iii. the "End Times"; and

iv. the doctrine of "male headship".

E. Your involvement with the Jehovah's Witnesses Church, including but not limited to:

i. the congregations of which you have a been a member; and

ii. the roles you have held within the Church, including your current role; and

iii. the relationship between your current role and the Legal and Service Departments of Watchtower Australia.

F. The systems, policies, and procedures in place within the Jehovah's Witnesses Church in Australia to:

i. respond to allegations or complaints of child sexual abuse made within the Church;

ii. prevent child sexual abuse within the Church; and

iii. record allegations or complaints of child sexual abuse; and

iv. identify child sexual abuse within the Church,

including any significant revisions to those systems, policies, or procedures, and the date(s) of and the reasons for those revisions.

G. The mechanisms, if any, that the Jehovah's Witnesses Church has in place to ensure compliance with any of the systems, policies, or procedures referred to in paragraph F above.

H. Any training offered by the Jehovah's Witnesses Church to its elders, ministerial servants, and/or any other member of the Church, in responding to allegations, prevention, and/or detection, of child sexual abuse, including the nature and frequency of that training.

I. Any consultation undertaken by the Jehovah's Witnesses Church with independent experts specialising in responding to allegations of, and prevention, and/or detection of, child sexual abuse. Please include a list of any such experts engaged by the Church, together with a summary of their qualifications and the areas in relation to which they have provided or provide advice and/or consulting expertise.

J. Your understanding of any obligations, legal or otherwise, that members of the Jehovah's Witnesses Church around Australia have in relation to:

i. reporting child sexual abuse to State and/or Federal authorities;

ii. conducting police checks of persons within the Church whose roles involve contact with children; and

iii. sharing of information that might prevent future child sexual abuse.

K. The role of Watchtower Australia and/or the Australian Branch Office in the following processes as they relate to or involve allegations, reports, or history of child sexual abuse:

i. consideration of prospective members of the Jehovah's Witnesses Church and their subsequent suitability for baptism;

ii. selection and appointment of elders, ministerial servants, pioneers, special pioneers, and/or any other position of status within the Church;

iii. the deletion or removal of elders, ministerial servants, pioneers, special pioneers, and/or any other position of status within the Church;

iv. the public or private reproval of members of the Church;

v. the awarding and removal of congregational privileges to members of the congregation, including the nature of those privileges;

vi. the disfellowshipping and/or disassociation of members of the Church; and/or

vii. the reinstatement of individuals as members of the Church.

L. The role of Watchtower Australia and/or the Australian Branch Office in relation to to the case of child sexual abuse by BCH

M. Any claim(s) for compensation or redress of any kind, whether in a court of law or otherwise, arising from an allegation or allegations of child sexual abuse within the Church, including the outcome of those claims.

The above matters are not intended to limit you in any way, and you should provide any other information that you consider to be relevant. We ask that you please provide copies of any documents not already produced to the Royal Commission which record the matters referred to above.

We ask that you prepare your statement by no later than **10 July 2015**. At such time, the Royal Commission will issue a notice for its production, and may summons you to give evidence in the public hearing.

Please do not hesitate to contact Joanna Blair on (02) 8284 2448 if you would like to discuss any aspect of this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Tony Giugni
Solicitor Assisting the Royal Commission
Telephone: 02 8284 2431
Email: tony.giugni@childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au

ANNEXURE 2 – REFERENCES

***The Watchtower* 2005, August 1 pages 13-14**

Major Offenses Against Individuals

Under the Law that God gave to ancient Israel, there were serious consequences for major offenses against individuals. For instance, if a thief came into a house at night and the householder killed him, there was no bloodguilt on the part of the householder. He was an innocent victim of a major crime. Hence, we read: "If a thief should be found in the act of breaking in and he does get struck and die, there is no bloodguilt for [the householder]."—Exodus 22:2.

A woman who has been raped has a right to be highly offended, as this is a major crime in God's eyes. Under the Mosaic Law, a man who raped a woman was to die "just as when a man rises up against his fellowman and indeed murders him." (Deuteronomy 22:25, 26) While we are no longer under that Law, it gives us insight into how Jehovah feels about rape—a horrible wrong.

In our time, rape is also a major crime with severe penalties. The victim has every right to report the matter to the police. In this way the proper authorities can punish the offender. And if the victim is a minor, the parents may want to initiate these actions.

SEPARATENESS FROM THE WORLD

***The Watchtower* 2012 , May 1 pages 3-11**

A Question for Jesus

Many God-fearing people feel that religion should be involved in politics. They believe that religion can play a vital part in solving humankind's problems. However, other sincere believers think that religion and politics should be separate. What do you personally think of religion's role in politics? Should those powerful forces work hand-in-hand?

JESUS CHRIST has been described as "the most influential figure in the religious history of mankind." So, imagine that we could ask him the question, Should religion be involved in politics? What would he say? While on earth, he answered that question by his words and deeds. For instance, in his renowned Sermon on the Mount, Jesus gave guidelines that help his followers to discern what role they should play in their communities. Let us consider some points from that famous sermon.

Touch the Life of Others

Jesus described the attitude his followers should have toward the world. He stated: **"You are the salt of the earth;** but if the salt loses its strength, how will its saltness be restored? It is no longer usable for anything but to be thrown outside to be trampled on by men. **You are the light of the world.** . . . Let your light shine before men, that they may see your fine works and give glory to your Father who is in the heavens." (Matthew 5:13-16) Why did Jesus compare his followers to salt and light?

Jesus' words imply that his followers are like salt, not for just a small group, but for all of mankind. They are like light, not for a limited number of people, but for all who want to see clearly. By using those word pictures, Jesus made it clear that he did not want his followers to isolate themselves from society. Why not?

Note the following: Salt cannot preserve food if it is not mixed with a food item. A lamp cannot dispel darkness from a room if the lamp is kept away from that room. It is, therefore, no wonder that Jesus never commanded his disciples to move to an isolated corner of the earth to establish communities of believers. Nor did he encourage his followers to live insulated lives behind the walls of

religious institutions. Instead, as salt needs to touch food and light needs to dispel darkness, so Christians need to have an impact on the lives of others.

"No Part of the World"

However, Jesus' instructions that his followers should interact with their fellow men raise an important question about a Christian's attitude toward politics. Why so? Shortly before his death, Jesus prayed to God in behalf of his followers: "I request you, not to take them out of the world, but to watch over them because of the wicked one. **They are no part of the world,** just as I am no part of the world." (John 17:15, 16) So, then, how is it possible for Christians to be no part of the world but, at the same time, be involved in their local community? To find out, let us consider three additional questions:

How Did Jesus View Politics?

THE Gospel writers describe several events in Jesus' ministry that brought him face-to-face with politics. For instance, shortly after Jesus' baptism at about the age of 30, the Devil offered him the position of *world ruler.* Later in his ministry, a crowd wanted to make him their *king.* Still later, people tried to turn him into a *political activist.* How did Jesus react? Let us consider these events.

World ruler. The Gospels state that the Devil offered Jesus rulership over "all the kingdoms of the world." Think of how much good Jesus could have done for suffering mankind if he had wielded the power of a world ruler! What politically oriented individual sincerely concerned with mankind's advancement could resist such an offer? But Jesus refused it.—Matthew 4:8-11.

King. Many of Jesus' contemporaries were desperate for a ruler who could solve their economic and political problems. Impressed by Jesus' abilities, the people wanted Jesus to join the political process. What was his reaction? Gospel writer John states: "Jesus, knowing they were about to come and seize him to make him king, withdrew again into the mountain all alone." (John 6:10-15) Clearly, Jesus refused to become involved in politics.

Political activist. Note what happened days before Jesus was put to death. Disciples of the Pharisees, who favored independence from the Roman Empire, joined by Herodians, members of a political party favoring Rome, approached Jesus. They wanted to force him to take a political position. They asked if the Jews should pay taxes to Rome.

Mark recorded Jesus' response: "'Why do you put me to the test? Bring me a denarius to look at.' They brought one. And he said to them: 'Whose image and inscription is this?' They said to him: 'Caesar's.' Jesus then said: 'Pay back Caesar's things to Caesar, but God's things to God.'" (Mark 12:13-17) Commenting on the reason for Jesus' response, the book *Church and State—The Story of Two Kingdoms* concludes: "He refused to act the part of a political messiah and carefully established both the boundary of Caesar and that of God."

Problems such as poverty, corruption, and injustice did not leave Christ unmoved. In fact, the Bible shows that he was deeply touched by the pitiful state of the people around him. (Mark 6:33, 34) Still, Jesus did not start a campaign to rid the world of injustices, although some tried hard to get him embroiled in the controversial issues of the day.

Clearly, as these examples show, Jesus refused to get involved in political affairs. But what about Christians today? What should they do?

What Should Christians Do Today?

TRUE Christians today do not participate in politics. Why not? Because they follow Jesus' example. He said about himself: "I am no part of the world." Regarding his followers, he stated: "You are no part of the world." (John 15:19; 17:14) Consider some reasons why Christians should not become involved in politics.

1. Human ability is limited. The Bible states that humans have neither the ability nor the right to govern themselves. "It does not belong to man who is walking," wrote the prophet Jeremiah, "even to direct his step."—Jeremiah 10:23.

Just as humans were not created to fly successfully on their own strength, so they were not created to rule successfully by themselves. Speaking about the limits of government, historian David Fromkin noted: "Governments are composed of human beings; therefore they are fallible and their prospects are uncertain. They exercise a certain power, but only a limited one." (*The Question of Government*) No wonder the Bible warns us not to put our trust in man!—Psalm 146:3.

2. Wicked spirit forces currently have an influence. When Satan offered Jesus world rulership, Jesus did not deny that the Devil had the power to offer him all the kingdoms of the world. In fact, on a later occasion, Jesus called Satan "the ruler of the world." Some years later the apostle Paul described Satan as "the god of this system of things." (John 14:30; 2 Corinthians 4:4) Paul wrote to fellow Christians: "We have a wrestling . . . against the world rulers of this darkness, against the wicked spirit forces in the heavenly places." (Ephesians 6:12) Behind the scenes, wicked spirit forces are the real rulers of this world. How should that fact influence our view of politics?

Think of this comparison: Just as small boats are swept along by powerful sea currents, human political systems are pulled along by powerful, wicked spirit forces. And just as the sailors in those boats can do little to change those powerful currents, politicians can do little to change the influence of those powerful spirit forces. Those forces are bent on corrupting humans beyond reform and on causing "woe for the earth." (Revelation 12:12) Therefore, real change can be brought about only by a person who is more powerful than Satan and his demons. That Person is Jehovah God himself.—Psalm 83:18; Jeremiah 10:7, 10.

3. True Christians give allegiance only to God's Kingdom. Jesus and his disciples knew that at a set time, God himself would establish a government in heaven to rule over the entire earth. The Bible calls this government God's Kingdom and reveals that Jesus Christ has been appointed as its King. (Revelation 11:15) Since that Kingdom affects all humans, Jesus made "the good news of the kingdom of God" the main subject of his teachings. (Luke 4:43) He also taught his disciples to pray: "Let your kingdom come." Why? Because under that Kingdom, God's will is sure to be done in heaven and on earth.—Matthew 6:9, 10.

What, then, will happen to man-made governments? The Bible answers that the governments "of the *entire* inhabited earth" will be destroyed. (Revelation 16:14; 19:19-21) If an individual truly believes that God's Kingdom is about to remove all man-made political systems, he logically would refrain from supporting those political systems. After all, if he tried to prop up doomed, man-made governments, he would, in effect, be taking a stand against God.

While true Christians do not participate in politics, does that mean that they have no interest in trying to improve the communities in which they live? Consider the answer given in the next article.

How Do Christian Teachings Affect Communities?

THE preceding articles considered why genuine Christians do not participate in politics. How, though, can Christians show that they are interested in improving the communities in which they live? One way is by following Jesus' command: "Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit, teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you."—Matthew 28:19, 20.

There is a link between following Jesus' command to "make disciples" and carrying out his instruction to be like salt and light to the world. (Matthew 5:13, 14) What is the connection? And what effect can that work have on people?

Christ's Message—Preserving and Enlightening

Salt is a preservative; it can prevent decay. Similarly, the message that Jesus instructed his followers to carry to people in all nations has a preserving influence. Those who accept and apply Jesus' teachings protect themselves from the moral decay so prevalent today. In what way? They

learn how to avoid practices that are harmful to health, such as smoking, and they develop such qualities as love, peace, long-suffering, kindness, and goodness. (Galatians 5:22, 23) Those qualities make them an asset to society. Christians who share this preserving message with their neighbors make a valuable contribution to their community.

What about the metaphor of light? Just as the moon reflects the light from the sun, so Christ's followers reflect the "light" from Jehovah God. They serve as reflectors by means of the enlightening message they preach and the good works they do.—1 Peter 2:12.

Jesus further highlighted the similarity between being a light and being a disciple by saying: "People light a lamp and set it, not under the measuring basket, but upon the lampstand, and it shines upon all those in the house. Likewise let your light shine before men." A shining lamp placed upon a lampstand is clearly visible to all those around it. Similarly, the preaching activities and other fine works that true Christians perform should be clearly visible to those living around them. Why? Jesus said that those who see the fine works will give glory, not to the Christians, but to God.—Matthew 5:14-16.

A Collective Responsibility

When Jesus said, "*You* are the light of the world" and "let *your* light shine," he was addressing all his disciples. Jesus' commission cannot be accomplished by a few individuals scattered in different religions. Instead, all believers are "the light." Seven million Jehovah's Witnesses, who live in more than 235 lands, believe that it is their collective responsibility to visit their neighbors to share the message that Christ wants his followers to proclaim.

What is the theme of the message of Jehovah's Witnesses? When Jesus gave his preaching commission, he did not instruct his followers to preach social or political reforms, union of Church and State, or any other secular ideology. Instead, he foretold: "This *good news of the kingdom* will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations." (Matthew 24:14) Thus, in obedience to Jesus' instructions, true Christians today continue to speak to their neighbors about God's Kingdom—the only government capable of bringing an end to Satan's wicked system and ushering in a righteous new world.

Sincere Believer and Responsible Citizen—How to Be Both

WHAT were two of the characteristics of Jesus' ministry? First, Jesus sought to change individual hearts, not political institutions. For instance, note what Jesus stressed in his Sermon on the Mount. Just before he spoke about the need to be like salt and light, he told his audience that true happiness belongs to those who are "conscious of their spiritual need." He added: "Happy are the mild-tempered ones, . . . the pure in heart, . . . the peaceable." (Matthew 5:1-11) Jesus helped his followers to see the importance of adjusting their thinking and feelings to God's standard of what is good and bad and the importance of serving God wholeheartedly.

Second, when Jesus saw human suffering, his compassion for his fellow men moved him to alleviate their misery. However, he did not make it his goal to eliminate all suffering. (Matthew 20:30-34) He cured sick people, but sickness remained a fact of life. (Luke 6:17-19) He brought relief to the oppressed, but injustice continued to cause suffering. He provided food for the hungry, but famines continued to plague mankind.—Mark 6:41-44.

Changing Hearts and Alleviating Suffering

Why did Jesus focus on changing hearts and alleviating suffering but not on changing institutions or *eliminating* distress? Jesus knew that God had purposed to use His Kingdom at a future time to put an end to all human governments and erase the causes of all suffering. (Luke 4:43; 8:1) Therefore, when the disciples once urged Jesus to spend more time on curing the sick, Jesus said to them: "Let us go somewhere else, into the village towns nearby, that I may preach there also, for it is for this purpose I have gone out." (Mark 1:32-38) Jesus alleviated the physical suffering of many, but he gave priority to preaching and teaching God's word.

In their preaching work today, Jehovah's Witnesses strive to imitate Jesus. They are moved to *alleviate* suffering by giving practical help to individuals in need. But the Witnesses do not strive to *eliminate* the world's injustices. They believe that God's Kingdom will erase the causes of all suffering. (Matthew 6:10) Like Jesus, they endeavor to change *hearts* but not political *institutions*. That approach is realistic because man's main problems are, not political, but moral.

Responsible Citizens

At the same time, Jehovah's Witnesses believe that it is their Christian responsibility to be good citizens. Hence, they honor and respect governmental authority. Through their publications and their witnessing work, they encourage their neighbors to be law-abiding. However, when a government demands what is in direct conflict with what God commands, the Witnesses do not comply. They "obey God as ruler rather than men."—Acts 5:29; Romans 13:1-7.

Jehovah's Witnesses visit all those in their community to offer Bible education free of charge. As a result of this education, millions of hearts have been changed. Each year, hundreds of thousands of people are helped to overcome such damaging practices as smoking, drunkenness, misuse of drugs, gambling, and sexual promiscuity. They have become morally responsible citizens because they have learned to apply Bible principles in their lives.—See the article "The Bible Changes Lives," on page 18 of this magazine.

In addition, Bible education helps family members to deepen their respect for one another and to improve communication—between spouses as well as parents and children and among the children themselves. These are factors that strengthen family bonds. Stronger families, in turn, result in stronger communities.

After reviewing the points that have been considered in these articles, what do you think: Does the Bible approve of those who mix religion and politics? The answer is clear; it does not. But should true Christians be responsible citizens? Yes, they should. How can they do so? By following Jesus' command to be like salt and like light to the world.

Those who strive to apply these practical directions of Christ will bring benefits to themselves and their families—as well as to the community in which they live. Jehovah's Witnesses in your area will be glad to share more information with you about the Bible education program that is currently being carried on in your community.

THE ROLE OF EVANGELIZING

***The Watchtower* 2004 January 1 pp. 8-12**

Let All Declare the Glory of Jehovah

> "Ascribe to Jehovah glory and strength. Ascribe to Jehovah the glory belonging to his name."—PSALM 96:7, 8.

DAVID, the son of Jesse, grew up as a shepherd lad in the vicinity of Bethlehem. How often he must have gazed up into the vastness of the starry heavens in the stillness of the night while watching over his father's flocks in those lonely sheep pastures! No doubt, such vivid impressions sprang to his mind when, inspired by God's holy spirit, he composed and sang the beautiful words of the 19th Psalm: "The heavens are declaring the glory of God; and of the work of his hands the expanse is telling. Into all the earth their measuring line has gone out, and to the extremity of the productive land their utterances."—Psalm 19:1, 4.

[2] Without speech, without words, without voice, Jehovah's awesome created heavens declare his glory, day after day, night after night. Creation never ceases to declare God's glory, and it is humbling to contemplate this silent testimony going into "all the earth" for all its inhabitants to see. However, the

silent witness of creation is not enough. Faithful humans are urged to join in with audible voice. An unnamed psalmist addressed faithful worshipers with these inspired words: "Ascribe to Jehovah glory and strength. Ascribe to Jehovah the glory belonging to his name." (Psalm 96:7, 8) Those who have a close relationship with Jehovah are thrilled to respond to that exhortation. What, though, is involved in ascribing glory to God?

[3] More is required than mere words. The Israelites of Isaiah's day glorified God with their lips, but most lacked sincerity. Through Isaiah, Jehovah said: "This people have come near with their mouth, and they have glorified me merely with their lips, and they have removed their heart itself far away from me." (Isaiah 29:13) Any praise uttered by such individuals was meaningless. To be meaningful, praise must spring from a heart filled with love for Jehovah and a sincere recognition of his unique glory. Jehovah alone is the Creator. He is the Almighty, the Just One, the epitome of love. He is the author of our salvation and the rightful Sovereign to whom everyone living in heaven and on earth owes subjection. (Revelation 4:11; 19:1) If we truly believe these things, let us glorify him with all our heart.

[4] Jesus Christ told us how to glorify God. He said: "My Father is glorified in this, that you keep bearing much fruit and prove yourselves my disciples." (John 15:8) How do we bear much fruit? First, by sharing whole-souled in preaching the "good news of the kingdom" and thus joining with all created things in "telling" about God's "invisible qualities." (Matthew 24:14; Romans 1:20) Moreover, in this way we all have a share—directly or indirectly—in the making of new disciples who swell the chorus of praise to Jehovah God. Second, we cultivate the fruitage produced in us by holy spirit and strive to imitate Jehovah God's superlative qualities. (Galatians 5:22, 23; Ephesians 5:1; Colossians 3:10) As a result, our daily conduct glorifies God.

"Into All the Earth"

[5] Paul in his letter to the Romans stressed the responsibility of Christians to glorify God by sharing their faith with others. A major theme of Romans is that only those who exercise faith in Jesus Christ can be saved. In chapter 10 of his letter, Paul showed that natural Israel of his day was still trying to achieve a righteous standing by following the Mosaic Law, whereas "Christ [was] the end of the Law." Hence, Paul says: "If you publicly declare that 'word in your own mouth,' that Jesus is Lord, and exercise faith in your heart that God raised him up from the dead, you will be saved." From that time on, "there [has been] no distinction between Jew and Greek, for there is the same Lord over all, who is rich to all those calling upon him. For 'everyone who calls on the name of Jehovah will be saved.'"—Romans 10:4, 9-13.

[6] Then Paul logically asks: "How will they call on him in whom they have not put faith? How, in turn, will they put faith in him of whom they have not heard? How, in turn, will they hear without someone to preach?" (Romans 10:14) Of Israel, Paul says: "They did not all obey the good news." Why did Israel not obey? Their lack of response was due to lack of faith, not lack of opportunity. Paul shows this by quoting Psalm 19:4 and applying it to the Christian preaching work rather than to the silent witness of creation. He says: "Why, in fact, 'into all the earth their sound went out, and to the extremities of the inhabited earth their utterances.'" (Romans 10:16, 18) Yes, even as the inanimate creation glorifies Jehovah, first-century Christians preached the good news of salvation everywhere and thus praised God in "all the earth." In his letter to the Colossians, Paul also described how widely the good news had spread. He said that the good news had been preached "in all creation that is under heaven."—Colossians 1:23.

Zealous Witnesses

[7] Likely, Paul wrote his letter to the Colossians about 27 years after the death of Jesus Christ. How could the preaching work have spread as far as Colossae in such a relatively short time? It happened because first-century Christians were zealous, and Jehovah blessed their zeal. Jesus had foretold that his followers would be active preachers when he said: "In all the nations the good news has to be preached first." (Mark 13:10) To that prophecy, Jesus added the command recorded in the final verses of Matthew's Gospel: "Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit, teaching them to

observe all the things I have commanded you." (Matthew 28:19, 20) Shortly after Jesus' ascension to heaven, his followers began to fulfill those words.

[8] After the outpouring of holy spirit at Pentecost 33 C.E., the first thing the loyal followers of Jesus did was to go out and preach, telling the crowds in Jerusalem "about the magnificent things of God." Their preaching was most effective, and "about three thousand souls" were baptized. The disciples continued to praise God publicly and zealously, with good results.—Acts 2:4, 11, 41, 46, 47.

[9] The activities of those Christians soon came to the attention of the religious leaders. Disturbed by the outspokenness of Peter and John, they commanded the two apostles to stop preaching. The apostles responded: "We cannot stop speaking about the things we have seen and heard." After being threatened and released, Peter and John returned to their brothers, and all joined in prayer to Jehovah. They courageously asked Jehovah: "Grant your slaves to keep speaking your word with all boldness."—Acts 4:13, 20, 29.

[10] That prayer was in harmony with Jehovah's will, as became evident a little later. The apostles were arrested and then miraculously released by an angel. The angel told them: "Be on your way, and, having taken a stand in the temple, keep on speaking to the people all the sayings about this life." (Acts 5:18-20) Because the apostles obeyed, Jehovah continued to bless them. Hence, "every day in the temple and from house to house they continued without letup teaching and declaring the good news about the Christ, Jesus." (Acts 5:42) Clearly, determined opposition was completely unable to stop Jesus' followers from publicly ascribing glory to God.

[11] Soon Stephen was arrested and stoned to death. His murder sparked bitter persecution in Jerusalem, and all the disciples except the apostles were forced to scatter abroad. Were they discouraged by the persecution? By no means. We read: "Those who had been scattered went through the land declaring the good news of the word." (Acts 8:1, 4) That zeal for declaring God's glory was seen again and again. In Acts chapter 9, we read that the Pharisee Saul of Tarsus, while traveling to Damascus to initiate persecution of Jesus' disciples there, saw a vision of Jesus and was struck blind. In Damascus, Ananias miraculously healed Saul's blindness. What was the first thing that Saul—later known as the apostle Paul—did? The record says: "*Immediately* in the synagogues he began to preach Jesus, that this One is the Son of God."—Acts 9:20.

Everyone Shared in Preaching

[12] It is widely acknowledged that everyone in the early Christian congregation shared in the preaching work. Of Christians in those days, Philip Schaff writes: "Every congregation was a missionary society, and every Christian believer a missionary." (*History of the Christian Church*) W. S. Williams states: "The general testimony is that all Christians in the primitive Church, especially those who had the charismatic gift [gifts of the spirit], preached the gospel." (*The Glorious Ministry of the Laity*) He also maintains: "Preaching was never meant by Jesus Christ to be the exclusive privilege of certain ranks of the ministry." Even Celsus, an ancient enemy of Christianity, wrote: "Wool-workers, cobblers, leather-dressers, the most illiterate and vulgar of mankind, were zealous preachers of the gospel."

[13] The accuracy of those statements is seen in the historical record of Acts. At Pentecost 33 C.E., after the outpouring of the holy spirit, *all* the disciples, men and women, publicly declared the magnificent things of God. After the persecution following the murder of Stephen, all Christians who were scattered abroad spread the good news far and wide. Some 28 years later, Paul was writing to all Hebrew Christians, not merely to a small clergy class, when he said: "Through him let us always offer to God a sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of lips which make public declaration to his name." (Hebrews 13:15) Describing his own view of the preaching work, Paul said: "If, now, I am declaring the good news, it is no reason for me to boast, for necessity is laid upon me. Really, woe is me if I did not declare the good news!" (1 Corinthians 9:16) Clearly, all faithful Christians in the first century felt the same way.

[14] Indeed, a genuine Christian has to share in the preaching work because it is inseparably linked to faith. Paul said: "With the heart one exercises faith for righteousness, but with the mouth one makes public declaration for salvation." (Romans 10:10) Is it only a small group within the

congregation—like a clergy class—that exercises faith and thus has the responsibility to preach? Of course not! All true Christians cultivate a living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and are moved to make a public declaration of that faith to others. Otherwise, their faith is dead. (James 2:26) Because all loyal Christians in the first century of our Common Era demonstrated their faith in this way, a great shout of praise to Jehovah's name was heard.

[15] In the first century, Jehovah blessed his people with growth despite problems inside and outside the congregation. For example, Acts chapter 6 records a disagreement between Hebrew-speaking and Greek-speaking converts. The problem was handled by the apostles. As a result, we read: "The word of God went on growing, and the number of the disciples kept multiplying in Jerusalem very much; and a great crowd of priests began to be obedient to the faith."—Acts 6:7.

[16] Later, political tensions developed between King Herod Agrippa of Judea and the people of Tyre and Sidon. The inhabitants of those cities made flattering peace overtures, and in response Herod gave a public address. The assembled crowd began to cry: "A god's voice, and not a man's!" Instantly, Jehovah's angel struck Herod Agrippa, and he died "because he did not give the glory to God." (Acts 12:20-23) What a shock to those whose hope was in human rulers! (Psalm 146:3, 4) The Christians, however, went on glorifying Jehovah. Consequently, "the word of Jehovah went on growing and spreading" despite such political instability.—Acts 12:24.

Then and Now

[17] Yes, the worldwide Christian congregation in the first century was made up of zealous, active praisers of Jehovah God. All loyal Christians shared in spreading the good news. Some met responsive ones and, as Jesus said, taught them to obey all the things he commanded. (Matthew 28:19, 20) The result was that the congregation grew, and more and more individuals joined King David of old in ascribing praise to Jehovah. All echoed the inspired words: "I laud you, O Jehovah my God, with all my heart, and I will glorify your name to time indefinite, for your loving-kindness is great toward me."—Psalm 86:12, 13.

[18] In view of this, the words of theology professor Allison A. Trites are thought provoking. Comparing modern-day Christendom with first-century Christianity, he said: "Churches today grow usually by *biological* growth (when the children within a local church family make a personal profession of faith) or by *transfer* growth (when a newcomer transfers his or her membership from another local church). In Acts, however, the growth was *conversion* growth, for the church was just beginning its work." Does that mean that true Christianity is no longer growing in the way that Jesus said it should? Of course not. True Christians today are every bit as zealous in publicly ascribing praise to God as were Christians in the first century.

LAST DAYS

***The Watchtower* 2013 1January 1 "Should You Fear the End of the World? "**

The End of the World—Fear, Fascination, and Frustration

How do you feel about December 21, 2012, the date on the Maya calendar that many have been saying would bring worldwide change? Depending on what you expected, you might be relieved, disappointed, or indifferent. Was it just another incorrect prediction for the end of the world?

What about "the end of the world" described in the Bible? (Matthew 24:3, *King James Version*) Some fear that the earth will be burned up. Others are fascinated by end-time scenarios. Many have simply grown tired of being told that the end is near. But could those be reactions to fiction rather than to fact?

You might be surprised to learn what the Bible really says about the end of the world. Not only does the Bible give reasons to look forward to the end but it also acknowledges the frustration that can set in if the end seems to be overdue. We invite you to consider the Bible's answers to some common questions about the end of the world.

Will the earth be burned up?

THE BIBLE'S ANSWER: *"[God] has founded the earth upon its established places; it will not be made to totter to time indefinite, or forever."*—PSALM 104:5.

The earth will not be destroyed, either by fire or by any other means. Instead, the Bible teaches that this planet is mankind's eternal home. Psalm 37:29 says: "The righteous themselves will possess the earth, and they will reside forever upon it."—Psalm 115:16; Isaiah 45:18.

After God created the earth, he said that it "was very good," and he still feels that way. (Genesis 1:31) Far from planning to destroy it, he promises to "bring to ruin those ruining the earth"—and to protect it from permanent damage.—Revelation 11:18.

You may wonder, though, about 2 Peter 3:7. That Bible verse says: "The heavens and the earth that are now are stored up for fire." Does this not show that the earth will be burned up? Actually, the Bible sometimes uses the terms "heavens," "earth," and "fire" figuratively, as symbols. For example, when Genesis 11:1 says: "All the earth continued to be of one language," it uses "earth" to mean human society.

The context of 2 Peter 3:7 shows that the heavens, earth, and fire mentioned there are also symbols. Verses 5 and 6 draw a parallel with the Flood of Noah's day. On that occasion, an ancient world was destroyed, yet our planet did not disappear. Instead, the Flood wiped out a violent society, or "earth." It also destroyed a kind of "heavens"—the people who ruled over that earthly society. (Genesis 6:11) In the same way, 2 Peter 3:7 foretells the permanent destruction of wicked society and its corrupt governments as if by fire.

What happens at the end of the world?

THE BIBLE'S ANSWER: *"The world is passing away and so is its desire, but he that does the will of God remains forever."*—1 JOHN 2:17.

"The world" that is to pass away is, not the earth, but the world of mankind whose lives are not in harmony with God's will. Just as a surgeon might remove a cancerous tumor to save a patient's life, God will "cut off" the wicked so that good people can truly enjoy life on earth. (Psalm 37:9) In that sense, "the end of the world" is a good thing.

Such a positive view of "the end of the world" is implied by the Bible translations that render this expression "the conclusion of the system of things" or "the end of the age." (Matthew 24:3; *New International Version*) Since both humankind and the earth survive the end, does it not seem reasonable that a new age, a new system of things, would follow? The Bible answers yes, for it speaks of "the coming system of things."—Luke 18:30.

Jesus called that future period "the renewal of all things." At that time, he will restore humanity to the conditions that God originally intended. (Matthew 19:28, *NIV*) We will then enjoy

- A paradise earth with security and prosperity for all.—Isaiah 35:1; Micah 4:4.
- Work that is meaningful and satisfying.—Isaiah 65:21-23.
- The curing of all disease.—Isaiah 33:24.
- The reversal of aging.—Job 33:25.
- The resurrection of the dead.—John 5:28, 29.

If we do "the will of God," what he asks of us, we need not fear the end of the world. Instead, we can look forward to it.

Is the end of the world really near?

THE BIBLE'S ANSWER: *"When you see these things occurring, know that the kingdom of God is near."*—LUKE 21:31.

In the book *The Last Days Are Here Again,* Professor Richard Kyle writes that "sudden change and social chaos create an atmosphere conducive to predictions of the end of the world." That is especially the case when the change and chaos seem hard to explain.

However, the Bible prophets who spoke about the end were not trying to explain baffling events of their day. Instead, they were *inspired by God* to describe conditions that would indicate an imminent end of the world. Consider some of those prophecies and decide for yourself whether they are being fulfilled in our time.

- Wars, famines, earthquakes, and epidemics of deadly disease.—Matthew 24:7; Luke 21:11.
- Significant increase in crime.—Matthew 24:12.
- The ruining of the earth by mankind.—Revelation 11:18.
- People who love themselves, money, and pleasures but do not love God.—2 Timothy 3:2, 4.
- The breakdown of the family.—2 Timothy 3:2, 3.
- General apathy toward the evidence of the approaching end.—Matthew 24:37-39.
- The preaching of the good news of God's Kingdom worldwide.—Matthew 24:14.

As Jesus said, seeing "all these things" lets us know that the end of the world is near. (Matthew 24:33) Jehovah's Witnesses believe that the evidence is convincing, and they share their faith with others by preaching in 236 lands.

Do mistaken expectations about the end mean that it will never come?

THE BIBLE'S ANSWER: *"Whenever it is that they are saying: 'Peace and security!' then sudden destruction is to be instantly upon them just as the pang of distress upon a pregnant woman; and they will by no means escape."*—1 THESSALONIANS 5:3.

The Bible likens the world's destruction to the onset of labor—the mother's pain is inevitable and comes suddenly. The time leading up to the end is also like a pregnancy, for an expectant mother is aware of ever-increasing signs of the coming birth. Her doctor might estimate the birth date; yet, even if the event should delay, she would still be sure that her baby will soon be born. Similarly, any mistaken expectations about the end do not alter the unmistakable features identifying these as "the last days."—2 Timothy 3:1.

'If the sign that we are near the end is so obvious,' you might ask, 'why do so many people fail to recognize it?' The Bible shows that when the end is near, many will belittle the evidence. Rather than acknowledge the fundamental changes during the last days, they would scoff: "From the day our forefathers fell asleep in death, all things are continuing exactly as from creation's beginning." (2 Peter 3:3, 4) In other words, the sign of the last days is clear, but many will ignore it.—Matthew 24:38, 39.

This article has considered just some of the Scriptural evidence that the end is near. Would you like to learn more? If so, why not contact Jehovah's Witnesses to accept their offer of a free Bible study? Study sessions can be held in your home, at another place convenient to you, or even over the phone. The only cost is your time, and the potential benefits are priceless.

HAVE JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES GIVEN INCORRECT DATES FOR THE END?

Jehovah's Witnesses have had wrong expectations about when the end would come. Like Jesus' first-century disciples, we have sometimes looked forward to the fulfillment of prophecy ahead of God's timetable. (Luke 19:11; Acts 1:6; 2 Thessalonians 2:1, 2) We agree with the sentiment of longtime Witness A. H. Macmillan, who said: "I learned that we should admit our mistakes and continue searching God's Word for more enlightenment."

Why, then, do we continue to highlight the nearness of the end? Because we take seriously Jesus' words: "Keep looking, keep awake." The alternative, to be found "sleeping" by Jesus, would prevent us from gaining his favor. (Mark 13:33, 36) Why?

Consider this example: A lookout in a fire tower might see what he thinks is a wisp of smoke on the horizon and sound what proves to be a false alarm. Later, though, his alertness could save lives.

Likewise, we have had some wrong expectations about the end. But we are more concerned with obeying Jesus and saving lives than with avoiding criticism. Jesus' command to "give a thorough witness" compels us to warn others about the end.—Acts 10:42.

We believe that even more important than focusing on *when* the end will come, we must be confident that it *will* come, and we must act accordingly. We take seriously the words of Habakkuk 2:3, which says: "Even if [the end] should delay [compared to what you thought], keep in expectation of it; for it will without fail come true. It will not be late."

MALE HEADSHIP

***The Watchtower* 2010 May 15 pages 8-12 Headship?**

Men, Do You Submit to Christ's Headship?

"The head of every man is the Christ."—1 COR. 11:3.

"YOU are worthy, Jehovah, even our God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power," states Revelation 4:11, "because you created all things, and because of your will they existed and were created." By reason of his Creatorship, Jehovah God is the Supreme Sovereign of the universe and is above all of his creation. That Jehovah "is a God, not of disorder, but of peace" can be seen by the way in which his angelic family is organized.—1 Cor. 14:33; Isa. 6:1-3; Heb. 12:22, 23.

[2] Before anything was created, God existed by himself for countless ages of time. His very first creation was the spirit creature known as "the Word" because he was the Spokesman for Jehovah. The Word is the one through whom all other things came into existence. Later, he came to earth as a perfect human and became known as Jesus Christ.—*Read John 1:1-3, 14.*

[3] What do the Scriptures say about the relative positions of God and his firstborn Son? Writing under inspiration, the apostle Paul tells us: "I want you to know that the head of every man is the Christ; in turn the head of a woman is the man; in turn the head of the Christ is God." (1 Cor. 11:3) The Christ is under the headship of his Father. Headship and subjection are essential for peace and order to prevail among intelligent creatures. Even the one 'by means of whom all other things were created' is required to submit to God's headship.—Col. 1:16.

[4] How did Jesus feel about submitting to Jehovah's headship and coming to earth? The Scriptures state: "Christ Jesus, who, although he was existing in God's form, gave no consideration to a seizure, namely, that he should be equal to God. No, but he emptied himself and took a slave's form and came to be in the likeness of men. More than that, when he found himself in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient as far as death, yes, death on a torture stake."—Phil. 2:5-8.

[5] At all times, Jesus humbly submitted to his Father's will. He said: "I cannot do a single thing of my own initiative; . . . the judgment that I render is righteous, because I seek, not my own will, but the will of him that sent me." (John 5:30) "I always do the things pleasing to [my Father]," he declared. (John 8:29) Toward the end of his life on earth, Jesus said in prayer to his Father: "I have glorified you on the earth, having finished the work you have given me to do." (John 17:4) Evidently, Jesus had no problem with recognizing and accepting God's headship over him.

Submission to the Father Brings Benefits to the Son

[6] When on earth, Jesus demonstrated many wonderful qualities. Among them was the great love he displayed for his Father. "I love the Father," he said. (John 14:31) He also demonstrated great love for people. (*Read Matthew 22:35-40.*) Jesus was kind and considerate, not harsh or overbearing.

"Come to me, all you who are toiling and loaded down," he said, "and I will refresh you. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am mild-tempered and lowly in heart, and you will find refreshment for your souls. For my yoke is kindly and my load is light." (Matt. 11:28-30) Sheeplike people of all ages, especially those who were downtrodden and oppressed, found great comfort in Jesus' delightful personality and uplifting message.

[7] Consider how Jesus dealt with women. Throughout history, many men have treated women very badly. That was true of the religious leaders in ancient Israel. But Jesus treated women with respect. This is made evident in his dealings with a woman who had been sick for 12 years with a flow of blood. "She had been put to many pains" by physicians and had spent all her resources trying to get well. Despite all that effort, she "had got worse." Under the Law, she was considered unclean. Anyone touching her would also become unclean.—Lev. 15:19, 25.

[8] When the woman heard that Jesus was healing the sick, she joined the crowd surrounding him, saying: "If I touch just his outer garments I shall get well." She touched Jesus and immediately got well. Jesus knew that she should not have touched his garment. Nevertheless, he did not scold her. On the contrary, he was kind to her. He understood how she must have felt after all those years of illness and discerned that she was desperate for help. Compassionately, Jesus told her: "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be in good health."—Mark 5:25-34.

[9] Even children could feel at ease in the presence of Jesus. When people brought children to him on one occasion, his disciples reprimanded them, evidently feeling that he would not want to be bothered with children. But that is not the way Jesus felt. The Scriptural account tells us: "At seeing this Jesus was indignant and said to [the disciples]: 'Let the young children come to me; do not try to stop them, for the kingdom of God belongs to suchlike ones.'" Further, "he took the children into his arms and began blessing them, laying his hands upon them." Jesus did not just tolerate children; he warmly welcomed them.—Mark 10:13-16.

[10] How did Jesus come to possess the qualities he displayed during his life on earth? In his prehuman existence, he observed his heavenly Father for aeons of time and absorbed his ways. (*Read Proverbs 8:22, 23, 30.*) In heaven, he had seen Jehovah's loving way of exercising headship over all His creation and had made that way his own. Would Jesus have been able to do that had he not been submissive? It was a delight for him to be in subjection to his Father, and it was a pleasure for Jehovah to have such a Son. When on earth, Jesus reflected perfectly the marvelous qualities of his heavenly Father. What a privilege it is for us to be in subjection to Christ, God's appointed Ruler of the heavenly Kingdom!

Imitate Christ's Qualities

[11] All in the Christian congregation, especially the men, should continually work hard to imitate Christ's qualities. As already noted, the Bible declares: "The head of every man is the Christ." As Christ imitated his Head, the true God, Christian men should strive to imitate their head—the Christ. Upon becoming a Christian, the apostle Paul did just that. "Become imitators of me," he exhorted fellow Christians, "even as I am of Christ." (1 Cor. 11:1) And the apostle Peter said: "To this course you were called, because even Christ suffered for you, leaving you a model for you to follow his steps closely." (1 Pet. 2:21) The admonition to imitate the Christ is of particular interest to men for still another reason. They are the ones who become elders and ministerial servants. As Jesus found joy in imitating Jehovah, Christian men should find joy in imitating Christ and his qualities.

[12] The elders in the Christian congregation are under obligation to learn to be like Christ. Peter gave the older men, or elders, this exhortation: "Shepherd the flock of God in your care, not under compulsion, but willingly; neither for love of dishonest gain, but eagerly; neither as lording it over those who are God's inheritance, but becoming examples to the flock." (1 Pet. 5:1-3) Christian elders are not to be dictatorial, domineering, arbitrary, or harsh. Imitating Christ's example, they endeavor to be loving, considerate, humble, and kind in their dealings with the sheep entrusted to their care.

[13] Those taking the lead in the congregation are imperfect men, and they should constantly be aware of that limitation. (Rom. 3:23) So they must be eager to learn about Jesus and imitate his love. They need to ponder over the way that God and Christ deal with people and then strive to imitate

them. Peter exhorts us: "All of you gird yourselves with lowliness of mind toward one another, because God opposes the haughty ones, but he gives undeserved kindness to the humble ones."—1 Pet. 5:5.

[14] In their dealings with God's flock, the appointed men in the congregation are to exhibit fine qualities. Romans 12:10 states: "In brotherly love have tender affection for one another. In showing honor to one another take the lead." Elders and ministerial servants show honor to others. Like Christians in general, these men are 'to do nothing out of contentiousness or out of egotism but with lowliness of mind are to consider that the others are superior to them.' (Phil. 2:3) Those taking the lead should certainly view others as being superior to them. By doing so, the appointed men will be following Paul's counsel: "We, though, who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those not strong, and not to be pleasing ourselves. Let each of us please his neighbor in what is good for his upbuilding. For even the Christ did not please himself."—Rom. 15:1-3.

'Assigning Wives Honor'

[15] Consider now Peter's counsel to married men. He wrote: "You husbands, continue dwelling in like manner with [your wives] according to knowledge, assigning them honor as to a weaker vessel, the feminine one." (1 Pet. 3:7) To honor someone means to hold that individual in high esteem. Thus, you would consider the opinions, needs, and wants of such a person and may defer to that one where there is no vital issue at stake. That is how a husband should deal with his wife.

[16] When telling husbands to honor their wives, Peter adds a warning: "In order for your prayers not to be hindered." (1 Pet. 3:7) That clearly shows how seriously Jehovah views the way a man treats his wife. Failure to show honor to her could hinder his prayers. Moreover, do not wives generally respond positively to being treated honorably by their husbands?

[17] On the matter of loving one's wife, God's Word counsels: "Husbands ought to be loving their wives as their own bodies. . . . For no man ever hated his own flesh; but he feeds and cherishes it, as the Christ also does the congregation . . . Let each one of you individually so love his wife as he does himself." (Eph. 5:28, 29, 33) To what extent should husbands love their wives? "Husbands," wrote Paul, "continue loving your wives, just as the Christ also loved the congregation and delivered up himself for it." (Eph. 5:25) Yes, a husband should be willing even to lay down his life for his wife, just as Christ did for others. When the Christian husband deals with his wife tenderly, considerately, attentively, unselfishly, it is easier for his wife to submit to his headship.

[18] Is assigning honor to wives in this way too much to expect from husbands? No, Jehovah would never ask them to do something that is beyond their capabilities. Besides, Jehovah's worshippers have access to the greatest force in the universe—God's holy spirit. Jesus said: "If you, although being wicked, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more so will the Father in heaven give holy spirit to those asking him!" (Luke 11:13) In their prayers, husbands can ask that by means of his spirit, Jehovah will help them in their dealings with others, including their wives.—*Read Acts 5:32.*

[19] Indeed, men bear a heavy responsibility to learn how to be submissive to Christ and imitate his headship. But what about women, wives in particular?

Second Statement

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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.

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

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.

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.

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

Third Statement

Name	Terrence John O'Brien
Address	12-14 Zouch Road Denham Court NSW 2656
Occupation	Minister, Director
Date	24 July 2015

1. The purpose of this statement is to correct an error in my first statement dated 10 July 2015 of which I have subsequently become aware of in preparing for the Public Hearing for Case Study 29.

First Statement: paragraph 49

2. In paragraph 49 of my first statement dated 10 July 2015, I stated that

> "In my 35 years as an elder I have not been involved in a case of child abuse of any kind."

3. Since making that statement, I have been shown documents relating to an incident in 1987 involving REDACTED. My involvement in that matter was as a circuit overseer. Although at the time of making my first statement, I did not have any recollection of the matter, it is apparent from a letter dated 2 June 2000 which I have been shown REDACTED that I was involved in the deletion of REDACTE as an elder for confessing to child sexual abuse that had occurred between 1970-1975. Having been shown the letter and reflecting on it, I now recall my involvement with the incident.

4. When initially preparing my statement, I had not considered this situation as my involvement was only to make a report to the Service Department recommending his

removal as an elder. Following that, I had no further involvement in his case. Any pursuant action was followed up by the body of elders concerned.

5. Similarly, I have been shown an undated document (but it appears from the surrounding documents to date from the 1990s), relating to an allegation of child abuse by REDACTED REDACTED. It appears from the document that I received a phone call in relation to the incident. Although I have reviewed the document and the relevant records, I have no recollection of the incident. I can only assume that I was on duty answering telephone calls that day. From my review of the documents, REDACTED was deleted as an elder in 1992 and disfellowshipped in 2011.

Signed: .....

Date: July 24, 2015

Witness: .....

Date: 24th July 2015

Statement

Name	VINCENT JOSEPH TOOLE
Address	12-14 Zouch Road Denham Court NSW 2565
Occupation	Solicitor
Date	10 July 2015

1. This statement made by me accurately sets out the evidence that I am prepared to give to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The statement is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

2. This statement is in response to a letter dated 26 June 2015 (which is attached to my statement and marked as Annexure 1) addressed to me from the Commission, which sets out various questions in paragraphs A-H.

3. I have answered the questions raised in connection with my role in the Legal Department and matters that I am personally aware of by the reference to the questions set out in the Commission's letter. I understand that Mr Spinks will address the role of the Service Department in handling child abuse matters.

A. OVERVIEW OF MY INVOLVEMENT WITH THE JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES CHURCH

4. I was baptised as one of Jehovah's Witnesses in October 1972 in the Manly Congregation in Sydney. In 1974, I commenced serving as a regular pioneer and in 1976 I commenced serving as a special pioneer. Around 1974 or 1975, I was appointed as a ministerial servant and in 1977, I was appointed as an elder.

5. In 1977, I moved to the Wagga Wagga Congregation where I continued serving as a special pioneer until 1980 when I moved to Bairnsdale where I continued serving as a special pioneer for approximately six months.

6. Commencing in late 1980 and up until 1989, I served as a circuit overseer in various locations in Australia. I served for approximately two and a half years in Tasmania, four and a half years in Brisbane and approximately one and a half years in Melbourne.

7. In 1989, I commenced doing voluntary work at the Branch headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses in Denham Court, Sydney, and have continued doing so up to the present. Since 1989, I have served in:

    a. the Chester Hill Congregation,

    b. the Illawong Congregation, and

    c. the Randwick Congregation.

8. In December 1993, I completed my legal studies and was admitted as a solicitor.

9. Since then, I have assisted in doing legal work for the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia ("the Branch") on a voluntary basis in the Legal Department.

10. Towards the end of 1995, I established my own legal practice, Vincent Toole Solicitor.

11. Since 2010, I have cared for the oversight of the Legal Department.

B. FUNCTIONS OF LEGAL DEPARTMENT IN RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS AND MANAGING THE RISK OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

12. From 1989, Mr John Mouritz, the then overseer of the Legal Department, primarily handled calls from elders in relation to child sexual abuse. However, on occasions I took calls from elders if Mr Mouritz was away or not available.

13. All elders serving in congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses throughout the world have been directed to contact the Legal Department in their local Branch Office as soon as they learn of an allegation involving child abuse. The primary reason for this direction is to ensure that the elders are made aware of any reporting obligations that they may have under the law in the State where they live. The direction is clearly stated in the October 1, 2012 letter to All Bodies of Elders in Australia under para. 4 (**WAT.0001.004.0066**):

    Some states have child-abuse reporting laws that, depending on the facts, mandate elders to report an accusation to the authorities. Thus, when elders learn of an accusation of child abuse, two elders from their congregation should immediately call the Legal Department for legal advice.

14. The letter to all bodies of elders dated August 1, 1995 contains similar direction (**WAT.0001.004.0005**):

    When a member of the congregation is accused of child molestation, the elders should contact the Society immediately. Some states make it mandatory that elders report an accusation to the proper authorities but other states do not.

15. Where the law does not require ministers of religion to report allegations of child abuse, the Legal Department has been instructed to direct the elders to clearly explain to the victim and/or their families that they have an absolute right to report the matter to the authorities and that they should feel completely free to do so. If they decide to report the matter, the elders will fully support them.

16. As a religious organisation, Jehovah's Witnesses highly value confidentiality in line with the Scriptural admonition *"do not reveal what you were told confidentially"* (Proverbs 25:9). Therefore, it has always been the organisation's direction that elders receive any confession in a setting covered by confessional privilege, if one is available. When receiving calls concerning allegations of child sexual abuse, the Legal Department also highlighted this direction. However, the letter from world headquarters dated January 21, 1999, to Watch Tower Society Australia, page 1, para. 2 clarified the position in connection with information received in this way obtained by elders (**WAT.0001.004.0020**):

> *Where the law does not obligate elders to report cases that come to their attention, there is no need for them to do so, but if the matter becomes known to the authorities and they are required to disclose information they have in their possession, they will do so unless they can claim ecclesiastical privilege.*

17. On this basis, in relation to child abuse cases, since receipt of this letter, elders, with the assistance of the Legal Department, have disclosed information being sought when the authorities have compelled them to do so.

18. Where the elders advise that the police or other authorities are already involved in the matter they are calling about, the elders are instructed to ensure that their actions do not interfere in any way with the police investigation. When this occurs, the elders are directed not to make inquiries or interview anyone concerning the allegations until the matter has been fully handled by the relevant authorities.

19. After the elders have been given the above advice from the Legal Department, they are then transferred to the Service Department where they are given whatever assistance and direction is needed to ensure that the matter is handled in harmony with the scriptural directions and procedures provided for handling allegations and instances of child sexual abuse.

20. On occasions when the police or other authorities are involved and they have sought documents from elders in connection with a matter that has been reported, the Legal Department has assisted the elders in obtaining and producing the documents sought.

21. The Legal Department is not involved in managing the risk of child sexual abuse within the Jehovah's Witnesses Church.

C. PERSONS SERVING IN THE LEGAL DEPARTMENT

22. Those serving in the Legal Department are:

    - Vincent Toole, Solicitor;
    - Benjamin Hamnett, Accountant;
    - Rachel van Witsen, Solicitor; and
    - Three support staff.

D. THE ROLE OF THE LEGAL DEPARTMENT IN HANDLING CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE ALLEGATIONS

23. The Legal Department is not involved in the spiritual aspects of the religion of Jehovah's Witnesses. Specifically, the Legal Department is not involved in handling of these matters:

    a. the consideration of prospective members of any congregation of Jehovah's Witness and their subsequent suitability for baptism;

    b. the selection and appointment of elders, ministerial servants, pioneers, special pioneers or any other position within congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses;

    c. the deletion or removal of elders, ministerial servants, pioneers, special pioneers, or any other position within congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses;

    d. the public or private reproval of members of Jehovah's Witnesses;

    e. the awarding and removal of congregational privileges to members of the congregation, including the nature of those privileges;

    f. the disfellowshipping and/or disassociation of persons who are members of Jehovah's Witnesses congregations;

    g. the reinstatement of individuals as members of any congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses.

E. THE ROLE OF THE LEGAL DEPARTMENT IN CASE OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE OF BCH

24. As far as I am aware, and based on my review of the file, the Legal Department had no involvement in the case of child sexual abuse by BCH that was handled in 1989.

25. I note from the file that I provided a memorandum to the Service Department dated January 23, 2003 concerning BCH The memorandum simply points out how untruthful he was being concerning his molestation of his daughter that he had previously admitted to before the appeal committee in 1989.

F. THE ROLE OF THE LEGAL DEPARTMENT AND VINCENT TOOLE SOLICITORS IN INVESTIGATION AND CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS OF BCH

26. The Legal Department was not involved in the investigation of, and subsequent criminal proceedings against, BCH commencing in 2001.

27. In the criminal proceedings against BCH commencing around 2001, Vincent Toole solicitor was involved in my capacity as an independent solicitor as follows:

    a. Vincent Toole solicitor received instructions from the six elders involved with the judicial and appeal committees who disfellowshipped BCH in 1989, namely, Ronald de Rooy, Dino Ali, Kevin Bowditch, James Bennett, Donald Wilson and Joseph Miraziz, to accept service on their behalf and to assist them with the preparation of their statements for the police and arranging for the production of subpoenaed documents;

    b. Vincent Toole solicitor acted for the Branch by accepting service on its behalf and arranging for the production of subpoenaed documents; and

    c. Vincent Toole solicitor also acted for the elders in the Beenleigh Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses by accepting service on their behalf and arranging for the production of subpoenaed documents.

28. The Branch, the Beenleigh Congregation and the elders involved willing cooperated with the police in this criminal proceeding based on the direction provided in the letter from world headquarters dated January 21, 1999 to Watch Tower Society Australia, page 1, para. 2 (**WAT.0001.004.0020**):

> *Where the law does not obligate elders to report cases that come to their attention, there is no need for them to do so, but if the matter becomes known to the authorities and they are required to disclose information they have in their possession, they will do so unless they can claim ecclesiastical privilege.*

G. MANDATORY REPORTING OBLIGATIONS AROUND AUSTRALIA AND POLICE CHECKS

29. All Australian States and Territories have enacted legislation imposing varying mandatory reporting obligations. South Australia, Victoria and the Northern Territory, impose the following specific obligations:

    a. In South Australia, a number of nominated persons in various professions, including *ministers of religion* as well as the *employees and volunteers in organisations formed for religious or spiritual purposes*, are required to report if he or she suspects on reasonable grounds that a child (under 18) *has been or is being abused* provided that the suspicion is formed in the course of the person's work or in carrying out their official duties with the exception of disclosures made in the confessional. *(Children's Protection Act 1993, ss. 6, 10, and 11.)*

b. In Victoria, all adults, including ministers of religion, who form a reasonable belief that *a sexual offence* has been committed by an adult against a child under 16 years of age, have an obligation to report the matter to the police. A *sexual offence* includes grooming for sexual conduct a child under the age of 16 years. (*Crimes Amendment (Grooming) Act 2014, s. 3.)* This obligation does not apply if the belief was obtained in a religious confession. Additionally, under the transitional provisions, the obligation to report applies if the victim was under 16 years of age on 3 June 2014, irrespective of when the information forming the basis of the reasonable belief is received. However, the obligation does not apply if the victim was aged 16 or over on 3 June 2014 and requests that the offence not be reported provided that the victim has the capacity to make an informed decision about the matter. (*Crimes Amendment (Protection of Children) Act 2014, s. 4.)*

c. In the Northern Territory, all adult Territorians are required to report anyone under 18 years who they believe is involved in sexual activity and *who is, or has suffered, or is likely to suffer, harm or exploitation* (including sexual abuse of a child). Where there is a relationship of special care between the offender and a child over 16 years of age, and an adult believes the child has been or is likely to be a victim of an offence, adult Territorians are required to report. If a child is under 14, and the Territorian believes that the child has been or is likely to be a *victim of a sexual offence*, then he or she must report the matter. *(Care and Protection of Children Act, s 26.)*

30. While the other jurisdictions have enacted legislation imposing mandatory reporting obligations on nominated persons or professions, ministers of religion have not been included in the list of those who have a mandatory reporting obligation

31. In New South Wales, Northern Territory, Tasmania, Victoria and Western Australia, approximately 7,000 elders and ministerial servants currently serving in congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses have obtained police checks . In these states they are required by law to do so.

a. In New South Wales, everyone doing child-related work must hold a Working with Children Check (WWCC) clearance. With religious organisations, work carried out by a minister, or other like religious leader or spiritual officer where children are part of the congregation is child-related work. All 3,254 elders and ministerial servants currently serving in congregations in New South Wales have WWCC clearances. *(Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012, s. 8; Child Protection (Working with Children) Regulation 2013, reg. 13.)*

b. In the Northern Territory, anyone involved in child-related work, including those involved in religious organisations as volunteer ministers, must hold a current clearance notice if their work involves or may potentially involve contact (as defined) with children. All 77 elders and ministerial servants currently serving in congregations in the Northern Territory have obtained clearance notices. *(Care and Protection of Children Act, ss. 185 and 187.)*

c. In Tasmania, as explained in the Tasmanian Government's *Guide for those working or volunteering in Child Related Religious Activities,* "A person must apply for working with children registration when working or volunteering in a child-related activity. Child-related religious activity means: a religious service conducted by a minister, priest, rabbi, mufti, acolyte or other religious leader or spiritual officer in a religious organisation for a congregation that consists of or includes children". All 251 elders and ministerial servants currently serving in congregations in Tasmania have obtained working with children registrations. *(Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013 (Tas), ss. 5, 6, 7, and 17.)*

d. In Victoria, all ministers of religion are required to hold a working with children assessment notice because they are involved in doing child-related work. If a minister of religion is the appointed leader of a local religious congregation in an organised religious institution and the congregation contains any children, work engaged in as a minister of religion is child-related work. All 2,025 elders and ministerial servants currently serving in congregations in Victoria have obtained working with children assessment notices. *(Working with Children Act 2005, ss. 8, 9 and 35.)*

e. In Western Australia, everyone engaged in child-related work, including volunteers who are ministers of religion or persons who, in any other capacity, are carrying out the work for the purposes of a religious organisation must have a current assessment notice if the work involves or may potentially involve contact with children. All 1,258 elders and ministerial servants currently serving in congregations in Western Australia have obtained assessment notices. *(Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004, ss. 4, 6, 22 and 24.)*

32. Under the existing law in the Australian Capital Territory, Queensland, and South Australia, elders and ministerial servants in congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses are not required to obtain police checks for the following reasons:

    a. In the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), everyone involved in a regulated activity must have a working with vulnerable people registration. With religious organisations, an activity or service provided is a regulated activity if it is *specifically for, or mainly used by children*, or *for people accessing a regulated activity* mentioned in the Schedule 1, Part 1.2 of the *Working with Vulnerable People (Background Checking) Act 2011*. Jehovah's Witnesses do not conduct any activity or provide any service specifically for, or mainly used by children, nor do they provide any of the services mentioned in Schedule 1, Part 1.2. Therefore, elders and ministerial servants in congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses in the ACT are not required to obtain working with vulnerable people registration in relation to their congregation activities. *(Working with Vulnerable People (Background Checking) Act 2011, ss. 8, 12, and Schedule 1, Part 1.23.)*

    b. In Queensland, everyone involved in *regulated employment* needs to have a current positive notice. With religious organisations, employment is *regulated employment* if the *usual functions* of the employment *include, or are likely to include, providing*

services directed mainly towards children or conducting activities mainly involving children. (Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000, ss. 188, Schedule 1, Part 1, ss. 5 and 10.) Jehovah's Witnesses do not conduct any activities or provide any services that are directed mainly towards children or mainly involving children. The structure and activities of congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses differ from most of the more well-known religions. For example, Jehovah's Witnesses do not sponsor or engage in any activities that separate or isolate children from their parents in any way. They do not conduct Sunday schools, camps, excursions, or any other activities involving children. Therefore, under the existing legislation, elders and ministerial servants in Queensland are not required to obtain a positive notice in relation to their congregation activities.

c. In South Australia, persons acting in a prescribed position in an organisation must have an assessment of their relevant history (which includes criminal history) undertaken. However, organisations and individuals are exempt from this requirement if the person who undertakes, or a position only involves, work that is not *for the exclusive benefit of children and is not provided to any child on an individual basis or a position in which all work involving children is undertaken in the presence of the children's parents or guardians and in which there is ordinarily no physical contact with the children. (Children's Protection Act 1993, ss. 8B, 8D and Children's Protection Regulations 2010, reg. 14.)* Jehovah's Witnesses do not engage in any work that is for the exclusive benefit of children or that separates children from their parents or guardians. Therefore, under the existing legislation, elders and ministerial servants in congregations in South Australia are not required to obtain a relevant history assessment in connection with their congregation activities.

H. THE BRANCH'S DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY

33. The Branch has had a long-standing practice of indefinitely retaining files involving child sexual abuse.

34. This practice is, by way of example set out in the direction given to all bodies of elders in a letter dated July 20, 1998, page 1, para. 2: (**WAT.0002.001.0003**):

> *Furthermore, any correspondence put in the confidential file about an individual accused of child molestation, proven or otherwise, should be marked "Do Not Destroy" and be kept indefinitely.*

35. A modification to this practice occurred as a result of the Branch coming under the Commonwealth privacy legislation, in particular the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth).

36. In 2009, the Commonwealth's Assistant Privacy Commissioner wrote to the Branch stating that, in his view, the Branch's annual turnover for the purposes of the Privacy Act should include donations received during the year, which meant that the Branch could no longer rely on the

"small business" exemption (before that, the Branch had operated on the understanding that it came under the "small business" exemption of the Act). The Branch accepted the decision and advised that it would do what was necessary to ensure its compliance with privacy legislation.

37. This meant the Branch was required to review ***all*** its files to ensure that it conformed to the requirements of the Act, in particular, in relation to keeping confidential, personal information in circumstances where it was unreasonable to do so.

38. As a result, the Branch introduced a policy for maintaining files and retaining documents for all files, including those relating to child sexual abuse.

39. The procedures for implementing of the policy as it pertained to serious matters and child sexual abuse matters was outlined in a letter to the bodies of elders dated February 1, 2009 which stated as follows (**WAT.0002.001.0015**):

> ***Other serious matters:*** *We have, however, received many inquiries concerning document retention relating to serious matters that do not result in disfellowshipping. These may concern persons judicially reproved, allegations of serious wrongdoing that cannot be established, and matters that are investigated and handled by two elders. In these and other similar situations, a summation of no more than one page should be written and held in the confidential file. All other documents and correspondence relating to the matter should then be destroyed. Summations concerning persons judicially reproved should be kept for a minimum period of five years. All other summations may be retained for as long as the body of elders deems necessary.*
>
> ***Child abuse matters:*** *In regard to all matters involving allegations or established cases of child abuse, the above-mentioned direction will apply, with one exception. All documents relating to the matter should be sent to the branch office, instead of being destroyed. This will facilitate the congregation retaining only a stamped S-77 form in matters resulting in disfellowshipping, or a single page summation for all other situations.*

40. The documents involving child sexual abuse sent to the service department at the Branch as a result of this direction were then placed in the file relating to the matter already held by the Branch.

41. The service department then carried out an assessment of the documents that were duplicative or unnecessary to keep in accordance with, and in order to comply with, the Act.

42. All material documentation was, of course, retained (and has now been provided to the Commission).

43. Further, the Branch continues to have a long-standing document replacement policy in connection with letters to congregations providing updated policy direction. When a letter is received that adjusts an existing policy in some way, the previous letter dealing with that policy is to be destroyed and replaced with the letter containing the adjusted policy. This reason for this is to avoid any confusion or mistake being made about what the current policy is in

connection with the matter dealt with in the letter. The Branch keep copies of these superseded documents for a period of time.

44. For example, the most recent letter setting out the importance of retaining the information relating to child abuse the 1 October 2012 letter. This letter supersedes the previous letters as set out in para. 1 (**WAT.0001.004.0066**). Among other matters it deals with, at para. 11 (**WAT.0001.004.0068**) it states:

> "Information concerning an individual accused of child molestation, proved or otherwise, should be placed in the congregational confidential file and marked "Do not destroy" and kept indefinitely".

45. Those files are kept at the Branch with a summary held by the congregation.

Signed: .....

Date: 10 July 2015

Witness: .....

Date: 10 JULY 2015

Annexure in the matter of Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia
Annexure 1 to Statement of Vincent Joseph Toole

Royal Commission
into Institutional Responses
to Child Sexual Abuse

26 June 2015

Mr Vincent Toole
Legal Department
Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia
12-14 Zouch Road
Denham Court NSW 2565

By email: InboxLGL.AU@jw.org

Dear Mr Toole,

Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (Royal Commission)
Case Study 29 (Jehovah's Witnesses) – request for statements

As you are aware, the Royal Commission is holding a public hearing in Sydney commencing on 27 July 2015 to inquire into the response of the Jehovah's Witnesses Church and the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia Ltd (**Watchtower Australia**) to complaints of child sexual abuse within the Jehovah's Witnesses Church in Australia.

The scope and purpose of the public hearing is to inquire into:

1. The experience of survivors of child sexual abuse within the Jehovah's Witnesses Church in Australia.

2. The responses of the Jehovah's Witnesses Church and the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia Ltd to allegations, reports or complaints of child sexual abuse within the Church.

3. The systems, policies and procedures in place within the Jehovah's Witnesses Church and the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia Ltd for raising and responding to allegations of or concerns about child sexual abuse within the Church.

4. The systems, policies and procedures in place in the Jehovah's Witnesses Church and the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia Ltd to prevent child sexual abuse within the Church.

5. Any related matters.

Request for statement
The Royal Commission requests that you prepare a statement which addresses the following matters:

A. An overview of your involvement with the Jehovah's Witnesses Church, including but not limited to an overview of:
   i. the congregations of which you have been a member; and

ii. the roles you have held within the Church, including but not limited to your role within the Legal Department and the period of service in that role.

B. The function(s) of the Legal Department in relation to responding to allegations and managing the risk of child sexual abuse within the Jehovah's Witnesses Church.

C. The membership and/or staffing of the Legal Department, with specific reference to the number of members/staff and their qualifications, if any.

D. The role of the Legal Department in the following processes as they relate to or involve allegations, reports, or history of child sexual abuse:

a. consideration of prospective members of the Jehovah's Witnesses Church and their subsequent suitability for baptism;

b. selection and appointment of elders, ministerial servants, pioneers, special pioneers, and/or any other position of status within the Church;

c. the deletion or removal of elders, ministerial servants, pioneers, special pioneers, and/or any other position of status within the Church;

d. the public or private reproval of members of the Church;

e. the awarding and removal of congregational privileges to members of the congregation, including the nature of those privileges;

f. the disfellowshipping and/or disassociation of members of the Church; and/or

g. the reinstatement of individuals as members of the Church.

E. The role of the Legal Department in relation to the case of child sexual abuse by BCH

F. The involvement, if any, of:

a. the Legal Department; and/or

b. Vincent Toole Solicitors,

in the investigation of, and subsequent criminal proceedings against, BCH

G. Your knowledge and understanding of any obligations, legal or otherwise, that members of the Jehovah's Witnesses Church around Australia have in relation to:

i. reporting child sexual abuse to State and/or Federal authorities;

ii. conducting police checks of persons within the Church whose roles involve contact with children; and

iii. sharing of information that might prevent future child sexual abuse.

H. Watchtower Australia's document retention policy and the revisions to that policy in or around 2008 regarding records relating to child sexual abuse, and the reasons for those revisions.

The above matters are not intended to limit you in any way, and you should provide any other information that you consider to be relevant. We ask that you please provide copies of any documents not already produced to the Royal Commission which record the matters referred to above.

We ask that you prepare your statement by no later than **10 July 2015**. At such time, the Royal Commission will issue a notice for its production, and may summons you to give evidence in the public hearing.

Please do not hesitate to contact Joanna Blair on (02) 8284 2448 if you would like to discuss any aspect of this matter.

Yours sincerely,



Tony Giugni
Solicitor Assisting the Royal Commission
Telephone: 02 8284 2431
Email: tony.giugni@childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au

STATEMENT OF JOE BELLO

REDACTED

D.O.B: 3/11/1958

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 REDACTED Congregation.

1.1. I was baptized as one of Jehovah's Witnesses in 1973.

1.2. I was appointed as an elder in 1991 in Beldon Congregation.

1.3. REDACTED Congregation was formed in late 1991 and I was appointed as an elder there. I have served as an elder in REDACTED Congregation since 1991.

2. **<u>Your knowledge and understanding of the systems, policies and procedures in place</u> within the Jehovah's Witness Church to:**

   a. respond to allegations or complaints of child sexual abuse made within the Church; and

   b. prevent child sexual abuse within the Church; and

   c. identify 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. When the elders become aware of an allegation of child sexual abuse, it is reported immediately to the Branch Office. The Branch advises the elders of any requirements

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of mandatory disclosure to the relevant authorities, and gives advice as to handling the wrongdoing according to scriptural principles.

2.2. Apart from reporting to the Branch and acting as advised, the body of elders treats child sexual abuse like any serious wrongdoing. Two elders are directed to investigate the complaint and, if substantiated, a judicial committee of three elders is appointed to deal with the matter. If the wrongdoer is repentant, he is reproved and loses privileges in the congregation. If he is an elder or ministerial servant he is removed from this position immediately. If the wrongdoer is not repentant he is disfellowshipped from the congregation and the congregation is notified of this fact (though they are not notified of the grounds for this).

2.3. Elders have the responsibility to teach all in the congregation to adhere to the clean moral standards in God's Word the Bible. They also help parents understand their responsibility is to protect their children. Assistance is given in various articles in the Watchtower and Awake magazines, and publications such as "Young People Ask" volumes 1 and 2, and "Learn from the Great Teacher".

2.4. Where a person has been found guilty of child sexual abuse, the elders privately counsel him as to appropriate behaviour with children, such as not spending time with them without another adult present, not inviting them to his home, not engaging in displays of affection with children and so on.

2.5. Detailed measures for protecting children in the congregation are provided to elders in the confidential letter dated 1 October 2012 from the Branch to all elders, and the elders' book "Shepherd the Flock of God in your Care" which was issued in about 2010.

2.6. Congregation members are reminded in our Bible instruction that they are obliged to report any serious wrongdoing (including child sexual abuse) to the elders if the wrongdoer will not come forward.

3. **<u>Any training that you have received</u>, participated in, and/or delivered in relation to responding to allegations, prevention, and/or identification of child sexual abuse.**

3.1. I have attended many elders' schools, which are courses held over 1 or 2 days every 2 or 3 years. At several of these schools, we have covered the topic of the elders' responsibilities in regard to preventing and dealing with cases of child sexual abuse.

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3.2. There has been a series of letters from the Branch dealing with child sexual abuse, the latest being the October 1 2012 letter I referred to in paragraph 2.5.

3.3. The current elders' book "Shepherd the Flock of God in your Care" also deals with child sexual abuse. The previous book "Pay Attention to Yourselves and to All the Flock" gave guidance on handling cases of serious wrongdoing which included cases of child sexual abuse.

3.4. I personally review the information in this publication and letter, and the information in relevant Watchtower and Awake articles, if ever I have any concern about possible child sexual abuse in the congregation.

4. **A summary of your experience, both prior to and since the allegations made by** BCB **REDACTED in 1991, of responding to allegations of child sexual abuse within the Church.**

4.1. The case involving BCB is the only one concerning child sexual abuse in which I have been involved.

5. **The response of the REDACTED Congregation to allegations of child sexual abuse made in or around 2012 or 2013 by** BCB **in relation to William (Bill Neill), 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 REDACTED Congregation, had with the Legal and/or Service Departments of Watchtower Australia after you became aware of the alleged abuse;**
   c. **any discussion(s) or meeting(s) that you, alone and/or together with any other member of the REDACTED 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) BCB

      ii) BCC

      iii) **Robert Boardman;**

      iv) **David Wood.**

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d. Any correspondence, including the substance of that correspondence, that you, alone and/or together with any other member of the REDACTED Congregation, had with any other Jehovah's Witness Congregation and/or the Watchtower Australia relating to the allegation of child sexual abuse made by BCB

5.1. Sometime in 2012, I can't remember the exact date, BCB asked the elders to visit her to discuss an issue. I and David Wood visited her and her husband BCC at her home.

5.2. In the course of that visit, BCB described how when she was a teenager staying at Bill Neill's home in Narrogin, she had been subjected by Bill Neill to sexual abuse on a number of occasions. That abuse involved Bill Neill kissing her on many occasions and putting his tongue in her mouth; touching her breasts through her nightgown, and looking at her when she was taking a shower. Later in her letters, BCB alleged that Bill Neill had performed oral sex on her.

5.3. When BCB initially advised us of this matter she said to David and me words to the effect, "I don't want to do anything about it myself but I feel the society should know so others can be protected."

5.4. Following this initial meeting with BCB David and I put the details in a letter which we sent to the Branch office.

5.5. Over subsequent months BCB was very upset and depressed. She said she had difficulties with what she felt were unkind actions toward her and her family by some others in the congregation, and she was having some troubles with the behaviour of her own children. She felt that her depression stemmed from the abuse she had suffered as a child. David Wood and I offered support and shared some scriptural thoughts, and suggested helpful articles from our publications which she and her husband could look over, to help deal with the matter.

5.6. Sometime later BCB 's mother provided an envelope to me at one of our meetings. It was from BCB and had a hand written summary substantially in accordance with what she had disclosed to David and me, which we had sent on to the Branch, with some minor elaboration.

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5.7. When I next saw BCB at the meeting she gave me another envelope with a printed summary with a little more detail but no explanation other than saying "This is the last one".

5.8. At a subsequent meeting I saw BCB husband BCC and he asked for the envelope to be returned, so I returned the latest printed summary and destroyed the previous hand written summary.

5.9. Sometime later David Wood and another elder, Robert Boardman went to visit BCB and I understand they sent a letter with an updated summary of BCB s complaint, with more details, to the Branch Office. They showed me the summary they had prepared before sending it so that I could confirm matters from my previous involvement.

5.10. Over a period of some months about 4 elders including myself were involved in providing shepherding care and assistance, with many visits to BCB and her family. She appeared to be very depressed. I spent many hours with her and BCC I felt for her pain and the difficulties the whole family was going through.

5.11. During this period, BCB husband BCC said to me words to the effect, BCB has seen a psychiatrist about her depression but she isn't getting better so we are seeking your help."

5.12. On one occasion BCC and I were having a conversation. We were throwing around ideas about how to help BCB move on from the abuse she had suffered as a young teenager. BCC said they were considering bringing the matter up with the Royal Commission. I said to BCC thinking out loud, "What would that accomplish other than dragging Jehovah's name through the mud? Would it help BCB move on from this at all?" He said, "It will achieve a measure of closure for her and possible financial compensation." I said, "I see your point, yes, a measure of closure could help BCB

5.13. Almost as soon as I had said it, I realized I should not have made that remark to BCC as it might seem to question going to the Royal Commission. I was wrong to say it and I never would want to discourage someone going to the authorities with a complaint of child sexual abuse. This is also against the direction we receive as elders from the Branch.

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5.14. After this conversation we both went to BCC home because he said BCB was very depressed and in need of encouragement and we shared some encouraging Scriptural thoughts and I encouraged BCB to focus on positive thoughts that might help her rise above her depressed feelings.

J. Bello

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10 July 2015

THE ROYAL COMMISSION INTO INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSES TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

STATEMENT

I, **Jason Davies**, Principal Legal Officer, Department of Education and Training, C/- Crown Law, 50 Ann Street, Brisbane, in the State of Queensland, state as follows:

1. I am a Barrister admitted to practice in Queensland in September 1998.

2. I am presently employed as a government lawyer and I hold the position of Principal Legal Officer at the Department of Education and Training ('the Department'), having commenced employment with the Department in June 2004.

3. Prior to commencing this role, I was a Legal Officer at the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions ('ODPP'). I held this position from August 1999 to August 2003.

An overview of my role and responsibilities at the Queensland DPP between 1 January 2000 and 31 December 2004, with particular reference to my role and responsibilities in relation to criminal proceedings against BCH

4. In my role as a Legal Officer at the ODPP I was engaged in the preparation and conduct of Committal proceedings concerning criminal matters at the Brisbane Magistrates Court, and the preparation of indictments for presentation in the superior courts of Queensland, concerning matters that I had conducted at Committal on behalf of the ODPP, and certain other matters that were conducted at Committal by the Queensland Police Service.

5. In relation to criminal proceedings against BCH I have had reference to file material provided by the ODPP to refresh my memory.

6. I recall that at some point in 2001 I took over the cypher 'CPA' in the Committals Workgroup at ODPP from Legal Officer, Ms Belinda Merrin. The cypher CPA is a designation of a particular legal officer position in the Committals Workgroup.

7. In taking over the CPA cypher, I became responsible for all of the prosecution files prepared or awaiting preparation and allocated to the CPA cypher. The prosecution file of BCH was one of those files.

Signature: Jason Davies ..... Witness: John C. Hornsby .....

8. I recall that the Committal proceeding for BCH was part heard when I took over the cypher (the committal of BCH had already had two days of hearings conducted by Ms Merrin and a further day was listed). I recall that I undertook the remainder of the hearing, which involved telephone evidence from several witnesses, on 24 October 2001.

9. After the conclusion of BCH Committal I was responsible for generally getting the matter ready for trial in the District Court, which in the main involved the preparation of the indictment and Schedule of Facts.

My recollection of the involvement of the Jehovah's Witness Church in the criminal proceedings against BCH, in particular in relation to the assistance, if any, that the Church provided to the Crown in the preparation of the Crown's case.

10. I do not recall having any difficulty in obtaining co-operation from the witnesses I examined who were, in the main, lay representatives of the Jehovah's Witness Church as elder members of the congregation attended by BCH

11. I do recall at one point contacting a lawyer who acted on behalf of the Jehovah's Witness Church as I was trying to locate records of meetings between BCH and church elders relevant to the proceedings. I do not recall any reluctance or hesitation to assist me in obtaining the records in question.

12. In respect of the witnesses I examined, I do not recall feeling that they had been uncooperative or mendacious in any respect.

13. I have been asked to explain my knowledge and understanding of the annotation outlined at the top of the Schedule of Facts I prepared, namely:

> *A crucial factor in this trial is the social environment created by the congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses which has strongly influenced the behaviour of the defendant and all witnesses*

14. To the best of my recollection I made the annotation because I wanted to warn any officers that subsequently handled the file (including other Legal Officers, Crown Prosecutors) that there was a unifying dynamic underpinning all of the evidence in the matter, namely the Jehovah's Witness faith.

15. On reflection, before I undertook the committal process in this matter, I was naïve enough to think that people of faith would be so horrified by sexual abuse in respect of children and women that they would not hesitate to contact the police and let justice take its course.

16. Subsequently, I was also concerned that the inculpatory admissions made by BCH in the context of meetings with elders of his congregation, which made the matter superficially seem more likely to lead to a conviction, would be rendered inadmissible at trial.

Signature: ..... Witness: .....

17. This concern arose due the risk that an application could be made at trial by BCH to exclude the evidence on the basis of unfairness, because the admissions were made in circumstances in which BCH could claim they were involuntary and also subject to inducement.

18. My understanding from the evidence I heard was that BCH would be treated less harshly by the congregation for his sins if he confessed and that even if he was disfellowshipped (excluded from the Jehovah's Witness Church), his confession would count in his favour if he later sought reinstatement on the basis of repentance.

19. As a consequence of the committal I finally understood that matters of faith sometime take precedence over secular, moral obligations and norms, namely referral of such matters to police.

20. It was also my opinion, based on the evidence and discussion with the victims, that the victims were not treated well by some members of the congregation, at least at the time of Mr BCH disfellowshipping and immediately afterward, and that their privacy was not preserved.

21. The annotation was meant to ensure that whoever followed me in the handling of this file understood that this was not a "run of the mill" sex offence matter. That the religious persuasion of those involved was integral to understanding the behaviour of the accused, the victims and witnesses, at least in their reluctance to go to the police. In my opinion, the annotation supplied valuable context in what was, at that stage, a very busy and under resourced office.

22. I have no knowledge as to whether the context expressed in my annotation had any impact, positive or negative, over the course of the criminal proceedings against BCH between 2001 and 2004.

I make this statement of my own free will believing its contents to be true and correct.

Dated at Brisbane this eighth day of July 2015.

Jason Davies

Jason Davies

John C. Hanley

Witness

Signature: Jason Davies Witness: John C. Hanley

THE ROYAL COMMISSION INTO INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSES TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

STATEMENT

I, **Jason Davies**, Principal Legal Officer, Department of Education and Training, C/- Crown Law, 50 Ann Street, Brisbane, in the State of Queensland, state as follows:

1. This statement is an addendum to the statement I provided to the Royal Commission dated 8 July 2015.

2. I have been asked to address the following additional matters, outlined in bold below.

The factual basis of your understanding, as referred to or otherwise expressed in paragraphs 15, 19 and 21 of your Statement, of the relationship between the faith of members of the Jehovah's Witnesses Church and the reluctance to report child sexual abuse to police or other authorities.

3. The factual basis of my views expressed in paragraphs 15, 19 and 21, is simply the chain of events between the time of the alleged offences and the time when the complainants approached the police. It was apparent to me that church elders appeared to seek to deal with the offending internally rather than by reference to police. The only explanation I could find for that attitude, in respect of the adults, was that they were all acting strictly in accordance with the rules governing their faith.

4. For example, BCG related that when she revealed her sexual assault to BCJ BCJ she was counselled to speak to the Church Elders about it. When BCG subsequently spoke to Elder Ali, she was further referred onto Elder Bowditch and then Elder De Rooy. This led to a meeting of the judicial committee within the church, which caused a meeting to be conducted where BCG was had to reveal her allegations in the presence of her alleged attacker and the Elders. She also relates a further meeting where six elders were present and she had to recount matters again.

5. At no stage during or after this process did BCG relate that she was advised to speak to the police to report the crimes against her. I also do not recall any evidence that any of the church Elders or even BCG mother approached the police to report the matter, even after Mr BCH made admissions.

With reference to paragraphs 16 to 18 of your statement, the prejudicial impact, if any, of the practices of the Jehovah's Witnesses in relation to investigation and adjudication of

Signature:..... Witness:.....
...

allegations, reports, or complaints of child sexual abuse, on the criminal proceedings generally.

6. My concern was entirely practical. The inculpatory statements made by Mr BCH had, from a prosecutor's perspective, potentially great evidential value. I was alert to this because in most complaints of this nature it is usually a contest of credibility between accuser and accused with little or no independent, corroborative evidence.

7. I recall speaking to my legal practice manager at the time I was preparing the matter (I believe it was Todd Fuller) and discussing the admissibility issue. I thought that the admissions would be excluded and he did not.

8. In hindsight, a more pressing concern should have been the delay in the allegations coming to police attention. I attribute this to the church processes and disfellowshipping, which given the religious mindset of all relevant parties at the time, was seemingly accepted as the end of the matter with no need to refer matters to the secular authorities.

The factual basis of your opinion, as expressed in paragraph 20 of your statement, that the privacy of the victims of Mr BCH was not preserved following those victims' reports of child sexual abuse to elders at the Mareeba Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses.

9. I recall that BCG said that some of the details of her allegations against her father had got out into the local community where they lived when the matter was dealt with by the Elders. I recall that she said that she had been subject to gossip and innuendo as a consequence.

10. In my view this was in part a consequence of the process adopted by the church for dealing with BCG complaints. The sheer number of people that were involved in hearing the complaints, the closeness of the Jehovah's Witness Community, and the nature of disfellowshipping Mr BCH makes it somewhat inevitable that embarrassing details would leak into the community.

I make this statement of my own free will believing its contents to be true and correct.

Dated at Brisbane this twentieth day of July 2015.

Jason Davies .... Witness

Jason Davies **Witness**

Signature: Jason Davies ..... Witness: .....

To STEPHEN TEECE Fax 02 4473 6519
10/07/15. R

STATEMENT OF ALBERT RONALD DE ROOY

REDACTED

D.O.B: 16 December 1955

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 was associated when very young with the Belgrave Congregation in Victoria and then the Narrabeen Congregation in New South Wales. As a teenager I attended the Rockhampton Congregation in Queensland and the Glen Iris Congregation in Victoria. In the 1970's I moved to the Cairns Congregation in Queensland and married my wife there. My family and I moved from there in 1981 to the Mareeba Congregation which I have attended since then.

1.2. I was appointed to serve as a Ministerial servant when about 28 years of age. At the age of 30 I was appointed to serve as an Elder in the Congregation.

1.3. As an Elder in the congregation I have been appointed to be a shepherd in the congregation to help and protect spiritually the members of the congregation. This involves teaching from God's word at the meetings to strengthen the faith of those in attendance . Also taking the lead in our preaching work and training ones who I work with. Also included is the role of keeping the congregation spiritually clean and healthy which sometimes involves handling matters of wrongdoing.

1.4. I am now 59 years of age.

2. Your knowledge and understanding of the systems, policies and procedures in place within the Jehovah's Witness Church between 1988 and 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. When a charge of sexual abuse is made, as an elder I have to follow that allegation through. This would include informing the body of elders of the allegation. 2 elders then are assigned to investigate the accusation, and report back to the body of Elders.

A. Ron Rooy

Ron de Rooy
10 July 2015

The body of Elders from that report determine if the accusation has substance and if there is, then appoint a Judicial Committee of 3 elders.

2.2. If an allegation of child abuse is raised, the body of elders is also obligated to report the allegation to the Branch Office immediately. I believe this reporting procedure began in the 1990's. Prior to that, child sexual abuse was handled in the same way as other cases of serious wrongdoing, as I have stated in 2.1 above.

2.3. Child sexual abuse is absolutely not tolerated in the congregation. Any Elder or Ministerial Servant guilty of this is immediately removed from serving in that capacity. An unrepentant child abuser will be disfellowshipped from the congregation, and others from the congregation do not associate with him.

2.4. The procedures for preventing sexual abuse of children are:
* keeping the congregation clean by disfellowshipping unrepentant sinners;
* teaching the congregation members the high moral standards of the Bible at our meetings;
* being vigilant as elders to follow through on any accusation made.

2.5. Also, all members of the congregation are taught that, if they learn of serious wrongdoing including child abuse, they have a personal responsibility to report the wrongdoing to the elders if the wrongdoer does not come forward himself.

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 **in 1989.**

3.1. As an elder I received training at a number of schools for elders which included teaching on handling cases of serious wrongdoing including child sexual abuse, and handling judicial matters on such wrongdoing.

3.2. I also received a number of articles for elders based on Bible principles for handling cases of serious wrongdoing judicially (including child sexual abuse), which were compiled into a publication "Pay Attention to Yourselves and All the Flock".

3.3. I also personally studied God's Word the Bible and various articles in our magazines Awake and the Watchtower that dealt with child sexual abuse.

3.4. From the 1990's I and other elders received specific instruction in the form of letters from the Branch Office which instructed us to report matters of child sexual abuse immediately to the Branch, and we commenced receiving instruction on the subject at elders' schools.

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3.5. My wife and I made sure we warned our own daughters when very young about the danger of sexual abuse and what kind of behaviour was unacceptable even from one of us parents.

3.6. I therefore treated as very serious the accusation that BCG made against her father.

4. A summary of your experience, both prior to and since the allegations made by BCG BCG in 1989, of responding to allegations of child sexual abuse within the Church.

4.1. I recall I was involved in one other case of child sexual abuse in the early 1990's. A brother in the congregation was strongly counseled and was deleted as an elder when the allegations of abuse first came to light. However a number of other complaints were reported in the next couple of years and he was therefore disfellowshipped.

4.2. Since BCG 's case and this other case, more information on the subject has been dealt with in our magazines, also since that time more instructions have been given to elders in dealing with child abuse.

5. The response of the Mareeba Congregation to allegations of child sexual abuse made by BCG in relation to BCH 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

ii) BCH

iii) any other member of the REDACTED family; and/or

iv) BCJ

5.1. My memory is vague because of time elapsed but I seem to recall that BCJ BCJ and BCG came together to inform the elders of the accusation against BCH. At that time BCH was already being handled by a judicial committee, of which I was a member, to look into his improper conduct with a married sister REDACTED and his lying about this. The judicial committee was

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investigating the view that BCH wanted to divorce his wife BCI on a technicality and marry REDA who we understood was also planning to divorce her husband on the same technical grounds. It was in the context of this committee that BCG made her allegations of sexual abuse by BCH and the body of Elders immediately investigated it, but BCH denied it vehemently and with aggression towards BCG

5.2 I tried to focus on doing my job as an elder to deal with the matter in the judicial committee setting, to discipline BCH and give spiritual help to his family. Other members of the congregation were giving support to BCG such as Kevin Bowditch and his family. I do not recall the question of going to the police being discussed at any time. I did not make any comment as to this. I am not surprised that BCG reported the abuse to the police some years later.

5.2. I cannot remember any correspondence with the Legal or Service Department after I became aware of the alleged abuse. Other than stated above, I cannot recall details of any discussions with other members of the Congregation, as it is too long ago. I do recall that I was a member of the judicial committee that disfellowshipped BCH that he appealed against the disfellowshipping and that I attended the appeal committee proceedings.

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

6.1. From memory, BCH was disfellowshipped for loose conduct with REDACTED and for lying about this. In the view of the judicial committee, we were unable to make a conclusive finding about the abuse allegation, as it amounted to one person's word against another's, and we were bound by the scriptural principle that all facts should be established by 2 or more witnesses. BCH appealed his disfellowshipping.

6.2. It was during the appeal committee hearing that BCH admitted in front of 6 persons present that what BCG had alleged was true. The original decision of the judicial committee to disfellowship him was confirmed by the appeal committee, with the admissions by BCH added as additional grounds for disfellowshipping him.

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 very soon after BCH was disfellowshipped, he moved away from Mareeba Congregation to another congregation.

Ron de Rooy
10 July 2015

7.2. I believe BCH first went to Brisbane and then to St.George Congregation in western Queensland. I recall that the elders in Mareeba Congregation received a recommendation for BCH to be reinstated from the elders at St George Congregation, but we rejected this recommendation. Later we received another recommendation from St George Congregation and BCH was subsequently reinstated. I can no longer recall the grounds for reinstating him including whether he had apologized to BCG

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 do not recall what correspondence there was with other congregations or with the Branch, other than the fact that the original judicial committee sent a report to the Branch, and that there was correspondence with St George Congregation about reinstating BCH

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

9.1. All I recall is that BCH left Mareeba Congregation very soon after his disfellowshipping, and I do not recall any such systems or procedures. I do recall that the body of elders in Mareeba Congregation were protective of BCG and at the time BCJ provided good support for her.

9.2. I also recall that BCG moved in and lived with Kevin Bowditch and his family for a time. They were very supportive of her and treated her like a daughter. I believe Kevin helped pay for her wedding to BCJ and gave her away at her wedding.

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 that a police officer named Natalie Bennett was helping to prosecute BCH As I recall all the elders on the original judicial committee and the appeal committee provided statements and any documents we held at the time to the police, and we were all involved in giving evidence in the trial at Brisbane. The case was dismissed. Later it went to court again but I was not involved this time. This time BCH was convicted.

Ron de Rooy
10 July 2015

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.

.....
Dino Ali
10 July 2015

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 **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 **in 1989, of responding to allegations of child sexual abuse within the Church.**

4.1. Apart from BCG 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.

.....
Dino Ali
10 July 2015

5. **The response of the Mareeba Congregation to allegations of child sexual abuse made by BCG in relation to BCH 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**
     - **ii) BCH**
     - **iii) any other member of the REDACTED family; and/or**
     - **iv) BCJ**

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 made the allegations of child sexual abuse, Ron de Rooy, Kevin Bowditch and I were in a judicial committee considering BCH leaving his wife and family for a sister in another congregation, 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 allegations were acted on immediately by the elders. BCG 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

4. We elders on the judicial committee spent many sleepless nights following through to support BCG and to deal with the allegations.

5. When BCH 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 REDAC 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 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 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.

.....
Dino Ali
10 July 2015

STATEMENT OF DOUG JACKSON

ADDRESS: REDACTED

D.O.B: OCTOBER 18, 1943,

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 Narrogin Congregation.

1.1. I was baptized as one of Jehovah's Witnesses in 1963.

1.2. I was appointed as an elder in Swan Hill congregation in Victoria in 1971.

1.3. In 1975 I moved to Seymour congregation in Victoria and served as an elder there.

1.4. In 1979 I served in Mount Evelyn congregation in Victoria and served as an elder there.

1.5. I retired from my job with the Victorian public service in 1981 and moved to Hope Valley congregation in South Australia, and served as an elder there.

1.6. In 1988 I moved to Paradise congregation in South Australia and served as an elder there.

1.7. In 1990 I moved to Perth to assist my elderly mother. I served as an elder in Thornleigh congregation.

1.8. In August 1990 I was invited by the Branch to serve as a circuit overseer. This involved visiting around 20 congregations twice a year, spending 6 days with them giving talks. At that time we had 3 congregation meetings during the week. As circuit overseer I also arranged meetings for field service and shared in the house-to-house ministry. I

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also had meetings with the elders and ministerial servants in the congregation. The purpose of the visit was to encourage all in the congregation.

1.9. I served as a circuit overseer in Western Australia between 1990 and 1998. I served in the circuit including Narrogin congregation from 1990 to the end of 1992. After then I served a circuit covering parts of Perth.

1.10. In 1998 I was appointed as a district overseer which involved visiting 12 circuits.

1.11. In 2014 I retired as district overseer as I had reached the age of 70. I now serve as an elder in Windsor Gardens congregation in South Australia.

1.12 REDACTED [redacted]

1.13. I am in reasonable health although my REDACTED condition has slowed me down. I am now 71 years old.

2. **Your knowledge and understanding of the systems, policies and procedures in place within the Jehovah's Witness Church between 1980 and 1986 to:**

a. Respond to allegations or complaints of child sexual abuse made within the Church; and

b. prevent child sexual abuse within the Church; and

c. identify 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. In the period referred to, I recall that child sexual abuse was dealt with the same as other cases of serious wrongdoing. 2 elders were appointed to investigate the allegation and if they found it substantiated, a judicial committee of 3 elders was formed to deal with the matter. The wrongdoer, the victim and other witnesses were interviewed and gave evidence. The judicial committee would then reprove the

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wrongdoer if he was repentant and disfellowship him if he was not. In either case any of the wrongdoer's privileges (such as serving as an elder or ministerial servant) would be withdrawn immediately. The policy for dealing with such cases was drawn from Bible principles.

2.2. From about the 1990's I recall that matters of child sexual abuse began to be dealt with as a special category and elders were directed to report any such complaints or allegations immediately to the Branch Office and to follow their direction in regard to reporting the matter to the authorities and handling the wrongdoing scripturally.

2.3. Prevention and identification of child sexual abuse was handled by instructing the congregations in applicable Bible principles. These included upholding God's high moral standards and also impressing on the congregation that they each have a personal responsibility before God to report any wrongdoing to the elders, if the wrongdoer will not reveal it voluntarily, to keep the congregation clean and free of reproach.

2.4. Our magazines the Watchtower and Awake, and other publications, dealt with child sexual abuse from time to time. These provided specific instruction to parents and children to help protect children from abuse, supported the right of victims to report abuse, and recognized their pain and the problems caused by abuse. These are offered to congregation members and the public free of charge.

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** BCB **in 1991.**

3.1. As an elder and later a circuit overseer, I recall that we received instruction on handling cases of serious wrongdoing, including child sexual abuse, in the form of schools and courses for elders, letters from the Branch and articles specifically designed to instruct elders in the scriptural principles and procedures to follow.

3.2. From the 1990's the Branch issued a series of letters to bodies of elders on how to handle cases of child sexual abuse, as well as articles which were later compiled into a book, "Shepherd the Flock of God". Elders' schools and courses began to provide specific instruction on responding to such allegations.

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3.3. Our magazines and publications as referred to above provided instruction on preventing child abuse to all members of the congregation as well as members of the public who accepted them.

4. **A summary of your experience, both prior to and since the allegations made by** REDACTED BCB **in 1991, of responding to allegations of child sexual abuse within the Church.**

4.1. BCB 's case is the only case involving child sexual abuse in which I have ever been involved.

5. **The response of the Narrogin Congregation to allegations of child sexual abuse made by** BCB **in relation to William (Bill Neill) in or around 1991, 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 Narrogin Congregation, had with the Legal and/or Service Departments of Watchtower Australia after you became aware of the alleged abuse;**
c. **any discussion(s) or meeting(s) that you, alone and/or together with any other member of the Narrogin 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) BCB

ii) **William (Bill) Neill;**

iii) BCC

iv) **any other member of the Neill family; and/or**

v) **Max Horley.**

5.1. During a visit I made as circuit overseer to Narrogin congregation in early 1992, Max Horley informed me that BCB had made a complaint of child sexual abuse

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against Bill Neil. As there were only 2 elders in the congregation, Bill and Max, I decided to investigate the complaint with Max.

5.2. I recall Max and I sent a letter to the Branch Office reporting the complaint, and that Bill Neil had stood down as an elder.

5.3. The only discussion about the matter in the Narrogin congregation that I can recall was with Bill Neill, Max Horley and BCB I do not recall the substance of those discussions, though to the best of my recollection BCB s complaint involved her discovering Bill Neill looking at her as she was taking a shower. Bill Neill admitted that he did so. I do not recall any detail of other conduct alleged against Bill Neill except that BCB said that Bill Neill had touched her breasts from the outside of her night clothing when kissing her goodnight. Bill Neill did not admit this conduct other than to say if it had occurred it was inadvertent. I do not recall talking to any other members of the Neill family or BCC

6. **The decision that William (Bill) Neill step down as an elder of the Narrogin congregation in 1992, and the reasons for that decision.**

6.1. Max Horley and I discussed the matter and we concluded that Bill Neill no longer met the scriptural qualifications for serving as an elder since he was guilty of uncleanness, and was not free from accusation. I recall feeling concern about the negative impact on BCB if Bill Neill continued serving as an elder. We therefore recommended to Bill Neill that he step down as an elder and he agreed to do so.

7. **Any decision that William (Bill) Neill be reappointed as an elder of the Narrogin congregation, and the reasons for that decision.**

7.1. As far as I can remember, I was not involved in Bill Neill's reappointment. When I left the circuit which included Narrogin congregation, he had not been reappointed. I did not know that he was recommended for reappointment or when this happened.

8. **Any correspondence between you, alone and/or together with any other member of the Narrogin congregation, and any other Jehovah's Witness congregation and/or Watchtower Australia relating to the allegations of child sexual abuse made by** REDACTED BCB

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8.1. As stated in 5.2 above, Max Horley and I reported the matter to the Branch Office in a letter. I do not have a copy of that letter.

9. Your knowledge and understanding of William (Bill) Neill's attendance at and membership of the Narrogin Congregation following the decision in 1992 for him to stand down as an elder, including but not limited to:

a. The period of his membership in the Congregation from 1992;
b. His role(s) within the Congregation from 1992;
c. Any privileges or restrictions applied to him by the Narrogin congregation;
d. Any specific systems and/or procedures that the body of elders of the Narrogin congregation put in place in relation to his contact with children.

9.1. I do not recall how long Bill Neill stayed in Narrogin congregation after being removed as an elder.

9.2. To the best of my recollection, after Bill Neill was removed as an elder, he had no privileges in the congregation. I do not recall if any systems or procedures were placed on him in relation to children.

9.3. At the time Bill Neill stood down as an elder, I recall Max Horley and I gave him strong counsel from the Bible and helped him with scriptures and articles from Jehovah's Witnesses' publications to strengthen him never to repeat such conduct and to hate such behaviour.

Doug Jackson
10 July 2015

REDACTED

STATEMENT OF MAX HORLEY

REDACTED

D.O.B: 3rd January, 1960

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 Narrogin Congregation.**

1.1. My parents became Jehovah's Witnesses around the time they were married so I have been associated all my life. I attended the congregation in Pingelly until the year I started school when the family moved to Narrogin in 1966. I got baptized in 1978 and was appointed a Ministerial Servant in 1985. I was appointed as an Elder in 1988 and served as the congregation Secretary until Bill Neil was removed in 1992 and I was appointed the Presiding Overseer (now known as the Coordinator of the Body of Elders). At the end of 1997 I moved to Halls Head along with my young family and was appointed an Elder in the Halls Head congregation in January, 1998. I became the Secretary around May, 2010. When the Dawesville congregation was formed in November, 2012 I was appointed an Elder and continue to serve as Secretary.

2. **<u>Your knowledge and understanding of the systems, policies and procedures in place</u> within the Jehovah's Witness Church between 1980 and 1986 to:**

   a. **Respond to allegations or complaints of child sexual abuse made within the Church; and**

   b. **prevent child sexual abuse within the Church; and**

   c. **identify 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.

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2.1. I was not appointed an elder until 1988 so my knowledge of policies and procedures was limited to what was contained in Watchtower articles that I could reference. After my appointment, I received some handbooks (dated 1977, 1979, 1981) which had limited additional references. These were combined into one publication in 1991 entitled "Pay Attention to Yourselves and to All The Flock". This publication contained only two references to responding to cases of child sexual abuse and nothing specifically on how to identify or prevent this from happening. The publication did provide information on how to proceed in all cases of sexual misconduct, that is, sexual relations outside of the marriage arrangement. A judicial committee would hear all evidence and then the wrongdoer would be reproved if repentant and removed from the congregation if unrepentant. Evidence would have to include a confession or testimony of two or more witnesses to the same conduct.

2.2. Our monthly magazines the Watchtower and Awake! deal with the issue of child sexual abuse from time to time, from the point of view of stating how wicked it is, helping parents protect children and children protect themselves, and helping victims deal with it and encouraging them to report it.

2.3. Also, the congregation is instructed from the Bible that, if they become aware of a case of serious wrongdoing, including child abuse, they are obligated to approach the wrongdoer and encourage him/her to speak to the elders about it, or if this does not happen, to report the wrongdoing themselves to the elders. The relevant Bible principle makes it clear that failure to report another's wrongdoing can make one responsible before God, and this is emphasised to the congregation.

3. **<u>Any training that you have received</u>, 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** BCB **in 1991.**

3.1. Over the years elders have received a number of letters from the Watchtower Society with references to child sexual abuse namely, but not limited to, 8/89, 4/92, 11/95, 5/97, 12/98, 2/09, 10/12. The later letters provide updated information and often replaced the earlier ones. In 2010 we received the publication "Shepherd the Flock of God" which also contained information on how to handle reports and cases of child sexual abuse and included references to printed material, i.e. letters to the body of elders. I have also attended a number of training days provided to congregation elders;

Max Horley
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some of which included information on child sexual abuse. These were conducted in 1992, 1995, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, and 2012. Now we are directed to contact the branch office legal department if any cases are brought to our attention.

4. **A summary of your experience, both prior to and since the allegations made by** BCB REDACTED **in 1991, of responding to allegations of child sexual abuse within the Church.**

4.1. The case involving BCB is the only one concerning child sexual abuse in which I have been involved.

5. **The response of the Narrogin Congregation to allegations of child sexual abuse made by** BCB **in relation to William (Bill Neill) in or around 1991, 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 Narrogin Congregation, had with the Legal and/or Service Departments of Watchtower Australia after you became aware of the alleged abuse;**
c. **any discussion(s) or meeting(s) that you, alone and/or together with any other member of the Narrogin 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) BCB ;

ii) BCC ;

iii) **William (Bill) Neill;**

iv) **Bronwyn Neill;**

v) **any other member of the Neill family; and/or**

vi) **Doug Jackson.**

5.1. Unfortunately my recollections are vague as it was a very long time ago and I did not keep any notes at the time. I remember BCB visiting me at home and I think BCC was with her although I do not remember if they were already married or only dating at the time. I did not contact the Watchtower Society. I do not remember talking to Bill Neil about the allegations on my own however we must have been expecting a visit of the

Max Horley
7 July 2015

Circuit Overseer and, when he did visit, both Doug Jackson and I met with Bill and also BCB separately to discuss the allegations. When BCB left school she was working RE DA REDACT ED in Narrogin. As her family lived on a farm a 45 minute drive from town, BCB stayed with Bill's family during the week and went home on the weekends. She became a part of the Neil family while living with them and shared a room with one or more of the daughters. The accusation was that Bill touched BCB 's breasts through her nightgown on more than one occasion either when he went to the room to kiss the girls good night or at other times when he was showing affection. Bill denied that he had deliberately done anything improper and, if anything had happened, it had been unintentional. Due to the lack of clear proof from either party, it became a case of one person's word against another. However, it had cast a cloud over the qualifications for Bill to remain an elder. I do not recall talking to Bronwyn Neil or any other members of the Neil family.

5.2. I don't recall BCB mentioning any other abuse by Bill Neill other than him touching her breasts. I am not saying that she did not, it is just that after more than 20 years I cannot remember it.

5.3. I do recall having a conversation with BCB around this time, in the course of which I said to her words to the effect, "It would be better not to talk about this matter within the congregation, because there's a fair bit of talk going around about why Bill [referring to Bill Neill] has stood down as an elder." I said this because I believed that gossip and speculation about the matter would be hurtful to BCB and her family, and to Bill and his family. I said this of my own initiative and was not asked to say it by anyone.

5.4. I never said anything to BCB about whether she should or should not report Bill's behaviour to the authorities.

6. **<u>The decision</u> that William (Bill) Neill step down as an elder of the Narrogin congregation in 1992, and the reasons for that decision.**

6.1. Prior to this issue being raised, I was involved with Bill Neil in handling another situation that had arisen in the congregation. I felt that the comments he made to the people involved was out of character for an elder, not given in a loving and caring manner. The comments he made on that occasion and other comments around that time then coupled with the case involving BCB cast doubts on his qualification to

Max Horley
7 July 2015

serve. I felt that he no longer had freeness of speech, that he was no longer 'Irreprehensible' or 'free from accusation'.(1Tim. 3:2, Titus 1:6,7). Doug Jackson agreed with me to recommend his removal as an elder. This was conveyed to the Watchtower Society along with a report on what had occurred. His deletion was then announced to the congregation without mentioning the reasons.

7. **Your involvement, if any, in any decision to reappoint William (Bill) Neill as an elder of the Narrogin congregation, and the reasons for that decision.**

7.1. Bill did speak to me on a few occasions about being reappointed in the years between 1992 and 1995. However, I did not feel enough time had passed to live down any negative feelings from the rest of the congregation. Bill and his family moved to Willeton congregation in Perth in about 1995. I later heard that he had been reappointed as an elder in that congregation. He was not reappointed in Narrogin congregation.

8. **<u>Any correspondence</u> , including the substance of that correspondence, that you, alone and/or together with any other member of the Narrogin congregation and/or Doug Jackson, had with any other Jehovah's Witness congregation and/or Watchtower Australia relating to the allegations of child sexual abuse made by** BCB

8.1. As mentioned above, the only correspondence I recall is the report sent to the Watchtower Society along with the recommendation to remove Bill as an elder by Doug Jackson. I do not have a copy of that report.

9. **Your recollection of William (Bill) Neill's attendance at and membership of the Narrogin Congregation following the decision in 1992 for him to stand down as an elder, including but not limited to:**
   a. **The period of his membership in the Congregation from 1992;**
   b. **His role(s) within the Congregation from 1992;**
   c. **Any privileges or restrictions applied to him by the Narrogin congregation;**
   d. **Any specific systems and/or procedures that the body of elders of the Narrogin congregation put in place in relation to his contact with children.**

9.1. Bill continued to attend meetings along with his family. In fact, he was rarely missing. I do not recall any specific restrictions applied to him. I understand he and his family moved to Perth in 1995 and attended meetings in the Willeton congregation.

Max Horley
7 July 2015

STATEMENT OF KEVIN BOWDITCH

ADDRESS:

D.O.B:

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 was baptized as one of Jehovah's Witnesses in 1964.

1.2. Between 1964 and 1969 I attended Mareeba Congregation, where I was appointed as a ministerial servant in 1968.

1.3. Between 1969 and 1976 I attended Bowen Congregation.

1.4. I was appointed as an elder some time in the 1970's, I do not recall exactly when.

1.5. Between 1976 and 1994 I attended Mareeba Congregation and served there as an elder.

1.6. From 1994 to the present I have served as an elder in Mossman Congregation apart from a period from 1994 to 1998.

2. **Your knowledge and understanding of the systems, policies and procedures in place within the Jehovah's Witness Church between 1988 and 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. All complaints were taken seriously and where possible acted on right away.

2.2. Two elders investigated the allegation, and when they found it had any substance, the body of elders appointed a judicial committee of three elders to deal with the wrongdoing.

2.3. If the judicial committee found that the wrongdoer was repentant, he would immediately lose any privileges (such as serving as an elder or ministerial servant) and would be allowed no role where he could have contact with children. The wrongdoer would be reproved and this would be announced to the congregation.

2.4. In speaking with a victim who was a child, the elders always made sure the innocent parent was present.

2.5. If the judicial committee formed the view that the wrongdoer was not repentant, he would be disfellowshipped from the congregation. The disfellowshipping would be announced to the congregation. Other members of the congregation would then not associate with him.

2.6. I recall that earlier the reasons for the disfellowshipping or reproof would also be announced, but by the end of the 1970's the reasons were no longer announced.

2.7. The elders would also privately inform parents with children when a case of child sexual abuse was established, that they should exercise vigilance with their children and not allow them contact with the abuser, because of the potential danger he posed.

2.8. All members of the congregation were informed from time to time that they were responsible to inform the elders of cases of wrongdoing they were aware of, if the wrongdoer would not come forward himself.

2.9. Jehovah's Witnesses also publish information in magazines and books for the public and congregation, warning of the dangers of child sexual abuse, how it can be identified, how to protect children from it, and how to support and assist victims.

2.10. Since the 1990's, elders have been directed to contact the Branch in cases of child sexual abuse, for advice on their obligation to report to the authorities and on handling the case in the congregation.

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 **in 1989.**

3.1. Elders received training at elders' schools, which were held every 2 or 3 years, in handling cases of serious wrongdoing including child sexual abuse.

3.2. Elders also received articles and letters from time to time from the Branch Office which assisted us in dealing with such cases.

3.3. From about the 1990's the elders received specific direction and instruction in handling cases of child sexual abuse. We received this direction and instruction at elders' schools and in letters from the Branch.

3.4. Our magazine articles (Watchtower and Awake) also provided training, as I have stated at paragraph 2.9 above.

4. **A summary of your experience, both prior to and since the allegations made by** BCG BCG **in 1989, of responding to allegations of child sexual abuse within the Church.**

4.1. Apart from BCG case, I have been involved in about 4 judicial committees dealing with allegations of child sexual abuse.

4.2. In 1 of these cases the abuser was repentant and was reproved, lost all privileges and as far as I know was never reappointed as an elder or ministerial servant.

4.3. In 3 of these cases the abuser was unrepentant and was disfellowshipped.

5. **The response of the Mareeba Congregation to allegations of child sexual abuse made by BCG in relation to BCH in or around 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;

   ii) BCH;

   iii) **any other member of the REDACTED family; and/or**

   iiii) BCJ

4.1. The case of BCH took place about 26 years ago and I don't recall the exact sequence of events or the details.

4.2. I was in Mareeba Congregation when the REDACTED family moved there, some years before the allegations were raised. My family and I soon became friends with the REDACTED family. We had children of a similar age. I have a daughter a bit younger than BCG and the 2 of them were friends.

4.3. As I recall, BCH came before a judicial committee for carrying on an inappropriate relationship with a married sister in the congregation, and resisting the counsel of the elders and lying to them when confronted with his conduct. The committee consisted of Ron de Rooy, Dino Ali and myself.

4.4. BCH left his family at this time and BCG moved into my home for a few months. She was engaged to BCJ at the time. My daughter was living at home at this time.

4.5. My family and I helped BCI BCG 's mother) and the other 6 REDACTED children find a home to live in, and helped them move in. BCI said she couldn't bear to stay in the family home any more. My family and I often had BCI and the children over for meals and to spend time with us at this time.

4.6. BCG married BCJ a few months later. She asked me to give her away at her wedding. My family and I helped her with her wedding plans and organization. We contributed to the cost of the wedding. We wanted to give her the best we could.

4.7. Around the time she moved into my home, BCG disclosed to me and (I think) Dino Ali that her father BCH had been abusing her sexually when she was a child. Her first disclosure to me was vague but was enough to raise my suspicions. As I recall, BCG revealed more details bit by bit over time, with support from BCJ who I recall was very supportive of her. I and the other elders on the committee did not push BCG but allowed her to reveal the information in her own time.

4.8. The judicial committee informed BCH of the allegations but he strongly denied them at first and was quite verbally aggressive towards BCG At the committee hearing I recall his body language was physically threatening and BCG appeared frightened of him.

4.9. On further questioning by the judicial committee, BCH said he could see her side but it was not his intent to molest her. He said because of his upbringing by an Eastern European father he had become a disciplinarian.

4.10. I recall the judicial committee had discussions with other members of the REDACTED family but I cannot remember the details. One thing I recall telling BCJ was that BCG would need a lot of support.

4.11. We as a Committee informed the Service Department at the Branch that we had disfellowshipped BCH. I cannot remember the details of that or any other correspondence.

4.12. BCH appealed the disfellowshipping. At the appeal committee hearing, when confronted with BCG 's allegations against him, he eventually agreed with them, saying "Yes, yes, I did do it, let's get this over with."

4.13. The appeal committee confirmed the decision to disfellowship BCH

5. **The decision of the Elders in the Mareeba Congregation to disfellowship BCH BCH in 1989 and the reasons for that decision.**

5.1. The decision to disfellowship BCH was based on his immoral relationship with another woman and leaving his wife and family, and his lying about this to the elders. I recall also that we felt the sexual abuse had been established. The appeal committee confirmed the decision to disfellowship him. Both committees found that he was unrepentant.

6. **The decision of the Elders in the Mareeba Congregation to reinstate BCH in 1992 and the reasons for that decision.**

6.1. I do not recall as I was not involved in this decision.

7. **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**

7.1. I cannot recall the details of such correspondence.

8. **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 relation to BCH BCH 's contact with children while he was a member of the Mareeba Congregation.**

8.1. The congregation was informed that BCH had been disfellowshipped but not the reasons for this. BCH left Mareeba Congregation very soon after this announcement.

8.2. I do not recall any specific measures put in place at the time.

9. **Your involvement, if any with the Queensland Police in relation to their investigation of BCH .**

9.1. I gave a statement to the Police and was pleased to do so.

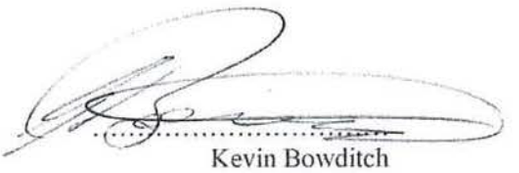
9.2. I recall the police also subpoenaed the congregation records. We had notes concerning BCH 's original committee hearing and provided these to the police.

10. **Your involvement, if any, in the criminal proceedings against** BCH .

10.1. **I gave evidence in court against** BCH **at 3 trials concerning the sexual abuse of** BCG . **I recall the other elders involved in the committee hearings gave evidence at the first trial.**

10.2. I recall that the first 2 trials were mistrials but at the third trial BCH was found guilty of the abuse and was convicted.

10.3. I was happy to give evidence for the Crown at each trial.



Kevin Bowditch
12 July 2015

Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

Statement

Name	BCB
Address	Known to the Royal Commission
Date	10 July 2015

1. This statement made by me accurately sets out the evidence that I am prepared to give to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

2. Where direct speech is referred to in this statement, it is provided in words or words to the effect of those which were used, to the best of my recollection.

3. My full name is BCB. I was born on REDACTED 1967 and I am 47 years old.

4. I am married to BCC and we have two daughters. My husband owns a REDACTED business and I work for him keeping the books.

5. I was formally baptised as a Jehovah's Witness when I was 18 years old.

Early involvement with the Jehovah's Witnesses

6. I grew up on a farm near Wickepin in Western Australia. I lived on the farm until I was around 19 with my dad, my mum and my younger brother.

7. In 1977 when I was about 10 years old, my mum became a Jehovah's Witness. Between about 1977 and 1979, my mum used to take me and my brother with her to a couple of Jehovah's Witnesses meetings each week in Corrigin. Corrigin was about an hour's drive away from where we lived.

8. My Dad and I were quite close up until I was about 10 years old. However, when I started attending Jehovah's Witness meetings with my mum, we drifted apart emotionally. My dad wasn't a Jehovah's Witness and never attended Jehovah's Witnesses meetings with us. He never stopped my mum, my brother or me from attending Jehovah's Witnesses meetings.

9. In or around 1979, my mum and dad decided that I should go to high school in Narrogin. Narrogin was about an hour's drive from where we lived. Because I was at school in Narrogin, my mum decided to join the Narrogin Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses. My mum, brother and I attended meetings there every Wednesday, Friday and Sunday.

10. The Sunday and Wednesday meetings of the Narrogin Congregation were held at the Narrogin Kingdom Hall and were attended by the whole congregation. At these meetings, one of the Elders would usually deliver a public talk from the platform based on a reading from The Watchtower magazine or give a talk from the Bible. At these meetings, the Elders would also lead question and answer sessions and give specific training about our door-to-door preaching.

11. The Wednesday meeting was referred to as the Theocratic Ministry School and children were allowed to give talks about the Jehovah's Witnesses beliefs at this meeting. I remember that I sometimes gave talks at these meetings.

12. The Friday meeting was referred to as Book Study and usually took place at someone's house. At this meeting, a small group of families would come together to discuss Biblical scripture.

The Neill Family

13. I first met Bill and Bronwyn Neill and their children at a large Jehovah's Witness party in or around 1979 when I was about 12 years old. Bill and Bronwyn had a daughter named BCE who was two years younger than me. BCE and I became very good friends.

14. In or around 1980, Bill Neill was one of two Elders at the Narrogin Congregation. At the time, I understood that Bill's position as an Elder gave him authority in the Jehovah's Witness community. He used to give talks at the weekly congregation meetings from the platform in the Kingdom Hall. The other Elder in the Narrogin Congregation at the time was Jack Shaylor.

15. I looked up to Bill because he was an Elder. Everybody in the congregation respected and trusted Bill, including my mum.

16. Between about 1980 and 1986 I spent a lot of time with BCE at the Neill family house. I used to stay at BCE house at least once a week. Often, I would attend the Friday night Book Study meeting led by Bill at the Neill's house, and then stay over at the Neill's house until the Sunday meeting at Kingdom Hall. BCE mum, Bronwyn, treated me like a daughter and I felt really close to her. I used to call Bill "Uncle Bill".

17. I recall that the Neill family talked a lot about church issues in the house. They used to discuss their belief in Jehovah. Bill in particular used to explain that all ideas and ways of behaving should be figured out according to what the Bible says. I remember that Bill would discourage BCE and me from forming friendships with other children who were not Jehovah's Witnesses at school.

18. The Neill family always seemed to me to be an affectionate family, which I really liked. For example, everyone always kissed each other on the lips when they said goodnight or goodbye to one another.

19. I remember that Bill and Bronwyn were very open with their kids about sex. Bill would often make sexual jokes in front of me. My mum never talked about anything to do with sex. I had grown up understanding that it was not something that you were supposed to talk about.

Sexual abuse

20. In or around 1982, when I was about 14 years old, I was staying over at BCE house, as I did almost every week. I was having a shower and BCE who I often shared the bathroom with, said "*what's that on your tummy?*" I looked down and noticed I had a rash on my stomach. Despite me not wanting her to, BCE went and got her mum. I only had my knickers and a singlet on. Bronwyn said she wanted to show Bill. I said "*I don't want him to see me*". I never let my Dad see me in my knickers so I was really embarrassed. Bill came and looked at my stomach and I remember feeling really uncomfortable about him seeing me like that.

21. Later in 1982, I was again staying over at BCE's house. On this night, as I was saying goodnight to Bill in the hallway of their house, he kissed me goodnight on the lips. Initially, this did not seem unusual to me, but he then stuck his tongue into my mouth. I pulled away and looked at him in shock. He looked at me and gave me a queer smirk-type smile. I found myself half-smiling back. I was so surprised by what he had done that I just froze. I didn't know what else to do.

22. Every time I stayed at the Neill family house after that night until the end of 1986, I had to endure Bill tongue-kissing me goodnight. This often occurred in the hallway just outside BCE bedroom.

23. Apart from putting his tongue in my mouth when I stayed over at BCE 's house, Bill's behaviour towards me did not seem to change. He continued to behave the same way around his family. He continued to lead the Jehovah's Witnesses meetings and to be respected by the rest of the congregation. Since nothing was said about what he was doing to me, I felt like I had to act like nothing was happening.

24. I didn't really know what to do. I was scared and ashamed. I felt that I was somehow responsible for what Bill was doing to me. I felt like I couldn't say anything about it, because I was worried I would get into trouble and that Bill would belt me like he belted his kids when they were naughty.

25. I respected Bill because he was an Elder. He was also BCE dad, and the head of the Neill household. But I had also come to fear him. Because of his position as an Elder, I felt that I couldn't tell anyone about what he was doing to me. I felt that if I told someone, it would upset Bronwyn and BCE as well as the members of the congregation.

26. Every time I thought about bringing what was happening to me out in the open, the consequences were too scary, so I stopped thinking about it. I felt like no one would believe me.

27. A few months later, after Bill had once again tongue-kissed me goodnight at his house, BCE said to me *"Did my Dad just kiss you for a long time?"*. I assumed that BCE must have seen Bill kiss me. I was scared of getting into trouble and so I said to BCE *"Don't worry, it's okay"*. I thought at the time that by not telling BCE what was

happening, I was protecting her. I thought that if she found out, it might cause her family to break up. I now wish I had told her.

28. On one occasion in or around 1983, Bill and I were out doing door-to-door preaching together. I remember that at some point, we were alone in Bill's Combi van. Bill said to me "*What shall we do about our little problem?*". I said to him "*I don't know*". Bill then asked me "*Do you want me to talk to Brother Shaylor about it? You know if I do that though, your mum and dad will find out*". I replied "*No*" to Bill because when he mentioned that my parents would find out, I got scared.

29. I was surprised that Bill suggested speaking to Brother Shaylor. At the time, I already felt guilty about what Bill was doing to me. But when Bill suggested speaking to Brother Shaylor, it removed any doubt in my mind that what was happening between Bill and me was my fault.

30. At the end of 1983, having completed Year 10, I left high school. The following year, I studied a business course and in around April 1984, I got a job REDACTED REDACTED I continued to stay at the Neill house regularly from around this time until the end of 1986.

31. One night, in or around 1984 when I was about 17, I stayed overnight at the Neill family house. While I was showering in the bathroom with the door locked I heard a noise. I looked up and saw Bill perving on me over the top of the shower curtain. I guess he must have been standing on the basin to be able to see. I don't know how, but I assume that Bill had unlocked the bathroom door from the outside. I screamed "*Get out!*" at Bill and he left the room. Bill and I never spoke of the shower incident.

32. On another night, also in 1984 and not long after the shower incident, I remember that Bill came into BCE room where she and I were making lots of noise and threw

me over the bed. He started belting me across my buttocks with his belt. It really stung me and afterwards I had a dark welt across my backside. Apart from the physical pain, I remember feeling humiliated, angry and shocked by what Bill had done.

33. On 26 October 1985, I was formally baptised as a Jehovah's Witness in a ceremony that involved being submerged in a pool of water. At the baptism, many of the other girls wore modest swimming costumes with t-shirts over the top. I remember that Bill refused to let BCE or I wear t-shirts over the top of our swimming costumes.

34. In or around 1985, when I around 18, I noticed Bill's behaviour towards me became more sexual. He used to say things to me in front of his wife Bronwyn and in front of BCE like *"You're a nymphomaniac"* and *"If you weren't in the truth, you'd be a prostitute"*. What he said didn't make sense to me because I was a virgin.

35. I recall that on one occasion in or around the end of 1985, Bill tongue-kissed me in his lounge room. As he was doing it, I heard Bronwyn say sharply *"Bill!"*. I remember thinking that we would be trouble but nothing more was said about the incident by Bronwyn or Bill.

36. Up until the summer of 1985-86, I thought Bill's behaviour was just something unpleasant that I had to put up with so I could have a good time with BCE and the rest of the Neill family, who I liked.

37. One day in the summer of 1985-86, while I was in the pantry in the kitchen of the Neill family house, Bill came in, shut the door and started kissing me. As I was older by then, I felt able to try and resist his kissing. Bill yelled at me and said to kiss him. He pushed me up against the wall and told me to pull my dress up so he could see

my underwear. Thankfully, someone came into the kitchen at that point and Bill stopped and left me alone in the pantry.

38. In or around October 1986, I left my job REDACTED I was very unhappy at the time because I was feeling pressured by people in the Narrogin Congregation to preach full-time.

39. After I left my job REDACTED, I moved in to the Neill's house for a couple of months, while I was looking for a new job in Narrogin. BCE was still living at home when I moved in with the Neill family.

40. Bill continued to harass me while I lived at the Neill house. At the same time, he remained a respected Elder in the Congregation. I became really resentful of him. I stopped referring to him as "Uncle Bill" and instead referred to him as "Bill". Looking back, I think this was my way of rebelling against him.

41. One day, at the end of 1986 when I was 19, I had been having a shower in the family bathroom at the Neill's house. Although the rule in the Neill house was not to lock the bathroom door, I used to lock the door because I wanted my privacy. That day, I had just stepped out of the shower and was naked when the door suddenly opened and Bill walked in. I don't know how Bill unlocked the door. I guess that he may have unlocked it with a knife, or even his finger nail. I know that Bill didn't walk in by accident because of the way he quickly opened the door, closed it again behind him, and stood against it, trapping me inside.

42. Bill then told me *"Sit on the floor and open your legs"*. I didn't want to do what he was asking but his manner was very threatening. I felt humiliated and scared. Bill then started fondling me and put his finger in my vagina. He then told me to stand up and he proceeded to perform oral sex on me. I felt disgusted and uncomfortable. I

knew that sex was something that people were meant to enjoy and I remember thinking that there must be something wrong with me because I didn't like what was happening.

43. The next day I was lying in bed in my room feeling sick when Bill came into the room. He said to me *"Did you like it?"*. I assumed he was referring to the bathroom incident. Pointing at his crotch he said to me *"It's better with this in"*. I asked him to leave and he did. Once he had left the room, I got up, packed my bags, and went home to my parents' farm without saying goodbye to BCE

44. In or around early 1987, I remember telling BCE that I had been seeing a couple of boys. Not long after I told her that, BCE told me that Bill wanted to talk to me about my relationship with boys. She told me to meet Bill at the Neill family house. Even though the meeting was at his house, I understood that I was being asked to see Bill in his capacity as an Elder and that I had to do as I was told. I would never have chosen to speak to Bill about my relationships with boys otherwise.

45. When I got to his house, Bill asked me to wait in BCE 's room. He came into the room and asked me: *"Can you show me your boobs?"*. Although I had come to expect this behaviour from Bill, I remember feeling shocked that he was asking me this. I remember that I let him look down my top. I don't know why I did what he asked. Looking back, I feel as though he could control me. Bill then said to me something like: *"Can you make yourself orgasm?"*. I said *"Yes"* and he replied to me *"I thought so, you dirty bitch."*

46. Bill was an Elder for as long as I knew him. I wasn't able to see at the time, but everything he did to me was in complete disregard of all the Jehovah's Witness rules, some of which he preached, about sex and association between Brothers and Sisters.

Disclosure of the abuse

47. In 1989, I told my now husband, BCC that Bill used to kiss me. I dreaded telling him and I couldn't bring myself to tell him any more detail about what happened than this. When I told him, he started asking me questions about what exactly had happened and I said to him *"Don't worry, it's all over now"*. I didn't want to say anything more because I was scared that BCC would tell someone.

48. Later, in or around 1991, a Jehovah's Witness acquaintance of mine, BCF told me that she had been abused by her uncle and that she had tried to commit suicide. I told her what happened to me but I didn't mention any names. Somehow she guessed that I was talking about Bill. I freaked out and asked her not to tell anyone.

Response of the Jehovah's Witnesses to the abuse

49. I guess that BCF did tell others in the congregation as, a week or so later, a young Elder from the congregation called Max Horley came to speak to me. Initially, I had no idea why he had come to see me, but he eventually revealed that he had come to talk to me about Bill and me. When he said this, I burst into tears.

50. I told Max about most of what Bill had done, but I couldn't mention the final bathroom incident when Bill had had oral sex with me. I was so ashamed. Max was very kind and supportive. He told me that what had happened was not my fault and that I shouldn't blame myself.

51. Soon after, Max arranged a meeting with Bill, BCC and me at my house. I don't remember anyone explaining the purpose of the meeting to me. At that meeting, Max said to me *"I believe Bill asked you if you wanted to see his penis, and you said no"*. I assumed that he was referring to the incident in the bedroom the morning after Bill had oral sex with me in the bathroom, even though I had not told him about this

incident myself. Bill looked at me and said "*Don't you think I was joking?*" and I said "*I don't know*". I didn't understand why someone would joke about that sort of thing. Nobody at the meeting said anything about Bill's comment. I still don't understand why no one at the meeting told Bill that you shouldn't joke about those sorts of things.

52. I did not talk about the incident in the bathroom at the first meeting. I didn't feel comfortable talking while Bill was in the room.

53. After that first meeting, I felt like there was a lot of stuff I had been unable to say in front of Bill. I decided to go to Max's house after the meeting to clarify things. As a result of our conversation at his house, Max organised a second meeting at my house.

54. The second meeting was attended by Max Horley, Doug Jackson, Bill, my husband BCC and me. Doug Jackson was the Circuit Overseer for the Narrogin Congregation. Max told me this meeting was a "Committee Meeting". I was not aware at the time what the purpose of the meeting was, or why Doug Jackson was attending.

55. During the Committee Meeting, Bill was defensive. He said that I used to wear revealing clothing. I remember that Doug Jackson made it quite clear to both of us that the Church has never allowed the victim's clothing as an excuse.

56. Throughout the meeting, Bill looked at me defiantly. I felt like he was challenging me to tell the full story of what he had done. I felt uncomfortable and could not bring myself to tell the Elders everything that had happened. I felt like I was still Bill's victim. I was still so scared of saying anything that would get me or Bill into trouble.

57. I remember that at one point in the meeting, Max said to me "*is there anything else you wish to tell us?*". I remember looking across the room at Bill and saying "*no*". It

was already very hard to talk about sex in a room full of men. It was especially hard to talk about what Bill had done to me while he was sitting there in front of me. I didn't feel like it was a safe environment and I was scared of what the consequences would be if I told the whole truth. Perhaps if a Sister who I was comfortable with had been there too, it might have been easier.

58. At the end of the meeting, the Elders asked Bill to say something to me, so he said *"I'm sorry"*. I took that to mean that he was sorry for everything that had happened, although his demeanour was not in any way remorseful and I could tell that he wasn't sorry. Nobody explained to me what the outcome of the meeting was or if anything would happen to Bill as a result of what I had reported.

59. After the meeting, Doug Jackson gave me a magazine article that had been published by the Watchtower a few years before. He encouraged me to read through it. The article was about child sexual abuse. At the time, I don't think I had thought of what had happened to me as child sexual abuse, because Bill hadn't had sex with me. But reading that article made me realise that what happened to me was child sexual abuse.

60. I don't remember discussing contacting the police with anybody at any time either before or after the Committee Meeting.

61. Not long after the Committee Meeting, Bronwyn Neill rang me and asked me about my conversation with BCF I said to Bronwyn BCF *told me that she had been abused by her uncle and I told* BCF *what had happened to me"*. Bronwyn said to me *"Bill didn't abuse you"*. I got scared so I said to Bronwyn *"I didn't actually say that"*. What I told Bronwyn was true. I had never actually used the word "abuse" when I spoke to BCF or during my discussions with Elders as I hadn't understood at the time that I had been abused.

62. As soon as I got off the phone to Bronwyn, I rang Max Horley to tell him about what Bronwyn had said to me. He told me that he'd sort it out. Later that day, Max rang me back and said to me BCB *the Neills have asked that you not tell any more people about Bill out of respect for the family"*. I respected Max and did as I was told. I didn't tell anyone else about what had happened to me, not even my best friend at the time. Thinking back, I now see that I was being asked to respect the man who had done those things to me, but nobody was offering me any respect or proper support.

63. A few weeks after the Committee Meeting, the Elders announced to the congregation that Bill had stepped down as an Elder. I was sitting in the congregation at the time. The Elders did not announce to the congregation why Bill was standing down. Although I understood the reasons for privacy, I have since felt that people in the congregation should have been warned about someone like Bill.

64. After the Committee Meeting, I don't recall being offered any support by Doug Jackson or Max Horley, though it's possible that they may have said something to me. Overall however, I remember that I didn't feel supported. No one in the congregation talked to me about what had happened to me, and Bill's wife, Bronwyn, ignored me for some time. This was especially hard because I loved Bronwyn like a mother.

Life after reporting the abuse

65. Even though I had reported what Bill had done, I was still expected to attend Book Study meetings that were being held at the Neill's house. I continued to see Bill several times a week at congregational meetings and at annual district conventions. Everything just seemed to carry on as normal, but I felt physically sick every time I saw Bill.

66. I continued to attend the Narrogin Congregation for three more years, and continued to see Bill at meetings during this period. In 1994, I moved out of the area and started attending a different Jehovah's Witnesses congregation.

67. I understand that Bill has since died, although I don't know when.

68. I still consider myself to be a Jehovah's Witness, and until very recently, attended meetings at the REDACTED Congregation in Western Australia.

Reporting to the Royal Commission

69. In or around December 2012, I provided a written statement to two Elders in the REDACTED Congregation. Their names are Joe Bello and David Wood. The statement summarised Bill's sexual abuse of me. I provided Joe and David with my statement as I thought that others might have also been abused by Bill and that my statement might be able to help to support their cases.

70. In or around July 2014, Joe Bello came to visit BCC and me at my house on an unrelated matter. During this visit, I raised the subject of Bill's sexual abuse of me and told Joe that I was considering reporting my story to the Royal Commission.

71. Around the same time, Joe Bello rang and had a conversation with BCC on the phone. During the conversation, Joe said to BCC *"You should ask* BCB *if she really wants to drag Jehovah's name through the mud"*. When BCC told me what Joe had said, I felt upset. It was not me that gave Jehovah a bad name, it was Bill.

72. For some time after the visit from Joe Bello, I was quite upset. My mother encouraged me to write down my feelings, so I wrote a note recording my feelings at the time about Bill's sexual abuse of me, the response of the Elders at Narrogin congregation, the response of the Elders at the REDACTED Congregation and my

reasons for reporting my story to the Royal Commission. Some time after, my mother handed this note to David Wood, one of the Elders in the REDACTED Congregation. The handwritten note is at WAT.0001.002.0497.

73. In around September 2014, I contacted the Royal Commission and reported my story. I have huge feelings of guilt about coming forward with my story. I feel as though I am betraying the Jehovah's Witnesses and bringing reproach onto them. When I speak to officers at the Royal Commission, my chest gets tight, I have heart palpitations, and I have difficulty breathing because of my anxiety about the betrayal.

74. Since reporting my story to the Royal Commission, I have stopped attending meetings at REDACTED Congregation. I am sad about this, because it means that I no longer see a lot of my friends from the congregation. Telling my story to the Royal Commission has brought up a lot of feelings of anger in relation to what Bill did to me, and the way I have been treated by the Jehovah's Witnesses.

Impact of the abuse

75. I've spent too many years suffering over this whole situation. It has held me back from living a normal life and I really want to move on.

76. The abuse definitely changed who I was. It destroyed my confidence and my self-esteem. Even though the sexual abuse stopped when I was 19, I have continued to feel like Bill's victim well into my adult life.

77. I continued to keep Bill's sexual abuse of me a secret for a long time. Over the years of our marriage I have told BCC more detail of what happened with Bill. It wasn't until just before my nervous breakdown 10 years ago that I finally confided fully in some of my friends. Once I started talking about what happened, it was like opening

a can of worms, and I became very ill. I was lucky to get help from a wonderful psychiatrist.

78. I've had a lot of therapy to address what Bill did to me, but I still have trouble feeling a sense of closure about what happened. I still feel that Bill was never made to face any consequences for what he did to me.

79. I feel like Bill's position as an Elder contributed to his power over me. I now think that I was brainwashed into thinking that speaking to people outside the church, or to the "worldly" people, would bring reproach upon Jehovah's name. I think that had I been allowed to speak to other non-Jehovah's Witness children at school, maybe someone might have reported what happened to me and I wouldn't have become the victim that I feel I am now.

80. As Bill is now dead, I don't have to worry about seeing him at Jehovah's Witnesses conventions anymore. I still struggle with my thoughts and feelings about the abuse, but I have an amazing group of "spiritual" sisters and friends, as well as my lovely husband BCC and my two beautiful daughters.

81. I would like to see a number of things change in the way that the Jehovah's Witnesses deal with child sexual abuse. First of all, I would like the Jehovah's Witnesses to take allegations of child abuse more seriously and report them to the police.

82. I also think that those victims that are brave enough to report to Elders should be properly supported and protected. I definitely did not feel protected when I disclosed my abuse to Max Horley and Doug Jackson in 1991. I found the experience of reporting my abuse to a room full of men, including the man who had abused me, very distressing.

83. I have never been offered any compensation by the Jehovah's Witnesses for what happened to me. I have never made any claim for compensation because I didn't think that I would be entitled to any. I am worried about what others will think of me asking for compensation. I know that many people have been through worse suffering than me in their lives. I don't want more than I am entitled to. I only want to be treated fairly as a victim of abuse that was perpetrated by a member of the Jehovah's Witnesses. I just want fair and just compensation for what Bill did.

STATEMENT OF ALLAN PENCHEFF

REDACTED

D.O.B: 13/09/1953

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 Loganholme Congregation.

1.1. I have been one of Jehovah's Witnesses for the past 41 years.

1.2. During that time I have been a member of the following congregations: Newtown Sydney, Marrickville Sydney, Woodridge Brisbane, Loganholme Brisbane, Coorparoo Brisbane, Manly Brisbane.

1.3. During that time I have served as a publisher, ministerial servant and an elder.

1.4. In the Loganholme Congregation I served as an elder which involved sharing the general oversight of the congregation.

2. **<u>Your knowledge and understanding of the systems, policies and procedures in place</u> within the Jehovah's Witness Church between 1992 and 2004 to:**

   a. respond to allegations or complaints of child sexual abuse made within the Church; and

   b. prevent child sexual abuse within the Church; and

   c. identify 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.

Allan Pencheff
10 July 2015

2.1. During the period between 1992 and 2004, if an allegation of child sexual abuse came to the attention of the elders, the procedure was to contact the Australia Branch Office in Sydney to make them aware of it.

2.2. The elders then would form a judicial committee of 3 elders to meet with accused and the accusers, to determine the validity of the allegations. In the event that the allegations were substantiated, and the perpetrator had been deceptive or unrepentant about what he had done, he would be disfellowshipped from the congregation to protect the members of the congregation from them. The congregation was notified that the perpetrator had been disfellowshipped, but not of the grounds for disfellowshipping. If the perpetrator was found to be repentant, he would lose all privileges (for example be removed as an elder or ministerial servant), and be reproved.

2.3. To prevent child abuse, perpetrators would be disfellowshipped from the congregation and members of the congregation who may come into contact with the perpetrator would be discreetly warned by the elders about him.

2.4. Our organisation also published articles in our magazines the Watchtower and Awake, outlining steps that parents could take to prevent their children becoming victims of child sexual abuse.

3. **Any training that you have received, participated in, and/or delivered between 1992 and 2004 in relation to responding to allegations, prevention, and/or identification of child sexual abuse.**

3.1. Our organisation provides training for elders annually on our role as elders including handling child sexual abuse cases in line with the above. In the period 1992 to 2004 I attended several training courses that clearly outlined what to do when child sexual abuse allegations are made.

3.2. The Branch Office also provided letters on handling cases of child sexual abuse from time to time.

3.3. As elders we investigate every allegation of child sexual abuse. We make every effort to protect our children from such. We abhor the sexual abuse of children and we will not protect any perpetrator of such repugnant acts from the consequences of their actions.

.....

Allan Pencheff
10 July 2015

4. **A summary of your experience of responding to allegations of child sexual abuse within the Church.**

4.1. To the best of my recollection I only have dealt with a couple of these cases as they are a very rare event amongst Jehovah's Witnesses. In each case the procedure outlined in 2. above was followed.

5. **The response of the Loganholme Congregation to criminal proceedings against** BCH BCH **between about 2001 and 2004 in relation to allegations of child sexual abuse made by** BCG **at the Mareeba Congregation in 1989, with specific reference to:**

a. **when, and in what circumstances, you became aware of the alleged abuse and the related criminal proceedings;**

b. **any correspondence, including the substance of that correspondence, that you, alone and/or together with any other member of the Loganholme Congregation, had with the Legal and/or Service Departments of Watchtower Australia after you became aware of the alleged abuse and the related criminal proceedings;**

c. **any discussion(s) or meeting(s) that you, alone and/or together with any other member of the Loganholme Congregation, were involved in, including the substance of those discussions or meetings, with any person about the alleged abuse and related criminal proceedings, including but not limited to any discussions or meetings with:**

i) BCG

ii) BCH **and/or**

iii) **any other member of the** REDACTE **family; and**

d. **any correspondence, including the substance of that correspondence, that you, alone and/or together with any other member of the Loganholme Congregation, had with any other Jehovah's Witness Congregation and/or the Watchtower Australia relating to the allegation of child sexual abuse made by** BCG

5.1. I became aware of the allegations being made against BCH at the time that the victims were taking legal action. I can't recall exactly where that information came from as it was a long time ago.

.....
Allan Pencheff
10 July 2015

5.2. I had a conversation with the Branch Office about what was taking place and what steps needed to be taken to protect the members of our congregation from any danger they may be in.

5.3. The body of elders in Loganholme Congregation then proceeded as outlined above at 2.

5.4. I have never met or spoken with BCG .

5.5. The body of elders of Loganholme Congregation appointed a judicial committee, of which I was a member. We met with BCH and discussed the allegations being made against him. It became apparent to us that he was being deceptive, as he kept changing his story. As a result the judicial committee decided that he should be disfellowshipped for lying. This was prior to the court case being finalised.

5.6. The only other member of the REDACTED family that I have spoken with about this matter was REDACTED his second wife, at the time. She was not the mother of the daughters making the accusations. She said that she felt that the allegations were false.

5.7. I don't recall any correspondence regarding this matter apart from sending the Branch a report of the decision to disfellowship BCH . I had spoken with the Branch Office about the allegations, and they had advised to proceed as outlined above at 2.

6. **Your recollection of BCH attendance at and membership of the Loganholme congregation until his disfellowshipping in 2003, including but not limited to:**
   a. **The period of his membership in the congregation;**
   b. **His role within the congregation; and**
   c. **Any privileges or restrictions applied to him by the Loganholme Congregation;**
   d. **Any specific systems and/or procedures that the body of elders of the Loganholme congregation put in place in relation to his contact with children.**

6.1. I cannot remember exactly how long BCH was a member of the Loganholme Congregation but it was several years.

6.2. I don't recall if BCH had any position of responsibility in the congregation.

6.3. When BCH first arrived he was restricted from answering at our meetings and giving any talks from the platform. After about a year these restrictions were lifted.

Allan Pencheff
10 July 2015

6.4. As far as I recall we were not aware of any reason to restrict his contact with children when he arrived. However after he was disfellowshipped no one in the congregation would have had any contact with BCH, apart from his wife.

7. The decision of the Elders in the Loganholme Congregation to disfellowship BCH BCH in 2003 and the reasons for that decision.

7.1. We met with BCH and discussed the allegations being made against him. It became apparent that he was being deceptive as he kept changing his story. As a result he was disfellowshipped for lying prior to the court case being finalised.

Allan Pencheff
10 July 2015

7th July 2015

From Monty Baker

Royal Commission request for statement

I would at the outset like to inform you that my memory is fading regarding events that happened 22 years ago. Please excuse any vague recollections. I have made no efforts to engage anyone to jog my memory as this would be awkward for myself and them. Also I have not been a member of the Church since 1993/4. The procedures and positions mentioned in my answers may not be the same today

Answers to questions of matters listed in your request.

1a Congregation attended?

Mt. Albert congregation NZ

Glen Eden congregation NZ

Loganholme congregation QLD Aust.

Beenleigh East congregation QLD Aust.

1b All roles held in church?

Congregation Member One who is viewed as a baptised servant of God's name Jehovah through the name of his son Jesus Christ. One who engages in Evangelising work to the extent his family or other commitments allow.

Regular Pioneer One who, due to circumstances, is able to devote his/her full time to the preaching activity.

Ministerial Servant A member of the congregation who assists the Elders in the functional duties of the congregation. These are men who have shown they have a desire to further the cause of God Kingdom on earth by bible study and active preaching of Gods kingdom.

Congregation Elder A Ministerial Servant who qualifies by meeting the scriptural requirements to be considered an Older man in a spiritual sense. Reflecting God's Love and displaying the attributes of Knowledge, Wisdom and Understanding were essential to be considered an Elder. He works as part of the body of Elders. He is appointed by the Watchtower through the recommendations of the rest of the body and the travelling appointed Representative of the Watchtower called the Circuit overseer.

Congregation Overseer (Formerly called a Congregation Servant and then changed to Coordinater) A Servant to Organize a Body of Appointed Elders who bring their contributions together to form a coherent or efficient congregation. This involved Chairing Elders Meetings and assigning duties with the agreement of the whole body. Such duties as forming Committees to handle Judicial matters to keep the congregation clean and irreprehensible. Duties of the body of Elders also include teaching

at congregation meetings and dispensing directions given by the Watch Tower Worldwide Governing Body.

Assembly Overseer (Involves organising different department overseers to work together in sequence or in time with one another in order to facilitate the smooth running of the assembly. For example: The cleaning department organises his volunteers for an early arrival so as to assist the Food Service Department. Auditing and Attendance Departments Etc.

Logan City Overseer A rather flattering title for someone to Coordinate the annual Yellow pages and phone listings. From memory there were 3 congregations in Logan City. A position of which I would be surprised if it still exists due to the digital age we live in.

All of the above voluntary positions did not receive any payments or stipends from the Watchtower Society. Apart from the initial stage of being a baptised member, all the other positions are appointed by the Watchtower Society through the recommendations of their representative called the Circuit Overseer. The Circuit Overseer, a direct representative of the Watchtower, travelled to congregations within his designated circuit to see that the congregations were fulfilling their spiritual roles and functioning according to the directions from God's Organisation.

1c My role in the Beenleigh East congregation?

Congregation Overseer (Formerly called a Congregation Servant and then changed to Coordinater) A Servant to Organize a Body of Appointed Elders who bring their contributions together to form a coherent or efficient congregation. This involved Chairing Elders Meetings and assigning duties with the agreement of the whole body. Such duties as forming Committees to handle Judicial matters to keep the congregation clean and irreprehensible. Duties of the body of Elders also include teaching at congregation meetings and dispensing directions given by the Watch Tower Worldwide Governing Body.

2a Response to allegation or complaints?

If after investigations the allegations prove to founded, the first response of the body of elders would be to the condition and welfare of the victim/s, making sure they were cared for during their traumatic ordeal. After that, a committee of three elders would be formed immediatly to meet with the offender to render whatever discipline was needed according to Scriptural Laws. This would include disfellowshipping and in the case of a violation against the Law of the land, the various authorities would be notified. (Romans Chapter 13)

2b

Child sexual abuse is considered abhorrent to the congregation. Zero tolerance is applied to this sin. As a result of this stance, all members of the congregation would be vigilant to any hint of this activity and would report their suspicions to a member of the Body of elders for further examination. If an incident of such gravity like this was to occur, the congregation would be given a speech at the first available opportunity to make them aware of this particular serious sin. Without

naming names of the offender or the victim, the congregation would be encouraged to see the need to keep the congregation clean remembering they represent the name of the Holy Sovereign God Jehovah. (1 Peter 1:16)

3 Any training received in relation to child abuse?

As I recall, no specific training was given in regards to child abuse. This was not endemic within the JW's church, as in some religious Institutions. In fact this is the only case I ever came across in the 25 years with the church. The only training that I can recall was the general overall scriptural references that were applied to any serious violations to Gods law which would also include the Laws of the land that do not contradict God's Law. (In Australia the laws of the land very rarely differ from God's Law. But this not the case of some other countries.)

4. A summary of my overall experience re BCH ?

Most of the answers to this question are covered in the next few questions that are asked. My overall experience was one of disgust for the individual. In the letter for this request, 'You' (The Commission) stated that I was involved in at least two requests by BCH for reinstatement. Well I am quite sure that I personally was only involved in 'One' request by BCH for reinstatement.

(NB) There were one or two other Elders of the body who seemed to be very familiar with the case, which leads me think there may have been an earlier request by BCH before I was sent to the Beenleigh East congregation in the early 1990's. I am unable to recall the name/s of these one or two protagonist/s, but I am sure they were existing member/s of the body of elders prior to my moving to Beenleigh East congregation. I use the term 'Protagonist' not to denigrate them but to indicate they took the lead in the discussion.

I also seem to recall that after he was denied reinstatement by our Beenleigh East congregation, he moved to another congregation to request reinstatement. I do not know the outcome of that request. I may have exited the church by then.

5a. Relationship with BCH prior to the request for reinstatement that I was involved with?

I had never heard of him.

5b When did I become aware of his request for reinstatement?

An elders meeting was called by the above mentioned protagonist/s (NB) to consider a request for reinstatement. As I was unfamiliar with the situation, I must confess I took a back seat in the proceedings.

5c My understanding of reasons for his disfellowshipping?

At the above mentioned Elders meeting it was revealed by the protagonist/s (NB) that he was expelled from the Mareeba congregation for his abusing his two daughters. At the meeting my only input was to ask about the welfare of his two daughters. In view of the statement that the mother his daughters was aware of the wrongdoing at the time of the abuse. This would unlikely make her a

fit person to care for them. Also mentioned at this Elders meeting, was that BCH was sent to prison for his actions. Therefore the question arose, "In whose care had the daughters been placed?" This was my concern.

5d Specific considerations made for his reinstatement?

Normal procedure was to write to the congregation of his disfellowshipping to find out first any details we should consider regarding his request. The Beenleigh Elders needed to determine that he was truly repentant and had stopped the activity that caused him to be removed. Also if he had fulfilled any reparations necessary for the wrongdoing he committed. He would also had to have proven that he was now a person of good character, fit to be called a Witness of Jehovah.

5e Any correspondence with Watchtower?

Not that I can recall. If other elders in the Body of Elders had correspondence with them, then I was not aware.

5f Any correspondence with any other congregation?

Upon receiving BCH 's request, there would have been a letter sent by the Beenleigh East Body of Elders to the Mareeba Body of Elders to determine the reason for his removal and any relevant matters regarding things we need to take notice of. I do not recall the reply from the Mareeba Body of Elders. I have no copies of any correspondence. All paperwork I had accrued over the years with the church were voluntarily handed back when I exited the church.

6a BCH 's period of membership in Beenleigh East congregation?

He was never a member of the Beenleigh East congregation. I do recall possibly seeing him sitting during a meeting, at the rear of the congregation meeting hall. This was the usual requirement for a disfellowshipped person. They are required to have arrive at the very commencement of the program, and then to leave immediately at the conclusion of the program, having no interaction at all with the members of the congregation.

6b 6c 6d Role?

No role at all.(See 6a)

I feel that the questions above may apply to any future requests for reinstatement that BCH may have made to another congregation after my time as a Jehovah's Witness.

Yours Faithfully

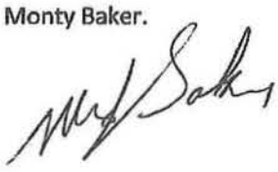
Monty Baker.

I feel that the questions above may apply to any future requests for reinstatement that BCH may have made to another congregation after my time as a Jehovah's Witness.

Due to my disfellowshipped status with JW's, I have had no contact with anyone in the organisation regarding this case or any other matter.

Yours Faithfully

Monty Baker.



Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse - Case Study 29

Statement of Monica Applewhite, Ph.D.
Expert Consultant in the Field of Prevention and Response to Child Sexual Abuse by Religious Organizations

INTRODUCTION

1. I have been asked by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia to provide my opinion in relation to matters raised by the Royal Commission's Terms of Reference dated January 25, 2013. In particular, I have been asked to consider issues 3 and 4 of Case Study 29 as set out in a letter of instruction dated July 7, 2015, from Milton Bray & Associates, solicitors for Watchtower and Bible Tract Society of Australia. A copy of the letter of instruction is attached and marked "MA 1".

Qualifications

2. My qualifications include my academic background and years of experience in the field of preventing and responding to sexual abuse in organizations. I have a Bachelor's degree in Social Work, a Master's of Science in Social Work, and a Ph.D. in Clinical Social Work. I have extensive experience working directly with sexual offenders who have perpetrated abuse in organizations, as well as 22 years of conducting root cause analysis of such cases for the purpose of determining the methods used by sexual offenders to access children within churches, schools and other organizations. I have worked directly with more than 300 organizations that serve children, youths and vulnerable adults in the United States, Canada, Italy, Ireland, Poland, the Philippines, Australia, and New Zealand.

3. Throughout my experience working with organizations, I have focused on sexual offending against children that occurs within and around religious organizations. My experience includes working directly with the Episcopal and Anglican Church, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, the United Methodist Church, the American Rabbinical Society, the Salvation Army, and the Roman Catholic Church.

4. On three separate occasions in the United States, and on one occasion in the United Kingdom, I have been asked by Jehovah's Witnesses to review civil liability cases and subsequently to provide testimony regarding my opinions in those cases. In that capacity, it has been necessary for me to become knowledgeable about the beliefs and practices of Jehovah's Witnesses with respect to sexual abuse allegations and prevention, as well as to develop a broad understanding of the religious organization's structure and governance as they relate to sexual abuse. I have not worked with Jehovah's Witnesses or any corporation used by them to develop published materials, policy, or procedures to prevent or respond to child sexual abuse or exploitation.

5. My primary work focus continues to be education and consulting work with organizations to prevent and respond to child sexual abuse; a comprehensive listing of my consulting client relationships is appended to this document.

Signature: _____ Witness: _____

Duty to the Royal Commission (Commission)

6. I understand that my overriding duty is to assist the Commission impartially on matters relevant to my area of expertise. I also understand that this duty overrides any obligation to those who have retained or instructed me.

7. I confirm that I understand my duty to the Commission, that I have complied with this duty, and will continue to comply with it. I further confirm that I am not an advocate for any party.

8. I have been provided with "Practice Note CM 7, Expert Witnesses in proceedings in the Federal Court of Australia" which sets out Guidelines for expert witnesses in that court. I have considered all the matters contained in these guidelines when formulating the opinions set out in my statement and acknowledge that my opinions are based on my expertise as set out above.

Background Information regarding the Religious Structure and Practices of Jehovah's Witnesses

9. The religion known as Jehovah's Witnesses is overseen by a "Governing Body" made up of elders who reside in Brooklyn, New York. Congregations are organized into "circuits". Circuits of certain geographical areas are organized into "Branches." A Branch is the largest territorial arrangement and each Branch is overseen by a separate "Branch Committee." Circuit Overseers are also called "Traveling Overseers." Traveling Overseers visit congregations to provide spiritual encouragement to congregations and to give spiritual help and support to congregation "Elders" who comprise a "Body of Elders" that is responsible for oversight of its respective local congregation. Potential elders are recommended by existing elders within the congregation and appointed by Circuit Overseers.

10. Jehovah's Witnesses do not require elders to make any particular pledge or promise of obedience or loyalty to others within the governing structure of the religious organization. Thus, there is no particular sustained relationship between an elder and a circuit overseer the way there is with a pastor to a bishop in other organizations. Jehovah's Witnesses teach that elders should avoid taking a superior position with reference to other congregation members. Elders are viewed as fellow workers by their fellow elders and by other congregation members.

11. Jehovah's Witnesses rely on scriptures (passages from the Bible) to form their religious beliefs and practices and internal religious governance. This distinguishes them from most other Christian denominations that use the Bible to shape thinking, guide behavior, and teach lessons, but not to directly set the religious beliefs and practices of the organization. Written documents describing the religious beliefs and practices of Jehovah's Witnesses often quote specific Biblical references.

12. Jehovah's Witnesses base their religious beliefs and practices on their understanding of Bible scriptures. Their understanding of various scriptures is laid out in publications produced by Jehovah's Witnesses which are made available to all members of each congregation and the public. These publications are distributed worldwide in many languages.

Signature: _____ Witness: _____

13. The religious beliefs and practices for operating individual congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses are provided in the publications *Shepherd the Flock of God* and *Organized to do Jehovah's Will* (WAT.0003.001.0001 – WAT.0003.001.0143 & WAT.0003.001.0296 – WAT.0003.001.05190). These publications set out the religious governance and procedures followed by elders and other congregation members in individual congregations. Additional information for all congregation members is provided in *Our Kingdom Ministry,* which is a newsletter, and in *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines which are widely published and publically available, as well as in various brochures and online resources. Changes, clarifications and supplemental instructions to elders are provided in Letters to all Bodies of Elders and Letters to all Congregations which are distributed by their respective Branches. These letters, along with the regular publications provide the consistent spiritual direction and internal religious governance that Jehovah's Witnesses strive for throughout the worldwide community of Jehovah's Witnesses.

14. Like the majority of Christian denominations, such as Anglican, Catholic, Lutheran, and others, the meetings for worship of Jehovah's Witnesses are open to the public. Also similar to other Christian organizations, current members, former members (including those who may have been disfellowshipped), and those who have no particular affiliation with the religion may attend meetings for worship.

15. Meetings for worship are generally held in a place of worship called a "Kingdom Hall." All of the meetings for worship are open to the public, there is no collection taken, and congregation members are not required to tithe. Children sit with their families during meetings for worship which are generally held in one big room.

16. Meetings for worship are held twice per week. Unlike many religions where only the spiritual leader speaks during services, ordinary congregation members, including women and children, have the opportunity to give comments during congregation meetings and can volunteer to be assigned a periodic speaking assignment, generally about 5 minutes in length, if they so wish. Thus, many congregation members have the opportunity to speak during congregation meetings for worship; this privilege is not limited to local spiritual leaders.

17. Jehovah's Witnesses may also refer to a congregation member who participates in some form of public ministry as a "publisher." The door to door ministry that is often associated with Jehovah's Witnesses is also called "field ministry" by Jehovah's Witnesses. This practice is patterned after the early Christians who went from "house to house" to share the "good news" of the Bible.

18. Elders are the local spiritual leaders of the congregations, and they offer spiritual guidance to congregation members on their own initiative or to those who ask for such help. They are the only members of the congregation authorized to provide pastoral care, which is meant to provide for the spiritual well-being of all congregation members.

19. Most congregations have multiple elders and they are not considered infallible. They work with one another consultatively and decisions are generally made by a group of elders in each congregation called a "body of elders," rather than by an individual elder.

Signature: _____ Witness: _____

20. Ministerial servants are members of the congregation who provide non-pastoral practical assistance and service to the elders and the congregation. Ministerial servants are not authorized to provide spiritual guidance, counseling or any other pastoral services to members of the congregation.

21. The duties of a ministerial servant may include the stocking and distribution of publications to congregation members, handling the microphones and other sound equipment for congregation meetings, keeping the Kingdom Hall clean and organized, or serving as attendants during congregation meetings. None of the responsibilities of a ministerial servant or elder allow or require that he be alone with children or otherwise separate a child from his or her family.

Issue 3 Case Study 29 Information regarding the systems, policies and procedures in place within the Jehovah's Witnesses Church for raising and responding to allegations of or concerns about child sexual abuse within the Church.

In this section, I have been asked to provide information regarding Jehovah's Witnesses' policies and procedures with respect to receiving and responding to allegations of child sexual abuse.

22. Jehovah's Witnesses are taught the beliefs, practices, and values of their faith through Bible-based publications, including *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* and online articles and videos. These publications and the website contain information about family life, religious practices, current events, Bible prophecy and Biblical accounts. It is the normal practice of the Jehovah's Witnesses to use these Bible-based publications and Online articles and videos to provide congregation members, and the general public, with Scriptural principles that provide practical guidance for managing and coping with the various situations that arise in life generally, and that specifically confront Jehovah's Witnesses because of their personal religious beliefs or the practice of their faith. It is within these Bible-based publications, online articles and videos, and letters to congregations that Branch offices communicate with individual and families about how to protect children from sexual abuse and what to do if abuse happens. These same Bible-based publications are also used to provide spiritual comfort and encouragement to those who have been abused and to encourage those who have perpetrated abuse to come forward and receive spiritual help from the elders.

23. Beginning in the early 1980's, *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* published articles that describe the experiences of survivors of sexual abuse and encouraged individuals who have experienced abuse to disclose to others. As described in the Brief Review of Contemporary Sexual Offence and Child Sexual Abuse Legislation in Australia, this was the same period of time that society at large began studying and publishing information about sexual abuse. One example of the publications of Jehovah's Witnesses that reaches out to victims and survivors can be found in *The Watchtower* October 1, 1983. An article entitled "Help for Victims of Incest" (WAT.0001.004.0325 – WAT.0001.004.0329) articulates the experiences of victims and the damage that can be done by sexual abuse. The article tells the story of an elder who erred by telling a woman to just forget about the abuse and urges readers to listen and show compassion. After telling elders to be thoughtful, the article also points out that some victims of abuse may need to talk with an experienced professional counselor.

Signature: _____ Witness: _____

24. Jehovah's Witnesses strive to live by a strict code of moral conduct based on Bible principles. The conduct that is expected of Jehovah's Witnesses is taught at their meetings for worship and described in their Bible-based publications (*The Watchtower* and *Awake!* and Online articles). In addition to describing the Christian standards of conduct that all of Jehovah's Witnesses should strive to maintain, these Bible-based publications provide the Scriptural principles on which such standards of conduct are based and reasons why adherence to such standards of conduct benefits individuals and society. For example, current articles published by Jehovah's Witnesses that can be found online teach teens how rules about abstaining from sexual contact are similar to traffic laws in that these may interfere with individual choices, but are designed to keep people safe.

25. Along with other "sins" and transgressions of themselves and others, Jehovah's Witnesses are expected to report known sexual abuse to the body of elders within the congregation. Elders, in turn, are instructed to treat victims with kindness and to follow the established internal ecclesiastical procedures for allegations of child sexual abuse (*Shepherd the Flock of God*: WAT.0003.001.0001 – WAT.0003.001.0143).

26. Child sexual abuse is regarded as a crime by Jehovah's Witnesses. Elders are instructed to report crimes according to the law and never to discourage anyone from reporting abuse to law enforcement. The following passage is included in *Shepherd the Flock of God*: (WAT.0003.001.0132 - WAT.0003.001.0133)

> **Child Abuse** -- Child abuse is a crime. **Never suggest to anyone that they should not report an allegation of child abuse to the police or other authorities.** If you are asked, make it clear that whether to report the matter to the authorities or not is a personal decision for each individual to make and that there are no congregation sanctions for either decision. Elders will not criticize anyone who reports such an allegation to the authorities. If the victim wishes to make a report, it is his or her absolute right to do so.

27. Bodies of elders have been instructed to follow the mandatory reporting laws of their state or country and to call the Branch Legal Department for legal advice regarding reporting requirements if anyone reports an allegation of sexual abuse to them. The Branch Service Department is also available to provide congregation elders with spiritual advice regarding how to provide spiritual comfort to victims, and internal ecclesiastical procedures that elders should follow to protect children from further abuse by the alleged offender.

    a. The August 28, 2002 letter (WAT.0004.001.0002) to all congregations in Australia stated, "We have long instructed elders to report allegations of child abuse to the authorities where required by law to do so, even where there is only one witness."

    b. The October 1, 2012 "Letter to all bodies of elders, Re: Child abuse" contains the current procedures for elders to follow in cases of child abuse (WAT.0001.004.0066 – WAT.0001.004.0071). This resource contains the following instructions:

> "Some states have child-abuse reporting laws that, depending on the facts, mandate elders to report an accusation to the authorities. Thus, when elders learn of an

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accusation of child abuse, two elders from their congregation should *immediately* call the Legal Department for legal advice" and "Regardless of whether the law requires the elders to report an accusation to the authorities, steps need to be taken to protect children. Elders should help the parents of the children involved to understand that they have the primary responsibility for protecting their children. Obviously, such parents will be keenly interested in taking precautions in this regard. Our publications contain helpful information on how parents can protect their children."

28. In addition to following state-mandated reporting, congregation elders have received internal ecclesiastical procedures to follow if a congregation member is accused of committing a serious sin, including child sexual abuse. These procedures require the body of elders to assign two elders to conduct a spiritual investigation of all allegations of child sexual abuse against a congregation member. Based on Jehovah's Witnesses' understanding of the scriptures, elders are only authorized to take congregational action if there is sufficient scriptural evidence of either two credible witnesses to the same incident of abuse by the alleged offender (or two different persons who witnessed similar incidents of abuse by the alleged offender), or a confession by the alleged offender. If congregational action proceeds, the Circuit Overseer appoints an experienced elder from the circuit to serve as the chairman of the judicial committee. If the elders on the judicial committee find that the individual is repentant for his sin, they will provide the individual with spiritual counsel and reproof to help him avoid the sinful behavior in the future and protect children.

29. If an individual who committed child sexual abuse is found to be repentant, the reproof would also involve an announcement to the congregation that the individual has been reproved by a judicial committee, but the sin for which the individual was reproved would not be mentioned. In the case of other serious sins, depending on the facts and circumstances, the reproof may involve a similar announcement to let the congregation that the individual has been reproved by a judicial committee Announcements to let the congregation know that the individual has been reproved are made during a regularly scheduled congregation meeting.

30. If the individual who was reproved by a congregation judicial committee was in an appointed congregation position such as an elder or ministerial servant, he would automatically be removed (deleted) from that position because he would no longer meet the Scriptural qualifications. When a ministerial servant or elder is deleted from his appointed position, an announcement is made during regularly scheduled congregation meetings to inform them of his deletion, but the reason for his deletion would not be mentioned.

31. If the judicial committee finds that the individual is not repentant for the sinful conduct, he or she may be disfellowshipped (excommunicated) from the congregation. In that case, an announcement would be made to the congregation that the individual is no longer one of Jehovah's Witnesses, but the nature of the sin for which he was disfellowshipped would not be mentioned.

32. When a judicial committee finds that a congregation member has sinned but is genuinely repentant. The individual is not disfellowshipped. However, such a repentant individual would be reproved and restricted from full participation in meetings for worship. For Jehovah's Witnesses, genuine

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repentance involves a sincere change in attitude and a heartfelt regret for the wrongs committed. Repeated incidents of sinful conduct may be taken as evidence of a lack of repentance even if the individual professes to be sorry and repentant for his sinful conduct. In the case of multiple instances of sinful conduct, the individual may be disfellowshipped because the repetition of the behavior may be viewed as evidence of a lack of genuine repentance and remorse.

33. Regardless of the outcome, the deliberations of a judicial committee and the information they consider are kept confidential. Like most Christian denominations, Jehovah's Witnesses strive to create a spiritual environment that allows the opportunity for sinners to make an honest disclosure of sinful conduct with the knowledge that he or she can trust that the information divulged to an elder or group of elders will be kept confidential and will not be shared with others.

34. Although "it cannot be said that in every case one who has sexually abused a child can never qualify for privileges of service in the congregation," (Letter to All Bodies of Elders, October 1, 2012) both the publications of Jehovah's Witnesses and letters to All Bodies of Elders have verified on multiple occasions since 1997, that a "known child molester" does not qualify for a responsible positions or "privileges" within the congregation such as being an elder or ministerial servant because he does not have the Scriptural qualifications to serve in those positions. The article, "Let us abhor what is wicked" in *The Watchtower*, January 1, 1997 (WAT.0001.004.0306 - WAT.0001.004.0309) publically clarified that a former child molester would not qualify for congregational privileges and instructions to bodies of elders in 1997, 2001, and 2002 affirmed that a child molester should not be recommended for an appointed congregation position.

35. Congregation elders keep records of congregation members who have been accused of child sexual abuse, proven or unproven, such records are kept in a confidential congregation file, marked, "Do Not Destroy." Such records are kept indefinitely.

36. In my opinion, the current messages to those who have experienced abuse and the guidelines that have been provided to elders in congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses are consistent with, and in some respects better than, the current practices of religious organizations throughout the world. However, because I have not reviewed any specific cases, I am not able to offer opinions regarding whether the implementation of these guidelines have ultimately resulted in law-abiding responses, good practice of child protection, or compassionate care of those who have experienced abuse.

Issue 4 Case Study 29: Information regarding the systems, policies and procedures in place within Jehovah's Witnesses Church and the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia Ltd to prevent child sexual abuse within the Church

In this section I have been asked to provide a summary of the systems in place within Jehovah's Witnesses to prevent sexual abuse within the faith.

37. Jehovah's Witnesses are unique in that they do not offer or sponsor programs that separate children or youths from their families. They have no Sunday school for children, and no non-state schools, camps, or youth ministry programs. Jehovah's Witnesses do not authorize or sponsor programs for children in out-of-home care or programs that involve parents turning the care and custody of their

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children over to authority figures within the congregation. The pattern and practice of not separating parents and children is distinctive to Jehovah's Witnesses, as children's and youths' programming is quite common in other religious organizations.

38. Central to the rationale for not offering or sponsoring programs that separate children or youths from their families, is the over-riding religious belief and practice of Jehovah's Witnesses that parents have the Scriptural responsibility to teach their own children and that it is not appropriate to "outsource" this responsibility to others. Fathers are expected to be involved in the teaching of the Bible to their own children and, if the father is unavailable to teach the children, the responsibility to teach the children falls to the mother.

39. Because of Jehovah's Witnesses' distinct approach to teaching children, they have not, as an organization, created the child-related volunteer or paid positions that are so common in other religious organizations. There are no rules that require an individual to be involved with children who are outside of the direct care and control of their parents or guardians.

40. Elders and ministerial servants are assigned positions within the organization; they are volunteer positions without pay. Neither elders nor ministerial servants are assigned to work with groups of children by the congregations. There is no such position as children's bible study instructor or youth minister. As such, the responsibilities of elders and ministerial servants within the congregations do not provide a greater level of access to children beyond the natural contact with children that would occur in any religious environment. Neither an elder nor a ministerial servant is a position of special access or trust with children.

41. During the 1960's and 1970's, the publications of Jehovah's Witnesses began to address child physical abuse and violence in the home, with articles such as "Parents can be Cruel," published in 1963 and "Child Abuse – Things you can do about it (*Awake!* July 22, 1976: WAT.0001.004.0216 – WAT.0001.004.0218). This latter article explains the damage that can be done to children through physical abuse, shaking a young child, screaming at a child or "vocally assaulting" youngsters. It also addresses the concern that over-disciplining can turn into physical abuse and provides scriptural and practical steps to take to overcome a temper. The article suggests that parents recall what it was like to be a child in order to increase empathy and nurturing as well as suggesting "Parents Anonymous" and pro-actively addressing the loneliness and isolation abusive parents often experience.

42. Beginning in the early 1980's, *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* also provided families with information to raise awareness of sexual abuse. Articles such as "Incest—the hidden crime," and "Rape at Home" were published in 1981 and 1982. "The New Morality – How will it affect them?" *Awake!* June 22, 1982 (WAT.0001.004.0223 – WAT.0001.004.0224) described prostitution of children and the distribution of images of child sexual abuse. Contemporary perspectives from psychologists, social workers and psychiatrists who opposed the new morality were set against the "pro-sexual abuse" propaganda of that era that sought to allow children "their sexual rights" and increase acceptance of sexual activities between adults and children. Suzanne Sgroi , a seminal contributor to understanding effects of sexual abuse, was quoted describing negative outcomes for children

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who experience sexual abuse. Parents were encouraged to maintain open communication with children as well as setting a good example for them with their own behavior.

43. On January 22, 1985, *Awake!* magazine (WAT.0001.004.0205 – WAT.0001.004.0212) published an issue of the magazine that focused on teaching parents about child sexual abuse and how to prevent and detect potential abuse. Five articles were included with the following:

    a. **Child Molesting – Every Mother's Nightmare.** (WAT.0001.004.205 – WAT.0001.004.0206) The publication began by describing the prevalence of child sexual abuse: One in 4 girls and 20 to 25 percent of sexual abuse victims are boys. It explained that sexual abuse is more likely to be perpetrated by a known adult or older child, and not by a stranger. It gave examples of sexual offenders who appear to be nice people and uses the example of a minister. David Finkelhor and Gail Sheehy, both of whom are experts in the field, were quoted.

    b. **Child Molesting – Who Would do a Thing like That?** (WAT.0001.004.206 – WAT.0001.004.0207) This article confronted the myth that abuse is only perpetrated by strangers. It gave examples of abuse by a church leader, an aunt, a physician and a father and addressed the fact that sexual abuse is often not violent, and may be perpetrated by someone the child genuinely cares for and trusts.

    c. **Child Molesting – You Can Protect Your Child** (WAT.0001.004.0208 – WAT.0001.004.0210). This document read much like an abuse prevention program aimed at parents. The article described the dynamics of sexual abuse and included cautions about creating overly obedient children who do not question what adults ask of them. It urged parents to be active protectors of their children, to keep their children out of dangerous situations such as having a child share a room with an adult or leaving their children in the care of older children during parities or large gathering. Communication between parents and children was emphasized and multiple concrete examples were given to clarify the information. Specific methods for how parents should talk with their children were also provided.

    d. **If the Worst Should Happen** (WAT.0001.004.0210 – WAT.0001.004.0212). In this article, parents were taught things to watch for that could be warning signs of sexual abuse. They were also taught how to respond if their child were to disclose abuse. The article states that particularly if a close family member has to go to prison, the child needs to be assured that the abuse was not his or her fault.

    e. **Response on Child Molesting.** This section includes Letters from Readers, including those from readers who experienced sexual abuse and had children who experienced abuse.

44. Throughout the 1990's and 2000's publications of Jehovah's Witnesses have continued to address sexual abuse and give advice to congregation members and the public who have experienced abuse. For example:

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a. The *Awake!* magazine's article, "A Time to Heal" (October 8, 1991) (WAT.0001.004.0229 – WAT.0001.004.0233), includes the following section:

> ***Getting Support.*** *If you are a victim of childhood sexual abuse, do not ride out the storm of returning memories by yourself. It helps to talk out your feelings. (Compare Job 10:1; 32:20.) Some who are extremely distressed may decide to seek the help of a qualified physician, counselor, or mental-health professional. In any case, a trusted friend, a marriage mate, family members, or Christian overseers who will listen with empathy and respect can also be valuable allies.*

b. The October 8, 1993 edition of *Awake!* (WAT.0001.004.0238 – WAT.0001.004.0247) includes an article entitled, "If Your Child Is Abused" that states:

> *Parents must therefore make every reasonable effort to protect their children! Many responsible parents choose to seek out professional help for an abused child. Just as you would with a medical doctor, make sure that any such professional will respect your religious views. Help your child rebuild his or her shattered self-esteem through a steady outpouring of parental love.*

45. In my opinion, Jehovah's Witnesses were well in advance of other religious organizations in providing educational materials to parents and families. The quality of the materials they provided during the 1980's and 1990's exceeded the standards of care for the time and continue to be more substantial than what many religious organizations offer parents and guardians today.

46. Since 2002, extensive programs of sexual abuse prevention have been initiated by other religious organizations and the standards of care in this respect have developed significantly over the past decade. However, most of the efforts of these religious organizations have naturally focused on prevention within their own programming for children and youths. In my own experience, I have not found examples in Australia of religious organizations that have provided parents, guardians, and the general public with the quality or consistency of information about prevention and response to sexual abuse or about how to support for those who have been abused that Jehovah's Witnesses have provided in their publications.

Other Specific Opinions

47. Regarding the instructions given to bodies of elders to contact the Branch office if there is a report of abuse (October 1, 2012), I offer the following opinion based on my experience. Over the past twenty years, I have observed many instances in which local religious leaders lack the experience and confidence to contact authorities in cases of child sexual abuse. Reporting to police or protective agencies falls so far outside of their ordinary practice of working with people, that they hesitate and often fail to fulfill their reporting duties, at times without even realizing they are mandated reporters. In my experience, I have found that when they are able to contact an objective authority it dramatically increases the likelihood of following established practice and legal requirements instead of judging the individual circumstances and "personalizing" the situation.

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48. On the whole, I have found that the ability to access professionals in the field who are part of the religious organization to be a valuable resource for local religious leaders who are dealing with disclosures of abuse, as well as dealing with the more nuanced situations in which suspicions are raised, but no disclosure has occurred. It is particularly useful in providing advice to local religious leaders concerning reporting obligations, given the substantial differences among state laws on the subject and the range of circumstances that may be involved. In my experience, many of the mistakes that have been made by religious leaders dealing with an offender who is well-known to the leader could have been avoided if the leader had been advised and encouraged by a more experienced and neutral third party.

49. In my opinion, the best methods to prevent abuse in environments where children are separated from parents are different from those that are effective in an environment where parents maintain control and custody of their children. In the former type of environment, the organization is responsible for selection of personnel, monitoring and supervision, training and decisions to retain staff if problems arise. In the latter type of environment, parents are making decisions about access to their children, supervising the access and determining whether a specific adult should or should not continue to have contact with their child. From my perspective, the best method for preventing sexual abuse in an environment where parents maintain control and custody of their children is to provide quality educational materials directly to parents and family members to help them make educated decisions about allowing access to their children. Jehovah's Witnesses excel in providing such educational materials to parents and family members, and the substance of their materials concerning child abuse is exceptionally clear and helpful.

Monica Applewhite, Ph.D.
608 Patterson Avenue
Austin, Texas USA 78703

Signature _____
Monica Applewhite, Ph.D.

Witness _____

Name _____

Date 22 July 2015

Signature: _____ Witness: _____

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Milton Bray
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7 July 2015

Our Ref.: MGB:WT:072015

Dr. Monica Applewhite
Email: monicaapplewhite@yahoo.com

Dear Dr Applewhite

Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse ("Commission") Expert – Dr Monica Applewhite

I have been instructed by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia Ltd (referred to in this letter as "**WTA**") to assist in its preparation for the Commission commencing its Public Hearing on 27 July 2015.

I refer to your previous correspondence with WTA.

The purpose of this letter is to request you to provide an expert report to assist the Commission in relation to its inquiry into the institutional response of "*Jehovah's Witnesses Church and the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia Ltd*" to child sexual abuse, which is Case Study 29.

We set out below the background to this matter, together with information relevant to your report and the specific matters that we would like you to address.

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1. Terms of Reference

1.1 The terms of Reference for the Royal Commission are found at **https://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au**. The website also sets out the background to the establishment of the Commission and the matters it has inquired into to date.

1.2 The scope and purpose (also set out on the Commission's website) of the public hearing in Case Study 29 is to inquire into the following:

1 The experience of survivors of child sexual abuse within the Jehovah's Witnesses Church in Australia.

2. The responses of the Jehovah's Witnesses Church and the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia Ltd to allegations, reports or complaints of child sexual abuse within the Church.

3. The systems, policies and procedures in place within the Jehovah's Witnesses Church and the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia Ltd for raising and responding to allegations of or concerns about child sexual abuse within the Church.

4 The systems, policies and procedures in place within the Jehovah's Witnesses Church and the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia Ltd to prevent child sexual abuse within the Church.

2. Independent expert

2.1 You are asked to provide an independent report. The purpose of the report is to provide assistance to the Commission.

2.2 WTA has previously written to the Commission and informed it that you will be engaged to provide an expert report that, in the opinion of WTA, will assist the Commission in its deliberations. WTA has also informed the Commission that you will refer to and agree to be bound by the Expert Witness Code of Conduct ("Code"). We attach a copy and, on the assumption it is acceptable to you, ask that you refer to the Code in your report and attach is as an Annexure to your report.

2.3 As you will see the Code is directed to Court proceedings rather than a Royal Commission. Nevertheless, we draw your attention to, in particular, paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Code. We will discuss with you how the matters referred to in paras 2.1 and 2.2 should be modified for the purposes of your report.

2.4 It may be, however, that the Commission will provide a different Code of Conduct, in which case we will send you a copy for your consideration and agreement.

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3. Documents

3.1 WTA has provided a substantial number of documents to the Commission. These documents have been put onto a database (known as Ringtail) and each document page has been given an identifier in the following format (**WAT.####.###.####,** eg 0001.0001.0001 may be a document 15 pages long, thus the last page will be 0001.0001.0015**).**

3.2 I understand that you have been provided with most of these documents without the Ringtail references as follows on 14 June 2015.

3.3 On 14 June 2015 by email , you were also provided with the following

(a) Document entitled: "References for Dr Applewhite"

(b) Selected material quoted in (a):

(i) 2012-10-01 Letter to all bodies of elders Child abuse
(ii) 2002-08-28 Letter to all congregations in Australia
(iii) *Shepherd the Flock of God* ks10 pages 18-20
(iv) *Shepherd the Flock of God* ks10 pages 43-44
(v) *Shepherd the Flock of God* ks 10 pages 72-73
(vi) *Shepherd the Flock of God* ks 10 pages 131-132
(vii) *The Watchtower*, August 8, 2005, When Is There a Basis for Taking Offence
(viii) 2007-07-31 Letter to Angela Frizzell
(ix) *Awake!*, October 8, 1993, If Your Child Is Abused
(x) *Awake!*, October 8, 1991, A Time To Heal
(xi) *Awake!*, January 22, 1985, If the Worst Should Happen
(xii) *Our Kingdom Ministry*, November 2002

3.4 On 7 July 2015 you were sent a complete copy of *Shepherd of the Flock* ks 10 (with updated notations) (**WAT.0003.001.0003**).

3.5 We further understand that you have access to substantial material from the Jehovah's Witnesses' website (www.jw.org) and, possibly, other sources.

3.6 When you refer to a document in your report please insert, where possible, the WAT reference. We understand that there will be instances where you will not be able to do this – we will insert the reference for you.

3.7 Please attach a list of **all** documents to which you refer in your report.

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3.8 In the unlikely event that you refer to a document that has not been provided to the Commission, we will inform the Commission of that fact and provide it to the Commission a copy.

4. Expertise

4.1 Although a copy of your Curriculum Vitae has been provided to the Commission, could you please ensure that you include in your report an introductory summary of your qualifications, expertise and experience. It is of particular importance that your expertise and experience is directed to the matters that are set out in both the Commission's Terms of Reference and the matters that are the subject of the Public Hearing for Case Study 29.

4.2 Please attach your most recent CV to your report.

5. Questions

5.1 We ask for your expert opinion on the following matters.

5.2 Paragraphs 3 and 4 of the matters being inquired into in Case Study 29, being:

> 3 The systems, policies and procedures in place within the Jehovah's Witnesses Church and the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia Ltd for raising and responding to allegations of or concerns about child sexual abuse within the Church.
>
> 4 The systems, policies and procedures in place within the Jehovah's Witnesses Church and the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia Ltd to prevent child sexual abuse within the Church.

5.3 In relation to these matters we ask that you consider and comment on, if it is within your knowledge and expertise, the following matters:

(a) the organisational structure of the Jehovah's Witnesses both internationally and nationally;

(b) whether or not, in your view, there is uniformity of approach to the matters raised by paragraphs 3 and 4 of in Case Study 29, by WTA and internationally. Please state your reasons for your conclusions;

(c) if, in your opinion, the organisational structure differs from other religious organisations and what, if any, impact that has on your response to issues 3 and 4.

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5.4 In addressing paragraphs 3 and 4 and based on your review of the Jehovah's Witnesses we also ask you to have particular regard to the policies, systems and procedures, that exist within Jehovah's Witnesses:

(a) that respond to allegations of or complaints of child sexual abuse;

(b) that record allegations of child sexual abuse;

(c) that prevent child sexual abuse.

and, to the extent it is within your expertise, how such policies, systems and procedures differ from other religious organisations.

5.5 Please let me know if you require any clarification of these instructions.

5.6 These instructions should be annexed to your report.

Yours sincerely
Milton Bray & Associates

Milton G Bray

Milton Bray, Solicitor

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Applewhite Curriculum Vitae

MONICA APPLEWHITE, PH.D.

CURRICULUM VITAE

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND AND WORK EXPERIENCE

EDUCATION
The University of Texas at Arlington
Arlington, Texas
Ph.D. in Social Work – Clinical Track (1995).
Dissertation: "A Logistical Regression Model of the Decision Making Process of Women in Abusive Relationships."
Advisor: Dr. Charles Mindel

The University of Texas at Arlington
Arlington, Texas
Master's of Science in Social Work (1992).

Texas Christian University
Fort Worth, Texas
Bachelor's of Science in Social Work (1990).

WORK EXPERIENCE
Confianza, LLC - Independent consultant
September 2007 to the present
Austin, Texas

- *September 2007 to the Present – Programs for Religious Organizations, Schools and Social Service Agencies*
    - *Developed and delivered educational programs for faith-based organizations, schools, social welfare and university systems throughout the United States, Ireland, Italy, The South Pacific Island Region, New Zealand, and throughout Australia.*
    - *Conducted comprehensive risk assessment and supported implementation of risk reduction strategies for Milton Hershey School in Hershey, Pennsylvania.*
    - *Provided educational programs to Hackley School, Bamford-Nightingale School and other independent boarding schools in the United States.*
    - *Facilitated the review of Accreditation Standards for Men's Religious Institutes in the United States. Reviewed standards for pastoral care of victims, incident investigation and supervision of those who have sexually abused minors.*
    - *Conducted workshops for supervisors of sexual offenders. Addressed current monitoring procedures, the use of static and dynamic variables in risk assessment, internal investigations and the use of community support for secondary prevention.*
    - *Delivered educational programs for Jesuit Superiors, Congregation for the Mission, Eastern and Mid-West Provinces, and numerous other programs for Religious Men.*

- *Conducted educational program for the Bishops of English-speaking countries entitled, "Monitoring the Accused and Safety Planning: Toward a Holistic Approach."*
- *Conducted educational programs for the USCCB regarding supervision of priests who have sexually offended against minors.*
- *Developed individualized programs of support and accountability for priests and religious who have sexually offended against minors and/or adults in ministry environments.*
- *Presentations for the National Safe Environments Leadership Conference in 2009 and 2010.*
- *Conducted educational programs and institutional risk assessment for educational and residential care facilities.*
- *On-site consultation and education for University Systems and campus ministries.*
- *Provided outreach and support to victims of sexual abuse on behalf of organizations in which the abuse had occurred.*
- *Investigated historical reports of abuse and allegations of misconduct that fall short of criminal behavior.*

- *September 2007 to the Present – Research on Historical and Current Standards of Care*
  - *Reviewed and documented the professional literature regarding the development of standards of care in schools and educational institutions in the United States and internationally.*
  - *Reviewed and documented the professional literature regarding standards of care for children, youths and vulnerable adults in out of home care, including residential treatment facilities, emergency shelters, juvenile detention centers, foster care, day care centers, group homes and respite care.*
  - *Reviewed and documented technical literature regarding the knowledge base surrounding sexual abuse of minors, the treatment of sexual offenders, known prevention methods and institutional response systems from the early 1900's to the present.*
  - *Researched and documented the development of criminal statutes, sexual offender registries, punishments and parole requirements for sexual offenders throughout the history of the United States.*
  - *Reviewed and summarized the professional literature regarding the historic understandings of victims of sexual abuse, the short-term and long-term effects of abuse on children and youth, and the evolution of treatment for victims of abuse.*

Park Dietz & Associates
Expert Consultant
2008 to the present

Praesidium, Inc.
Partner, President of Religious Services (1998 – 2007)
Arlington, Texas

- *1998 to 2007 Work with Organizations that Serve Children, Youths and Vulnerable Adults*
    - *Conducted numerous on-site risk assessments of organizations that serve minors and vulnerable adults.*
    - *Activities included policy review, face to face interviews with staff and participants, review of records and incidents, and observations of programs.*
    - *Conducted investigations of boundary violations, policy violations and other non-criminal behaviors with children, youth and vulnerable adults.*
    - *Organizations included resident camps; water parks; dry parks; municipal pools; youth development organizations; public, private and charter schools; child care facilities, foster care organizations, Autism treatment facilities, residential treatment facilities, emergency shelters, juvenile corrections facilities and programs to address the needs of vulnerable adults.*
    - *Developed individualized strategies to address risks identified in assessments.*
    - *Developed policies and procedures to prevent and respond to physical, sexual and emotional abuse.*
    - *Conducted several hundred educational workshops and seminars to address screening and selection, internal feedback systems, policy development, monitoring and supervision, consumer awareness and incident investigation.*

- *2002 to 2007 Programs for the Conference of Major Superiors of Men*
    - Addressed the major superiors of Catholic Religious Institutes in the United States. Program was entitled, "*From Compliance to Commitment: Large Scale Organizational Change to Protect Children and Young People*".
    - *Conducted 12-part Educational Program for Major Superiors entitled, "Instruments of Hope and Healing: Prevention and Response to Sexual Abuse of Minors." Educational program included sessions regarding internal investigations, responding to those who have experienced abuse,*
    - *Worked with a committee of priests, monks and brothers to develop "Accreditation for Religious Institutes," a program of accountability. The Accreditation Standards consisted of 28 requirements for prevention and response to sexual abuse, including standards for the supervision of priests and brothers who have sexually offended children and youths.*
    - *Conducted site visits of more than 400 individual religious communities to ensure adherence to accreditation standards.*
    - *Conducted numerous educational programs (60+) with individual Religious Institutes, combining research findings, investigation experiences and current industry expectations to increase the knowledge and skills for prevention among priests and brothers.*

- *2003 to 2004 Programs for the Episcopal Church and the Salvation Army*
    - *Addressed the Episcopal House of Bishops in a program entitled, "Policies and Standards for the Protection of Children" which outlined a five-step process for prevention and response to sexual abuse in religious organizations. The five-step process was accepted by the bishops and formalized in a resolution of the 74th General Convention of the Episcopal Church. The resolution adopted the standards for prevention and response to sexual abuse for all Episcopal Churches in the United States.*
    - *Developed National Model Policies for the Episcopal Church in the United States,*
    - *Developed and trained national program of prevention and response for the Episcopal Church in the United States and the Salvation Army Western Territory.*

- *1998 to 2007 Work with Religious Organizations*

    - *Conducted risk assessments of faith-based organizations, including churches, religious schools, religious camps and youth ministry programs. Developed policies, supporting forms for documentation and procedures for managing risks of abuse that are unique to these environments.*
    - *Conducted investigations of sexual misconduct in religious organizations. Investigations of misconduct included Roman Catholic and Episcopal Priests, Religious brothers and monks, Jewish rabbis, Baptist Ministers, non-denominational protestant ministers, youth ministers, camp counselors, swimming instructors and school teachers of multiple religious traditions.*
    - *Developed individualized supervision protocols for members of the clergy and others in positions of trust who have sexually abused minors, violated boundaries with adults and failed to adhere to organizational policies with respect to boundaries and the ethics of ministry.*

- *1998 to 2003 Programs for the United States Catholic Dioceses*
    - *Developed A Time to Protect God's Children and A Plan to Protect God's Children, video-based training designed to teach warning signs of child molestation and strategies for preventing and responding to abuse. Piloted program, trained trainers in 11 states and presented workshop to more than 30,000 Catholic laypeople, religious men and women, and members of the clergy.*
    - *Developed the Control Access Toolkit, a set of protocols and instruments for use in screening and selecting adults to work and volunteer in positions of trust with minors. The toolkit included interview questions, reference forms and follow-up questions, protocols for criminal background checks and a checklist for decision-making.*
    - *Reviewed 21 Roman Catholic Diocesan Policies and developed model Diocesan Policies for prevention and response to sexual abuse.*
    - *Developed a Self-Audit Toolkit for institutions to review their own policies and procedures to determine whether addition protocols may aid in the prevention and response to warning signs and incidents of abuse.*

Praesidium, Inc.
Partner, Vice-President of Risk Management Technology (1994 – 1998)
Arlington, Texas

- *1994 to 1998 Programs for YMCA's and Youth Development Organizations*
    - *Conducted risk assessment of YMCA programs, including child care, sports, Indian Guides & Princesses, resident camps, day-camps, after-school programs and swim instruction.*
    - *Developed screening protocols for staff and volunteers, screening and selection tools, parent information materials, and incident response protocols.*
    - *Conducted numerous educational programs for YMCA's and Youth Development programs throughout the United States, including Seattle, Detroit, San Francisco and Dallas.*

- *1994 to 1998 Programs for Residential Treatment Facilities and Emergency Shelters*
    - *Conducted risk assessments for residential treatment facilities for children and youth with behavioral and emotional disturbances, including specialized programs for children and youth with chemical dependency, histories of sexual offending, oppositional-defiant disorders, conduct disorders, physical and sexual abuse histories and developmental delays.*
    - *Conducted root cause analysis of cases of adult to child abuse, child to child abuse, and incidents of sexual conduct among program participants.*
    - *Developed policies and educational programs for the Association of Licensed Care Facilities in Texas.*
    - *Developed protocols and implementation strategies for managing juvenile sexual offenders in residential treatment facilities.*

- *1994 to 1998 Programs for Foster Care*
    - *Conducted risk assessment foster care organizations and foster homes.*
    - *Developed screening and selection system for foster families, including protocols for home visits, a self-assessment for potential foster parents, behavioral interviews, reference check questions and protocols for decision-making.*
    - *Developed case management protocols for ongoing supervision and monitoring of foster homes. Included standard interviews with children and youth and procedures for direct observations of interactions.*
    - *Conducted training for foster parents, case managers, supervisors and administrators regarding abuse prevention and response in foster care environments.*

Child Safe Environments, Inc. (later became Praesidium, Inc.)
Consulting Firm for Organizations, specializing in prevention and response to sexual abuse.
Co-Founder (1992-1994)
Arlington, Texas

- *In preparation for consulting with organizations serving children and vulnerable adults, the following activities were completed:*
    - *Conducted complete literature review of sexual abuse, with focus on organizational abuse, disclosure, characteristics of targeted victims, prevention methods and standards for response upon disclosure.*
    - *Reviewed all empirical research that was available regarding physical and sexual abuse in organizations. Reviewed and analyzed cases of "institutional physical and sexual abuse."*
    - *Utilized a "root cause analysis" methodology to identify root causes of abuse in organizations that serve children and youth.*
    - *Reviewed legal definitions and child abuse reporting laws to develop educational materials for organizations that serve children.*
    - *Reviewed prosecuted cases and all other publically available cases to identify patterns of abuse, disclosure and investigation in organizational abuse.*
    - *Reviewed current research on sexual offenders and patterns of "extra-familial" abuse.*

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS
National Association of Social Workers (NASW)

Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers (ATSA)

PUBLICATIONS
Putting Abuse in Context, America Magazine, September 25, 2006

Understanding Infatuation and Devotion, Human Development Magazine, Winter, 2005

SPECIFIC CLIENT ORGANIZATIONS

Camps

- Camp Carter, Fort Worth
- Camp Colman, Washington State
- Camp Grady Spruce, Dallas
- Camp Jones Gulch, San Francisco
- Camp Nissokone, Michigan
- Camp Olympia, Texas
- Camp Orkila, San Juan Islands
- Pine Cove Christian Camps
- Woodmen of the World

Child Care and Social Service Organizations

- All Church Home for Children (adoption, emergency shelter, foster care, residential)
- Autistic Treatment Centers, Dallas and San Antonio
- Bair Foundation (adoption, foster care, kinship care, family services)
- Baltimore Catholic Charities (adoption, foster care, residential treatment)
- Bridge Emergency Shelter for Children and Youths
- Buckner Children's and Family Services (adoption, foster care, family services)
- Cal Farley's Boy's Ranch (residential and transitional programs for children & youth)
- Casey Family Programs (adoption, foster care, family services)
- CentaCare Social Services, Queensland, Australia
- Clinicare Corporation (Residential Treatment Centers)
- Covenant Kids, Inc. (adoption, foster care, family services)
- DePelchin Children's Center (foster care, adoption, mental health)
- D&S Residential (care for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities)
- Eckerd Youth Alternatives (services for children and youth w/complex mental, emotional and behavioral needs)
- Fort Worth Catholic Charities (children, refugee and family services and foster care)
- La Petite Academy (educational and child care)
- Lee and Beluah Moor's Children's Home (adoption, foster care and residential care)
- Lena Pope Home (counseling, family services and intensive treatment programs)
- Lutheran Social Services of the South (adoption, foster care, kinship care and residential)
- Marywood Child and Family Services (services for pregnant and parenting teens)
- Masonic Homes (counseling and family services)
- Methodist Children's Home (foster care, residential treatment, family services)
- Mentor Clinical Care (therapeutic & medically complex foster care, adults, adoption)
- New Horizon Academy Child Care (educational and child care)
- New Jersey Department of Children and Families
- New York Foundling Hospital (adoption, foster care, adults, family services)
- North American Family Institute (juvenile justice, behavioral health, adult services)
- Presbyterian Children's Home (adoption, foster care, residential, family services)
- Rancho Valmora Treatment Center (residential treatment for adolescents)
- Safe Havens of Kornerstone (adoption, foster care, family services)
- Seguin Services, Inc. (adoption, foster care, adult services)
- Social Services of Auckland, New Zealand (foster care, kinship care, family services)
- St. Dominic's Home (family foster care, therapeutic pre-school, mental health services)

- Texas Association of Children's and Family Services (TACFS)
- Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services
- Texas Baptist Children's Home (residential treatment, family services)
- Wisconsin Association of Family and Children
- Wisconsin Bureau of Regulation and Licensing
- Wyoming Department of Family Services

Parks and Recreation

- Ellis and Associates
- Illinois Parks and Recreation
- Six Flags Hurricane Harbor
- World Waterpark Association

Religious Organizations

- Abbey of Gethsemani
- American Cassinese Congregation
- Anglophone Conference of Bishops
- Australian Office of Professional Standards
- Australian Conference of Bishops
- Benedictine College
- Broadway Baptist Church
- Brothers of the Sacred Heart
- Capuchin Friars
- Catholic Charities of Baltimore
- Catholic Charities of Fort Worth
- Christ Chapel Bible Church
- Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints
- Church of the Hills
- Conference of Major Superiors of Men
- Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life
- Congregation of Alexian Brothers
- Congregation of Christian Brothers
- Congregation of the Holy Spirit
- Congregation of the Passion
- Consolata Missionaries
- Conventual Franciscan Friars
- Divine Word Missionaries
- Dominican Friars – Eastern Province
- Dominican Friars – Western Province
- Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta
- Episcopal Diocese of Indianapolis
- Episcopal Diocese of Texas
- Episcopal House of Bishops
- Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest
- Glenmary Home Missioners
- Holy Cross Brothers and Fathers – Worldwide policy and education
- Hospitaller Brother of St. John of God
- International Church of the Foursquare Gospel
- Irish Catholic Bishops Conference

- Irish Missionary Union
- Josephite Fathers
- Legionaries of Christ
- LifeTeen International
- Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers
- Marist Brothers and Fathers of New Zealand
- Marist Brothers of the Schools
- McKinney Memorial Bible Church
- Mepkin Abbey
- Mission Personnel – Episcopal Church
- Missionaries of the Sacred Heart – Prevention and response in 23 countries
- Missionaries of the Precious Blood
- Missionary Society of St. Columban
- Monastery of Christ in the Desert
- Montfort Missionaries – Global prevention and response initiative
- Mount Angel Abbey and Seminary
- National Conference of Synagogue Youth
- National Religious Vocation Directors Conference
- National Safe as Church Conference, Australia
- New Melleray Abbey
- Norbertines, St. Norbert Abbey
- Oblates of Mary Immaculate
- Office of Professional Standards for New Zealand
- Order of St. Augustine - Villanova
- Order of Friars Minor
- Order of the Most Holy Trinity
- New Jersey Catholic Conference
- Park Cities Baptist Church
- Polish Catholic Bishop's Conference
- Presbyterian Church of the USA
- Rabbinical Council of America
- Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Atlanta
- Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Baltimore
- Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Brisbane
- Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago
- Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Denver
- Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Los Angeles
- Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne, Victoria
- Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Newark
- Roman Catholic Archdiocese of New Orleans
- Roman Catholic Archdiocese of New York
- Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Seattle
- Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney, Australia
- Roman Catholic Diocese of Adelaide, South Australia
- Roman Catholic Diocese of Anchorage
- Roman Catholic Diocese of Austin
- Roman Catholic Diocese of Brownsville
- Roman Catholic Diocese of Cairns, Queensland Australia
- Roman Catholic Diocese of Charlotte
- Roman Catholic Diocese of Dallas

- Roman Catholic Diocese of Fairbanks
- Roman Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth
- Roman Catholic Diocese of Lubbock
- Roman Catholic Diocese of Manchester, NH
- Roman Catholic Diocese of Norwich, CT
- Roman Catholic Diocese of Phoenix
- Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland, ME
- Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland, OR
- Roman Catholic Diocese of San Angelo
- Roman Catholic Diocese of Springfield
- Roman Catholic Diocese of Toowoomba, Queensland Australia
- Safe Environment Conference of the United States
- Society of Jesus, California Province
- Society of Jesus, Chicago Province
- Society of Jesus, Missouri Province
- Society of Jesus, New York Province
- Society of Jesus, Oregon Province
- St. Joseph's Abbey
- Sulpicians
- Texas Catholic Conference
- The Salvation Army, United Kingdom with the Republic of Ireland
- The Salvation Army USA Western Territory (Denver to Guam)
- United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
- United States Jesuit Conference
- Vincentians – Eastern Province
- Vincentians – Midwest Province
- Windsor Village United Methodist Church
- Xaverian Brothers
- Young Life
- Youth for Christ

Residential Care Facilities for Clergy and Other Ministers

- Recon, Inc.
- Shalom Center, Inc.
- St. Luke Institute
- St. Michael's Community
- The Southdown Institute, Toronto Canada
- Vianney Renewal Center

Universities, Schools, and Educators

- Ambassador Programs
- Arrupe Jesuit High School
- Beggs Independent School District
- Board of Education, City of Chicago
- Brother Rice High School
- Buckingham, Browne and Nichols School
- Catholic Education Office - Sydney, Australia
- DeMatha Catholic High School

- Edison Schools (Nationwide)
- Fordham Preparatory School
- Hackley School
- Gonzaga University
- Madill School District
- Marist School, Atlanta Georgia
- Marlborough School for Girls
- Milton Hershey School
- Montessori Schools
- National Deaf Academy
- Newton Learning Home Field Adventure
- Nightingale-Bamford School
- Regis High School, New York
- San Juan Diego High School
- St. Ignatius College Preparatory School, Chicago
- St. John's College, Belize City
- St. John's University, Collegeville, MN
- St. John's University, New York City
- St. Joseph's Preparatory School, Philadelphia
- The Imani School
- Ventura County Schools Self- Funding Authority
- Wyoming School Board

Youth Development Organizations

- Baden-Powell Scout's Association
- Boy Scouts of America
- Heritage YMCA Group
- H.O.P.E. Farm
- Junior Achievement, Inc.
- Old Colony YMCA
- Pacific Science Center
- Sierra Club
- YMCA of Fort Worth
- YMCA of Greater Kansas City
- YMCA of Greater New York
- YMCA of Greater Seattle
- YMCA of Greater St. Paul
- YMCA of Metropolitan Dallas
- YMCA of Metropolitan Detroit
- YMCA of Metropolitan Minneapolis
- YMCA of Newport County
- YMCA of Pittsburgh
- YMCA of San Diego County
- YMCA of San Francisco
- YMCA of the Treasure Coast
- YMCA of the USA

CASE STUDY 29 - Statement of Geoffrey William Jackson

Name	GEOFFREY WILLIAM JACKSON
Address	124 Columbia Heights Brooklyn, New York United States of America
Occupation	Minister

INTRODUCTION

1. This statement is to supplement my testimony given to the Royal Commission on 14 August 2015 in respect of the following three Scriptural issues, on which I undertook to Justice Peter McClellan AM to make further inquiries:

   a. the use of male judges in the Christian congregation;

   b. a specific reference in material published by Jehovah's Witnesses about the use of secular courts in cases of abuse; and

   c. whether Deuteronomy 22:25-27 is an exception to the Scriptural requirement of "two witnesses".

Issue 1: Use of Male Judges

2. At 15954.29 of the transcript, His Honour asked me whether there was "*any biblical impediment to a determination, a judicial determination, being made by a body which includes women..... ?*. I responded in part by noting that although women can be involved in this very sensitive area, the role of judges in the congregation lies with men. I then referred to 1 Timothy 3:1 and following a further request by His Honour, I informed His Honour that I would provide further Scriptural references as to the use of male judges in the Christian congregation (T.159555.35). The following exchange then took place:

> *Q. We would appreciate it, because one possible modification to meet this issue of the lack of women as judges of allegations brought forward by women against men may be a modification of your process to include women in the judicial determination step. You understand?*
> *A. I do understand, your Honour, and we will make sure you get those references.*

3. My response to His Honour's request is as follows.

Judging in the Old Testament

4. With the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt, Moses, as Jehovah God's representative, became a judge. Moses thereafter appointed "capable men" as chiefs of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, and of tens. (Exodus 18:13-26) The nation was organised with male chiefs authorised to handle

smaller cases whenever necessary. But anything unusually complicated or difficult, or a matter of national importance, was to be brought to Moses or to the sanctuary before the priests, all of whom were male. (Numbers 3:1-51; Deuteronomy 17:8-12) The judges were not only to render judicial decisions regarding established wrongs but, if alleged offences were reported to them or they otherwise heard about such, they were to "investigate the matter thoroughly" to confirm if the accusation was true.—Deuteronomy 17:2-7.

5. The men selected as judges were to be capable, trustworthy men, fearing Jehovah God and hating dishonest profit. (Exodus 18:21) They were generally family heads or heads of tribes, older men of the city in which they acted as judges. Male Levites, who were set aside by Jehovah God as special instructors in the Law, also served prominently as judges.—Deuteronomy 1:15; 1 Chronicles 23:3, 4; 2 Chronicles 19:8.

Judging in the New Testament

6. On Pentecost 33 C.E., the Mosaic Law ended and spiritual oversight (including judging) of the congregation was entrusted to elders ("overseers"). However, the principles espoused in the Old Testament (Hebrew Scriptures) guided the first-century Christian congregation and served as the context for future practices. Thus, in setting forth the qualifications for elders, the apostle Paul identifies only male members of the congregation as potential elders when he states:

> *"This statement is trustworthy: If a man is reaching out to be an overseer, he is desirous of a fine work." (1 Timothy 3:1)*

That Paul's use of the terms "man" and "he" were not generalities referring to both men and women is confirmed in verse 2, where he lists being "a husband of one wife" as one of the requirements. And in verse 11 of the same chapter, Paul specifically offers counsel to women.

7. In Paul's letter to Titus, he restates the Scriptural qualification that men serve as elders, notice Titus chapter 1, verses 5 and 6:

> *"I left you in Crete so that you would correct the things that were defective and make appointments of elders in city after city, as I instructed you: if there is any man free from accusation, a husband of one wife, having believing children who are not accused of debauchery or rebelliousness."*

8. In addition, James chapter 5, verses 14 to 16, says:

> *"Is there anyone sick among you? Let him call the elders of the congregation to him, and let them pray over him, applying oil to him in the name of Jehovah. [15] And the prayer of faith will make the sick one well, and Jehovah will raise him up. Also, if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. [16] Therefore, openly confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. A righteous man's supplication has a powerful effect."*

9. The sickness referred to in James chapter 5, verse 14 is spiritual, not physical, as can be discerned from the fact that verses 15 and 16 identify prayer and confession as aids in recovery. As indicated in verse 15, this admonition to "*call the elders*" (male overseers) is not limited to only those who need to confess wrongdoing, since the verse says "*if he [the one calling the elders] has committed sins, he will be forgiven.*" The context indicates that "*anyone suffering hardship*" who needed assistance beyond what might be obtained through personal effort and prayer is directed by the Scriptures to "*call the elders*" for help. (James 5:13)

10. Such ones "*suffering hardship*" would include an alleged victim of child abuse who would stand to gain a measure of spiritual and emotional recovery in knowing that the alleged actions of an abuser would appropriately be looked into by the Christian congregation in accord with Scriptural guidelines.

11. These Scriptural passages and my comments regarding judging matters in the Christian congregation (including allegations of child sexual abuse or any other serious sin), are, of course, looking at things from a spiritual, not a secular, perspective.

12. As I have previously testified, Jehovah's Witnesses do not view this ecclesiastical process as a replacement for any criminal and/or civil inquiry into such conduct.

Issue 2: Use of Secular Courts in Cases of Abuse

13. At T.15986.33-T15990.10 the Commissioner explored with me the position of an elder who "absolutely believed" a victim of abuse, but in a situation where there was insufficient Scriptural evidence for a Judicial Committee to act against the perpetrator due to the lack of corroborating evidence. At T15988.23 the following exchange occurred:

> *Q. Yes, but I'm putting to you the proposition that you have one witness who you absolutely believe.*
> *A. Yes.*
>
> *Q. What do you do?*
> *A. Well, for the ultimate protection of that child, I could □ if they feel that child, and other children, are in danger, I can □ well, I would hope that the conscience of the elders would notify the police if the parent is not willing to do that.*
>
> *Q. So you would hope that the elders would act in that way. Is there any □□*
> *A. Yes.*
>
> *Q. □□ instruction that they are to act in that way?*
> *A. You know, your Honour, this is not my field. I can't tell you all the sections where we've said that, but that is my understanding, but if that instruction isn't given, that's perhaps something that we need to look at.*

14. The book "*Keep Yourselves in God's Love*," published by Jehovah's Witnesses, has been the basis for study at our congregation meetings worldwide and has been reviewed on a one-on-one basis with all newly baptized Jehovah's Witnesses since 2009. (An extract is found at Tender Bundle 127: WEB.0053.001.0001). The publication has the following comment on page 223:

> "In rare instances, one Christian might commit a serious crime against another—such as rape, assault, murder, or major theft. In such cases, it would not be unchristian to report the matter to the authorities, even though doing so might result in a court case or a criminal trial."

Issue 3: Explanation of Deuteronomy 22:25-27

15. At T15970-15974, Counsel Assisting suggested that the requirement of at least two witnesses in relation to cases of sexual abuse had no proper Scriptural foundation, relying upon references to Deuteronomy 22:25-27 to support this proposition.

16. While these verses might appear to be an exception to the Scriptural requirement that there be at least two witnesses to establish a matter, that is not a correct reading of the passages.

17. Five chapters earlier, at Deuteronomy 17:6, the Mosaic Law clearly states without exception:

> *"On the testimony of two witnesses or of three witnesses the one who is to die should be put to death. He must not be put to death on the testimony of one witness."*

And in Deuteronomy chapter 19, verse 15, it says:

> *"No single witness may convict another for any error or any sin that he may commit. On the testimony of two witnesses or on the testimony of three witnesses the matter should be established."*

18. It is important to note that the two contrasting situations in verses 23 to 27 of Deuteronomy chapter 22 do not deal with proving whether the man is guilty in either situation. His guilt is assumed in both instances. In saying that he:

> *"happened to meet her in the city and lay down with her"*

or he:

> *"happened to meet the engaged girl in the field and the man overpowered her and lay down with her".*

in both instances, the man had already been proved guilty and worthy of death, this being determined by proper procedure earlier in the judges' inquiry. But the question at this point before the judges (having established that improper sexual relations had occurred between the man and the woman) was whether the engaged woman had been guilty of immorality or was a victim of rape. This is a different issue, although related, to establishing the man's guilt.

19. The elders had guidance in determining if any guilt should be charged to her. In the second instance (verse 27), the woman would not die,

> *"for he happened to meet her in the field, and the engaged girl screamed, but there was no one to rescue her".*

Such a cry for help might be admitted by her assailant, which would confirm her claimed innocence. On the other hand, if the assailant denied that the woman had screamed for help, the judges would not have a basis for refusing her claim, since, in effect, it would be her word against his and there was no one nearby either to rescue her or to serve as a witness one way or the other as to her scream for help. Thus, the judges would not have a basis for taking any action against her because any claim contrary to her professed innocence could not be established by two or more witnesses. The woman, as claimed, would be judged innocent. In that case (verses 25 and 26),

> *"the man who lay down with her is to die by himself, and you must do nothing to the girl."*

This is because (verses 26 and 27):

> *"[t]he girl has not committed a sin deserving of death. This case is the same as when a man attacks his fellow man and murders him. For he happened to meet her in the field, and the engaged girl screamed, but there was no one to rescue her."*

20. So it is not as though the woman at this point in the inquiry is seeking to prove the man's guilt and finds herself as the only witness against him. However, it is of interest that the raping of a woman is said to be "the same as when a man attacks his fellow man and murders him." (Deuteronomy 22:26) Thus, the crime of rape is made parallel to murder, equated not only as to reprehensibility but also evidently as to being established by the same Scriptural rules of evidence, which included having the testimony of two witnesses (Numbers 35:30).

21. Understandably, there is concern in child abuse situations because there is seldom an additional eyewitness to such a crime. Even in those circumstances, the Christian congregation does not ignore the accusation. I refer the Royal Commission to the testimony of Mr Rodney Spinks of the Service Department in which he set out the further protective steps which are taken following an allegation. In addition, in those jurisdictions with mandatory reporting, elders would be required to report accusations regardless of the number of eyewitnesses.

Signed: GWJackson

Date: September 2, 2015

Witness: [signature]

Date: Sept 2, 2015

Signature: GWJackson Witness: [signature]

Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

ROYAL COMMISSION INTO INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSES TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

AT SYDNEY

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

Royal Commissions Act 1902

NEW SOUTH WALES

Royal Commissions Act 1923

QUEENSLAND

Commissions of Inquiry Act 1950

PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO

THE JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES AND WATCHTOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA LTD

CASE STUDY 29

SUBMISSIONS OF SENIOR COUNSEL ASSISTING THE ROYAL COMMISSION

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Introduction

About the public hearing

1 The 29th public hearing of the Royal Commission was held in Sydney from 27 July to 5 August 2015 and on 14 August 2015.

2 The scope and purpose of this public hearing was to inquire into:

a) The experience of survivors of child sexual abuse within the church of the Jehovah's Witnesses (the **Jehovah's Witness Church**) in Australia.

b) The responses of the Jehovah's Witnesses Church and its corporation, the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia Ltd (**Watchtower Australia**), to allegations, reports or complaints of child sexual abuse within the Church.

c) The systems, policies and procedures in place within the Jehovah's Witnesses Church and Watchtower Australia for raising and responding to allegations of or concerns about child sexual abuse within the Church.

d) The systems, policies and procedures in place in the Jehovah's Witnesses Church and Watchtower Australia to prevent child sexual abuse within the Church.

e) Any related matters.

3 During the public hearing, the Royal Commission heard evidence from two survivors, BCB and BCG, who were abused by those in positions of authority within the Jehovah's Witness organisation in the period between approximately 1982 and 1988.

4 The Royal Commission also heard evidence from:

a) eight congregational elders who were involved in handling the allegations of child sexual abuse reported by the survivors

b) three senior members of the Australia Branch Office of the Jehovah's Witness organisation

c) a member of the Governing Body of the Jehovah's Witnesses organisation

d) a consultant in the field of prevention and response to child sexual abuse by religious organisations engaged by Watchtower Australia, and

e) a former solicitor of the Queensland Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions.

What the case study considered

5 The case study explored in detail the experiences of two survivors of child sexual abuse and the Jehovah's Witness organisation's response to their complaints of sexual abuse whilst they were members of the organisation. Twelve institutional witnesses gave evidence about the organisation's response.

6 The case study also examined the systems, policies and procedures in place within the Jehovah's Witness organisation for responding to allegations of child sexual abuse, and

the mechanisms in place to prevent child sexual abuse within the Jehovah's Witness organisation.

7 The case study also considered the role of Watchtower Australia and the Governing Body in the organisation's response to allegations of abuse.

Part 1 Overview of the Jehovah's Witnesses

8 The Jehovah's Witness organisation was founded towards the end of the 19th century in Pennsylvania by a small group of Bible students led by Charles Taze Russell.[1] Russell had become disillusioned with mainstream Christianity, which he argued had strayed from the first century vision of Christianity described in the Bible.[2] In 1884, Taze's Zion's Watch Tower Tract Society was incorporated and carried on the business of publishing and disseminating millenarian literature – that is, literature based on the belief that the end of the world is imminent.[3]

9 Today, the religion has a worldwide presence of 8.2 million active members in 239 countries.[4] Over the last 25 years, the active membership of Jehovah's Witnesses worldwide has increased from four million members in 1990.[5]

10 The Jehovah's Witness organisation has been active in Australia since 1896, with a Branch Office first established in 1904 (the **Australia Branch Office**).[6] The Australia Branch Office is based in Sydney and coordinates the activities of all congregations in Australia, New Zealand and 'various other islands'.[7]

1.1 Organisational structure

11 The primary legal entity used by the Jehovah's Witness organisation today is the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania (**Watchtower Pennsylvania**).[8] The headquarters of Watchtower Pennsylvania is in Brooklyn, New York and is also known as 'Bethel' meaning 'House of God'.[9]

The Governing Body

12 The activity of Jehovah's Witnesses worldwide is overseen by the Governing Body.[10] The Governing Body is a council of elders who consider themselves to be anointed by Jehovah God and who look to Jehovah and to Jesus Christ for direction in all matters.[11] It is based at the world headquarters of the Jehovah's Witness organisation in the United States and is at the apex of a highly centralised and hierarchical structure.[12]

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1 Exhibit 29-0003, WEB.0053.002.0001 at 0004 (Tab 102).
2 Exhibit 29-0003, WEB.0053.002.0001 at 0007 (Tab 102).
3 Exhibit 29-0003, WEB.0053.002.0001 at 0005 (Tab 102).
4 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.003.0001 at 0004 (Tab 132);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.001.0001 at 0004 (Tab 133).
5 Exhibit 29-0029, WAT.9999.012.0001.
6 Exhibit 29-0024, Statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [6].
7 Exhibit 29-0024, Statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [8];
Exhibit 29-0025, Second statement of Terrence O'Brien at STAT.0592.002.0001 at [9].
8 Exhibit 29-0024, Statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [12].
9 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0075 (Tab 109).
10 Exhibit 29-0025, Second statement of Terrence O'Brien at STAT.0592.002.0001 at [8].
11 Exhibit 29-0028, EXH.029.028.0001_R at 0005_R;
Transcript of G W Jackson, T15938:10-18 (Day 155).
12 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0007-13 (Tab 109).

13 The Royal Commission heard evidence from one of seven current members[13] of the Governing Body, Geoffrey Jackson. Mr Jackson has been a member of the Governing Body since September 2005.[14] He was appointed to the Governing Body because of his spiritual qualifications.[15] The work of the Governing Body is undertaken by several committees on which serve a total of 30 'helpers', and the work of each committee is overseen by the Governing Body itself.[16] Each member of the Governing Body is assigned to one or more of those committees.[17] Mr Jackson told the Royal Commission that he serves on three committees, namely the Teaching, Writing, and Personnel Committees.[18]

14 Mr Jackson told the Royal Commission that the Governing Body is 'a spiritual group of men who are the guardians of our doctrine' and is responsible for 'giving direction and impetus to Kingdom Work' in all matters.[19] When asked if the Governing Body members saw themselves as disciples of Jesus, Mr Jackson did not answer in the affirmative but told the Royal Commission that the members of the Governing Body 'hope to be [Jesus's] disciples'.[20]

15 Similarly, when asked if the Governing Body members saw themselves as 'Jehovah God's spokespeople on earth', Mr Jackson did not answer, instead telling the Royal Commission that it 'would seem to be quite presumptuous to say that we are the only spokesperson that God is using'.[21] Mr Jackson's professed humility is not, however, supported by the Jehovah's Witness organisation's own publications. The organisation's handbook for members, *Organised to Do Jehovah's Will*, teaches with reference to the 'faithful and discreet slave' (and thus, the Governing Body)[22] for instance, that the congregation hopes to 'draw ever closer to Jehovah by manifesting complete trust in the channel that He is using to direct His people today'.[23] A confidential manual produced by the Governing Body and entitled *Branch Organization January 2015* (the ***2015 Branch Organization Manual***) records that the Governing Body 'is organized to take the lead as Jehovah directs it by Holy Spirit'.[24] Thus the Governing Body is believed by Jehovah's Witnesses to be the 'channel' by which Jehovah's will is communicated to the 'Christian' congregation and the Governing Body is directed by Jehovah in all that it does. It was Mr O'Brien's evidence that the Governing Body is Jehovah God's representative on earth providing definitive Scriptural interpretation.[25]

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13 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15931:43-44 (Day 155).
14 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15931:18-20 (Day 155).
15 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15932:1-2 (Day 155).
16 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15932:34-T15933:7, T15933:20-27, T15977:9-11 (Day 155).
17 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15842:18-21 (Day 153).
18 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15931:37-39 (Day 155).
19 Exhibit 29-0028, EXH.029.028.0001_R at 0005_R;
Transcript of G W Jackson, T15933:32-45 (Day 155);
Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15818:23-41 (Day 153).
20 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15937:29-33 (Day 155).
21 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15937:35-38 (Day 155).
22 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15822:15-18 (Day 153).
23 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0007 (Tab 109).
24 Exhibit 29-0028, EXH.029.028.0001_R at 0005_R [1].
25 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15817:17-127 (Day 153).

16 Mr Jackson said that the members of the Governing Body regard themselves as having been appointed by the Holy Spirit and as among the 144,000 anointed Jehovah's Witnesses who will go to heaven when they die.[26]

Branch Offices

17 The pattern of organisation and operation of the Jehovah's Witness organisation today is said to adhere to that of first century Christian congregations.[27] The Governing Body provides 'unified theocratic direction to Branch and Country committee members worldwide' in the *2015 Branch Organization Manual*.[28]

18 The Governing Body supervises more than 90 branches worldwide.[29] A Branch Office is the headquarters for the Jehovah's Witness organisation in a particular country or region and is also referred to as 'Bethel'.[30]

19 Each Branch Office is supervised by a Branch Committee which oversees districts within the branch.[31] The Australia Branch Office is represented around Australia by circuit overseers, who have pastoral responsibility for about 20 congregations (that is, a circuit).[32] A circuit overseer travels weekly to different congregations in his circuit and is responsible for, among other things, ensuring that each congregation is complying with all theocratic direction given by the Governing Body.[33] Branch Committee members and circuit overseers are appointed by the Governing Body.[34]

20 Congregations form the basic organisational unit of the Jehovah's Witness organisation.[35] Each congregation is overseen by a body of elders.[36] Each congregation in Australia is, in the legal sense, a voluntary association and a separately registered charity.[37]

The Jehovah's Witness organisation in Australia

21 There are currently 821 congregations in Australia with over 68,000 active members.[38] Over the past 25 years, the active membership of the organisation in Australia has grown

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26 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15937:1-5, 11-27 (Day 155).
27 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0008 (Tab 109).
28 Exhibit 29-0028, EXH.029.028.0001_R at 0004_R.
29 Exhibit 29-0024, Statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [8].
30 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0012 (Tab 109).
31 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0012 (Tab 109).
32 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.001.0001 at 0009 (Tab 133).
33 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.001.0001 at 0009 (Tab 133);
Exhibit 29-0024, Statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [43].
34 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15816:12-14, T15820:2-29 (Day 153);
Exhibit 29-0028, EXH.029.028.0001_R at 0005_R and 0011_R;
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0032 (Tab 109);
Transcript of V J Toole, T15756:21-35 (Day 153);
Transcript of G W Jackson, T15940:41-T15941:3 (Day 155).
35 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0010-0011 (Tab 109);
Exhibit 29-0024, Statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [6]-[8].
36 Exhibit 29-0024, Statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [9].
37 Exhibit 29-0024, Statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [23].
38 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15844:11-21;

29% from approximately 53,000 members in 1990.[39] In the same period Australia's population growth has been approximately 38%.[40]

22 The Australian Branch Office relevantly comprises the following structures:

a) the Branch Committee, an ecclesiastical body of (currently) 12 full-time elders,[41] which oversees and manages the operation of the Australia Branch Office[42]

b) the Legal Department,[43] and

c) the Service Department and Desk, which care for all aspects of the spiritual activities of the Jehovah's Witness organisation.[44]

23 The function of each of the above structures is relevant to the Royal Commission's examination of the Jehovah's Witness organisation's response to child sexual abuse in its ranks. The Royal Commission heard evidence from three institutional witnesses who serve in each of these structures.

24 Terrence O'Brien is the Coordinator of the Branch Committee and a director and Secretary of Watchtower Australia.[45] He has actively served with the Jehovah's Witness organisation for 40 years.[46]

25 Rodney Spinks is the senior Service Desk elder who has served in the Service Department since January 2007.[47] He is specifically responsible for inquiries relating to child sexual abuse and for assisting congregation elders to implement the Australia Branch Office's guidelines for handling child abuse allegations and providing victim support.[48] The Service Desk currently comprises five Branch Office staff.[49]

26 Vincent Toole is a solicitor who has, since 2010, overseen the operation of the Legal Department within the organisation's Australia Branch Office.[50] Mr Toole told the Royal Commission that he has been involved with the Legal Department since 1989.[51]

Exhibit 29-0024, Statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [6].

39 Exhibit 29-0029, WAT.9999.012.0001.

40 See Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Census of Population and Housing 6 August 1991: Australia in Profile* (1993) (population recorded as 17.28 million), and Australian Bureau of Statistics Population Clock at http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs%40.nsf/94713ad445ff1425ca25682000192af2/1647509ef7e25faaca2568a900154b63?OpenDocument accessed on 22 September 2015 at 9.37pm, recording current Australian population as 23,905,342.

41 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15815:10-12, 40-42 (Day 153).

42 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0012 and 0037-0038 (Tab 109);
Exhibit 29-0025, Second statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.002.0001 at [9].

43 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15656:37-40 (Day 152).

44 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15657:25-27 (Day 153);
Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of Rodney Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at [52].

45 Exhibit 29-0024, Statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [3] and [45];
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0009.001.0001 at 0006 (Tab 134).

46 Exhibit 29-0024, Statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [41].

47 Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of Rodney Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at [16] and [53].

48 Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of Rodney Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at [20] and [53].

49 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15656:8-9 (Day 152).

50 Exhibit 29-0023, Statement of Vincent Toole, STAT.0593.001.0001_R at [11].

51 Transcript of V J Toole, T15751:27-33 (Day 153).

The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia Ltd

27 Watchtower Australia is the legal entity which facilitates the production and distribution of Bible-based literature for the organisation throughout Australasia.[52] Watchtower Australia is a public company limited by guarantee and a registered charity.[53] For ease of reference and unless otherwise specified, a reference to the Branch Office or Australia Branch Office will include a reference to Watchtower Australia.

1.2 Congregational membership

Elders and ministerial servants

28 Within each congregation, the members comprise elders, ministerial servants and publishers.[54] Publishers are the ordinary congregation members. Only a male publisher can make spiritual advancement by first becoming a ministerial servant and then an elder.[55] Mr Jackson and Mr O'Brien each gave evidence that a woman can never be an elder in the Jehovah's Witness organisation.[56]

29 Congregational responsibilities are split between elders and ministerial servants. Elders and ministerial servants are volunteer roles taken up by men who have been actively involved in the congregation for a period of time. The Jehovah's Witness organisation does not have a salaried clergy and therefore considers that it has no employees.[57] Appointments are based on Scriptural qualifications and there is prescriptive guidance as to how a ministerial servant and an elder should serve, act and behave at all times.[58] Mr Spinks and Mr O'Brien told the Royal Commission that elders must be experienced men who have displayed a pattern of integrity in their lives over a period of time as ministerial servants.[59]

30 Each congregation is overseen by a body of elders.[60] Elders are appointed to shepherd the congregation and oversee spiritual matters.[61] Their primary responsibilities include organising field work (or door-to-door preaching), running congregational disciplinary

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52 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0011 (Tab 109);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.001.0001 at 0005 (Tab 133);
Exhibit 29-0024, Statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [21].

53 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0009.001.0001 (Tab 134);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.001.0001 at 0005 (Tab 133).

54 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0025 and 0028 (Tab 109).

55 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0069-0070 (Tab 109).

56 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15951: 23-26 (Day 155).
Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15863:19-45 (Day 153).

57 Exhibit 29-0024, Statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [9].

58 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0013-0022 (Tab 109);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0033 [7] (Tab 120).

59 Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of Rodney Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at [73];
Exhibit 29-0024, Statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [40].

60 Exhibit 29-0024, Statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [9].

61 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0018 and 0023 (Tab 109);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0007 [1] and 0008 [3] (Tab 120);
Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15847:13-18 (Day 153).

committees, leading the congregation services and Bible studies and attending to the pastoral care of the congregation.[62] Upon appointment, each elder is given a copy of the *Shepherd the Flock* handbook which is designed to 'supply vital information that will help them care for congregation matters'.[63]

31 Ministerial servants predominantly provide administrative support and practical assistance to the elders and service to the congregation.[64] They care for organisational tasks such as acting as an attendant at congregation meetings, handling sound equipment, distributing literature, managing congregation accounts, and general maintenance at the Kingdom Hall (the place of worship for Jehovah's Witnesses).[65]

32 Mr Jackson confirmed that it is the belief of Jehovah's Witnesses that elders and ministerial servants are appointed by the Holy Spirit.[66]

Publishers

33 Members of the congregation are called 'publishers' and call each other 'brother' and 'sister'.[67] Publishers may be baptised or unbaptised. Baptism is a symbol of the publisher's dedication to Jehovah.[68] Un-baptised publishers are those who have not been baptised but have been given approval to join the congregation's formal ministry and to identify themselves publically with the Jehovah's Witness organisation.[69]

34 When a publisher qualifies to share in the Jehovah's Witnesses' preaching work, just prior to baptism he or she is provided with a copy of the *Organized to do Jehovah's Will* handbook.[70]

35 Publishers who wish to devote many hours to field service preaching may be appointed as pioneers.[71] Regular pioneers are exemplary congregation members who have volunteered to spend a certain amount of time in the public preaching activity each month.[72] Special pioneers serve full-time in preaching work and are selected from experienced long-serving regular pioneers.[73]

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62 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.001.0001 at 0005 (Tab 133);
Exhibit 29-0016, Statement of Albert Ronald De Rooy, STAT.0597.001.0001_R at [1.3].

63 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0007 [2] (Tab 120).

64 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0042 (Tab 109);
Exhibit 29-0019, Statement of Rodney Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at [71].

65 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0041-0045 (Tab 109);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.001.0001 at 0005 (Tab 133);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0077 (Tab 109).

66 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0014, 0015, 0023, 0024, 0044 (Tab 109);
Transcript of D Ali, T15363:9-13 (Day 148);
Transcript of G W Jackson, T15936:42-T15937:5 (Day 155).

67 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0069 (Tab 109);
Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15844:23-31 (Day 153).

68 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0060 (Tab 109).

69 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0065 (Tab 109).

70 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15843:34-36 (Day 153).

71 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0071-72 (Tab 109).

72 Exhibit 29-0019, Statement of Rodney Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at [66];
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0072 (Tab 109).

73 Exhibit 29-0019, Statement of Rodney Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at [69];

1.3 The practice of being a Jehovah's Witness

Publications

36 The Jehovah's Witnesses believe that the teachings promulgated by the Governing Body are 'based on God's Word. So, what is taught is not from men but from Jehovah God. – Isa. 54:13. Matt. 24:14, 45-47'.[74] The teachings and direction of the Governing Body take the form of *Awake!* and *Watchtower* magazines, letters containing directives to branch offices and elders, handbooks, and other publications.[75]

37 The Jehovah's Witness organisation told the Royal Commission that the *Awake!* and *Watchtower* magazines are the most widely distributed periodicals in the world.[76] The *Awake!* magazine is published by the Jehovah's Witness organisation for those with little knowledge of 'Christian teachings' to 'build faith in the Bible and … understand that Jehovah's Witnesses are different from other religious groups'.[77] The *Watchtower* magazine is published as a public edition (for those who are unfamiliar with Jehovah's Witness concepts) and as a study edition (for Jehovah's Witnesses and those who attend meetings).[78]

Scriptural literalism

38 The key imperative belief of the Jehovah's Witness organisation is that the Bible is the inspired word of God.[79] Jehovah's Witnesses interpret much of the Bible literally and take living in accordance with Bible principles extremely seriously.[80] The Bible is used by the Jehovah's Witnesses to set policy and religious practice[81] and was described by Mr Jackson as the Jehovah's Witness organisation's 'constitution'.[82]

Way of life

39 Being a Jehovah's Witness is a way of life for all members.[83] Devotees are expected to adhere to all doctrines established by the Governing Body through its interpretation of the Bible, the implementation of which is overseen by the Branch Committees and congregational elders.[84] Members of the Jehovah's Witness organisation are taught to

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Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0073 (Tab 109).

74 Exhibit 29-0024, Statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [13].

75 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15816:34-42 (Day 153);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.001.0001 at 0004 (Tab 133);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 (Tab 109);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 (Tab 120).

76 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.001.0001 at 0004 (Tab 133).

77 Exhibit 29-0028, EXH.029.028.0001_R at 0136_R [8].

78 Exhibit 29-0028, EXH.029.028.0001_R at 0136_R [8].

79 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15828:41-T15829:2 (Day 153);
Exhibit 29-0003, WEB.0053.002.0001 at 0007 (Tab 102).

80 Exhibit 29-0003, WEB.0053.002.0001 at 0007 and 0016 (Tab 102).

81 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.001.0001 at 0006 (Tab 133).

82 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15935:20-23 (Day 155).

83 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0097-0098 (Tab 109).

84 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15933:32-45, T15939:20-26 (Day 155);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0075 and 0107 (Tab 109);
Transcript of V J Toole, T15754:11-15 (Day 153).

be obedient and submissive to those in the organisation in positions of authority, including elders.[85] Members of the Jehovah's Witness organisation are expected to adhere to a strict code of moral conduct based on the Scriptures and enforced by a highly formalised disciplinary process for dealing with wrongdoing.[86]

Separateness from the world

40 The Jehovah's Witness organisation teaches that 'it was of great importance to Jesus that his followers keep separate from the world' and offers guidance as to how its members might themselves go about keeping separate from the world.[87] The organisation encourages its members to exercise caution when associating with those who are not members.[88] Non-Jehovah's Witnesses are referred to within the organisation as 'worldly' people and those who are 'not in the Truth'.[89]

41 The Jehovah's Witness organisation acknowledges that its members can benefit from a basic secular primary and high school education.[90] However the organisation counsels against pursuit of further education, the involvement of children in extra-curricular activities and attendance in sex education classes.[91] Documents in evidence show that Jehovah's Witness parents are encouraged by the organisation to school their own children in matters of sex education, because the alternative of school-based sex education is considered likely to result in immorality.[92]

42 Mr Spinks and Mr Toole told the Royal Commission that members of the Jehovah's Witnesses organisation are instructed to subject themselves to secular laws and government to the extent that such subjection does not conflict with Biblical law.[93] The *Organized to do Jehovah's Will* handbook explains that this is because secular authorities have been 'placed in their relative positions by God'.[94] However, the same handbook considers 'circumstances under which a Christian would refuse to obey worldly rulers' and counsels that '[w]e must obey God as ruler rather than men. – Acts 5:29'.[95] Mr Spinks told the Royal Commission that 'Jehovah's Witnesses will always obey Scripture … [specifically Acts 5:29] … where there is a clear Bible principle that' conflicts with secular law.[96]

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85 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0024 and 0039 (Tab 109).
86 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0084-0091 (Tab 109);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0059-0081 (Tab 120).
87 Exhibit 29-0003, WEB.0053.001.0001 at 0007 (Tab 127).
88 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0082 (Tab 109).
89 Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [19].
90 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0081 (Tab 109).
91 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0081 (Tab 109);
Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [15];
Transcript of BCB, T15171:4-6, 20-26 (Day 141).
92 Exhibit 29-0003: WAT.0001.004.0225 (Tab 75);
WAT.0001.004.0223 (Tab 76).
93 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0099 (Tab 109);
Transcript of V J Toole, T15767:38-T15768:9 (Day 153);
Transcript of R P Spinks, T15700:25-37 (Day 152).
94 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0099 (Tab 109).
95 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0105 (Tab 109).
96 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15700:25-37 (Day 152).

43 Further, relatively recent publications such as *Keep Yourself in God's Love* counsel that, as Paul says in Ephesians 6:12, '[w]e have a struggle … not against blood and flesh, but against the governments, against the authorities, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the wicked spirit forces in the heavenly places'.[97] Moreover, the same publication states that Paul's use of the words 'governments' and 'authorities' suggests that 'attacks from the spirit realm are highly organized and deliberate'.[98]

44 In the light of such doctrinal teachings, it is submitted that the message published to members of the Jehovah's Witness organisation about their relationship with secular authorities is not as simple as that described by Messrs Toole and Spinks. It is submitted that, in fact, the organisation presents its members with conflicting and ambiguous teachings regarding their relationship with secular authorities, thereby fostering a distrust of such authorities.

Millenarianism

45 Mr O'Brien told the Royal Commission that the Jehovah's Witnesses have a doctrinal understanding of Bible prophecies regarding the 'conclusion of the system of things', which is also referred to as 'the last days'.[99] He said that 'the Bible foretells the end of the present system of things',[100] meaning the 'end of the world'.[101]

46 The Jehovah's Witnesses are taught that the end of the world is something to look forward to and that 'God will "cut off" the wicked so that good people can truly enjoy life on earth'.[102] A June 1982 edition of *Awake!* magazine, for instance, tells readers that the only way to finally end child abuse is to 'embrace God's Kingdom under Christ' and to 'love God with all your heart and your neighbour as yourself' so as to be saved when the end comes.[103]

47 The Jehovah's Witnesses recognise that they 'have had wrong expectations about when the end would come'[104] following 'failed prophecies of 1914, 1918, 1925 and, most significantly, 1975'.[105] However, the Jehovah's Witnesses are counselled that 'even more important than focusing on when the end will come, [they] must be confident that it will come, and … act accordingly.[106] Mr Geoffrey Jackson told the Royal Commission that the world's end is now imminent as the 'Jehovah's Witnesses believe these are the last days'.[107]

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97 Exhibit 29-0003, WEB.0053.001.0001 at 0016 (Tab 127).
98 Exhibit 29-0003, WEB.0053.001.0001 at 0017 (Tab 127).
99 Exhibit 29-0024, Statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [33] and [35].
100 Exhibit 29-0024, Statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [34].
101 Exhibit 29-0024, Annexure 2, STAT.0592.001.0024 at 0032.
102 Exhibit 29-0024, Annexure 2, STAT.0592.001.0024 at 0032.
103 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0223 (Tab 76).
104 Exhibit 29-0024, Annexure 2, STAT.0592.001.0024 at 0033.
105 Exhibit 29-0003, WEB.0053.002.0001 at 0005-0006 and 0008.
106 Exhibit 29-0024, Annexure 2, STAT.0592.001.0024 at 0034.
107 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15937:41-44 (Day 155).

Evangelism

48 Members of the Jehovah's Witness organisation evangelize to glorify God and are instructed to go and make disciples of all people.[108] Jehovah's Witnesses view evangelizing as a personal responsibility and the extent to which they engage in this activity is a personal decision that they make as an expression of their love for God.[109] Documents in evidence show that the Jehovah's Witness organisation expects that each member places his or her evangelising obligations above secular employment.[110]

49 Jehovah's Witnesses worship and praise Jehovah by attending organised meetings, Bible study, Theocratic Ministry Schools and field service.[111] Jehovah's Witness meetings are generally held in the Kingdom Hall.[112] A study edition of *The Watchtower* magazine containing four to five articles is published by the Governing Body each month for study by the congregations over the course of that month.[113]

Male headship

50 Documents in evidence show that the Jehovah's Witness organisation teaches that being in subjection to God is essential and that it is important to observe the headship principle.[114] Mr O'Brien explained that the headship principle accepted by Jehovah's Witnesses is that 'the head of every man is the Christ, in turn the head of a woman is the man'.[115] Mr O'Brien's evidence revealed that this belief is reflected in the patriarchal structure of the organisation, where men hold positions of authority within congregations and headship in the family.[116] Women are expected to defer to the authority of their husbands and children are taught to obey their parents.[117]

Available findings on the Jehovah's Witnesses relationship with secular authorities

F1 The Jehovah's Witness organisation presents its members with conflicting and ambiguous teachings regarding their relationship with secular authorities, thereby fostering a distrust of such authorities.

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108 Exhibit 29-0024, Statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [30].
109 Exhibit 29-0024, Statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [31].
110 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0082 (Tab 109).
111 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0045-0058 (Tab 109).
112 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0077 (Tab 109).
113 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15843:15-25 (Day 153);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0047-0048, 0051 (Tab 109).
114 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0096 (Tab 109).
115 Exhibit 29-0024, Statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [38];
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0096 (Tab 109).
116 Exhibit 29-0024, Statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [37];
Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15863:19-28 (Day 153).
117 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0099 (Tab 109).

Part 2 Historical child sexual abuse data

51 In investigating the response of the Jehovah's Witness organisation to child sexual abuse, the Royal Commission sought from Watchtower Australia all documents evidencing or relating to allegations or complaints of child sexual abuse involving members of the Jehovah's Witness organisation in Australia.[118]

52 In response to the Royal Commission's summons to produce, Watchtower Australia produced some 5,000 documents comprising, among other things, files relating to some 1,000 alleged perpetrators of child sexual abuse dating back to 1950. Royal Commission staff analysed those files and produced the following data which was for the most part uncontested by the organisation.[119]

2.1 Data extracted from Watchtower Australia files

53 Since 1950, Watchtower Australia has recorded allegations, reports or complaints of child sexual abuse against 1,006 members of the Jehovah's Witness organisation in Australia.[120]

54 Those recorded allegations, reports or complaints relate to at least 1,800 alleged victims of child sexual abuse.[121]

55 The files record that 579 of those against whom allegations were made confessed to having committed child sexual abuse.[122]

56 Of the 1,006 members against whom allegations of child sexual abuse were made, 108 were elders or ministerial servants at the time of the first instance of alleged abuse.[123] The files do not reveal how many of the alleged perpetrators were elders or ministerial servants at the time of any subsequent instances of alleged child sexual abuse. The files record that 28 alleged perpetrators were appointed as elders or ministerial servants after having been the subject of an allegation of child sexual abuse.[124]

57 Finally, the files record that 401 alleged perpetrators were disfellowshipped in relation to an allegation of child sexual abuse,[125] and that 230 of those alleged perpetrators were

118 Exhibit 29-0021, WAT.999.013.0001_R.
119 Exhibit 29-0031, WAT.0021.001.0001;
Exhibit 29-0021, WAT.9999.013.0005_R.
120 Exhibit 29-0021, WAT.9999.013.0012 at [1].
121 Exhibit 29-0031, WAT.0021.001.0001;
Exhibit 29-0031, WAT.0021.001.0001 – the figure in the table at the bottom of the column entitled 'Total number of alleged victims' does not take into account cells where the number of victims was recorded as '10+'.
122 Exhibit 29-0021, WAT.9999.013.0012 at [8].
123 Exhibit 29-0021, WAT.9999.013.0012 at [6].
124 Exhibit 29-0021, WAT.9999.013.0012 at [16].
125 Exhibit 29-0021, WAT.9999.013.0012 at [12].

subsequently reinstated.[126] Of those disfellowshipped, 78 were disfellowshipped on more than one occasion in relation to an allegation of child sexual abuse.[127]

Oral evidence on the number of recorded alleged perpetrators

58 Mr Spinks pointed out that while he did not wish to diminish the significance of the number of alleged perpetrators identified in the case files, 199 of the 1,006 alleged perpetrators were not Jehovah's Witnesses at the time of the first reported allegation.[128] He however accepted that it 'was probably true' that the 199 alleged perpetrators identified in the case files went on to become Jehovah's Witnesses, and that in many cases they were the subject of subsequent allegations of child sexual abuse while they were Jehovah's Witnesses.[129]

59 Mr Toole told the Royal Commission that for approximately the last two years he has been responsible for receiving telephone calls from congregational elders about allegations of child sexual abuse on behalf of the Legal Department.[130] He estimated that, over that period, he had received and continues to receive 'three, sometimes four' calls each month.[131]

60 Mr Toole's evidence as to frequency of calls regarding child sexual abuse is consistent with the number and frequency of allegations of child sexual abuse that is evidenced in the files produced to the Royal Commission.

2.2 Data on reporting to police

61 The analysis conducted by Royal Commission staff showed that of the 1,006 alleged perpetrators of child sexual abuse identified by the Jehovah's Witness organisation in Australia, not one was reported to police or other secular authority by the Jehovah's Witness organisation (including by elders within the organisation).[132] With reference to the files, no instance was identified by the Jehovah's Witness organisation of an allegation having been reported by the organisation to the police or other authorities.[133]

62 It was put to Mr Toole that there is no record in the case files of an elder having ever reported an allegation of child sexual abuse to the police or secular authorities.[134] Mr Toole accepted that 'if that is the way the files read, I assume that must be correct'.[135]

63 The analysis demonstrated that 161 of the alleged perpetrators recorded in the files had nevertheless been convicted of a child sexual abuse offence,[136] indicating that in spite

126 Exhibit 29-0021, WAT.9999.013.0012 at [14].
127 Exhibit 29-0021, WAT.9999.013.0012 at [13].
128 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15663:39-44 (Day 152).
129 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15718:43-T15719:9 (Day 152).
130 Transcript of V J Toole, T15760:18-30 (Day 153).
131 Transcript of V J Toole, T15760:18-30 (Day 153).
132 Exhibit 29-0021, WAT.9999.013.0012 at [20].
133 Transcript of V J Toole, T15777:24-T15778:22 (Day 153).
134 Transcript of V J Toole, T15777:42-44 (Day 153).
135 Transcript of V J Toole, T15777:42-T15778:3 (Day 153).
136 Exhibit 29-0021, WAT.9999.013.0012 at [19].

of it not having been reported by the organisation, the alleged perpetrator had still come to the attention of police.

64 In a letter dated 20 July 2015, Watchtower Australia advised the Royal Commission that it had conducted a search of key words in the case files (such as 'police', 'child services', 'authorities', 'charge', 'court', 'welfare').[137] According to the results of its search, Watchtower Australia contended that '383 alleged perpetrators had been dealt with by either police or secular authorities in the respective States or Territories in which they reside'.[138] This figure was reiterated by Mr Spinks in oral evidence.[139]

65 Mr Toole accepted in examination that the conclusion asserted in the letter of 20 July 2015 was questionable because the search methodology may have yielded results even in cases where there was, for example, an instruction not to involve secular authorities.[140]

Available findings on historical child sexual abuse data

F2 Since 1950, the Jehovah's Witness organisation in Australia has received allegations of child sexual abuse against 1,006 of its members relating to at least 1,800 victims, and has in that period not reported a single allegation to the police or other authorities, even though 579 of those against whom allegations were made confessed to having committed child sexual abuse.

F3 The Jehovah's Witness organisation in Australia receives approximately three to four reports of allegations of child sexual abuse each month.

137 Exhibit 29-0021, WAT.0018.001.0001_R at [10].
138 Exhibit 29-0021, WAT.0018.001.0001_R at [10].
139 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15717:4-T15718:3 (Day 152).
140 Transcript of V J Toole, T15777:6-22 (Day 153).

Part 3 Historical policies and procedures

66 The Royal Commission heard evidence from two survivors of child sexual abuse, BCB and BCG, whose complaints of abuse were first handled by the Jehovah's Witness organisation in or around 1992 and 1989 respectively.

67 This Part of these submissions provides an overview of the systems, policies and procedures in place within the Jehovah's Witness organisation for responding to complaints of child sexual abuse at the time that BCB and BCG first raised their abuse with the organisation, and in the years following. The policies and procedures governing the organisation's ongoing response to the management of BCG's abuser from 2010, and to BCB's second disclosure to the organisation in 2012, are dealt with in Parts 7 and 8 of these submissions.

68 Broadly speaking, allegations of child sexual abuse were handled in the relevant periods in the same way as any sin was handled according to a system requiring reporting of serious wrongdoing to congregational elders. The elders would then investigate with a view to determining the veracity of an allegation. If an allegation was proved in accordance with Scriptural standards, then the elders would form a judicial committee to determine the degree of repentance of the accused and the appropriate sanction.

3.1 Key documents recording systems, policies and procedures in 1989 and 1992

69 In 1989 and 1992, the Jehovah's Witness elders handling BCG's and BCB's complaints of child sexual abuse was required to be governed by the policies and procedures set out in the *Pay Attention to Yourselves and All the Flock* elders' handbooks of 1981 and 1991 respectively (hereinafter, ***Pay Attention 1981*** and ***Pay Attention 1991***).[141] Those elders' handbooks were from time to time supplemented by letters from the Branch Office containing direction on the application of Scriptural principles and procedures,[142] and by other Jehovah's Witness organisation publications including the *Awake!* and *Watchtower* magazines.[143]

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141 Exhibit 29-0033, WAT.0019.001.0001;
Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of Albert Ronald De Rooy, STAT.0597.001.0001_R at [3.2];
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 (Tab 80);
Exhibit 29-0002, Statement of Max Horley, STAT.0601.001.0001_R at [2.1].

142 Exhibit 29-0004, Statement of Doug Jackson, STAT.0600.001.0001_R at [3.1];
Exhibit 29-0002, Statement of Max Horley, STAT.0601.001.0001_R at [3.1];
Exhibit 29-0004, Statement of Doug Jackson, STAT.0600.001.0001_R at [3.2];
Exhibit 29-0005, Statement of Joseph Bello, STAT.0594.001.0001_R at [3.2];
Exhibit 29-0007, Statement of Dino Ali, STAT.0598.001.0001_R at [3.2];
Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of Albert Ronald De Rooy, STAT.0597.001.0001_R at [3.4];
Exhibit 29-0010, Statement of Kevin Bowditch, STAT.0602.001.0001_R at [3.3].

143 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0033 (Tab 80).

70 In 1989 and 1992, general information as to reporting and disciplinary procedures was available to ordinary publishers like BCG and BCB in the form of the *Organized to Accomplish Our Ministry* (published in 1983).[144]

3.2 Reporting child sexual abuse

Reporting within the Jehovah's Witness organisation

71 In 1989 and 1992, ordinary publishers within the Jehovah's Witness organisation were encouraged to report serious sins such as fornication, adultery and homosexuality to the elders.[145] Once a sin was reported to elders, publishers were advised that they could 'leave the problem in the hands of the responsible members of the congregation and trust in Jehovah that it will be resolved'.[146]

72 From 1991, elders were instructed that a person with knowledge of 'wrongdoing' had an obligation to report that wrongdoing in order to keep the congregation clean.[147]

73 Elders themselves were obliged, from 1991, to report their own 'gross wrong[s]' to the body of elders as they would no longer be qualified to continue in their 'appointed' role.[148]

74 From at least 1991, the types of sin that a person might report to elders as child sexual abuse included one or a combination of the following:[149]

a) *'Uncleanness* includes an intentional momentary touching of sexual parts or caressing of breasts. (1 Thess. 4:7, 8; 1 Tim. 5:1,2)'

b) *'Loose conduct* is a shocking, flagrant disregard for Jehovah's moral standards. (Gal. 5:19; w83 3/15 p. 31; w739/15 pp. 574-6)', and

c) *'Por-nei'a* involves immoral use of the genitals of at least one human (whether in a natural or a perverted way) …' and includes the 'sexual abuse of children'.

75 With respect to 'porneia', *Pay Attention 1991* instructed elders to 'do what they reasonably can to protect children from further abuse; follow the Society's directives on such matters'.[150]

76 On the evidence before the Royal Commission, it was not until at least 1992 that elders were given an explicit directive to immediately contact the Branch Office for advice if they received a report or allegation of child sexual abuse.[151]

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144 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15843:27-39 (Day 153);
Exhibit 29-0032, WAT.0020.001.0001 at 0004.

145 Exhibit 29-0032, WAT.0020.001.0001 at 0100.

146 Exhibit 29-0032, WAT.0020.001.0001 at 0101.

147 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0028-0029 (Tab 80).

148 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0029 (Tab 80).

149 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0024-0026, 0028 (Tab 80).

150 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0025 (Tab 80).

151 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0001 at 0003 (Tab 81).

Reporting to authorities

77 In 1989 and 1992, elders were under no specific direction to either report child sexual abuse to authorities themselves or to encourage the survivor of the alleged abuse to report to authorities. Instead, *Pay Attention 1981* advised elders that 'the law on ecclesiastical privilege in many countries does not require elders to report the offender or the offense to secular authorities'.[152] *Pay Attention 1991* suggested that the elders encourage the accused to report himself to authorities.[153]

78 *Pay Attention 1991* otherwise discouraged Jehovah's Witnesses from taking fellow Christians to secular courts to settle personal disputes and counselled that such disputes should be settled with the help of the congregation elders.[154] Failure to observe this injunction could result in restriction of congregational privileges.[155]

Investigation and establishment of a judicial committee

79 In both 1989 and 1992, reports or allegations of serious wrongdoing were to be investigated by elders in order to determine if there was substance to a given report or allegation and if there was therefore a need to form a judicial committee.[156]

80 Elders were instructed that an accusation had substance if it was an 'offense serious enough to result in disfellowshipping',[157] and if there are 'either two witnesses or a confession of wrongdoing'.[158] *Pay Attention 1981* also specifically instructed that testimony from '*another witness to the same type of sin on the part of the accused person … would be basis to convoke a judicial committee*' (sic).[159]

81 If there was insufficient evidence to form a judicial committee but 'serious questions' were raised then, from 1991, two elders might have investigated the matter further in any event.[160] In the case of reports of 'gross' or 'serious' sins that might 'contaminate' the congregation or that have brought the congregation into disrepute, a body of elders was directed to investigate and, if necessary, establish a judicial committee to handle the matter.[161] *Pay Attention 1991* does not, however, specifically define what constitutes a 'gross' or 'serious' sin.

82 More minor transgressions such as 'minor uncleanness' could be handled 'at the discretion of an elder or two' and did not require the formation of a judicial

152 Exhibit 29-0033, WAT.0019.001.0001 at 0019.
153 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0062-0063 (Tab 80).
154 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0064 (Tab 80).
155 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0064 (Tab 80).
156 Exhibit 29-0033, WAT.0019.001.0001 at 0032;
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0041 (Tab 80).
157 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0041 (Tab 80).
158 Exhibit 29-0033, WAT.0019.001.0001 at 0035;
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0041 (Tab 80).
159 Exhibit 29-0033, WAT.0019.001.0001 at 0035.
160 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0029 and 0041 (Tab 80).
161 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0029 (Tab 80).

committee.[162] The *Pay Attention 1991* handbook did not offer specific guidance as to what might constitute 'minor uncleanness'.

83 Ultimately though, if an accused person denied wrongdoing and there was only one witness to the alleged wrongdoing, then a judicial committee would not be formed and the matter would be left in Jehovah's hands.[163]

Investigating elders and judicial committee members

84 The role of an elder in handling an allegation of wrongdoing was described in *Pay Attention 1981* and *1991* as being to act as a judge and 'readjust', 'reprove' those who are repentant, or 'remove unrepentant wrongdoers' from the congregation.[164]

85 *Pay Attention 1991* directed elders to be impartial at all times.[165] Accordingly, '[a]n elder who … has had a special friendship with [the accused] should not normally serve on the [judicial] committee …'.[166]

Judicial committee

86 *Pay Attention 1991* provided that evidence and testimony of witnesses were to be considered by a judicial committee prior to any decision about the action necessary in respect of the accused person.[167] That handbook further provided that no action should be taken by a 'committee' against an accused person 'unless the evidence clearly proves this necessary'.[168]

87 *Pay Attention 1991* then set out the types of evidence that would be acceptable in clearly proving that action in respect of the accused was necessary:[169]

a) 'the testimony of two or three eyewitnesses …; no action could be taken if there was only one witness (Deut.19-15; John 8:17)' (the **two-witness rule**)

b) a confession from the accused, 'which may be accepted as conclusive proof without other corroborating evidence. (Josh. 7:19)'

c) strong circumstantial evidence 'such as pregnancy or evidence (testified to by at least two witnesses) that the accused stayed all night in the same house with a person of the opposite sex … under improper circumstances', and

d) the testimony of two or three witnesses to the same kind of wrongdoing but each is a witness to a separate incident.

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162 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0025 (Tab 80).
163 Exhibit 29-0033, WAT.0019.001.0001 at 0035;
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0050 (Tab 80).
164 Exhibit 29-0033, WAT.0019.001.0001 at 0032;
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0024 (Tab 80).
165 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0039 (Tab 80).
166 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0067-0068 (Tab 80).
167 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0042-0043 (Tab 80).
168 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0043 (Tab 80).
169 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0043 (Tab 80).

88 From 1981, elders were directed that the judicial committee was to probe in an effort to establish facts, ascertain the attitude of the accused, and determine if there was evidence to establish serious wrongdoing.[170] From 1991, however, elders were instructed to avoid 'probing questions [that] go into needless details, especially in regard to sexual misconduct, unless this [was] absolutely necessary, such as in determining whether 'por-neia' had been committed'.[171]

89 From at least 1981, in the absence of a confession by the accused, the accuser was required, even in cases of sexual abuse, to make her allegation before her abuser during either or both of the investigation and judicial committee stages of the process.[172] Both *Pay Attention 1981* and *Pay Attention 1991* instructed elders that the rationale for this was that an accuser should be willing to assume responsibility 'as was the case in Israel'.[173]

90 From at least 1981, elders were instructed to invite the accused person to make a statement at the commencement of a judicial committee hearing. From 1991, elders were also directed to treat the accused kindly, making sure that he was put at ease.[174] *Pay Attention 1991* directed all elders on a judicial committee to weigh carefully both the interests of the accused and those of the congregation as a whole.[175]

91 From 1991, provision was also made for the accused to bring witnesses who could speak in his defence.[176] No equivalent entitlement was prescribed in respect of the complainant.

92 Although not explicitly stated in either *Pay Attention 1981* or *1991*, it would appear that in 1989 and 1992 elders handling a complaint of child sexual abuse were required by the Jehovah's Witness organisation to assess the evidence of the complaint before them according to the Scriptures at both investigative and judicial committee stages of the process.

Assessment of repentance

93 When elders had determined that there was sufficient evidence to establish the truth of an allegation, *Pay Attention 1991* and *1981* directed them to assess whether the wrongdoer was repentant in order to determine the appropriate judicial sanction.[177]

94 *Pay Attention 1991* instructed elders that a judicial committee's primary consideration in determining the appropriate sanction is the 'the individual's sincere repentance or

170 Exhibit 29-0033, WAT.0019.001.0001 at 0033-0034.
171 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0043-0044 (Tab 80).
172 Exhibit 29-0033, WAT.0019.001.0001 at 0035;
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0050-0051 (Tab 80).
173 Exhibit 29-0033, WAT.0019.001.0001 at 0035;
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0050-0051 (Tab 80).
174 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0044 (Tab 80).
175 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0048 (Tab 80).
176 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0042 (Tab 80).
177 Exhibit 29-0033, WAT.0019.001.0001 at 0033-34.

the lack of it'.[178] Among other things, whether the individual had apologised to the person offended by his conduct (in the case of child sexual abuse, the victim) was a relevant consideration in the assessment of repentance.[179] Elders were instructed that '[n]either the gravity of the wrong nor bad publicity finally determines whether the person should be disfellowshipped'.[180]

3.3 Outcomes and sanctions

Deletion of elders

95 *Pay Attention 1991* directed that a wrongdoer who was an elder, ministerial servant or a pioneer would not qualify to continue in his appointed position of service and should be removed.[181] This is because elders, ministerial servants and pioneers were required to be irreprehensible and serve with a clean conscience.[182] It also instructed that an elder or a ministerial servant who committed a 'gross wrong' was morally obligated to inform the body of elders of his being reprehensible.[183]

Disfellowshipping and reproval

96 Depending upon the degree of repentance of a person found by investigating elders to be guilty of child sexual abuse, that person would either be disfellowshipped or reproved.

97 From at least 1981, elders were directed to expel unrepentant wrongdoers who were guilty of 'gross, serious' sins from the congregation, thus denying them fellowship with Jehovah's clean congregation.[184] Disfellowshipping action served to protect other members of the congregation from the bad influence of the wrongdoer, safeguard the purity of the congregation and uphold Jehovah's good name.[185]

98 From at least 1981, elders were directed that a truly repentant wrongdoer should be reproved rather than disfellowshipped.[186] Administering reproof, either privately or before onlookers concerned in the case, served to discipline the wrongdoer and instil a wholesome fear in the onlookers.[187]

99 In 1983, *Organized to Accomplish Our Ministry* advised publishers that the judicial committee would inform the wrongdoer of the decision to disfellowship him from the

178 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0045 (Tab 80).
179 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0046-47 (Tab 80).
180 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0045 (Tab 80).
181 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0029-0030 and 0056 (Tab 80).
182 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0029-0030 (Tab 80).
183 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0029-0030 (Tab 80).
184 Exhibit 29-0033, WAT.0019.001.0001 at 0050;
Exhibit 29-0032, WAT.0020.001.0001 at 0102-0104.
185 Exhibit 29-0032, WAT.0020.001.0001 at 0103-0104;
Exhibit 29-0033, WAT.0019.001.0001 at 0048-0050.
186 Exhibit 29-0033, WAT.0019.001.0001 at 0048;
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0052 (Tab 80).
187 Exhibit 29-0032, WAT.0020.001.0001 at 0103.

congregation and would clearly state the Scriptural reason(s) for the disfellowshipping action.[188] A direction to this effect was included in *Pay Attention 1991*.[189]

100 Following a decision to disfellowship or to publicly reprove, a brief announcement would be made to the congregation stating only that the person had been disfellowshipped[190] or reproved,[191] but not the reason for the sanction. This announcement served to alert faithful members of the congregation to stop associating with the disfellowshipped person.[192]

101 Members of the congregation were counselled against having contact and spiritual association with disfellowshipped persons[193] and told that it was necessary to shun disfellowshipped persons in order to have a good relationship with Jehovah.[194]

102 Both *Pay Attention 1981* and *Pay Attention 1991* provided that if a disfellowshipped person believed that a serious error in judgment was made, he was allowed seven days to appeal the committee's decision by writing a letter to the body of elders of the congregation which took the disfellowshipping action clearly stating his reasons for the appeal.[195]

103 An appeal committee would hear the original evidence and any new evidence relevant to the case.[196]

3.4 Reinstatement as a Jehovah's Witness

104 *Pay Attention 1981* and *Pay Attention 1991* provided that a disfellowshipped person could be reinstated in the congregation when he gave clear evidence of repentance, demonstrating that he has abandoned his sinful course of conduct and was desirous of having a good relationship with Jehovah.[197]

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188 Exhibit 29-0032, WAT.0020.001.0001 at 0104.
189 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0053 (Tab 80).
190 Exhibit 29-0032, WAT.0020.001.0001 at 0105.
191 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0055 (Tab 80);
Exhibit 29-0033, WAT.0019.001.0001 at 0050.
192 Exhibit 29-0032, WAT.0020.001.0001 at 0105.
193 Exhibit 29-0033, WAT.0019.001.0001 at 0042-0043;
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0035 (Tab 80);
Exhibit 29-0007, Statement of Dino Ali, STAT.0598.001.0001_R at [2.3];
Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of Albert Ronald De Rooy, STAT.0597.001.0001_R at [2.3];
Exhibit 29-0010, Statement of Kevin Bowditch, STAT.0602.001.0001_R at [2.5].
194 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0035 (Tab 80).
195 Exhibit 29-0032, WAT.0020.001.0001 at 0104;
Exhibit 29-0033, WAT.0019.001.0001 at 0051-0053.
196 Exhibit 29-0033, WAT.0019.001.0001 at 0051-0053.
197 Exhibit 29-0033, WAT.0019.001.0001 at 0037;
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0060 (Tab 80);
Exhibit 29-0032, WAT.0020.001.0001 at 0106.

105 Elders were directed not to be hasty in reinstating individuals, being careful to allow sufficient time, perhaps many months, a year or even longer, for the disfellowshipped person to prove genuine repentance.[198]

106 Generally, the decision to reinstate was made by a judicial committee of the congregation that took the disfellowshipping action.[199] If the disfellowshipped person moved congregations, the reinstatement plea could be heard by the new local judicial committee.[200] Thereafter, that local committee would give the body of elders of the original congregation that disfellowshipped the individual its recommendation.[201]

3.5 Support offered for survivors of child sexual abuse

107 *Pay Attention 1991* directed elders to treat victims of sexual abuse with extreme thoughtfulness and kindness and to do what they reasonably could to protect children from further abuse.[202]

108 In 1992, the Branch Office directed elders to '[h]elp [victims] see that their worth as individuals is not diminished by the shameful way they were treated. The important thing is how Jehovah views them'.[203]

198 Exhibit 29-0032, WAT.0020.001.0001 at 0106;
Exhibit 29-0033, WAT.0019.001.0001 at 0037.

199 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0060 (Tab 80);
Exhibit 29-0033, WAT.0019.001.0001 at 0053-0054;
Exhibit 29-0032, WAT.0020.001.0001 at 0106.

200 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0060 (Tab 80);
Exhibit 29-0032, WAT.0020.001.0001 at 0106.

201 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0060 (Tab 80);
Exhibit 29-0032, WAT.0020.001.0001 at 0106.

202 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0025 (Tab 80);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0205 at 0210 (Tab 78);
Exhibit 29-0019, Statement of Rodney Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at [33];
Exhibit 29-0024, Statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [51].

203 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0001 (Tab 81).

Part 4 BCB

109 BCB grew up on a farm in Western Australia.[204] She began associating with the Jehovah's Witness organisation when she was 10 years old and was formally baptised as a Jehovah's Witness at age 18.[205]

110 BCB is now 47 years old and is a mother of two children.[206] BCB is still a Jehovah's Witness[207] but since reporting to the Royal Commission in about September 2014, she has stopped attending congregational meetings.[208]

4.1 BCB's abuse by Bill Neill

111 Between 1980 and 1986 when BCB was aged between 12 and 18, she regularly stayed overnight at the home of her friend, her friend's father, Bill Neill, and their family.[209] Bill Neill was an elder in the Narrogin congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses in Western Australia.[210] BCB attended weekly Bible studies led by Bill Neill at the Narrogin Kingdom Hall and at the Neill family house.[211]

112 Bill Neill discouraged BCB from forming friendships with non-Jehovah's Witnesses.[212] BCB left high school at the end of Year 10,[213] encouraged by the Neill family who preferred marriage or full-time preaching over pursuit of a further education.[214]

113 The Royal Commission heard that from 15 years of age, BCB was groomed and sexually abused by Bill Neill.[215] Bill Neill remained a respected elder within the congregation whilst he continued to abuse BCB.[216] Notwithstanding his abuse of her, BCB continued to respect Bill Neill and felt unable to disclose the abuse because of his position of authority in the congregation.[217]

114 BCB told the Royal Commission that Bill Neill's position as an elder contributed to his power over her.[218]

204 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [6].
205 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [5] and [7].
206 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [3]-[4].
207 Transcript of BCB, T15175:15-16 (Day 147).
208 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [73]-[74].
209 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [16].
210 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [14]-[15].
211 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [16].
212 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [17].
213 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [30].
214 Transcript of BCB, T15171:1-14 (Day 147).
215 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [20]-[46].
216 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [40].
217 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [25].
218 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [79].

4.2 BCB's disclosure to the Narrogin Congregation elders

115 BCB first disclosed her abuse by Bill Neill to a Jehovah's Witness acquaintance in about 1991.[219] BCB gave evidence that about a week after she disclosed to her acquaintance, another elder in the Narrogin congregation, Mr Horley, approached her about Bill Neill's conduct.[220] Implicit in that is that the acquaintance had passed on BCB's disclosure to Mr Horley.

116 Mr Horley told the Royal Commission that, on his recollection, he first came to hear of the allegations against Bill Neill when BCB and her husband, BCC, came to visit him at his home to disclose the abuse.[221]

117 This difference in these recollections of BCB and Mr Horley as to how Mr Horley came to learn of BCB's allegations against Bill Neill is unimportant for present purposes and is therefore not necessary to resolve.

4.3 The response of the Narrogin congregation elders to BCB's disclosure

118 At the time of BCB's disclosure, Mr Horley and Bill Neill were the only two elders serving in the Narrogin congregation.[222] At that time, Mr Horley had known Bill Neill for 16 years.[223]

119 Mr Horley told the Royal Commission that he did not remember speaking to Bill Neill about BCB's allegation on his own and that he and Mr Doug Jackson, the then circuit overseer, spoke to Bill Neill together during one of Mr Doug Jackson's visits to the congregation.[224]

BCB's meeting with Mr Horley and Bill Neill

120 BCB gave evidence that shortly after she initially spoke with Mr Horley, he arranged a meeting at her house between himself, Bill Neill, BCB and BCC.[225]

121 Mr Horley told the Royal Commission that he was unable to recall this first meeting with BCB.[226]

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219 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [48]; Transcript of BCB, T15173:3-35 (Day 147).
220 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [49]; Transcript of BCB, T15173:37 – T15174:32 (Day 147).
221 Transcript of M Horley, 15184:17-20 (Day 147).
222 Transcript of M Horley, T15181:3-10 (Day 147).
223 Transcript of M Horley, T15220:3 (Day 147).
224 Exhibit 29-0002, Statement of Max Horley, STAT.0601.001.0001_R at [5.1].
225 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [51]; Transcript of BCB, T15174:34-38 (Day 147).
226 Transcript of M Horley, T15189:10-43 and T15215:14-19 (Day 147).

122 BCB gave evidence that, during this first meeting, Bill Neill made inappropriate jokes about his alleged conduct.[227] BCB also gave evidence that she was pressed by Mr Horley for intimate details or her abuse.[228]

123 BCB told the Royal Commission that it was very distressing for her to have to discuss her abuse in front of a room full of men, including her abuser.[229] BCB said that she felt unable to report the full extent of Bill Neill's abuse at the meeting.[230]

BCB's meeting with Mr Horley, Mr Doug Jackson, and Bill Neill

124 BCB gave evidence that Mr Horley also arranged a second meeting, again at her house, between himself, BCB, BCC, Bill Neill, and Mr Doug Jackson.[231]

125 As noted above, Mr Horley told the Royal Commission that it was at this meeting that he recalls BCB first making her allegations against Bill Neill.[232]

126 BCB gave evidence that during the second meeting Bill Neill was defensive and said that she used to wear revealing clothing.[233] BCB also gave evidence that she did not feel supported and that her credibility was being tested by the elders.[234]

127 The Royal Commission heard that again BCB felt too uncomfortable to disclose to the elders the full extent of her abuse by Bill Neill.[235]

128 BCB told the Royal Commission that nobody explained to her the purpose of either meeting.[236] Mr Horley gave evidence that he could not recall what was explained to BCB.[237]

129 BCB said that after the second meeting, Mr Doug Jackson encouraged her to read an *Awake!* magazine about child sexual abuse, but that nobody explained to her what the outcome of the meetings was or if anything would happen to Bill Neill.[238]

Mr Horley's evidence about the investigation of BCB's allegation

130 Mr Horley told the Royal Commission that at the time, he understood that Biblical principles required the accuser to face the accused[239] and that the relevant procedure was that set out in *Pay Attention 1991*.[240]

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227 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [51].
228 Transcript of BCB, T15175:43-T15175:7 (Day 147).
229 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [80].
230 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [52]-[53].
231 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [53]-[54].
232 Transcript of M Horley, T15189:10-43 and T15215:14-19 (Day 147).
233 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [55]-[56].
234 Transcript of BCB, T15176:45-T15177:4 (Day 147).
235 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [55]-[56].
236 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [51],[54].
237 Transcript of M Horley, T15196:11-18 (Day 147).
238 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [58]-[59].
239 Transcript of M Horley, T15189:45-T15190:2 (Day 147).
240 Transcript of M Horley, T15190:39-T15191:36 (Day 147).

131 Mr Horley accepted in evidence that it is inappropriate to require an accused and his accuser to meet together, but said that he did not reflect on it at the time because he was just following the then procedure.[241] He agreed that it would be very hard for an abused person to disclose the full detail of her abuse before the accused and at least two other men.[242]

132 It is submitted that Mr Horley's application of the procedure set out in *Pay Attention 1991*, which required BCB to face her abuser, caused significant distress to BCB and prevented her from the disclosing the full extent of her abuse.

133 Mr Horley accepted, and it is submitted, that it was totally inappropriate of him to take a person accused of child sexual abuse into the victim's home.[243]

Mr Doug Jackson's evidence about the investigation

134 Mr Doug Jackson agreed that the purpose of the meetings with BCB and Bill Neill was to establish the truth of BCB's allegation in accordance with the Jehovah's Witness organisation protocol.[244] He did not accept that BCB was unaware of the purpose of those meetings, because, he said, although he couldn't remember what he told BCB, he 'would have told her why we were meeting'.[245]

Sufficiency of evidence

135 Mr Horley gave evidence that because Bill Neill denied any intentional misconduct or deliberate touching on his part, the rule requiring two or more witnesses meant that BCB's allegations could not be proven according to the Scriptures and so the matter could not progress to a judicial committee.[246] This was the case even in circumstances where he had no reason to disbelieve BCB's allegations.[247]

Further disclosure / reporting

136 BCB gave evidence that following the committee meeting, Mr Horley discouraged her from discussing her abuse 'out of respect for the Neill family'.[248] Mr Horley told the Royal Commission that he had discouraged further disclosure because he believed 'that gossip and speculation about the matter would be hurtful to BCB and her family, and to Bill and his family'.[249] Mr Horley denied that he was trying to cover the matter up.[250]

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241 Transcript of M Horley, T15189:45-T15190:27 (Day 147).
242 Transcript of M Horley, T15199:25-38 (Day 147).
243 Transcript of M Horley, T15216:18-21 (Day 147).
244 Transcript of D J Jackson, T15228:15-18, and T15228:20-24 (Day 147).
245 Transcript of D J Jackson, T15227:23-27, and T15227:29-33 (Day 147).
246 Exhibit 29-0002, Statement of Max Horley, STAT.0601.001.0001_R at [5.1];
Transcript of M Horley, T15192:37-39 (Day 147);
Transcript of M Horley, T15202:19-24 (Day 147);
Transcript of M Horley, T15207:5-12 (Day 147).
247 Transcript of M Horley, T15203:1-7 (Day 147).
248 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [62].
249 Exhibit 29-0002, Statement of Max Horley, STAT.0601.001.0001_R at [5.3].
250 Transcript of M Horley, T15199:40-T15200:17 (Day 147).

137 However, Mr Horley accepted that BCB would have felt silenced and unsupported by his instruction not to speak with others about her abuse.[251]

138 BCB did not remember discussing reporting her complaint to the police with anybody before or after the meetings.[252]

139 Mr Horley told the Royal Commission that he never said anything to BCB about 'whether she should or should not report Bill Neill's behaviour to the authorities'.[253] Mr Horley said that he gave no consideration to whether he or BCB should report the matter to police.[254]

140 Mr Horley said that there were very few internal policies and procedures at the time about whether elders should go to police when faced with allegations like those brought by BCB.[255]

4.4 Bill Neill's removal as an elder

141 BCB told the Royal Commission that a few weeks after the meetings with Mr Horley and Mr Doug Jackson, Bill Neill stepped down as an elder.[256] The fact, but not the grounds, of Bill Neill's deletion as an elder was announced to the congregation.[257]

142 Mr Horley said that BCB's allegations had cast a cloud over Bill Neill's qualifications as an elder[258] and that he, together with Mr Doug Jackson, recommended that Bill Neill step down.[259] Mr Doug Jackson also said that he considered that Bill Neill no longer met the Scriptural qualifications for serving as an elder since he was guilty of uncleanness and not free from accusation.[260]

143 BCB gave evidence that even after she had disclosed her abuse by Bill Neill, she was still expected to attend Bible study organised by Mr Horley[261] and held at Bill Neill's house.[262] She said that she continued to see Bill Neill several times a week at congregational meetings.[263]

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251 Transcript of M Horley, T15200:19-T15201:41 (Day 147).
252 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [60].
253 Transcript of BCB, T15175:29-38 (Day 147);
Exhibit 29-0002, Statement of Max Horley, STAT.0601.001.0001_R at [5.4].
254 Transcript of M Horley, T15188:10-16 (Day 147).
255 Transcript of M Horley, T15205:3-32 (Day 147).
256 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [63].
257 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [63];
Exhibit 29-0002, Statement of Max Horley, STAT.0601.001.0001_R at [6.1].
258 Exhibit 29-0002, Statement of Max Horley, STAT.0601.001.0001_R at [5.1].
259 Exhibit 29-0002, Statement of Max Horley, STAT.0601.001.0001_R at [6.1].
260 Exhibit 29-0004, Statement of Doug Jackson, STAT.0600.001.0001_R at [6.1].
261 Transcript of BCB, T15169:37-T15170:23 (Day 147).
262 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [65].
263 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [65].

144 BCB gave evidence that she was left feeling unsupported by the congregation and was instead encouraged to respect her abuser.[264]

145 Mr Horley told the Royal Commission that he and Mr Doug Jackson did not consider it necessary to impose any specific restrictions on Bill Neill.[265]

146 Mr Horley agreed, and it is submitted, that restricting Bill Neill's privileges would have been appropriate in relation to some situations.[266]

The report to the Branch Office

147 In a letter dated 1 February 1992, Mr Horley and Mr Doug Jackson reported to the Branch Office on the outcome of their investigation into BCB's allegations.[267] The letter reported the recommendation that Bill Neill step down as an elder because Mr Horley and Mr Doug Jackson had concluded that 'uncleanness' had been committed 'on several occasion (sic)'.[268]

148 The letter of 1 February 1992 further reported that both Mr Horley and Mr Doug Jackson were 'impressed by Brother Neill's acceptance of counsel and his humility throughout the ordeal' and recommended that he be appointed as an elder again 'once this has died down'.[269] Mr Horley told the Royal Commission that in this regard the letter used 'unfortunate wording' and he acknowledged that '[m]atters of this nature take many years, if ever, to die down completely'.[270]

149 The *Pay Attention 1991* handbook to which Messrs Horley and Jackson would have had regard directed that the privilege of serving as ministerial servant or elder could be recommended only after the individual had ample time to prove himself to be irreprehensible and again 'free from accusation' and had 'freeness of speech'.[271] It is submitted that to simply wait for the matter to 'die down' before reappointing Bill Neill would not have been in accordance with the direction of the Governing Body as recorded in *Pay Attention 1991*.

150 Mr Horley gave evidence that although he signed the letter to the Branch Office, [272] he did not believe that Bill Neill had only committed uncleanness 'on several occasions'. Mr Horley accepted that BCB had made other allegations against Bill Neill, but could not

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264 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [62] and [64].

265 Transcript of M Horley, T15209:11-15;
Exhibit 29-0002, Statement of Max Horley, STAT.0601.001.0001_R at [9.1];
Exhibit 29-0004, Statement of Doug Jackson, STAT.0600.001.0001_R at [9.2];
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0504_R (Tab 70).

266 Transcript of M Horley, T15209:4-25 (Day 147).

267 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0504_R (Tab 70).

268 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0504_R (Tab 70).

269 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0504_R (Tab 70).

270 Transcript of M Horley, T15209:39-43 (Day 147).

271 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0061-0062 (Tab 80);
Exhibit 29-0033, WAT.0019.001.0001 at 0037-0038.

272 Transcript of M Horley, T15205:34-T15206:2 (Day 147).

explain to the Royal Commission why those allegations had not been detailed in the report to the Branch Office.[273]

151 The letter of 1 February 1992 also reported that 'unfortunately there may be worldly people who also know' about Bill Neill's conduct.[274] Mr Horley told the Royal Commission that he had included an expression of concern about how widely known BCB's allegations were because he had wanted to preserve the cleanness of the congregation and was concerned about the reputation of Jehovah's name.[275]

152 Mr Horley ultimately accepted that he was concerned with Bill Neill's efficacy as an elder, his qualification to teach, and the proper functioning of the organisation.[276] Mr Horley conceded that his concern was 'probably not' about protecting children in the congregation.[277]

Available findings on BCB's first disclosure

F4 The elders bringing the man whom BCB accused of abusing her to her home was unjustified and traumatising for BCB and should not have occurred.

F5 Although the elders may have been following the documented procedure at the time and they may have believed that Scriptural principle required that the accuser face the accused with her allegations, it was distressing to and unsupportive of BCB to require that of her.

F6 It was distressing for BCB to be required by the elders to tell of what had happened to her to a group of men, including the man whom she accused of abusing her, and it was not likely to, nor did it, result in BCB disclosing the full extent of her abuse.

F7 It was inconsistent with the elders' professed sympathy for BCB for them not to have offered her the opportunity of the support and involvement of women in the process of investigating her allegations of abuse.

F8 The elders did not explain to BCB the purpose of their investigation and the meetings with her such as to ensure that she had an understanding of that purpose, which left her confused and disempowered.

F9 The application of the two-witness rule meant that there was insufficient evidence for the elders to act against BCB's abuser even though they believed her, which left her feeling disbelieved and unsupported, and it left the abuser in the congregation where he may have been a risk to other children.

F10 Mr Horley telling BCB that she should not discuss her abuse with anyone left her feeling silenced and unsupported.

F11 BCB was not told by the elders that she could, let alone should, report her abuse to the authorities.

F12 In circumstances where both investigating elders agreed that there was substance to BCB's allegations, they should have taken steps against Bill Neill, at least by imposing some

273 Transcript of M Horley, T15207:36-T15208:38 (Day 147).
274 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0504_R (Tab 70).
275 Transcript of M Horley, T15206:26-34 (Day 147).
276 Transcript of M Horley, T15210:13-31 (Day 147).
277 Transcript of M Horley, T15209:45-T15210:31 (Day 147).

restrictions on his activities involving children and thereby addressing the potential risk that he posed to other children.

F13 It was traumatic for BCB and inappropriate of Mr Horley for him to have required BCB to attend Bible study at Bill Neill's home when he knew that BCB accused Bill Neill of abusing her.

F14 The recommendation of the elders to the Branch Office that Bill Neill be reinstated as an elder 'once this has died down' and their expressed concern 'that there may also be worldly people who also know' demonstrates that they were more concerned about the reputation of Bill Neill and the congregation than about the risk that he posed to children.

4.5 BCB's disclosure in 2012

153 In 2012 in a written statement, BCB disclosed her abuse by Bill Neill to two elders in her local congregation, Joe Bello and David Wood.[278]

154 In a letter dated 18 December 2012, Messrs Bello and Wood forwarded BCB's written statement to the Branch Office.[279]

155 BCB told the Royal Commission that in July 2014, when Mr Bello was visiting her house on an unrelated matter she told him that she was considering reporting her abuse to the Royal Commission.[280] BCB gave evidence that at around the same time, Mr Bello telephoned her husband, BCC, and asked if BCB 'really wants to drag Jehovah's name through the mud'.[281]

156 Mr Bello accepted, and it is submitted, that he was wrong to have said what he said to BCC and that he should never want to 'discourage someone from going to the authorities'.[282] It is further submitted that Mr Bello's discouragement of BCB through what he said to BCC was in direct contravention of the Jehovah's Witness organisation's explicit directive to '[n]ever suggest to anyone that they should not report an allegation of child abuse to the police or other authorities'.[283]

157 Upset by Mr Bello's visit, BCB wrote a second letter recording her feelings about her abuse.[284] Under cover of a letter dated 17 December 2014, Mr Bello, Mr Wood, and Mr Robert Boardman of BCB's local congregation forwarded BCB's second letter to the Branch Office.[285]

278 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [69];
Exhibit 29-0005, Statement of Joseph Bello, STAT.0594.001.0001_R at [5.1].
279 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0501_R (Tab 71);
280 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [70].
281 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [71];
Exhibit 29-0005, Statement of Joseph Bello, STAT.0594.001.0001_R at [5.12].
282 Exhibit 29-0005, Statement of Joseph Bello, STAT.0594.001.0001_R at [5.13].
283 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0132 [19] (Tab 120).
284 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [72].
285 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0495 (Tab 72).

Mr Horley's correspondence with the Branch Office in 2015

158 In a letter dated 6 January 2015, Mr Horley provided, at the request of the Service Desk at the Branch Office,[286] a brief summary of events leading to the deletion of Bill Neill as an elder in 'in around 1993'.[287] In his letter, Mr Horley reported that '… it became a matter of her word against his as there were no witnesses to the alleged events. BCB was an attractive young sister and often got around the house in her nightwear …'.[288] Mr Horley told the Royal Commission that this latter observation was in fact a comment that Bill Neill had made to him.[289] Mr Horley said that Bill Neill's comment 'should have raised stronger warning bells than it did at the time'.[290]

159 Mr Horley accepted, in evidence, that a child cannot validly consent to being sexually abused or be blamed for it.[291]

Available findings on BCB's second disclosure

F15 It was wrong of Joe Bello, and contrary to the Jehovah's Witness organisation's own direction in that regard, to discourage BCB from reporting to the Royal Commission by asking whether she 'really wants to drag Jehovah's name through the mud'.

F16 The elders in BCB's present congregation should have supported BCB in her reporting to the Royal Commission if that is what she wanted to do.

4.6 The impact on BCB of the abuse and of the organisation's response

160 BCB told the Royal Commission about the long term effect that Bill Neill's abuse has had on her. She said that the abuse changed who she was, destroyed her confidence, and held her back from living a normal life.[292] BCB continued to feel as though she was Bill Neill's victim well into her adult life.[293]

161 BCB told the Royal Commission that she had a nervous breakdown 10 years ago[294] and has had a lot of therapy to address Bill Neill's abuse.[295] The Royal Commission heard that the abuse has impacted on BCB's health such that she has required ongoing medical and therapeutic treatment.[296] BCB gave evidence that her medical treatment has cost her

286 Transcript of M Horley, T15210:46-T15211:25 (Day 147).
287 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0493_R (Tab 74).
288 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0493_R (Tab 74).
289 Transcript of M Horley, T15212:42-9 (Day 147).
290 Transcript of M Horley, T15213:11-16 (Day 147).
291 Transcript of M Horley, T15213:18-28 (Day 147).
292 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [74]-[75].
293 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [76].
294 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [77].
295 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [78].
296 Transcript of BCB, T15171:41-T15172:34 (Day 147);
Transcript of BCB, T15178:47-T15179:6 (Day 147).

money and that she would welcome compensation if it were to be offered to her by the Jehovah's Witness organisation.[297]

162 BCB said that she felt brainwashed into believing that speaking with 'worldly' people would bring reproach upon Jehovah's name.[298] BCB said that, as a result of reporting her story to the Royal Commission, she is riddled with guilt for betraying the Jehovah's Witness organisation[299] and for 'dragging Jehovah's name through the mud'.[300]

163 BCB told the Royal Commission that, in her view:

a) the elders should have encouraged her to go to the police[301]

b) she should not have been confronted by her abuser in her own home,[302] and

c) there should have been women involved to support her through the process.[303]

297 Transcript of BCB, T15179:8-13 (Day 147).
298 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [77].
299 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [73].
300 Transcript of BCB, T15171:28-39 (Day 147).
301 Transcript of BCB, T15178:5-7 (Day 147).
302 Transcript of BCB, T15178:19-22 (Day 147).
303 Transcript of BCB, T15178:24-26 (Day 147).

Part 5 BCG

164 BCG was born in Queensland and grew up in a strict Jehovah's Witness family.[304] BCG's father, BCH, joined a congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses in Queensland when she was very young, and her mother joined the same congregation a short time thereafter.[305] BCG was formally baptised as a Jehovah's Witness when she was about 16 years old.[306]

165 BCG is 43 years old and the mother of four children.[307] She is currently in the final year of a law degree[308] and is no longer a Jehovah's Witness.[309]

5.1 BCG's abuse by her father, BCH

166 BCG's father, BCH, was appointed as a ministerial servant in the Mareeba Congregation in Far North Queensland when BCG was about 13.[310] BCH was well respected within the congregation and was given special privileges by the congregation elders, including conducting private Bible studies, managing door-to-door preaching and teaching and counselling the members of the congregation.[311]

167 As head of the household, BCH dictated and enforced compliance with household rules.[312] BCG said that her father would make her deliver Scriptural talks before the Congregation from the platform in the Kingdom Hall and take part in door-to-door preaching.[313] As a Jehovah's Witness, BCG was taught to love and fear Jehovah and to never question her parents or their decisions.[314]

168 BCG was not permitted to associate with people outside the Jehovah's Witness community.[315] She was taught from a young age that 'worldly' people, including the police, were bad and not to be trusted as they served Satan.[316] BCG's parents did not allow BCG to attend sex education classes at school or participate in extra-curricular activities, such as sport, because the organisation advised against it.[317] BCG said that she was not permitted to attend school after Year 10 because choosing higher education over Jehovah was frowned upon by the Jehovah's Witness organisation.[318]

304 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [14].
305 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [7].
306 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [5].
307 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [3].
308 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [3].
309 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [66].
310 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [9].
311 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [9].
312 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [13]-[14].
313 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [11].
314 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [17].
315 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [14].
316 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [14] and [19].
317 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [14].
318 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [15].

169 The Royal Commission heard that when she was 17, BCG was sexually abused by BCH on a number of occasions over a two week period whilst her mother and siblings were away on holiday.[319]

5.2 BCG's attempted disclosure to the Mareeba Congregation elders

170 BCG told the Royal Commission that she initially tried to report her father's abuse to Mr Ali and Mr Bowditch, two elders in the Mareeba Congregation who were also friends of her father's.[320] BCG said that both elders refused to speak with her before she spoke to her father, or without her father being present.[321]

171 Mr Ali told the Royal Commission that he had no recollection of any such conversation with BCG.[322] Mr Ali agreed, however, that to require a person to speak to her father in the first instance was 'consistent with the teaching of the [organisation]'.[323]

172 Mr Bowditch recalled his wife raising with him that BCG needed to talk with him but could not recall his response.[324] He did not however accept that he would have required BCH to be present before speaking with BCB.[325]

5.3 Investigation and judicial committee

173 About eight months after BCG was sexually abused by her father while her mother and siblings were away, BCH left BCG's mother for another woman and moved out of the family home.[326] It was not until this time that BCG found the courage to tell her male friend, BCJ, about the abuse.[327] BCJ approached BCG's father to confront him about the abuse and subsequently arranged for BCG to meet with the elders of the Mareeba Congregation.[328]

174 At the time that they became aware of BCG's allegation, Messrs Ali, Bowditch and De Rooy, were already members of a judicial committee considering BCH's extra-marital relationship.[329] Mr Bowditch said that there was a lot of overlap between BCG's complaint and the matters already before the judicial committee and therefore some of BCG's complaint was investigated concurrently.[330] Mr Ali said that the same judicial

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319 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [26]-[27].
320 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [37] and [38].
321 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [37] and [38].
322 Transcript of D Ali, T15323:5-15, T15324:1-2 (Day 148).
323 Transcript of D Ali, T15325:12-T15326:18 (Day 148).
324 Transcript of K D Bowditch, T15393:46-T15396:3 (Day 149).
325 Transcript of K D Bowditch, T15394:5-T15396:19 (Day 149).
326 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [39].
327 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [39].
328 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [39]-[40].
329 Transcript of A R De Rooy, T15540:37-44 (Day 151).
Transcript of D Ali, T15327:42-45 (Day 148).
Transcript of K D Bowditch, T15396:23-37 (Day 149).
330 Transcript of K D Bowditch, T15397:6-13 (Day 149).

committee members also dealt with BCG's allegations and that 'it was tied in pretty much together'.[331]

Interviewing of BCG

175 BCG told the Royal Commission that she was interviewed by Mr De Rooy, Mr Ali and Mr Bowditch on a number of occasions.[332] BCG said that, on each occasion, she was alone and without any support.[333] On at least one occasion, BCH was also present at the meeting.[334]

176 BCG said that did not remember anyone explaining the purpose of the meetings to her, but that she understood that the elders were investigating her allegations.[335]

177 BCG told the Royal Commission that instead of being protected and supported as a victim of child sexual abuse, she felt that the elders sat in judgement of her credibility as a witness and made her feel to blame for what had happened.[336] She said that because the elders were all male and were friends of her father's she was reluctant to speak in any detail about BCH's abuse.[337]

178 BCG said that, at one of the meetings, the elders forced BCG to directly confront her father with her abuse allegations.[338] BCG told the Royal Commission that when her father was brought into the room she was extremely terrified.[339] In the meeting, BCH threatened BCG verbally and physically and blamed her for seducing him.[340]

179 Mr Bowditch and Mr Ali accepted that requiring BCG to make her allegations in front of BCH would have been a traumatising experience for BCG and that the process of requiring a victim of child sexual abuse to make her allegation in the presence of her offender was not conducive to arriving at the truth.[341]

Allegations of sexual abuse of BCG's sisters

180 Not long after disclosing her abuse to the elders, BCG disclosed to her mother, BCI. BCI told BCG that her father had previously abused BCG's older sister.[342] At around the same time, BCG's two younger sisters each told BCG and her mother that they had also been sexually abused by BCH.[343]

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331 Transcript of D Ali, T15339:26-37 (Day 148).
332 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [42]-[43].
333 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [42].
334 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [42] and [49].
335 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [42].
336 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [43], [78] and [80].
337 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [44].
338 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [49].
339 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [49].
340 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [50];
Transcript of K D Bowditch, T15399:14-22 (Day 149).
341 Transcript of K D Bowditch, T15399:14-33 (Day 149);
Transcript of D Ali, T15376:17-33 (Day 149).
342 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [46].
343 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [47].

181 BCG said that although she told the elders about her sisters' sexual abuse allegations against BCH, the elders did not take those allegations into account in their consideration of BCG's allegation against BCH.[344] BCG said that Mr De Rooy told her that the elders could not consider the evidence of her sisters' abuse as they were too young to know what they were talking about and were not witnesses to the 'same event'.[345]

182 Mr De Rooy, Mr Ali and Mr Bowditch each told the Royal Commission that they did not recall being told about the abuse of BCG's sisters during the judicial committee meetings.[346]

The investigating/judicial committee's conclusion as to the sufficiency of evidence

183 Mr De Rooy, Mr Ali and Mr Bowditch all believed that BCG had been abused by BCH.[347] Despite their belief as to the truth of BCG's allegations, they concluded that without a confession by BCH they were bound by the two-witness rule and had insufficient proof to take action.[348] Mr De Rooy accepted that this outcome was 'not fair' for BCG, but told the Royal Commission that the elders were bound by their Biblical principles.[349]

Mr Ali's notes of the judicial committee

184 During the public hearing, Mr Ali was shown a document comprising some 23 pages of photocopied handwritten notes.[350] He told the Royal Commission that the document constituted notes that he had taken during the judicial committee process regarding BCH.[351] He agreed that the page numbers also appeared to be in his handwriting.[352]

185 Mr Ali did not dispute that the pages appeared to be ordered consecutively starting at '1', with each page following the numbered page being the reverse of its respective numbered page.[353] He acknowledged that where a page, such as the page between the pages numbered 14 and 15, was unnumbered, it stood to reason that the unnumbered page was the reverse of the preceding numbered page.[354]

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344 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [48];
Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [52].

345 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [52].

346 Transcript of D Ali, T15334:45-47 (Day 148);
Transcript of A R De Rooy, T15554:20-33 (Day 151);
Transcript of K D Bowditch, T15405:40-43 (Day 149).

347 Transcript of K D Bowditch, T15404:5-9 (Day 149);
Transcript of D Ali, T15330:36-T15331:29, T15330:42-43 (Day 148), T15353:1-13, T15361:10-17 (Day 149);
Transcript of A R De Rooy, T15547:1-5, T15548:26-42 (Day 151).

348 Exhibit 29-007, Statement of Dino Ali, STAT.0598.001.0001_R at [5.5] and [5.6];
Transcript of D Ali, T15331:1-29 (Day 148);
Exhibit 29-006, Statement of Albert Ronald De Rooy, STAT.0597.001.0001_R at [6.1].

349 Transcript of A R De Rooy, T15547:1-40 (Day 151).

350 Exhibit 29-0008, QLD.0068.001.1478_R.

351 Transcript of D Ali, T15342:20-22, T15348:3-5 (Day 149).

352 Transcript of D Ali, T15342:37-38 (Day 149).

353 Transcript of D Ali, T15342:33-35, T15343:29-T15344:32 (Day 149).

354 Transcript of D Ali, T15343:8-T15344:32 (Day 149).

186 Mr Ali agreed that the first page of the notes was dated 1 June 1989, or possibly 1 May 1989.[355] It is submitted that it can be accepted that the date is 1 June 1989: the manuscript is clear enough and each of the dates appearing thereafter is either that date or a later date with there being no date recorded between 1 May and 1 June.

187 At the foot of the reverse of the page numbered 14 was written '19-7-89 [BCH] appeals, fax to Kevin'.[356] Mr Ali told the Royal Commission that the pages which precede the reverse of page 14 'possibly' record matters dealt with by the judicial committee prior to the date on which BCH lodged his appeal against the committee's decision to disfellowship.[357] It is submitted that the notes clearly record such matters, there being no other sensible reading of them.

188 Mr Ali accepted that his notes appeared to be structured in such a way as to first record the name of the person to whom the notes refer, then either by use of a colon or a dash, record what that person told the committee.[358]

What Mr Ali's notes say about the abuse of BCG's sisters

189 Mr Ali was taken to pages 4 and 5 of his notes, which relevantly record the following:[359]

> Page 4
>
> [BCG] and [BCI] – molesting! 4 – 5 times.
>
> …
>
> - Says [BCH] has abused 2 younger children, possibly [BCK] too at age 2.
>
> Page 5
>
> [BCK] (by herself)
>
> …
>
> On abuse to [BCK]
>
> Yes, at age 3 (remembers vividly).

190 Mr Ali was taken to page 8 of his notes, which relevantly records the following: [360]

> She does not like what her dad is doing with [redacted] and commendably, when pulled up before [redacted] by [BCH] to deny charge of molestation to [BCK] she insisted on the truth despite [BCH's] efforts to the contrary.

191 Mr Ali agreed that the 'she' referred to on page 8 of his notes as extracted above was BCG's older sister, BCK.[361] He agreed that the notes record that BCK herself told the

355 Transcript of D Ali, T15342:40-47 (Day 149).
356 Exhibit 29-0008, QLD.0068.001.1478_R at 1495_R.
357 Transcript of D Ali, T15343:3-27 (Day 149).
358 Transcript of D Ali, T15344:45-T15346:20 (Day 149).
359 Exhibit 29-0008, QLD.0068.001.1478_R at 1481_R and 1482_R.
360 Exhibit 29-0008, QLD.0068.001.1478_R at 1485_R.
361 Transcript of D Ali, T15348:45-T15349:10 (Day 149).

judicial committee of himself and Messrs De Rooy and Bowditch, about having been sexually abused by her father. [362]

192 Mr Ali was taken to the foot of page 11 of his notes which records the date '17.6.89' and below the date 'Met with [BCI] and [BCG]', and then to the reverse of page 11 of his notes, which relevantly records the following: [363]

> …
>
> Interesting that both mentioned [BCK] as admitting to another "attempt" of molesting by [BCH] when going to school at later age…
>
> …
>
> [BCH] took [BCK's] hand to place it on his private parts.
>
> she pulled hand away and refused to speak with him for some time.

193 Mr Ali agreed that, on or around 17 June 1989, during the judicial committee process before himself and Messrs De Rooy and Bowditch, BCG and her mother reported to the committee an incident of abuse against BCK by BCH.[364]

What Mr Ali's notes say about BCH's confession

194 Page 12 of Mr Ali's notes records that the judicial committee met on 10 July 1989 to discuss disfellowshipping BCH on 'charges of "LOOSE CONDUCT" and "Lying"'.[365] On the same page, the notes record that an appointment was made over the telephone with BCH and someone else to meet at the Kingdom Hall at 7.30pm on 12 July 1989.[366]

195 Mr Ali was taken to page 14 of his notes, which relevantly recorded the following: [367]

> [BCH] – told of charges "Loose conduct + lying"
>
> …
>
> [BCH] has admitted to all things and also said that whatever [BCG] had said on molesting was true.

196 Having previously agreed to the possibility that the pages prior to the reverse of the page numbered 14 record matters dealt with by the judicial committee prior to BCH's appeal on 19 July 1989,[368] Mr Ali agreed that the notes record BCH confessing to the judicial committee to abusing BCG.[369] Mr Ali agreed that in spite of having confessed to the sexual abuse of his daughter, BCG, BCH was subsequently disfellowshipped by the

362 Transcript of D Ali, T15347:46-T15348:5 (Day 149).
363 Exhibit 29-0008, QLD.0068.001.1478_R at 1489_R.
364 Transcript of D Ali, T15350:32-43 (Day 149).
365 Exhibit 29-0008, QLD.0068.001.1478_R at 1490_R.
366 Exhibit 29-0008, QLD.0068.001.1478_R at 1490_R.
367 Exhibit 29-0008, QLD.0068.001.1478_R at 1494_R.
368 Transcript of D Ali, T15343:3-27 (Day 149).
369 Transcript of D Ali, T15351:20-26 (Day 149).

committee on grounds relating only to his extra-marital relationship and not to the sexual abuse of BCG.[370]

Submissions in relation to the evidence before the judicial committee

197 Each of Messrs Ali, Bowditch and De Rooy told the Royal Commission that owing to the passage of time, they were unable to recall specific details or the sequence of events in the case of BCG.[371]

198 Mr De Rooy denied in evidence that the judicial committee considering BCG's allegations was made aware of the allegations of abuse in respect of BCG's sisters.[372] He told the Royal Commission that had the judicial committee been made aware it would have acted.[373] Mr De Rooy's evidence was that, in spite of the allegations recorded in the notes, 'we did not know of that information'.[374] Mr De Rooy told the Royal Commission that his memory was vague and acknowledged that the notes were likely to be a more reliable record of what information was considered by the judicial committee at the time than his own memory, but insisted that the judicial committee was not aware of the additional allegations.[375]

199 Mr De Rooy also told the Royal Commission that it was his recollection that BCH did not confess to abusing BCG until the appeals committee meeting, however Mr De Rooy could not provide any explanation for the confession recorded in Mr Ali's notes.[376]

200 In the light of Mr De Rooy's concession as to the reliability of the notes, and Mr Ali's evidence as to their provenance and arrangement, it is submitted that where the notes are reasonably clear they should be accepted in preference to the recollection of the elders. In particular, it should be accepted that:

a) on or about 1 June 1989, the elders were advised by BCG and her mother that BCG's older sister and her two younger sisters had each been sexually abused by BCH, and

b) between 12 and 19 July 1989, and before the judicial committee's decision to disfellowship BCH, BCH confessed to the judicial committee his sexual abuse of BCG.

201 It is submitted that contrary to evidence given before the Royal Commission by Messrs Ali, Bowditch, and De Rooy, the judicial committee had before it sufficient evidence in the form of the allegations of BCG's sisters to conclude, according to the evidentiary requirements set out in *Pay Attention 1981*,[377] that BCH had sexually abused BCG.

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370 Transcript of D Ali, T15351:20-26 (Day 149).

371 Exhibit 29-0007, Statement of Dino Ali, STAT.0598.001.0001_R at [5(1)];
Exhibit 29-0010, Statement of Kevin Bowditch, STAT.0602.001.0001_R at [4.1];
Exhibit 29-0016, Statement of Albert Ronald De Rooy, STAT.0597.001.0001_R at [5.1].

372 Transcript of A R De Rooy, T15553:13-22 (Day 151).

373 Transcript of A R De Rooy, T15553:22, 34-36 (Day 151).

374 Transcript of A R De Rooy, T15553: 13-22 (Day 151).

375 Transcript of A R De Rooy, T15553:38-45 (Day 151).

376 Transcript of A R De Rooy, T15557:15-T15558:28 (Day 151).

377 Exhibit 29-0033, WAT.0019.001.0001 at 0035.

202 It is submitted that the judicial committee of Messrs Ali, Bowditch and De Rooy failed to take account of the evidence of BCG's sisters and of the confession of BCH in deciding the grounds upon which to disfellowship BCH.

The decision to disfellowship BCH

203 BCH was ultimately disfellowshipped, not for child sexual abuse, but for 'loose conduct' in relation to his extra-marital relationship and for 'lying' about it.[378]

The report to the Branch Office about the decision to disfellowship BCH

204 The report of the judicial committee to the Branch Office regarding the decision to disfellowship BCH referred only to the charges of 'loose conduct' and 'lying'.[379] The report did not mention BCG's allegation of child sexual abuse against BCH or the investigation undertaken by Messrs De Rooy, Ali, and Bowditch.[380]

205 Mr Bowditch was unable to explain why the report did not mention BCG's allegation of child sexual abuse.[381]

206 Mr De Rooy told the Royal Commission that the report did not refer to BCG's allegations because, in his view, the investigation into her allegations was still ongoing.[382] He agreed however that there can be no ongoing investigation of a disfellowshipped person.[383]

207 When asked what would have become of BCG's allegation had BCH not appealed the decision to disfellowship him, Mr De Rooy told the Royal Commission that he felt that BCG had the right to go to the police.[384]

208 Mr De Rooy was unable to recall if he supported or encouraged BCG to report her allegations to the authorities.[385]

5.4 BCH's appeal

209 On 19 July 1989, BCH sent a fax to Messrs De Rooy, Bowditch and Ali appealing the judicial committee's decision to disfellowship him for 'loose conduct' and 'lying'.[386] An appeal committee was convened and was comprised of three new elders, Joe Mirarziz,

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378 Exhibit 29-0007, Statement of Dino Ali, STAT.0598.001.0001_R at [5.1], [5.6] and [6.1];
Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of Albert Ronald De Rooy, STAT.0597.001.0001_R at [6.1];
Exhibit 29-0010, Statement of Kevin Bowditch, STAT.0602.001.0001_R at [5.1];
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0134_R (Tab 3);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0135_R (Tab 5);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0136_R (Tab 26).

379 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0134_R (Tab 3).

380 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0134_R (Tab 3).

381 Transcript of K D Bowditch, T15405:26-28 (Day 149).

382 Transcript of A R De Rooy, T15559:3-31 (Day 151).

383 Transcript of A R De Rooy, T15560:33-41 (Day 151).

384 Transcript of A R De Rooy, T15561:23-26 (Day 151).

385 Transcript of A R De Rooy, T15562:11-16 (Day 151).

386 Exhibit 29-0003, QLD.0068.001.1474_R (Tab 4).

Don Wilson and Jim Bennett.[387] The appeal committee elders were from other congregations in the area.[388] Mr De Rooy, Mr Ali and Mr Bowditch also attended the appeal committee meeting as observers.[389]

210 Mr Ali told the Royal Commission that BCG's allegations of sexual abuse resurfaced during the appeal committee meeting.[390] As a result, BCG was brought, alone, before BCH and the six male elders to be interviewed again.[391]

211 Messrs Bowditch and De Rooy told the Royal Commission that during the appeal committee meeting BCH confessed to abusing BCG.[392]

212 The appeal committee upheld the decision to disfellowship BCH for 'loose conduct' and 'lying', and added, relevantly, the ground of 'porneia' to reflect BCH's confession to 'gross sexual acts against' BCG on five or six occasions.[393]

213 In spite of the decision of the appeal committee to add the ground of 'porneia', the form recording BCH's disfellowshipping only recorded the charges of 'loose conduct' and 'lying'.[394] In oral evidence, Mr De Rooy accepted that this was an oversight.[395]

214 Mr Bowditch told the Royal Commission that the Mareeba Congregation was not informed of the reason for BCH's disfellowshipping.[396]

215 Mr De Rooy and Mr Ali told the Royal Commission that, despite BCH's admission to the appeal committee, they did not consider reporting the matter to police.[397] Mr Ali and Mr Bowditch accepted that the result of this was that BCH, a man they knew to have confessed to child sexual abuse, was left at large in the community.[398]

BCG's reaction after BCH's disfellowshipping

216 BCG told the Royal Commission that she was devastated by the decision of the original judicial committee to disfellowship BCH on grounds unrelated to his sexual abuse of

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387 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0135_R (Tab 5).
388 Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [54].
389 Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [54].
390 Transcript of D Ali, T15357:10-12 (Day 149).
391 Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [53];
Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of Albert Ronald De Rooy, STAT.0597.001.0001_R at [6.2].
392 Exhibit 29-0010, Statement of Kevin Bowditch, STAT.0602.001.0001_R at [4.12];
Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of Albert Ronald De Rooy, STAT.0597.001.0001_R at [6.2].
393 Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [57] and [58];
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0135_R (Tab 5).
394 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0136_R (Tab 26).
395 Transcript of A R De Rooy, T15581:27-45 (Day 151).
396 Transcript of K D Bowditch, T15408:39-41 (Day 149).
397 Transcript of D Ali, T15358:10-15 (Day 149) and T15358:39-T15359:2 (Day 149);
Transcript of A R De Rooy, T15564:25-28 (Day 151).
398 Transcript of K D Bowditch, T15409:10-11 (Day 149);
Transcript of D Ali, T15358:45-T15359:2 (Day 149).

her.[399] It appeared to her that BCH's abuse of her did not qualify as wrongdoing in the eyes of the Jehovah's Witness organisation.[400]

217 Mr Ali's handwritten notes of the original investigation and judicial committee record that BCG was counselled by the elders against speaking to others, including her soon to be fiancé, about her case.[401] Mr De Rooy told the Royal Commission that the counsel was aimed at protecting the confidentiality of the matter and that this was intended to be for BCG's benefit.[402] Mr De Rooy accepted that such counsel may have had the effect of making BCG feel silenced.[403]

218 BCG told the Royal Commission that, following BCH's disfellowshipping, many people in the congregation accused her of lying about BCH's abuse and that, as a result, she felt worthless, helpless and embarrassed.[404]

219 BCG told the Royal Commission that after and as a result of her experience of the committee meetings with the elders, she attempted suicide.[405] BCG said that she reported her suicide attempt to the elders as it was considered a sin by the Jehovah's Witness organisation.[406] BCG gave evidence that she was chastised by Mr De Rooy for attempting suicide because it was viewed as a serious wrongdoing.[407] Mr De Rooy was unable to recall speaking to BCG about her attempted suicide.[408]

Available findings on the investigation and judicial committee processes following BCG's disclosure

F17 The elders did not explain to BCG the purpose of their investigation and their meetings with BCG such as to ensure that she had an understanding of that purpose, which left her confused and disempowered.

F18 It was traumatising for BCG to be required by the elders to tell what had happened to her to a group of men, including the man whom she accused of sexually abusing her, and it was not likely to, nor did it, result in BCG disclosing the full extent her abuse.

F19 It would have been supportive of the elders to offer BCG the opportunity of the support and involvement of other women in the process of investigating her allegations of abuse.

F20 During their judicial committee investigation or proceedings the elders received evidence that BCH had abused BCG's elder sister and her two younger sisters, but they took no action in relation to that evidence.

F21 The evidence presented to the judicial committee of BCH having abused his other daughters satisfied the Jehovah's Witness organisation's own rules with regard to sufficiency of evidence

399 Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [53].
400 Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [53].
401 Exhibit 29-0008, QLD.0068.001.1478_R at 1482_R and 1499_R.
402 Transcript of A R De Rooy, T15598:9-17 (Day 151).
403 Transcript of A R De Rooy, T15598:19-22 (Day 151).
404 Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [59].
405 Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [72].
406 Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [60].
407 Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [60].
408 Transcript of A R De Rooy, T15565:43-45 (Day 151).

to establish that BCH had abused BCG, but the elders wrongly ignored that evidence and accordingly failed to uphold BCG's complaint against BCH.

F22 In the course of the judicial committee process, and before the elders reached a conclusion on BCH's guilt in relation to his extra-marital conduct, BCH confessed to having abused BCG.

F23 The elders inexplicably and wrongly ignored BCH's confession to having abused BCG and thereby, within the precepts of the Jehovah's Witness organisation's own rules and procedures, failed to uphold BCG's complaint against BCH.

F24 BCG was not told by the elders that she could, let alone should, report her abuse to the authorities.

F25 The appeal committee's requirement that BCG give evidence of her sexual abuse by her father to a group of seven men including her named abuser was unjustified and traumatising to BCG and should never have happened.

F26 The failure by the elders to report BCH's sexual abuse of BCG to the police had the result that BCH remained at large in the community and a risk to children, and reflects that the elders were not concerned with child safety but rather with keeping their organisation 'clean'.

F27 The judicial committee's failure to uphold BCG's complaint of abuse by BCH conveyed to BCG that the organisation tolerated child sexual abuse within its ranks.

F28 The advice given by the elders to BCG that she not speak about her abuse to anyone had the effect of silencing her.

F29 The elders' treatment of BCG was unsympathetic and unsupportive and left her feeling worthless and helpless.

5.5 The reinstatement of BCH

220 In February 1990, less than eight months after the appeal committee's decision to disfellowship him, BCH applied to the Beenleigh East Congregation for reinstatement as a Jehovah's Witness.[409]

221 Mr Spinks and Mr Monty Baker were both elders in the Beenleigh East Congregation at the time that BCH applied for reinstatement.[410]

222 In a letter dated 19 March 1990, the elders of Beenleigh East Congregation wrote to the Mareeba elders seeking further information about the circumstances of BCH's disfellowshipping.[411] That letter did not refer to or seek further information in relation to BCH's sexual abuse of BCG.[412]

223 Mr Baker said that he and his fellow elders at the Beenleigh East Congregation must have been told about the sexual abuse because it was discussed at the first meeting of the Beenleigh East judicial committee.[413] Mr Baker said that the primary concern of the

409 Exhibit 29-0003, QLD.0068.001.1466_R (Tab 10).
410 Exhibit 29-0019, Statement of Rodney Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at [82]-[83].
411 Exhibit 20-0003, WAT.0006.001.0036_R (Tab 7).
412 Exhibit 20-0003, WAT.0006.001.0036_R (Tab 7);
Transcript of M J Baker, T15619:19-22 (Day 151).
413 Transcript of M J Baker, T15619:24-30 (Day 151).

Beenleigh East judicial committee was nevertheless BCH's conduct in relation to the charges of 'loose conduct' and 'lying'.[414]

224 In a letter dated 23 April 1990, the elders at the Mareeba Congregation replied to the Beenleigh East elders recommending that BCH's application for reinstatement be rejected on the basis that BCH was not repentant for his wrongdoing.[415]

225 Mr De Rooy accepted that although the letter of 23 April 1990 referred to BCH 'sexually molesting his two eldest daughters', the reasons given by the Mareeba elders for rejection of BCH's reinstatement application were concerned only with the continuing relationship between BCH and another woman.[416] Mr De Rooy did not accept that the absence of a reference to child sexual abuse in their reasons suggests that the Mareeba judicial committee did not take the child sexual abuse allegations seriously.[417]

226 In around June of 1990, the Beenleigh East judicial committee rejected BCH's first application for reinstatement on the basis, Mr Spinks said, that BCH had not displayed 'godly sadness' or have a record of 'works that befit repentance'.[418] In its report of 15 June 1990, the committee noted that BCH 'denied any incest' and claimed that his confession before the appeal committee at Mareeba had been made 'under pressure'.[419]

227 Between September 1990 and April 1992, BCH sent a series of letters to elders from the Mareeba, Beenleigh East and St George Congregations, as well as to the Australia Branch Office. In each letter BCH made a plea for reinstatement.[420]

228 In April 1992, both the Branch Office and elders from the Mareeba Congregation sent letters to the St George Congregation, where BCH was at the time attending, advising that the elders at St George should display caution in believing any display of repentance by BCH.[421]

229 On 19 October 1992, elders from the St George Congregation wrote to the Mareeba Congregation recommending that there were now 'ample reasons' to support BCH's reinstatement, including that he had expressed 'sincere remorse over his past conduct'.[422]

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414 Transcript of M J Baker, T15621:44-47 (Day 151).
415 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0006.001.0026_R (Tab 8).
416 Transcript of A R De Rooy, T15572:13-16 (Day 151).
417 Transcript of A R De Rooy, T15573:12-18 (Day 151).
418 Exhibit 29-0018, Statement of Rodney Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at [85].
419 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0006.001.0034_R (Tab 9).
420 Exhibit 29-0003, QLD.0068.001.1465_R (Tab 10);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0006.001.0017_R (Tab 14);
Exhibit 29-0003, QLD.0068.001.1457_R (Tab 17).
421 Exhibit 29-0003, QLD.0068.001.1450_R (Tab 22);
Exhibit 29-0003, QLD.0068.001.1449_R (Tab 23).
422 Exhibit 29-0003 QLD.0068.001.1448_R (Tab 24).

230 By 4 November 1992, elders from the Mareeba Congregation had agreed to 'go along with [the St George Congregation's] recommendation for reinstatement'.[423]

231 BCH was reinstated on 13 November 1992.[424] Mr De Rooy said that despite agreeing to BCH's reinstatement, he was 'very hesitant' about BCH being reinstated at the time.[425]

232 Mr De Rooy accepted that an important component to consider in any decision to reinstate a perpetrator of child sexual abuse is whether or not the perpetrator apologised to the victim.[426] Mr De Rooy said that, as far as he could recall, BCH never issued such an apology to either BCG or her older sister.[427]

233 It is submitted that in circumstances where Mr De Rooy remained hesitant about agreeing to reinstate BCH and where BCH had not showed repentance by apologising to BCG,[428] the elders from Mareeba Congregation should not have agreed to reinstate BCH in 1992.

BCG's reaction to BCH's reinstatement

234 BCG said that when she learned that her father had been reinstated, she told Mr De Rooy that she was concerned for the safety of the congregation and that she intended to report the matter to the police.[429] BCG said that Mr De Rooy responded that if she reported to police, she would be disfellowshipped.[430] Mr De Rooy could not recall this conversation with BCG and did not accept that he might have said that to BCG.[431]

5.6 BCG's correspondence with the Branch Office

235 On 19 December 1995, BCG wrote to the Branch Office expressing concern about her father's premature reinstatement.[432] In her letter, BCG informed the Branch Office that she was concerned that BCH would sexually abuse other children within the Jehovah's Witness organisation.[433]

236 On 26 February 1996, the Service Desk at the Branch Office responded to BCG, telling her that they would investigate the matter and counselled her to have faith in Jehovah and the elders in her congregation.[434]

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423 Exhibit 29-0003, QLD.0068.001.1447_R (Tab 25).
424 Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [61]; Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0136_R (Tab 26).
425 Transcript of A R De Rooy, T15580:47-T15581:1 (Day 151).
426 Transcript of A R De Rooy, T15580:7-29 and T15584:1-4 (Day 151); Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0046.
427 Transcript of A R De Rooy, T15580:7-29 (Day 151).
428 See Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0046-47 (Tab 80).
429 Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [62].
430 Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [62].
431 Transcript of A R De Rooy, T15584:23-29 (Day 151).
432 Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [64]; Exhibit 29-0003, QLD.0068.001.1410_R (Tab 29).
433 Exhibit 29-0003, QLD.0068.001.1410_R at 1417_R (Tab 29).
434 Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [64];

237 BCG told the Royal Commission that upon receiving the Branch Office's letter, she felt angry, upset and let down.[435] BCG told the Royal Commission that she had already put her faith in the elders when she reported the abuse to them but felt that they didn't protect or support her.[436] Mr Geoffrey Jackson told the Royal Commission that he expected any letter from a Branch Office to be written with a spirit of love and concern, and that the Australia Branch's letter did not, on its face, reflect that love and concern.[437]

238 On 25 July 1996, the Service Desk at the Branch Office wrote to the body of elders at the Mareeba Congregation asking whether the fact that BCH had not apologised to BCG was a factor taken into consideration in the decision to reinstate BCH.[438] In its letter the Service Desk noted that it undertook to BCG to follow up on this matter, and asked the body of elders to reassure BCG that this was the case.[439]

239 There is no evidence that the Jehovah's Witness organisation took any action subsequent to its letter of 25 July 1996 to address the concerns expressed by BCG in her letter, to respond to her letter, or to offer her support.

Available findings on the reinstatement of BCH

F30 BCH was reinstated as a Jehovah's Witness little more than three years after he had been disfellowshipped for, amongst other things, five or six counts of sexual abuse of his daughter.

F31 The decision to reinstate BCH took no account of the risk that BCH posed to children, paid little regard to the fact that he had been disfellowshipped because of child sexual abuse, and was focussed principally on his extra-marital relationship.

F32 The decision to reinstate BCH took no account of BCH's failure to apologise to BCG, a factor relevant to consideration of sincere repentance, or of what BCG might have had to say about BCH being reinstated.

F33 The decision to reinstate BCH was disrespectful and unsupportive of BCG.

F34 The Branch Office's response to BCG on 26 February 1996 caused BCG to feel angry, upset and let down, and did not convey support and concern to BCG on the part of the Jehovah's Witness organisation.

5.7 BCG's report to police

240 In or around 1998 or 1999, BCG decided to leave the Jehovah's Witness organisation.[440] BCG said that, as a result of this decision, she was shunned, ostracised and actively avoided by members of her local congregation.[441]

Exhibit 29-0003, QLD.0068.001.1409_R (Tab 30).

435 Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [65].

436 Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [65].

437 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15993:42-T15994:5 (Day 155).

438 Exhibit 29-0003, QLD.0068.001.1408_R (Tab 31).

439 Exhibit 29-0003, QLD.0068.001.1408_R (Tab 31).

440 Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [66].

441 Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [66].

241 After leaving the Jehovah's Witness organisation, BCG reported the abuse by her father to the police.[442] In around 2001, criminal proceedings commenced against BCH in relation to his sexual abuse of BCG.

242 The Royal Commission heard evidence from Mr Jason Davies, who was then a case lawyer with the Queensland Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (**DPP**) assigned to the case of BCH. Mr Davies told the Royal Commission that in preparing the case for prosecution he became concerned that the inculpatory admissions made by BCH during the committee meetings would be rendered inadmissible at trial.[443] Mr Davies said that his concern arose in relation to BCH's admission because of the circumstances in which it was made and that an incentive to early confession was the prospect of reduced punishment.[444] Mr Davies said that after preparing the indictment he had no further involvement in the case, but that it was reported to him that ultimately BCH's inculpatory statements had been excluded on voir dire at the first trial.[445]

243 BCH's first trial resulted in a hung jury while his second trial was declared a mistrial.[446] After a third trial which concluded in December of 2004, BCH was convicted for the unlawful and indecent assault and attempted rape of BCG and was sentenced to three years' imprisonment.[447]

244 The Royal Commission heard that the elders from the Mareeba Congregation who had presided over the committee meetings and appeal committee meetings gave evidence at the first trial of BCH.[448]

245 BCG told the Royal Commission that her experience of the three criminal trials was significantly less traumatic than her experience sitting through the committee meetings.[449]

Available findings on the impact of the judicial committee process on criminal proceedings against BCH

F35 The judicial committee and appeal committee processes that preceded BCG reporting her abuse by her father to the police complicated the criminal proceedings because of the numbers of people involved in those processes and the telling and retelling of the experience.

442 Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [67].
443 Exhibit 29-0011, Statement of Jason Davies, STAT.0595.001.0001_R at [16].
444 Transcript of J P Davies, T15423:17-32 (Day 149).
445 Transcript of J P Davies, T15421:25-29 (Day 149).
446 Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [69];
447 Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [69];
Exhibit 29-0003, QLD.0068.003.0104 (Tab 45).
448 Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [69].
449 Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [70].

5.8 The second disfellowshipping of BCH

246 The Royal Commission heard evidence from Mr Allan Pencheff who was an elder in the Loganholme Congregation between 1991 and 2005.[450]

247 Mr Pencheff told the Royal Commission that following BCH's reinstatement in 1992, BCH started attending the Loganholme Congregation in Queensland.[451]

248 In a letter dated 17 December 1992, the Mareeba Congregation recommended certain restrictions be placed on BCH due to the 'gravity of the wrongs committed' but did not refer to BCH's charge of child sexual abuse, nor recommend any restrictions regarding BCH's exposure to children.[452]

249 Mr Pencheff gave evidence that at the time BCH joined the Loganholme Congregation he was restricted from answering at meetings and giving talks from the platform.[453] Mr Pencheff said that he was not aware of any reason to restrict BCH's contact with children.[454] He said that he only became aware of BCH's history of child sexual abuse when criminal proceedings were commenced against BCH in 2001.[455]

250 In circumstances where *Pay Attention 1991* provided that privileges could be 'restored progressively when it is determined that the individual has progressed spiritually …',[456] it is submitted that by omitting reference to the nature of the 'sin' for which BCH had been disfellowshipped the elders at the Mareeba Congregation made it impossible for the elders at the Loganholme to apply restrictions commensurate with the gravity of the 'sin' and to properly assess if BCH had made spiritual progression in accordance with the direction in *Pay Attention 1991*.

251 On 1 November 2002, the Service Desk at the Branch Office wrote to the Loganholme Congregation advising that BCH had 'recently been prosecuted for sexually interfering with' BCG and her younger sister.[457] In its letter, the Service Desk noted that until 'his recent guilty plea' BCH had consistently denied that he had sexually abused his daughters.[458] It is not clear why the Service Desk was under the impression that BCH had pleaded guilty, as there is no evidence to suggest that he did so at any time other than before the Mareeba judicial and appeal committees.

252 The Service Desk instructed two elders of the Loganholme Congregation to meet with BCH to investigate his lying to elders about the abuse of his daughters.[459] The Loganholme elders were instructed that if BCH refused to confess to his wrongdoing, he

450 Transcript of A C Pencheff, T15642:39-42 (Day 152).
451 Transcript of A C Pencheff, T15643:38-45 (Day 152).
452 Exhibit 29-0003, QLD.0068.001.1446_R (Tab 27).
453 Exhibit 29-0018, Statement of Allan Pencheff, STAT.0604.001.0001_R at [6.3].
454 Exhibit 29-0018, Statement of Allan Pencheff, STAT.0604.001.0001_R at [6.4].
455 Exhibit 29-0018, Statement of Allan Pencheff, STAT.0604.001.0001_R at [5.1].
456 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0061 (Tab 80).
457 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0112_R (Tab 40).
458 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0112_R (Tab 40).
459 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0112_R at 0113_R (Tab 40).

should be informed that he would likely be disfellowshipped for sexually abusing BCG's younger sister as well as for dishonesty.[460]

253 In a memorandum to the Service Desk dated 23 January 2003,[461] Mr Toole (writing from the Legal Department) observed that the primary issue before the Loganholme judicial committee in 2003 was BCH's lying, as opposed to his sexual abuse of BCG.[462] Mr Toole did not accept that it was reasonable to conclude from his memorandum that he considered BCH's dishonesty as being more serious than the child sexual abuse.[463]

The decision to disfellowship BCH for lying

254 Mr Pencheff gave evidence that he was one of the two elders that met with BCH and later chaired the Loganholme judicial committee that was established to consider whether to disfellowship BCH for lying.[464]

255 Mr Pencheff told the Royal Commission that the Loganholme judicial committee accepted the allegations of BCH's three daughters as sufficient evidence to establish that in addition to abusing BCG, BCH had also abused BCG's three sisters.[465]

256 In March 2003, despite accepting the truth of the allegations of BCH's three daughters, and the instruction from the Service Desk that upon conviction BCH 'will likely be disfellowshipped for sexually abusing' BCG's younger sister, the elders at Loganholme Congregation disfellowshipped BCH for 'deliberate, malicious lying and bearing false witness' and not for child sexual abuse.[466]

257 Mr Pencheff did not accept that the reasons for BCH's disfellowshipping recorded in the judicial committee's report suggest that, at the time, the judicial committee considered the charge of lying to be more serious and pressing than a charge of 'porneia' or child sexual abuse.[467] Mr Pencheff said that the charge of child sexual abuse and the charge of dishonesty went 'hand in hand' and that the judicial committee took the charge of child sexual abuse very seriously.[468]

258 It is submitted that the reasons recorded in Mr Toole's memorandum to the Service Desk,[469] the notification of disfellowshipping form,[470] and the judicial committee's

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460 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0112_R at 0113_R (Tab 40).
461 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0109 (Tab 41).
462 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0109 (Tab 41);
Exhibit 29-0023, Statement of Vincent Toole, STAT.0593.001.0001_R at [25].
463 Transcript of V J Toole, T15786:39-41 (Day 152).
464 Exhibit 29-0018, Statement of Allan Pencheff, STAT.0604.001.0001_R at [1.4], [5.5], and [7.1];
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0107_R (Tab 42).
Transcript of A C Pencheff, T15645:16-24 (Day 152).
465 Transcript of A C Pencheff, T15646:43-47 (Day 152).
466 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0107_R (Tab 42);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0108_R (Tab 43).
467 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0108_R (Tab 43);
Transcript of A C Pencheff, T15650:30-47 (Day 152).
468 Transcript of A C Pencheff, T15650:30-47 (Day 152).
469 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0109_R (Tab 41).
470 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0107_R (Tab 42).

report regarding their decision to disfellowship BCH,[471] do not support Mr Pencheff's evidence that the Loganholme judicial committee did not consider a charge of lying to be more serious than one of child sexual abuse.

259 It is submitted that despite having evidence that BCH had sexually abused BCG's three sisters, the judicial committee disfellowshipped BCH for dishonesty in relation to child sexual abuse, not for the child sexual abuse itself, and that this decision prioritised the charge of dishonesty over the charge of child sexual abuse.

Available findings on the risk management and second disfellowshipping of BCH

F36 When BCH was reinstated no restrictions were placed on him which were relevant to his risk to children despite his established history of child sexual abuse.

F37 BCH was disfellowshipped a second time for lying in relation to child sexual abuse rather than for child sexual abuse itself.

F38 The reasons canvassed and then given for the second disfellowshipping of BCH show that those from the Jehovah's Witness organisation who were involved were more concerned about a charge of lying than they were about BCH's sexual abuse of his daughters.

5.9 BCH's repeated requests for reinstatement

260 Since at least May 2006 BCH has continued to make repeated applications for reinstatement, firstly to the Loganholme Congregation in Queensland, and later to the Kalamunda Congregation in Western Australia.[472]

261 Mr Spinks told the Royal Commission that the Service Desk has been closely involved in providing guidance to the elders on the respective judicial committees that have been responsible for considering BCH's applications for reinstatement in the Loganholme and Kalamunda Congregations.[473] Mr Spinks said that '[c]lear direction had been given to the elders that, until [BCH] fully acknowledges his sins of child abuse and lying in connection with these offences, it would be difficult for the committees or the victims to consider that he was repentant'.[474]

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471 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0108_R (Tab 43).

472 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0104_R (Tab 46);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0012.001.0004_R (Tab 51);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0012.001.0005_R (Tab 53);
Exhibit 29-0003, LOCO.0001.001.0018_R (Tab 56);
Exhibit 29-0003, LOCO.0001.001.0025_R (Tab 57);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0012.001.0007_R (Tab 59);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0101_R (Tab 61);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0098_R (Tab 64);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0096_R (Tab 65);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0094_R (Tab 67).

473 Exhibit 29-0019, Statement of Rodney Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at [88]-[89].

474 Exhibit 29-0019, Statement of Rodney Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at [89];
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0091_R (Tab 69).

262 As at the date of the public hearing, BCH remained disfellowshipped as a Jehovah's Witness. [475]

5.10 Impact of abuse

263 BCG told the Royal Commission that she experienced depression during her teens and that after she was sexually abused by her father her depression became worse. BCG attempted suicide as a result of her experience of the committee meetings with the elders in the Mareeba Congregation.[476] BCG stated that, at the time, she couldn't bear the judgement and public vilification by those around her.[477]

264 BCG told the Royal Commission that she has at times feared being ostracised, shunned and vilified by those around her. She said that she has always lived in fear of her father, and that she had lived in fear of Jehovah.[478]

265 BCG told the Royal Commission that during the criminal proceedings against her father, she was terrified that Jehovah would kill her for having reported to the police and for bringing reproach upon his name.[479]

5.11 Redress

266 In her written statement, BCG told the Royal Commission that the current beliefs and practices of the Jehovah's Witness organisation – specifically the two-witness rule, the practice of not reporting to authorities outside the organisation, and the factors taken into account when reinstating an alleged perpetrator of child sexual abuse – appear to favour and even protect paedophiles.[480]

267 BCG told the Royal Commission that in her view it was essential that uniform mandatory reporting laws are introduced across Australia to apply to organisations like the Jehovah's Witnesses in order to protect children.[481]

268 BCG also gave evidence that the Jehovah's Witness organisation needed to be made financially accountable in order to redress the suffering of past, present and future victims of child sexual abuse within the Jehovah's Witnesses organisation.[482]

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475 Exhibit 29-0019, Statement of Rodney Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at [88]-[89].
476 Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [72].
477 Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [72].
478 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [74].
479 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [75].
480 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [82].
481 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [82].
482 Exhibit 29-006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [82].

Part 6 A Scriptural approach to child sexual abuse policy

6.1 Policies based on the Scriptures

269 The Jehovah's Witnesses organisation relies primarily on Bible passages to set policies and practices.[483] The Jehovah's Witnesses organisation says that it has had Bible-based policies on child sexual abuse for over 30 years and that it is only authorised to address child sexual abuse in accordance with Scriptural direction.[484] These policies have been refined and periodically addressed in various publications over the past several decades.[485]

6.2 Governing Body responsible for Scriptural interpretation and policy formulation

Interpreting the Scriptures

270 Mr Jackson gave evidence that the primary role of the Governing Body is to interpret the Scriptures.[486] He confirmed in evidence that the Governing Body's interpretation of the Scriptures in relation to particular issues might change or develop from time to time and confirmed that one example of such development was in relation to the relaxation of the prohibition on blood transfusions to allow for blood fractions.[487]

271 Mr O'Brien told the Royal Commission that the Branch Committee is not involved in Scriptural interpretation because it is the Governing Body which provides the definitive Scriptural interpretation.[488] Mr O'Brien said that he was not aware of there being any scope for the Australia Branch to adopt a different Scriptural interpretation to that provided by the Governing Body.[489]

Formulation and promulgation of policy

272 Mr Jackson agreed that all policies of the Jehovah's Witness organisation are subject to Scriptural principles and that the Governing Body approves all policies to ensure that they are in keeping with the Scriptures.[490]

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483 Exhibit 29-0024, First statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [75]; Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of Rodney Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at [23]-[24]; Transcript of R P Spinks, T15682:22-29 (Day 152).

484 Exhibit 28-0003, WAT.0001.001.0001 at 0006 and 0012 (Tab 133).

485 Exhibit 29-0024, First statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [66].

486 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15945:17-19 (Day 155).

487 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15945:25-36 (Day 155).

488 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15817:6-22 (Day 153).

489 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15817:29-31 (Day 153).

490 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15977:20-28 (Day 155).

273 The Governing Body gives final approval for new publications and audio and video programmes.[491] Mr Jackson agreed that the Governing Body gives final approval for such publications as the:[492]

a) *Awake!* and *Watchtower* magazines

b) *Shepherd the Flock* elders' handbook

c) *Organized to do Jehovah's Will* handbook

d) 2015 Branch Organization Manual

e) letters signed on behalf of the Governing Body, and

f) templates for letters to bodies of elders.

274 Branch offices around the world, including the Australia Branch Office,[493] may write articles for the *Awake!* and *Watchtower* publications, but the articles must be submitted to the Governing Body's Writing Committee for approval.[494]

275 Mr Jackson and Mr Toole told the Royal Commission that policy letters issued by the Governing Body may be adjusted locally by branch offices to reflect the requirements of local laws.[495] Mr Jackson said that it would be unusual for a branch office to publish its own manual or guidelines in relation to responding to allegations of child sexual abuse.[496]

276 From at the least the 1990s, the Australia Branch Office has, under the direction of the Governing Body,[497] periodically issued directives in the form of letters addressed to all bodies of elders providing instruction on how to respond to allegations of child sexual abuse.[498]

6.3 Australia Branch Committee authority to produce or revise policy

277 Mr Jackson said that it is the Governing Body's expectation that the branch offices around the world will act in accordance with the procedures and guidelines set out in

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491 Exhibit 29-0028, EXH.029.028.0001_R at 0005_R;
Transcript of G W Jackson, T15940:30-39 (Day 155);
Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15819:13-20, 30-47 (Day 153).

492 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15941:23-T15942:4 (Day 155);
see also transcript of T J O'Brien, T15840:25-30 (Day 153).

493 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15819:22-28 (Day 153).

494 Exhibit 29-0028, EXH.029.028.0001_R at 0138_R [12], [15]-[16].

495 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15942:30-46 (Day 155);
Transcript of V J Toole, T15752:34-41, T15753:10-17 (Day 153);
Exhibit 29-0028, EXH.029.028.0001_R at 0067_R [29]-[30].

496 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15952:42-T15953:3 (Day 155).

497 Exhibit 29-0003: WAT.0001.004.0007 (Tab 87); WAT.0012.001.0025 (Tab 90); WAT.0004.001.0021 (Tab 98); WAT.0001.004.0020 (Tab 99); WAT.0001.004.0023 (Tab 110); WAT.0001.004.0075 (Tab 126).

498 Namely, but not limited to:
Exhibit 29-0003: WAT.0001.004.0004 (Tab 81); WAT.0001.004.0005 (Tab 83); WAT.0001.004.0011 (Tab 89); WAT.0002.001.0001 (Tab 97); WAT.0002.001.0015 (Tab 119); WAT.0001.004.0066 (Tab 124);
Exhibit 29-0002, Statement of Max Horley, STAT.0601.001.0001_R at [3.1];
Exhibit 29-0007, Statement of Dino Ali, STAT.0598.001.0001_R at [3.2].

the *2015 Branch Organization Manual*.[499] Mr O'Brien told the Royal Commission that 'the theocratic or Scriptural direction that the Governing Body provides, is the same in every branch and for all Jehovah's Witnesses, worldwide'.[500]

278 Mr O'Brien explained that the Branch Committee faithfully implements and follows the direction of the Governing Body.[501] Mr Toole said that Jehovah's Witness congregations in Australia take their direction and instructions from the Branch Office.[502]

279 Mr Jackson explained that although there is an expectation that branch committee members will follow the direction of the Governing Body, 'there are provisions for those branch committees to get back to us if they see that there is something that doesn't work, and we can adjust it accordingly'.[503]

280 In contrast to what is set out above, Mr Spinks' evidence was that as long as the Australia Branch Office doesn't stray from the Scriptures, it has the 'full authority to produce documents, to clearly set out for seminars, letters to elders, letters to publishers, what needs to be made clear locally'.[504] Mr Spinks said that the Australia Branch has the authority to 'determine something different from what is set out in the [current documents] that have come down from New York'.[505]

281 There is no evidence to support Mr Spinks' version on the authority of the Australia Branch Office to publish things differently from, or without the approval of, the Governing Body. To the contrary, documents in evidence include an exchange of correspondence between the Australia Branch Office and the Governing Body's Service Committee where the former seeks from the latter agreement to the inclusion of an article on a particular subject in a newsletter.[506] There is also correspondence demonstrating that the Governing Body's committees set policies and procedures and guidelines for dealing with issues arising in relation to child sexual abuse for the Australia Branch.[507]

282 In the circumstances, it is submitted that the Royal Commission should prefer the documentary evidence and the oral evidence of Messrs Jackson, Toole and O'Brien to

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499 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15931:39, T15932:32 (Day 155);
Exhibit 29-0028, EXH.029.028.0001 at 0005_R;
Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15822:15-23 (Day 153).

500 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15816:26-32 (Day 153).

501 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15822:15-23 (Day 153).

502 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001_R at 0075 [2] (Tab 109).
Transcript of V Toole, T15754:11-15 (Day 153).

503 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15939:39-45 (Day 155).

504 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15688:12-21 (Day 152).

505 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15692:27-35 (Day 152).

506 Exhibit 29-0003: WAT.0001.004.0014 (Tab 93), WAT.0012.001.0009 (Tab 94), WAT.0004.001.0026 (Tab 96), and WAT.0004.001.0027 (Tab 100).

507 Exhibit 29-0003: WAT.0004.001.0010 (Tab 86), WAT.0001.004.0007 (Tab 87), WAT.0012.001.0025 (Tab 90), WAT.0004.001.0014 (Tab 91), WAT.0012.001.0013 (Tab 91), WAT.0012.001.0014 (Tab 91), WAT.0012.001.0011 (Tab 92), WAT.0004.001.0021 (Tab 98), WAT.0001.004.0020 (Tab 99), WAT.0012.001.0023 (Tab 101), WAT.0012.001.0016 (Tab 103), WAT.0012.001.0022 (Tab 104), WAT.0001.004.0023 (Tab 110), WAT.0001.004.0025 (Tab 110), WAT.0004.001.0058 (Tab 113), WAT.0004.001.0060 (Tab 113), WAT.0012.001.0027 (Tab 113), WAT.0002.001.0011 (Tab 114), WAT.0002.001.0013 (Tab 115), and WAT.0001.004.0046 (Tab 116).

that of Mr Spinks regarding the extent of a branch office's authority to determine policies and procedures.

Available findings on the authority of the Governing Body

F39 Mr Spinks' evidence that the Australia Branch has full authority to produce documents, seminars, letters to elders and letters to publishers without the approval or agreement of the Governing Body is rejected.

F40 The Governing Body retains authority in respect of all publications in the name of the Jehovah's Witness organisation and any view or perspective contrary to that of the Governing Body is not tolerated.

6.4 Flexibility of Scriptural interpretation

283 Mr O'Brien gave evidence that although the Jehovah's Witness organisation is governed by first century Biblical principles, Jehovah's Witnesses believe that many of those principles 'are timeless, in any place, any time'.[508]

284 Mr Spinks told the Royal Commission that if the learnings of science in relation to sexual abuse were in conflict with the Jehovah's Witnesses' understanding of the Bible, then '[a]bsolutely the Bible will prevail'.[509] He also gave evidence that where there is 'clear Scriptural arrangement' or 'clear instructions in the Scriptures', the Jehovah's Witness organisation's approach to the application of the Bible will not change as society changes.[510]

285 While Mr Jackson[511] and Mr Spinks[512] both accepted that the Governing Body may change its interpretation of the Scriptures from time to time, several witnesses, including Mr Jackson, told the Royal Commission that there was no scope for flexibility in the interpretation of the Scriptures in relation to:

a) the two-witness rule[513]
b) the practice of shunning[514]
c) the practice of disfellowshipping unrepentant individuals and reproving repentant individuals[515]
d) the reinstatement of repentant individuals,[516] and

508 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15826:18-34 (Day 153).
509 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15700:13-19 (Day 152).
510 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15699:19-22 (Day 152).
511 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15945:25-28, T15946:12-15 (Day 155).
512 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15689:25-29; 31-38 (Day 152).
513 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15705:38-40 (Day 152);
Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15833:21-28 (Day 153).
514 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15984:4 (Day 155);
Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15851:44-T15852:3 (Day 153).
515 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15707:5-12 (Day 152).
516 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15707:5-12 (Day 152).

e) there being no role for women as decision-makers in the judicial committee process.[517]

[517] Transcript of G W Jackson, T15954:46-T15955:3 (Day 155);
Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15831:40-T15832:6 (Day 153) (contra).

Part 7 Current systems, policies and procedures for responding to allegations of child sexual abuse

7.1 Documents said to record current policy and procedure

286 Mr Spinks told the Royal Commission that the current polices of the Jehovah's Witnesses organisation for dealing with an accusation of child sexual abuse are outlined in:[518]

a) the Bible (the English edition published by the Jehovah's Witness organisation is the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*)

b) the current elders' Handbook entitled *Shepherd the Flock of God*[519]

c) Jehovah's Witness organisation publications available to all congregants approaching baptism,[520] such as *Organized to Do Jehovah's Will*[521]

d) updated guidelines issued by the Governing Body to all branch offices in August 2013 regarding how service desks should field questions from elders regarding child abuse matters (the **2013 Service Desk Guidelines**),[522] and

e) letters sent to all bodies of elders, in particular the letter of 1 October 2012,[523] which consolidated into one letter the spiritual advice and guidance provided in various letters from preceding years as to how Jehovah's Witnesses handle allegations of child abuse.[524]

287 Mr Spinks and Mr O'Brien also told the Royal Commission that a pivotal *Watchtower* article entitled 'Let Us Abhor What is Wicked' published in January 1997 clarifies in Biblical terms the principles to which a congregation should have regard in considering how a 'child molester' should be viewed and treated.[525]

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518 Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of Rodney Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at [23]-[24].

519 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 (Tab 120).

520 Transcript of D J Jackson, T15263:30-32 (Day 148);
Transcript of R P Spinks, T15672:12-14 (Day 152);
Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15843:32-36 (Day 153).

521 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 (Tab 109).

522 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0076 (Tab 126).

523 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066 (Tab 124).

524 Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of Rodney Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at [18];
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066 at [1] (Tab 124).

525 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0306 (Tab 85);
Exhibit 29-0024, First statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [57];
Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of Rodney Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at [19].

7.2 Training

288 Elders within the Jehovah's Witness organisation are given periodic training on the implementation of its policies and procedures.[526] The training takes the form of one-day programmes or seminars called *Kingdom Ministry Schools*.[527]

289 Messrs De Rooy, Ali, Bowditch and Doug Jackson each told the Royal Commission that from the 1990s they had received specific instruction in the form of discussions at elders' schools and training courses on responding to child sexual abuse.[528]

290 Mr O'Brien told the Royal Commission that aside from what is published in the Jehovah's Witness organisation's literature, congregational elders are not given specific training on identifying child sexual abuse.[529]

7.3 Initial response to an allegation of child sexual abuse

Congregation should report wrongdoing

291 *Organized to do Jehovah's Will* instructs members of the Jehovah's Witness organisation that 'gross sins' should be reported to the elders because they threaten the moral cleanness of the congregation.[530] A person may approach the congregational elders 'either to confess their own sin or to report what they know regarding the wrongdoing of others'.[531]

292 *Organized to do Jehovah's Will* also instructs members that once a matter has been reported to the elders, 'you will have taken the matter as far as you can', that the matter should be left in the hands of the elders, and that one should 'trust in Jehovah that it will be resolved'.[532]

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526 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.001.0001 at 0009 (Tab 133);
Exhibit 29-0004, Statement of Doug Jackson, STAT.0600.001.0001_R at [3.1];
Exhibit 29-0007, Statement of Dino Ali, STAT.0598.001.0001_R at [3.1];
Exhibit 29-0016, Statement of Albert Ronald De Rooy, STAT.0597.001.0001_R at [3.1];
Exhibit 29-0010, Statement of Kevin Bowditch, STAT.0602.001.0001_R at [3.1];
Exhibit 29-0018, Statement of Allan Pencheff, STAT.0604.001.0001_R at [3.1];
Exhibit 29-0005, Statement of Joseph Bello, STAT.0594.001.0001_R at [3.1].

527 Exhibit 29-0024, First statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [72]-[73];
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0053 - 0055 (Tab 109).

528 Exhibit 29-0004, Statement of Doug Jackson, STAT.0600.001.0001_R at [3.2];
Exhibit 29-0007, Statement of Dino Ali, STAT.0598.001.0001_R at [3.3];
Exhibit 29-0016, Statement of Albert Ronald De Rooy, STAT.0597.001.0001_R at [3.4];
Exhibit 29-0010, Statement of Kevin Bowditch, STAT.0602.001.0001_R at [3.3].

529 Exhibit 29-0024, Statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [64].

530 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0085 (Tab 109).

531 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0088 (Tab 109).

532 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0086 (Tab 109).

Types of Scriptural wrongdoing that include child sexual abuse

293 The official position of the Jehovah's Witness organisation is that it abhors child sexual abuse and that it will not protect any perpetrator of such repugnant acts.[533]

294 Elders are instructed that child sexual abuse includes:

> … sexual intercourse with a minor; oral or anal sex with a minor; fondling the genitals, breasts, or buttocks of a minor; voyeurism of a minor; indecent exposure to a minor; soliciting a minor for sexual conduct; or any kind of involvement with child pornography. Depending on the circumstances of the case, it may also include "sexting" with a minor. "Sexting" describes the sending of nude photos, seminude (sic) photos, or sexually explicit text messages electronically, such as by phone.[534]

295 The Jehovah's Witness organisation also instructs elders that child sexual abuse is captured by one or more of the following Scriptural offences:

a) *porneia*, which includes sexual intercourse, oral or anal sex, 'immoral use of the genitals, whether in a natural or perverted way, with lewd intent'[535]
b) *brazen or loose conduct*, which is conduct which reflects 'an attitude that betrays disrespect, disregard, or even contempt for divine standards, laws, and authority' and includes child sexual abuse,[536] and
c) *gross uncleanness*, which can include, to the extent that an adult involves a child in the viewing, 'an entrenched practice of viewing, perhaps over a considerable period of time, abhorrent forms of pornography that is sexually degrading', including child pornography.[537]

Elders to report immediately to the Branch Office / Legal Department

296 Upon receipt of an allegation or complaint of child sexual abuse, two elders from the congregation should immediately contact the Branch Office Legal Department for legal advice.[538] Mr Toole said that this is a direction issued by the Governing Body to elders serving throughout the world.[539] The direction to call the Legal Department applies

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533 Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of Rodney Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at [21(a)] and [22];
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066 at 0068 [9] (Tab 124);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.001.0001 at 0015 (Tab 133).

534 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066 at 0066 [3] (Tab 124).

535 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0060 [5] (Tab 120);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0076 at 0078 [16] (Tab 126).

536 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0061-0062 [9]-[10] (Tab 120);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0076 at 0078 [16] (Tab 126).

537 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0064-0065 [13]-[14] (Tab 120);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0076 at 0079 [19] (Tab 126).

538 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066 at 0066 [4] (Tab 124);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0132 [18] (Tab 120);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0014.001.0009 at 0012 [14] (Tab 131A).

539 Exhibit 29-0023, Statement of Vincent Toole, STAT.0593.001.0001_R at [13];
Transcript of V J Toole, T15752:19-32 (Day 153).

'even' in circumstances where the abuse alleged is historical, and where the allegation is based on the testimony of only one witness. [540]

Branch Office Legal Department to advise on legal obligations

297 The Branch Office Legal Department will provide to the congregational elders 'legal advice based on the facts and the applicable law', including in relation to any mandatory reporting obligations applicable to the congregational elders.[541]

Guidance provided by the Service Department / Desk

298 After calling the Legal Department, the elders may be directed to contact the Service Department for assistance with any questions regarding theocratic or judicial aspects of the case, how to protect children, and how to spiritually comfort and support the victim.[542] The Service Department also provides guidance on when and how elders should interview a young victim of child abuse.[543]

299 The *2013 Service Desk Guidelines* provide for the guidance that should be offered when an elder is calling in relation to reports from publishers of an awareness that a person in an appointed role has 'molested a child in the past'.[544] Those Guidelines say that the elders should be informed of any legal obligation to report to authorities that may apply, and that 'individuals should not be discouraged from reporting matters to the authorities but should be reminded of the need for confidentiality when speaking with others, thus avoiding a charge of slander'.[545]

300 Mr Spinks gave evidence that in the first instance the advice given to congregational elders reporting an incident of child sexual abuse is generic advice 'from the published material', followed by a request that the elders provide the Service Desk with details in writing to enable the Service Desk to assist them.[546] Mr Spinks said that the generic advice offered is set out on page 131 of the elders' handbook, *Shepherd the Flock,* which reads as follows:[547]

> Child abuse is a crime. Never suggest to anyone that they should not report an allegation of child abuse to the police or other authorities. If you are asked, make it clear that whether to report the matter to authorities or not is a personal decision for each individual to make and that there are no congregation sanctions for either decision. Elders will not criticize anyone who reports such an allegation to the authorities. If the victim wishes to make a report, it is his or her absolute right to do so. – Gal. 6:5.[548]

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540 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066 at 0067 [4] (Tab 124).
541 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066 at 0067 [4]-[5] (Tab 124).
542 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066 at 0067 [5] (Tab 124);
Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of Rodney Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at [25]-[26] and [28]-[33].
543 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0076 at 0084 [46]-[47] (Tab 126).
544 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0076 at 0081 [31]-[33] (Tab 126).
545 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0076 at 0081 [33] (Tab 126).
546 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15661:2-18 (Day 152).
547 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15661:20-31, T15661:44-T15662:1-4 (Day 152).
548 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0132-133 [19] (Tab 120).

301 Mr Spinks told the Royal Commission that it was not the practice of the Service Desk to put or confirm in writing the advice given in the first instance to elders.[549]

302 Although the *Shepherd the Flock* handbook advises that '[t]he branch office will … give direction based on the circumstances involved in each situation',[550] Mr Spinks accepted that the position is that following provision of generic advice to elders by the Service Desk, 'then it is over to the elders as to what they do' and that the Service Desk does not offer 'specific advice in a particular situation'.[551]

303 However, it was the evidence of Mr Horley in particular, but also of Messrs De Rooy, Bello and Doug Jackson, that they as congregational elders specifically rely upon the advice of the Branch Office in handling complaints of child sexual abuse.[552] Mr Horley told the Royal Commission that he would need to seek advice and take direction from the Branch Office on how to proceed in relation to matters involving reporting to police,[553] application of the two-witness rule,[554] interviewing of survivors,[555] flexibility of Scriptural interpretation,[556] fairness of the process,[557] and how he might proceed if faced with BCB's situation again today.[558]

304 Mr Horley also said that there may have been changes to the process, but that those changes are not recorded in the elders' handbook, and that is where the Branch Office may offer further advice when elders contact it as directed.[559]

305 It is submitted that the present practice of the Service Desk of offering generic advice about how to handle a complaint of child sexual abuse is unlikely to provide sufficient guidance to congregational elders who are directed to contact the Branch Office for, and expect, specific guidance[560] in handling such a complaint. It is further submitted that there is therefore a risk that congregational elders with little or no experience of handling complaints of child sexual abuse are left without proper guidance to deal with such complaints, thereby exposing victims of abuse to the risk of further trauma as a result of inexperienced handling of their complaints.

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549 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15661:2-6 (Day 152).
550 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0132 [18] (Tab 120).
551 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15662:45-T15663:8 (Day 152).
552 Transcript of M Horley, T15186:6-8, T15193:2-3, T15193:13-15, T15193:46-T15194:3, T15196:3-9, T15198:7-12, T15198:31-36, T15218:18-23, T15219:23-26, and T15220:39-42 (Day 147);
Transcript of D J Jackson, T15233:12-16, T15255:19-26 (Day 147);
Transcript of J Bello, T15268:47-T15269:2 (Day 148);
Transcript of A R De Rooy, T15579:29-34 (Day 151).
553 Transcript of M Horley, T15186:6-8 (Day 147).
554 Transcript of M Horley, T15193:2-3, T15193:13-15, T15193:46-T15194:3 (Day 147).
555 Transcript of M Horley, T15198:7-12, T15198:31-36, T15219:23-26 (Day 147).
556 Transcript of M Horley, T15196:3-9 (Day 147).
557 Transcript of M Horley, T15220:39-42 (Day 147).
558 Transcript of M Horley, T15218:18-23 (Day 147).
559 Transcript of M Horley, T15220:39-42 (Day 147).
560 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0132 [18] (Tab 120).

7.4 Investigation of allegations of child sexual abuse

Two elders to investigate every allegation

306 Elders are instructed that, having carefully reviewed the letter to all bodies of elders of 1 October 2012[561] and paragraphs 18-21 of Chapter 12 of the *Shepherd the Flock* handbook,[562] two congregational elders should investigate every allegation of child sexual abuse.[563]

Victim to give testimony before the elders and the accused

307 As a part of their investigation, the elders are instructed that they should speak to the accused about the allegation.[564] If the accused denies the allegation, then the elders 'should try to arrange a meeting with him and the accuser together'.[565] In the case of an allegation of child sexual abuse, the elders are directed to contact the Branch Office before arranging a meeting with the child and the accused.[566]

308 Mr Spinks gave evidence that since the mid-1990s the Jehovah's Witness organisation has 'recognised that a victim or a survivor should not have to confront their abuser'.[567] The only document which Mr Spinks was able to identify in which this policy was stated was a 'S-337' form dated 1998[568] which had recently been located by an older member of the Service Department stuck inside his copy of the superseded *Pay Attention 1991* elders' handbook.[569]

309 Mr Spinks told the Royal Commission that the S-337 form was an outline of what circuit overseers would go through in their meetings with bodies of elders in the applicable six month period and that the policy would not have been restated in subsequent S-337 forms.[570]

310 In the circumstances, the document cannot be said to be a current record of policy and is of very limited relevance. Be that as it may, it provides as follows:[571]

> BEFORE FORMING A JUDICIAL COMMITTEE (4 min.)
>
> 1. How can the person who is a witness to a serious sin aid both the wrongdoer and the congregation? (The witness should make sure the responsible elders become aware of it. Usually best to approach the person involved first, though it is not wrong to go directly to elders. He should

561 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066 (Tab 124).
562 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0132 [18]-[19] (Tab 120).
563 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066 at 0068 [11] (Tab 124);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0088 (Tab 109);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT. 0003.001.0001 at 0073 [38] (Tab 120).
564 Exhibit 20-0003, WAT. 0003.001.0001 at 0073 at [38] (Tab 120).
565 Exhibit 20-0003, WAT. 0003.001.0001 at 0073 at [39] (Tab 120).
566 Exhibit 20-0003, WAT. 0003.001.0001 at 0073 at [39] (Tab 120).
567 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15686:36-39 (Day 152).
568 Exhibit 29-0020, EXH.029.020.0001.
569 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15687:15-21 (Day 152).
570 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15702:5-38 (Day 152).
571 Exhibit 29-0020, EXH.029.020.0001 at 0003.

> encourage the wrongdoer to approach the elders, then after a reasonable period of time check with the elders to be sure they know)…
>
> 2. When is it not advisable for the witness to confront the accused alone? What should elders do? (When he is a party to the wrongdoing, is a victim, or is extremely timid. Children who are victims of molestation should not be required to confront the accused. In some cases two elders or an elder and the witness can confront the accused)
>
> JUDICIAL COMMITTEE HEARING PROCEDURE (24 min.)
>
> …
>
> 2. Explain what is to be done if the accused person does not admit guilt. (The alleged wrongdoer has right to face his accusers. In most cases, he will have opportunity to hear their testimony and reply. After presenting accusation and its source, the committee will give the accused opportunity to respond. However, if, perhaps due to distance, it is impractical for the witness to be present, this should not prevent the committee from proceeding.

311 The paragraphs extracted from the S-377 form above appear to mirror very closely the instruction offered to elders in *Pay Attention 1991*.[572] The paragraphs, however, expand upon *Pay Attention 1991* in two respects. First, in the context of the requirement that a witness should confront the accused before approaching elders, the S-377 form specifies that child victims of molestation should not be required to confront the accused. It is submitted that on its face the S-377 form exemption for children who are victims of sexual abuse applies only to children (i.e. not when child victims are adults) and it does not apply beyond the requirement that a person in the first instance confront the person who has wronged them, let alone to the stage at which elders are investigating a complaint. Secondly, the form provides for an exemption from presentation of an allegation before the accused and the committee if such presentation is impractical. This latter provision was later incorporated into the *Shepherd the Flock* elders' handbook,[573] and as with the provision in *Shepherd the Flock*, it is submitted, appears only to provide for exemption in circumstances of practical difficulty (such as distance) rather than when the witness is a victim of child sexual abuse.

312 Mr Spinks gave further evidence that a statement written by the victim and given to the investigating elders would be sufficient at the investigative stage of a matter.[574] He agreed that insofar as the S-337 form supported that policy, it only did so in respect of the investigative stage as opposed to the judicial hearing stage of a matter.[575]

313 Mr Spinks told the Royal Commission that an accuser facing their abuser via written statement 'conforms perfectly with the Scriptural requirement'.[576] The Scriptural requirement referred to is presumably that recorded in *Pay Attention 1991* as

572 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0050-51 (Tab 80).
573 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0090-91 [2] (Tab 120).
574 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15704:11-14 (Day 152)
575 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15704:47-T15705:20 (Day 152)
576 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15706:39-45 (Day 152).

'[a]ccusers should be willing to assume their responsibility, as was required in Israel (Deut. 17:6, 7; 19: 16-21)'.[577] The first of those references provides that 'the hand of the witnesses should be the first to come against him to put him to death' and the second provides that those who make false allegations must be 'removed' from the congregation.

If the accuser or accused refuses to meet with the elders

314 The *Shepherd the Flock* handbook provides that if the accused denies an allegation of wrongdoing and he or his accuser refuses to speak to the elders, 'the elders will leave matters in Jehovah's hands (Deut.19:15-17; 1 Tim. 5:19, 24, 25 …)'.[578]

315 Mr Spinks told the Royal Commission that if someone accused of a crime refused to answer an allegation, he would be disfellowshipped on a charge of brazen loose conduct, which is 'an absolute disregard for the authority and standards'.[579]

Interviewing children

316 The 2013 Service Desk Guidelines address when elders should interview a young child victim of sexual abuse. Specifically, the Guidelines set out the advice that should be offered to elders who call the Service Desk for advice about interviewing a child.[580] The Guidelines provide, for instance, that if there is 'more than one accuser and thereby already sufficient evidence to handle the matter judicially … there is likely no need to interview the young child'.[581]

317 Mr Spinks accepted that on the evidence before the Royal Commission, in circumstances where elders are unable to interview a child because it would be too traumatizing or the child's parents do not consent, and there was no confession or other evidence,[582] then the elders are unable to take judicial action.[583]

318 Mr Spinks also agreed that it was quite probable that elders involved in interviewing a child victim of sexual abuse would not have any specialised training in dealing with child victims of trauma.[584]

Establishing the veracity of an allegation

319 As was the position in 1991, elders are not authorized to form a judicial committee in order to take congregational action unless the child sexual abuse is proven according to Biblical standards which are satisfied by evidence of:[585]

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577 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.002.0001 at 0051 (Tab 80).
578 Exhibit 20-0003, WAT. 0003.001.0001 at 0073-74 at [39] (Tab 120).
579 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15740:26-32 (Day 152).
580 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0075 at 0084 [46]-[51] (Tab 126).
581 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0075 at 0084 [46] (Tab 126).
582 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0075 at 0084 [46] (Tab 126).
583 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15708:32-39 (Day 152).
584 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15710:2-5 (Day 152).
585 Exhibit 29-0019, Annexure 2, STAT.0591.001.0018 at [2.2];
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066 at 0068 [11] (Tab 124).

a) a confession from the accused, which 'may be accepted as conclusive proof without other corroborating evidence. (Josh 7:19)'[586]

b) the two-witness rule, which appears to have been modified slightly by the 1 October 2012 letter to require that the witnesses are 'credible'[587]

c) the testimony of two or three witnesses to separate incidents of the same kind of wrongdoing,[588] or

d) strong circumstantial evidence testified to by at least two witnesses.[589]

320 Mr Spinks told the Royal Commission that in some cases a combination of the four Scriptural criteria for establishing the truth of an allegation 'may be used as a basis for taking congregational action'.[590] Mr Spinks did not specify the type of circumstances in which such an approach might be taken.

321 Elders are instructed that the testimony of youths may be considered by the investigating elders, who must 'determine whether the testimony has the ring of truth'.[591] The 2013 Service Desk Guidelines advise elders to have regard to certain criteria as set out in the *Shepherd the Flock* handbook in assessing the veracity of a child's allegation.[592] Those criteria include the level of maturity of the child or youth, the consistency of the child's memory, and the reputation of the child's parents.[593]

322 The testimony of 'unbelievers and disfellowshipped or disassociated ones' may also be considered, but the elders are advised to weigh any such testimony carefully.[594] Mr Jackson told the Royal Commission that the reason for this direction to elders is because 'someone who is not a [Jehovah's] Witness may have no difficulties at all about telling a lie'.[595]

Oral and further evidence about the flexibility of the two-witness rule

323 It was Mr O'Brien's evidence that simply because the two-witness rule applies does not mean that a victim is not believed or that the elders don't take precautions.[596]

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586 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0072 [37] (Tab 120);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066 at 0068 (Tab 124).

587 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0072 [37] (Tab 120);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066 at 0068 [11] (Tab 124);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0084 (Tab 109).

588 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0072-0073 [37] (Tab 120);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066 at 0068 [11] (Tab 124).

589 Exhibit 29-0019, Annexure 2, STAT.0591.001.0018 at [2.2];
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0062 [11] (Tab 120).

590 Exhibit 29-0019, Annexure 2, STAT.0591.001.0023 at [2.2].

591 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0073 [37] (Tab 120).

592 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0076 at 0084 [47] (Tab 126).

593 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0134 [21] (Tab 120).

594 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0073 [37] (Tab 120).

595 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15997:4-20 (Day 155).

596 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15833:21-33 (Day 153).

324 Messrs Horley, De Rooy, Ali and Bowditch each said that notwithstanding that they believed BCB's and BCG's allegations of abuse, they were bound by the two-witness rule in handling the respective complaints.[597]

325 Mr Spinks and Mr O'Brien both said that the two-witness rule is a Scriptural direction that the Jehovah's Witnesses do not have the authority to change.[598]

326 Mr Spinks accepted that more often than not, there will only be one witness to an incident of sexual abuse.[599] Mr Spinks also told the Royal Commission that he had no reason to question the proposition as published in the Jehovah's Witness organisation's own publications that allegations of sexual abuse are almost always justified.[600]

327 Mr Jackson's evidence was that there is a Scriptural basis to the two-witness rule. He referred specifically to Matthew 18:16, Deuteronomy 19:15, 2 Corinthians 13:1 and 1 Timothy 5:19.[601]

328 Mr Jackson was asked about the extent to which Deuteronomy 22:23-27 should inform the Scriptural foundation of the two-witness rule.[602] Deuteronomy 22:23-27 offers the example of a man raping a woman in a field in circumstances where there are no witnesses to the rape and where in spite of the absence of a second witness, the man is to be put to death. It was put to Mr Jackson, and he accepted, that that Scripture contemplates a case where there are no witnesses to the rape other than the woman herself.[603] It was also put to Mr Jackson, and he agreed, that only one witness was sufficient, in those circumstances, for the man to be put to death.[604] Mr Jackson told the Royal Commission that added to the single witness in the situation contemplated by Deuteronomy 22:23-27 was the 'circumstance' of the rape.[605] Mr Jackson said that the Jehovah's Witnesses had 'already acknowledged that circumstances can also be one of the witnesses'.[606] The principal 'circumstance' of the rape was that there was no third-person witness, as is usually the case with instances of child sexual abuse.

329 It was suggested to Mr Jackson that this Scripture provided the basis for the Governing Body not to apply the two-witness rule in the case of sexual abuse, or that it called into

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597 Transcript of M Horley, T15202:19-24 and T15203:1-4 (Day 147);
Transcript of K D Bowditch, T15404:5-9 and T15405:45-T15406:1 (Day 149);
Transcript of D Ali, T15331:1-29 (Day 148), T15353:6-13 and T15361:10-17 (Day 149);
Transcript of A R De Rooy, T15547:1-40 (Day 151);
Exhibit 29-0007, Statement of Dino Ali, STAT.0598.001.0001_R at [5.6];
Exhibit 29-0016, Statement of Albert Ronald De Rooy, STAT.0597.001.0001_R at [6.1].

598 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15705:31-40 (Day 152);
Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15833:21-28 (Day 153).

599 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15710:40-43 (Day 152).

600 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15710:45-T15711:7 and T15716:25-39 (Day 152);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0205 at 0210 (Tab 78);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0238 at 0241 (Tab 82).

601 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15967:33-T15969:46 (Day 155).

602 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15970:-T15971:47 (Day 155).

603 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15971:16-20 (Day 155).

604 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15971:26-29 (Day 155).

605 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15971:19-24 (Day 155).

606 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15972:1-3 (Day 155).

question the proper foundation to the two-witness rule in the case of sexual abuse. Mr Jackson's answer was to say that the Jehovah's Witnesses believe that there is a proper foundation to the rule because of the number of times that it is emphasised in the Scriptures.[607] Mr Jackson did not say that there is no prospect of modifying the application of the two-witness rule within Scriptural requirements so as to make it inapplicable to cases of sexual abuse.

330 In a statement provided to the Royal Commission after the close of the public hearing, Mr Jackson offered an alternative explanation of Deuteronomy 22:23-27 to that which he had accepted in oral evidence.[608] In his statement Mr Jackson explained that the man's guilt had been judged at an earlier stage in Deuteronomy, and that the referenced verses dealt only with establishing guilt (or absence thereof) on the part of the woman.[609] In his statement, Mr Jackson did not seek to explain the reason for the difference between his oral and written evidence as to context of Deuteronomy 22:23-27.

331 It is submitted that there is little utility in attempting to resolve the conflict between Mr Jackson's oral and his subsequent written evidence on the subject of the relevance of Deuteronomy 22:23-27 to the flexibility of the two-witness rule. However, it is open to the Royal Commission to note the difficulty experienced by even a member of the Governing Body in arriving at an interpretation of Deuteronomy 22:23-27 which renders it irrelevant to the application of the two-witness rule.

332 Mr Jackson was asked to what extent the Jehovah's Witness organisation was bound by the Scriptures to maintain and apply the two-witness rule.[610] He did not respond to the question, instead telling the Royal Commission that he 'thought that that had already been established in the hearings, but, if not, certainly that is something that we need to follow up'.[611]

333 Following his oral evidence on the subject of Deuteronomy 22:23-27, Mr Jackson was taken to the *Shepherd the Flock* handbook and to the example regarding witnesses to adultery.[612] It was put to Mr Jackson, and he agreed, that the example in the handbook that two witnesses observing the opportunity for adultery, as opposed to two witnesses directly observing the adultery itself, demonstrates circumstances where the two witnesses to the opportunity will be sufficient to establish the case of adultery.[613]

334 It was then put to Mr Jackson that the same principles should apply in the case of child sexual abuse.[614] Mr Jackson did not respond directly to the proposition and instead told

607 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15971:43-T15972:10 (Day 155).
608 Exhibit 29-0035, Statement of Geoffrey William Jackson, STAT.0670.001.0001 at [15]-[20].
609 Exhibit 29-0035, Statement of Geoffrey William Jackson, STAT.0670.001.0001 at [18]-[19].
610 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15974:4-7 (Day 155).
611 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15974:14-16 (Day 155).
612 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0062 [11] (Tab 120).
613 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15972:23-T15973:20 (Day 155).
614 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15973:22-25 (Day 155).

the Royal Commission that it was 'a very large question and … something that we would need to consider carefully'.[615]

335 Mr Jackson nevertheless agreed that circumstantial or corroborating evidence such as the evident trauma of a victim of child sexual abuse 'would need to be taken into account' as corroborating evidence in the determination of the veracity of an allegation.[616] It was not clear however if it was Mr Jackson's evidence that the witness of the evident trauma experienced by a victim of child sexual abuse could therefore constitute the required second witness.[617] Mr Jackson said that the Jehovah's Witness organisation is interested in following up such matters after the Royal Commission.[618]

336 It is submitted that Mr Jackson was evasive and unhelpful in assisting the Royal Commission to understand whether there is scope for interpretation of the two-witness rule such that would allow for action to be taken in circumstances where there is only one direct witness to an incident of child sexual abuse.

337 It is further submitted that the current position is that where the victim is the only witness to an incident of child sexual abuse and the abuser does not confess, the Jehovah's Witness organisation will not take action until such time as a second child is abused in similar circumstances by the same accused person. It is submitted that this position is untenable and is completely at odds with the organisation's expression of abhorrence of child sexual abuse.

338 Accordingly, the Jehovah's Witness organisation should be encouraged to explore the possibility adverted to by Mr Jackson of considering a more flexible interpretation of the two-witness rule such that would allow for the acceptance of circumstantial and corroborating evidence, such as the evident trauma of a victim of child sexual abuse.

Oral evidence that wrongdoing must ultimately be established by elders

339 Mr Jackson gave evidence that the ultimate decision to establish the nature and the occurrence of wrongdoing in the investigation of an allegation of child sexual abuse, must be made by the investigating elders.[619] Mr Jackson told the Royal Commission that the scriptural basis for this requirement is the headship principle in 1 Corinthians 11:3.[620]

340 Mr Jackson told the Royal Commission that there is 'no leeway whatsoever' in the Jehovah's Witnesses system of beliefs for allowing women to be elders.[621] Mr O'Brien's evidence was to like effect,[622] as was that of Mr Spinks.[623] Mr Jackson went on to tell the

615 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15973:22-35 (Day 155).
616 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15973:37-47 (Day 155).
617 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15973:37-44 (Day 155).
618 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15973:45-47 (Day 155).
619 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15961:16-45 (Day 155).
620 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15962:3-7 (Day 155).
621 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15951:1826 (Day 155).
622 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15831:40-T15832:6; T15863:23-38; T15866:21-26 (Day 153).
623 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15706:20-27 (Day 152).

Royal Commission that the Bible teaches that a judge must be a man but was, at the time, unable to provide a specific scriptural reference in support of his understanding.[624]

341 In his written statement provided to the Royal Commission following the close of the public hearing, Mr Jackson offered the relevant scriptural references to which he adverted but was unable to provide during the hearing. Specifically, he referred to various books of the Old Testament which, he said, describe judges and priests as being all male.[625] Mr Jackson said that although the Mosaic Law of the Old Testament ended '[o]n Pentecost 33 C.E.', its principles 'guided the first century Christian congregation and served as the context for future practices'.[626] Mr Jackson explained that it is on this basis that the apostle Paul 'identifies only male members of the congregation as potential elders' in 1 Timothy 3:1.[627]

342 It should be noted by the Royal Commission that, in his statement, Mr Jackson referred only to those books of the Old Testament in which men are described as judges, and did not refer to Judges 4:4-5 which tells of the female judge, Deborah. Specifically, the verses report that Deborah, 'a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, was judging Israel at that time' and that the 'Israelites would go up to her for judgment'. Since a woman judge was apparently accepted in the Old Testament, it is not apparent why women should not be judges of 'Christian' guilt or innocence in the Jehovah's Witness organisation.

343 Mr Jackson accepted that it would be possible for the Jehovah's Witness organisation to consider, through research and checking the Scriptures, whether the process could be modified to allow women to be involved in the decision as to whether an allegation was true or false.[628]

344 It is submitted that the current position is that the ultimate decision to establish the veracity of an allegation of child sexual abuse must be made by investigating elders and that an elder must be a man. The Jehovah's Witness organisation should however be encouraged to explore the possibility adverted to by Mr Jackson of developing the process to allow women to be involved in deciding the truth or otherwise of a sexual abuse allegation, and that there is real and identified scope for the organisation to do so in accordance with the Scriptures.

The role of women in the investigation of an allegation of child sexual abuse

345 Mr O'Brien accepted that women bring a different perspective and understanding to that of men to an issue such as whether or not a young girl or woman was sexually assaulted.[629]

346 Mr O'Brien said that at the investigative stage of a matter there is no Biblical requirement that a victim of child sexual abuse present his or her allegation in person

624 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15955:8-36 (Day 155).
625 Exhibit 29-0035, Statement of Geoffrey William Jackson, STAT.0670.001.0001 at [4]-[5].
626 Exhibit 29-0035, Statement of Geoffrey William Jackson, STAT.0670.001.0001 at [6].
627 Exhibit 29-0035, Statement of Geoffrey William Jackson, STAT.0670.001.0001 at [6].
628 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15959:46-T15960:11 (Day 155).
629 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15830:28-33 (Day 153).

to three elders.[630] He told the Royal Commission that the question of whether women could be involved in the investigation process requires further consideration. Specifically, he advised that 'if it's based upon the Bible standards, then [the Branch Committee] would present that as one of the recommendations from the Commission' and that he didn't 'see why a woman couldn't be involved in the process, particularly in establishing the victim's statement, so she doesn't have to face three men'.[631]

347 Mr Jackson agreed that an elder may find it difficult to appreciate exactly how a young woman making an allegation of child sexual abuse might feel in making that allegation.[632]

348 Mr Jackson said that there is no Biblical impediment to women being involved in the investigation of alleged sexual abuse.[633] He told the Royal Commission that in circumstances where elders cannot talk to a victim because perhaps to do so would traumatise the victim too much, two women close to the victim may take the victim's testimony and convey it to the investigating elders.[634] Mr Jackson agreed, however, that one of the tasks of elders who hear allegations of child sexual abuse is to measure the credibility of the person alleging the abuse.[635]

349 It is submitted that Mr Jackson's evidence is not entirely consistent with the position clearly set out in *Shepherd the Flock* (and referred to above) that should an accuser refuse to meet with elders, then the matter can proceed no further and is 'left in Jehovah's hands'.[636]

350 It is submitted that the current process of investigation doesn't provide for, or even allow, the involvement of women as investigators or even to receive a complainant's statement and pass it on to the investigating elders. Further, in the light of Mr Jackson's evidence that an elder, and therefore not a woman in the congregation, must determine the credibility of a witness, there is limited scope for the involvement of women in the investigation.

351 It is nevertheless submitted that the Jehovah's Witness organisation should be encouraged to explore ways in which women can be involved in the investigation of allegations of child sexual abuse, in particular to avoid the need for a complainant to have to make a statement directly to or in the presence of elders. Mr Jackson's evidence that there is no Biblical impediment to women being involved in the investigation and that two women close to the victim may take the victim's testimony and convey it to the investigating elders, is a positive indication that the Jehovah's Witness organisation may be able to improve this aspect of the existing procedure even within what they perceive to be their Scriptural strictures.

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630 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15827:35-47 (Day 153).
631 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15828:10-20, T15831:20-28 (Day 153).
632 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15957:41-T15958:2 (Day 155).
633 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15954:11-27 (Day 155).
634 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15961:26-35 (Day 155).
635 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15957:25-29 (Day 155).
636 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0073 [39] (Tab 120).

Where there is insufficient evidence to substantiate the allegation

352 Where according to the Scriptural rules there is insufficient evidence to substantiate an allegation of child sexual abuse, the matter is held in abeyance and elders are directed to 'remain vigilant with regard to the conduct and activity of the accused'.[637] In this event, no further action is taken in relation to the complaint and the matter is 'left in Jehovah's hands'.[638]

Where there is sufficient evidence to substantiate the allegation

353 If sufficient evidence is discovered, the body of elders will assign a judicial committee to administer Scriptural discipline to the wrongdoer.[639] Child sexual abuse is recognised as an offence for which a judicial committee should be formed.[640]

Available findings on the investigation process

F41 There are no circumstances in which the survivor of a sexual assault should have to make her allegation in the presence of the person whom she accuses of having assaulted her, and, contrary to the present position, the documents, manuals and instructions produced by the Jehovah's Witness organisation should make this clear.

F42 The requirement that two or more eyewitnesses to the same incident are required in the absence of a confession from the accused, the testimony of two or three witnesses to separate incidents of the same kind of wrongdoing, or strong circumstantial evidence testified to by at least two witnesses (i.e. the two witness rule):

a) means that in respect of child sexual abuse which almost invariably occurs in private, very often no finding of guilt will be made in respect of a guilty accused
b) causes victims of child sexual abuse to feel unheard and unsupported when it results in allegations of child sexual abuse not being upheld
c) is a danger to children in the Jehovah's Witness organisation because its consequence is that very often nothing is done about an abuser in the organisation
d) does not seem to be applied by the Jehovah's Witness organisation in the case of an accusation of adultery, which suggests that adultery is taken more seriously by the organisation than child sexual abuse, and
e) needs to be revisited by the Jehovah's Witness organisation with a view to abandoning it or at least reformulating it to ensure that safe decisions as to someone being guilty of child sexual abuse can be made more easily.

F43 The requirement that only elders (i.e. men) can participate in the making of decisions in the investigation process on whether or not someone has committed child sexual abuse:

a) is a fundamental flaw in that process which weakens the decisions by excluding women, and

637 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066 at 0068 [11] (Tab 124);
Exhibit 29-0019, Annexure 2, STAT.0591.001.0018 at [3.1].

638 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT. 0003.001.0001 at 0073 at [39] (Tab 120);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0310 at 0314 (Tab 84).

639 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0088 (Tab 109);
Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of Rodney Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at [38].

640 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0062 [10] (Tab 120).

b) needs to be revisited by the Jehovah's Witness organisation to ensure a meaningful role for women.

7.5 Establishment of a judicial committee

Formation of a judicial committee

354 If wrongdoing is serious enough and it has been established by investigating elders that there is sufficient evidence of the wrongdoing having been committed, at least three elders will form a judicial committee to determine if the accused is genuinely repentant.[641]

355 Mr O'Brien told the Royal Commission that ultimately the adjudication process will require three men because the elders must be men and it is the elders who are shepherds and who make the judicial decisions.[642]

356 When deciding if a judicial committee is necessary in the case of historical wrongdoing, the elders are to consider, among other things, whether the person confessed voluntarily, whether the matter is widely known, and if the lives of others are affected.[643] In relation to the latter consideration, a life might be affected if, for example, child sexual abuse or adultery is involved.[644]

357 In cases involving allegations of child sexual abuse, elders are directed to contact their circuit overseer who will designate an experienced elder from a congregation in the circuit to sit on the judicial committee.[645]

Purpose of a judicial committee

358 The purpose of a judicial committee is for the elders to establish if the accused person is genuinely repentant and to determine the appropriate penalty having regard to that person's degree of repentance. Elders on a judicial committee are charged with safeguarding the congregation and provide assistance to the wrongdoer.[646]

Confidentiality of a judicial committee

359 Elders are instructed that the fact of a judicial committee should not be disclosed to persons not entitled to know and '[s]trict confidentiality must be maintained to avoid

641 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0088 (Tab 109);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0059 [1] (Tab 120);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0082 [1] (Tab 120).
642 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15828:2-4; T15830:1-4 (Day 153).
643 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0075 [44] (Tab 120).
644 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0075 [44] (Tab 120).
645 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066 at 0068 [11] (Tab 124);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0072 (Tab 125).
646 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0059 [1] (Tab 120).

unnecessary entanglement with secular authorities who may be conducting a criminal investigation of the matter'.[647]

360 Mr Toole agreed that passing information or making a report to secular authorities would not produce an entanglement with those authorities.[648]

7.6 Judicial committee hearing procedure

Process explained to the accused

361 An accused person is invited to attend a meeting with the judicial committee and the elders are instructed to make clear to the accused that the meeting is a judicial hearing.[649] Elders are directed to try and put the accused at ease and invite him to make a personal statement.[650]

362 There is no specific provision in the Jehovah's Witness organisation's documents that directs the elders to ensure that the accuser, when appearing before the judicial committee, is also at ease.

Accuser to present allegation in presence of the accused

363 If the accused maintains that he or she is innocent, then 'the witnesses to the wrongdoing should be presented and their testimony should be given in the presence of the accused'.[651] The *Shepherd the Flock* handbook provides that:

> It is best that the witnesses give their testimony in person. However, it may be that the witnesses live a great distance away or for some reason are not able to be physically present. If so, their testimony may be presented in the hearing of the accused by a secure phone call or perhaps submitted in writing and read to the accused. The accused should be given the opportunity to respond to the testimony.[652]

364 On its face, the reference to 'witnesses' in this provision includes the person who complains of having been abused (save perhaps in the rare case where there are sufficient other witnesses to not require the victim to be a witness). The result is that as the provision stands, it is only in the case of the victim living a great distance away or there being some other reason of practicality that prevents a witness from being physically present that her evidence can be taken by telephone or submitted in writing. This raises the question of requiring the victim to give evidence in the presence of the three (male) members of the judicial committee and her abuser.

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647 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0014.001.0009 at 0011 (Tab 131A).
648 Transcript of V J Toole, T15766:14-19 (Day 153).
649 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0084 [6] (Tab 120).
650 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0089 [1]-[2] (Tab 120).
651 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0090-91 [2] (Tab 120); Exhibit 29-0020, EXH.029.020.0001 at 0003.
652 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0091 [2] (Tab 120).

365 Mr Toole accepted that the judicial committee process does not lend itself to a young abused person being full and frank about the details of her abuse.[653] That stands to reason given the obvious difficulty that a young woman, for example, would have in recounting to three elders intimate details of a sexual nature.

366 Despite what is stated in *Shepherd the Flock* as quoted above, each of Messrs Spinks, Toole and O'Brien gave evidence that a victim of child sexual abuse does not these days need to face her abuser in a judicial committee unless she wants to.[654] Mr O'Brien told the Royal Commission that a victim need not be involved after she has provided a statement to the elders detailing her abuse.[655] Mr Jackson agreed that there are no circumstances in which the survivor of a sexual assault should have to make her allegation in the presence of the person whom she accuses of having assaulted her.[656]

367 It is submitted that the evidence of Messrs, Spinks, Toole and O'Brien is not supported by the available documentary evidence. That is to say, there is nothing in the documents which sets out the judicial committee process that provides for a complainant to give evidence only by way of statement other than what is recorded above. The Jehovah's Witness organisation is meticulous in setting out its processes in writing in various manuals and letters, and in ensuring that uniform processes are used throughout the world. Accordingly, to the extent that it suggests deviation from what is provided for or allowed under the documented processes, the evidence of the witnesses cannot be accepted.

Presence of support person

368 The *Shepherd the Flock* handbook instructs that those wishing to attend to provide moral support should not be allowed to do so. It relevantly provides that the judicial committee will:

> [H]ear only those witnesses who have relevant testimony regarding the alleged wrongdoing. Those who intend to testify only about the character of the accused should not be allowed to do so. The witnesses should not hear details and testimony of other witnesses. Observers should not be present for moral support.[657]

369 Mr Spinks told the Royal Commission that the Jehovah's Witness organisation does allow a person complaining of child sexual abuse to have a support person present.[658]

370 Mr Spinks said that the passage in the *Shepherd the Flock* handbook disallowing support persons applied to the accused and did not apply to child sexual abuse matters.[659] He

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653 Transcript of V J Toole, T15802:16-22 (Day 153).
654 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15833:43-T15834:26 (Day 153);
Transcript of V J Toole, T15802:16-22 (Day 153);
Transcript of R P Spinks, T15704:21-29 (Day 152).
655 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15828:4-8 (Day 153).
656 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15952:16-20 (Day 155).
657 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0091 [3] (Tab 120).
658 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15693:29-33 (Day 152).
659 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15693:42-44 and T15694:4-6 (Day 152).

agreed in evidence that the passage was confusing and told the Royal Commission that it could be better written to make clear that the prohibition on moral support applied only to the accused.[660]

371 It is submitted that the present documented position is that a victim is not allowed to be accompanied by a support person when appearing before a judicial committee. To the extent that this is not the case, the documents should be revised to reflect the true procedure and allowances in respect of support for a victim of child sexual abuse.

Available findings on the judicial committee process

F44 Under the current documented judicial committee process, if the evidence of the complainant is to be taken into account then she must give evidence in person unless she lives a great distance away or for some other reason is not able to be physically present.

F45 The stated willingness of the Jehovah's Witness organisation in Australia to have the evidence of a complainant of child sexual abuse give evidence remotely or by way of a written statement should be formalised and documented so that those running judicial committee processes and those affected by them are properly advised of the position.

F46 Under the current documented judicial committee process, a complainant of child sexual abuse is prohibited from having someone present with her in the judicial committee process to offer support.

F47 The stated willingness of the Jehovah's Witness organisation in Australia to allow a complainant of child sexual abuse to be accompanied by a support person of her choosing should be formalised and documented so that those running judicial committee processes and those affected by them are properly advised of the position.

F48 The current documented process for responding to allegations of child sexual abuse within the Jehovah's Witness organisation is focussed largely on the rights and comfort of the accused, with little regard to the requirements of a victim of abuse.

7.7 Assessment of repentance

372 Having heard the testimony of the witnesses to the wrongdoing and/or the confession and personal statement of the accused, the judicial committee elders are instructed to convene alone to consider the degree of repentance of the accused.[661]

373 The primary task of the elders on a judicial committee in circumstances where guilt has been established and where the wrongdoer is genuinely repentant, is to rehabilitate and restore the wrongdoer irrespective of the gravity of the wrongdoing or sin.[662]

374 The Jehovah's Witnesses consider that 'repentance involves a deep regret over a damaged relationship with Jehovah, remorse over the reproach brought upon Jehovah's

660 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15695:2-18 (Day 152).
661 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0091-92 [5] (Tab 120).
662 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0089 (Tab 109);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0004.001.0027 (Tab 100).

name and people, and a sincere longing to come back into God's favour'.[663] The *Shepherd the Flock* handbook provides that the judicial committee's decision as to degree of repentance of a wrongdoer should not 'be determined by the notoriety of the wrong.[664] The judicial committee should look for clear works of repentance commensurate with his wrongdoing. (2 Cor.7:10, 11)'.[665]

375 The *Shepherd the Flock* handbook provides elders with a non-exhaustive list of indicators of genuine repentance to which they might have regard when assessing the repentance of a wrongdoer.[666]

376 Mr Spinks gave evidence that the risk of re-offending is not part of any assessment of repentance and acknowledged that in a court-setting there would likely be expert evidence before the decision-makers as to that risk.[667]

Available findings on the management of risk

F49 The failure of the Jehovah's Witness organisation to take into account the risk of re-offending when considering whether an offender is repentant, and consequently in deciding whether to merely reprove rather than to disfellowship, or whether to re-admit someone who has previously been disfellowshipped, does not adequately take account of considerations of child safety and should be revisited.

7.8 Sanctions for wrongdoing – deletion

377 The *Shepherd the Flock* handbook provides that if it comes to light that a serving elder or ministerial servant has committed a disfellowshipping offence such as child sexual abuse, he would likely be disqualified from serving 'for many years'.[668] Deletion of an elder is announced to the congregation and the circuit overseer is required to report deletion to the Branch Office.[669]

378 In his first written statement, Mr Spinks told the Royal Commission that an elder or ministerial servant is immediately removed if he is found to have engaged in child sexual abuse.[670]

663 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0092 [6] (Tab 120).
664 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0092 [7] (Tab 120).
665 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0092 [7] (Tab 120).
666 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0093-94[10] (Tab 120).
667 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15713:44-T15714:10 (Day 152).
668 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0039 [20] (Tab 120).
669 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0002.001.0034 at 0035 (Tab 128);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0002.001.0039 at 0043 (Tab 129);
Transcript of D J Jackson, T15247:10-17 (Day 148).
670 Exhibit 29-0019, Statement of Rodney Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at [72] and [74];
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0002.001.0034 at [10]-[12] (Tab 128).

7.9 Sanctions for wrongdoing - reproval

379 If a judicial committee determines that a wrongdoer is genuinely repentant, including in cases of child sexual abuse, then it reproves the wrongdoer.[671]

Announcement of reproval - public or private

380 Reproval is a form of discipline that allows the wrongdoer to remain a member of the congregation[672] and which involves telling the accused that he is reproved either entirely in private or before those aware of the wrongdoing.[673] It is a sanction intended to discipline the wrongdoer and warn the onlookers that wrongdoing has been committed.[674]

381 The judicial committee determines whether to make the announcement of reproof publicly or privately.[675] If the wrongdoing is widely known or is likely to become widely known in the congregation, the elders are instructed that a public announcement will 'safeguard the reputation of the congregation'.[676] Alternatively, if the elders consider that the 'congregation needs to be on guard concerning the repentant wrongdoer', for example, in cases involving child sexual abuse, then announcing the reproof publicly will 'serve as a protection for the congregation'.[677]

382 While the fact of reproof may be announced, the grounds of the reproval are not.[678]

Application of restrictions

383 A person who is judicially reproved is disqualified from special privileges, such as serving in a position of authority.[679] Judicial restrictions are also imposed on those who are reproved, which restrictions might include being counselled by the elders about appropriate behaviour with children.[680]

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671 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066 at 0068 (Tab 124);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0097-0098 [18], (Tab 120);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0089 (Tab 109);
Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of Rodney Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at [43];
Exhibit 29-0019, Annexure 2, STAT.0591.001.0023 at [4.9];
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.001.0001 at 0007 and 0016 (Tab 133).

672 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066 at 0068 (Tab 124);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0097-0098, (Tab 120);
Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of Rodney Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at [43];
Exhibit 29-0019, Annexure 2, STAT.0591.001.0023 at [4.9];
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.001.0001 at 0007 and 0016 (Tab 133).

673 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0097-0101 (Tab 120).

674 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0089 (Tab 109);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066 at 0068 [11] (Tab 124);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0097-0098 [20] (Tab 120).

675 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0098 [20] (Tab 120).

676 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0098-99 [20] (Tab 120).

677 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0099 [20] (Tab 120).

678 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0099 [21] (Tab 120);
Exhibit 29-0024, Statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [62].

679 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0098 [19] (Tab 120).

680 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0098 [19] (Tab 120);

384 The *Organized to do Jehovah's Will* handbook provides that restrictions are removed in time 'as the individual's spiritual recovery becomes manifest'.[681] However, more recent directives advise elders not to extend privileges 'hastily' and that a person who has been found to have committed child sexual abuse may never be recommended to receive privileges.[682]

Practical effect of reproval as a sanction

385 Mr O'Brien agreed with the proposition that the practical effect of reproval is that a known offender is left 'in the congregation and in the family, if the offender is in a family'.[683]

Available findings on sanctions - reproval

F50 Since it is the policy or practice of the Jehovah's Witness organisation not to report allegations of child sexual abuse to the police (other than if required by law to do so), if a known abuser is found to be repentant and for that reason merely reproved rather than disfellowshipped he remains in the congregation and a risk to children in the congregation.

F51 The system of not announcing the reasons for reproval means that members of the congregation are not warned about the risk that such a wrongdoer poses to children in the congregation.

F52 The sanction of reproval therefore does nothing to protect children in the congregation and in the broader community.

7.10 Sanctions for wrongdoing - disfellowshipping

386 If the wrongdoer is unrepentant for committing a 'gross sin', he is to be disfellowshipped from the congregation.[684] To be disfellowshipped means to be excommunicated from, or cast out of, the Jehovah's Witness organisation.[685] Congregation members are directed not to associate with disfellowshipped persons.[686]

Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of Rodney Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at [45]-[46];
Exhibit 29-0019, Annexure 2, STAT.0591.001.0023 at [4.16];
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0089 (Tab 109);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066 at 0068 [12] (Tab 124).

681 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0089 (Tab 109).

682 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066 at 0069-71 [15],[23] (Tab 124);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0076 at 0080-81 [28] (Tab 126).

683 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15834:28-32 (Day 153).

684 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066 at 0068 [11] (Tab 124);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0101 [26] (Tab 120);
Exhibit 29-0019, Annexure 2, STAT.0591.001.0023 at [4.7]-[4.8];
Exhibit 29-0024, Statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [89].

685 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.001.0001 at 0007 and 0016 (Tab 133).

686 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0087 and 0090 (Tab 109);
Exhibit 29-0007, Statement of Dino Ali, STAT.0598.001.0001_R at [2.3].

387 The purpose of disfellowshipping is to 'protect the flock and safeguard the cleanness of the congregation'.[687] When a person is disfellowshipped, the branch office is to be notified.[688]

388 Unless the disfellowshipped person appeals the judicial committee's decision to disfellowship, the judicial committee explains to the person the need for genuine repentance and advises as to the steps the person ought to take in order to be reinstated as a Jehovah's Witness.[689]

Announcement of disfellowshipping

389 When a person is disfellowshipped for child sexual abuse, an announcement is made to the congregation to the effect that the person is 'no longer one of Jehovah's Witnesses'.[690] The announcement is made to the congregation so that it knows not to associate with the disfellowshipped person.[691]

390 While the fact of disfellowshipping is announced, the grounds are not.[692]

Practical effect of disfellowshipping

391 Mr O'Brien agreed with the proposition that 'disfellowshipping leaves a known offender in the family and/or at large in the community'.[693]

Available findings on sanctions - disfellowshipping

F53 Since it is the policy or practice of the Jehovah's Witness organisation not to report allegations of child sexual abuse to the police (other than if required by law to do so), if a known abuser is disfellowshipped he remains in the community and a risk to children in the community.

F54 The sanction of disfellowshipping does nothing to protect children in the community.

7.11 Appealing a disfellowshipping decision

392 Disfellowshipping decisions may be appealed within seven days.[694] Appeal committees are formed 'even if there seems to be no valid basis for it'[695] comprising, to the extent

687 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0086 and 0090 (Tab 109).
688 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0102 [33] (Tab 120).
689 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0091 (Tab 109).
690 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0102 [32] (Tab 120).
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0091 (Tab 109).
691 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0091 (Tab 109).
692 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0102 [32] (Tab 120);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0091 (Tab 109);
Exhibit 29-0024, Statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [62];
Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of Rodney Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at [41].
693 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15834:34-36 (Day 153).
694 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0105 (Tab 120).
695 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0105 (Tab 120).

possible, impartial elders from a different congregation and selected by the circuit overseer, who hear the case *ab initio*.[696]

7.12 Reinstatement as a Jehovah's Witness

393 A disfellowshipped person may be reinstated into the congregation after the passage of 'sufficient' time if the judicial committee determines that the individual is truly repentant and the reason(s) for their removal from the congregation have been abandoned.[697]

394 The decision to reinstate is always made by the judicial committee that decided to disfellowship the person.[698] Where the disfellowshipped person applies for reinstatement in a new congregation, the bodies of elders in both the new and old congregation are expected to communicate and exchange relevant information.[699]

395 The *Shepherd the Flock* handbook instructs elders to apply restrictions in all cases of reinstatement.[700]

7.13 Support for survivors of child sexual abuse

Role of elders

396 Congregational elders are instructed to be kind, tender, empathetic, compassionate and patient when dealing with survivors of child sexual abuse.[701]

397 The Jehovah's Witness organisation recognises that elders are not mental health professionals or therapists and counsels against elders taking on such a role.[702] Elders are instead described as 'spiritual shepherds', whose role is to ensure that a survivor's worth is not 'diminished by the shameful way they were treated' and to convey that 'the important thing is how Jehovah views them'.[703]

398 Mr O'Brien told the Royal Commission that '[a]lmost every elder would use on their shepherding calls visiting a victim of any kind' Jehovah's Witness articles and Scriptures

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696 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0105 (Tab 120);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0090-91 (Tab 109).

697 Exhibit 29-0024, Statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [94];
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0120 (Tab 120);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0093 (Tab 109).

698 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0119 (Tab 120);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0093 (Tab 109).

699 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0093 (Tab 109).

700 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0122 [12] (Tab 120).

701 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066 at 0070 [21] (Tab 124);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0054 [21] (Tab 120).

702 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0055 [22] (Tab 120);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0001 at 0003 (Tab 81).

703 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0001 at 0003 (Tab 81);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0004 (Tab 81).

that are specific to the needs of the victim.[704] He suggested that the Jehovah's Witness organisation could write and ask circuit overseers to make specific enquiries in their circuit congregations about victims of child sexual abuse, and make sure that the proper Scriptures are being used to console those victims.[705]

399 Elders are cautioned against meeting alone with 'a sister who is a victim of abuse, suffers from depression, or for any other reason is in a delicate emotional state' as a woman in such a state 'may be more vulnerable and may be prone to develop improper feelings toward an elder meeting with her'.[706]

Role of women in survivor support

400 While noting that 'a sister would not get involved in matters that need the attention of the elders', the *Shepherd the Flock* handbook advises elders that on occasion, a female survivor of child sexual abuse may approach an older woman in the congregation for help and emotional support.[707]

Access to professional counselling / medical services

401 The Jehovah's Witness organisation recognises that some survivors of child sexual abuse require professional medical attention and condones the seeking of such assistance to the extent that it does not conflict with Bible principles.[708]

402 Mr Spinks told the Royal Commission that the types of therapies that might conflict with Bible principles do not include '[m]ainstream therapy, normal psychiatric, psychological therapy', but might include 'some of the more extreme and radical therapies'.[709]

403 Mr Toole told the Royal Commission that he is not aware of any policy that positively states that elders should advise survivors of child sexual abuse of their right to seek professional psychological assistance.[710]

404 It is submitted that the present position of the Jehovah's Witness organisation is that elders should not discourage survivors of child sexual abuse from seeking professional support from outside of the organisation, nor should they encourage it or actively advise as to a person's right to do so.

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704 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15857:34-40 (Day 153);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0325 (Tab 77);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0205 (Tab 78).
705 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15857:42-T15858:13 (Day 153).
706 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0057 [28] (Tab 120).
707 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0055 [24] (Tab 120).
708 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0056 [25] (Tab 120).
709 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15675:32-46 (Day 152).
710 Transcript of V J Toole, T15801:1-6 (Day 153).

7.14 Reporting to authorities

Brief overview of relevant reporting regimes

405 Each state and territory in Australia has now enacted 'mandatory reporting laws'. These laws require designated persons outside of a child's family to report known and suspected child sexual abuse to child welfare agencies.[711] The mandatory reporting regime has developed throughout Australia over a 40 year period since 1969.[712] Currently, the laws share many features across jurisdictions: the duty is obligatory, must be immediately complied with, and applies to suspected past and present abuse; and the report destination is usually the jurisdiction's department of child protection.[713]

406 The approach to mandatory reporting is not currently uniform across Australia and the relevant laws were created in different jurisdictions at different times.[714] Consequently, several significant differences remain across jurisdictions,[715] including the categories of persons who are obliged to make reports.[716] The reporting duty is normally applied to professions which typically deal with children in the course of their work (such as teachers, police, doctors and nurses).[717] In the Northern Territory, however, the duty applies to every adult.[718] In South Australia the duty has been specifically extended to apply to ministers of religion,[719] 'although the duty does not extend to information communicated in the course of a religious confession'.[720]

407 Mandatory reporting laws are distinct from provisions making it a crime not to report criminal conduct to the authorities. These crimes are referred to as concealment offences. It used to be that the common law crime of misprision of a felony made it an

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711 *Children and Young People Act 2008* (ACT) s 356; *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* (NSW) ss 23, 27; *Care and Protection of Children Act* (NT) ss 15, 16, 26; *Child Protection Act 1999* (Qld) s 13E-I; *Children's Protection Act 1993* (SA) ss 6, 10, 11; *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997* (Tas) ss 3, 14; *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (Vic) ss 162, 182, 184; *Children and Community Services Act 2004* (WA) ss 124A-H; *Family Law Act 1975* (Cth) s 67ZA.

712 Associate Professor Ben Mathews, *Mandatory reporting laws for child sexual abuse in Australia: A legislative history, Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse*, Sydney, August 2014 (the **RC Mandatory Reporting Report**) at 1.2.1.4.

713 RC Mandatory Reporting Report at 1.2.1.6;
Children and Young People Act 2008 (ACT) s 356; *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* (NSW) ss 23, 27; *Care and Protection of Children Act* (NT) ss 15, 16, 26; *Child Protection Act 1999* (Qld) s 13E-I; *Children's Protection Act 1993* (SA) ss 6, 10, 11; *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997* (Tas) ss 3, 14; *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (Vic) ss 162, 182, 184; *Children and Community Services Act 2004* (WA) ss 124A-H; *Family Law Act 1975* (Cth) s 67ZA.

714 RC Mandatory Reporting Report at 1.2.1.2-3.

715 RC Mandatory Reporting Report at 1.2.1.7 and 1.2.1.7(b).

716 RC Mandatory Reporting Report at 1.2.1.7 and 1.2.1.7(a).

717 *Children and Young People Act 2008* (ACT) s 356; *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997* (Tas) s 14; *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (Vic) s 182; *Children and Community Services Act 2004* (WA) ss 124B; *Child Protection Act 1999* (Qld) s 13E; *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* (NSW) s 27.

718 *Care and Protection Act 2007* (NT), s 26.

719 *Children's Protection Act 1993* (SA) s 11(2)(ga), as amended by the *Children's Protection (Miscellaneous) Amendment Act 2005* (SA).

720 RC Mandatory Reporting Report at 1.2.1.7(a);
Children's Protection Act 1993 (SA), s 11(4).

offence for anyone to conceal his or her knowledge of the commission of a felony, but that offence has been abolished in most Australian jurisdictions.[721] In New South Wales, s 316 of the *Crimes Act 1900* (NSW) makes it a criminal offence for a person with knowledge or belief that a serious indictable offence has been committed to not report to authorities information that may materially assist in securing the apprehension or prosecution or conviction of the offender. Similarly in Victoria, s 327 of the *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic) makes it a criminal offence for a person to not disclose to a police officer information that leads the person for form to a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed. Both jurisdictions provide a defence of reasonable excuse for withholding information[722] and exempt clergy members who obtain the information in the course of their profession[723] or a religious confession.[724]

Mandatory reporting and the Jehovah's Witness organisation

408 Since at least 1995, congregational elders have been instructed to contact the Branch Office Legal Department to ascertain if any reporting obligations apply in respect of an allegation of child sexual abuse.[725] Mr Toole told the Royal Commission that the Jehovah's Witness organisation in Australia considers itself bound by mandatory reporting legislation in Victoria, South Australia and the Northern Territory.[726]

409 Mr Toole told the Royal Commission that in 1999 the world headquarters of the Jehovah's Witness organisation clarified that '[w]here the law does not obligate elders to report cases that come to their attention, there is no need for them to do so …'.[727] Mr Spinks gave evidence that it is not the practice of the Jehovah's Witness organisation to report child sexual abuse to police,[728] nor has the organisation ever claimed 'to have instructed the elders to go to the authorities'.[729]

410 In August of 2002, members of all congregations in Australia were advised by the Branch Office that congregational elders have long been instructed to report allegations of child sexual abuse 'where required to by law to do so, even when there is only one witness'.[730] In October of 2002, the Australia Branch Office Legal Department issued a letter to all bodies of elders clarifying that '[w]hether or not they are "required by law to [report]", can only be determined at the time when the elders contact the Society after receiving a report of child abuse'.[731]

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721 RC Mandatory Reporting Report at 2.6.3 (footnote 94);
See also, for example, *Crimes Act 1900* (NSW), s 341; Schedule 11 to the *Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935* (SA); and *Crimes (Classification of Offences) Act 1981* (Vic), ss 2 and 4.

722 *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic), s 327(2); *Crimes Act 1900* (NSW), s 316(1).

723 *Crimes Act 1900* (NSW), s 316(4) and (5); *Crimes Regulation 2010* (NSW), r 4(f).

724 *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic), s 327(7); *Evidence Act 2008* (Vic), ss 127(1) and (4).

725 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0005 at 0005 (Tab 83).

726 Exhibit 29-0023, Statement of Vincent Toole, STAT.0593.001.0001_R at [29]-[30].

727 Exhibit 29-0023, Statement of Vincent Toole, STAT.0593.001.0001_R at [16];
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0020 at 0020 (Tab 99).

728 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15665:10-15 (Day 152).

729 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15671:45-T15672:1 (Day 152).

730 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0004.001.0001 at 0002 (Tab 105).

731 Exhibit 29-0034, CORR.0182.001.0005 at 0005.

411 It is submitted that in the light of the letter of October 2002 and other directives issued only to elders, the letter of August 2002 to all Jehovah's Witnesses is misleading as to the true position of the organisation in relation to reporting child sexual abuse to authorities, that true position being that elders do not report to authorities unless directed to do so by the Branch Office.

412 Mr Toole told the Royal Commission that he has been taking calls from elders to the Legal Department for at least the last two years. He said that he discusses with the elders calling for advice what mandatory reporting obligations might apply.[732]

413 In a letter dated 10 January 2012, all bodies of elders in South Australia were advised by the Branch Office Legal Department of new mandatory reporting obligations and of the need to immediately contact the Branch Office upon receipt of any allegations of child abuse.[733]

Concealment offences and the Jehovah's Witness organisation

414 Mr Spinks gave evidence that in recent weeks it has been explained to him that some states impose criminal sanctions on those who do not report knowledge of a criminal offence, i.e. concealment offences as distinct from mandatory reporting obligations.[734] Mr Spinks said that he understood that in resolving the truth of an allegation of child sexual abuse, through the Jehovah's Witness investigative and judicial process, an elder's state of knowledge changes from being knowledge of an accusation of a criminal offence to knowledge of the commission of a criminal offence.[735] That is to say, it is clear that in circumstances where elders have found a sexual offence to have been committed where concealment offences exist they are prima facie obliged to report to the police.

415 Mr Toole gave evidence that before being called before the Royal Commission, it had been his understanding that the 'prevailing' legislation governing reporting of child sexual abuse was the state and territory mandatory reporting legislative schemes.[736] He said that it had been a 'wake-up call' to learn that the concealment offences applied independently of the mandatory reporting provisions.[737] He told the Royal Commission that once the public hearing was concluded the Jehovah's Witness organisation in Australia would be engaging senior counsel to advise on any reporting obligations, including those arising under the criminal law.[738]

416 Mr Toole told the Royal Commission that if the law required it, then the Jehovah's Witness organisation would be happy to report child sexual abuse to authorities.[739] It was put to him that in NSW at least, the legislation had required reporting of such crimes since 1990, and before that the common law had imposed a similar obligation.[740] Mr

732 Transcript of V J Toole, T15759:41-T15760:2 (Day 153).
733 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0065 (Tab 123).
734 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15666:14-22 (Day 152).
735 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15666:7-12, 34-38 (Day 152).
736 Transcript of V J Toole, T15789:8-21 (Day 153).
737 Transcript of V J Toole, T15789:16-27 (Day 153).
738 Transcript of V J Toole, T15789:16-42 (Day 153).
739 Transcript of V J Toole, T15790:13-20 (Day 153).
740 Transcript of V J Toole, T15790:22-29 (Day 153).

Toole said that although he understood what was put to him, the Jehovah's Witness organisation has not reported child sexual abuse on the understanding that only the mandatory reporting laws applied.[741] Mr Toole confirmed that the organisation's understanding was also his understanding.[742]

417 It is implicit in Mr Toole's confession to a 'wake-up call' that prior to being called to give evidence before the Royal Commission he did not advise elders from New South Wales of their obligations under the concealment laws. It follows that where elders in NSW formed the view that child sexual abuse had occurred they were obliged under sanction of the criminal law to report those cases to the police.

418 Mr Toole should accordingly be referred to the Law Society of New South Wales for possible investigation.

Available findings on reporting

F55 Prior to this case study, the Jehovah's Witness organisation in Australia did not advise congregational elders of their obligations to report the commission of criminal offences to the police under s 316 of the *Crimes Act 1900* (NSW).

F56 This report is referred to the Law Society of New South Wales in relation to the conduct of Mr Toole in having failed to advise congregational elders of their obligations to report their knowledge of the commission of certain criminal offences to the police.

Reporting to secular authorities more generally

419 Elders are instructed that, in the absence of mandatory reporting obligations, it is the right of the individual to decide whether to report child sexual abuse to the police or other secular authorities.[743] The *Shepherd the Flock* handbook instructs elders that:

> … If you are asked, make it clear that whether to report the matter to the authorities or not is a personal decision for each individual to make and that there are no congregational sanctions for either decision...[744]
>
> [emphasis added]

420 The 2013 Service Desk Guidelines direct the Service Desk to advise elders not to discourage individuals from reporting matters to the authorities, but that they should remind individuals of the 'need for confidentiality when speaking with others, thus avoiding any charge of slander'.[745]

741 Transcript of V J Toole, T15791:3-33 (Day 153).
742 Transcript of V J Toole, T15791:12-17 (Day 153).
743 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0132-133 [19] (Tab 120); Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0004.001.0001 at 0002 (Tab 105).
744 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0132 [19] (Tab 120).
745 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0076 at 0081 [33] (Tab 126).

421 Mr Spinks said that the Service Desk does not instruct elders to report to the authorities.[746]

422 Messrs Spinks, Toole and O'Brien each gave evidence that Jehovah's Witness elders do not have the right Scripturally to usurp a victim's 'right' to report an allegation of child sexual abuse to the authorities, and as such, elders do not themselves report allegations of child sexual abuse to authorities.[747]

423 Mr Spinks said that the Scriptures that support the Jehovah's Witness organisation's position in relation to reporting to authorities are 2 Corinthians 1:24 and Galatians 6:5.[748]

424 2 Corinthians 1:24 provides, 'Not that we are the masters over your faith, but we are fellow workers for your joy, for it is by your faith that you are standing'. In and of itself, it is not at all apparent how this passage prohibits elders from reporting child sexual abuse to secular authorities. Furthermore, it is submitted that application of the passage as Mr Spinks suggests appears inconsistent with the organisation's own teachings about the role of elders, which is as a 'shepherd' to the 'flock' with an obligation to care for the flock's safety.[749]

425 Galatians 6:5 provides that '[f]or each one will carry his own load'. Again, it is not at all apparent how this passage prohibits elders from reporting child sexual abuse to authorities. In fact, it is submitted that the preceding verses[750] suggest that the 'one' being told to 'carry his own load' is not a victim of a serious crime; rather the preceding verses suggest that the counsel is intended to apply to a wrongdoer bearing responsibility for his wrongs.

426 It is accordingly submitted that the Royal Commission should not accept Mr Spinks' evidence regarding the Scriptural basis for the position of the Jehovah's Witness organisation regarding not reporting crimes to the authorities.

Further evidence of Mr Spinks

427 Mr Spinks gave evidence that when a child is in a situation where the threat of harm remains, the Service Desk instructs elders to speak to the parent or guardian of that child and assist that person to 'do all they can, including going to the authorities, if that's what … the guardian/parent is willing to do … and remind them that they … will have the full support of the elders in doing that'.[751]

428 Mr Spinks said that if the elders are not in a position of being able to take judicial action, for example if there is only one witness to the alleged abuse or if it is too traumatising

746 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15663:10-12 (Day 152).
747 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15720:36-T15721:12 (Day 152);
Transcript of V J Toole, T15763:6-15 (Day 153);
Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15835:33-41 (Day 153).
748 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15721:3-8 (Day 152).
749 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15847:13-18 (Day 153).
750 See Galatians 6:1-4.
751 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15662:5-19 (Day 152).

for the victim witness to speak to elders, then '[t]he parents would be reminded that it's their absolute right to take this to the authorities, and the elders will support them in it'.[752]

429 It is submitted that Mr Spinks' evidence that elders are told to make sure that survivors of child sexual abuse and their families have the absolute right to report to the authorities should not be accepted. Mr Spinks' evidence in this regard is not credible in the light of his earlier evidence that the advice given to elders by the Service Desk is generic advice as read out from page 131 of the *Shepherd the Flock* handbook.[753] The relevant paragraph provides that survivors and their families should be advised of the right to report to authorities if they ask.[754]

430 Insofar as elders reporting to authorities themselves is concerned, Mr Spinks said that if there were uniform mandatory reporting requirements across Australia, then the Jehovah's Witnesses 'will willingly and happily comply'.[755]

Further evidence of Mr Toole

431 In his written statement, Mr Toole told the Royal Commission that the Branch Committee instructs the Legal Department to direct elders to clearly explain to a victim of child sexual abuse and/or to the victim's family, that they have an absolute right to report the matter to authorities.[756] Mr Toole gave evidence that it was his understanding that this instruction was given by the Branch Committee in harmony with the direction given in the letter to all bodies of elders of 1 October 2012, although he was unable to identify that direction in the letter.[757] Instead, Mr Toole told the Royal Commission that the instruction from the Branch Committee was 'in the spirit of what's being discussed' in the letter of 1 October 2012.[758]

432 Mr Toole accepted that the Legal Department does not have any written instruction from the Branch Committee to direct elders to explain to a victim or her family, their right to report abuse to authorities.[759]

433 Mr Toole gave evidence that in at least the last two and a half years he has taken three to four calls regarding allegations of child sexual abuse every month.[760] He told the Royal Commission that in each case where he provides advice to elders and where there is no mandatory reporting obligation, it is his practice to instruct elders to:

> … go back to the victim or their family and explain to them very clearly that they have the absolute right to be able to go and report this matter to the

752 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15708:33-T15709:4 (Day 152).
753 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15661:26-T15662:3 (Day 152).
754 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0132 [19] (Tab 120).
755 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15665:38-42 (Day 152).
756 Exhibit 29-0023, Statement of Vincent Toole, STAT.0593.001.0001_R [15].
757 Transcript of V J Toole, T15759:9-27 (Day 153).
758 Transcript of V J Toole, T15759:25-27 (Day 153).
759 Transcript of V J Toole, T15759:34-39 (Day 153).
760 Transcript of V J Toole, T15760:18-30 (Day 153).

> authorities. That's their privilege and they need to understand that, and that you will support them in whatever decision they make.[761]

434 Although Mr Toole gave evidence that elders in the Jehovah's Witnesses do not have the right, Scripturally, to take away an individual's right to decide whether to report a child sexual abuse complaint to the police,[762] he later agreed that 'in some circumstances, there would be a need for elders to report to the authorities'.[763] Mr Toole said further that the Legal Department will do 'whatever needs to be done to protect a child', and that '[i]f it means going to the police, we would have no hesitation in going to the police'.[764]

Further evidence of Mr O'Brien

435 Mr O'Brien agreed in evidence that the fact that the Jehovah's Witness organisation's disciplinary procedures can leave a perpetrator of child sexual abuse at large in the community 'can only be resolved with systematic reporting to the authorities'.[765]

436 Mr O'Brien gave evidence that elders in the Jehovah's Witness organisation do not see that they have the right, Scripturally, to take away the right of a victim or parent of a victim to report child sexual abuse to police, by themselves reporting child sexual abuse to the police.[766] However he later told the Royal Commission that the organisation would report a complaint of child sexual abuse to the police 'if the child remains at risk and there is no responsible adult within the family to remove [the child] from further risk of abuse'.[767] Mr O'Brien said that he did not personally have any experience or knowledge of a matter being reported to police by the organisation.[768]

437 Mr O'Brien accepted in evidence that, unlike child protection authorities, the Jehovah's Witness organisation does not have the power to intervene in a family situation to ensure protection of the child.[769]

Evidence of Mr Jackson

438 It was Mr Jackson's evidence that where a child remains at risk of abuse, 'the elders should encourage the guardian of the child, or whoever is in that family arrangement who is not the perpetrator, to notify the authorities'.[770] It was put to Mr Jackson that there is a Jehovah's Witness practice of not reporting child sexual abuse allegations to the authorities unless required by law to do so.[771] Rather than responding to the

761 Transcript of V J Toole, T15759:41-T15760:16 (Day 153).
762 Transcript of V J Toole, T15763:6-15 (Day 153).
763 Transcript of V J Toole, T15763:42-45 (Day 153).
764 Transcript of V J Toole, T15794:23-26 (Day 153).
765 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15834:34-44 (Day 153).
766 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15835:33-41 (Day 153).
767 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15860:34-37 (Day 153).
768 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15860:39-T15861:17 (Day 153).
769 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15835:22-31 (Day 153).
770 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15966:30-T15967:4 (Day 155).
771 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15965:2-5 (Day 155).

proposition, Mr Jackson said that he was 'not familiar with the statistics or the general practice …'.[772]

439 Mr Jackson was asked if there was a Scriptural basis to the practice or policy of the Jehovah's Witness organisation of not reporting child sexual abuse to authorities unless required to do so by law.[773] He explained in response that there 'is a spiritual dilemma' arising out of the question of reporting to authorities.[774] Mr Jackson said that one aspect of that dilemma arises when an elder learns of an allegation of child sexual abuse and must consider his obligation of confidence in accordance with the Scriptural guidance in Proverbs 25:8-10.[775] Another aspect of the dilemma, he explained, was the Scriptural requirement in 1 Peter 5:2-3 that an elder 'does not have the authority to lord it over or take over control of a family arrangement' where a survivor or her guardian has the right to decide if they want to report to authorities. [776]

440 Mr Jackson said that the spiritual dilemma to which he referred arises out of the conflict between the elders' adherence to those Scriptural principles and the desire to 'make sure that children are cared for'.[777]

441 Mr Jackson did however accept that it would be possible for the Jehovah's Witness organisation to consider adopting a policy which says that in cases where there are others at risk, a report must be made to the authorities.[778]

442 Mr Jackson nonetheless qualified his evidence in relation to the capacity for the Jehovah's Witness organisation to require elders to report to authorities and said that there were 'Scriptural factors that maybe make that a little complicated, and it would certainly be a lot easier if we had mandatory laws on that'.[779]

Documentary evidence

443 As dealt with in Part 2 above, the Royal Commission received evidence that of 1,006 alleged perpetrators of child sexual abuse identified by the Jehovah's Witness organisation since 1950, not one was reported by the organisation to secular authorities.[780]

Submissions in relation to reporting to authorities

444 It is not possible, on the available evidence, to conclude that it is the practice of the Jehovah's Witness organisation to:

a) positively advise victims and/or their families of their right to report allegations of child sexual abuse to the authorities, and/or

772 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15965:6-7 (Day 155).
773 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15965:11-14 (Day 155).
774 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15965:6-8 (Day 155).
775 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15965:19-39 (Day 155).
776 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15965:41-T15966:21 (Day 155).
777 Transcript of G W Jackson, T1596621-23(Day 155).
778 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15967:10-14 (Day 155).
779 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15967:19-22 (Day 155).
780 Exhibit 29-0021, WAT.999.013.0012.

b) encourage victims and/or their families to report allegations of child sexual abuse to the authorities.

Available findings on the Jehovah's Witness organisation's policy on reporting

F57 It is the policy and practice of the Jehovah's Witness organisation in Australia to not report allegations of child sexual abuse to the police or other authorities unless required by law to do so.

F58 The basis for this policy is said to be respect for the 'right' of the victim to herself decide whether to make a complaint to the authorities.

F59 That basis has no justification where the victim is still a minor at the time that the abuse comes to the attention of the organisation, or where there are others who may still be at risk at the hands of the alleged abuser.

F60 Since the organisation cannot remove an alleged abuser from the family or take other positive steps to safeguard children in the family from continuing risk, the organisation should have a policy to report all allegations of child sexual abuse to the authorities unless an adult victim specifically requests that a report not be made and there is no appreciable risk of children being abused.

7.15 The evidence of Mr Davies, formerly of the Queensland DPP

445 Mr Davies, formerly of the Queensland DPP,[781] gave evidence that his experience of the internal processes of the Jehovah's Witness organisation with respect to allegations of child sexual abuse gave him cause for concern from a prosecutorial perspective for the following reasons:

a) the delay in allegations coming to police attention caused by the internal handling of child sexual abuse complaints and the acceptance by the organisation that there is no need to refer such allegations to secular authorities[782]

b) the questionable admissibility of inculpatory statements made by the accused during the disfellowshipping process owing to the incentive of a reduced penalty if an admission as to the alleged conduct is made[783]

c) the impact on the survivor of the internal handling of their complaint, in particular in relation to the number of people to whom the survivor is required to disclose the details of their complaint,[784] and

d) as a consequence of the number of people involved in handling a complaint, the potential for contamination of the survivor's evidence before it reaches the police.[785]

781 Exhibit 29-0011, First statement of Jason Davies, STAT.0595.001.0001_R at [3]-[9].

782 Exhibit 29-0012, Supplementary statement of Jason Davies, STAT.0595.002.0001_R at [8];
Transcript of J Davies, T15422:41-T15423:6, 42-46 (Day 149).

783 Transcript of J Davies, T15424:4-6 (Day 149);
Exhibit 29-0011, First statement of Jason Davies, STAT.0595.001.0001_R at [16]-[18];
Exhibit 29-0012, Supplementary statement of Jason Davies, STAT.0595.002.0001_R at [6]-[7];

784 Transcript of J Davies, T15424:9-25 (Day 149).

785 Transcript of J Davies, T15424:27-39 (Day 149).

Available findings on the impact of the Jehovah's Witness organisation's processes on criminal processes

F61 The internal processes of the Jehovah's Witness organisation for handling allegations of child sexual abuse cause significant delay in a complaint coming, if ever, before authorities.

F62 Admissions made by an accused during the investigative and/or judicial committee process administered by the Jehovah's Witness organisation may not be admissible in criminal proceedings because of the circumstances in which they are made, including that incentives such as reduction in penalty are offered if an admission is made.

F63 The number of people to whom a survivor of child sexual abuse is required to divulge the detail of her complaint exacerbates the trauma already suffered by a survivor of such abuse.

F64 There is significant risk of contamination of a survivor's evidence as a result of the number of times and circumstances in which a survivor is required to divulge the detail of her complaint before her abuse is, if ever, reported to the authorities.

7.16 Redress and acknowledgment

446 Mr O'Brien told the Royal Commission the Jehovah's Witness organisation in Australia does not have a redress scheme for responding to and potentially compensating victims of child sexual abuse in Australia because, to date, it has never received a claim.[786]

447 Mr O'Brien gave evidence that the involvement of the Jehovah's Witness organisation in a collective redress scheme would require the approval of the 26 members of Watchtower Australia and the Governing Body.[787] Mr O'Brien said that he would recommend that the Jehovah's Witness organisation establish a redress scheme of its own to care for victims of child sexual abuse.[788]

448 In the context of humanitarian relief, Mr Jackson told the Royal Commission that 'the Governing Body is happy for our organisation to spend money helping persons … who [have] been traumatised or affected in a bad way'.[789] Mr Jackson said in evidence that, subject to the Scriptures, participation of the Jehovah's Witness organisation with other institutions in a coordinated redress scheme is 'not something that is totally out of the option pool'.[790]

449 Mr Jackson told the Royal Commission that although Jehovah's Witnesses try to 'keep a high moral standard' and 'treat victims in a loving way', he had not personally been involved in Governing Body discussions regarding consideration of the issue of an

786 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.9999.004.0003 (Tab 135);
Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15835:46-T15836:5 (Day 153).
787 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15836:24-T15837:3, T15838:10-T15839:9 (Day 153)
788 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15837:5-T15838:8 (Day 153)
789 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15985:38-44 (Day 153)
790 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15986:16-32 (Day 153)

apology to survivors of child sexual abuse.[791] He said in evidence that he was unable to speak 'collectively for everybody' but the Governing Body has 'apologised on other matters in the past' and so an apology to survivors of child sexual abuse 'is perceivable'.[792]

450 Mr Jackson agreed with the proposition put to him that 'it is very important for people in such senior positions as [his] to really have a good understanding of the perspective of a survivor of abuse'.[793] He also said that empathised with BCG. However, he had neither read the statements nor heard the evidence of BCG, nor did he seem to be aware of the fact that BCG was a woman,[794] purportedly on account of being too busy. However he had clearly taken considerable time to follow the evidence of Jehovah's Witness witnesses.[795] Mr Jackson accordingly failed to live by the principle that he said he regarded as important, namely that he should have a good understanding of the perspective of a survivor of abuse, and his stated empathy with BCG was hollow.

Available findings on Mr Jackson's stated empathy for survivors

F65 Mr Jackon's failure to have read or be familiar with the testimony of the survivor witnesses yet to have read or otherwise familiarised himself with the testimony of Jehovah's Witness witnesses belies his stated empathy for the survivors and his stated recognition of the importance of their perspectives.

791 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15985:16-25 (Day 153).
792 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15985:29-32 (Day 153).
793 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15990:32-42 and T15991:35-44 (Day 155).
794 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15990:24-30 (Day 155).
795 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15951: 26-42, T15952:27-32, T15954:16-27, T15965:16-19 (Day 155).

Part 8 Current systems, policies, and procedures for preventing child sexual abuse

8.1 Parental responsibility

451 The Jehovah's Witness organisation considers that the primary responsibility for the protection of children lies with parents.[796] In his written statement, Mr O'Brien said that this is particularly so as the organisation does not have programmes or facilities that separate children from their parents.[797]

452 In his written statement, Mr O'Brien also told the Royal Commission that the Jehovah's Witness organisation believes that loving and protective parents are the best deterrent to child abuse.[798]

Education through publications

453 Mr O'Brien described the position of the Jehovah's Witness organisation as being that parental education of children about sex and the dangers of child sexual abuse can be a major factor in its prevention.[799] He said that the Jehovah's Witness organisation educates parents via study groups and publications to help protect their children from child sexual abuse.[800] The 2013 Service Desk Guidelines instruct the branch service desks to advise elders to 'periodically remind parents of the need to review with their children articles in the organization's publications'.[801]

454 A number of *Awake!* and *Watchtower* publications dating back to 1970 and produced by the Jehovah's Witness organisation address child sexual abuse.[802]

8.2 Information sharing

Sharing between congregations and the branch office

455 The Jehovah's Witness organisation offers theocratic guidance on the sharing of information between relevant bodies of elders through 'letters of introduction' when a member moves from one congregation to another.

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796 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066 at 0068 [10] (Tab 124).
797 Exhibit 29-0024, Statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [67].
798 Exhibit 29-0024, Statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [67].
799 Exhibit 29-0024, Statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [55].
800 Exhibit 29-0024, Statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [65]; Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15842: 37-42 (Day 153).
801 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0076 at 0081 [34].
802 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0225 (Tab 75); Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0223 (Tab 76), Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0205 (Tab 78), Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0238 (Tab 82), Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0007 (Tab 87), Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0128 (Tab 106); Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0253 (Tab 112); Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066 at 0068 [10] (Tab 124).

456 When a 'known child molester' moves to another congregation, elders are instructed to send a letter of introduction (copied to the Branch Office) with full and complete information about the person's background and current situation to the elders of the new congregation.[803] The Branch Office, and not the congregational elders, determines whether or not a person is a 'known child molester'.[804] Whether or not a person is a 'known child molester' depends upon whether he is known by the congregation to be such and is therefore 'not "free from accusation" or "irreprehensible", nor does he have "a fine testimony from people on the outside". (1 Tim. 3:1-7, 10; 5:22; Titus 1:7)'.[805]

457 The Branch Office determines what information regarding the accusation may be shared with the new congregation.[806] For example, if 20 years have passed since a person sexually abused a child and the Branch Office has determined that the person can be appointed to a position of trust, then there is no need for information regarding the person's history of offending to be passed to a new congregation.[807]

Information requests from secular authorities

458 All elders are directed to immediately contact the Branch Office if approached by secular authorities requesting access to congregational records or seeking testimony from elders.[808] In November 2014, all bodies of elders were instructed never to 'reveal confidential information to anyone unless theocratic procedure requires it or the branch office has instructed you to do so', and were given examples of people who may seek such information as including police, government officials, school personnel, and family members.[809]

459 Elders are instructed that the reason for resisting production of confidential records to authorities, even when those records are sought under subpoena, prior to consultation with the Branch Office Legal Department is that the records may be protected by 'minister-communicant privilege' or legal professional privilege.[810]

Confessional privilege

460 In 1997 and 1999, the Australia Branch Office communicated with the headquarters of the Jehovah's Witness organisation in relation to the availability of confessional privilege when information or documents are sought by secular authorities from the Jehovah's Witness organisation.[811] The ultimate position of the organisation appears, at least in

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803 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0133 [20] (Tab 120);
Exhibit 29-0019, Annexure 2, STAT.0591.001.0018 at [4.21];
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066 at 0069 (Tab 124);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0076 at 0083 [41] (Tab 126).

804 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066 at 0069 [15] (Tab 124).

805 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066 at 0069 [15] (Tab 124).

806 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0133 [21] (Tab 120);
Exhibit 29-0019, Annexure 2, STAT.0591.001.0018 at [3.2]-[3.4].

807 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0076 at 0083 [42] (Tab 126).

808 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0088 [19] (Tab 120).

809 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0014.001.0009 at 0005 [10] (Tab 131A).

810 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0014.001.0009 at 0006 [12] (Tab 131A).

811 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0004.001.0010 (Tab 86); Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0007 (Tab 87); Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0012.001.0025 (Tab 90); Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0004.001.0014 (Tab 91); Exhibit 29-0003,

1997, to have been that it would be appropriate to try to claim confessional privilege where a confession is obtained by a judicial committee and that any actions associated with that judicial committee, such as reporting to the body of elders and to the branch office, would form part of the confessional ritual for the purposes of any such claim.[812]

461 In oral evidence, Mr Toole agreed that it is possible that 'the confidentiality of the confession in the case of the Jehovah's Witnesses is very qualified' and that 'a lot of different people … end up having access to that information'.[813]

462 Mr Toole said that although for the past 15 years the Jehovah's Witnesses have taken the position of waiving confessional privilege when approached by authorities, there may be circumstances in which that position could change.[814]

8.3 Appointments to positions of authority in the organisation

Qualification

463 Elders and ministerial servants hold positions of trust within the congregation.[815] The Jehovah's Witness organisation offers theocratic guidance on the qualification of a known child molester for such positions of responsibility.[816] For instance, an elder must be a man who is 'irreprehensible, be free from accusation, and [has] a fine testimony from people on the outside'.[817] An elder should have a wife and children in subjection[818] and he should not have been recently reproved for wrongdoing.[819]

Inquiry as to candidate's history

464 Circuit overseers are responsible for the appointment of elders and ministerial servants following recommendation of candidates for appointment by congregational bodies of elders.[820]

WAT.0012.001.0011 (Tab 92); Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0014 (Tab 93); Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0020 (Tab 99).

812 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0004.001.0014 at 0017 (Tab 91); Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0012.001.0014 at 0015 (Tab 91); Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0012.001.0011 (Tab 92).

813 Transcript of V J Toole, T15774:36-46 (Day 153).

814 Transcript of V J Toole, T15775:1-3 (Day 153);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0014.001.0009 at 0010 [6].

815 Exhibit 29-0024, Statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [82]-[83];
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0002.001.0034 at 0034-0035 (Tab 128);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0016-0023 (Tab 109);
Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [78];
Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [15];
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0002.001.0001 at 0001 (Tab 97).

816 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066 at 0068-0071 (Tab 124);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0031-0042 (Tab 120).

817 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0018 (Tab 109).

818 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0015-17 (Tab 109);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0032 [5] (Tab 120).

819 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0033 [7] (Tab 120);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0018 (Tab 109).

820 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0076 at 0080 [25] (Tab 126);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0002.001.0034 at [1]-[2] (Tab 128);

465 If a man is nominated by his congregation's body of elders, the circuit overseer is instructed to inquire as to whether the man has a history of child sexual molestation'.[821] Prior to announcement of appointment as an elder in Australian states and territories where it is required, the candidate must obtain a working with children check (a **WWCC**).[822]

466 Mr O'Brien told the Royal Commission that the Jehovah's Witness organisation complies fully with legislative requirements to ensure all relevant persons have the necessary clearances for working with children.[823] Mr Toole said that there are approximately 7,000 elders and ministerial servants currently serving in Jehovah's Witnesses congregations in Australia who have obtained child related police checks.[824]

467 Mr Toole accepted, and it is submitted, that to some degree the efficacy of the WWCC is undermined by the practice of Jehovah's Witnesses not to systematically report those in their midst accused of child sexual abuse.[825] That is because the system depends on reports being made to authorities in order to maintain the WWCC database. There is therefore an element of hypocrisy in the Jehovah's Witness organisation claiming credit for having obtained clearances for working with children for its elders and ministerial servants, but at the same time not reporting the offences of its elders and ministerial servants which would prevent them from being able to obtain working with children clearance.

Available findings on the system of prevention of child sexual abuse - WWCC

F66 The documented practice of the Jehovah's Witness organisation of not reporting child sexual abuse to the authorities undermines the efficacy of the working with children check system, a system to which the organisation says it subscribes and with which it says it complies.

468 If a man has 'a history of child molestation' he is not automatically disqualified from appointment as an elder or ministerial servant. For instance, the 2013 Service Desk Guidelines provide that if a man molested a child in the 'distant past' and 'if there is no apparent outcry', he may be recommended for appointment as a ministerial servant.[826] Similarly, if a man is known to have sexually abused a child before he was baptised as a Jehovah's Witness, he is not necessarily disqualified from holding a position of responsibility in the congregation.[827]

469 Since at least 1998, elders have been instructed that it is 'best to wait at least 20 years since the last incident of child abuse was committed before retaining or appointing a

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Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0002.001.0039 at [1] (Tab 129).

821 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0002.001.0034 at [4] (Tab 128);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0002.001.0039 at 0040 [6] (Tab 129).

822 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0002.001.0034 at 0035 (Tab 128).

823 Exhibit 29-0024, Statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [78].

824 Exhibit 29-0023, Statement of Vincent Toole, STAT.0593.001.0001_R at [31].

825 Transcript of V J Toole, T15775:35-47 (Day 153).

826 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0076 at 0078 [14] (Tab 126).

827 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0076 at 0076 [3]-[4] (Tab 126).

former child abuser', although there may be exceptions to this, including if the abuse was committed prior to baptism.[828]

Reappointment of elders and ministerial servants

470 If 20 years have passed since the child sexual abuse and the man has served faithfully, there is no outcry from the congregation, and 'everything else points to his currently enjoying Jehovah's blessing', then the branch office may decide disqualification from service is not necessary. However, the 2013 Service Desk Guidelines warn that:

> if a former child molester continues in a position of responsibility, whether the sin occurred before or after baptism – there may be serious problems if he later molests a child. This could bring reproach on Jehovah's name …[829]

471 Since 1950, 28 alleged perpetrators of child sexual abuse were appointed to a position of authority after having been the subject of an allegation of child sexual abuse. Further, of 127 alleged perpetrators of child sexual abuse deleted as elders or ministerial servants as a result of allegations of child sexual abuse, 16 were later reappointed.[830]

8.4 Congregational risk management of known offenders

Counselling and monitoring of persons accused of child sexual abuse

472 Elders are instructed to counsel a person found to have committed child sexual abuse to:

> … refrain from displaying affection for children, to avoid hugging or holding children on their lap, never to be alone with a child (other than their own), not to allow children to spend the night in their home …[831]

473 Mr Spinks told the Royal Commission that soon after a reproof for child sexual abuse is imposed and an announcement made to the congregation, the elders may deliver a 'warning lecture' to the congregation about the type of sin and how to prevent it.[832] Mr Spinks told the Royal Commission that, in this way, 'congregation members are aided in their ability to protect children from child sexual abuse'.[833]

474 Elders are instructed that a '"known child molester" should be told not to work alone with children in the field ministry … This serves to protect any minor who answers the door, the former abuser, and the reputation of the congregation'.[834]

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828 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0004.001.0021 at [1]-[2] (Tab 98).
829 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0076 at 0077 [11] (Tab 126).
830 Exhibit 29-0021, WAT.9999.013.0012.
831 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066 at 0068-0069 (Tab 124);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0076 at 0082 [35] (Tab 126).
832 Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of Rodney Spinks, STAT0591.001.0001_R at [44];
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0100 [23] (Tab 120).
833 Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of Rodney Spinks, STAT0591.001.0001_R at [44].
834 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0076 at 0082 [36] (Tab 126).

475 If a person has been assessed by the judicial committee as displaying genuine repentance and is reproved, the judicial committee is to 'monitor the spiritual progress of the repentant wrongdoer'.[835]

476 If the Branch Office considers a person to be a 'predator', the Service Desk will advise congregational elders to meet with parents of 'minor children' in the congregation and issue a warning about the person.[836]

477 In circumstances where a person has been accused of child sexual abuse and the elders are not authorised to take judicial action, for example, because the person did not confess and there was only one witness to the conduct, the elders are instructed to 'remain vigilant with regard to the conduct and activity of the accused'.[837]

478 Mr O'Brien told the Royal Commission that the elders would meet with a person against whom an allegation of child sexual abuse had been made but not proven and 'give very clear direction on what restrictions would apply to their association with children, with others in the congregation, and [the elders] would monitor that'.[838]

479 Mr O'Brien said that others in the congregation would not be aware of the restrictions placed upon a person against whom an allegation of child sexual abuse had been made.[839] He accepted that in those circumstances supervision of that person is therefore confined to when the elders or an elder is present to observe the person.[840]

480 Mr O'Brien gave evidence that the extent to which elders are able to discharge their obligation to care for the congregation is restricted by application of two-witness rule and that 'unless there is a second witness to a similar type of event, or the same event, then 'the elders' hands are tied with warning the person'.[841]

Evaluation of risk and treatment of offenders

481 Mr Spinks accepted that the processes used by secular society to evaluate the risk of re-offending were not used by the Jehovah's Witnesses.[842]

482 Mr Spinks also gave evidence that the Jehovah's Witnesses did not offer any kind of programmes for the professional treatment of offenders.[843]

483 Dr Monica Applewhite, who was engaged by the Jehovah's Witness organisation to provide expert evidence about its practices and procedures, told the Royal Commission that 'once somebody abuses, once their internal mechanisms of control have allowed

835 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0099 [22] (Tab 120).
836 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066 at 0069 [13] (Tab 124);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0076 at 0083 [40] (Tab 126).
837 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066 at 0068 [11] (Tab 124).
838 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15847:34-41 (Day 153).
839 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15847:43-45 (Day 153).
840 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15847:47-T15848:16 (Day 153).
841 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15848:18-28 (Day 153).
842 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15715:45-T15716:1 (Day 152).
843 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15716:14-20 (Day 152).

them to cross that line once, I don't have confidence in those internal mechanisms of control for the future'.[844]

Available findings on the system of prevention of child sexual abuse – risk of reoffending

F67 The practices and procedures of the Jehovah's Witness organisation for the prevention of child sexual abuse, and in particular for the management of the risk of an abuser reoffending, do not take account of the actual risk of an offender reoffending and accordingly place children in the organisation at significant risk of sexual abuse.

8.5 Records management

484 The Jehovah's Witness organisation's current document retention policy provides that records concerning an individual accused of child molestation are to be indefinitely retained in the congregational confidential file.[845] Since 2009 the Australia Branch Office has required that all congregational documents relating to a matter of established child abuse be sent to the Branch Office.[846]

485 Mr Toole stated that indefinite retention of records relating to child abuse has been a long-standing practice of the Jehovah's Witness organisation.[847]

486 Elders are also directed that records relating to the appointment and deletion of elders and ministerial servants should be kept indefinitely.[848]

844 Transcript of M L Applewhite, T15498:9-13 (Day 150).

845 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066 at 0068 [11] (Tab 124);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0076 at 0083 [41] (Tab 126).
Exhibit 29-0023, Statement of Vincent Toole, STAT.0593.001.0001_R at [44];
Exhibit 29-0019, Annexure 2, STAT.0591.001.0018 at [4.12];
Exhibit 29-0024, Statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [63].

846 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0002.001.0015 (Tab 119).

847 Exhibit 29-0023, Statement of Vincent Toole, STAT.0593.001.0001_R at [33]-[34].

848 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0002.001.0034 at 0037 [15] (Tab 128).

Part 9 Additional issues

9.1 Accessibility and clarity of information regarding systems policies and procedures

Identification of body of documents recording current policy

487 Messrs Toole, Spinks and O'Brien told the Royal Commission that the letter to all bodies of elders dated 1 October 2012 is the document which offers current spiritual advice and guidance to elders on how to handle matters involving child sexual abuse.[849]

488 That letter to all bodies of elders instructs elders to destroy earlier letters regarding institutional handling of child sexual abuse.[850] The letter instructs elders to first have regard to the *Shepherd the Flock* handbook and to relevant Scriptural principles involved, and to consult the 1 October 2012 letter each time a matter of child abuse arises.[851]

489 Mr Spinks told the Royal Commission that current child sexual abuse policy is recorded in the 1 October 2012 letter, the *Shepherd the Flock* handbook, the 2013 Service Desk Guidelines, the *Organized to do Jehovah's Will* handbook, and the Bible.[852] However, Mr Spinks also said that these documents do not represent the complete direction given to elders in relation to responding to allegations of child sexual abuse, but rather they are the relevant documents dealing with 'key issues'.[853] Mr Spinks acknowledged that it would be hard in those circumstances for anyone to know what the position is in relation to current policy and procedure.[854]

490 Mr Spinks agreed in evidence that it would be difficult for an elder to ascertain the current policy and on what material to rely in handling a matter, but he said that this is the reason elders are instructed to immediately contact the Branch Office when they receive an allegation of child sexual abuse.[855]

Clarity and accessibility to elders of current policy

491 The Royal Commission heard evidence that it is the practice of the Jehovah's Witness organisation to encourage survivors of child sexual abuse and their families to report the abuse to authorities. Mr Spinks did not accept that the true practice is in fact, as specified in the *Shepherd the Flock* handbook, that elders are instructed only to discuss reporting to authorities if asked.[856] Mr Spinks agreed that the *Shepherd the Flock*

849 Exhibit 29-0023, Statement of Vincent Toole, STAT.0593.001.0001_R [13];
Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of Rodney Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R [18], [24];
Exhibit 29-0024, First statement of Terrence O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R [54].
850 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066 at 0066 [1] (Tab 124).
851 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066 at 0066 [1]-[2] (Tab 124).
852 Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of Rodney Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R [24].
853 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15683:15-43 (Day 152).
854 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15687:34-T15688:3 (Day 152).
855 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15684:17-24 (Day 152).
856 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15747:10-29 (Day 152).

handbook is one document that needs to change to reflect the actual policy of the Jehovah's Witness organisation.[857]

492 Mr Spinks also accepted that the *Shepherd the Flock* handbook was 'confusing … to say the least' as to the policy on whether a survivor may be accompanied by a support person in a judicial committee proceeding.[858]

493 Mr Spinks was unable to identify where in the suite of documents said to record current policy, the Jehovah's Witness organisation's policy that an accuser need not face the accused in the investigative and judicial committee process was recorded.[859]

494 Mr Jackson agreed that the documents, manuals and instructions of the Jehovah's Witness organisation should make clear that a survivor of sexual assault should not have to make her allegation in the face of her abuser.[860]

495 Mr O'Brien told the Royal Commission that one matter to which the Jehovah's Witness organisation could give greater consideration is the provision to elders of clearly and more specific and tailored information and documentation as to the process for the handling of investigations and judicial committees involving child sexual abuse.[861]

Clarity and accessibility to survivors and their families of information regarding systems, policies and procedures

496 Mr O'Brien gave evidence that a copy of *Organized to do Jehovah's* [*Will*] is issued to each member of the congregation prior to baptism.[862] He also told the Royal Commission that every member of the congregation is provided with a copy of the Watchtower library on CD, which is updated annually, includes publications going back many years, and is searchable.[863] Mr O'Brien also described the publicly available Jehovah's Witness organisation website as a mean of providing information to congregants.[864]

497 It would appear that only the letter to all congregations of 28 August 2002[865] has specifically addressed to all members of the Jehovah's Witness organisation the organisation's process for handling of complaints of child sexual abuse. The 1 October 2012 letter and the elders' *Shepherd the Flock* handbook are not available to publishers, and the 2013 Service Desk Guidelines are not even available to circuit overseers, elders and ministerial servants.

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857 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15747:31-33 (Day 152).
858 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15695:16-18 (Day 152).
859 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15686:36-T15687:28 (Day 152) and see paragraphs 308 to 312 of these submissions.
860 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15952:34-40 (Day 155).
861 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15832:24-33 (Day 153).
862 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15843:27-43 (Day 153).
863 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15858:32-45 (Day 153).
864 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15858:47-T15859:4 (Day 153).
865 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0004.001.0001 (Tab 105).

498 Mr Spinks accepted that a victim of child sexual abuse should have access to a clear policy and procedure about how to raise their allegation and how the Jehovah's Witness organisation will respond.[866] He also accepted that there was currently no document to which a victim of child sexual abuse could turn that would explain the process.[867]

499 Mr O'Brien told the Royal Commission that the Jehovah's Witness organisation could give greater consideration to provision of clear information about the processes to victims and their parents.[868]

Submissions in relation to clarity of information

500 It is submitted that the Jehovah's Witness organisation's current policies and procedures for responding to allegations of child sexual abuse are insufficiently documented and accessible to those responsible for their implementation.

501 It is submitted that the Jehovah's Witness organisation's current policies and procedures for responding to allegations of child sexual abuse are not sufficiently clear and accessible to those who might wish to make a complaint of child sexual abuse.

Available findings on the accessibility of procedures and policies

F68 The Jehovah's Witness organisation's documented procedures for reporting on and responding to allegations of child sexual abuse are deficient in that they are not documented in such a way as to be easily accessible in one document and available to all interested or affected parties and some matters that are stated to be the policies or practices of the organisation are not recorded at all.

9.2 Leaving the Jehovah's Witness organisation

502 The relevance of the question of leaving the organisation arises from the not improbable scenario of a survivor of abuse in the organisation wanting to leave the organisation – particularly if she feels that her complaint of abuse was not dealt with adequately or if her abuser remains in the organisation.

503 The *Organized to do Jehovah's Will* publisher's handbook provides explicitly that a person who no longer wishes to be known as a Jehovah's Witness, will by the action of stating as much, disassociate himself from the Jehovah's Witness organisation:

> The term "disassociation" applies to the action taken by a person who, although a baptised member of the congregation, deliberately repudiates his Christian standing, rejecting the congregation by his actions or by stating that he no longer wants to be recognised as or known as one of Jehovah's Witnesses. Because he is disassociated, his situation before Jehovah is far different from that of an inactive Christian, one who no longer shares in the field ministry. An inactive person may have failed to study God's Word

866 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15684:35-43 (Day 152).
867 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15684:45-T15685:2 (Day 152).
868 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15833:1-11 (Day 153).

> regularly, or…he may have lost his zeal for serving Jehovah. The elders as well as other concerned members of the congregation will continue rendering appropriate spiritual assistance to an inactive brother. (Rom. 15:1; 1 Thess. 5:14; Heb. 12:12) However, the person who disassociates himself by repudiating the faith and deliberately abandoning Jehovah's worship is viewed in the same way as one who is disfellowshipped. A brief announcement is made to inform the congregation, stating: "[Name of person] is no longer one of Jehovah's Witnesses".[869]
>
> [emphasis added.]

504 Jehovah's Witnesses are counselled against associating, fraternising or conversing with a person who has been disfellowshipped or who has disassociated.[870] This practice is known as shunning.[871]

505 Even family members are instructed not to associate with a disfellowshipped or disassociated relative, unless the association is unavoidable such as if they share a house with the person.[872]

506 Violation by a Jehovah's Witness of the decree against associating with a disfellowshipped or disassociated person may itself, in certain circumstances, be a disfellowshipping offence.[873]

507 Mr Jackson gave evidence that a person who no longer wants to be known as a Jehovah's Witness has the 'total freedom' of taking the action of disassociating.[874] He told the Royal Commission that '[i]f they don't want to apply to officially be removed as one of Jehovah's Witnesses, they can tell anyone they want that they are no longer a Jehovah's Witness'.[875]

508 Mr O'Brien said that an inactive Jehovah's Witness is not prohibited from free association with other Jehovah's Witnesses.[876]

509 Mr Jackson told the Royal Commission that disassociation as described in the *Organized to do Jehovah's Will* handbook simply gives a person 'the right to officially have an announcement made'.[877] He reiterated his earlier evidence that if they decide not to

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869 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0092 (Tab 109);
See also Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0117 (Tab 120).

870 Exhibit 29-0027, EXH.029.027.0001 at 0006;
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0117 (Tab 120);
Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15848:30-T15849:16 (Day 153).

871 Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [18], [21], [66].

872 Exhibit 29-0027, EXH.029.027.0001 at 0006;
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0117 (Tab 120);
Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15849:27-41 (Day 153);
Transcript of G W Jackson, T15980:13-22 (Day 155).

873 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0117 (Tab 120).

874 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15975:18-22 (Day 155).

875 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15975:22-25 (Day 155).

876 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15846:2-6 (Day 153).

877 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15976:1-21 (Day 155).

exercise the right to an announcement of disassociation, then they won't automatically be disassociated.[878]

510 Mr Jackson ultimately agreed that if a person 'definitely' no longer wants to be subject to the Jehovah's Witness organisation's discipline and rules, then they must actively leave the organisation by disassociating.[879] A person who merely becomes inactive, or 'fades', is still regarded to be a Jehovah's Witness by the organisation and is therefore still subject to its rules and disciplinary procedures. Such a person is therefore still susceptible to being disfellowshipped for some or other 'offence' under the rules of the organisation.

511 It is submitted that Mr Jackson's oral evidence is inconsistent with the position regarding disassociation published to Jehovah's Witnesses internationally in the form of the *Organized to do Jehovah's Will* handbook. It is further submitted that the true position in relation to a person who no longer wants to be known as a Jehovah's Witness and who no longer wishes to be subject to the organisation's rules and regulations, is that as recorded in the *Organized to do Jehovah's Will* handbook.

Freedom of choice

512 Mr O'Brien agreed that Jehovah's Witnesses tend to know and associate closely with one another.[880] He told the Royal Commission that there is a strong sense of community within the organisation in Australia, members refer to each other as 'brother' and 'sister' and congregation members spend a lot of time together each week.[881] Mr O'Brien accepted that for a Jehovah's Witness, his or her social network is generally comprised of other Jehovah's Witnesses.[882]

513 Mr Jackson told the Royal Commission that the Jehovah's Witness organisation recognises an individual's freedom to make religious choices.[883]

514 It was put to Mr O'Brien that as a Jehovah's Witness, a survivor of child sexual abuse may be faced with the impossible choice of staying in an organisation which is protective of their abuser, or of leaving the organisation and consequently losing their entire family and social network.[884] He told the Royal Commission that the decision to disassociate is a personal one and that a survivor of child sexual abuse could instead choose to become inactive and therefore retain their 'spiritual and familial association'.[885]

515 Mr O'Brien said in evidence, that in circumstances where the survivor wished to disassociate as a consequence of the intensity of her feelings from her experience, she would understand the implications of disassociation.[886] Mr O'Brien disagreed that 'it is

878 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15976:15-21 (Day 155).
879 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15981:19-23 (Day 155).
880 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15844:23-31 (Day 153).
881 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15844:23-39 (Day 153).
882 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15845:16-18 (Day 153).
883 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15974:45-47 (Day 155).
884 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15851:22-31 (Day 153).
885 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15852:28-31 (Day 153).
886 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15851:33-37 (Day 153).

incredibly hard for someone to leave [the Jehovah's Witness organisation] because of the huge pain, suffering, cruelty that she must face if she does leave'.[887]

516 Ultimately, Mr O'Brien told the Royal Commission that he could 'only be guided by what the Scriptures say'.[888]

517 Mr Jackson did not accept that putting people in the position of having to choose between their faith and their family and social network was contrary to that freedom of religious choice.[889] It was Mr Jackson's evidence that people are not forced to remain within the organisation.[890]

518 Mr Jackson agreed that in the case of a person baptized at a young age who wants to leave the Jehovah's Witness organisation, that person is faced with a stark choice, one consequence of which is that the person must leave everyone they know behind them.[891]

519 Mr Jackson accepted that the decision to disassociate and leave the Jehovah's Witnesses was a 'difficult' one that can be 'personally devastating because [a person] can lose their whole social network and their families'.[892]

520 However, both Mr Jackson and Mr O'Brien disagreed that the practice of shunning makes the Jehovah's Witness a 'captive organisation'.[893]

521 It is submitted that the Jehovah's Witness organisation's policy of requiring its adherents to actively shun those who leave the organisation makes it a 'captive organisation' whose rules regarding association with those who have chosen to leave the organisation impact the capacity of a survivor of child sexual abuse within the organisation to exercise their right to freedom of religion.

Scriptural basis for the practice of shunning

522 Mr Jackson told the Royal Commission that the Scriptural basis for shunning can be found in the passage starting at 1 Corinthians 5:1.[894] However, this passage deals explicitly with circumstances of sexual immorality existing in the congregation and Paul says that the man who committed the deed must be handed over to Satan 'so that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord' (verse 5). Paul also says that the congregation must 'stop keeping company with sexually immoral people' (verse 9).

523 The passage would therefore appear to provide some Scriptural basis to the practice of shunning those who have been found guilty of some or other gross sexual sin (within

887 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15852:19-22 (Day 153).
888 Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15851:44-T15852:3 (Day 153).
889 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15982:6-13 (Day 155).
890 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15982:25-26(Day 155).
891 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15983:8-13(Day 155).
892 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15981:38-T15982:4 (Day 155).
893 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15983:31-32(Day 155);
Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15852:15-22 (Day 153).
894 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15983:35-44 (Day 155).

the rules of the organisation), but provides no basis at all for the practice of shunning those who merely seek to exercise their right to leave the organisation.

524 The Jehovah's Witness organisation's practice of shunning those who leave the organisation is also in conflict with Mr Jackson's evidence that Jehovah God is a compassionate God[895] and that Jehovah God recognises the worth and dignity of all human beings.[896]

Available findings on shunning

F69 Members of the Jehovah's Witness organisation who no longer want to be subject to the organisation's rules and discipline have no alternative than to leave the organisation which requires that they disassociate from it.

F70 The Jehovah's Witness organisation's policy of requiring its adherents to actively shun those who leave the organisation:

a) makes it extremely difficult for someone to leave the organisation
b) is cruel on those who leave and on their friends and family who remain behind
c) is particularly cruel on those who have suffered child sexual abuse in the organisation and who wish to leave because they feel that their complaints about it have not been adequately dealt with
d) is not apparently justified by the Scriptures which are cited in support of it
e) is adopted and enforced in order to prevent people from leaving the organisation and thereby to maintain its membership, and
f) is in conflict with the organisation's professed support for freedom of religious choice and the belief that Jehovah God is a compassionate God who recognises the worth and dignity of all human beings.

895 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15974:30-31 (Day 155).
896 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15974:33-35 (Day 155).

Part 10 Dr Monica Applewhite

525 At the request of the Jehovah's Witness organisation, the Royal Commission heard evidence from Dr Monica Applewhite who was engaged by the Jehovah's Witness organisation to provide an expert report on the response of the organisation to allegations of child sexual abuse.

10.1 Dr Applewhite's qualifications

526 Dr Applewhite holds a Bachelor of Science in Social Work from Texas Christian University and a Master of Science in Social Work and a PhD in Clinical Social Work from the University of Texas at Arlington.[897] Dr Applewhite's PhD is not specifically relevant to child sexual abuse.[898]

Published work

527 In oral evidence, Dr Applewhite told the Royal Commission that she has not authored any peer-reviewed articles or publications.[899]

528 The Royal Commission heard that Dr Applewhite has, over the course of her career, consulted with numerous organisations to identify and analyse the best practices of organisations in relation to preventing and responding to incidents of abuse.[900] Dr Applewhite told the Commission that she had never published the results of this analysis as the research methodology involved in the analysis was not up to the rigours of empirical research.[901]

10.2 Dr Applewhite's experience

529 In her report, Dr Applewhite told the Royal Commission that she has 'extensive experience working directly with sexual offenders who have perpetrated abuse in organisations, as well as 22 years of conducting root cause analysis of such cases for the purpose of determining the methods used by sexual offenders to access children within churches, schools and other organisations'.[902]

530 Dr Applewhite accepted that, since 2007, her work has primarily involved running educational programmes for independent and private schools in relation to the prevention of child sexual abuse and current standards of best practice.[903] Dr

897 Exhibit 29-0013, Annexure 2, STAT.0606.001.0017;
Exhibit 29-0013, Statement of Dr Monica Applewhite, STAT.0606.001.0001 at [2].
898 Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15434:32-39 (Day 150).
899 Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15434: 43-47 (Day 150).
900 Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15437: 35-T15438:21 (Day 150).
901 Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15438:31-46 (Day 150).
902 Exhibit 29-0013, Statement of Dr Monica Applewhite, STAT.0606.001.0001 at [2].
903 Exhibit 29-0013, Annexure 2, STAT.0606.001.0017;
Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15442: 38-42 (Day 150).

Applewhite also accepted that her work in Australia has, for the most part, involved conducting educational programmes for Catholic education organisations.[904]

Previous experience as an expert witness for the Jehovah's Witness organisation

531 Dr Applewhite has previously been engaged by the Jehovah's Witness organisation to provide expert evidence in four separate civil liability cases – three in the United States and one in the United Kingdom.[905] Dr Applewhite told the Royal Commission that each of the civil cases related to claims for damages arising out of allegations of child sexual abuse and that, in each case, the Jehovah's Witness organisation was cited as a defendant.[906] Dr Applewhite told the Royal Commission that, in those cases, she had not been hired to give evidence critical of the organisation and could not recall ever having given evidence that was critical of the organisation.[907]

10.3 Dr Applewhite's expert report

532 Dr Applewhite agreed that her report constituted a documentary review of the Jehovah's Witness organisation's policies and procedures and that her report did not consider the practical implementation of those policies or procedures.[908]

533 Dr Applewhite's report was based on her review of documents provided to her by Watchtower Australia, publications that are available on the Jehovah's Witness organisation website (which date from 2000), and the witness statements of Mr O'Brien and Mr Toole.[909]

534 In preparing her report Dr Applewhite did not consider the statements of the survivor witnesses.[910] Dr Applewhite also said that she had not considered any independent studies or research about the Jehovah's Witness organisation.[911]

10.4 Dr Applewhite's written opinions

535 Dr Applewhite expressed three opinions in her report.

536 First, in paragraph 36 of her report, Dr Applewhite stated that:

> In my opinion, the current messages to those who have experienced abuse and the guidelines that have been provided to elders in congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses are consistent with, and in some respects better than, the current practices of religious organizations throughout the world.[912]

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904 Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15446: 39-42 (Day 150);
Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15444:10-T15447:9 (Day 150).
905 Exhibit 29-0013, Statement of Dr Monica Applewhite, STAT.0606.001.0001 at [4].
906 Transcript of M L Applewhite, T15452:21-47 (Day 150).
907 Transcript of M L Applewhite, T15453:20-38 (Day 150).
908 Transcript of M L Applewhite, T15462:37-T15463: 5 (Day 150).
909 Transcript of M L Applewhite, T15460:6-T15461:29 (Day 150).
910 Transcript of M L Applewhite, T15461:31-33 (Day 150).
911 Transcript of M L Applewhite, T15461:35-37 (Day 150).
912 Exhibit 29-0013, Statement of Dr Monica Applewhite, STAT.0606.001.0001 at [36].

537 Secondly, in paragraph 45 of her report, Dr Applewhite stated that:

> In my opinion, Jehovah's Witnesses were well in advance of other religious organizations in providing educational materials to parents and families. The quality of the materials they provided during the 1980's [sic] and 1990's [sic] exceeded the standards of care for the time and continue to be more substantial than what many religious organizations offer parents and guardians today.[913]

538 Thirdly, in paragraph 46 of her report, Dr Applewhite stated that:

> In my own experience, I have not found examples in Australia of religious organizations that have provided parents, guardians, and the general public with the quality or consistency of information about prevention and response to sexual abuse or about how to support for [sic] those who have been abused that Jehovah's Witnesses have provided in their publications.[914]

539 Dr Applewhite acknowledged that her report did not identify the basis on which she had formed her opinions.[915] She accepted that her report failed to identify the 'current standards' of other religious organisations,[916] or to which 'religious organisations' she had had reference in writing her report.[917] Dr Applewhite told the Royal Commission that her understanding of material provided to parents and families about sexual development in children by other faith-based organisations was 'anecdotal'.[918]

540 Dr Applewhite accepted that it would be difficult for the Royal Commission to accept the opinions expressed in paragraphs 36, 45, and 46 of her report, because her report does not identify the basis on which the opinions were formed.[919]

541 At the request of senior counsel for Watchtower Australia, the Royal Commission granted Dr Applewhite permission to submit a supplementary report setting out the reasons for the opinions in her expert report.[920]

542 On 16 August 2015, Dr Applewhite wrote to the legal representative of Watchtower Australia and advised that she was unable to prepare a supplementary statement due to other commitments. She conveyed in her letter her belief that 'between the research that has already been undertaken by the Commission and the evidence provided by others who testified after [her], the questions [Watchtower Australia has] presented to [her] have been or shortly will be answered'.[921]

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913 Exhibit 29-0013, Statement of Dr Monica Applewhite, STAT.0606.001.0001 at [45].
914 Exhibit 29-0013, Statement of Dr Monica Applewhite, STAT.0606.001.0001 at [46].
915 Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15459:20-T15460:4 and T15463:35-44 (Day 150).
916 Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15504:22-32 (Day 150).
917 Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15504:22-T15505:14 (Day 150).
918 Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15459:13-23 (Day 150).
919 Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15463:35-47 (Day 150);
Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15459:20-46 (Day 150).
920 Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15520:1-15521:3 (Day 150).
921 Letter from Dr Monica Applewhite to Mr Bray, 16 August 2015, received by the Royal Commission on 25 August 2015.

10.5 Dr Applewhite's errors on factual issues

543 In her report, Dr Applewhite addressed several factual matters in relation to which she was asked questions in oral evidence.

Factual issue: elders as 'fellow workers'

544 In her report, Dr Applewhite told the Royal Commission that:

> Jehovah's Witnesses teach that elders should avoid taking a superior position with reference to other congregation members. Elders are viewed as fellow workers by their fellow elders and by other congregation members.[922]

545 Dr Applewhite told the Royal Commission that her understanding of how congregation members view elders is based solely on materials and literature published by the Jehovah's Witness organisation and not on any empirical study of how the elders are actually viewed by members.[923]

546 Dr Applewhite accepted, as evidenced in the organisation's own documents, that Jehovah's Witnesses consider that elders are appointed by the Holy Spirit;[924] that elders have a leadership role within the congregation;[925] that congregation members entrust their spiritual life to the elders as shepherds of the flock;[926] and that elders are responsible for investigating reports of wrongdoing within the congregation, establishing judicial committees, making a determination as to wrongdoing and imposing sanctions on wrongdoers.[927] Despite the documentary evidence in relation to the role of elders, Dr Applewhite did not accept that elders are viewed as anything other than fellow workers by congregation members.[928] Dr Applewhite told the Royal Commission that the literature of the Jehovah's Witness organisation does not set elders apart as 'distinctive or in some ways [sic] superior' to other congregation members.[929]

547 It is submitted that, contrary to the evidence of Dr Applewhite, the literature and materials published by the Jehovah's Witness organisation sets elders apart from the rest of the congregation, and that it would be incorrect to conclude that elders are viewed as 'fellow workers' by ordinary congregation members. It is further submitted that in fact elders enjoy positions of great responsibility, power and influence and are probably regarded in that way by ordinary congregation members. Certainly, the experiences of both BCB and BCG support the view that elders are held up as having authority and power and certainly not as being 'fellow workers'.[930]

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922 Exhibit 29-0013, Statement of Dr Monica Applewhite, STAT.0606.001.0001 at [10].
923 Transcript of M L Applewhite, T15465:34-T15466:12 (Day 150).
924 Transcript of M L Applewhite, T15467:42-45 (Day 150).
925 Transcript of M L Applewhite, T15468:16-20 (Day 150).
926 Transcript of M L Applewhite, T15468:16-43 (Day 150).
927 Transcript of M L Applewhite, T15469:8-35 (Day 150).
928 Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15470:3-T15471:31 (Day 150).
929 Transcript of M L Applewhite, T15471:15-41 (Day 150).
930 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [14], [15], [79];

Factual issue: role of ministerial servants in providing pastoral care

548 In her report, Dr Applewhite told the Royal Commission that:

> Ministerial servants are members of the congregation who provide non-pastoral practical assistance and service to the elders and the congregation. Ministerial servants are not authorized to provide spiritual guidance, counselling or any other pastoral services to members of the congregation.[931]

549 However, documents in evidence suggest otherwise. Specifically, *Organised to Do Jehovah's Will* provides for circumstances where a ministerial servant might 'care for' a congregation book study group until such time as an elder is available to take over.[932] *Shepherd the Flock* also provides for circumstances where a ministerial servant will accompany an elder in visiting members of the congregation to provide spiritual guidance and counsel, particularly where a ministerial servant might be training to become an elder.[933]

550 Dr Applewhite did not accept the proposition that *Organised to Do Jehovah's Will* authorises ministerial servants to undertake pastoral care in certain circumstances,[934] but agreed that *Shepherd the Flock* does not exclude a ministerial servant from participating in pastoral care with an elder.[935] Nonetheless, Dr Applewhite ultimately did not accept that the evidence given in her report was incorrect.[936]

551 It is submitted that, contrary to Dr Applewhite's evidence, the literature and materials published by the Jehovah's Witness organisation envisage circumstances in which a ministerial servant might be authorised to provide pastoral care to members of the congregation.

Factual issue: role of elders and ministerial servants in relation to children

552 In her report, Dr Applewhite told the Royal Commission that:

> None of the responsibilities of a ministerial servant or elder allow or require that he be alone with children or otherwise separate from his or her family.[937]

553 From at least December 1998 the Jehovah's Witness organisation has instructed all bodies of elders that:

> Those who are appointed to privileges of service, such as elders and ministerial servants, are put in a position of trust. One who is extended

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Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [9], [10], [13], and [77].

931 Exhibit 29-0013, Statement of Dr Monica Applewhite, STAT.0606.001.0001 at [20].

932 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0029 (Tab 109).

933 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0024-25 [23] (Tab 120);
see also Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0044 (Tab 109).

934 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0013.001.0001 at 0043 (Tab 109);
Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15475:27-T15476:28 (Day 150).

935 Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15478:13-15 (Day 150).

936 Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15478:17-23 (Day 150).

937 Exhibit 29-0013, Statement of Dr Monica Applewhite, STAT.0606.001.0001 at [21].

> privileges in the congregation is judged by others as being worthy of trust. This includes being more liberal in leaving children in their care and oversight.[938]

554 Dr Applewhite told the Royal Commission that the above direction was meant as 'a warning to let elders know that families might be more trusting of a person and allow their children to be alone with someone who was a ministerial servant or an elder', and that it was her understanding that elders and ministerial servants were not meant to meet alone with women or children.[939] Dr Applewhite was unable to provide any reference in the Jehovah's Witness organisation's policies for this understanding and did not otherwise identify the source of her understanding.[940]

555 While there is a documented prohibition on an elder meeting alone with a woman who is a victim of abuse for fear that she might 'develop improper feelings' towards him,[941] there is no such documented prohibition, at least in evidence, against an elder or ministerial servant being alone with a child. Senior Counsel for Watchtower Australia undertook to locate the relevant reference and provide it to the Royal Commission.[942] As at the date of these submissions, no such reference has been provided.

556 It is accordingly submitted that, contrary to Dr Applewhite's evidence, there is no specific prohibition on elders and ministerial servants meeting alone with children.

Factual issue: the two-witness rule

557 Dr Applewhite agreed that child sexual abuse most often occurs in private, and that as a result, a survivor would have 'real difficulties' establishing that child sexual abuse had occurred according to a standard of proof that required two witnesses to the abuse.[943] Dr Applewhite further agreed that elders are not able to take any action where there is only one witness and the accused denies the allegation.[944] She acknowledged that in such circumstances, the effect of the application of the two-witness rule is that an alleged perpetrator remains, with his rights intact, in the congregation and able to interact with the survivor.[945] She agreed that that result is 'not a very good place to end up'. [946]

558 Dr Applewhite also accepted that the role of the two-witness rule in preventing allegations of child sexual abuse from being established has the potential to further traumatise survivors of child sexual abuse and to place the survivor's psychological well-being at a 'by no means … ideal place'.[947]

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938 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0002.001.0001 at 0001 (Tab 97).
939 Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15479:13-24 (Day 150).
940 Transcript of M L Applewhite, T15479:26-29 (Day 150).
941 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0057 [28] (Tab 120).
942 Transcript of M L Applewhite, T15479:26-34 (Day 150).
943 Transcript of M L Applewhite, T15495:2-T15496:29 (Day 150).
944 Transcript of M L Applewhite, T15516:35-T15517:9 (Day 150).
945 Transcript of M L Applewhite, T15516:35-T15517:6 (Day 150).
946 Transcript of M L Applewhite, T15517:8-9 (Day 150).
947 Transcript of M L Applewhite, T15503:7-28 (Day 150).

Factual issue: accused facing accuser and absence of support person

559 Dr Applewhite told the Royal Commission that it was the current practice of the Jehovah's Witness organisation to allow a survivor to write a letter rather than requiring her to present her allegation directly and in person to elders and the accused in a judicial committee hearing.[948]

560 Dr Applewhite said that her understanding of the current practice was based on the letter of 1 October 2012 to all bodies of elders and on the witness statement of Mr Toole.[949] She agreed that the direction in *Shepherd the Flock* was that a survivor would have to present her evidence before a three-man judicial committee and the accused, but she told the Royal Commission that it was her understanding that the direction had been modified by the letter of 1 October 2012 to the effect that testimony in person was not necessary.[950] It was put to Dr Applewhite, and she agreed, that the letter of 1 October 2012 did not in fact modify the direction in *Shepherd the Flock* in the way that she had understood.[951]

561 Dr Applewhite accepted that the Jehovah's Witness organisation's documented policies require a survivor to give their testimony before a judicial committee in the presence of the accused, unless the survivor lives 'a great distance away or for some reason [is] not able to be physically present'.[952]

562 In relation to the direction in *Shepherd the Flock* that 'observers should not be present for moral support', Dr Applewhite agreed that such a direction excludes a survivor from having someone with her during a judicial committee hearing to provide moral support.[953]

563 Dr Applewhite ultimately said that 'if it turns out that the practice that they have today does not allow someone to write a letter and they have to confront their offender and they have to sit in the room with no support it is not going to meet the standard of care'.[954] It submitted that Dr Applewhite's evidence that such a requirement of a survivor would not meet the standard of care, should be accepted.

Factual issue: reporting to authorities

564 In her report, Dr Applewhite told the Royal Commission that:

> Child sexual abuse is regarded as a crime by Jehovah's Witnesses. Elders are instructed to report crimes according to the law and never to discourage anyone from reporting abuse to law enforcement.[955]

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948 Transcript of M L Applewhite, T15485:34-41, T15493:20-21 (Day 150).
949 Transcript of M L Applewhite, T15489:19-21 (Day 150).
950 Transcript of M L Applewhite, T15488:34-T15489:9, T15489:25-35 (Day 150).
951 Transcript of M L Applewhite, T15491:21-T15492:28, (Day 150).
952 Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15493:26-47 (Day 150).
953 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0091 [3] (Tab 120); Transcript of M L Applewhite, T15491:2-19 (Day 150).
954 Transcript of M L Applewhite, T15494:2-15 (Day 150).
955 Exhibit 29-0013, Statement of Dr Monica Applewhite, STAT.0606.001.0001 at [26].

565 Dr Applewhite agreed that she did not mean to imply in her report that elders are instructed to report crimes generally, but that it is the case that elders are instructed to report to authorities only after the Branch Office has advised if a mandatory reporting obligation applies in the particular case.[956]

566 Dr Applewhite later expressed her view that a mandatory reporting requirement should be introduced so that elders would not have the option to not report allegations of child sexual abuse to police.[957]

567 Dr Applewhite also told the Royal Commission that in her opinion, criminal sanctions are necessary in respect of perpetrators of child sexual abuse so that there are 'clear consequences' that will 'act as a deterrent'.[958]

10.6 Submissions in relation to the opinions proffered in Dr Applewhite's report

568 It is submitted that the Royal Commission cannot accept the opinions expressed by Dr Applewhite in paragraphs 36, 45 or 46 of her report, because:

a) those opinions are not supported by the reasons set out in her report, and

b) the facts and assumptions upon which Dr Applewhite's opinions are based are not identified in her report or in her oral evidence.

Available findings on Dr Applewhite's expert opinions

F71 The opinions expressed by Dr Applewhite in paragraphs 36, 45 and 46 of her report are rejected because they are not substantiated by identifiable facts and assumptions or by reasons.

F72 Dr Applewhite's report contains a number of factual errors with regard to her documenting of the relevant practices and procedures of the Jehovah's Witnesses.

F73 Dr Applewhite's report is therefore rejected.

10.7 Dr Applewhite's oral evidence: Finkelhor's Model

569 In her report, Dr Applewhite referenced articles in *Awake!*, which in turn referred to research conducted by Dr David Finkelhor,[959]who, Dr Applewhite agreed, is a 'credible' and 'leading researcher and academic writer in the field' of prevention of child sexual

956 Transcript of M L Applewhite, T15482:16-43 (Day 150).
957 Transcript of M L Applewhite, T15495:43-T15496:-9 (Day 150).
958 Transcript of M L Applewhite, T15513:42-T15514:1 (Day 150).
959 Exhibit 29-0013, Statement of Dr Monica Applewhite, STAT.0606.001.0001 at [43(a)].

abuse.[960] Dr Applewhite explained that by including such references she had wanted to illustrate that, 'solid researchers […] are cited in the articles'.[961]

570 Dr Applewhite was shown a report published by the Australian Institute for Family Studies in June 2015 entitled 'Conceptualising the prevention of child sexual abuse' (the **AIFS Report**).[962] The AIFS Report identifies Dr Finkelhor's Four Preconditions Model (**Finkelhor's Model**), which was first published in 1984 and which has been used to understand the behaviour of child sexual abuse offenders.[963]

571 Dr Applewhite was familiar with Finkelhor's Model.[964] Dr Applewhite agreed that the following social/cultural factors that support three of the four preconditions for an individual to engage in child sexual abuse identified in Finkelhor's Model, exist within the Jehovah's Witness organisation. They are:

a) repressive norms about masturbation and extra marital sex[965]
b) weak criminal sanctions (in circumstances where mandatory reporting obligations do not apply and the Jehovah's Witnesses do not report to authorities)[966]
c) ideology of patriarchal prerogatives for fathers, at least in the sense of it being a patriarchal organisation[967]
d) barriers to women's equality,[968] and
e) strong ideology of family sanctity.[969]

572 In respect of Finkehor's fourth precondition[970] and its relevant social/cultural factors, Dr Applewhite said that she 'is not sure about' whether the Jehovah's Witness organisation or community can be characterised as exhibiting 'social powerlessness of children'.[971]

573 Dr Applewhite said that she would have to look at the matter more carefully before accepting that the identified social/cultural factors 'raised some flashing lights' or came together in a 'perfect storm' with regard to the risk of child sexual abuse occurring in the Jehovah's Witness organisation.[972]

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960 Transcript of M L Applewhite, T15511:8-10 (Day 150);
Exhibit 29-0013, Statement of Dr Monica Applewhite, STAT.0606.001.0001 at [43(a)].
961 Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15511:16-17 (Day 150).
962 Exhibit 29-0015, WEB.0061.001.0001.
963 Exhibit 29-0015, WEB.0061.001.0001 at 0041.
964 Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15512:1-6 (Day 150).
965 Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15513:18-30 (Day 150).
966 Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15513:32-T15514:1 (Day 150).
967 Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15515:3-5 (Day 150).
968 Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15515:9-11 (Day 150).
969 Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15515:34-40 (Day 150).
970 Exhibit 29-0015, WEB.0061.001.0001 at 0042.
971 Transcript of ML Applewhite, T-15515:47-T15516:8 (Day 150).
972 Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15516:16-21 (Day 150).

10.8 Dr Applewhite's oral evidence: Standards of Best Practice

574 Dr Applewhite accepted a number of components to current standards of best practice in relation to raising and responding to allegations of child sexual abuse within religious organisations. She accepted that religious organisations should have:

a) a process for reporting allegations of child sexual abuse which is survivor focussed and designed to ensure that the child or adult survivor feels able to come forward and be comfortable in reporting the allegation[973]

b) a process for reporting allegations of child sexual abuse that does not require a survivor to confront the alleged perpetrator of their abuse or be in the same room as the alleged perpetrator without support[974]

c) a system for preventing perpetrators of child sexual abuse from being put back in a position of trust with children[975]

d) an ability to take child-safe action in order to remove children from imminent danger, or a relationship with other authorities that have that ability,[976] and

e) strong and cooperative relationships with child protection authorities and with criminal justice authorities.[977]

575 Dr Applewhite accepted, and it is submitted, that the Jehovah's Witness organisation's current policies and procedures for raising and responding to child sexual abuse do not meet all the current standards of best practice.[978] She also accepted that 'there are better ways' for handling complaints than having a survivor tell her story to two and then three men without moral support with the accused being present,[979] and that the two-witness rule is 'problematic'.[980]

Available findings on Dr Applewhite's oral evidence

F74 Dr Applewhite accepted the following components to current standards of best practice in relation to raising and responding to allegations of child sexual abuse within religious organisations, namely that religious organisations should have:

a) a process for reporting allegations of child sexual abuse which is survivor focussed and designed to ensure that the child or adult survivor feels able to come forward and be comfortable in reporting the allegation

b) a process for reporting allegations of child sexual abuse that does not require a survivor to confront the alleged perpetrator of their abuse or be in the same room as the alleged perpetrator without support

c) a system for preventing perpetrators of child sexual abuse from being put back in a position of trust with children

973 Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15448:35-T15449:10 (Day 150).
974 Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15494:2-15 (Day 150).
975 Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15452:8-19 (Day 150).
976 Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15450:14-18 (Day 150).
977 Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15451:38-46 (Day 150).
978 Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15500:21-44 (Day 150).
979 Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15501:36-41 (Day 150).
980 Transcript of ML Applewhite, T15503:10 (Day 150).

d) an ability to take child-safe action in order to remove children from imminent danger, or a relationship with other authorities that have that ability, and
e) strong and cooperative relationships with child protection authorities and with criminal justice authorities.

F75 The opinion expressed by Dr Applewhite in oral evidence that requiring a survivor of child sexual abuse to present her testimony before elders and her abuser would not meet the relevant standard is accepted.

F76 The opinion expressed by Dr Applewhite that requiring a survivor of child sexual abuse to present her allegation and testimony to three men without the presence of a support person would not meet the relevant standard is accepted.

F77 The Jehovah's Witness organisation's current policies and procedures for raising and responding to complaints or allegations of child sexual abuse do not meet all current standards of best practice.

Part 11 Summary of available findings

Available findings on the Jehovah's Witnesses relationship with secular authorities

F1 The Jehovah's Witness organisation presents its members with conflicting and ambiguous teachings regarding their relationship with secular authorities, thereby fostering a distrust of such authorities.

Available findings on historical child sexual abuse data

F2 Since 1950, the Jehovah's Witness organisation in Australia has received allegations of child sexual abuse against 1,006 of its members relating to at least 1,800 victims, and has in that period not reported a single allegation to the police or other authorities, even though 579 of those against whom an allegation was made confessed to having committed child sexual abuse.

F3 The Jehovah's Witness organisation in Australia receives approximately three to four reports of allegations of child sexual abuse each month.

Available findings on BCB's first disclosure

F4 The elders bringing the man whom BCB accused of abusing her to her home was unjustified and traumatising for BCB and should not have occurred.

F5 Although the elders may have been following the documented procedure at the time and they may have believed that Scriptural principle required that the accuser face the accused with her allegations, it was distressing to and unsupportive of BCB to require that of her.

F6 It was distressing for BCB to be required by the elders to tell of what had happened to her to a group of men, including the man whom she accused of abusing her, and it was not likely to, nor did it, result in BCB disclosing the full extent of her abuse.

F7 It was inconsistent with the elders' professed sympathy for BCB for them not to have offered her the opportunity of the support and involvement of women in the process of investigating her allegations of abuse.

F8 The elders did not explain to BCB the purpose of their investigation and the meetings with her such as to ensure that she had an understanding of that purpose, which left her confused and disempowered.

F9 The application of the two-witness rule meant that there was insufficient evidence for the elders to act against BCB's abuser even though they believed her, which left her feeling disbelieved and unsupported, and it left the abuser in the congregation where he may have been a risk to other children.

F10 Mr Horley telling BCB that she should not discuss her abuse with anyone left her feeling silenced and unsupported.

F11 BCB was not told by the elders that she could, let alone should, report her abuse to the authorities.

F12 In circumstances where both investigating elders agreed that there was substance to BCB's allegations, they should have taken steps against Bill Neill, at least by imposing some restrictions on his activities involving children and thereby addressing the potential risk that he posed to other children.

F13 It was traumatic for BCB and inappropriate of Mr Horley for him to have required BCB to attend Bible study at Bill Neill's home when he knew that BCB accused Bill Neill of abusing her.

F14 The recommendation of the elders to the Branch Office that Bill Neill be reinstated as an elder 'once this has died down' and their expressed concern 'that there may also be worldly people who also know' demonstrates that they were more concerned about the reputation of Bill Neill and the congregation than about the risk that he posed to children.

Available findings on BCB's second disclosure

F15 It was wrong of Joe Bello, and contrary to the Jehovah's Witness organisation's own direction in that regard, to discourage BCB from reporting to the Royal Commission by asking whether she 'really wants to drag Jehovah's name through the mud'.

F16 The elders in BCB's present congregation should have supported BCB in her reporting to the Royal Commission if that is what she wanted to do.

Available findings on the investigation and judicial committee processes following BCG's disclosure

F17 The elders did not explain to BCG the purpose of their investigation and their meetings with BCG such as to ensure that she had an understanding of that purpose, which left her confused and disempowered.

F18 It was traumatising for BCG to be required by the elders to tell what had happened to her to a group of men, including the man whom she accused of sexually abusing her, and it was not likely to, nor did it, result in BCG disclosing the full extent her abuse.

F19 It would have been supportive of the elders to offer BCG the opportunity of the support and involvement of other women in the process of investigating her allegations of abuse.

F20 During their judicial committee investigation or proceedings the elders received evidence that BCH had abused BCG's elder sister and her two younger sisters, but they took no action in relation to that evidence.

F21 The evidence presented to the judicial committee of BCH having abused his other daughters satisfied the Jehovah's Witness organisation's own rules with regard to sufficiency of evidence to establish that BCH had abused BCG, but the elders wrongly ignored that evidence and accordingly failed to uphold BCG's complaint against BCH.

F22 In the course of the judicial committee process, and before the elders reached a conclusion on BCH's guilt in relation to his extra-marital conduct, BCH confessed to having abused BCG.

F23 The elders inexplicably and wrongly ignored BCH's confession to having abused BCG and thereby, within the precepts of the Jehovah's Witness organisation's own rules and procedures, failed to uphold BCG's complaint against BCH.

F24 BCG was not told by the elders that she could, let alone should, report her abuse to the authorities.

F25 The appeal committee's requirement that BCG give evidence of her sexual abuse by her father to a group of seven men including her named abuser was unjustified and traumatising to BCG and should never have happened.

F26 The failure by the elders to report BCH's sexual abuse of BCG to the police had the result that BCH remained at large in the community and a risk to children, and reflects that the elders were not concerned with child safety but rather with keeping their organisation 'clean'.

F27 The judicial committee's failure to uphold BCG's complaint of abuse by BCH conveyed to BCG that the organisation tolerated child sexual abuse within its ranks.

F28 The advice given by the elders to BCG that she not speak about her abuse to anyone had the effect of silencing her.

F29 The elders' treatment of BCG was unsympathetic and unsupportive and left her feeling worthless and helpless.

Available findings on the reinstatement of BCH

F30 BCH was reinstated as a Jehovah's Witness little more than three years after he had been disfellowshipped for, amongst other things, five or six counts of sexual abuse of his daughter.

F31 The decision to reinstate BCH took no account of the risk that BCH posed to children, paid little regard to the fact that he had been disfellowshipped because of child sexual abuse, and was focussed principally on his extra-marital relationship.

F32 The decision to reinstate BCH took no account of BCH's failure to apologise to BCG, a factor relevant to consideration of sincere repentance, or of what BCG might have had to say about BCH being reinstated.

F33 The decision to reinstate BCH was disrespectful and unsupportive of BCG.

F34 The Branch Office's response to BCG on 26 February 1996 caused BCG to feel angry, upset and let down, and did not convey support and concern to BCG on the part of the Jehovah's Witness organisation.

Available findings on the impact of the judicial committee process on criminal proceedings against BCH

F35 The judicial committee and appeal committee processes that preceded BCG reporting her abuse by her father to the police complicated the criminal proceedings because of the numbers of people involved in those processes and the telling and retelling of the experience.

Available findings on the risk management and second disfellowshipping of BCH

F36 When BCH was reinstated no restrictions were placed on him which were relevant to his risk to children despite his established history of child sexual abuse.

F37 BCH was disfellowshipped a second time for lying in relation to child sexual abuse rather than for child sexual abuse itself.

F38 The reasons canvassed and then given for the second disfellowshipping of BCH show that those from the Jehovah's Witness organisation who were involved were more concerned about a charge of lying than they were about BCH's sexual abuse of his daughters.

Available findings on the authority of the Governing Body

F39 Mr Spinks' evidence that the Australia Branch has full authority to produce documents, seminars, letters to elders and letters to publishers without the approval or agreement of the Governing Body is rejected.

F40 The Governing Body retains authority in respect of all publications in the name of the Jehovah's Witness organisation and any view or perspective contrary to that of the Governing Body is not tolerated.

Available findings on the investigation process

F41 There are no circumstances in which the survivor of a sexual assault should have to make her allegation in the presence of the person whom she accuses of having assaulted her, and, contrary to the present position, the documents, manuals and instructions produced by the Jehovah's Witness organisation should make this clear.

F42 The requirement that two or more eyewitnesses to the same incident are required in the absence of a confession from the accused, the testimony of two or three witnesses to separate incidents of the same kind of wrongdoing, or strong circumstantial evidence testified to by at least two witnesses (i.e. the two witness rule):

a) means that in respect of child sexual abuse which almost invariably occurs in private, very often no finding of guilt will be made in respect of a guilty accused
b) causes victims of child sexual abuse to feel unheard and unsupported when it results in allegations of child sexual abuse not being upheld
c) is a danger to children in the Jehovah's Witness organisation because its consequence is that very often nothing is done about an abuser in the organisation
d) does not seem to be applied by the Jehovah's Witness organisation in the case of an accusation of adultery, which suggests that adultery is taken more seriously by the organisation than child sexual abuse, and
e) needs to be revisited by the Jehovah's Witness organisation with a view to abandoning it or at least reformulating it to ensure that safe decisions as to someone being guilty of child sexual abuse can be made more easily.

F43 The requirement that only elders (i.e. men) can participate in the making of decisions in the investigation process on whether or not someone has committed child sexual abuse:

a) is a fundamental flaw in that process which weakens the decisions by excluding women, and
b) needs to be revisited by the Jehovah's Witness organisation to ensure a meaningful role for women.

Available findings on the judicial committee process

F44 Under the current documented judicial committee process, if the evidence of the complainant is to be taken into account then she must give evidence in person unless she lives a great distance away or for some other reason is not able to be physically present.

F45 The stated willingness of the Jehovah's Witness organisation in Australia to have the evidence of a complainant of child sexual abuse give evidence remotely or by way of a written statement should be formalised and documented so that those running judicial committee processes and those affected by them are properly advised of the position.

F46 Under the current documented judicial committee process, a complainant of child sexual abuse is prohibited from having someone present with her in the judicial committee process to offer support.

F47 The stated willingness of the Jehovah's Witness organisation in Australia to allow a complainant of child sexual abuse to be accompanied by a support person of her choosing should be formalised and documented so that those running judicial committee processes and those affected by them are properly advised of the position.

F48 The current documented process for responding to allegations of child sexual abuse within the Jehovah's Witness organisation is focussed largely on the rights and comfort of the accused, with little regard to the requirements of a victim of abuse.

Available findings on the management of risk

F49 The failure of the Jehovah's Witness organisation to take into account the risk of re-offending when considering whether an offender is repentant, and consequently in deciding whether to merely reprove rather than to disfellowship, or whether to re-admit someone who has previously been disfellowshipped, does not adequately take account of considerations of child safety and should be revisited.

Available findings on sanctions – reproval

F50 Since it is the policy or practice of the Jehovah's Witness organisation not to report allegations of child sexual abuse to the police (other than if required by law to do so), if a known abuser is found to be repentant and for that reason merely reproved rather than disfellowshipped he remains in the congregation and a risk to children in the congregation.

F51 The system of not announcing the reasons for reproval means that members of the congregation are not warned about the risk that such a wrongdoer poses to children in the congregation.

F52 The sanction of reproval therefore does nothing to protect children in the congregation and in the broader community.

Available findings on sanctions – disfellowshipping

F53 Since it is the policy or practice of the Jehovah's Witness organisation not to report allegations of child sexual abuse to the police (other than if required by law to do so), if a known abuser is disfellowshipped he remains in the community and a risk to children in the community.

F54 The sanction of disfellowshipping does nothing to protect children in the community.

Available findings on reporting

F55 Prior to this case study, the Jehovah's Witness organisation in Australia did not advise congregational elders of their obligations to report the commission of criminal offences to the police under s 316 of the *Crimes Act 1900* (NSW).

F56 This report is referred to the Law Society of New South Wales in relation to the conduct of Mr Toole in having failed to advise congregational elders of their obligations to report their knowledge of the commission of certain criminal offences to the police.

Available findings on the Jehovah's Witness organisation's policy on reporting

F57 It is the policy and practice of the Jehovah's Witness organisation in Australia to not report allegations of child sexual abuse to the police or other authorities unless required by law to do so.

F58 The basis for this policy is said to be respect for the 'right' of the victim to herself decide whether to make a complaint to the authorities.

F59 That basis has no justification where the victim is still a minor at the time that the abuse comes to the attention of the organisation, or where there are others who may still be at risk at the hands of the alleged abuser.

F60 Since the organisation cannot remove an alleged abuser from the family or take other positive steps to safeguard children in the family from continuing risk, the organisation should have a policy to report all allegations of child sexual abuse to the authorities unless an

adult victim specifically requests that a report not be made and there is no appreciable risk of children being abused.

Available findings on the impact of the Jehovah's Witness organisation's processes on criminal processes

F61 The internal processes of the Jehovah's Witness organisation for handling allegations of child sexual abuse cause significant delay in a complaint coming, if ever, before authorities.

F62 Admissions made by an accused during the investigative and/or judicial committee process administered by the Jehovah's Witness organisation may not be admissible in criminal proceedings because of the circumstances in which they are made, including that incentives such as reduction in penalty are offered if an admission is made.

F63 The number of people to whom a survivor of child sexual abuse is required to divulge the detail of her complaint exacerbates the trauma already suffered by a survivor of such abuse.

F64 There is significant risk of contamination of a survivor's evidence as a result of the number of times and circumstances in which a survivor is required to divulge the detail of her complaint before her abuse is, if ever, reported to the authorities.

Available findings on Mr Jackson's stated empathy for survivors

F65 Mr Jackon's failure to have read or be familiar with the testimony of the survivor witnesses yet to have read or otherwise familiarised himself with the testimony of Jehovah's Witness witnesses belies his stated empathy for the survivors and his stated recognition of the importance of their perspectives.

Available findings on the system of prevention of child sexual abuse – WWCC

F66 The documented practice of the Jehovah's Witness organisation of not reporting child sexual abuse to the authorities undermines the efficacy of the working with children check system, a system to which the organisation says it subscribes and with which it says it complies.

Available findings on the system of prevention of child sexual abuse – risk of reoffending

F67 The practices and procedures of the Jehovah's Witness organisation for the prevention of child sexual abuse, and in particular for the management of the risk of an abuser reoffending, do not take account of the actual risk of an offender reoffending and accordingly place children in the organisation at significant risk of sexual abuse.

Available findings on the accessibility of procedures and policies

F68 The Jehovah's Witness organisation's documented procedures for reporting on and responding to allegations of child sexual abuse are deficient in that they are not documented in such a way as to be easily accessible in one document and available to all interested or affected parties and some matters that are stated to be the policies or practices of the organisation are not recorded at all.

Available findings on shunning

F69 Members of the Jehovah's Witness organisation who no longer want to be subject to the organisation's rules and discipline have no alternative than to leave the organisation which requires that they disassociate from it.

F70 The Jehovah's Witness organisation's policy of requiring its adherents to actively shun those who leave the organisation:

a) makes it extremely difficult for someone to leave the organisation
b) is cruel on those who leave and on their friends and family who remain behind
c) is particularly cruel on those who have suffered child sexual abuse in the organisation and who wish to leave because they feel that their complaints about it have not been adequately dealt with
d) is not apparently justified by the Scriptures which are cited in support of it
e) is adopted and enforced in order to prevent people from leaving the organisation and thereby to maintain its membership, and
f) is in conflict with the organisation's professed support for freedom of religious choice and the belief that Jehovah God is a compassionate God who recognises the worth and dignity of all human beings.

Available findings on Dr Applewhite's expert opinions

F71 The opinions expressed by Dr Applewhite in paragraphs 36, 45 and 46 of her report are rejected because they are not substantiated by identifiable facts and assumptions or by reasons.

F72 Dr Applewhite's report contains a number of factual errors with regard to her documenting of the relevant practices and procedures of the Jehovah's Witnesses.

F73 Dr Applewhite's report is therefore rejected.

Available findings on Dr Applewhite's oral evidence

F74 Dr Applewhite accepted the following components to current standards of best practice in relation to raising and responding to allegations of child sexual abuse within religious organisations, namely that religious organisations should have:
a) a process for reporting allegations of child sexual abuse which is survivor focussed and designed to ensure that the child or adult survivor feels able to come forward and be comfortable in reporting the allegation
b) a process for reporting allegations of child sexual abuse that does not require a survivor to confront the alleged perpetrator of their abuse or be in the same room as the alleged perpetrator without support
c) a system for preventing perpetrators of child sexual abuse from being put back in a position of trust with children
d) an ability to take child-safe action in order to remove children from imminent danger, or a relationship with other authorities that have that ability, and
e) strong and cooperative relationships with child protection authorities and with criminal justice authorities.

F75 The opinion expressed by Dr Applewhite in oral evidence that requiring a survivor of child sexual abuse to present her testimony before elders and her abuser would not meet the relevant standard is accepted.

F76 The opinion expressed by Dr Applewhite that requiring a survivor of child sexual abuse to present her allegation and testimony to three men without the presence of a support person would not meet the relevant standard is accepted.

F77 The Jehovah's Witness organisation's current policies and procedures for raising and responding to complaints or allegations of child sexual abuse do not meet all current standards of best practice.

Angus Stewart SC

25 September 2015

Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

Submissions on behalf of Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia & Others

9 November 2015

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1. Executive Summary of Submissions

1.1 Jehovah's Witnesses do not condone or cover up the abhorrent sin and crime of child sexual abuse. In fact, as is clear from the statistical summary quoted by Counsel Assisting the Royal Commission in his opening address, it is quite apparent that Jehovah's Witnesses have for at least the last 65 years taken a proactive role in investigating and documenting such abuse and taking action against proved abusers.

1.2 The investigation and judicial findings by Jehovah's Witnesses are part of an ecclesiastical process and are not intended to be a replacement for any criminal and/or civil inquiry.

1.3 Elaboration of these submissions and the reasons for them are set out in the sections below.

2. Organisation of submissions

2.1 These submissions are organised as follows:

(a) Part I is in the following sections:

(i) Part IA is an overview of the submissions and deals with some preliminary matters;

(ii) Part IB addresses the Royal Commission's Terms of Reference;

(iii) Part IC addresses the approach of Jehovah's Witnesses to child sexual abuse matters;

(iv) Part ID addresses some other important related matters; and

(v) Part IE is an overview of the appropriateness of Counsel Assisting's suggested findings and systemic considerations.

(b) Part II addresses each of the 77 findings that Counsel Assisting considers are available to be made on the evidence before the Royal Commission.

(c) Part III addresses further matters that Jehovah's Witnesses consider are appropriate for the Royal Commission to take into account.

(d) Part IV summarises the findings that Jehovah's Witnesses accept, those that they reject and those that they consider should be amended.

3. Part IA: An overview of the submissions and some preliminary matters

3.1 Below we set out, by way of an overview, matters that are relevant to the broader context in which the Royal Commission is operating and specific matters that are relevant to its findings and ultimately to its recommendations.

The significance of religious beliefs

3.2 It is estimated that there are over two billion persons around the world who, like Jehovah's Witnesses, believe in the existence of God and Jesus Christ. They rely principally upon the words of the Bible to guide them in their beliefs and their daily lives. They find comfort in their lives from their religious beliefs and look to the government to respect their religious beliefs. In this regard, Jehovah's Witnesses are no different in their expectations of the secular authorities than others.

3.3 Jehovah's Witnesses, like the members of other faiths, are law-abiding citizens of the countries in which they live. However, like all imperfect humans, an individual within the faith may commit a serious sin that is also a violation of the secular law. Jehovah's Witnesses invariably address such a breach according to their Bible-based religious beliefs and practices. For the reasons developed further below, it would be wrong to conclude that the religious principles, procedures and practices of Jehovah's Witnesses applied in dealing with matters of sin within their congregations were intended to supplant the criminal law or to provide an alternative system for dealing with criminal conduct.

3.4 Based on their understanding of the Bible's teachings, Jehovah's Witnesses are taught to respect the government and they do not isolate themselves from human society.[1] As was pointed out during the public hearings of the Royal Commission, Jehovah's Witnesses have as members, amongst others, lawyers, doctors, psychologists, policemen and policewomen, and members of many other occupations and callings.[2] When needed, Jehovah's Witnesses seek help from qualified professionals in the fields of law, medicine and

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1 Romans 13:1; 1 Corinthians 5:10.

2 Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at [54]-[56];
Exhibit 29-0023, Statement of V J Toole, STAT.0593.001.0001_R at [22];
Exhibit 29-0024, First statement of T J O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [25];
Transcript of R P Spinks, T15741:22-23 and T15674:7-10 (Day 152);
Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15858:19-21 and T15861:29-38 (Day 153).

mental health. Most Jehovah's Witnesses have family members who belong to other religions or who are atheists.[3]

Misconceptions about Jehovah's Witnesses

3.5 At times, Jehovah's Witnesses are the subject of misconceptions. When examined objectively, such views are found to be distorted or untrue.

3.6 For example, the relationship of Jehovah's Witnesses to the government is forthright. Jehovah's Witnesses obey the law and strongly advocate respect for government officials. Only in the rare instance when a secular law conflicts with God's law would one of Jehovah's Witnesses disobey a governmental authority.[4] This can be seen in the case of Jehovah's Witnesses in Nazi Germany who endured imprisonment and even execution rather than submit to the Nazi regime. On the other hand, as evidence of their respect for governmental authority, Jehovah's Witnesses report crimes to the authorities when required by law to do so, they seek legal recourse through the judicial system when they are wronged and they conscientiously pay their taxes.[5]

Religious Freedom in Australia

3.7 We are thankful that the Australian government is not antithetical to the holding of or the free exercise of religious beliefs. Indeed, many persons, such as the German Lutherans in South Australia, came to Australia to escape religious persecution in their homeland. Notably, section 116 of the *Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act* ("the Constitution") protects the free exercise of religion and precludes interference from Commonwealth laws.

3.8 It is in that broader context of freedom that one must understand religious practices. A person is free to practice his/her religious beliefs to the extent that such practice is not *prohibited* by law and not only to the extent that it is *permitted* by law. Logically, unless a religious practice or procedure is prohibited by law, a question that assumes an obligation to do something proceeds upon a false premise as to the free exercise of religion in Australia. Some of the questions asked and some of the points made by Counsel Assisting assumed that such an obligation existed.[6] The problem with this assumption is that an example was often offered as proof of the truth of an

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3 Exhibit 29-0024, First statement of T J O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [4]; Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15845:12-14 (Day 153).
4 Acts 5:29.
5 Romans 13:1.
6 See, for example, the exchange at Transcript of V J Toole, T15763.10-11 (Day 153).

assumption, but the opposite is demonstrated by reliance upon another example, as the Commissioner, the Hon. Justice McClellan observed when he referred to the fact that some might desire a matter to be dealt with confidentially: [7]

> "But, Mr Jackson, many of these people don't want to go to the police because that involves potentially a public process, trial, and so on. It's very common that people don't want to go to the police."

3.9 We trust that the findings and recommendations made by the Commission will have a secure foundation and respect the freedom of belief and the free exercise of religion, as Constitutionally protected. It would, however, be unfortunate if findings or recommendations had the effect of denying to members of a faith the right to adhere to their beliefs or to freely exercise their religious choice. For example, an adherent may prefer that a matter be cared for within his/her faith. It would be unfortunate if findings or recommendations of the Royal Commission had a "chilling effect" on the disclosure of cases of abuse to ministers.

3.10 The High Court of Australia has often emphasised the need to protect minorities from the misuse of power.[8] Unpopular views do not necessarily equate to unlawful or illegal conduct. From an uninformed point of view, it is easy to say that a crime should always be reported to the authorities, but the legal system is not that simple. A number of factors may be involved, for example: What does the law require? What does the victim or his/her parents want to be done about the matter? What is the morally right thing to do? What do the Scriptures say about the matter? Ignoring any of these questions oversimplifies relevant considerations and results in positing a simplistic, untenable solution.

Two Universes of Discourse – two different concerns

Sins and Crimes

3.11 In the universe of discourse that is concerned with religious beliefs, a sin is a thought or conduct contrary to the tenets of a faith, as understood and practiced by its adherents. A sin is not always the same thing as a crime. Although, in many instances, it can, and obviously will, be. Jehovah's

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7 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15987:32-35 (Day 155) (The Hon. Justice McClellan speaking).

8 See, for example, *Adelaide Co. of Jehovah's Witnesses Inc. v. The Commonwealth* (1943) 67 CLR 116 at 124 per Latham J.

Witnesses regard child sexual abuse as both an abhorrent sin and a crime.[9] Sinning does not have the same consequences either for a survivor of the conduct or for the sinner in the world of faith as a crime does in the criminal justice system. Within most religions, avoiding sinning, repentance for one's sins, the forgiveness of sins and compassion for the victim and sinner are central tenets. Many non-religious people sometimes will not, or cannot, understand how or why a Christian may forgive a repentant sinner and exercise compassion in so doing.

3.12 On the other hand, in the criminal law, repentance, forgiveness and compassion are not centrally important concepts, although they sometimes have a role to play in the sentencing and rehabilitation of convicted persons. Rather, the central concerns of the criminal law are with the prevention, investigation, prosecution, punishment of crimes and the rehabilitation of the criminal.[10] In that universe of discourse, the rules of evidence and the burden of persuasion are also central concepts.

3.13 One cannot equate the responses taken in a religious context involving a sinner and the responses/consequences for a perpetrator in the criminal context. One cannot measure the utility of the responses to child sexual abuse by a comparative exercise between the religious and secular arenas, as the Commissioner, the Hon. Justice McClellan observed.[11] To do so would be to proceed upon a false assumption, namely, that the two universes of discourse share the same objectives and processes and that the *raison d'etre* for them is the same. Neither time, nor space, unfortunately permits us to give all of the reasons why that is not so.[12]

3.14 When two universes of discourse co-exist, they can sometimes overlap but they do not necessarily share the same concerns, objectives, or means by which to achieve their ends. The appearance of Jehovah's Witnesses before the Royal Commission demonstrated something of the truth of the proposition. Jehovah's Witnesses sought to assist the Commission by explaining what

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9 Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at [13];
Exhibit 29-0024, First statement of T J O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [47];
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0306 at 0309 (*The Watchtower*, January 1, 1997 p. 29).

10 See e.g. Criminal Law by Gillies (The Law Book Co. Ltd. 1985) page 2.

11 Transcript of Dr M L Applewhite, T15500:46-T15501:1, 13-17 (Day 10) (The Hon. Justice McClellan speaking).

12 For example, and, to begin with, the world of religion is concerned with the avoidance of sin because it offends God and prevents a person from leading a virtuous life as a prelude to future blessings from God. In the criminal world, the avoidance of crime is seen as beneficial to the common good and not as a prelude to future blessings from God. "Repentance" is essential to a religion because once a person has sinned, it is essential that they realise the error of their ways, repent of their wrongdoing and seek forgiveness from God. Recognition of wrongdoing is relevant in the criminal law principally to the question of sentencing and rehabilitation of the individual. Whilst it may have had a religious origin, it is not used for that purpose in the criminal law.

they believe to be the appropriate way to deal with the sin of child sexual abuse. The Royal Commission, by contrast, is entrusted with, amongst other things, the responsibility for determining what institutions and governments do and should do, to better protect children, and not comparing religious approaches to dealing with sin.

3.15 Jehovah's Witnesses do not purport to offer an alternative process to the secular authorities' approach to the protection of children and to the punishment of criminal conduct. Nor do they seek to interfere with that process. The extent to which they are able to cooperate with governments is guided by their belief in the Scriptures and by such considerations as the establishing of wrongdoing and the role of repentance.

3.16 If governments wish for greater assistance in dealing with child abuse matters, they must say so, because it is unrealistic to expect that people of faith are attempting to achieve the same objectives as the criminal law in their dealings with, and treatment of, sinners. There is nothing new in that statement and governments are well aware of the need to balance the different approaches — the sanctity of what is said in the confessional being a well-known example.

Religious belief and another's "reality"

3.17 In the universe of religious discourse, belief and reality are two central distinctions that it is important to observe. A person is entitled to have a belief in the existence of a thing or an event even if someone else does not share that belief. Our laws proceed upon the assumption that, for the most part, a person is entitled to have his/her beliefs respected even if those beliefs do not apparently conform with that which is perceived to be someone else's "reality".

3.18 The fact that not all share the beliefs of Jehovah's Witnesses (such as the belief in the existence of God and that the Bible is the Word of God) does not mean that the beliefs of Jehovah's Witnesses are wrong, misguided, or unworthy of respect. Whether they are approved by secular authorities is a different question, involving different considerations.

3.19 Many of the questions asked of witnesses in the Royal Commission proceeded upon an unstated and false assumption that, at all times, both questioner and witness either shared or should share the same views and objectives.[13] As a result of that assumption, the questioner and witness were often at cross-purposes. The two universes of discourse do not readily

[13] For example, Transcript of R P Spinks, T15715:4-T15716:1 (Day 152).

overlap. Moreover, acknowledging the force of a particular point of view of a questioner or respecting that point of view about the efficacy of the criminal law is not synonymous with acknowledging wrongdoing by one of Jehovah's Witnesses, or that it is wrong to hold a different view about their faith's response to sinners.

Religious doctrine and freedom of religious belief

3.20 A significant amount of time was spent in the Commission considering and debating doctrinal matters. It is understood that such doctrinal matters were considered relevant by Counsel Assisting to a consideration of the response by Jehovah's Witnesses to child sexual abuse.

3.21 To the extent that such doctrinal matters were relevant to the Commission's Terms of Reference then, of course, there was not, nor could there be, any objection to, or legitimate complaint about the time spent investigating such matters.

3.22 To the extent that there was debate about whether Jehovah's Witnesses views or interpretation of Scripture was wrong,[14] such debate went beyond what was necessary, and will, in our view, not ultimately prove to be helpful to the Commission. It could also be perceived as betraying personal prejudice and was apt to give the wrong impression of the good work that the Commission is doing.

3.23 For example, whether a sinner's guilt is determined by congregation elders (men) appears to have no causal connection to whether child sexual abuse occurs within a family or outside of the family. It is a different question whether some insensitivity on the part of a man may cause hurt to another person's feelings. Such feelings are not to be ignored, but they do not amount to sexual abuse as understood. Moreover, no empirical or credible evidence, suggesting that a decision being made only by men was, or is, necessarily problematic, was placed before the Commission. Male judges (many of whom may be fathers) determine the guilt or innocence of defendants all over the world. No empirical evidence suggesting that men are not intellectually or emotionally equipped to determine the guilt or innocence of someone accused of child abuse was presented to the Commission. No empirical evidence suggesting that women are necessarily better equipped either intellectually or emotionally to do so was presented to the Commission. In the absence of evidence one way or the other, the choice of the gender of the persons

[14] Compare *Church of the New Faith v Commissioner of Pay-roll Tax (Vict.)* (1983) 154 CLR 120 at 150 per Murphy J: "[t]he truth or falsity of religions is not the business of officials or the courts".

involved in the decision-making process is an aspect of the free exercise of religion, which means that a person is entitled to believe and act in accordance with their beliefs,[15] even if those beliefs mean that congregation elders (men) determine a sinner's guilt.

The correct interpretation of Scripture is not relevant in this context

3.24 The outcome of an investigation into the causes of child sexual abuse and into institutional responses to the same need not, nor should it, depend upon whether a person's interpretation of a particular passage in Scripture is correct or not. The interpretation, right or wrong, is what it is. The correctness of Scriptural interpretation is not within the Terms of Reference of this Commission. More to the point, Jehovah's Witnesses abhor child sexual abuse as a sin and a crime, and have published significant amounts of literature about the subject over several decades.[16] Unlike some, Jehovah's Witnesses did not and do not deny the existence of the problem, they keep records concerning such conduct, they investigate such conduct, and in accordance with their religious beliefs, they discipline members of their faith who abuse minors.

3.25 For the reasons given above, it would be an error to consider that Jehovah's Witnesses adhere to their principles, procedures, and practices with the intent of supplanting the criminal law or to provide an alternative system for dealing with criminal conduct.

Adulthood and preserving the dignity of choice

3.26 It is trite that our laws also assume that an adult person is free to make choices and to accept personal responsibility for their actions. An adult

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15 See above (1943) 67 CLR 116 at page 124 per Latham J.

16 Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at [13] and [21a];
Exhibit 29-0024, First statement of T J O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [47] and [65];
Transcript of R P Spinks, T15730:40-T15731:2 (Day 152);
Examples of such literature include, but are not limited to:
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0223 (*Awake*! June 22, 1982 – "To End Child Abuse");
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0325 (*The Watchtower*, October 1, 1983 – "Help for the Victims of Incest");
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0205 (*Awake*! January 22, 1985 – "Child Molesting: Every Mother's Nightmare");
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0238 (*Awake*! October 8, 1993 - "Your Child is in Danger", "How Can We Protect Our Children?" and "Prevention in the Home");
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0310 (*The Watchtower*, November 1, 1995 – "Comfort for Those with a Stricken Spirit");
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0306 (*The Watchtower*, January 1, 1997 – "Let Us Abhor What is Wicked");
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0128 (January 1, 2003 - "*Learn From the Great Teacher*", Chapter 32 "How Jesus was Protected");
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0253 (October 1, 2007 – "*A Danger that Concerns Every Parent*").

survivor of sexual abuse should not be denied the choice to initiate or make a complaint to the secular authorities. Two points may immediately be made. First, the Commission's own literature accepts that anonymous complaints of abuse can be made.[17] Secondly, it is a relevant consideration that not all sexual misconduct, although morally repugnant, can be equated. As the evidence of the former prosecutor Mr Davies revealed, the secular authorities in Queensland appeared not to have the resources to deal with all complaints of sexual misconduct that were reported.[18] Inevitably, government resources for the investigation and prosecution of child sexual abuse are limited.

3.27 Our laws also assume that it is the right of a parent to initiate or make a complaint on behalf of a child. Jehovah's Witnesses are correct in respecting parental rights and such rights are recognised by Australian laws and international instruments.

[17] For example, question 3 in "Practice Guidelines 3" issued by the Royal Commission into Institutional Child Sexual Abuse, accessed on 4/11/2015 at: http://childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/about-us/practice-guidelines/guide-to-gathering-information
See also the brochure "Sharing your story: A guide to your private session" published by the Royal Commission into Institutional Child Sexual Abuse, accessed on 4/11/2015 at: http://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/share-your-story/private-sessions

[18] Transcript of J P Davies, T15426:45-T15427:4 (Day 149).

4. Part IB: The Royal Commission's Terms of Reference

4.1 While the scope of the Royal Commission's Terms of Reference is broad, we believe that they can be summarized by two key questions: (1) What can and should be done to better protect children from sexual abuse? and (2) What are, and what should be, the best responses to take when it occurs? In our view, all findings and recommendations ought ultimately be relevant to those two questions and the efficacy of any suggested responses ought to be measured against the achievement of the objectives implicit in those two questions. To do otherwise would distract from the objectives of the Commission.

4.2 Jehovah's Witnesses sought to address such questions with the assistance of the highly qualified independent expert, Dr Monica Applewhite. Dr Applewhite's views are consistent with the views of experts already called by the Commission, and her 22 years of experience in the study of child sexual abuse matters, which exceeds many others, should be helpful. In such circumstances, it would be most unfortunate if the Commission were to accept the suggested finding by Counsel Assisting that her report should be rejected.

4.3 We take the view, for the reasons set out at length below, that many of the suggested findings made by Counsel Assisting will not, in fact, assist the Commission in its task, and ought not to be made for that and other reasons. Where we consider that the suggested finding or an amended finding will be of assistance to the Commission because they assist the Commission in answering those relevant questions, then either the findings suggested are not opposed, are amended, or a new finding is suggested. As was stated at the outset, Jehovah's Witnesses are endeavouring to fully cooperate with the Commission.

Constraints of the Terms of Reference

4.4 The Commission's Terms of Reference impose constraints upon its investigations, the most obvious being that it is investigating child sexual abuse and not sexual misconduct towards adults. It is also investigating "institutions", not families, and "institutional contexts", not family contexts. It must also have regard for the fact that many religious organisations provide services and support for children and their families that are beneficial to the children's development. The Commission should be principally concerned with systemic failures.

4.5 The two cases investigated to some extent fell inside the Commission's Terms of Reference, but they both, to some extent also fell outside those Terms of Reference, as will be elaborated upon in more detail below. A significant point that should be made about these cases is that they could not purport to be representative of all of the issues that require investigation and the way they are now addressed by Jehovah's Witnesses. First, because of the introduction of mandatory reporting in some Australian states; second, because with the passage of time more has been learned about dealing with such matters, and responses have changed since the late 1980's and early 1990's. Third, the cases highlighted the circumstances of only the two individuals concerned.

4.6 Child sexual abuse is a matter of concern to any right thinking parent or adult, and to see it *only* as an "institutional" problem would be to miss an essential truth: that much abuse occurs within families. The reasons why one person within a family might abuse another vary. That is not to say that institutions cannot be helpful in addressing the problem, but it helps to put the response of institutions into context.

5. Part IC: The approach of Jehovah's Witnesses

Co-operation and assistance

5.1 Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia, the legal entity used by Jehovah's Witnesses to facilitate their worship in Australia, co-operated fully with the Royal Commission. It provided some 65 years of records and three witnesses who testified before the Commission. In addition, several congregation elders flew in from around Australia to give evidence in the form of witness statements and oral evidence.

5.2 Congregation elders who gave evidence did so to the best of their ability, in some instances about events occurring some 27 to 33 years ago, including whether conversations even occurred. The witnesses readily acknowledged the force of the different points of view expressed by Counsel Assisting and other counsel, and they acknowledged where appropriate, not only perceived shortcomings in responses, but they also expressed a genuine willingness to learn from past shortcomings.

5.3 One of the difficulties the witnesses encountered in answering questions was with the passage of time. The two cases concerned events occurring between 1982 and 1988. That is between 27 to 33 years ago. It would be surprising, given the passage of time, if a person could remember any details, let alone the precise details, of conversations or events occurring so long ago. No Court today would expect such accuracy of memory of an adult survivor or of a witness to whom the adult survivor spoke, given the lengthy passage of time.

5.4 Moreover, as is well known to the Commission, many of the attitudes, values, and beliefs of 27 to 33 years ago are quite different from those commonly held today towards the prevention, investigation, and prosecution of child sexual abuse. In the context of the criminal justice system, much has changed in the last 30 years concerning the investigation and prosecution of crimes against children. Such crimes are now investigated much more sympathetically and there are procedures in place to enable the giving of evidence by video link or with support. Such procedures did not exist 27 to 33 years ago in all Australian states. In a similar way, Jehovah's Witnesses have improved how they handle the matter of child abuse.

Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse ("CSA") and parental responsibility

5.5 Jehovah's Witnesses consider that the prevention of child sexual abuse must start with educating parents, so that they can actively educate their children about the dangers of abuse and protect them from the same even from within the family.[19] In that regard, their approach is supported both as a matter of common sense and by specialists in the field of prevention of child sexual abuse. It is self-evident that the State simply does not have the resources to prevent child sexual abuse from occurring and it must look to others, including individuals, parents, families, and institutions to assist in that regard. The State is far more likely to achieve that objective if it respects the role of parents than if it shifts the responsibility to the shoulders of others. Indeed many international and national laws recognise that parents and care-givers have the primary responsibility in such matters.[20] The position of Jehovah's Witnesses is consistent with that approach. They believe that parents are in the best position to protect their children.

5.6 When child sexual abuse does occur, Jehovah's Witnesses take the matter seriously. Congregation elders investigate every instance or complaint whether involving a meeting attender, a congregation member, a ministerial servant, or an elder.

Reporting to the secular authorities

5.7 Jehovah's Witnesses regard child abuse as both an abhorrent sin and a crime. Jehovah's Witnesses consider it is the right of the victim and/or the victim's parents to report. The reporting of the crime to the secular authorities by victims or their parents is not discouraged. Elders report such matters to the secular authorities in those States where it is required by law to be reported (mandatory reporting). Regardless of reporting requirements, an

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19 Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at [48]-[49];
Exhibit 29-0024, First statement of T J O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [55] and [67];
Transcript of V J Toole, T15796:33-36 (Day 153);
Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15859:26-30,38-42 (Day 153);
Transcript of G W Jackson, T15988:15-22 (Day 155);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0238 (*Awake*! October 8, 1993 - "Your Child is in Danger", "How Can We Protect Our Children?" and "Prevention in the Home");
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0253 at 0253-0260 (*Awake*! October 1, 2007 – "A Danger that Concerns Every Parent").
To similar effect is the view taken by the Royal Commission. See e.g. Royal Commission Interim Report Vol 1 at page 9, paragraph 4.3.

20 For example, the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* (NSW) ss. 4(b), 9(2)(a)-(c), 10(1) and 31; similar legislation exists in other States/Territories of Australia;
Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 (entered into force for Australia on 16 January 1991), Articles 12, 14 and 16; and
Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Resolution 2005/20, annex, Guidelines on Justice in Matters Involving Child Victims and Witnesses of Crime 2005, Articles 5, 6 and 8.

elder can report a crime to secular authorities if he believes there is a risk to a child.[21]

5.8 The decision to take away that right from a victim or the parents of a child must be left to the legislatures of each State or the Federal Parliament. The consequences of doing so may be thought to be good or adverse. It may reveal more cases of abuse, in which case the question will be whether the governments will provide the resources to ensure that such matters will be investigated and followed through (only 20% of the matters reported in Queensland could be followed up, according to the testimony of Mr Davies)[22]. On the other hand, victims and their families may hesitate to seek the assistance of ministers out of fear of the consequences of coming forward (hence the need for anonymity in some cases of reporting).[23]

5.9 Recognition of the right of the adult survivor to make the decision whether to report is important or the adult survivor may feel disempowered and further traumatised.

5.10 If a child is unable to report the matter to the secular authorities and the parents are unable or unwilling to do so,[24] then an elder may feel compelled to report the matter to the authorities, particularly if he believes there is a risk to a child.[25] Furthermore, it is apparent from the number of cases where the secular authorities have been involved that reporting to the authorities by Jehovah's Witnesses takes place.[26]

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21 Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at [29]-[30];
Exhibit 29-0019, Annexure 2 to First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0018_R at [1.8];
Exhibit 29-0024, First statement of T J O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [74];
Transcript of V J Toole, T15776:30-35 (Day 153);
Transcript of G W Jackson, T15967:15-17 (Day 155).

22 Transcript of J P Davies, T15426:46-47 (Day 149).

23 See footnote 17 above.

24 Exhibit 29-0019, Annexure 2 to First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0018_R at [1.8];
Exhibit 29-0024, First statement of T J O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [56];
Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15860:34-37 (Day 153).

25 Exhibit 29-0024, First statement of T J O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [74];
Exhibit 29-0035, Statement of G W Jackson, STAT.0670.001.0001 at [13]-[14] quoting from p.223 in the book "Keep Yourselves in God's Love" published by Jehovah's Witnesses (an extract of this book is Exhibit 29-0003, WEB.0053.001.0001);
Transcript of R P Spinks, T15671:26-37 (Day 152);
Transcript of V J Toole, T15776:31-35 (Day 153);
Transcript of G W Jackson, T15967:15-17 (Day 155).

26 Some 383 complaints were made to and investigated by the secular authorities: See Exhibit 29-0021, WAT.0018.001.0001_R at 0009 [10] (the letter from Milton Bray & Associates to the Commission dated 20 July 2015) wherein it stated: " by searching key words (ie. police, child services, authorities, charge, court, welfare etc.) in the Case Files and upon careful review of the information contained therein, my client was able to establish that 383 alleged perpetrators have been dealt with by either the police or secular authorities in the respective States or Territories in which they reside." No evidence was put to the contrary.

Reporting within the faith

5.11 As was acknowledged in the Commission, there are times when victims may wish to have their matter dealt with confidentially within the faith.[27] To deny them that opportunity may disempower the victims and may lead to further traumatisation.

5.12 As explained above and elsewhere, Jehovah's Witnesses do not purport to offer a competing or alternative process for dealing with crime; rather their internal religious process deals with sin and its consequences based on their religious beliefs and practices.

Investigation of CSA by elders: procedural matters

5.13 There are established practices and procedures within the Jehovah's Witnesses faith for dealing with the abhorrent sin of child abuse. The present day practices and procedures were canvassed in some detail by Mr Rodney Spinks in his evidence.[28] As was readily apparent from his evidence, the procedures are flexible and can be adapted to the individual's circumstances.[29]

5.14 A victim of child sexual abuse is not required to confront his/her abuser.[30] It is possible that in the past, on occasion, local elders asked victims to confront the accused, just as happened within the criminal justice system at that time.[31]

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27 See footnotes 7 and 17 above.
The Hon. Justice McClellan also acknowledged, "We have now conducted more than 3,800 private sessions as part of the Royal Commission's work": Transcript of R P Spinks, T15679:40-41 (Day 152).

28 Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001 at [23]-[40];
Exhibit 29-0019, Annexure 2 to First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0018-0022;
Transcript of R P Spinks, T15683:23-T15684:7 (Day 152).

29 Exhibit 29-0019, Annexure 2 to First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0018, for example, the procedures at [1.4], [1.8], [1.9], [2.2(d)], [3.4] and [4.13];
Transcript of R P Spinks, T15696:30-41 (Day 152);
Transcript of R P Spinks, T15678:26-32, 41-47 (Day 152) [Tokley/McClellan];
Transcript of V J Toole, T15763:32-37 (Day 153).

30 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15683:45-T15684:2, T15686:26-40, T15695:12-14, and T15704:3-14, 33-37 (Day 152);
Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15827:39-41, T15834:1-26 (Day 153);
Transcript of G W Jackson, T15951:29-33 and T15954:40-44 (Day 155);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0310 at 0313, second column (*The Watchtower*, November 1, 1995 – "Comfort for Those with a Stricken Spirit").

31 In their inquiry into children and the legal process, the ALRC and HREOC heard significant and distressing evidence that child witnesses, particularly in child sexual assault cases, are often berated and harassed to the point of breakdown during cross-examination: Australian Law Reform Commission and Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, *Seen and Heard: Priority for Children in the Legal Process*, ALRC 84 (1997), [14.111] and [14.50].
The Wood Royal Commission heard a number of similar complaints in relation to treatment of child witnesses: Royal Commission into the New South Wales Police Service, *Final Report*, Vol 5 (1997), [15.92].
Similar comments were also made to the VLRC in its inquiry into reform of sexual offences law and

Since at least 1998, elders have been instructed not to require victims of molestation to confront the accused.[32]

5.15 Although not demonstrably a problem for elders in practice, the fact that all of the practices and procedures are not contained in one document was acknowledged as an area for improvement, and Jehovah's Witnesses are in the process of considering that suggestion.

Evidential matters

5.16 It is not an evidential requirement that a child or adult survivor confront their abuser and, unfortunately, there was some confusion about that aspect of the matter during the Royal Commission hearings.[33]

5.17 The evidential requirements for the establishment of sin are based upon Scripture.[34] In the absence of a confession, the testimony of two witnesses is required to prove the charge.[35] However, sin can also be established if there are two witnesses to the same kind of wrongdoing even though each individual is a witness to a separate incident. The admission of guilt by the sinner is sufficient and no eyewitnesses are required.[36]

5.18 Jehovah's Witnesses consider that the requirement for two witnesses is not a matter for debate as it is based on Scriptural requirements found in the Mosaic Law and reiterated by Jesus Christ and the Apostle Paul.[37] Even when the requisite Scriptural evidence is lacking, elders nevertheless take precautionary measures.

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procedure: Victorian Law Reform Commission, *Sexual Offences: Final Report* (2004).
In NSW, child complainants (who were under the age of 16 at the time of the alleged offence and are currently under the age of 18 years) have only recently, since after 2003, been exempt from giving oral evidence under any circumstances at committal proceedings thus saving them from being cross-examined at committal: s.91(8) *Criminal Procedure Act 1986* (NSW).

32 Exhibit 29-0020, EXH.029.020.0001 at 0003 (Circuit Overseer's Outline for the Elders' Meeting, Form S-337)

33 See, for example, Transcript of R P Spinks, T15685:42-T15686:40 (Day 152).

34 Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001 at [36];
Exhibit 29-0019, Annexure 2 to First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0018 at [2.2];
Exhibit 29-0024, First statement of T J O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [61];
Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15833:26-28 (Day 153);
Transcript of G W Jackson, T15967:33-T15968:7 (Day 155).

35 Exhibit 29-0019, Annexure 2 to First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0018 at [2.2(a)];

36 Exhibit 29-0019, Annexure 2 to First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0018 at [2.2(b)].

37 See Deuteronomy 19:15, Matthew 18:16 and 1 Timothy 5:19.

5.19 If ministers of religion are covered by a mandatory reporting regime, Jehovah's Witnesses comply with the legislation.[38] As was stated at the Royal Commission on several occasions, where reporting is mandated congregation elders report even in those cases where there is insufficient Scriptural evidence to take congregation judicial action.

Responses

Handling CSA offenders within the faith

5.20 Jehovah's Witnesses handle the sin of child sexual abuse based on Scripture and the circumstances of each case. This may result in a variety of disciplinary measures based on the circumstances of the sin, the circumstances of the victim, repentance or the lack of it on the part of the sinner, and other related Scriptural considerations.[39]

5.21 So long as there is no violation of the secular law, the handling of the sin of child abuse by Jehovah's Witnesses based on Scripture cannot be faulted from a secular point of view. The principles are somewhat analogous to those operating in the criminal justice system, save that, once a person has served his/her time in prison and is released, there is often no supervision of that person and no further assistance offered to such a person let alone protection for the community. That is not the case within the Jehovah's Witnesses organisation. The communities of Jehovah's Witnesses are small enough that a sinner will be understood to have sinned by those within the community. A truly repentant sinner will cooperate with the elders in respecting any restrictions imposed for the protection of others.

Mr Davies' evidence

5.22 Mr Davies' evidence has to be understood in light of the following matters. First, Mr Davies was a relatively inexperienced lawyer in a junior supporting role and was expressing a personal point of view based on his experience in one case.[40] Secondly, his view about the admissibility of evidence was not

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38 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15665:37-42, T15690:16-19, and T15743:11-14 (Day 152);
Transcript of V J Toole, T15764:18-20, T15771:21-26 and T15790:13-20 (Day 153);
Transcript of G W Jackson, T15965:16-19 and T15966:25-28 (Day 155).

39 Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001 at [41]-[47];
Exhibit 29-0019, Annexure 2 to First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0018 at [4.5]-[4.21];
Exhibit 29-0024, First statement of T J O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [62], [86], [88]-[92],[94],[95];
Transcript of R P Spinks, T15707:3-13 and T15714:23-T15715:2 (Day 152);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0306 at 0308-0309 (*The Watchtower*, January 1, 1997 – "Let Us Abhor What is Wicked").

40 Exhibit 29-0011, First statement of J Davies, STAT.0595.001.0001_R at [1] and [4]-[9]. Mr Davies was admitted to practice in 1998 and was involved in the BCH proceedings in late 2001.

shared by his immediate senior.[41] Thirdly, his observation was a truism of no real consequence in the prosecution of the matter, although it gave context. The same observation could be made about abuse occurring within any faith in which all of the persons involved shared the same faith. Fourthly, it would be wrong to draw, based upon the limited evidence presented, some general conclusions applicable to all future cases involving Jehovah's Witnesses as the quality and quantity of the evidence could not justify a generalised conclusion.

Expert's assistance

5.23 As part of Case Study 29, Jehovah's Witnesses offered the assistance of Dr Monica Applewhite, an independent expert from the United States. Dr Applewhite is not a member of the Jehovah' Witnesses organisation. She gained her three academic qualifications from universities that are not associated with the Jehovah's Witnesses organisation and she had 22 years of relevant field experience.[42] Although a challenge was made to her independence, there was no evidence that she was not independent, nor that she was not suitably qualified. In fact, Dr Applewhite made several concessions that some might have thought were adverse to Jehovah's Witnesses.

5.24 Dr Applewhite, because of her travelling constraints, gave evidence before Mr Spinks gave his evidence. Several of her comments that may appear to be concessions need to be revisited in light of Mr Spinks' subsequent evidence. Her testimony and the suggested findings by Counsel Assisting are examined in greater detail in Part II below.

41 Exhibit 29-0012, Second statement of J Davies, STAT.0595.002.0001_R at [7].
42 Exhibit 29-0013, Statement of Dr M L Applewhite, STAT.0606.001.0001 at [2];
Exhibit 29-0013, Annexure 2 to the Statement of Dr M L Applewhite, STAT.0606.001.0017 – Curriculum Vitae.

6. Part ID: Some other important matters

Then and Now

6.1 The abuse in the two cases occurred between 1982 and 1988. The attitudes, values and beliefs surrounding child sexual abuse 27 to 33 years ago in the criminal justice system were quite different then to the way they are now.[43] In the 1980's, a female complainant might have or would have had her allegations investigated by male detectives, most likely have a male prosecution counsel, be cross-examined by male defence counsel, give evidence in public before a jury comprising men and women, all of whom would be strangers and, given the requirement of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt, sometimes see a perpetrator walk free from the courtroom. Until the law changed, it used to be a requirement that evidence given by a child complainant always required corroboration and juries were warned not to act upon their evidence unless it was corroborated.[44]

6.2 The point is that, in the last 27 years the criminal justice system has come to understand that the way in which it dealt with sexual abuse cases could have resulted in further trauma to victims. It would be unfair to judge what occurred in the cases of BCB and BCG in light of contemporary attitudes, values, and beliefs, when 27 years ago the secular authorities either offered or delivered no better response.[45]

The two cases and improving responses

6.3 Jehovah's Witnesses are sympathetic to victims who experience traumatic events. If abuse is to be prevented from happening, then why it occurred in the two cases and the motivations of those who perpetrated these wrongs need to be considered.

6.4 In terms of the responses to the accounts of abuse brought forward by the two victims, the responses by the elders were, in part, a product of their backgrounds, in part a product of the times, and in part, a product of the connections between the victims and the abusers. Whether the secular authorities would have acted differently is open to question[46] as we did not

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43 These are matters of public record and were part of the impetus for changing the way in which the criminal justice system dealt with sexual abuse cases.

44 See, e.g. *B v The Queen* (1992) 175 CLR 599.

45 See e.g. Royal Commission Interim Report Vol 2 at page 5 concerning the "Criminal Justice System".

46 Professor K. Daly, Australian Centre for the study of sexual assault (ACSSA), no12 of 2011 page 6: "It is little surprise that victim's experiences with and judgments of the criminal process are not positive"; and "Research on victim's experiences with the legal process in common law countries like Australia …

hear from any prosecutor of his/her experience in the 1980's of prosecuting sexual abuse cases.

6.5 Improving responses to child sexual abuse is something that can be achieved, and Jehovah's Witnesses have improved and will continue to do so. The fact that Jehovah's Witnesses respond to the sin of child sexual abuse is something that should not be discouraged, but encouraged. Material published under the auspices of the Australian Government revealed that in one study of sexual assault cases between 1990 and 2005, possibly only 1 in 10 matters were seen through to conclusion by prosecutorial authorities.[47] In other words, resorting to the criminal justice system is not a "cure-all" of the problem.

Section 316 *Crimes Act 1900* (NSW)

6.6 Counsel Assisting raised a question about s.316 of the *Crimes Act 1900* (NSW). Jehovah's Witnesses presently consider that s.316 does not apply where a victim complains to an elder that he or she has been abused, because, at that stage, the elder's knowledge is not the "knowledge" required by the section, although it may satisfy the "belief" required by the section. Nevertheless, the elder is not required to report the same to the authorities because of the application of the qualification in s.316(1) of "without reasonable excuse" when those words are considered and understood in light of the requirements of s.316(4) of the Act, s.127 of the *Evidence Act 1995* (NSW) and the beliefs and practices of Jehovah's Witnesses.

6.7 The combined effect of the qualification in s.316(1) and s.316(4) of the Act and s.127 of the *Evidence Act 1995* (NSW) is that where an elder forms the belief in the "course of practising or following a profession, calling or vocation …" he has a "reasonable excuse" within the meaning of s.316(1) to not report the information and thus no offence is committed; that interpretation is supported by the section's natural meaning, the highest common law authorities, its legislative history, and a consideration of the section by the NSW Law Reform Commission.

6.8 Consequently, Mr Toole was correct in thinking that elders who were informed of complaints were not required to report the matter to the authorities. In any event, in the absence of an authoritative determination by a Court of competent jurisdiction about whether a requirement exists in the

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and civil law countries … shows that, despite legal and procedural reforms, victims/survivors are dissatisfied with the criminal justice system."'

47 Professor K. Daly, Australian Centre for the study of sexual assault (ACSSA), no12 of 2011 pages 4-5.

circumstances contemplated (and none is referred to by Counsel Assisting) there is no basis for any criticism or referral to the Law Society of New South Wales even if questions of professional competence to advise on such matters were within the Commission's Terms of Reference, which, clearly, they are not.

7. Part IE: The suggested findings of Counsel Assisting

7.1 The suggested findings by Counsel Assisting are problematic in the sense that, they often seem to assume a connection between child sexual abuse and beliefs of Jehovah's Witnesses in circumstances where there is no obvious connection and none is identified by Counsel Assisting.

7.2 For example, consider the suggested findings on "shunning" in F69 and F70. One can ask rhetorically, if an adult person is "shunned" or avoided because he or she has formally disassociated or resigned from the faith, how is the same connected to the prevention of sexual abuse of a child or a response to child sexual abuse? In our submission, it is not or at least, it is not obvious that it is and no evidence connecting the same was placed before the Commission. In fact, the opposite was the case. Mr Monty Baker, an adult who was disfellowshipped, said that being shunned "... wasn't really a problem for me …".[48] Indeed, as a matter of common sense, an adult person who makes a decision must expect that the consequences that ordinarily follow upon such a decision will be attracted.

7.3 When considered against the broader matters mentioned above, it will be seen that several of the findings suggested by Counsel Assisting are indeed problematic. The problems with the findings can be broken down into the following broad categories.

7.4 First, some of the findings are too broadly stated to be of assistance to the Commission. An example is suggested finding F1. The finding does not identify what is the "teaching" that is supposed to be "conflicting" and "ambiguous". It does not refer to relevant literature of Jehovah's Witnesses which address the view taken of the superior authorities[49] and, in any event, one may ask rhetorically, how does or would such a broad finding assist the Royal Commission in its difficult task of making recommendations that will be acted upon by governments so as to reduce the incidence of sexual abuse and to better respond to it?

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48 Transcript of M Baker T15614:28-38 (Day 151).

49 Exhibit 29-0019, Annexure 2 to First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0018 at [1.6];
Exhibit 29-0024, Annexure 2 to First statement of T J O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0024 at 0028 (extract from *The Watchtower*, May 1, 2012);
Exhibit 29-0035, Statement of G W Jackson, STAT.0670.001.0001 at [14] (quoting from p.223 in the book "*Keep Yourselves in God's Love*" published by Jehovah's Witnesses; an extract of this book is Exhibit 29-0003, WEB.0053.001.0001);
Transcript of R P Spinks, T15742:13-34 (Day 152) (quoting Romans 13:1-4);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0306 at 0309 [first paragraph] (*The Watchtower*, January 1, 1997 – "Let Us Abhor What is Wicked").

7.5 Secondly, some of the suggested findings are based on events that occurred 27 years ago and they do not reflect what Jehovah's Witnesses do today, nor are they reflective of any systemic issues within the faith. In such circumstances, the Commission is not given the assistance to which it is entitled.

7.6 Thirdly, some of the findings are either not supported by any reliable, credible or empirical evidence or are inconsistent with evidence given in the Commission, in some cases by persons called by Counsel Assisting. For example, suggested findings F43(a) and (b). No evidence was presented which could support such a finding, nor is it within the Commission's Terms of Reference.

7.7 Fourthly, some of the findings even if, arguably, within purview of the Terms of Reference could not realistically, or meaningfully, be properly investigated because there is no means by which any reliable evidence could be ascertained. For example, suggested finding F70. There appears to be no Term of Reference that requires the Commission to investigate the "shunning" of adults. Nor could, or will such a finding, assist the Commission in making recommendations about what changes ought to be made so as to reduce the incidence of child sexual abuse or to better respond to child sexual abuse, as the so-called "shunning" arises not because of any abuse of a child but because of a decision to reject the beliefs of a faith.[50]

Appropriate findings and systemic considerations

7.8 Jehovah's Witnesses have repeatedly expressed the desire to cooperate fully with the Commission and are sympathetic to victims of child sexual abuse.

7.9 One of the most important questions is: What should be done today to better protect children? Another is: What can be done to better respond to cases of child sexual abuse when they occur? In answer to those two questions, findings addressed to systemic issues could be made.

7.10 It has also been accepted that, whatever procedure is adopted, the procedure should respect the rights of the victim and should not further traumatise the victim. The present-day practices of Jehovah's Witnesses attempt to address such concerns.

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[50] Exhibit 29-0024, First statement of T J O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [93];
Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15852:28-39 (Day 153);
Transcript of G W Jackson, T15981:19-23, T15982:16-31 (Day 155).

7.11 If it is borne in mind that the Commission's findings and recommendations will be read by persons around the world, it emphasises the importance of dealing with "systemic", and not isolated, issues.

7.12 The Commission's task of studying institutional responses to child abuse requires findings as to what Jehovah's Witnesses do:

(a) to prevent child sexual abuse from occurring;

(b) to protect children from further abuse when it occurs;

(c) to report such abuse to the authorities;

(d) to deal with the perpetrators of such abuse; and

(e) to alleviate the impact of such abuse.

7.13 In respect of such questions, the short answers are:

(a) Jehovah's Witnesses have for several decades published and disseminated literature warning of the dangers of child abuse and helping parents to protect their children from abuse.[51] Jehovah's Witnesses will continue to do so.

(b) Jehovah's Witnesses endeavour to protect children from abuse.[52] To that end, they encourage parents to protect their children. They respect that the victim or his/her parents may decide to seek professional help.

(c) While most of the 1,006 case files of abuse occurred in jurisdictions where there was no legal obligation for ministers of religion to report, contrary to Counsel Assisting's assertion, the files on hand confirm that close to 400 cases of abuse have been reported to secular authorities by victims or others. In some cases, the victims or their families have exercised their right not to report the matter to the secular authorities and their decision has been respected by congregation elders. In still other instances, the victims or their families have later decided to report the matter and congregation elders have provided support.

Jehovah's Witnesses, consistent with Australian and international instruments, consider that it is the right of the survivor and/or the

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51 See footnote 16 above.

52 Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001 at [19], [28-30], [33], [37], [41]-[49];
Exhibit 29-0019, Annexure 2 to First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0018 at [1.8];
Exhibit 29-0024, First statement of T J O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [55]-[57];
Transcript of R P Spinks, T15660:26-31, 40-47 (Day 152);
Transcript of V J Toole, T15763:32-40 (Day 153);
Transcript of G W Jackson, T15968:26-32 (Day 155).

survivor's family to report the matter to secular authorities.[53] Where the secular authorities require that it be reported by elders, the elders report the matter to the authorities.[54]

(d) Those who commit the sin of child abuse are reproved and placed under restrictions or disfellowshipped.[55] Even if reinstated, the wrongdoer will be placed under continuing restrictions in order to protect children.[56]

(e) Like organisations in the secular arena, the procedures and practices of Jehovah's Witnesses have been improved and changed over the last 27 years in an endeavour to better respond to and alleviate the impact of child sexual abuse.

7.14 Detailed answers are contained in Part II which Part responds to the proposed findings by Counsel Assisting.

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53 Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001 at [30];
Exhibit 29-0019, Annexure 2 to First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0018 at [1.4];
Exhibit 29-0023, Statement of V J Toole, STAT.0593.001.0001_R at [15];
Exhibit 29-0024, First statement of T J O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [56], [59] and [60];
Transcript of R P Spinks, T15709:2-4 and T15720:40-45 (Day 152);
Transcript of V J Toole, T15766:23-40 (Day 153);
Transcript of G W Jackson, T15966:6-23 (Day 155);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0004.001.0001 (Letter dated August 28, 2002 from Watchtower Australia read to All Congregations in Australia regarding reporting of child sexual abuse to secular authorities).

54 Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001 at [30];
Exhibit 29-0019, Annexure 2 to First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0018 at [1.6];
Exhibit 29-0023, Statement of V J Toole, STAT.0593.001.0001_R at [13], [14], [29] and [30];
Exhibit 29-0024, First statement of T J O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [77];
Transcript of V J Toole, T15760:32-38, T15766:36-40 (Day 153).

55 Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001 at [41], [43], [45]-[47];
Exhibit 29-0019, Annexure 2 to First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0018 at [4.5]-[4.13], [4.16]-[4.21];
Exhibit 29-0024, First statement of T J O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [62], [70], [89]-[91];
Transcript of R P Spinks, T15711:27-46 (Day 152);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0306 at 0307-0309 (*The Watchtower*, January 1, 1997 – "Let Us Abhor What is Wicked").

56 Exhibit 29-0019, Annexure 2 to First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0018 at [4.16], [4.17] and [4.21];
Exhibit 29-0024, First statement of T J O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [95].

8. Conclusions to Part I

8.1 All of the matters referred to above are relevant to the context in which the Commission operates, to the findings that it will or should make and to whether the Commission's report and recommendations will receive the reception they ought fairly to receive. Some of them are of greater importance than others in their impact upon the two principal questions identified above concerning prevention and responses to child abuse.

8.2 The Commission's report will be read by many in Australia and around the world as it would seem to be both the largest and most thorough inquiry of its type anywhere in the world. Its views will no doubt influence future generations of Australian legislators and others.

8.3 If the Commission's views are to be respected around the world, as they undoubtedly will and should be, it is of the utmost importance that those reading the Commission's report and recommendations understand that its approach to the universal problem of child sexual abuse is free of any perception that the findings and recommendations it makes are antithetical to the religious beliefs and practices of Jehovah's Witnesses.

8.4 Ultimately, any findings or recommendations ought to be measured against their practical efficacy in achieving the objectives of the Commission as set out in its Terms of Reference namely, to better protect children from sexual abuse and to have better responses if it should occur.

8.5 Jehovah's Witnesses view child sexual abuse as both a sin and a crime. They have fully cooperated with the Commission in fulfilling its task, and are committed to continuing their efforts to prevent child sexual abuse.

9. Part II Summary of available findings

9.1 Part II responds in detail to the proposed findings of Counsel Assisting in Parts 1-10 of Counsel Assisting's Submissions ("CAS"); reference to a paragraph within Counsel Assisting's Submissions are identified as "CAP" followed by the paragraph number, for example "CAP 114".

CAS Part 1: Overview of Jehovah's Witnesses

Available findings on Jehovah's Witnesses' relationship with secular authorities

9.2 Counsel Assisting considers that the following finding is available on the evidence:

F1 The Jehovah's Witness organisation presents its members with conflicting and ambiguous teachings regarding their relationship with secular authorities, thereby fostering a distrust of such authorities.

9.3 The evidence referred to by Counsel Assisting at CAS 1.3 does not and, could not, justify such a finding. The suggested finding is not, in any way, relevantly connected to either preventing or responding to child sexual abuse by Jehovah's Witnesses. It follows, the proposed finding, has little direct bearing on the Terms of Reference.

9.4 The tangential relevance appears to be that if the finding that Jehovah's Witnesses have a "distrust of authority" is accepted, it justifies a further implied finding that Jehovah's Witnesses only deal with child sexual abuse internally and are reluctant to report child abuse to authorities because of that distrust. The logic is flawed. It is based on the conflation between dealing with the sin of sexual abuse and the crime of sexual abuse and Counsel Assisting's lack of understanding of the faith's teachings on the Scriptures.

9.5 Counsel Assisting selectively refers in CAS 1.3 to "doctrinal teachings" as supporting the proposed finding. Counsel Assisting does not, however, identify with any specificity the "teachings" or in what way they are "conflicting" or "ambiguous" such as to justify a conclusion that Jehovah's Witnesses 'mistrust' such authorities (or that they only deal internally with sexual abuse matters or would not report child sexual abuse to the secular authorities because of that mistrust).

9.6 The relationship between Jehovah's Witnesses and secular authorities is set out in Mr O'Brien's first statement.[57] In Annexure 2, he clearly sets out the position of Jehovah's Witnesses in society. In part it notes (emphasis added):

> …..Jehovah's Witnesses believe that it is their **Christian responsibility to be good citizens. Hence they honour and respect government authority. Through their publications and witnessing work, they encourage their neighbours to be law-abiding**. However, when a government demands what is in direct conflict with what God commands, the Witnesses do not comply. They "obey God as ruler rather than men."— Acts 5:29; Romans 13:1-7.[58]

9.7 This position is consistent with Mr Spinks' evidence as to obedience to Scripture over secular law. That evidence, relied upon by Counsel Assisting, was given in the context of a discussion of Jehovah's Witnesses currently being imprisoned because of their beliefs in several countries and, historically, in Nazi Germany.

9.8 In harmony with Romans 13:1-7, Jehovah's Witnesses comply with mandatory reporting laws. Thus, Counsel Assisting's reliance on the text cited from *Keep Yourselves in God's Love* is mistaken.[59] The reference to "governments" and "authorities" in the cited passage is directly relevant to a Jehovah's Witnesses' response where such institutions demand obedience to what is in direct conflict with God's commands. Any attempt to use such texts to support an implied proposition that Jehovah's Witnesses' response to child sexual abuse is explained by a "mistrust of authority", is disingenuous and a blatant misapplication of the text.

9.9 The belief of Jehovah's Witnesses that God's law supersedes man's law in no way prevents them from reporting child sexual abuse when required to do so by secular law. Relevantly, as regards child sexual abuse, the position of Jehovah's Witnesses is unequivocal: they encourage obedience to the law.[60]

9.10 It is also to be kept firmly in mind that a misunderstanding and misrepresentation of the faith's official position by a member of the faith (or a former member) as to the relationship between Jehovah's Witnesses and the secular authorities does not represent the official teachings of Jehovah's

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57 Exhibit 29-0024, First statement of T J O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [24]-[28].
58 Exhibit 29-0024, Annexure 2 to First statement of T J O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0024, page 5, citing *The Watchtower*, May 1, 2012 p3-11.
59 Exhibit 29-0003, WEB.0053.001.0001 at 0016;
Exhibit 29-0003, WEB.0053.001.0001 at 0017.
60 Exhibit 29-0023, Statement of V J Toole, STAT.0593.001.0001_R at [13]-[14];
Exhibit 29-0024, First statement of T J O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [77];
Transcript of G W Jackson, T15965:11-19, T15966:25-28 (Day 155).

Witnesses, just as a misrepresentation by a legal practitioner of the relevant principle to be extracted from a case would not represent the official view of, for example, the High Court or the New South Wales Court of Appeal.

CAS Part 2: Historical Child Sexual Abuse

Available findings on historical child sexual abuse data

9.11 Counsel Assisting considers that the following two findings are available on the evidence:

F2 Since 1950, the Jehovah's Witness organisation in Australia has received allegations of child sexual abuse against 1,006 of its members relating to at least 1,800 victims, and has in that period not reported a single allegation to the police or other authorities, even though 579 of those against whom an allegation was made confessed to having committed child sexual abuse.

9.12 The actual statistic referred to (1,006) needs to be understood in the following context for the following reasons.

9.13 First, it is wrong to assert that 1,006 were "members" since, of those, approximately 200 persons were involved in child abuse, or were the subject of an allegation, prior to their becoming Jehovah's Witnesses.[61]

9.14 Secondly, there is no evidence that 1,800 persons were, in fact, victims. An allegation does not mean that a person is a victim. It is well known that in parenting disputes in the context of family law, unfounded allegations of sexual abuse of children may be made.[62] Not all such allegations are substantiated, nor are they necessarily true.

9.15 Thirdly, Jehovah's Witnesses have a broad definition of sexual misconduct that includes, for example, "sexting" between minors.[63] Elders are instructed to call the branch office if they learn that a minor is involved in "sexting".

9.16 Fourthly, when an allegation is made by an adult survivor of child sexual abuse, it is not the right of an organisation to make a report on that adult's behalf unless the adult requests that it be done. Adults have the right to make such a choice and organisations are not entitled to deny them that right.

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61 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15663:40-44 (Day 152).
62 See e.g. *Sullivan v Moody* (2001) 207 CLR 562 at 570 [12].
63 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15713:7-11 (Day 152);
Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15835:8-11 (Day 153).

9.17 Fifthly, becoming one of Jehovah's Witnesses is voluntary. Its organisational structure, modelled on the first century Christian congregation, exists to serve God's purposes. The faith is not an agency or instrumentality of government entrusted with the responsibility for the supervision and care of children.

9.18 Sixthly, while most of the 1,006 case files referred to by Counsel Assisting occurred in jurisdictions where ministers of religion were not mandated reporters, congregation elders are directed to adhere to mandatory reporting regimes when they apply to ministers of religion.[64]

9.19 While Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia is not legally obligated to report allegations of child sexual abuse to the secular authorities, since August 25, 1989, congregation elders have been directed to contact the branch office in relation to compliance with reporting requirements.[65] Further, congregation members are free to report such matters to the secular authorities and many have done so, as is apparent from information provided to the Commission.[66]

9.20 The suggested finding is unlikely to assist the Commission in making appropriate recommendations about what can be done to better respond to child sexual abuse because it is not placed into any factual context. A mere recitation of numbers will not assist the Commission.

9.21 It should be noted that in many cases, victims or their families did not want the secular authorities involved. In still other cases, the victim may have chosen not to report the abuse until later in life, by which time he or she is an adult.

F3 The Jehovah's Witness organisation in Australia receives approximately three to four reports of allegations of child sexual abuse each month.

9.22 In order to ensure that allegations of child sexual abuse are properly handled by congregation elders, they are instructed to contact the branch office if they learn of any broadly-defined sexual misconduct involving minors. The evidence given by Mr Toole was, when read in context, that he received three

64 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15709:2-11, 17-22 (Day 152)
Transcript of V J Toole, T15766:32-40 (Day 153).

65 Exhibit 29-0034, CORR 0182.001.005, which refers to the letter AB:AS To All Bodies of Elders, August 25, 1989, page 3.

66 Just under 400 cases (383) involved the secular authorities: Transcript of R P Spinks, T15663:25-26 and T15717:32-41 (Day 152).

to four calls a month about “allegations” of child sexual abuse and not reports of ”actual” child sexual abuse.[67]

9.23 No inquiry was made during the public hearing as to the circumstances of each of the calls made by the elders to the branch office in order to determine if the report involved a non-Witness perpetrator, occurred before the wrongdoer’s association with Jehovah’s Witnesses, if the allegation was historical in nature, or if it was in fact, by definition, child sexual abuse.

CAS Part 3: BCB

Available findings on BCB’s first disclosure

9.24 Counsel Assisting considers that the following 11 findings are available on the evidence:

F4 The elders bringing the man whom BCB accused of abusing her to her home was unjustified and traumatising for BCB and should not have occurred.

F5 Although the elders may have been following the documented procedure at the time and they may have believed that Scriptural principle required that the accuser face the accused with her allegations, it was distressing to and unsupportive of BCB to require that of her.

F6 It was distressing for BCB to be required by the elders to tell of what had happened to her to a group of men, including the man whom she accused of abusing her, and it was not likely to, nor did it, result in BCB disclosing the full extent of her abuse.

F7 It was inconsistent with the elders’ professed sympathy for BCB for them not to have offered her the opportunity of the support and involvement of women in the process of investigating her allegations of abuse.

F8 The elders did not explain to BCB the purpose of their investigation and the meetings with her such as to ensure that she had an understanding of that purpose, which left her confused and disempowered.

F9 The application of the two-witness rule meant that there was insufficient evidence for the elders to act against BCB’s abuser even though they believed her, which left her feeling disbelieved and unsupported, and it left the abuser in the congregation where he may have been a risk to other children.

F10 Mr Horley telling BCB that she should not discuss her abuse with anyone left her feeling silenced and unsupported.

F11 BCB was not told by the elders that she could, let alone should, report her abuse to the authorities.

F12 In circumstances where both investigating elders agreed that there was substance to BCB’s allegations, they should have taken steps against Bill Neill, at least by imposing some

[67] Transcript of V J Toole, T15760.23-30 (Day 153).

restrictions on his activities involving children and thereby addressing the potential risk that he posed to other children.

F13 It was traumatic for BCB and inappropriate of Mr Horley for him to have required BCB to attend Bible study at Bill Neill's home when he knew that BCB accused Bill Neill of abusing her.

F14 The recommendation of the elders to the Branch Office that Bill Neill be reinstated as an elder 'once this has died down' and their expressed concern 'that there may also be worldly people who also know' demonstrates that they were more concerned about the reputation of Bill Neill and the congregation than about the risk that he posed to children.

9.25 It is submitted that the evidential basis for suggested findings F4 to F14 contained in paragraphs 109 to 152 of the submission by Counsel Assisting require the following additions, deletions and amendments.

9.26 On a global basis the honesty, candour, and quality of the elders' evidence should be acknowledged by the Commission along the lines of that reported by Janet Fife-Yeomans at page 32 of "The Daily Telegraph" on 1 August, 2015: *While people from other churches dragged to the Royal Commission have obviously been coached by PR gurus and lawyers in how to present themselves and say the right thing, the Jehovah's Witnesses were totally devoid of artifice.*

9.27 CAP 111: For accurate context, it should be added that the offending conduct occurred when BCB was staying at the Neill home. BCB was staying at the Neill home because of her friendship with Bill Neill's daughter. As such it is submitted that the offending conduct did not arise because of Bill Neill being in a position of authority over BCB.

9.28 Without minimising its offensiveness, it is submitted that the offending conduct (inappropriate kissing and the touching of BCB's breasts through her clothing) committed when BCB was under the age of 18 would amount in criminal law to indecent assault. This point is made, not to condone or minimise the conduct, but to put it into its correct legal context. Counsel Assisting did not comment on or clarify this fact with the Commission. Even so, it should be noted that the congregation viewed the wrongdoing seriously and took congregation action.

9.29 Further, the offending conduct initially reported to the congregation was that of indecent assaults and not sexual assaults.

9.30 It is also submitted that BCB was a married adult when the congregation elders learned of the misconduct of Bill Neill and subsequently met with her.

9.31 CAP 112: The statement that *Bill Neill discouraged BCB from forming friendships with non-Jehovah's Witnesses* is of no particular significance to child sexual abuse.[68] Many years ago (and even in some cultures today), a relationship or even a friendship with a person of a different faith was frowned upon.

9.32 Further, the statement that *BCB left high school encouraged by the Neill family* has no evidential basis, but even if it did, it has no causal connection to child sexual abuse.[69]

9.33 Further, the implication that the Neills discouraged BCB from fraternising with non-Jehovah's Witnesses is contradicted by the fact that BCB had non-Jehovah's Witness friends whilst at school and was working in a bank with non-Jehovah's Witnesses at the time of the offending conduct.[70]

9.34 CAP 113: The statement that Bill Neill *groomed and sexually abused* BCB is legally inaccurate and should be amended to *indecently assaulted.*

9.35 Further, the statement that *BCB felt unable to disclose the abuse because of Bill Neill's position of authority in the congregation* is incomplete. In paragraph [25] of her statement, BCB states that Bill Neill was the head of the household and that she felt that she could not tell anyone as if she did it would upset Bill Neill's wife, Bronwyn, and their daughter, BCE, as well as members of the congregation.[71] According to her own statement, all of these factors influenced BCB's decision not to disclose what was happening to her.

9.36 CAP 115: For accurate context it should be added that BCB was an adult, of 23 or 24 years of age, when she first disclosed this matter.

9.37 CAP 116: For accurate context it should be added that at the time of receiving the complaint Mr Horley was 31 years of age, he had been an elder for only 3 years[72] and it was the first time that he had dealt with a complaint of sexual abuse.[73]

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68 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [17].
69 Transcript of BCB, T15171:9-14 (Day 141).
70 Transcript of BCB, T15170:32-39 (Day 141).
71 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [25].
72 Transcript of M Horley, T15180:45 to T15181:1 (Day 147).
73 Exhibit 29-0002, Statement of M Horley, STAT.0601.001.0001_R at [4.1]; Transcript of M Horley T15184:32-35 (Day 147).

9.38 CAP 118: For accurate context it should be added that when this matter was reported to Mr Horley he immediately sought the advice and guidance of the circuit overseer, Mr Douglas Jackson.[74]

9.39 CAP 122: For accurate context it should be added that BCB's evidence was that "*Max* [Horley] *was very supportive and kind*".[75]

9.40 It should also be added that BCB's evidence as to being "*pressed*" by Mr Horley amounted to BCB saying that Mr Horley simply repeated what BCB had previously told him and that she confirmed this.[76]

9.41 CAP 123: For accurate context, BCB's reference to "*a room full of men"* in her statement should be understood to mean Mr Douglas Jackson, Mr Horley and her abuser, Bill Neill. It should also be added that BCB's husband, BCC, was also present to support BCB. It should also be noted that BCB knew Mr Douglas Jackson and Mr Horley at that time.

9.42 CAP 127: For accurate context, it should be added that BCB did not feel comfortable disclosing the full extent of her abuse to anyone at that time, including her husband, BCC.[77]

9.43 CAP 128: For accuracy it should be added that the assertion of BCB that *nobody explained to her the purpose of either meeting* should be contrasted with Mr Douglas Jackson's evidence, which is cited at CAP 134.[78]

9.44 For accuracy, it should also be stated that:

(a) BCB gave evidence that she did understand that it was her word against Bill Neill's and that the elders were trying to find out what happened.[79]

(b) As one of Jehovah's Witnesses, BCB would have received a copy of the publication "Organised to Accomplish Our Ministry"[80] at some point before her baptism in 1986. At page 145 of that publication, an

74 Exhibit 29-0002, Statement of M Horley, STAT.0601.001.0001_R at [5.1]; Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [53]-[54]; Transcript of M Horley, T15189:28-31 (Day 147).
75 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [50]; Transcript of BCB, T15164:4-5 (Day 147).
76 Transcript of BCB, T15173:34-35 (Day 147) and T15175:45-T15176:1.
77 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [47] and [77].
78 Transcript of D Jackson, T15227:23-27, and T15227:29-33 (Day 147).
79 Transcript of BCB, T15177:19-21 (Day 147).
80 Exhibit 29-0032, WAT.0020.001.0001.

overview is provided of the process of how the elders investigate and deal with cases of wrongdoing within the congregation.[81]

9.45 CAP 129: For accurate context the following should be added:

(a) Within weeks of BCB's complaint, Bill Neill was removed as an elder in the congregation and BCB was present at the congregation meeting when this fact was announced;

(b) This announcement conveyed that Bill Neill had been disciplined, and/or sanctioned,[82]

(c) Those with knowledge of the investigation of Bill Neill, including BCB, would have known why Bill Neill had been removed,[83] and

(d) The publication "Organised to Accomplish Our Ministry" at page 141[84] explains that the removal of an elder is reflective of his failing to meet Scriptural standards for elders.

9.46 CAP 132: Accordingly, for accurate context the statement "*and prevented her from disclosing the full extent of her abuse*" should be removed.[85]

9.47 CAP 133: It is submitted that the adjective "*totally*" should be removed.

9.48 CAP 136: It is submitted that the statement, *Mr Horley denied that he was trying to cover the matter up,* should be removed as the question and answer surrounding this are not relevant or based on any evidence in the proceedings.

9.49 Further, it should be added that Mr Horley gave evidence that the purpose of his request was to limit the spread of gossip[86] and that BCB was free to talk to others within the congregation including the elders or a mature woman from within the congregation.[87]

9.50 CAP 137: In light of the previous submission, this paragraph should be amended to read, *Mr Horley accepted that BCB could have felt silenced and unsupported by his instruction not to speak with others about her abuse*.

9.51 CAP 143: For accuracy, the following should be added:

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81 Transcript of D Jackson, T 15263:3-44 and T 15266:6-12 (Day 148).
82 Transcript of M Horley, T15203:29-T15204:1 (Day 147).
83 Transcript of M Horley, T15204:14-18 (Day 147).
84 Exhibit 29-0032, WAT.0020.001.0001.
85 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [47] and [77].
86 Transcript of M Horley, T15201:10-16, T15202:5-12 (Day 147).
87 Transcript of M Horley, T15201:20-36 (Day 147).

(a) BCB said that there was at least one other Bible study group held at the Kingdom Hall in Narrogin.[88]

(b) BCB did not recall who it was that conveyed to her that she had to continue attending the Bible study group at Bill Neill's house, and it might have been her mother. BCB said that BCC had said to her it might have been Mr Horley but BCC was not called to give evidence as to this even though he was present at the public hearing in a support role.[89] Further, this was not put to Mr Horley before the Royal Commission.

(c) There was no compulsion as to which Bible study group, if any, BCB should attend.

9.52 It is further submitted that the statement that Mr Horley organised the Bible study held at Bill Neill's house should be removed as it is not based on any evidence in the proceedings.

9.53 In light of the previous submissions, it is submitted that CAP 143 be amended to read, *BCB gave evidence that even after she had disclosed her abuse by Bill Neill, she continued to see Bill Neill several times a week at congregational meetings*.

9.54 CAP 144: For accuracy, it should be added that BCB's evidence was that Mr Horley asked her not to talk out of respect for the Neill family. The other members of the Neill family were her friends, including Mrs Neill, whom BCB said she "*loved like a mother*".[90]

9.55 The evidence does not support the assertion that BCB was in fact encouraged to respect her abuser.

9.56 In light of the foregoing submissions, it is submitted that CAP 144 be amended to read, *BCB gave evidence that she was left feeling unsupported by the congregation and that she felt she was instead being encouraged to respect her abuser*.

9.57 CAP 149: For accurate context, it should be added that Mr Horley gave evidence that it would take many years for that to occur, if ever,[91] and that in fact Bill Neill was not reappointed until 2001 to the Warnbro Congregation, a period of 10 years.

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88 Transcript of BCB, T15170:8, 9 (Day 147).
89 Transcript of BCB, T15170:17-19 (Day 147).
90 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [62] and [64].
91 Transcript of M Horley, T15209:39-43 (Day 147).

9.58 CAP 152: For accuracy, it should be added that:

(a) Mr Horley's evidence was that his aim in removing Bill Neill as an elder was to protect every member of the congregation from Bill Neill,[92] and

(b) Mr Douglas Jackson's evidence was that in dealing with Bill Neill, steps would have been taken to ensure *that he wouldn't get into that situation again.*[93]

Suggested revised and amended findings

9.59 In the light of the foregoing submissions, it is submitted that the following additions, deletions and amendments are required to Counsel Assisting's recommended findings contained at F4 to F14.

9.60 Suggested finding F7 should be amended to: *As BCB had the support of her husband who was present with her, the fact that the elders did not offer her the opportunity to have women involved in the process is not inconsistent with the elders' professed sympathy for BCB*.

9.61 Suggested finding F8 should be amended to: *Elders investigating BCB's complaints could have ensured that BCB understood the purpose of their investigation and the meetings with her.*

9.62 Suggested finding F9 is contrary to the evidence and should not be made for the reasons set out in paragraphs 9.197 to 9.227.

9.63 Suggested finding F10 is not supported by the evidence before the Commission and as such should not be made for the reasons set out in paragraphs 9.48 and 9.50.

9.64 Suggested finding F11 should be amended to: *Elders investigating BCB's complaints could have advised BCB of her right to report abuse to authorities*.

9.65 Suggested finding F12 should be amended to: *After Bill Neill was removed as an elder, the elders could also have imposed appropriate restrictions on his involvement with children.*

9.66 Suggested finding F13 is not supported by the evidence and as such should not be found by the Commission. See also paragraph 9.51 and 9.52 above.

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92 Transcript of M Horley, T15217:9-24 (Day 147).
93 Transcript of D Jackson, T15253:26-29 (Day 148).

9.67 Suggested finding F14 should be amended to: *The recommendation of the elders to the branch office that Bill Neill be reappointed as an elder 'once this has died down' and their expressed concern 'that there may also be worldly people who also know' were inappropriate and did not reflect the policy and practice of Jehovah's Witnesses.*

Available findings on BCB's second disclosure

9.68 Counsel Assisting considers that the following two findings are available on the evidence:

F15 It was wrong of Joe Bello, and contrary to the Jehovah's Witness organisation's own direction in that regard, to discourage BCB from reporting to the Royal Commission by asking whether she 'really wants to drag Jehovah's name through the mud'.

F16 The elders in BCB's present congregation should have supported BCB in her reporting to the Royal Commission if that is what she wanted to do.

9.69 It is submitted that the evidential basis for suggested findings F15 and F16 contained in CAP 153 to 159 of the submission of Counsel Assisting require the following additions, deletions and amendments set out below in order that they fairly and accurately represent the evidence given before the Commission.

9.70 CAP 155: For accurate context, the following evidence given by Mr Bello should be added:

(a) that the conversation was an informal conversation with BCB's husband, BCC, not BCB;

(b) that the question was rhetorical;

(c) that the words used by Mr Bello were, not *did BCB really want to drag Jehovah's name through the mud*, but, *what would that accomplish other than dragging Jehovah's name through the mud*; and

(d) that when BCC said that it was about closure and financial compensation Mr Bello accepted BCB's right to do so and said he could see BCC's point that it could achieve a measure of closure for BCB.[94]

9.71 BCC did not give evidence on this issue.

[94] Transcript of J Bello, T15273:11-26 (Day 148).

9.72 CAP 156. This paragraph is not supported by the evidence before the Commission and should not be asserted by the Commission.[95]

9.73 CAP 157: The reference to *Upset by Mr Bello's visit,* should be removed. There was no evidence that this was the reason for BCB writing her letter.

9.74 CAP 159: It is submitted that this paragraph is irrelevant and should be removed.

9.75 For greater accuracy, it should be added that Mr Bello gave evidence that the elders in Kingsley Congregation gave a great deal of support to BCB and BCC, as well as forwarding BCB's letters to the branch office.[96]

9.76 In the light of the foregoing submissions, we now submit that the following additions, deletions and amendments are necessary to Counsel Assisting's recommended findings contained at F15 to F16.

9.77 For the reasons stated above, suggested finding F15 is not supported by the evidence given before the Commission and should not be made.

9.78 For the reasons stated above, suggested finding F16 is not supported by the evidence given before the Commission and should not be made.

CAS Part 5: BCG

Available findings on the investigation and judicial committee processes following BCG's disclosure

9.79 Counsel Assisting considers that the following 13 findings are available on the evidence:

F17 The elders did not explain to BCG the purpose of their investigation and their meetings with BCG such as to ensure that she had an understanding of that purpose, which left her confused and disempowered.

F18 It was traumatising for BCG to be required by the elders to tell what had happened to her to a group of men, including the man whom she accused of sexually abusing her, and it was not likely to, nor did it, result in BCG disclosing the full extent her abuse.

F19 It would have been supportive of the elders to offer BCG the opportunity of the support and involvement of other women in the process of investigating her allegations of abuse.

95 Transcript of J Bello, T15273:11-36 (Day 148).
96 Exhibit 29-0005, Statement of Joseph Bello, STAT.0594.001.0001_R at [5.5] and [5.10].

F20 During their judicial committee investigation or proceedings the elders received evidence that BCH had abused BCG's elder sister and her two younger sisters, but they took no action in relation to that evidence.

F21 The evidence presented to the judicial committee of BCH having abused his other daughters satisfied the Jehovah's Witness organisation's own rules with regard to sufficiency of evidence to establish that BCH had abused BCG, but the elders wrongly ignored that evidence and accordingly failed to uphold BCG's complaint against BCH.

F22 In the course of the judicial committee process, and before the elders reached a conclusion on BCH's guilt in relation to his extra-marital conduct, BCH confessed to having abused BCG.

F23 The elders inexplicably and wrongly ignored BCH's confession to having abused BCG and thereby, within the precepts of the Jehovah's Witness organisation's own rules and procedures, failed to uphold BCG's complaint against BCH.

F24 BCG was not told by the elders that she could, let alone should, report her abuse to the authorities.

F25 The appeal committee's requirement that BCG give evidence of her sexual abuse by her father to a group of seven men including her named abuser was unjustified and traumatising to BCG and should never have happened.

F26 The failure by the elders to report BCH's sexual abuse of BCG to the police had the result that BCH remained at large in the community and a risk to children, and reflects that the elders were not concerned with child safety but rather with keeping their organisation 'clean'.

F27 The judicial committee's failure to uphold BCG's complaint of abuse by BCH conveyed to BCG that the organisation tolerated child sexual abuse within its ranks.

F28 The advice given by the elders to BCG that she not speak about her abuse to anyone had the effect of silencing her.

F29 The elders' treatment of BCG was unsympathetic and unsupportive and left her feeling worthless and helpless.

9.80 It is submitted that the evidential basis for suggested findings F17 to F29 contained in CAPs 164 to 219 require the following additions, deletions and amendments.

9.81 CAP 167: For accurate context, it should be added that the offending conduct was committed by BCG's father, BCH. As such it is submitted that the offending conduct did not arise from BCH being in a position of authority linked to the Jehovah's Witnesses' faith.

9.82 CAP 167: Further, the only evidence of these assertions came from BCG. As such, it is submitted that they should be preceded by, *BCG gave evidence that.*

9.83 CAP 168: The only evidence of these assertions came from BCG. As such, it is submitted that they should be preceded by, *BCG gave evidence that.*

9.84 CAP 170: Paragraphs 37 and 38 of BCG's statement indicate that BCG did not, at any time, indicate that she wished to discuss sexual abuse allegations with the elders. In her statement BCG states only:

(a) *I need to talk about some stuff that's happened between me and dad,*[97] and

(b) *I want to talk to you about things in my family that you don't know about. What my father is doing.*[98]

9.85 Consistent with this, in 2001 at the committal proceedings against BCH, BCG gave evidence of a conversation she had with Mr Ali. BCG's evidence was that she told Mr Ali that, *you need to come and talk to the family, there's things you don't know about in the family, you need to come and talk to us.*[99]

9.86 CAP 171: For accuracy, Mr Ali's evidence in relation to BCG's complaint should be added. Mr Ali's evidence in this regard was:

(a) *I'm sorry, but I can't recollect that;*[100]

(b) *Generally, if it was something of a minor concern, yes;*[101] and

(c) *If this did really happen – I'm not doubting that it did – then it would be consistent with myself to follow through and have a discussion with her, and to also approach the parent if it was something of concern, yes*.[102]

9.87 CAP 172: For accuracy, it should be added that when Mr Bowditch was asked by Counsel Assisting whether he would have told BCG that he could not talk to her without BCH being present he answered categorically, *I would never have said that*.[103]

9.88 Further it should be added that, during questioning by Counsel Assisting on this issue, Mr Bowditch answered variously:

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97 Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [37].
98 Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [38].
99 Transcript of BCG at committal proceedings against BCH, QLD.0068.001.0732:19-37.
100 Transcript of D Ali, T15325:28-29 (Day 148).
101 Transcript of D Ali, T15325:34-35 (Day 148).
102 Transcript of D Ali, T15326:11-15 (Day 148).
103 Transcript of K Bowditch, T15394:8 (Day 149).

(a) *I didn't know how serious it was, and as she was a young adult, I would have spoken to her anyway*.[104];

(b) *No, I would speak to her with somebody else, like my wife, in a room that's close or – you know – in an adjoining room;*[105] and

(c) *I still would not have said that. I would have let the person talk to me*.[106]

9.89 It is therefore submitted that CAPs 170 to 172 are without foundation and should be removed.

9.90 CAP 174: It should be added that BCG gave evidence in 2001 at the committal proceedings against BCH. BCG stated that her allegations arose in the context of another investigation of BCH, saying *[another woman] was involved…so was BCK, so was Mum. BCJ was there…lots of people in there. There were lots of other events going on as well*.[107]

9.91 CAP 175: BCG's statement that she was alone and without support is not accurate. It should be added that BCG had the support of her then fiancé BCJ, who was present at the Kingdom Hall during the judicial committee meeting.[108] In this regard Mr Ali stated that BCJ was present all the time.[109] At times during the judicial process BCG's mother, BCI, and sister, BCK, were also present.[110]

9.92 Further it is submitted that the elders dealing with this matter had a close association with BCG[111] and at all times sought to put BCG at ease. Further, the elders sought to reassure and support BCG during this process. [112]

9.93 Mr de Rooy gave evidence that, "*We had known her for such a long time, she was like our family",*[113] and that the elders "*felt very much for her".*[114] Mr Ali

104 Transcript of K Bowditch, T15394:18-19 (Day 149).
105 Transcript of K Bowditch, T15394:23-26 (Day 149).
106 Transcript of K Bowditch, T15395:17-18 (Day 149).
107 Transcript of BCG at committal proceedings against BCH, QLD.0068.001.0735:21-34.
108 Transcript of D Ali, T15330:28-29 (Day 148).
109 Transcript of D Ali, T15378:33-38 (Day 149).
110 Transcript of BCG, T15288:40-41 and T15310:14-18 (Day 148).
111 Transcript of BCG, T15288:3-4 (Day 148).
112 Transcript of D Ali, T15365:13-31, T15376:15, 37-42 (Day 148);
Exhibit 29-0016, Statement of R de Rooy, STAT.0597.001.0001_R at [9.1].
113 Transcript of R de Rooy, T15546:2-11 (Day 151).
114 Transcript of R de Rooy, T15546:32-36 (Day 151).

and Mr Bowditch also gave evidence that the elders were well known to BCG and that they were there to protect her.[115]

9.94 CAP 177: BCG's statement that the elders were friends of her father requires context. There was no evidence before the Commission of any particular relationship. To the contrary, the evidence was that all members of the congregation, including BCG, were treated similarly.[116]

9.95 BCG's evidence in 2001 at the committal proceedings against BCH should also be added, being that she was reluctant to speak of BCH's abuse to the elders because, "*they're not supposed to say anything to anyone else but sometimes they tell their wives and it will get around to everybody".*[117]

9.96 It should be added that all of the elders gave evidence that they believed BCG.[118] Mr Bowditch gave evidence that he told BCG that he believed her one hundred percent.[119]

9.97 Further, the elders did not drop BCG's allegations once the decision was made to disfellowship BCH, but rather continued to investigate and press the allegations at BCH's appeal relating to the other matter before the judicial and appeal committees.[120]

9.98 CAP 178: The verb "*forced*" should be changed to "*required*" consistent with CAP 179.

9.99 CAP 179: It should be added that the elders gave evidence that BCG involved herself voluntarily in the process of confronting her father and wanted to put her allegations to him face-to-face.[121]

9.100 CAP 181: For accurate context it should be added that at the first meeting the elders were concluding an investigation, which had been on foot for some time in relation to BCH's alleged marital infidelity.[122]

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115 Transcript of D Ali, T15378:10-20 (Day 149).
Transcript of K Bowditch, T15399:29-33, T15414:46 and following (Day 149).
116 Transcript of D Ali, T15318:15-16 and T15331:10-15 (Day 148).
117 Transcript of BCG at committal proceedings against BCH, QLD.0068.001.0733:51-56.
118 Transcript of D Ali, T15331:17-22 (Day 148), T15353:6-13 (Day 149);
Transcript of K Bowditch, T15404:5-9 (Day 149).
Transcript of R de Rooy, T15547:1-5, T15548:45 (Day 151).
119 Transcript of K Bowditch, T15413:37-43 (Day 149).
120 Transcript of R de Rooy, T15560:18-T15561:21 (Day 151).
121 Transcript of D Ali, T15374:33-43, T15376:7-10 (Day 149);
Transcript of K Bowditch, T15397:35-39, T15398:16-19, 27-31 (Day 149).

9.101 That meeting was formed to deal with that earlier complaint.[123]

9.102 The complaint was dealt with and a finding made against BCH.[124]

9.103 During that judicial committee meeting BCG made her more serious complaint against BCH.[125]

9.104 During that judicial committee BCG made hearsay allegations relating to BCH and her sisters.[126]

9.105 During that judicial committee meeting, at all times, BCH denied the allegations.[127]

9.106 Following the judicial committee meeting the elders continued to investigate BCG's complaints.[128]

9.107 BCH appealed the earlier judicial committee findings regarding his marital infidelity.[129]

9.108 During the subsequent appeal committee meeting, the elders questioned BCH at length about BCG's complaints following which BCH confessed.[130]

9.109 It should be added that BCG gave evidence-in-chief in 2001 at the committal proceedings against BCH, concerning the appeal committee meeting:[131]

And then Kevin Bowditch said – he said, "Before you close up can we – can BCG just" – he called me BCG, I think. Just he gave – admit it 'cause I never heard him admit it. In there Joe Marazza [sic] said "Yeah". I think – and he –

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122 Exhibit 29-0007, Statement of D Ali, STAT.0598.001.0003_R at [5.1];
Transcript of D Ali, T15339; 13-46 (Day 149);
Exhibit 29-0010, Statement of K Bowditch, STAT.0602.001.0003_R at [4.3]; and
Exhibit 29-0016, Statement of R de Rooy, STAT.0597.001.0001_R at [5(iv)].

123 Exhibit 29-0007, Statement of D Ali, STAT.0598.001.0003_R at [5.1];
Transcript of D Ali, T15339; 13-19 (Day 149); and
Exhibit 29-0016, Statement of R de Rooy, STAT.0597.001.0001_R at [5(iv)].

124 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0134_R.

125 Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of BCG STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [50].

126 Exhibit 29-0006, Statement of BCG, STAT.0590.001.0001_R at [51].

127 Exhibit 29-0007, Statement of D Ali, STAT.0598.001.0003_R at [5.5];
Exhibit 29-0010, Statement of K Bowditch, STAT.0602.001.0001_R at [4.8].

128 Exhibit 29-0008, QLD.0068.001.1478_R.
QLD.0068.001.1484; and
Transcript of D Ali, T15380:33-37 (Day 149).

129 Exhibit 29-0003, QLD.0068.001.1474_R (Tab 4).

130 Exhibit 29-0016, Statement of R de Rooy, STAT.0597.001.0001_R at [6.2];
Exhibit 29-0010, Statement of K Bowditch, STAT.0602.001.0001_R at [4.12].

131 Transcript of BCG at committal proceedings against BCH, QLD.0068.001.0736:15-40.

Kevin Bowditch said that, "I think that it would be good for BCG's sake", or for my sake, BCG's sake to hear that. And I was like absolutely bowled over because the last one he kept saying that I was lying and everything. In the second committee they – they asked him well – they asked him, did he abuse me, something to that effect, and he said, "Yes". He had his head down like this. I did—

You're indicating that he had his hands over his face? – Yeah, like that, with his hands on his knees and he said, "Yes, I did step out of line". And then another thing that Joe Marazza [sic] said, because one of his things – his little things was that I seduced him. Joe Marazza [sic] said, "Okay". Not – he said this was no – no insult at me and it's not that they didn't believe me, they do believe me, that he said to BCH, my father, that if that was the case, which it wasn't, that it would be his right as a father to not do that. He would still be wrong in doing that and he fairly gave him heaps. Well, I thought he did. I thought it was good to see. And they still decided to disfellowship him.

9.110 It should be added that during cross-examination at the committal proceedings against BCH, BCG gave the following evidence, concerning the appeal committee meeting:

…Kevin Bowditch said, "Before you finish up or before" you know they go on "Can BCG or BCG just hear him admit what he's done for her sake" and then they asked him the question did he touch me or molest or whatever to that effect and he said, "Yes, I did. I did step out of line" and he had his hands on his forehead bending over on his knees.

All right?- - And I was quite surprised that he actually admitted it because he was adamant that he didn't do it.

Okay. Any other conversations you recall that evening? - - Yes. A – Joe Morassis [sic] really got cranky at him. I remember that and said to him how disgusting it was that I had to turn to some other young brother in the congregation to – for protection from my own father and as the matter with the seducing business brother Joe Morrasis [sic] said to me that he knows that it did not happen – that I did not seduce my father. So, he was in no way saying that I did. So, I – you know, that was clear and he said to my father that if it was the case that that did happen that it was his job as a father not to be

doing that and it was wrong for him to do that anyway but acknowledged that it did not happen like that.[132]

9.111 The appeal committee then confirmed the earlier judicial committee findings and added the more serious finding of *porneia* in relation to BCG's complaints.[133]

9.112 CAP 183: For accurate context it should be added that, although the elders were bound by their Biblical principles, Mr Spinks[134] and Mr Geoffrey Jackson both gave evidence that the elders were always encouraged to act in harmony with their consciences to protect the victim and that their individual conscientious decisions would be respected. The elders in BCG's matter demonstrated this to be the case, since they continued to pursue BCG's allegations in spite of insufficient evidence at the time, until further evidence became available in the form of a confession by BCH.

9.113 CAP 184 to CAP 193: Counsel Assisting's submission relating to Mr Ali's notes and the evidence relating to BCK appearing at the judicial committee appear to be framed in such a way as to unfairly impugn the evidence of Mr Ali, Mr de Rooy and Mr Bowditch. The fact that BCK did attend at some point and did make a complaint against BCH is conceded and not in issue. As such, this should simply be stated as a fact leading to Counsel Assisting's suggested findings at F20 and F21 on that issue.

9.114 CAP 194 to CAP 196: Counsel Assisting's submission relating to Mr Ali's notes and the evidence relating to whether BCH confessed during the earlier judicial committee meeting also appear to be framed in such a way as to unfairly impugn the evidence of Mr Ali, Mr de Rooy and Mr Bowditch.

9.115 Counsel Assisting's reliance on the notes and Mr Ali's and Mr de Rooy's evidence relating to them is ill-conceived and likely to mislead the Commission.

9.116 The notes did not form part of the proposed tender bundle for the public hearing.

9.117 The notes were written in 1989.

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132 Transcript of BCG at committal proceedings against BCH, QLD.0068.001.0787:38-60.
133 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0135_R (Tab 3).
134 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15671:33-37, T15672:1-4 (Day 152).

9.118 Without notice, Mr Ali and then Mr de Rooy were questioned in relation to those 26 year old notes.

9.119 Both Mr Ali and Mr de Rooy had little recollection of the notes and did their best to assist the Commission.

9.120 It should be added that Mr Ali and Mr de Rooy were witnesses of truth consistent with the earlier submission at 9.26.

9.121 For context in relation to those notes, Mr Ali gave evidence in 2003 at the first trial of BCH where he was asked about the alleged confessions contained on page 14 of the notes. Mr Ali's evidence was as follows:[135]

Now, I'm also going down to the bottom of that page, and I'm trying to find out when this refers to. "BCH has admitted to all things and also said that whatever BCG had said on molesting was true." Do you see that there? - - I do.

Do you have some independent recollection now having looked at that note as to what was said and when it was said? - - This was the so-called witnesses that had on hearsay. Apparently BCG had mentioned to them that what had happened to her concerning her dad, what her dad did to her, this is the individuals mentioned there were – if you noticed on the fourth line on the bottom, "Ian and Janette", his wife ---

Yeah? - - and "Janette tells BCH that he tells her" ---

I understand, I understand. So that's some hearsay comment that you've recorded? - - Yes.

---of witnesses? - - Yes.

That's not anything that you heard said by BCH? - - No, she had claimed BCH had molested her.

That's okay, But you didn't hear her say anything to that effect? - - No, no.

Because all these notes concern times before we get to the appeals committee, don't they? - - They do.

[135] Transcript of Mr Ali at first trial of BCH, QLD.0068.001.1017:50 – 1018:22.

HER HONOUR: Who are Ian and Janette? - - They are friends of the family, of the BCG's family.

9.122 Mr Ali also gave evidence at the first trial of BCH that the notes were taken at some point while the judicial committee meetings were in progress, including the meeting in which the decision to disfellowship BCH was taken, after the investigative stage had concluded, and were not contemporaneous to all the events described therein.[136]

9.123 In their statements to the Commission, Mr Ali, Mr de Rooy and Mr Bowditch each stated that BCH's confession only occurred at the appeal committee hearing.

9.124 The evidence of Mr Ali, Mr de Rooy and Mr Bowditch was consistent with that position.

9.125 Paragraphs 43 to 53 of BCG's statement are clearly inconsistent with any confession being forthcoming from BCH at the judicial committee meeting.

9.126 It should also be noted that during BCG's evidence at the trial of BCH, BCG volunteered matters that could adversely affect the reliability of her evidence in that and any subsequent proceedings. [137]

9.127 The evidence of BCG at the Commission did not address this issue, nor did Counsel Assisting ask any questions relating to an alleged admission by BCH at the judicial committee meeting.

9.128 It would be clearly unfair for Counsel Assisting to rely on the notes to make findings of fact in these circumstances.

9.129 Further, it is implausible that BCH would have appealed the judicial committee findings relating to loose conduct if he had confessed to these more serious allegations.

9.130 Further, it is implausible that the appeal committee would have noted and acted on BCH's confession to these allegations during the appeal committee meeting if BCH had already made such confessions.

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136 QLD.0068.001.1004:35-50

137 BCG's evidence at the first trial of BCH in 2003 [QLD.0068.001.1106:20-30 and QLD.0068.001.1116:40-50].

9.131 It is therefore submitted that CAPs 194 to 202 should be removed.

9.132 It is therefore submitted that suggested findings F22 and F23 should not be made.

9.133 CAP 200: For abundant caution, the submission of Counsel Assisting should not be accepted and should be removed.

9.134 CAP 202: For abundant caution it should be added that at the conclusion of the judicial committee meeting into BCH's marital infidelity, the elders continued to investigate BCG's allegations until such time as BCH confessed at the appeal committee meeting.

9.135 Further, the only sister of BCG to give any evidence to the elders was BCK.[138]

9.136 CAP 203: The word "*ultimately*" should be replaced with "*immediately*".

9.137 CAP 204: This submission is not relevant and is misleading. The report related to the concluded investigation into BCH's marital infidelity. Investigations were continuing into BCG's complaint. The report was received by the Service Desk on 7 August 1989. The Service Desk also received, on 7 August 1989, the report of the appeal committee which dealt with BCG's complaint.[139]

9.138 CAP 206: The sentence, *He agreed however that there can be no ongoing investigation of a disfellowshipped person* is not relevant, is misleading and should not be made. There is clear evidence that following the judicial committee meeting the investigation into BCG's complaints continued and the complaints were taken up during the appeal committee meeting.

9.139 Further, Mr de Rooy's evidence should be added, that the disfellowshipping of BCH would only have taken effect after an announcement to the congregation that BCH was disfellowshipped, which would only be made after the expiration of the 7 day period to appeal the decision of the judicial committee.[140]

9.140 CAP 208: It is submitted that this paragraph is not relevant and should be removed.

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138 Transcript of D Ali, T15347;13, 46-47, and T15347;1 (Day 149).
139 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.001.002.0135_R (Tab 5).
140 Transcript of R de Rooy, T15605:3-7 (Day 151);
See also Exhibit 29-0032, WAT.0020.001.0001 at pages 147-148.

9.141 CAP 210: For accuracy, it should be added that BCG's then fiancé, BCJ accompanied BCG to the Kingdom Hall and remained at the premises to support BCG.[141]

9.142 It should also be stated that of the 6 elders, Mr Ali, Mr de Rooy and Mr Bowditch were well known to BCG (see 9.92 and 9.93 above) and Mr Don Wilson was the father of BCG's best friend.[142]

9.143 CAP 213: For accuracy it should be added that this document appears to be the original notification from the judicial committee that had not been updated to reflect the subsequent finding of the appeal committee.

9.144 CAP 216: It is submitted that this statement is inaccurate and should be removed.

9.145 CAP 219: It should be added that Mr de Rooy emphatically denied that he would have chastised BCG for her attempted suicide, and stated, *I would not ... at all think of chastising someone who felt like that. That is just not part of how I shepherd and help ones who are distressed like that*.[143]

9.146 In light of the foregoing, we now submit that the following additions, deletions and amendments are necessary to Counsel Assisting's recommended findings contained at F17 to F29.

9.147 F17: This suggested finding is not supported by the evidence and should not be made.

9.148 F18: This suggested finding should be amended to remove, *and it was not likely to, nor did it, result in BCG disclosing the full extent of her abuse*.

9.149 F19: This suggested finding should be amended to reflect the evidence in relation to BCG.

9.150 F20: This suggested finding should be amended to remove, *but they took no action in relation to that evidence.*[144]

9.151 F21: This suggested finding should be amended to: *The evidence presented to the judicial committee of BCH having abused BCG's elder sister satisfied*

141 Transcript of D Ali, T15330:28-29 (Day 148).
142 Transcript of BCG, T15290:7-8 (Day 148).
143 Transcript of R de Rooy, T15565:43 to T15566:13 (Day 151).
144 Transcript of D Ali, T15353:18-23 and 32-33.

the Scriptural standard with regard to sufficiency of evidence to establish that BCH had abused BCG.

9.152 F22: This suggested finding is not supported by the evidence and should be amended to: *In the course of the appeal committee hearing, BCH confessed to having abused BCG*

9.153 F23: This suggested finding is not supported by the evidence and should not be made.

9.154 F24: This suggested should be disregarded.

9.155 F25: This suggested finding should be amended to remove: *"The appeal committee's requirement",* "*was unjustified*" and "*and should never have happened*".

9.156 F26: This suggested finding should be amended to remove: *and a risk to children and reflects that the elders were not concerned with child safety but rather with keeping their organisation "clean"*.

9.157 F27: This suggested finding is not supported by the evidence and should be disregarded.

9.158 F28: This suggested finding should be amended by replacing '*anyone*' with '*everyone*'.

9.159 F29: This suggested finding is not supported by the evidence and should not be made.

Available findings on the reinstatement of BCH

9.160 Counsel Assisting considers that the following four findings are available on the evidence:

F30 BCH was reinstated as a Jehovah's Witness little more than three years after he had been disfellowshipped for, amongst other things, five or six counts of sexual abuse of his daughter.

F31 The decision to reinstate BCH took no account of the risk that BCH posed to children, paid little regard to the fact that he had been disfellowshipped because of child sexual abuse, and was focussed principally on his extra-marital relationship.

F32 The decision to reinstate BCH took no account of BCH's failure to apologise to BCG, a factor relevant to consideration of sincere repentance, or of what BCG might have had to say about BCH being reinstated.

F33 The decision to reinstate BCH was disrespectful and unsupportive of BCG.

F34 The Branch Office's response to BCG on 26 February 1996 caused BCG to feel angry, upset and let down, and did not convey support and concern to BCG on the part of the Jehovah's Witness organisation.

9.161 It is submitted that the evidential basis for suggested findings F30 to F34 contained in CAP 220 to 233 require the following additions, deletions and amendments.

9.162 CAP 220: replace *less than* with *almost*.

9.163 CAP 231: replace *BCH was reinstated in 13 November 1992* with *3 years after being disfellowshipped by the Mareeba Congregation BCH was reinstated in the St George Congregation*.

9.164 CAP 234: replace *Mr de Rooy could not recall this conversation with BCG and did not accept that he might have said that to BCG* with *Mr de Rooy's evidence was*:

(a) *That he did not recall the question of going to the Police being discussed at any tim*e;

(b) *That he did not make any comment as to this*; *and*

(c) *That he was not surprised that BCG reported the abuse to the Police some years later.*[145]

9.165 Further, when cross-examined at length by Counsel Assisting on this matter, Mr de Rooy maintained his position and added further support for his position by explaining that in his opinion the prohibition on taking legal action against fellow Jehovah's Witnesses did not apply in the case of matters such as child sexual abuse.[146]

9.166 It is therefore submitted that the last two sentences of CAP 234 should be removed.

[145] Exhibit 29-0016, Statement of R de Rooy, STAT.0597.001.0001_R_at [5.2].
[146] Transcript of R de Rooy, T15584:6-T15587:27 (Day 151).

9.167 In the light of the foregoing, we now submit that the following additions, deletions and amendments are necessary to Counsel Assisting's suggested findings contained at F30 to F34.

9.168 F30: should be replaced with: *BCH was reinstated as one of Jehovah's Witnesses three years after he had been disfellowshipped for, amongst other things, child sexual abuse of his daughter and adultery*.

9.169 F31: should be replaced with: *The religious decision to reinstate BCH as a member of the congregation was based on his demonstration of repentance, rather than on other factors*.

9.170 F32: should be replaced with: *BCG felt that the decision to reinstate BCH as a member of the congregation did not take into consideration whether BCH had personally apologised to BCG for child sexual abuse*.

9.171 F33: should be replaced with: *BCG felt that the decision to reinstate BCH in the St George Congregation did not take her feelings into consideration*.

9.172 F34: should be replaced with: *Although the letter from Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia to BCG dated 26 February 1996 acknowledges her feelings and conveys concern for BCG, due to a misunderstanding of the meaning of the Scripture shared with her, BCG felt, angry, upset, and unsupported.*[147]

Available findings on the impact of the judicial committee process on criminal proceedings against BCH

9.173 Counsel Assisting considers that the following finding is available on the evidence:

> **F35 The judicial committee and appeal committee processes that preceded BCG reporting her abuse by her father to the police complicated the criminal proceedings because of the numbers of people involved in those processes and the telling and retelling of the experience.**

9.174 The suggested finding will not assist the Commission in its task of making recommendations on systemic issues concerning either the prevention of, or better responses to, child sexual abuse. The suggested finding seems to be based upon the views of an inexperienced lawyer (Mr Davies) in the one case

[147] Exhibit 29-0003, QLD.0068.001.1409_R;
Transcript of G W Jackson, T15993 (Day 155).

involving BCG. One example does not reflect the existence of a systemic problem in responding to complaints of child sexual abuse. Moreover, it is important to see things in context. It is sometimes a feature of criminal trials that they can be factually and legally complicated and evidence can be contaminated by speaking to others, but, as is evident from the testimony of many adult survivors, it does not necessarily prevent the conviction of a perpetrator. Furthermore, some adult survivors will want to speak to someone about what has happened to them. Not listening to an adult survivor, or informing them that they ought not speak about what has happened to them, has the potential to further traumatise a survivor.

9.175 The problem is not that a survivor should not speak to several persons,[148] it is whether the listener may influence or contaminate the survivor's views about what occurred. For example, it is well known that if a matter is reported to the police, the survivor may have to tell their story to several persons including the investigating officer, the medical examiner, one or more detectives, prosecution counsel and possibly others. In the case of young children who often first report such matters to their parents, some degree of contamination may be inevitable. Speaking out is often the first step to recovery for a victim and the suggested finding, if made, has the potential to have a "chilling effect" on speaking out simply because of the way in which ideas are conveyed in short hand by persons.

Available findings on the risk management and second disfellowshipping of BCH

9.176 Counsel Assisting considers that the following three findings are available on the evidence:

F36 When BCH was reinstated no restrictions were placed on him which were relevant to his risk to children despite his established history of child sexual abuse.

F37 BCH was disfellowshipped a second time for lying in relation to child sexual abuse rather than for child sexual abuse itself.

F38 The reasons canvassed and then given for the second disfellowshipping of BCH show that those from the Jehovah's Witness organisation who were involved were more concerned about a charge of lying than they were about BCH's sexual abuse of his daughters.

9.177 The evidence concerning BCH was that he abused only his own children when they were vulnerable to abuse. There was no evidence that BCH

[148] As the Royal Commission observed in its Interim Report Vol 2 at page 4, one of the factors that encourages disclosure of abuse includes being asked in a sensitive and appropriate way by a trusted adult. Elders within the Jehovah's Witnesses are trusted adults and it is noteworthy that 1,006 cases were disclosed to the organisation.

abused any child apart from his own. There was no evidence given that BCH was a risk to any other children and there is, therefore, no evidential, or any other basis, for suggested finding F36 and it ought not be made. BCH's actions should be condemned with a finding but, in the absence of evidence, there is no basis for a broader finding.

9.178 It will be recalled that one of the witnesses[149] gave evidence that it is not possible to separate out the lie from the content of the lie[150] and an attempt to do so is artificial. If a person lies about being a child abuser, when they have been found to have committed the sin of child abuse, the lie is evidence that the person is unrepentant and, an unrepentant person will be disfellowshipped for the failure to admit their first wrongdoing and not for the lying. It follows that, suggested finding F37 proceeds upon an artificial distinction and it will not be of assistance to the Commission in its task of making recommendations on systemic issues.

9.179 The Commission ought not make suggested finding F38 because it relies upon a view of the evidence that was expressly denied by the elders involved in making the relevant decisions.[151] In this case, Counsel Assisting misinterprets the reasons why the elders disfellowshipped BCH. This exemplifies why secular bodies should not second-guess the reasons for disciplinary decisions of ecclesiastical bodies.

9.180 It should be noted that Counsel Assisting, according to F35, criticises the elders for interviewing BCG which he contends "complicated the criminal proceedings" and then takes exception to the fact that the elders did not speak to her two young sisters who were also victimised by BCH. Mr Pencheff testified that the judicial committee refrained from interviewing these two other victims out of deference to the ongoing criminal proceedings.[152]

CAS Part 6: A Scriptural Approach to Child Sexual Abuse Policy

Available findings on the authority of the Governing Body

9.181 Counsel Assisting considers that the following two findings are available on the evidence:

[149] Mr A C Pencheff.
[150] See the evidence of Mr A C Pencheff: Transcript of A C Pencheff, T15650:30-40 (Day 152).
[151] See the evidence of Mr A C Pencheff: Transcript of A C Pencheff, T15650:30-T15651:12 (Day 152).
[152] Transcript of A C Pencheff, T15647:8-10 (Day 152).

F39 Mr Spinks' evidence that the Australia Branch has full authority to produce documents, seminars, letters to elders and letters to publishers without the approval or agreement of the Governing Body is rejected.

9.182 It may be recalled that the tenor of Mr Spinks' evidence was that, from a Scriptural perspective, the Governing Body has primacy regarding the response to sexual abuse but each branch office, including the Australia branch office, had responsibility to ensure compliance with the local legal requirements and other sensitivities of the jurisdiction, and several examples of where that had occurred were given to the Commission by Mr Toole and Mr Spinks.[153] It follows from the foregoing that, the suggested finding F39 proceeds upon an inaccurate view of Mr Spinks' evidence and, in fairness to him and Jehovah's Witnesses, it should not be made.

9.183 In any event, however, the suggested finding is not, in any way, relevantly connected to either preventing or responding to child sexual abuse by Jehovah's Witnesses. It follows that, the proposed finding, has little direct bearing on the Terms of Reference and is of no real assistance to the Commission.

9.184 The proposed finding misrepresents Mr Spinks' evidence in several respects:

(a) First, Counsel Assisting fails to include in the finding the important qualification that Mr Spinks makes (despite referring to that qualification in CAS 280). The qualification is in the following terms that:[154]

> "As long as we [that is, the Australia branch] don't stray from the Scriptures which is the primary role of the Governing Body worldwide, the Australia branch has full authority to produce documents, to clearly set out ... what needs to be made clear locally".

(b) Secondly, Counsel Assisting does not refer to Mr Spinks' evidence that elaborates on the proposition that Governing Body approval is not required where, by way of example, there is a mandatory reporting requirement.[155]

(c) Thirdly, Counsel Assisting takes out of context the statement that the "Australian branch does have that authority".[156] The statement is referrable to ensuring that "things that are specific to the countries –

153 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15688:15-21, T15691:15-22 and T15692:36-T15693:3 (Day 152).
154 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15688:15-21 (Day 152).
155 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15690:12-23 (Day 152).
156 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15692:35 (Day 152).

sensitivities, cultural issues, legal implications" are taken into account in publications and policies.[157]

9.185 There is no justification for a finding that Mr Spinks gave evidence to the effect that the Australia branch had full authority to publish without approval or agreement of the Governing Body.

9.186 To the contrary, it leads ineluctably to the conclusion that the process was collaborative. Further, Mr Spinks' evidence was consistent with the evidence of Messrs Jackson, Toole and O'Brien. As Mr Geoffrey Jackson stated:[158]

> *…we would expect the general framework of what we do to be published as approved by the Governing Body. But, you see, when we say "published" letters are published by the local branches that indicate any variance that may need to take place with regard to those policies.*

9.187 Furthermore, the finding fails to distinguish between a branch office publishing documents where there was established Scriptural direction and where local requirements entailed deliberations and correspondence between the Governing Body and the branch.

9.188 As to the former, the evidence shows the Australia branch regularly produced letters to elders and letters to publishers without seeking the review or approval of the Governing Body.[159] As the content of such letters is based on Bible principles and the publications and guidelines provided by the Governing Body, and the Service Department is giving specific directions in a local context, there is no expectation or requirement on the part of the Governing Body to review or approve such letters.

9.189 Finally, the suggested finding is not, in any way, relevantly connected to either preventing or responding to child sexual abuse by Jehovah Witnesses. It follows that, the proposed finding, has little direct bearing on the Terms of Reference and is of no real assistance to the Commission.

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157 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15692:17-18 (Day 152).
158 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15953:18-24 (Day 155).
159 Examples of such letters are the letters from the Service Department to the Body of Elders at Kalamunda Congregation:
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0091_R;
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0092_R;
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0095_R; and
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.002.0099_R.

F40 The Governing Body retains authority in respect of all publications in the name of the Jehovah's Witness organisation and any view or perspective contrary to that of the Governing Body is not tolerated.

9.190 The submissions in response to suggested finding F39 above are repeated. It is inaccurate to suggest that "all" publications in the name of the organisation of Jehovah's Witnesses are subject to the Governing Body's authority. It was clear from the evidence given before the Commission that the Governing Body allows local branch offices to modify letters as necessary to conform with local requirements and circumstances. Therefore, it is inaccurate to suggest that "all" publications in the name of the organisation of Jehovah's Witnesses are subject to the Governing Body's authority.

9.191 However, an available finding F40 concerning the authority of the Governing Body, which is consistent with the evidence of Mr Geoffrey Jackson and Mr Spinks, is that:

> *"The Governing Body retains authority in respect of the general principle and framework of all publications in the name of Jehovah's Witnesses, and any view or perspective contrary to the Bible is not tolerated."*

CAS Part 7: Current Systems, Policies and Procedures for Responding to Allegations of Child Sexual Abuse

Available findings on the investigation process

9.192 Counsel Assisting considers that the following three findings are available on the evidence:

F41 There are no circumstances in which the survivor of a sexual assault should have to make her allegation in the presence of the person whom she accuses of having assaulted her, and, contrary to the present position, the documents, manuals and instructions produced by the Jehovah's Witness organisation should make this clear.

9.193 Jehovah's Witnesses agree that a child victim of sexual abuse should not have to confront their abuser. Jehovah's Witness procedures and practices did not and do not require such a confrontation. In those cases where the adult survivor wishes to confront the abuser, however, different considerations may be involved.[160]

[160] Transcript of R P Spinks, T15686 (Day 152).

9.194 The suggested finding refers to what may have happened in one particular case of an adult survivor, rather than to the long-standing policies and practices of Jehovah's Witnesses that do not require a victim to confront his/her abuser. The suggested finding is misleading concerning the policies and practices of Jehovah's Witnesses. The suggested finding implies that:

(a) Jehovah's Witnesses *presently* require a survivor of a sexual assault to make her allegation in the presence of the accused; and

(b) The documents, manuals and instructions produced by Jehovah's Witnesses are unclear about whether a survivor of sexual assault must face the accused,

both of which are contrary to oral testimony[161] given before the Commission and documentary evidence[162] provided to the Commission.

9.195 In addition, the suggested finding is misleading. As Ms Gallagher, Counsel for BCB, acknowledged that Jehovah's Witnesses do not require a survivor of a sexual assault to make her allegation in the presence of the accused:[163]

> Q. As it stands now, just as practicalities, if a young child comes forward, or there is complaint from a young child, of course they would not face their abuser - is that so?
>
> A. That's correct
>
> Q. So there's a statement, or the allegation would be put in writing in some way; is that right ?
>
> A. That can be the case, yes.

9.196 An available finding F41, consistent with the documents produced to the Commission and the evidence of each of Messrs Geoffrey Jackson, Spinks, O'Brien and Toole is as follows:

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161 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15683:43-T15684:7 (Day 152);
Transcript of G W Jackson (agreeing with Spinks), T15951:29-33 and T15952:27-29 (Day 155);
Transcript of T J O'Brien at T15834:1-26 (Day 153);
Transcript of V J Toole (agreeing with Spinks), at T15802:19-22 (Day 153).

162 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT 0001.004.0310 (*The Watchtower* "Comfort for Those With a Stricken Spirit", November 1, 1995);
see also Transcript of R P Spinks, T15695:5-14 (Day 152);
Exhibit 29-0020, EXH.029.020.0001 (Circuit Overseer's *Outline for the Elders' Meeting*, Form S-337);
Transcript of R P Spinks, T15702-T15705:20 (Day 152);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at [0073] (*Shepherd the Flock of God* ("Elders' Handbook", also referred to as *ks10*) chapter 5, par. 38).

163 See Transcript of R P Spinks, T15733:14-22 (Day 152) (during Ms Gallagher's examination of Mr Spinks)

"Jehovah's Witnesses have not and do not presently, require the survivor of a sexual assault to make his/her allegation in the presence of the person whom he/she accuses of having assaulted him/her, unless the survivor wishes to do so; and Jehovah's Witnesses have acknowledged the need for this position to be clearly documented."

F42 The requirement that two or more eyewitnesses to the same incident are required in the absence of a confession from the accused, the testimony of two or three witnesses to separate incidents of the same kind of wrongdoing, or strong, circumstantial evidence testified to by at least two witnesses (i.e. the two witness rule):

(a) means that in respect of child sexual abuse which almost invariably occurs in private, very often no finding of guilt will be made in respect of a guilty accused

9.197 The suggested finding at F42(a) is a criticism of the Bible's rule of evidence for establishing sin.[164] Counsel Assisting asserts that because abuse occurs in private, "very often no finding of guilt will be made". If that assertion were true, then one would expect to see that in the vast majority of cases, there would be no finding of guilt of a person within the faith. That assertion is not supported by the statistical evidence presented to the Commission[165] and is not supported by the experience in the secular arena.

9.198 First, the function of the investigative process carried out by Jehovah's Witnesses is to determine whether evidence exists, by reference to Scriptural standards for sin, such that a judicial committee should be formed. This is not a procedure to determine if an individual is guilty of a crime. If a judicial committee is formed, its function is to establish the facts and then to ascertain the attitude of the wrongdoer, that is, whether he or she is repentant.[166]

9.199 Secondly, no evidence was presented to the Commission that, by virtue of such conduct occurring in private, *very often no finding of guilt will be made* notwithstanding that the Commission received documents concerning all allegations of such conduct and that nearly 580 persons confessed to some form of sexual abuse or misconduct.[167]

9.200 Thirdly, the conclusion sought to be drawn does not follow from the premises. If two persons are both assaulted in private and both come forward with

164 Proverbs 28:13; Matthew 18:16; Deuteronomy 19:15; 2 Corinthians 13:1; 1 Timothy 5:19.
165 According to the letter from the Solicitor Assisting the Commission only 125 out of 1,006 case files were prevented from proceeding to a judicial committee. Approximately some 579 alleged perpetrators confessed to having committed child sexual abuse: Exhibit 29-0021, WAT.9999.013.0003_R (Letter from T. Giugni of Royal Commission to Milton Bray dated 16 July 2015 at paragraphs 16-17).
166 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15967:38-T15968 (Day 155).
167 Exhibit 29-0031, WAT.0021.001.0001 - Case File Analysis Prepared by Royal Commission Staff.

reports, the matter of guilt is established. If it occurs in private and a confession or admittance of guilt occurs, guilt will also be established.

9.201 Fourthly, the suggested finding is based on an incorrect assumption that no precautionary actions are taken when there is insufficient Scriptural evidence of the sin occurring. It is also based on an incorrect and unrealistic assumption that the investigation processes followed by secular authorities often result in a finding of guilt in respect of an accused, which is widely acknowledged not to be the case by members of the police force, legal profession and judiciary. For example:

(a) the secular judicial system failed to make a finding of guilt against [BCH] in two separate trials, and only succeeded on the third attempt, as stated:

> *there were three trials – the first resulted in a hung jury, the second a mistrial, and then the third a conviction.*[168]

(b) Mr Davies gave evidence that about 80 per cent of matters reported to the State of Queensland child protection authority were not acted on as

> *They didn't reach the thresholds necessary for child protection statutory action.*[169]

9.202 The suggested finding F42(a) should be amended to read:

> *"In the case of any alleged serious sin, including child abuse, judicial committees are formed on the basis of the Scriptural standard of evidence of either a confession or substantiation by two or more witnesses. – Proverbs 28:13; Deuteronomy 19:15; Matthew 18:16; 2 Corinthians 13:1; 1 Timothy 5:19."*

F42 [The two witness rule]:

b) causes victims of child sexual abuse to feel unheard and unsupported when it results in allegations of child sexual abuse not being upheld

9.203 The suggested finding F42(b) is presumably based upon the testimony of the two witnesses BCB and BCG but the testimony of these two witnesses does not in fact support the suggested finding.

[168] Transcript of J P Davies, T15421:31-33 (Day 149).
[169] Transcript of J P Davies, T15426:46-T15427:2 (Day 149).

9.204 First, in her evidence, BCB stated[170] that when she told Max Horley about what had happened to her, *"…Max was very kind and supportive. He told me that what has happened was not my fault and that I shouldn't blame myself*", although BCB also states that,[171] "*Overall however, I remember that I didn't feel supported*". Nevertheless, nowhere in her statement does BCB assert that the existence of the two witness rule caused her to feel either "unheard" or "unsupported".

9.205 Moreover, it is not possible to draw such an inference based upon the experience of these two witnesses, whose abuse occurred in the 1980's. Every person's responses in life are unique to that person. Some may consider it "unfair" or "disappointing" or they may be "angry" but they may not consider that they have been "unheard" or "unsupported".

9.206 Secondly, there is no *causal connection* between an evidential requirement that there be two witnesses or other Scripturally sufficient evidence to a sin and a victim's feelings about the abuse they have suffered and whether they feel "unheard" or "unsupported". The fact is that survivors do have a voice and they are heard by elders and their complaints are investigated. Additionally, victims and their families are provided with ongoing spiritual support and comfort.[172]

9.207 Thirdly, even in the secular arena, it is well known that many allegations of sexual abuse are not upheld[173] – the secular system is not necessarily condemned as "*causing*" victims to feel "unheard" or "unsupported" when their allegations are not upheld.

9.208 Fourthly, even if it were true, no process dealing with the crime of child sexual abuse could abandon a requirement that some evidence be presented. Whether the Scriptural requirement that there be a confession or two witnesses to establish sin should be altered is beyond the Terms of Reference of the Commission and contrary to the fundamental right of freedom of religion enshrined in the Constitution.

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170 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [50].

171 Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [64].

172 See for example, Transcript of BCB, T15164:4-6 (Day 141), Transcript of A R de Rooy, T15566:7-13 (Day 151), Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.004, "What Elders Can Say to Abuse Victims" and Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.001, Letter from Watchtower to All Bodies of Elders dated 23 April 1992.

173 For example, BCG reported that "It took six years and three trials before he [BCH] was finally convicted for the indecent assault of me": Transcript of BCG, T15293:42-43 (Day 148);
See also the Report prepared for the Royal Commission, "Sentencing for Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Contexts", July 2015, p. 1: *"A criminal justice response to CSA entails a long and difficult process of reporting, detection, prosecution, trial and disposition. Sentencing is one of the final stages of this process, however the number of people convicted and sentenced of CSA represents a very small proportion of those who commit such offences. Attrition rates are very high and accordingly very few offenders are held to account, and only a small number of victims can be vindicated through this process."*

9.209 The suggested finding is not supported by the evidence. An alternate suggested finding F42(b) consistent with the evidence of the two survivor witnesses is:

> "*Based on the testimony of the two survivor witnesses: (i) Although BCB did not feel supported overall, her testimony was that [an elder involved in Scriptually caring for her accusation] was "very kind and supportive. He told me that what has happened was not my fault and that I shouldn't blame myself"; and (ii) Although BCG felt unsupported when her allegations of child sexual abuse against her father, BCH, were not Scripturally established at the time of the first congregation judicial hearing, it should be noted that BCH was found guilty of the sexual abuse of his daughter by the congregation appeal committee within the following two weeks.*"

F42: [The two witness rule]:

c) is a danger to children in the Jehovah's Witness organisation because its consequence is that very often nothing is done about an abuser in the organisation

9.210 No credible or reliable or tested evidence was in fact presented to the Commission to support such a generalised finding that the Scriptural requirement for two witnesses "*is a danger to children*" and it ought not be made. It also ought not be made for the following additional reasons.

9.211 First, there is no *causal connection* between the existence of a rule of evidence and whether children within a religious community are at risk of sexual abuse and the assumption that the two are connected is not borne out by any evidence presented to the Commission. It is tantamount to saying that, the requirement of proof of criminal guilt "beyond a reasonable doubt" means that "very often nothing is done about an abuser" secularly if they are not convicted; or that, the hearsay rule should be abandoned because it means that "very often" a truthful person is not relied upon. The rules of evidence are based upon the experience of the Courts in dealing with matters over at least two centuries. The Scriptural rules of evidence are thousands of years old. One aspect of the rules of evidence is to ensure a fair trial of allegations and to ensure that innocent persons are not wrongly convicted.

9.212 Secondly, it neglects the fact that a significant number of persons have been prosecuted by the secular authorities regardless of the existence of the two witness rule and the suggested finding does not have regard to that

consideration.[174] As an example, notably, the elders cooperated with the prosecution against BCG's father.[175]

9.213 Thirdly, it also overlooks the fact that in the small communities of Jehovah's Witnesses, an allegation of wrongdoing will not go unnoticed or unheeded. The experiences of both BCB and BCG establish the opposite and other members of the community of Jehovah's Witnesses became aware of the wrongdoing caused to BCB and BCG and support was provided to them.

9.214 Fourthly, such a finding is, in fact, contrary to the evidence given by Mr Spinks and others (as set out in the passages below) that a person suspected of child sexual abuse can be the subject of restrictions.[176]

9.215 Fifthly, the only consequence of the "two witness rule" in this context, is that it may preclude elders from "taking a specific action, judicial action" in respect of the accused.[177]

9.216 However, the event that triggers Jehovah's Witnesses to take protective action for a victim (and other at risk children) is an allegation of child sexual abuse. Elders are instructed to *investigate every allegation of abuse.*[178] In every case where an allegation of child sexual abuse is made, Jehovah's Witnesses instigate a range of measures to protect children:

(a) The safety of the victim and other children in congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses is the first concern of elders, the Australia branch and the Governing Body;[179]

(b) The elders are directed to call the Service Department to "discuss the situation and work out how best to be able to protect the child";[180]

(c) The branch office informs congregation elders that steps need to be taken to protect the child;[181]

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174 [161] alleged perpetrators have been convicted of a sexual abuse offence out of 383 investigated by the secular authorities.
175 Exhibit 29-0011, First statement of J Davies, STAT.0595.001.0001_R at [10]-[12].
176 Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001 at [37], [46], [47], [65]; Transcript of R P Spinks, T15711:26-29 and T15737:20-32 (Day 152).
177 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15711:14-16 (Day 152).
178 Exhibit 29-0024, First statement of T J O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [54] citing *Letter to Bodies of Elders* dated October 1, 2012, Re: Child abuse.
179 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15968:29-38 (Day 155).
180 Transcript of V J Toole, T15763:32-40 (Day 153).
181 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0068 (Letter to Elders *"Whatever the Cost"* October 1, 2012, para. 10); Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0210 (*Awake*! January 22, 1985); Exhibit 29-0019, Annexure 2 to First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0018.

(d) The branch office Service Department gives clear advice to the elders on the need to protect the child;[182]

(e) If the abuser is an elder or ministerial servant, he is deleted and does not continue to function in this capacity;[183]

(f) The conduct and activities of the accused are closely monitored and the elders implement the directions set out in paragraph 11 of the Letter to Bodies of Elders dated October 1, 2012 Re: Child Abuse;[184]

(g) The elders may warn the accused or place restrictions on his contact with children; and subsequently disfellowship the accused for breaching those restrictions;[185]

(h) Two elders may be assigned to meet with the parents of minor children in order to provide a warning as set out in paragraph 13 of the Letter to Bodies of Elders dated October 1, 2012 Re: Child Abuse;[186]

(i) If an elder ultimately believes a child is in danger, and the parent or guardian is unwilling to protect the child, the elder can report the matter to the police.[187]

9.217 At all times during this process, the stated policy of Jehovah's Witnesses is that:

> "If the victim wishes to make a report [to the authorities], it is his or her absolute right to do so."[188]

9.218 In addition, the suggested finding is based on an incorrect and unrealistic assumption that the investigation processes followed by secular authorities often result in the conviction and/or removal of an abuser from the community, which is widely acknowledged not to be the case by staff in child protection authorities, members of the police force, legal profession and judiciary.

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182 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15662:34-43 (Day 152) (see also from T15661:23).
183 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0306 (*The Watchtower* January 1, 1997, pp. 26-29 "*Let Us Abhor What is Wicked*");
Exhibit 29-0024, First statement of T J O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R, par. [62] at 0013, 1 Timothy 3:1-7, 10; Titus 1:7.
184 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15737:16-32 (Day 152);
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0066
CAS par. 352 noting that the elders in such situations are directed to remain "vigilant".
185 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15711:22-46 (Day 152);
Transcript of R P Spinks, T15712:46-T15713:17 (Day 152).
186 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0069.
187 Transcript of V J Toole, T15794:23-26 (Day 153).
188 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0133 (ks10 12:19).

F42 [The two witness rule]:

d) does not seem to be applied by the Jehovah's Witness organisation in the case of an accusation of adultery, which suggests that adultery is taken more seriously by the organisation than child sexual abuse

9.219 The suggested finding "that adultery is taken more seriously by the organisation than child sexual abuse" is contrary to the oral evidence given by Mr M Baker, formerly one of Jehovah's Witnesses, called by Counsel Assisting. Mr Baker, who had no reason to give evidence favourable to Jehovah's Witnesses having been disfellowshipped and shunned by others, acknowledged that adultery was not regarded as more serious than child sexual abuse.[189]

9.220 Indeed, no oral evidence of any person with any authority or relevant experience to speak on such matters was presented to the Commission in which it was asserted that it was the practice of Jehovah's Witnesses to take adultery more seriously than child sexual abuse. No one would seriously contend that adultery was a more serious sin than the sin of sexual abuse of a child.[190]

9.221 For those and other reasons, the assumption regarding the *evidence* required for establishing adultery is incorrect and is not supported by the oral testimony that was placed before the Commission[191] and the literature published and disseminated by Jehovah's Witnesses.[192]

9.222 The suggested finding "that adultery is taken more seriously by the organisation than child sexual abuse" is incorrect[193] and ought not be made.[194] Jehovah's Witnesses have for decades warned against the abhorrent sin of child abuse[195] and have advised that in order to protect a child, the sinner may

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189 Transcript of M Baker, T15623:45-T15624:8 (Day 151).

190 For example, Transcript of R P Spinks, T15721:19-23 (Day 152): "*Not only is that printed, that we view child abuse as a sin and a crime, there is no worse sin and crime than child abuse. So I understand the basis for you expressing that, but that is totally the opposite to the truth with Jehovah's Witnesses*."
See also Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001 at [13] and [25];
Exhibit 29-0024, First statement of T J O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [47] and [91].

191 Exhibit 29-0035, Statement of G W Jackson, STAT.0670.001.0001 at [15]-[21];
See also footnote 190 above.

192 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0205 at 0210 (Awake! January 22, 1985 – "Child Molesting: Every Mother's Nightmare"); for more examples, see footnote 16 above.

193 See footnotes 190-192 above.

194 The only possible basis for such a conclusion was the confusing cross examination of the elders on the judicial committee who only had confirmation of the sin of adultery for which they disfellowshipped BCH. When confirmation of the child abuse of BCG was established at the appeal of that decision the disfellowshipping was upheld on the basis of the additional charge of porneia (child abuse).

195 See footnote 16 above.

need to go to jail,[196] and Jehovah's Witnesses will not protect an abuser.[197] No one in Australia today is sent to jail for committing adultery.

F42 [The two witness rule]:

e) needs to be revisited by the Jehovah's Witness organisation with a view to abandoning it or at least reformulating it to ensure that safe decisions as to someone being guilty of child sexual abuse can be made more easily.

9.223 The evidential requirements laid down in Scripture for establishing sin are not matters that can be "revisited" or "abandoned" by Jehovah's Witnesses;[198] just as belief in the Bible's record of Jesus Christ curing the blind or resurrecting the dead cannot be abandoned by Christians, notwithstanding modern-day evidence that such miracles are not humanly possible; nor will the criminal justice system abandon the requirement to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt, although many no doubt think that such a requirement allows some who are guilty to go free.

9.224 Moreover, the free exercise of religion protected by s.116 of the Constitution means that a person is free to hold a religious belief and is free to act upon that religious belief in respect of matters of sin without interference from the secular authorities.[199] It would be beyond the scope of the Terms of Reference of the Commission to require a member of a religious faith to "revisit" or "abandon" their beliefs in order to satisfy another person's idea of what constitutes a "safe" decision.

9.225 This suggested finding is based on a number of incorrect assumptions. A "safe decision" is not necessarily one that "can be made more easily". In the case of Jehovah's Witnesses, a determination of guilt in respect of a sinner is based on their understanding of Scriptural evidentiary requirements.

9.226 The suggested finding is inconsistent with the religious beliefs of the 68,000 Jehovah's Witnesses living in Australia and 8.2 million Jehovah's Witnesses

196 Exhibit 29-0024, First statement of T J O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [57];
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0205 at 0210 (last paragraph in box) (Awake! January 22, 1985 – "Child Molesting: Every Mother's Nightmare");
Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0306 at 0310 (par. 1) (The Watchtower, January 1, 1997 – "Let Us Abhor What is Wicked").

197 Exhibit 29-0035, Statement of G W Jackson, STAT.0670.001.0001 at [14];
Transcript of R P Spinks, T15662:1-43 (Day 152);
Transcript of V J Toole, T15794:23-26 (Day 153);
See also footnote 196 above.

198 Exhibit 29-0035, Statement of G W Jackson, STAT.0670.001.0001 at [15]-[21];
Transcript of R P Spinks, T15699:21-47; T15700:7-11, 19-37; T15705:33-40 (Day 152);
Transcript of G W Jackson, T15946:15-19 (Day 155).

199 See paragraphs 3.7-3.10 in Submissions above.

worldwide (since Jehovah's Witnesses are united in their religious beliefs and practices, irrespective of their nationality).

9.227 In any event, the investigative processes to determine whether a serious sin occurred that are followed by Jehovah's Witnesses do not purport to supplant the secular authorities, to whom a victim or his/her parents remain free at all times to report a crime.

F43 The requirement that only elders (i.e. men) can participate in the making of decisions in the investigation process on whether or not someone has committed child sexual abuse:

a) is a fundamental flaw in that process which weakens the decisions by excluding women, and

b) needs to be revisited by the Jehovah's Witness organisation to ensure a meaningful role for women

9.228 As set out in Part I, no empirical or credible evidence has been placed before the Commission suggesting that a decision made only by men was or is necessarily problematic.

9.229 In relation to F43(b), Jehovah's Witnesses repeat their submissions in response to suggested finding F42(e). It would be inconsistent with and contrary to the free exercise of religion in Australia for the Commission to find that the members of a religious institution must "revisit" a Scriptural belief.

9.230 It is beyond the scope of the Commission's Terms of Reference to make findings on what is or is not a "meaningful role" for women within the belief system of Jehovah's Witnesses.

9.231 In any event, as noted at CAP 351, Mr Geoffrey Jackson gave evidence:

> "that there is no Biblical impediment to women being involved in the investigation and that two women close to the victim may take the victim's testimony and convey it to the investigating elders."

9.232 However, with regard to making decisions or judgments in the Christian congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, this responsibility is assigned to the men who are appointed as elders.

Available findings on the judicial committee process

9.233 Counsel Assisting considers that the following five findings are available on the evidence:

> **F44 Under the current documented judicial committee process, if the evidence of the complainant is to be taken into account then she must give evidence in person unless she lives a great distance away or for some other reason is not able to be physically present.**

9.234 The suggested finding is contrary to the oral evidence of Mr Spinks, who advises elders about such matters, is not supported by any documents referred to by Counsel Assisting and conflates several stages of the process that is involved.

9.235 Counsel Assisting's submission that the oral evidence of Messrs Spinks, O'Brien and Toole "cannot be accepted" is based on an incorrect assumption that there are no documents available to support the oral evidence of the witnesses and is disingenuous.

9.236 The suggested finding is factually incorrect; it is contrary to the following documents produced and explained to the Commission:

(a) The reference to *Shepherd the Flock of God* ("Elders' Handbook") chapter 7, paragraph 2 [200] in the suggested finding is taking the reference out of context. As testified by Mr Spinks, this is a reference to congregation judicial action in *general* and is not specific to handling child sexual abuse.

(b) A specific documented reference to there being no need for a victim of child sexual abuse to confront his/her abuser are found at:

(i) Elders' Handbook chapter 5, paragraph 38.[201] The point is that victims of child sexual abuse are not required to meet with the abuser, and their testimony may be "submitted in writing and read to the accused".[202]

(ii) *The Watchtower* magazine entitled "Comfort for Those With a Stricken Spirit", November 1, 1995 p. 28.[203]

(iii) Circuit Overseer's Outline for the Elders' Meeting, Form S-337 (5/98).[204]

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200 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0090.
201 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0073.
Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15833:43-T15834:26 (Day 153).
202 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.001 at 0090 (ks10 7:2).
203 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0310;
Transcript of R P Spinks, T15695:5-14 (Day 153).

F45 The stated willingness of the Jehovah's Witness organisation in Australia to have the evidence of a complainant of child sexual abuse give evidence remotely or by way of a written statement should be formalised and documented so that those running judicial committee processes and those affected by them are properly advised of the position.

9.237 The stated willingness of Jehovah's Witnesses on this issue is formalised and documented, and has been since at least 1995, as set out in response to F44 above.

9.238 Every elder has a personal copy of the Elders' Handbook which states a victim of child sexual abuse does not need to give evidence in person: Elders' Handbook, chapter 5, paragraph 38.[205] Elders have also received training at schools and during regular circuit overseer's visits concerning this issue.[206]

9.239 Elders have been directed to contact the Service Department whenever an allegation of child sexual abuse is made, whereupon they are advised by elders in the Service Department who are experienced in handling child sexual abuse matters and walked through how to handle the matter, as set out in Annexure 2 to the Statement of R P Spinks.[207]

9.240 Counsel Assisting has relied too much on one case from 27 years ago [BCG] and has not provided any evidence to substantiate the proposed finding in relation to current or recent practice.

9.241 Although the current position is clearly documented, incorporated into the training of elders, and advised by the Service Department to elders, Jehovah's Witnesses have agreed to consider incorporating all of the relevant references into a single document.

9.242 The finding F45 should read:

> *"Jehovah's Witnesses should continue to make clear their long-standing policy that, where desired, a victim may provide evidence remotely or by way of a written statement to elders investigating and to those subsequently handling an allegation of child abuse."*

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204 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15702-T15705:20 (Day 152);
Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15833:43-T15834:26 (Day 153);
Exhibit 29-0020, EXH.029.020.0001.

205 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0073.

206 See, for example, Transcript of R P Spinks, T15701:15-T15703:30 (Day 152).

207 Exhibit 29-0019, Annexure 2 to First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0018.

F46 Under the current documented judicial committee process, a complainant of child sexual abuse is prohibited from having someone present with her in the judicial committee process to offer support.

9.243 This suggested finding is incorrect and is based on Counsel Assisting's misunderstanding of the Elders' Handbook chapter 7, paragraph 3 statement that,[208] "Observers should not be present for moral support", which is actually referring to moral support for the accused, not for a witness/victim.

9.244 Mr Spinks' evidence was (emphasis added):[209]

> "Our application of it, in practice, in the service department, has always been for *the accused*, who is trying to defend himself against the allegations, to not have observers there for moral support, other than the specific witnesses. *We don't want the survivor there as a witness at that judicial hearing*."

9.245 At CAS 370, Counsel Assisting has taken the words of Mr Spinks out of context. The transcript shows that the context in which Mr Spinks acknowledged that the passage in the Elders' Handbook "is confusing," means that it could be "confusing" to those who are not Jehovah's Witnesses.[210] Mr Spinks was clear in his understanding of the Elders' Handbook and was also clear about the current practice and application of the section by congregation elders.[211]

9.246 In circumstances where a victim chooses to confront an accused during the judicial committee process, he/she is <u>not</u> prohibited from having a trusted individual present with them for moral support.

9.247 Accordingly, the suggested finding F46 should not be made.

F47 The stated willingness of the Jehovah's Witness organisation in Australia to allow a complainant of child sexual abuse to be accompanied by a support person of her choosing should be formalised and documented so that those running judicial committee processes and those affected by them are properly advised of the position.

9.248 This suggested finding is based on the incorrect assertions that a complainant of child sexual abuse must be present at a judicial committee hearing and that

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208 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0091.
209 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15695:8-14 (Day 152).
210 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15695:16-18 (Day 152).
211 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15693:29-T15695:18 (Day 152).

the complainant is prohibited from having a trusted individual with them for moral support. No such requirement or prohibition exists, as set out in the responses to F45 and F46 above.

9.249 As set out above, if a victim wishes to have a support person present in any situation, there is nothing that prevents that from occurring.

F48 The current documented process for responding to allegations of child sexual abuse within the Jehovah's Witness organisation is focussed largely on the rights and comfort of the accused, with little regard to the requirements of a victim of abuse.

9.250 This suggested finding is based on incorrect assertions and should not be made for the following reasons.

9.251 Given the evidence provided by Messrs Spinks and Toole about the process for responding to allegations of child sexual abuse and the documented requirements concerning such responses, Counsel Assisting's suggested finding should not be made.

9.252 Evidence was given that when a complaint of sexual abuse was made, the first priority was the protection of children.[212] The next step was to notify the Legal Department in order to comply with any reporting requirements.[213] The next step involved the Service Department and emphasised the protection of children.[214]

9.253 A victim is not required to confront the accused and can give their version of events by letter.[215] The victim is entitled to and receives comfort and support at each stage of the process.[216]

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212 Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at 0005 [28]-[30];
Exhibit 29-0019, Annexure 2 to First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0018_R at [1.8];
Exhibit 29-0024, First statement of T J O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at 0010 [51] and 0012 [56];
Transcript of R P Spinks, T15660:40-47 (Day 152);
Transcript of V J Toole, T15763:32-40 (Day 153);
Transcript of G W Jackson, T15968:26-32 (Day 155).

213 Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at 0004 [26];
Exhibit 29-0019, Annexure 2 to First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0018_R at [1.5]-[1.6];
Exhibit 29-0023, Statement of V J Toole, STAT.0593.001.0001_R at 0002 [13]-[14].

214 Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at 0004 [26];
Exhibit 29-0019, Annexure 2 to First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0018_R at [1.8]-[1.9];
See also footnote 212 above on the protection of the child.

215 See footnote 30 above.

216 Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at 0005 [31]-[33] citing Scriptures from the Bible and articles published by Jehovah's Witnesses concerning their practice of giving support to a child or survivor of abuse;
Transcript of G W Jackson, T15956:24-30 (Day 155).

9.254 The subsequent steps involved investigating the complaint and addressing the complaint.[217] Natural justice requires that a person accused of sexual abuse be given the opportunity to respond to a complaint. A person accused of child sexual abuse is permitted to state their version of events in a calm and dispassionate atmosphere.

9.255 Ample documentary evidence was put before the Commission demonstrating that, when an allegation is made of child abuse, the child must be protected[218] and the abuser dealt with even if it means that an abuser goes to jail.[219]

9.256 The purpose of dealing with a sinner in accordance with Scriptural requirements is to enable the sinner to understand, and repent of, their wrongdoing and to make amends to God. Of necessity, the process must respond to the sinner just as the various requirements in a criminal trial respond to an alleged offender. It is, for example, well known that an accused person in a criminal trial has the presumption of innocence in their favour and that the prosecution must prove its case beyond a reasonable doubt.

9.257 This suggested finding is also incorrect because:

(a) It is based on quoting a sentence out of context from the Elders' Handbook chapter 7, paragraph 1.[220] While not specifically dealing with child sexual abuse cases, that paragraph[221] says that elders should "*try to put the accused at ease*" when meeting with him/her, "*Even if the accused is belligerent*."

(b) To suggest that elders acting in a Christian manner when *disciplining a wrongdoer* in any way relates to the *requirements of a victim* of abuse is gratuitous and unhelpful to the process.

(c) It fails to have regard to the Bible as the *primary* document used by Jehovah's Witnesses when responding to allegations of child sexual abuse; and which Counsel Assisting has repeatedly acknowledged is followed closely by Jehovah's Witnesses.

(d) It fails to have regard to the documents referred to in response to suggested finding F44 above, which are sensitive to the needs of a victim of abuse.

(e) It fails to have regard to the extensive material published by Jehovah's Witnesses and provided to the Commission, which forms part of the

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217 Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at 0004 [34]-[47];
Exhibit 29-0019, Annexure 2 to First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0018_R at [2.1]-[4.21].
218 See footnotes 16 and 212 above.
219 See footnotes 16 and 196 above.
220 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0090.
221 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0090.

documented policy of Jehovah's Witnesses when responding to allegations of child sexual abuse, and which focuses on how best to meet the needs of a victim of abuse.

Available findings on the management of risk

9.258 Counsel Assisting considers that the following finding is available on the evidence

F49 The failure of the Jehovah's Witness organisation to take into account the risk of re-offending when considering whether an offender is repentant, and consequently in deciding whether to merely reprove rather than to disfellowship, or whether to re-admit someone who has previously been disfellowshipped, does not adequately take account of considerations of child safety and should be revisited.

9.259 Jehovah's Witnesses do take into consideration the likelihood of whether an offender will repeat his sin in considering whether to disfellowship or to subsequently reinstate. Moreover, the request that Jehovah's Witnesses "revisit" their handling of these matters is nothing less than an impermissible request to subordinate the fundamental right of freedom of religion of Jehovah's Witnesses, as protected by the Constitution, to secular law and, moreover, is beyond the Terms of Reference of the Commission.

9.260 If a person is truly repentant, then, by definition, they are asserting that they are unlikely to sin again because they have an understanding of their wrongdoing and do not want to repeat it. An assessment that someone is truly repentant involves an assessment of the risk of re-offending. Thus, and contrary to the suggested finding, "repentance" takes into account the "risk of re-offending".

9.261 Further, neither psychiatrists, nor psychologists, have a monopoly on the prediction of human behaviour.[222] Indeed, every day of the week, ordinary people predict with some accuracy the behaviour of others and, by and large, our daily experiences demonstrate the accuracy of such predictions.

9.262 Moreover, *no one* can predict with *certainty* the actions of another person in the future and it is wrong to suggest otherwise.[223] For example, in the *Veen* case, the High Court of Australia overturned a sentence of life imprisonment for manslaughter and Veen's sentence was reduced to 12 years imprisonment.[224] Veen was subsequently released on licence and several

[222] See the observations in *Veen v The Queen [No.1]* (1979) 143 CLR 458 at 464.7 per Stephen J.
[223] See the observations in *Veen v The Queen [No.1]* (1979) 143 CLR 458 at 464.7 per Stephen J.
[224] *Veen v The Queen [No.1]* (1979) 143 CLR 458.

months later killed again in very similar circumstances to his first killing and was again sentenced to life imprisonment.[225] On the second occasion, the High Court upheld the sentence of life imprisonment. Veen's actions demonstrated his propensity to kill in some situations but predicting with certainty that he would do so, was acknowledged as not being possible.[226]

9.263 Furthermore, the suggested finding and CAP 376 in the Submission of Counsel Assisting need to be put in context. The question that Counsel Assisting put to Mr Spinks was: [227]

> "The difference in a civil court setting, for example, is that there are likely to be expert reports from psychologists and others as to the risk of reoffending. That wouldn't be part of your judicial process--", to which Mr Spinks replied, "That's true."

9.264 Of course, the judicial process of Jehovah's Witnesses is not a "civil court setting" but rather it is determining whether a person has sinned and their response to such sinning. Jehovah's Witnesses do not purport to offer an alternative system of criminal justice in which prevention, prosecution, punishment and rehabilitation are the primary considerations.

9.265 In any event, there is *no* evidence that the Scriptural principles applied by Jehovah's Witnesses in determining repentance place children at risk. On the contrary, the documentary and oral evidence of the witnesses and Dr Monica Applewhite showed that considerations of child safety are of paramount importance irrespective of whether a sinner is reproved, disfellowshipped or reinstated – see, for example, the considerations of child safety applied by Jehovah's Witnesses to individuals who are reproved, disfellowshipped and/or reinstated at paragraphs 4.10 – 4.21 in Annexure 2 to the Statement of R P Spinks.[228]

9.266 Mr Spinks gave evidence concerning the specific case of [BCH] in which Jehovah's Witnesses have refused to reinstate (that is, re-admit) him as a congregation member for a total of 15 years because of taking into account his failure to fully acknowledge his offences and considerations of child safety.

9.267 On the other hand, the secular authorities released [BCH] from prison and into the community after 3 years, apparently without monitoring his activities in the

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225 *Veen v The Queen [No.2]* (1988) 164 CLR 465.
226 *Veen v The Queen [No.2]* (1988) 164 CLR 465 at 470.
227 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15714:6-10 (Day 152).
[see complete exchange at Transcript of R P Spinks, T15713:44-T15716.1 (Day 152)].
228 Exhibit 29-0019, Annexure 2 to First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0018 at 0021-0022.

community after he was released. While the congregation disciplinary process is in no way a substitute for a 'civil court setting' or any action on the part of authorities, the suggested finding that congregation action "does not adequately take into account considerations of child safety" is inconsistent with the evidence before the Commission.

Available findings on sanctions – reproval

9.268 Counsel Assisting considers that the following three findings are available on the evidence:

> **F50 Since it is the policy or practice of the Jehovah's Witness organisation not to report allegations of child sexual abuse to the police (other than if required by law to do so), if a known abuser is found to be repentant and for that reason merely reproved rather than disfellowshipped he remains in the congregation and a risk to children in the congregation**.

9.269 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding is unsupported by facts and conclusory. It should therefore not be made. It is correct to say and the same was acknowledged[229] that, in some circumstances, a person who has committed an offence and is reproved may remain in the congregation (subject to restrictions)[230] but the same may be, and, often is, true whether the offender is dealt with within a religious community or in the general community (unless imprisoned). The mere presence of an offender within a congregation does not necessarily entail that other children in a congregation or the community are at risk. A lot would depend upon the circumstances of the offender and the offending.

9.270 Such a broad finding viz. that a reproved person "remains ... a risk to children" is not supported by the evidence given to the Commission and inaccurately represents Jehovah's Witnesses' stand on the matter, for the reasons set out below.

9.271 There is in fact no policy stating that Jehovah's Witnesses should not report child sexual abuse to the secular authorities, nor is there evidence of a practice not to report allegations of child sexual abuse; each allegation is dealt with on its merits. Jehovah's Witnesses' position is that victims and their parents are free to report child sexual abuse. Moreover, congregation elders

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229 Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at 0007 [43];
Transcript of R P Spinks, T15707:8-13; T15714:23-T15715:2; and T15734:5-11 (Day 152).

230 Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at 0007 [45]-[47];
Exhibit 29-0019, Annexure 2 to First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0018 at 0021 [4.13]-[4.21];
Exhibit 29-0024, First statement of T J O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at 0015 [70].

report allegations when required to do so by law or if they consider a child is at risk and its parent or guardian fails to take the necessary protective action.

9.272 The suggested finding fails to have regard to the following evidence given to the Commission by witnesses:

(a) There are special considerations applied by Jehovah's Witnesses when determining allegations of child sexual abuse, for an example as set out in paragraph 4.8 in Annexure 2 to the Statement of R P Spinks,[231] which states:

> "In the case of a practice of child abuse, the individual would unlikely "be able to demonstrate sufficient repentance to the judicial committee at the time of the hearing. If so, he must be disfellowshipped" [Elders' Handbook chapter 7, paragraph 9]."[232]

(b) Paragraph 62 in the Statement of T J O'Brien[233] which states:

> "Elders have been directed that any Jehovah's Witness who sexually abuses a child is either to be disfellowshipped from the congregation *or is to receive severe discipline, part of which will always include a public announcement for the protection of the congregation*."

9.273 In addition, if the reproval "involves an elder, ministerial servant, pioneer, special pioneer and/or any other position of status in the congregations, the branch office is notified since a person who is *reproved* by a judicial committee of elders *automatically ceases to qualify* for such assignments."[234]

9.274 Measures are taken by Jehovah's Witnesses to protect children in the congregation when a sinner is reproved (rather than disfellowshipped) – which protective measures are set out at paragraphs 4.10 – 4.21 in Annexure 2 to the Statement of R P Spinks.[235]

9.275 At all times an adult survivor or a child victim and his/her parents retain their full right to report the matter to the police; and are advised by the elders to take whatever protective action is necessary, including reporting the matter to the authorities if that is their desire.

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231 Exhibit 29-0019, Annexure 2 to First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0018 at 0020.
232 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0003.001.0093.
233 Exhibit 29-0024, First statement of T J O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at 0013.
234 Exhibit 29-0024, First statement of T J O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at 0018_R at [86].
235 Exhibit 29-0019, Annexure 2 to First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0018 at 0021-0022.

9.276 Irrespective of whether a parent or guardian of an abused child takes responsible action, if a congregation elder believes that children are at risk, then the elder can inform the authorities so that children are protected.[236]

9.277 The structure, activities and meetings for worship of Jehovah's Witnesses minimise the potential for a child abuser to pose any risk to other children. Dr Monica Applewhite gave evidence to the effect that different child protection/prevention considerations apply when an institution does not have the care or guardianship of children.[237]

9.278 Confirming this, as Mr O'Brien noted in his statement:[238]

> "We do not have any programs in which we take custody of children from their parents. We do not have Sunday Schools, youth groups, camps or social activities that separate children from parents. All of our congregation meetings involve entire family groups. Children, even teenagers, are not separated into groups from parents. Nor do we have secular educational schools, orphanages, hospitals, day care centres and the like. We believe that loving and protective parents are the best deterrent to child abuse. We continue to educate parents and provide them with valuable tools to help them educate and protect their children.-Deuteronomy 6:6, 7."

9.279 In addition to whatever action is taken by the authorities, a suggested finding that congregation disciplinary action, the removal of all congregation privileges and assignments, and a public announcement of the disciplinary reproval contributes to a risk to children in the congregation is unsubstantiated and indicates that the Commission is recommending a stricter internal process for Jehovah's Witnesses than for any other faith-based organisation.

9.280 There is *no* evidence that the Scriptural principles applied by Jehovah's Witnesses when determining the sanctions to be imposed on a sinner place children at risk. The suggested finding F50 should not be made.

F51 The system of not announcing the reasons for reproval means that members of the congregation are not warned about the risk that such a wrongdoer poses to children in the congregation.

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236 See for example, Transcript of G W Jackson, T15967:14-17 (Day 155); Transcript of V J Toole, T15776:30-35 (Day 153).

237 Exhibit 29-0013, Statement of Dr M L Applewhite, STAT.0606.001.0001 at [49] and this proposition is also set out in the reverse situation by Professor Quadrio in Case Study 28: Transcript of Prof C Quadrio, T8486:31-43 (Day 81).

238 Exhibit 29-0024, First statement of T J O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at 0014_R at [67].

9.281 It is correct to say that the reasons for reproval of an individual are not announced but the fact of reproval of an individual is announced to the congregation and the individual will also be placed under severe restrictions (as Mr O'Brien mentioned in his oral testimony).[239] The congregation is thus alerted to the fact that the particular individual has engaged in conduct that is deserving of censure or condemnation. In such circumstances, it would be surprising if members of a congregation were to act as if nothing had occurred and they were not wary of the individual.

9.282 Such an announcement would alert any parent in the congregation to be wary of such an individual. The restrictions placed upon the individual would also safeguard the members of the congregation. Additionally, in most instances a talk will subsequently be given in the congregation about the need for vigilance or care for children in relation to such behaviour.

9.283 For those reasons, including the additional ones set out below, the suggested finding should not be made.

9.284 This finding is unavailable on the evidence presented to the Commission. The reasons and evidence set out in response to suggested finding F50 above are repeated.

9.285 The risk to members of the congregation cannot accurately be measured but, having regard to the reasons and evidence set out in response to F50, it is considered that the risk may be minimal because an announcement is made that the individual concerned has been reproved and in most instances a talk will subsequently be given in the congregation about the need for vigilance and care for children in relation to such behaviour.[240]

9.286 The finding fails to have regard to the evidence submitted to the Commission whereby, if required, "two elders should be assigned *to meet with the parents of minor children in order to provide a warning*." - Letter to Bodies of Elders, October 1, 2012 paragraph 13.[241]

9.287 The Commission failed to provide any evidence of how the same is not true of abusers who are released into the community without a public announcement warning of the risk to children in the community.

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239 Exhibit 29-0024, First statement of T J O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [62].
240 Exhibit 29-0019, First statement of R P Spinks, STAT.0591.001.0001_R at 0007 [43]-[44].
241 Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0069.

9.288 Jehovah's Witnesses are unaware of any faith-based or community organisation that is authorised to unilaterally and publically announce the details of offences or internal disciplinary action taken against a member or an attendee, and the Commission did not proffer any evidence of same.

9.289 To the extent that the Commission seeks to find or recommend that Jehovah's Witnesses announce the *reasons* for any reproval *publicly* to the congregation, the Commission's recommendation must comply with the relevant privacy legislation (the Australian Privacy Principles) and such other law which may apply to a public announcement of this nature.

9.290 On risk, see also the evidence of Mr Baker (formerly one of Jehovah's Witnesses) who in his statement said: [242]

> "Child sexual abuse is considered abhorrent to the congregation. Zero tolerance is applied to this sin. As a result of this stance, all members of the congregation would be vigilant to any hint of this activity and would report their suspicions to a member of the Body of elders for further examination. If an incident of such gravity like this was to occur, the congregation would be given a speech at the first available opportunity to make them aware of this particular serious sin. Without naming names of the offender or the victim, the congregation would be encouraged to see the need to keep the congregation clean remembering they represent the name of the Holy Sovereign God Jehovah. (1 Peter 1:16)"

9.291 Finally, Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F51, if adopted, would impermissibly subordinate the fundamental right of freedom of religion of Jehovah's Witnesses, as protected by the Constitution, to a secular requirement not demanded of any other faith-based group and would be beyond the Terms of Reference of the Commission.

F52 The sanction of reproval therefore does nothing to protect children in the congregation and in the broader community.

9.292 No evidence was, in fact, presented to the Commission to establish such a finding, and suggested finding F52 should therefore not be made. In addition, the matters set out in response to suggested findings F50 and F51 above are repeated.

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[242] Exhibit 29-0017, Statement of M Baker, STAT.0605.001.0001_R at 0002 [2b].

9.293 A more accurate statement concerning reproval is that: "a reproved person remains a member of a congregation subject to such restrictions as are placed upon that person. Whether such a person may be a risk to the broader community is not something that can be known and was not investigated in the Commission".

Available findings on sanctions – disfellowshipping

9.294 Counsel Assisting considers that the following two findings are available on the evidence:

> **F53 Since it is the policy or practice of the Jehovah's Witness organisation not to report allegations of child sexual abuse to the police (other than if required by law to do so), if a known abuser is disfellowshipped he remains in the community and a risk to children in the community.**

9.295 As mentioned above, Jehovah's Witnesses do not have such a policy or practice. The approach taken by Jehovah's Witnesses is that the decision whether or not to report belongs to the victim and his/her parents, rather than to the congregation.

9.296 The statistical evidence confirms that some 383 instances of the 1,006 case files provided to the Commission also involved the secular authorities.[243]

9.297 The suggested finding proceeds upon two assumptions, the truth of which were not established in the Commission. First, the assumption that in *all* cases, a person who has been disfellowshipped has not also been dealt with by the secular authorities and imprisoned and, second, the assumption that such a person may or will seek to abuse children in the community.

9.298 Evidence presented to the Commission is to the contrary. For example, according to the statistics, some 161 persons were actually convicted of offences involving child sexual abuse and some 383 cases involved the authorities.[244]

9.299 The broad finding is unavailable having regard to the following evidence:

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[243] Please see footnote 26 above.

[244] Please see footnote 26 above.
See also Exhibit 29-0021, WAT.9999.013.0011_R, Appendix A, at [9].

(a) There is no policy stating that Jehovah's Witnesses should not report child sexual abuse to the police or other authorities: see above paragraphs.

(b) Disfellowshipping from the congregation is *in no way a substitute* for reporting allegations of child sexual abuse to the police. The evidence of Jehovah's Witnesses repeatedly highlighted this point.

(c) It is based on an inaccurate and unrealistic assumption that a report to the police will result in an abuser being removed from the community (that is, imprisoned), which is widely acknowledged is often not the case.

(d) It is not supported by evidence of any causal link between child sexual abuse and the Bible-based disciplinary procedures of Jehovah's Witnesses.

9.300 For the reasons set forth above, suggested finding F53 should not be made.

F54 The sanction of disfellowshipping does nothing to protect children in the community.

9.301 No evidence was presented to support the suggested finding.

9.302 The purpose for disfellowshipping is primarily spiritual; related to keeping a congregation spiritually clean, which is a matter of religious belief, separate to the protection of children in the community. Disfellowshipping is a Bible-based, congregation disciplinary process and is not a substitute for criminal proceedings. Additionally, as a religious procedure, consideration of this activity is outside the scope of the Terms of Reference of the Commission: 1 Corinthians 5:13 and Statement of Mr O'Brien.[245]

9.303 The suggested finding is not supported by evidence of any causal link between child sexual abuse and the Bible-based disciplinary procedures of Jehovah's Witnesses.

9.304 The suggested finding wrongly assumes a broad obligation upon Jehovah's Witnesses "to protect children in the community" but fails to identify how such an obligation exists. To the extent that mandatory reporting legislation exists in a State or Territory, Jehovah's Witnesses will continue to comply with their obligations; and to give their full support to survivors who report to the authorities.

[245] Exhibit 29-0024, First statement of T J O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at 0019 at [89].

Available findings on reporting

9.305 Counsel Assisting considers that the following two findings are available on the evidence:

> **F55 Prior to this case study, the Jehovah's Witness organisation in Australia did not advise congregational elders of their obligations to report the commission of criminal offences to the police under s 316 of the *Crimes Act 1900* (NSW).**

9.306 Counsel Assisting raised a question about s.316 of the *Crimes Act 1900* (NSW). Jehovah's Witnesses presently consider that s.316 does not apply where a victim complains to an elder that they have been abused, because, at that stage, the elder's knowledge is not the "knowledge" required by the section, although it may satisfy the "belief" required by the section. Nevertheless, the elder is not required to report the same to the authorities because of the application of the qualification in s.316(1) of "without reasonable excuse" when those words are considered and understood in light of the requirements of s.316(4) of the Act, s.127 of the *Evidence Act 1995* (NSW) and the usages and rituals of the Jehovah's Witnesses faith.

9.307 The combined effect of the qualification in s.316(1) and s.316(4) of the Act and s.127 of the *Evidence Act 1995* (NSW) is that where an elder forms the belief in the "course of practising or following a profession, calling or vocation …" they have a "reasonable excuse" within the meaning of s.316(1) to not report the information and thus no offence is committed; that interpretation is supported by the section's natural meaning, the highest common law authorities, its legislative history, and a consideration of the section by the NSW Law Reform Commission.

9.308 Consequently, Mr Toole was correct in thinking that elders who were informed of complaints were not required to report the matter to the authorities. It follows that he is not in error. In any event, in the absence of an authoritative determination by a court of competent jurisdiction about whether a requirement exists in the circumstances contemplated (and none is referred to by Counsel Assisting) there is no basis for any criticism or referral to the Law Society of New South Wales even if questions of professional competence to advise on such matters were within the Commission's Terms of Reference, which, clearly, they are not.

9.309 Jehovah's Witnesses are currently seeking advice from Senior Counsel in relation to the *Crimes (General) Amendment (Concealment of Offences)*

Regulation 1998 (NSW) cl 2, Sch 1. and its application in relation to mandatory reporting laws and related matters.

9.310 Accordingly, this suggested finding F55 should not be disregarded.

F56 This report is referred to the Law Society of New South Wales in relation to the conduct of Mr Toole in having failed to advise congregational elders of their obligations to report their knowledge of the commission of certain criminal offences to the police.

9.311 For the reasons set out in response to suggested finding F55 above, there is no basis for any criticism of Mr Toole's professional competence or a referral to the Law Society of New South Wales of the submission by Counsel Assisting or any report.

Available findings on the Jehovah's Witness organisation's policy on reporting

9.312 Counsel Assisting considers that the following four findings are available on the evidence:

F57 It is the policy and practice of the Jehovah's Witness organisation in Australia to not report allegations of child sexual abuse to the police or other authorities unless required by law to do so.

9.313 There is no policy and practice of Jehovah's Witnesses to not report child sexual abuse to the police or other authorities. This suggested finding and the submissions CAPs 419, 421, 422, 424 and 425 on which it is based, misrepresent what is the actual approach of Jehovah's Witnesses in Australia. Jehovah's Witnesses do not take it upon themselves to report such matters as they consider that it is the right of the victim or his/her parents to do so.

9.314 The present practice of Jehovah's Witnesses on reporting to the secular authorities is based on a number of important considerations which Mr Geoffrey Jackson explained[246] and others also explained. In summary, these are:

(a) Jehovah's Witnesses comply with the law – to the extent mandatory reporting laws apply to ministers of religion (or similar) in a given State or Territory.

[246] Transcript of G W Jackson, T15965:16-T15967:22 (Day 155).

(b) Jehovah's Witnesses respect the right of an adult survivor to decide for him/herself whether or not to report a complaint to the secular authorities.

(c) Jehovah's Witnesses respect the right of a family of the child victim to report the matter to the secular authorities.

(d) Jehovah's Witnesses will take all steps necessary to protect a child from abuse and an abuser will not be protected.

(e) Jehovah's Witnesses do report matters to the police as the police have dealt with a significant number of cases involving some Jehovah's Witnesses.

9.315 The safety of the victim and other children is paramount. In cases where the parent or guardian of a minor fails to take necessary measures to protect the child, a congregation elder can inform the authorities for the protection of the child or other children.[247]

9.316 Mr Toole was unequivocal in his evidence:[248]

> *We would do it if we thought it was necessary to protect the child, unhesitatingly. If I came across a situation and the only way that I believed I could protect a child that was in danger - I would have absolutely no hesitation at all in going to [the] authorities, even though I'm not required by a mandatory reporting law.*[249]

9.317 In addition, Counsel Assisting's suggested finding fails to account for the policy and practice of Jehovah's Witnesses as set out in the following oral and documentary evidence:

(a) "In any circumstances, where the elders learn that the victim remains in danger of further abuse, the elders are reminded that, 'First, the child—and other children too—must be protected from any further abuse. This must be done whatever the cost.' *Awake!* January 22, 1985, page 8".[250]

(b) The policy *Letter to All Bodies of Elders* dated October 1, 2012, states: "Regardless of whether the law requires the elders to report an accusation to the authorities, steps need to be taken to protect children."[251]

(c) The evidence of Mr Spinks (who is the senior Service Desk member in the Service Department at the Australia Branch) informs elders "to go

247 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15967:15-17 (Day 155) and T15988:29-33 (Day 155).
248 Transcript of V J Toole, T15776:30-35; T15794:23-26; and T15795:1-9 (Day 153).
249 Transcript of V J Toole, T15776:30-35 (Day 153).
250 Exhibit 29-0033, WAT.0001.001.0013.
251 Exhibit 29-0033, WAT.0001.004.0066 at 0068 at [10].

back to the guardian/parent and assist them to do all they can, including going to the authorities, if that's what the parent – the guardian/parent is willing to do, including going to the authorities, and remind them that they – the individual, that they have the full support of the elders in doing that."[252]

(d) Contrary to Counsel Assisting's submission at CAPs 424 and 425, Mr Spinks did *not* testify that 1 Corinthians 1:24 and Galatians 6:5 "prohibit" Jehovah's Witnesses from reporting child sexual abuse to the police or other authorities. These submissions misrepresent the transcript of Mr Spinks.[253] To the extent that Counsel Assisting relies on his own understanding and interpretation of these Scriptures to make submission CAP 426, the analysis is unnecessary and unhelpful to the work of the Commission.

(e) Careful analysis of the case files reveals the practice of Jehovah's Witnesses includes numerous incidents of members of the organisation reporting child sexual abuse to the police or other authorities, although not required by law to do so.[254]

(f) The published procedure states: "Never suggest to anyone that they should not report an allegation of child abuse to the police or authorities ... If the victim wishes to make a report, it is his or her absolute right to do so."[255]

(g) The support given by congregation elders to parents/guardians as the primary caregiver(s), "including going to the authorities," is clearly stated in evidence before the Commission.[256]

9.318 Accordingly, this suggested finding F57 should not be made.

F58 The basis for this policy is said to be respect for the 'right' of the victim to herself decide whether to make a complaint to the authorities.

9.319 As stated above in response to suggested finding F57, Jehovah's Witnesses do not have a policy and practice to not report allegations of child sexual abuse to the secular authorities, unless required by law. The policy and practice of Jehovah's Witnesses is based upon a number of considerations, one of which is, the right of the child, or the child's parents, to decide whether to report matters to the secular authorities.

252 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15662:12-19 (Day 152).
253 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15720:40-T15721:12 (Day 152).
254 Transcript of V J Toole, T15776:24-T15777:3 (Day 153);
Transcript of R P Spinks, T15663:28-30 and T15664:12-19 (Day 152).
255 Exhibit 29-0033, WAT.0003.001.0001 at 0132-0133 (ks10 chapter 12, paragraph 19).
256 See Transcript of R P Spinks, T15662:5-19 (Day 152).

9.320 The suggested finding wrongly implies there is something legally or morally wrong with respecting the right of the victim to decide whether to report the abuse (except if a child is in danger and his/her parent or guardian fails to take protective action or to the extent that mandatory reporting laws apply, in which case elders will report). It would be improper and contrary to the Commission's Terms of Reference, for a finding of the Commission to disregard the victim's rights.

9.321 The suggested finding fails to acknowledge that, in respecting the right of a victim to personally decide whether to report, it is submitted that Jehovah's Witnesses are following what is considered best practice today, as acknowledged by NSW Health, victim support groups, the testimony of some victims of abuse, the Commission's provision for reports to be made anonymously, and many other professional sources.

9.322 Mr Spinks' evidence was that the approach taken by Jehovah's Witnesses is consistent with the approach recommended in *Sharing the un-shareable: A resource for women on recovering from child sexual abuse*, which states: [257]

> *It is each survivor's decision whether or not to report the abuse. Many survivors choose not to report and this should be respected.*

9.323 Mr Spinks' further evidence was: [258]

> *…. the publication that is given to victims here at the Commission from NSW Health, … says, "The victim should be given the right to determine whether it is to go to the authorities or not", and that booklet that is handed to the victims says, "And their wish in that matter should be respected." Now, that's religiously [is] the approach that we have taken for the reasons that have only been sort of briefly described, … but we accept, when the State says, "You are required to mandatorily report that offence", that Jehovah's Witnesses will … willingly and happily comply. In the meantime, we've got that ethical challenge of respecting the individual's right, as the New South Wales brochure says, and as the Scriptures say.*

9.324 Jehovah's Witnesses propose the following alternate finding, which they submit is consistent both with their approach and widely-acknowledged need to respect the right of a victim to determine if she/he wishes to report the abuse:

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[257] Published by Education Centre Against Violence, NSW Health 201 at p.21.
[258] Transcript of R P Spinks, T15665:25-45 (Day 152).

"*Jehovah's Witnesses respect the right of a survivor or victim of abuse (or their parent or guardian) to decide for him or herself whether or not to report the abuse to the authorities."*

F59 That basis has no justification where the victim is still a minor at the time that the abuse comes to the attention of the organisation, or where there are others who may still be at risk at the hands of the alleged abuser.

9.325 The consequence of the suggested finding by Counsel Assisting is that it would sweep away the rights of victims/survivors to determine whether they wish to report their abuse and disempower them.

9.326 It is accepted that a victim or the parents of a child may choose not to report the matter to the secular authorities. The fact that some decide not to report does not represent a "systemic" failure on the part of Jehovah's Witnesses to comply with their legal obligations.

9.327 Accordingly, suggested finding F59 ought to be disregarded.

F60 Since the organisation cannot remove an alleged abuser from the family or take other positive steps to safeguard children in the family from continuing risk, the organisation should have a policy to report all allegations of child sexual abuse to the authorities unless an adult victim specifically requests that a report not be made and there is no appreciable risk of children being abused.

9.328 The suggested finding ought not be made as it is tantamount to a recommendation that would sweep away the rights of the victim and the victim's family to report such matters contrary to Australian and international instruments recognising the rights of children and families.[259]

9.329 In addition, the mere reporting of such a serious allegation to the secular authorities could potentially destroy the family unit in circumstances where the allegation was subsequently found to be unjustified and relatively recent experience in both Australia[260] and the United Kingdom has demonstrated that

[259] For example, the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* (NSW) ss. 9(2)(a)-(c), 10(1) and 31; similar legislation exists in other States/Territories of Australia;
Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 (entered into force for Australia on 16 January 1991), Articles 12, 14 and 16; and
Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Resolution 2005/20, annex, Guidelines on Justice in Matters Involving Child Victims and Witnesses of Crime 2005, Articles 5, 6 and 8.

[260] See e.g. *Sullivan v Moody* (2001) 207 CLR 562.

not all allegations are true, even when made by reputable secular authorities.[261]

9.330 Moreover, Jehovah's Witnesses are not an agency or instrumentality of government but a voluntary faith-based association of individuals. As stated above, and specifically in response to F57, Jehovah's Witnesses comply with the relevant legislation and Counsel Assisting's proposed finding is not helpful to the Commission.

9.331 The submissions in response to F57 are repeated, which demonstrate that the practice of Jehovah's Witnesses is based on several important considerations, including religious beliefs and practices which are based on Scriptural principles.

9.332 In responding to whether a report should made to authorities in situations where it is deemed that others are at risk, Mr Geoffrey Jackson stated that it was:

> "a possible thing for us to consider, and I think, already, the assumption is there, that if any elder was to see that there was some definite risk, that their conscience would move them to do that. But the point I was trying to make, Mr Stewart, is there are other scriptural factors that maybe make that a little complicated, and it would certainly be a lot easier if we had mandatory laws on that."[262]

9.333 Jehovah's Witnesses submit that despite repeated statements that they do and will continue to comply with mandatory reporting and would welcome uniform laws in this regard, Counsel Assisting has consistently chosen to criticise their Bible-based religious beliefs and practices rather than the lack of uniform mandatory reporting laws.

9.334 Jehovah's Witnesses propose the following alternate finding:

> *"The Scripturally-based beliefs and practices of Jehovah's Witnesses require that they obey the laws pertaining to child abuse. In jurisdictions that require it, they obey laws requiring the reporting of such allegations to the authorities. Elders of Jehovah's Witnesses will obey any newly-enacted laws requiring ministers of religion to report allegations of child abuse."*

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[261] See e.g. *X (Minors) v Bedfordshire County Council* [1995] 2 AC 633.
[262] Transcript of G W Jackson, T15967:14-22 (Day 155).

Available findings on the impact of the Jehovah's Witnesses organisation's processes on criminal processes

9.335 Counsel Assisting considers that the following four findings are available on the evidence:

F61 The internal processes of the Jehovah's Witness organisation for handling allegations of child sexual abuse cause significant delay in a complaint coming, if ever, before authorities.

9.336 The only evidence given of any delay was that given by Mr Davies in his statement and oral evidence before the Commission. Mr Davies was then a junior lawyer (three years qualified) who had worked on only the one case involving Jehovah's Witnesses. That evidence alone does not warrant such a finding and no other reliable or credible evidence was provided to the Commission that could provide support for such a "systemic" finding. It follows that it ought not be made.

9.337 Specifically, it places too much weight on the personal observations and a brief historical file note of a single witness, Mr Jason Davies, in relation to his experience in one case in 2001 that is, some 14 years ago. For the reasons given above, the evidence of Mr Davies, does not demonstrate any systemic problems with the approach of Jehovah's Witnesses to dealing with child sexual abuse and no such finding could ever be made in a Court based upon his limited experience in such matters.

9.338 Moreover, there are many reasons why a victim may delay in reporting the abuse that occurred to them as a child. The Commission is aware of the research on the issue of delayed reporting.[263] There is no empirical evidence that the practices and procedures of Jehovah's Witnesses contribute to a delay in reporting.

9.339 Accordingly, suggested finding F61 should not be made.

F62 Admissions made by an accused during the investigative and/or judicial committee process administered by the Jehovah's Witness organisation may not be admissible in criminal proceedings because of the circumstances in which they are made, including that incentives such as reduction in penalty are offered if an admission is made.

[263] The Commission itself noted that, "on average it took the victim's 22 years to disclose the above, men longer than women.": Interim Report Volume 1, paragraph 3.1.

9.340 The suggested finding raises several debatable propositions of law and fact which were not canvassed during the public hearing and ultimately must depend upon the specific case. The admissibility of confessions in a criminal case depends upon the circumstances in which the confession was given and as to whether duress was applied or "incentives" were offered by persons in authority which resulted in the person's will being overborne to such an extent that the confession or admission could not be said to be voluntary.[264]

9.341 The judicial procedure adopted by Jehovah's Witnesses does not involve either the application of duress to a person or the offering of "incentives" in "reduction of penalty". It is, with respect, wrong to view "reproval", as contrasted with "disfellowshipping", as "incentives" or as "penalties". In a religious organisation, a person can choose to accept that they have sinned and repent of their sins and be reproved for sinning or they can deny the sin, notwithstanding evidence to the contrary, and be disfellowshipped. A disfellowshipped person can subsequently demonstrate their repentance and be re-admitted to the faith. A person of faith would not see "reproval" rather than "disfellowshipping" as an "incentive" and there was no evidence to suggest otherwise.

9.342 The finding is based on the testimony of a single non-expert witness, Mr Jason Davies. The claim that "incentives such as a reduction in penalty are offered if admission is made" are not a part of the religious belief system and teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses, and the Commission provided no evidence or a single example of this being the case. In fact, the Court case Mr Jason Davies was referring to involving BCG included the testimony of the elders involved in the congregation judicial committee process and resulted in a criminal conviction.

9.343 In the case files provided to the Commission, of the 383 cases known to have had the involvement of the secular authorities, 161 (or 42%) resulted in a conviction.[265] There was no evidence provided to support the claim that congregation procedures inhibit conviction rates.[266]

9.344 Accordingly, this suggested finding F62 should not be made.

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264 *Cross on Evidence* (10th ed; 2015) ed. Heydon at page 1213 [33595].

265 Please see footnote 26 above.
See also Exhibit 29-0021, WAT.9999.013.0011_R, Appendix A, at [9].

266 In Comparison: "Fitzgerald's study of the attrition of sexual offences in the New South Wales criminal justice system found that, of the very low number of sexual offences that are actually reported to the police (7,500 in 2004), only 10 per cent resulted in a guilty finding." Freiberg, A, Donnelly, H and Gelb, K, 2015, Sentencing for Child Sexual Assault in Institutional Contexts, Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, Sydney. Page 18. (emphasis added)

F63 The number of people to whom a survivor of child sexual abuse is required to divulge the detail of her complaint exacerbates the trauma already suffered by a survivor of such abuse.

9.345 It is not possible to make such a broad finding based upon the evidence provided to the Commission of a single junior assistant prosecutor. It may be possible to make a finding that it has been the experience of some survivors of child sexual abuse that the re-telling of the story of their abuse can or may exacerbate the trauma that they have already suffered.

9.346 In the secular arena, a victim of child sexual abuse may have to repeat their story on several occasions to the initial interviewer, possibly to detectives, possibly to counsel or the instructing solicitors and, most probably, in Court.

9.347 The two cases presented by the Commission are from decades ago and there was no evidence submitted by the Commission in relation to current practice. In fact, Mr Spinks said regarding the current practice:

> *... in this day and age and for a long time, we would not have a victim or a survivor of child abuse in a judicial hearing.*[267]

He further stated:

> *... you will find numerous examples of where the parents or guardians have provided the statement without intervention from the elders ...*[268]

9.348 Accordingly, this suggested finding F63 should not be made.

F64 There is significant risk of contamination of a survivor's evidence as a result of the number of times and circumstances in which a survivor is required to divulge the detail of her complaint before her abuse is, if ever, reported to the authorities.

9.349 Counsel Assisting incorrectly assumes that the policies and practices of Jehovah's Witnesses require a victim to divulge the details of his/her complaint to the elders before the matter can be reported to the authorities. To the contrary, the victim and his/her parent or guardian have the absolute right to report the matter to the authorities at any time they may wish to do so, whether before or after they seek the spiritual assistance of the elders in their

[267] Transcript of R P Spinks, T15694:15-17 (Day 152).
[268] Transcript of R P Spinks, T15698:19-23 (Day 152); Transcript of R P Spinks, T15704 (Day 152).

congregation. In fact, whether to bring the matter to the attention of the elders is a personal decision for the victim and his/her parent or guardian.

9.350 Moreover, the proposed finding involves an assessment of the risks associated with a person repeating their testimony. It is well-known that, in the secular arena, a complainant of sexual abuse may be "cross-examined" on discrepancies in their stories both by the prosecutorial authorities and by defence counsel. It is also true that some people need to speak about their adverse experiences whilst others "internalise" such experiences. Each person needs to be considered and dealt with individually.

9.351 The suggested finding is not relevant to the current practice or policy of Jehovah's Witnesses. A victim or survivor of child abuse would not need to be present in a congregation hearing or give their evidence a number of times. No evidence was presented to the Commission that the spiritual support of a survivor of child abuse would contaminate the survivor's evidence. Mr Davies' admission to his "naïve"[269] approach to the case of BCG and his summation based on "memory" does not present a clear understanding of the events relating to the one case decades ago. Mr Davies' opinions were speculative and unsubstantiated. The case of BCG did result in a conviction of her father and the testimony of the congregation elders assisted in this. Counsel Assisting failed to accept the testimony in relation to the current policies and practices of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Available findings on Mr Geoffrey Jackson's stated empathy for survivors

9.352 Counsel Assisting considers that the following finding is available on the evidence:

> **F65 Mr Jackson's failure to have read or be familiar with the testimony of the survivor witnesses yet to have read or otherwise familiarised himself with the testimony of Jehovah's Witness witnesses belies his stated empathy for the survivors and his stated recognition of the importance of their perspectives.**

9.353 This suggested finding did not have regard to the following facts and matters:

(a) Written communications[270] between those instructing Counsel Assisting and the lawyers representing Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia was to the effect that Mr Geoffrey Jackson's views would be

[269] Transcript of J P Davies, T15422:27 (Day 149).
[270] See Letter from Royal Commission to Milton Bray dated 14 July 2015;
See also the statements by Counsel Assisting at Transcript of R P Spinks, T15676:29-33 and T15676:42-47 (Day 152).

sought on "policy" matters and not that he would be called upon to offer testimony on specific cases.

(b) It was explained that, Mr Jackson was in Australia for personal reasons due to his father's terminal illness. In fact, Mr Geoffrey Jackson's father passed away on 30 September 2015. In the circumstances, the view was taken that Mr Geoffrey Jackson should not be additionally burdened during that difficult time.

(c) It was not put to Mr Geoffrey Jackson during his oral evidence that his failure to read or familiarise himself with the survivor's stories belied his empathy for such persons. Natural justice requires that a person be confronted with such a complaint during the public hearing if the suggested finding is to be made.

(d) The suggested finding can have no bearing on the two most important questions that must be addressed by the Commission concerning the prevention of child sexual abuse and to have better responses. The Commission is entitled to assistance to identify systemic issues and failings, not speculation about whether a person is or is not empathetic.

(e) Moreover, Mr Geoffrey Jackson addressed in a forthright manner questions of apology[271] and redress[272] and expressed his empathy for survivors of sexual abuse.[273] Such matters ought to result in a finding in his favour.

(f) The suggested finding should reflect what Mr Geoffrey Jackson himself explained:[274]

> *I wasn't aware of the fact that I would be called before the Commission ... I haven't lived in Australia for 36 years, and I haven't certainly had a chance to look through the files ... The reason I came here was to care for my ailing father, and that has taken a lot of my time.*[275]

CAS PART 8: Current Systems, Policies and Procedures for Preventing Child Sexual Abuse

Available findings on the system of prevention of child sexual abuse – WWCC

9.354 Counsel Assisting considers that the following finding is available on the evidence:

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271 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15985:29-32 (Day 155).
272 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15985:38-44 and T15986:19-31 (Day 155).
273 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15995:2-9 (Day 155);
See also Mr Geoffrey Jackson's expressions at T15985:16-20 and T15994:24-30 (Day 155).
274 Transcript of G W Jackson, T15990:20-30 (Day 155).
275 Mr Geoffrey Jackson's father has since passed away.

F66 The documented practice of the Jehovah's Witness organisation of not reporting child sexual abuse to the authorities undermines the efficacy of the working with children check system, a system to which the organisation says it subscribes and with which it says it complies.

9.355 The statistical evidence provided to the Commission indicated that some 383 cases were reported to the authorities[276] and in his evidence, Mr Toole stated that he had advised persons to report to the secular authorities to comply with mandatory reporting requirements.[277]

9.356 Accordingly, this suggested finding is too broadly stated and should not be made in the terms expressed.

Available findings on the system of prevention of child sexual abuse – risk of reoffending

9.357 Counsel Assisting considers that the following finding is available on the evidence:

F67 The practices and procedures of the Jehovah's Witness organisation for the prevention of child sexual abuse, and in particular for the management of the risk of an abuser reoffending, do not take account of the actual risk of an offender reoffending and accordingly place children in the organisation at significant risk of sexual abuse.

9.358 This suggested finding does not appear to have regard for the evidence given at the Commission. Showing an awareness of the danger, the policy states:

> "The elders should remain vigilant with regard to the conduct and activity of the accused ... The elders should be especially mindful of the activity of any who are known to have sexually abused a child in the past. They should also ensure that newly appointed elders are made aware of this caution." (Letter October 1, 2012, paragraphs 11 & 12.)

9.359 Additionally, the proposed finding fails to have regard to the evidence submitted to the Commission whereby, if required, "two elders should be assigned to meet with the parents of minor children in order to provide a warning." – Letter to Bodies of Elders, October 1, 2012 paragraph 13.

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276 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15663:25-26 and T15717:32-46 (Day 152); Transcript of V J Toole, T15776:44-47 (Day 153).
277 Transcript of V J Toole, T15760:32-35 (Day 153).

9.360 Mr Spinks testified:[278]

> "… *do we understand that someone who has abused a child can offend again? Yes, very clearly! Does that move us to say that we will never allow a child abuser to return to the congregation? ... I think if that was the case no-one would be released from prison, there'd be no programs in place. So we are not naïve as to the fact that a child abuser can reoffend, and that's written in our own publications*."[279]

9.361 In the case of BCG's father, he remains disfellowshipped from the congregation because of the considered risk of reoffending, for instance while he fails to accept responsibility for his actions.[280] The fact that a record is kept of any individual who associates with a congregation and has been accused of child sexual abuse or related offences, is a strong indication of the policy to monitor those accused and protect children in the congregation.

9.362 Accordingly, this suggested finding F67 should be disregarded.

CAS PART 9: Additional Issues

Available findings on the accessibility of procedures and policies

9.363 Counsel Assisting considers that the following finding is available on the evidence:

> **F68 The Jehovah's Witness organisation's documented procedures for reporting on and responding to allegations of child sexual abuse are deficient in that they are not documented in such a way as to be easily accessible in one document and available to all interested or affected parties and some matters that are stated to be the policies or practices of the organisation are not recorded at all.**

9.364 The recommendation to review documentation procedures is under consideration by Jehovah's Witnesses. However, to imply that policies or practices of the organisation are "deficient" is inconsistent with the evidence given by Mr Spinks to the Commission.[281]

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278 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15714:21-46 (Day 152).
279 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15714:23-32 (Day 152) and see, for example, Exhibit 29-0003, WAT.0001.004.0306 at 0309 (paragraph 2) (The Watchtower, January 1, 1997 p. 29).
280 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15714:34-39 (Day 152).
281 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15685:25-29 (Day 152).

9.365 Accordingly, this suggested finding F68 that "Jehovah's Witnesses' documented procedures for reporting on and responding to allegations of child sexual abuse are deficient" should not be made.

Available findings on shunning

9.366 Counsel Assisting considers that the following two findings are available on the evidence:

F69 Members of the Jehovah's Witness organisation who no longer want to be subject to the organisation's rules and discipline have no alternative than to leave the organisation which requires that they disassociate from it.

9.367 The policies and practices of Jehovah's Witnesses do not require any individual who no longer wants to be subject to their "rules and discipline" to formally disassociate themselves. They can simply stop associating with the congregation. Such individuals are not shunned.

9.368 In any event, however, there appears to be no systemic connection between an adult making a decision to leave an organisation and child sexual abuse. Suggested finding F69 has no relevance to preventing, or improving responses to, child sexual abuse, and it is clearly outside the scope of the Terms of Reference of the Commission, and Counsel Assisting did not provide evidence to the contrary.

9.369 Jehovah's Witnesses attended the Commission's public hearing to assist the Commission with the task of addressing the prevention and responses to child sexual abuse. Jehovah's Witnesses were not asked to address questions regarding persons who wished to leave the organisation.

F70 The Jehovah's Witness organisation's policy of requiring its adherents to actively shun those who leave the organisation:

a) makes it extremely difficult for someone to leave the organization

9.370 One of the persons who gave evidence before the Commission, Mr Baker, formerly one of Jehovah's Witnesses and called by Counsel Assisting, did not suggest he had a problem in leaving the organisation.[282] Mr Baker was frank in his reasons for leaving. He sought to pursue a lifestyle that was incompatible with the way of life of Jehovah's Witnesses. Notwithstanding,

[282] Transcript of M J Baker, T15614:33-38 (Day 151): "... it wasn't really a problem for me ..."

Mr Baker expressed no hostility towards Jehovah's Witnesses, he did not seek to denigrate their beliefs, nor did he seek to belittle the faith. On the contrary, he expressed his disbelief at the number of and basis for the allegations.

9.371 No reliable and credible evidence was presented to support this broad suggested finding by Counsel Assisting and it contains a speculative value judgment - "extremely difficult" - about the motivations of adult persons.

9.372 Moreover, the suggested finding has no connection with preventing or responding to child sexual abuse and, furthermore, appears not to appreciate the difference between disassociation and inactivity. As was explained, if someone decides to no longer associate with Jehovah's Witnesses that is a personal decision and no disciplinary action is taken against that person.

9.373 For example, Mr Geoffrey Jackson stated:[283] "I thought I made it quite clear I don't agree with that supposition". We do not have a "so-called spiritual police force" to chase after ones who no longer want to be Jehovah's Witnesses."

9.374 For example, Mr O'Brien stated: [284] "They don't have to disassociate themselves to stop associating. They don't lose their spiritual or familial association by being inactive."

9.375 Accordingly, this suggested finding F70(a) should not be made.

F70 The Jehovah's Witness organisation's policy …:

b) is cruel on those who leave and on their friends and family who remain behind

9.376 No persons gave any evidence to the effect that the suggested finding was, or is, true in all cases in which a person leaves the faith. For that reason alone, such a broad finding cannot be made. In any event, "cruel" is an emotive and personal view of the impact of someone leaving the faith. For some of those who wish to leave, it may be "sad", "disappointing" or a "relief" or it may excite no adverse feelings at all. In other words, it will depend upon the individual's personal circumstances and their personal beliefs. In any event, the suggested finding is outside of the scope of the Terms of Reference of the Commission.

[283] Transcript of G W Jackson, T15980:24-42 (Day 155).
[284] Transcript of T J O'Brien, T15852:28-31 (Day 153).

9.377 Some persons may be perfectly happy to have left the faith and others behind. No adverse comment was made by or elicited from Mr Baker, formerly one of Jehovah's Witnesses, who had left the faith.[285]

9.378 Accordingly, this suggested finding F70(b) should not be made.

F70 The Jehovah's Witness organisation's policy …:

c) is particularly cruel on those who have suffered child sexual abuse in the organisation and who wish to leave because they feel that their complaints about it have not been adequately dealt with

9.379 No evidence was presented to substantiate the finding that "those who have suffered child sexual abuse in the organisation and who wish to leave because they feel that their complaints about it have not been adequately dealt with." Evidence to the contrary was provided by witnesses. (See the responses to suggested finding F69 above at paragraphs [9.367]-[9.369] and F70 above at paragraphs [9.370]-[9.378].)

9.380 Accordingly, this suggested finding F70(c) should not be made.

F70 The Jehovah's Witness organisation's policy …:

d) is not apparently justified by the Scriptures which are cited in support of it.

9.381 With respect, Counsel Assisting is not qualified to offer an authoritative opinion on the Scriptures and presented no supporting evidence for this opinion, which goes beyond the Terms of Reference of the Commission.

9.382 No recommendation by the Commission ought to be or could be based on a suggested finding made along such lines as it would, if enacted into law, infringe the protection afforded by s.116 of the Constitution, which concerns the free exercise of religion.[286]

9.383 Accordingly, this suggested finding F70(d) should not be made.

F70 The Jehovah's Witness organisation's policy…….

e) is adopted and enforced in order to prevent people from leaving the organisation and thereby to maintain its membership.

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[285] Transcript of M Baker, T15614:17-38 (note in particular lines 33-34) (Day 151).
[286] See paragraphs 3.7-3.10 in Submissions above.

9.384 This suggested finding ought not be made because:

(a) there was no evidence given to the Commission upon which it could be based - no documents were or are referred to by Counsel Assisting and no oral testimony is referred to containing any admission which could support such a finding;

(b) it is not true as a matter of fact – Jehovah's Witnesses are a voluntary faith-based organisation that persons are free to join and to leave;

(c) Jehovah's Witnesses were not asked to address the Commission on such a question. Had it been raised beforehand, it could have and would have been addressed directly by testimony from persons inside and outside of the faith;

(d) it is not at all relevant to the Commission's Terms of Reference;

(e) it is an unfounded, unfair and unnecessary attack upon a voluntary faith-based organisation that is law-abiding and does much to promote lawful conduct within Australia and around the world through its exertions; and

(f) if the finding could not be made in a Court of law, it ought not be made by the Commission.

9.385 Evidence to the contrary was provided by witnesses. (See the responses to suggested finding F69 and F70(a) above at paragraphs [9.367]-[9.375]).

9.386 Accordingly, this suggested finding F70(e) should be disregarded.

F70 The Jehovah's Witness organisation's policy …:

f) is in conflict with the organisation's professed support for freedom of religious choice and the belief that Jehovah God is a compassionate God who recognises the worth and dignity of all human beings.

9.387 The suggested finding F70(f) on "shunning" postulates a false conflict and for that reason should not be made. It is perfectly proper for a person of one faith to "avoid" or "shun" (the two are synonyms) another person who either refuses expressly (or implicitly) to accept the first person's beliefs or who denigrates their beliefs. Evidence was given during the Commission's public hearing in Case Study 29 that members of the faith have siblings in other faiths and they do not "shun" them.[287] The mere fact that someone chooses another faith does not mean that they are "shunned" — something more is required and that something more is a rejection (or denigration) of another's beliefs.

[287] Exhibit 29-0024, First statement of T J O'Brien, STAT.0592.001.0001_R at [4] and [25]; Transcript of V J Toole, T15795:29-31 (Day 153).

9.388 Even Mr Monty Baker (formerly one of Jehovah's Witnesses) understood that avoidance or shunning is based upon passages in the Bible.[288] He did not assert that it was inconsistent with Scripture, nor did he assert that it was "cruel".

9.389 As a matter of freedom of belief, any person in the secular arena would be entitled to "avoid" or "shun" a (self-asserted) "Christian" member of, for instance, a motorcycle gang who advocated and engaged in activities inconsistent with a Christian way of life. It is still possible for that person to support freedom of religious choice and to also recognise that even a bikie can choose a different form of life and may have different religious beliefs. The point of difference is when the bikie either expressly or by implication rejects or denigrates the person's beliefs and that leads to the avoidance. If such a right is recognised in the general community, why, one can ask rhetorically, should it be denied to a member of the Jehovah's Witnesses faith?

9.390 Accordingly, this suggested finding F70(f) should not be made.

CAS PART 10: Dr Monica Applewhite

Available findings on Dr Applewhite's expert opinions

9.391 Counsel Assisting considers that the following three findings are available on the evidence:

F71 The opinions expressed by Dr Applewhite in paragraphs 36, 45 and 46 of her report are rejected because they are not substantiated by identifiable facts and assumptions or by reasons.

9.392 Dr Applewhite was the only expert called to give evidence in Case Study 29 and the only expert who commented upon the practices of Jehovah's Witnesses. No other expert came forward to give evidence and no other expert contradicted Dr Applewhite's conclusions.

9.393 There was no evidence given that the conclusions expressed by Dr Applewhite were, in fact, incorrect, even if the reasoning by which she came to her views was not elaborated upon in her report.

9.394 Whether the conclusions expressed by Dr Applewhite will ultimately prove to be of assistance to the Commission is a matter upon which reasonable minds

[288] Transcript of M J Baker T15614:46-15615:8 (Day 151).

can differ when one bears in mind that, part of the Commission's task is to consider what can be better done to protect children; and when it is also appreciated that, religious bodies have a significant role in providing support that is beneficial to children and their families.[289]

9.395 The opinions expressed by Dr Applewhite should not be rejected simply because Counsel Assisting considers that the opinions are not substantiated. There is a clear distinction between being correct in one's opinion or conclusion and not justifying an opinion. The same distinction underlies those decisions of appellate courts when they do not agree with the reasoning (or lack thereof) of a trial judge but nevertheless agree with the overall conclusion or conclusions on particular issues reached by the trial judge. In such circumstances, the conclusion can stand even if the path by which it was reached was unknown.

9.396 Jehovah's Witnesses publish and disseminate a substantial amount of material in many different languages throughout the world. It is self-evidently better to encourage an organisation to continue warning against child abuse then it is to criticise what has been done to protect children.

9.397 Accordingly, this suggested finding F71 should be amended to read:

> *The opinions expressed by Dr Applewhite in paragraphs 36, 45 and 46 of her report are accepted.*

F72 Dr Applewhite's report contains a number of factual errors with regard to her documenting of the relevant practices and procedures of the Jehovah's Witnesses.

9.398 The factual errors were minor and limited in number, and, as was demonstrated in further questioning by counsel for Jehovah's Witnesses, the errors had no bearing upon the ultimate conclusions expressed by Dr Applewhite in her report.[290] It would be rare for any report not to contain an error of sorts; the important question is whether the error had a bearing upon the ultimate conclusion.

9.399 Accordingly, this suggested finding F72 should be amended to read:

[289] Letters Patent page 1.
[290] Transcript of Dr M L Applewhite, T15519:8-24; T15524:6-43 (Day 150).

Dr Applewhite's report contains a small number of inconsequential factual errors with regard to her documenting of the relevant practices and procedures of Jehovah's Witnesses.

F73 Dr Applewhite's report is therefore rejected.

9.400 The reasons given by Counsel Assisting to support suggested findings F71 and F72 are not a reason to reject an expert's report (as suggested in F73). Even if correct, they could only ever be a reason for not basing action upon the report but not for rejecting it. There is no evidence that contradicts the expert's conclusions and there was ample documentary and oral evidence in support of them.[291]

9.401 Accordingly, this suggested finding F73 should be amended to read:

Dr Applewhite's report is therefore accepted.

Available findings on Dr Applewhite's oral evidence

9.402 Counsel Assisting considers that the following findings are available on the evidence:

F74 Dr Applewhite accepted the following components to current standards of best practice in relation to raising and responding to allegations of child sexual abuse within religious organisations, namely that religious organisations should have:

a) a process for reporting allegations of child sexual abuse which is survivor focussed and designed to ensure that the child or adult survivor feels able to come forward and be comfortable in reporting the allegation

b) a process for reporting allegations of child sexual abuse that does not require a survivor to confront the alleged perpetrator of their abuse or be in the same room as the alleged perpetrator without support

c) a system for preventing perpetrators of child sexual abuse from being put back in a position of trust with children

d) an ability to take child-safe action in order to remove children from imminent danger, or a relationship with other authorities that have that ability, and

[291] See for example, Case Study 2, Transcript of Prof S W Smallbone, T1506:36-41, T1519:5-23, T1535:2-14 (Day 15);

e) strong and cooperative relationships with child protection authorities and with criminal justice authorities

9.403 It should be remembered that Dr Applewhite gave evidence before Mr Spinks gave his evidence about the present day practices of the Service Department at the branch office and that Dr Applewhite specifically did not comment upon the present day practices.

9.404 The procedures and practices of Jehovah's Witnesses meet criteria (a), (b), (c), (d) and (e).

9.405 As to 74(a) see the oral evidence of Mr Spinks.[292]

9.406 As to 74(b) see the oral evidence of Mr Spinks.[293]

9.407 As to 74(c) see the oral evidence of Mr Spinks.[294]

9.408 As to 74(d) see oral the evidence of Mr Toole[295] and Mr Spinks.[296]

9.409 As to 74(e), Mr Toole gave evidence of the assistance provided to the police and the fact that he was thanked for the assistance given by him and the elders concerned to the police.[297]

9.410 As the evidence of Mr Davies revealed,[298] it would be unrealistic to consider that the police and the prosecutorial authorities always had the resources to deal with all allegations of child sexual abuse and assistance from Jehovah's Witnesses has been welcomed and for which they have been thanked.[299]

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292 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15697:47-T15698:8; see also T15665:18-45 (Day 152).
293 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15683:45-T15684:2; T15686:26-40; T15695:12-14; and T15704:3-14, 33-37 (Day 152).
294 Transcript of R P Spinks, T15711:26-44; T15735:21-38; T15736:39-42; T15737:20-32 (Day 152).
295 On the ability to take child-safe action, see Transcript of V J Toole, T15763:32-40 and T15776:29-35 (Day 153);
On Jehovah's Witnesses' relationship with authorities that have that ability, see Transcript of V J Toole, T15796:44-T15797:24 and T15800:15-18 (Day 153).
296 On the ability to take child-safe action, see Transcript of R P Spinks, T15660:40-47 and T15711:26-43 (Day 152);
On Jehovah's Witnesses' relationship with authorities that have that ability, see Transcript of R P Spinks, T15741:20-33 and T15742:13-44 (Day 152).
297 Transcript of V J Toole, T15767:43-T15768:9 and T15811:25-T15812:15 (Day 153);
See also Transcript of J P Davies, T15428:18-T15429:1 (Day 149).
298 Transcript of J P Davies, T15426:45-T15427:10 (Day 149).
299 See footnotes 295-297 above.

F75 The opinion expressed by Dr Applewhite in oral evidence that requiring a survivor of child sexual abuse to present her testimony before elders and her abuser would not meet the relevant standard is accepted.

9.411 The practice of Jehovah's Witnesses has, for some time, been that a victim of child sexual abuse is not required to present his/her testimony before elders (see response to suggested finding F44 above).

9.412 An adult survivor of child sexual abuse can, if they wish to, confront their abuser (see response to suggested finding F41 above).

9.413 What occurred in the cases of BCB and BCG was consistent with the standards applied by the secular authorities at that time, 27 to 33 years ago (see paragraphs 5.4, 6.1 and 6.2).

F76 The opinion expressed by Dr Applewhite that requiring a survivor of child sexual abuse to present her allegation and testimony to three men without the presence of a support person would not meet the relevant standard is accepted.

9.414 This suggested finding assumes that Jehovah's Witnesses' policies and practices prohibit a victim of child sexual abuse from having a support person present when he or she presents his/her allegation to the elders. As noted in response to suggested findings F46 above, this is not the case.

9.415 We also refer to the evidence of Mr Spinks where he discussed the practice of Jehovah's Witnesses, and stated clearly that a victim of child sexual abuse is not prohibited from having a support person present. Counsel Assisting's suggested finding is not the practice of Jehovah's Witnesses.[300]

[300] Transcript of R P Spinks, T15693:29-T15694:17 and T15695:2-14 (Day 152).

F77 The Jehovah's Witness organisation's current policies and procedures for raising and responding to complaints or allegations of child sexual abuse do not meet all current standards of best practice.

9.416 The suggested finding is far too sweeping and cannot be made. No specific current standard was investigated in any detail in Case Study 29, and no opportunity was provided to address any particular current standard of best practice for religious organisations. Moreover, this was never the subject of evidence before the Commission. Dr Applewhite was never afforded an opportunity to opine on this subject.

9.417 However, in accord with Scriptural principles, Jehovah's Witnesses are willing to review their policies and practices on child sexual abuse, including those having to do with the protection of children.

10. Part III: Some further matters

10.1 Ultimately, the Commission is required to make recommendations to the Australian Parliament about what can be done to better prevent child sexual abuse and what can be done to improve the responses to child sexual abuse. It is apparent that the Commission's task involves addressing systemic issues and failings and not isolated incidents of sexual abuse.[301]

10.2 A number of the suggested findings by Counsel Assisting do not seem to be directed towards "systemic" issues. It should be noted that in both cases the abuse took place in the context of the private home. In any event, the congregation elders viewed the wrongdoing seriously and took congregation action. Moreover, these cases are not representative of the present-day procedures of Jehovah's Witnesses when addressing child sexual abuse. Unfortunately, those assisting the Commission appear to have misunderstood the relevant Jehovah's Witnesses' documents, which would not be the case with congregation elders who understand and implement the direction contained in the documents with the support of the Service Department.

10.3 Jehovah's Witnesses are a law-abiding community, committed to love of neighbour.[302] They readily comply with mandatory reporting laws. They also obey any other statutes enacted to safeguard minors from sexual abuse.

10.4 Jehovah's Witnesses have demonstrated that they make adjustments where necessary and within the confines of their Scriptural beliefs. Several examples were given during oral testimony of what Jehovah's Witnesses are prepared to do: for example, to review procedures, to consider whether procedures and practices should be consolidated into one document, and to seek additional independent legal advice.

10.5 The very serious task entrusted to the Commission is not lost upon Jehovah's Witnesses and for that reason, amongst others, Jehovah's Witnesses have not sought to criticise any person doing their job. Jehovah's Witnesses consider, however, that some of the criticisms made by Counsel Assisting go beyond what is necessary to assist the Commission in fulfilling its task or what is required by the Terms of Reference. They appear to be unjustified attacks on Jehovah's Witnesses as a faith and the individual members thereof. These attacks seem to be the result of misinterpretations of the beliefs and practices of Jehovah's Witnesses and of the Bible and the law.

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301 Letters Patent at pages 1 and 2.
302 Matthew 22:39; John 13:34, 35.

10.6 Proof of this can be seen by reference to suggested finding F56 concerning Mr Toole and the referral to the Law Society of New South Wales[303] and the suggested finding F65 concerning Mr Geoffrey Jackson's empathy for survivors.[304] It was not put directly to Mr Toole that, the fact that he did not advise elders who sought his advice to report a matter to the police pursuant to s.316 *Crimes Act* (NSW) was a breach of his professional or ethical obligations so that he was not given the opportunity then to defend himself against any criticism. Moreover, in the greater scheme of things neither Mr Toole's professional competence, nor Mr Geoffrey Jackson's personal empathy for survivors, will have any bearing upon the important questions and the tasks facing the Commission and its ultimate recommendations. Unfortunately, the effect upon the reader is to prejudice the reader against two law-abiding citizens in circumstances where the criticism is not justified or relevant but instead assumes a state of affairs that neither person was required to defend.

10.7 In addition to those two examples, suggested finding F70 (concerning membership of Jehovah's Witnesses) is also based on Counsel Assisting's misunderstanding of Jehovah's Witnesses' beliefs and practices. Further, this suggested finding is not related to either preventing or responding to child sexual abuse, and is a criticism that was not raised with Jehovah's Witnesses at any time before the suggested finding. The suggested finding ought not to have been made by Counsel Assisting and should be withdrawn.

[303] See paragraphs 9.305-9.311 in Submissions above.
[304] See paragraphs 9.352-9.353 in Submissions above.

11. Part IV: Summary of suggested findings that Jehovah's Witnesses accept and proposed amended findings

11.1 It is the submission of Jehovah's Witnesses that the findings that ought to be made should address the two important questions that the Commission is entrusted to deal with: prevention and responses at a systemic level. In so doing, it is, of course, appropriate to recognise the experiences of the survivors. To that end, Jehovah's Witnesses set out below what they consider to be accurate findings based on the evidence presented to the Commission and addressing what Jehovah's Witnesses do to prevent and respond to child sexual abuse.

11.2 As stated above, the findings that the Commission ought to be making in terms of prevention and responses are set out below.

Response to suggested findings on the Jehovah's Witnesses relationship with the secular authorities

11.3 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F1:

> F1 The Jehovah's Witness organisation presents its members with conflicting and ambiguous teachings regarding their relationship with secular authorities, thereby fostering a distrust of such authorities.

This is simply not true for the reasons given in paragraphs 9.3 to 9.10.

Response to suggested findings on historical child sexual abuse data

11.4 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F2:

> F2 Since 1950, the Jehovah's Witness organisation in Australia has received allegations of child sexual abuse against 1,006 of its members relating to at least 1,800 victims, and has in that period not reported a single allegation to the police or other authorities, even though 579 of those against whom an allegation was made confessed to having committed child sexual abuse.

This suggested finding has no regard to matters raised in correspondence with the Commission providing context for the statistics, as explained in paragraphs 9.12 to 9.21.

11.5 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F3:

F3 The Jehovah's Witness organisation in Australia receives approximately three to four reports of allegations of child sexual abuse each month.

For the reasons provided in paragraphs 9.22 to 9.23, this suggested finding should be amended to read:

The Jehovah's Witness organisation may receive approximately three or four calls a month about child sexual abuse. No evidence was presented to determine if these reports involved non-Witness perpetrators, occurred before the wrongdoer's association with Jehovah's Witnesses, if the report was historical in nature, or if it was in fact pertaining to actual child sexual abuse.

Response to suggested findings on BCB's first disclosure

11.6 Counsel Assisting's suggested findings F4 – F6:

F4 The elders bringing the man whom BCB accused of abusing her to her home was unjustified and traumatising for BCB and should not have occurred.

F5 Although the elders may have been following the documented procedure at the time and they may have believed that Scriptural principle required that the accuser face the accused with her allegations, it was distressing to and unsupportive of BCB to require that of her.

F6 It was distressing for BCB to be required by the elders to tell of what had happened to her to a group of men, including the man whom she accused of abusing her, and it was not likely to, nor did it, result in BCB disclosing the full extent of her abuse.

This suggested finding should be amended to reflect the actual testimony of BCB, in both her oral testimony [Transcript of BCB, T15176:19-20 (Day 141)] **and written statement** [Exhibit 29-0001, Statement of BCB, STAT.0603.001.0001_R at [82]], **respectively:**

BCB "felt very, very uncomfortable" and it was "very distressing".

11.7 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F7:

F7 It was inconsistent with the elders' professed sympathy for BCB for them not to have offered her the opportunity of the support and involvement of women in the process of investigating her allegations of abuse.

This suggested finding should be amended to read as follows, based on the reasons outlined in paragraphs 9.30 to 9.42:

As BCB had the support of her husband who was present with her, the fact that the elders did not offer her the opportunity to have women involved in the process is not inconsistent with the elders' professed sympathy for BCB.

11.8 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F8:

F8 The elders did not explain to BCB the purpose of their investigation and the meetings with her such as to ensure that she had an understanding of that purpose, which left her confused and disempowered.

For the reasons given in paragraphs 9.43 to 9.45, this suggested finding should be amended to read:

Elders investigating BCB's complaints could have ensured that BCB understood the purpose of their investigation and the meetings with her.

11.9 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F9:

F9 The application of the two-witness rule meant that there was insufficient evidence for the elders to act against BCB's abuser even though they believed her, which left her feeling disbelieved and unsupported, and it left the abuser in the congregation where he may have been a risk to other children.

The suggested finding is contrary to the evidence and for the reasons explained in paragraphs 9.197 to 9.227, should be disregarded.

11.10 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F10:

F10 Mr Horley telling BCB that she should not discuss her abuse with anyone left her feeling silenced and unsupported.

The suggested finding does not accurately reflect BCB's evidence: see in addition paragraphs 9.48 to 9.50.

11.11 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F11:

F11 BCB was not told by the elders that she could, let alone should, report her abuse to the authorities.

This suggested finding should be amended to read:

Elders investigating BCB's complaints could have advised BCB of her right to report abuse to authorities.

11.12 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F12:

F12 In circumstances where both investigating elders agreed that there was substance to BCB's allegations, they should have taken steps against Bill Neill, at least by imposing some restrictions on his activities involving children and thereby addressing the potential risk that he posed to other children.

For the reasons provided in paragraphs 9.58, this suggested finding should be amended to read:

After Bill Neill was removed as an elder, the elders could also have imposed appropriate restrictions on his involvement with children.

11.13 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F13:

F13 It was traumatic for BCB and inappropriate of Mr Horley for him to have required BCB to attend Bible study at Bill Neill's home when he knew that BCB accused Bill Neill of abusing her.

This suggested finding does not accurately reflect the evidence given: see paragraphs 9.51 and 9.52.

11.14 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F14:

F14 The recommendation of the elders to the Branch Office that Bill Neill be reinstated as an elder 'once this has died down' and their expressed concern 'that there may also be worldly people who also know' demonstrates that they were more concerned about the reputation of Bill Neill and the congregation than about the risk that he posed to children.

For the reasons provided in paragraphs 9.57 and 9.58, this suggested finding should be amended to read:

The recommendation of the elders to the branch office that Bill Neill be reappointed as an elder 'once this has died down' and their expressed concern 'that there may also be worldly people who also know' were inappropriate and did not reflect the policy and practice of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Response to suggested findings on BCB's second disclosure

11.15 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F15:

F15 It was wrong of Joe Bello, and contrary to the Jehovah's Witness organisation's own direction in that regard, to discourage BCB from reporting to the Royal Commission by asking whether she 'really wants to drag Jehovah's name through the mud'.

For the reasons given in paragraphs 9.70 to 9.71, this suggested finding is not supported by the evidence and ought to be disregarded.

11.16 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F16:

F16 The elders in BCB's present congregation should have supported BCB in her reporting to the Royal Commission if that is what she wanted to do.

This suggested finding is simply too broad, as outlined in paragraphs 9.69 to 9.75.

Response to suggested findings on the investigation and judicial committee processes following BCB's disclosure

11.17 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F17:

> F17 The elders did not explain to BCG the purpose of their investigation and their meetings with BCG such as to ensure that she had an understanding of that purpose, which left her confused and disempowered.

This suggested finding is not supported by the evidence and should not be made for the reasons set out in paragraphs 9.80 to 9.145.

11.18 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F18:

> F18 It was traumatising for BCG to be required by the elders to tell what had happened to her to a group of men, including the man whom she accused of sexually abusing her, and it was not likely to, nor did it, result in BCG disclosing the full extent her abuse.

For the reasons outlined in paragraphs 9.80 to 9.145, this suggested finding should be amended to remove:

and it was not likely to, nor did it, result in BCG disclosing the full extent of her abuse.

11.19 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F19:

> F19 It would have been supportive of the elders to offer BCG the opportunity of the support and involvement of other women in the process of investigating her allegations of abuse.

This suggested finding should be amended to reflect the evidence in relation to BCG, as set out in paragraphs 9.90 and 9.91.

11.20 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F20:

F20 During their judicial committee investigation or proceedings the elders received evidence that BCH had abused BCG's elder sister and her two younger sisters, but they took no action in relation to that evidence.

This suggested finding should be amended to remove the following, based on the reasons given in paragraphs 9.80 to 9.145:

but they took no action in relation to that evidence.

11.21 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F21:

F21 The evidence presented to the judicial committee of BCH having abused his other daughters satisfied the Jehovah's Witness organisation's own rules with regard to sufficiency of evidence to establish that BCH had abused BCG, but the elders wrongly ignored that evidence and accordingly failed to uphold BCG's complaint against BCH.

The suggested finding should be amended as follows, based on the explanation in paragraphs 9.80 to 9.145:

The evidence presented to the judicial committee of BCH having abused BCG's elder sister satisfied the Scriptural standard with regard to sufficiency of evidence to establish that BCH had abused BCG.

11.22 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F22:

F22 In the course of the judicial committee process, and before the elders reached a conclusion on BCH's guilt in relation to his extra-marital conduct, BCH confessed to having abused BCG.

Based on the reasons outlined in paragraphs 9.80 to 9.145, this suggested finding should be amended to read:

In the course of the appeal committee hearing, BCH confessed to having abused BCG.

11.23 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F23:

F23 The elders inexplicably and wrongly ignored BCH's confession to having abused BCG and thereby, within the precepts of the Jehovah's Witness organisation's own rules and procedures, failed to uphold BCG's complaint against BCH.

This is simply not true for the reasons provided in paragraphs 9.80 to 9.145.

11.24 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F24:

F24 BCG was not told by the elders that she could, let alone should, report her abuse to the authorities.

For the reasons explained in paragraphs 9.80 to 9.145, this suggested finding ought to be disregarded.

11.25 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F25:

F25 The appeal committee's requirement that BCG give evidence of her sexual abuse by her father to a group of seven men including her named abuser was unjustified and traumatising to BCG and should never have happened.

This suggested finding should be amended to remove the following, given the reasons provided in paragraphs 9.80 to 9.145 and 9.193 to 9.196:

'The appeal committee's requirement', 'was unjustified' and *'and should never have happened'.*

11.26 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F26:

F26 The failure by the elders to report BCH's sexual abuse of BCG to the police had the result that BCH remained at large in the community and a risk to children, and reflects that the elders were not concerned with child safety but rather with keeping their organisation 'clean'.

For the reasons outlined in paragraphs 9.80 to 9.145, this suggested finding should be amended to remove:

and a risk to children and reflects that the elders were not concerned with child safety but rather with keeping their organisation 'clean'.

11.27 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F27:

F27 The judicial committee's failure to uphold BCG's complaint of abuse by BCH conveyed to BCG that the organisation tolerated child sexual abuse within its ranks.

This suggested finding is not supported by the evidence, as explained in paragraphs 9.80 to 9.145, and should be disregarded.

11.28 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F28:

F28 The advice given by the elders to BCG that she not speak about her abuse to anyone had the effect of silencing her.

For the reasons provided in paragraphs 9.80 to 9.145, this suggested finding should be amended by replacing:

'anyone' with *'everyone'.*

11.29 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F29:

F29 The elders' treatment of BCG was unsympathetic and unsupportive and left her feeling worthless and helpless.

This suggested finding is simply untrue for the reasons set out in paragraphs 9.80 to 9.145.

Response to suggested findings on the reinstatement of BCH

11.30 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F30:

F30 BCH was reinstated as a Jehovah's Witness little more than three years after he had been disfellowshipped for, amongst other things, five or six counts of sexual abuse of his daughter.

This suggested finding should be replaced with the following, for the reasons outlined in paragraphs 9.161 to 9.166:

BCH was reinstated as one of Jehovah's Witnesses three years after he had been disfellowshipped for, amongst other things, child sexual abuse of his daughter and adultery.

11.31 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F31:

F31 The decision to reinstate BCH took no account of the risk that BCH posed to children, paid little regard to the fact that he had been disfellowshipped because of child sexual abuse, and was focussed principally on his extra-marital relationship.

For the reasons provided in paragraphs 9.161 to 9.166, this suggested finding should be replaced with:

The religious decision to reinstate BCH as a member of the congregation was based on his demonstration of repentance, rather than on other factors.

11.32 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F32:

F32 The decision to reinstate BCH took no account of BCH's failure to apologise to BCG, a factor relevant to consideration of sincere repentance, or of what BCG might have had to say about BCH being reinstated.

This suggested finding should be replaced with the following, for the reasons given in paragraphs 9.161 to 9.166:

BCG felt that the decision to reinstate BCH as a member of the congregation did not take into consideration whether BCH had personally apologised to BCG for child sexual abuse.

11.33 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F33:

F33 The decision to reinstate BCH was disrespectful and unsupportive of BCG.

Given the explanation in paragraphs 9.161 to 9.166, this suggested finding should be replaced with:

BCG felt that the decision to reinstate BCH in the St George Congregation did not take her feelings into consideration.

11.34 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F34:

F34 The Branch Office's response to BCG on 26 February 1996 caused BCG to feel angry, upset and let down, and did not convey support and concern to BCG on the part of the Jehovah's Witness organisation.

For the reasons outlined in paragraphs 9.161 to 9.166, this suggested finding should be replaced with:

Although the letter from Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia to BCG dated 26 February 1996 acknowledges her feelings and conveys concern for BCG, due to a misunderstanding of the meaning of the Scripture shared with her, BCG felt, angry, upset, and unsupported.

Response to suggested findings on the impact of the judicial committee process on criminal proceedings against BCH

11.35 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F35:

F35 The judicial committee and appeal committee processes that preceded BCG reporting her abuse by her father to the police complicated the criminal proceedings because of the numbers of people involved in those processes and the telling and retelling of the experience.

This suggested finding ought to be disregarded for the reasons provided in paragraphs 9.174 and 9.175.

Response to suggested findings on the risk management and second disfellowshipping of BCH

11.36 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F36:

F36 When BCH was reinstated no restrictions were placed on him which were relevant to his risk to children despite his established history of child sexual abuse.

Given the reasons set out in paragraph 9.177, this suggested finding should not be made.

11.37 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F37:

F37 BCH was disfellowshipped a second time for lying in relation to child sexual abuse rather than for child sexual abuse itself.

For the reasons outlined in paragraph 9.178, this suggested finding should not be made.

11.38 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F38:

F38 The reasons canvassed and then given for the second disfellowshipping of BCH show that those from the Jehovah's Witness organisation who were involved were more concerned about a charge of lying than they were about BCH's sexual abuse of his daughters.

This is simply not true, as set out in paragraph 9.179.

Response to suggested findings on the authority of the governing body

11.39 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F39:

F39 Mr Spinks' evidence that the Australia Branch has full authority to produce documents, seminars, letters to elders and letters to publishers without the approval or agreement of the Governing Body is rejected.

For the reasons provided in paragraphs 9.182 to 9.189, this suggested finding should be amended to read:

The Australia Branch has authority to produce documents, seminars, letters to elders and letters to publishers in matters relating to its local jurisdiction as long as such do not express any view or perspective contrary to the Bible.

11.40 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F40:

> F40 The Governing Body retains authority in respect of all publications in the name of the Jehovah's Witness organisation and any view or perspective contrary to that of the Governing Body is not tolerated.

The suggested finding should be amended to read as follows, for the reasons given in paragraphs 9.190 to 9.191:

The Governing Body retains authority in respect of the general principle and framework of all publications in the name of Jehovah's Witnesses, and any view or perspective contrary to the Bible is not tolerated.

Response to suggested findings on the investigation process

11.41 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F41:

> F41 There are no circumstances in which the survivor of a sexual assault should have to make her allegation in the presence of the person whom she accuses of having assaulted her, and, contrary to the present position, the documents, manuals and instructions produced by the Jehovah's Witness organisation should make this clear.

As explained in paragraphs 9.193 to 9.196, this suggested finding should be amended to read:

Jehovah's Witnesses have not and do not presently, require the survivor of a sexual assault to make his/her allegation in the presence of the person whom he or she accuses of having assaulted him or her, unless the survivor wishes to do so; and Jehovah's Witnesses have acknowledged the need for this position to be clearly documented.

11.42 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F42(a):

F42 The requirement that two or more eyewitnesses to the same incident are required in the absence of a confession from the accused, the testimony of two or three witnesses to separate incidents of the same kind of wrongdoing, or strong, circumstantial evidence testified to by at least two witnesses (i.e. the two witness rule):

a) means that in respect of child sexual abuse which almost invariably occurs in private, very often no finding of guilt will be made in respect of a guilty accused often no finding of guilt will be made in respect of a guilty accused

Based on the reasons in paragraphs 9.197 to 9.202, this suggested finding should be amended to read:

In the case of any alleged serious sin, including child abuse, judicial committees are formed on the basis of the Scriptural standard of evidence of either a confession or substantiation by two or more witnesses. – Proverbs 28:13; Deuteronomy 19:15; Matthew 18:16; 2 Corinthians 13:1; 1 Timothy 5:19.

11.43 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F42(b):

F42 [The two witness rule]:

b) causes victims of child sexual abuse to feel unheard and unsupported when it results in allegations of child sexual abuse not being upheld

This suggested finding should be amended to read as follows, for the reasons provided in paragraphs 9.203 to 9.209:

"Based on the testimony of the two survivor witnesses: (i) Although BCB did not feel supported overall, her testimony was that [an elder involved in Scriptually caring for her accusation] was "very kind and supportive. He told me that what has happened was not my fault and that I shouldn't blame myself"; and (ii) Although BCG felt unsupported when her allegations of child sexual abuse against her father, BCH, were not Scripturally established at the time of the first congregation judicial hearing, it should be noted that BCH was found guilty of the sexual abuse of his daughter by the congregation appeal committee within the following two weeks."

11.44 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F42(c):

F42 [The two witness rule]:

c) is a danger to children in the Jehovah's Witness organisation because its consequence is that very often nothing is done about an abuser in the organisation

This suggested finding is simply not true: see the reasons outlined in paragraphs 9.210 to 9.218.

11.45 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F42(d):

F42 [The two witness rule]:

d) does not seem to be applied by the Jehovah's Witness organisation in the case of an accusation of adultery, which suggests that adultery is taken more seriously by the organisation than child sexual abuse

This is simply not true, given the reasons provided in paragraphs 9.219 to 9.222.

11.46 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F42(e):

F42 [The two witness rule]:

e) needs to be revisited by the Jehovah's Witness organisation with a view to abandoning it or at least reformulating it to ensure that safe decisions as to someone being guilty of child sexual abuse can be made more easily.

Such a finding is beyond the Commission's Terms of Reference for the reasons given in paragraphs 9.223 to 9.227.

11.47 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F43:

F43 The requirement that only elders (i.e. men) can participate in the making of decisions in the investigation process on whether or not someone has committed child sexual abuse:

a) is a fundamental flaw in that process which weakens the decisions by excluding women, and

b) needs to be revisited by the Jehovah's Witness organisation to ensure a meaningful role for women

Such a finding is beyond the Commission's Terms of Reference, as explained in paragraphs 9.228 to 9.232.

Response to suggested findings on the judicial committee process

11.48 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F44:

F44 Under the current documented judicial committee process, if the evidence of the complainant is to be taken into account then she must give evidence in person unless she lives a great distance away or for some other reason is not able to be physically present.

The suggested finding is simply not true: see the reasons provided in paragraphs 9.234 to 9.236.

11.49 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F45:

F45 The stated willingness of the Jehovah's Witness organisation in Australia to have the evidence of a complainant of child sexual abuse give evidence remotely or by way of a written statement should be formalised and documented so that those running judicial committee processes and those affected by them are properly advised of the position.

For the reasons outlined in paragraphs 9.237 to 9.242, this suggested finding should be amended to read:

Jehovah's Witnesses should continue to make clear their long-standing policy that, where desired, a victim may provide evidence remotely or by way of a written statement to elders investigating and to those subsequently handling an allegation of child abuse.

11.50 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F46:

F46 Under the current documented judicial committee process, a complainant of child sexual abuse is prohibited from having someone present with her in the judicial committee process to offer support.

The suggested finding is untrue: see the reasons set out in paragraphs 9.243 to 9.247.

11.51 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F47:

F47 The stated willingness of the Jehovah's Witness organisation in Australia to allow a complainant of child sexual abuse to be accompanied by a support person of her choosing should be formalised and documented so that those running judicial committee processes and those affected by them are properly advised of the position.

The suggested finding contains incorrect assertions as set out in paragraphs 9.248 and 9.249 and ought to be disregarded.

11.52 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F48:

F48 The current documented process for responding to allegations of child sexual abuse within the Jehovah's Witness organisation is focussed largely on the rights and comfort of the accused, with little regard to the requirements of a victim of abuse.

The suggested finding is simply not true: see the reasons given in paragraphs 9.250 to 9.257.

Response to suggested findings on the management of risk

11.53 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F49:

F49 The failure of the Jehovah's Witness organisation to take into account the risk of re-offending when considering whether an offender is repentant, and consequently in deciding whether to merely reprove rather than to disfellowship, or whether to re-admit someone who has previously been disfellowshipped, does not adequately take account of considerations of child safety and should be revisited.

This suggested finding ought to be disregarded given the reasons in paragraphs 9.259 to 9.267.

Response to suggested findings on sanctions - reproval

11.54 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F50:

F50 Since it is the policy or practice of the Jehovah's Witness organisation not to report allegations of child sexual abuse to the police (other than if required by law to do so), if a known abuser is found to be repentant and for that reason merely reproved rather than disfellowshipped he remains in the congregation and a risk to children in the congregation.

There is no policy or practice and for the reasons outlined in paragraphs 9.269 to 9.280, this suggested finding should not be made.

11.55 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F51:

F51 The system of not announcing the reasons for reproval means that members of the congregation are not warned about the risk that such a wrongdoer poses to children in the congregation.

For the reasons provided in paragraphs 9.281 to 9.291, this suggested finding should not be made.

11.56 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F52:

F52 The sanction of reproval therefore does nothing to protect children in the congregation and in the broader community.

No evidence was placed before the Commission that could justify such a finding so for the reasons given in paragraphs 9.292 to 9.293, this suggested finding ought to be disregarded.

Response to suggested findings on sanctions - disfellowshipping

11.57 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F53:

F53 Since it is the policy or practice of the Jehovah's Witness organisation not to report allegations of child sexual abuse to the police (other than if required by law to do so), if a known abuser is disfellowshipped he remains in the community and a risk to children in the community.

There is no such policy or practice and for the reasons provided in paragraphs 9.295 to 9.300, this suggested finding should not be made.

11.58 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F54:

F54 The sanction of disfellowshipping does nothing to protect children in the community.

No evidence was provided to the Commission which could support such a finding and based on the reasons in paragraphs 9.301 to 9.304, this suggested finding should not be made.

Response to suggested findings on reporting

11.59 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F55:

F55 Prior to this case study, the Jehovah's Witness organisation in Australia did not advise congregational elders of their obligations to report the commission of criminal offences to the police under s 316 of the Crimes Act 1900 (NSW).

This suggested finding ought to be disregarded as explained in paragraphs 9.306 to 9.310.

11.60 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F56:

F56 This report is referred to the Law Society of New South Wales in relation to the conduct of Mr Toole in having failed to advise congregational elders of their obligations to report their knowledge of the commission of certain criminal offences to the police.

The report should not be referred to the Law Society of New South Wales for the reasons outlined in paragraph 9.311 and 10.6.

Response to suggested findings on the Jehovah's Witnesses organisation's policy on reporting

11.61 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F57:

F57 It is the policy and practice of the Jehovah's Witness organisation in Australia to not report allegations of child sexual abuse to the police or other authorities unless required by law to do so.

There is no such policy and practice of Jehovah's Witnesses: see the reasons given in paragraphs 9.313 to 9.318.

11.62 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F58:

F58 The basis for this policy is said to be respect for the 'right' of the victim to herself decide whether to make a complaint to the authorities.

This suggested finding should be amended to read as follows, based on the reasons in paragraphs 9.319 to 9.324:

Jehovah's Witnesses respect the right of a survivor or victim of abuse (or their parent or guardian) to decide for him or herself whether or not to report the abuse to the authorities.

11.63 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F59:

F59 That basis has no justification where the victim is still a minor at the time that the abuse comes to the attention of the organisation, or where there are others who may still be at risk at the hands of the alleged abuser.

For the reasons set out in paragraphs 9.325 to 9.327, this suggested finding ought to be disregarded since it does not relate to the policies and practices of Jehovah's Witnesses.

11.64 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F60:

F60 Since the organisation cannot remove an alleged abuser from the family or take other positive steps to safeguard children in the family from continuing risk, the organisation should have a policy to report all allegations of child sexual abuse to the authorities unless an adult victim specifically requests that a report not be made and there is no appreciable risk of children being abused.

For the reasons provided in paragraphs 9.328 to 9.333, this suggested finding should be amended to read:

The Scripturally-based beliefs and practices of Jehovah's Witnesses require that they obey the laws pertaining to child abuse. In jurisdictions that require it, they obey laws requiring the reporting of such allegations to the authorities. Elders of Jehovah's Witnesses will obey any newly enacted laws requiring ministers of religion to report allegations of child abuse.

Response to suggested findings on the impact of the Jehovah's Witnesses organisation processes on criminal processes

11.65 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F61:

F61 The internal processes of the Jehovah's Witness organisation for handling allegations of child sexual abuse cause significant delay in a complaint coming, if ever, before authorities.

This suggested finding cannot be made given the statistical evidence presented to the Commission, as explained in paragraphs 9.336 to 9.339.

11.66 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F62:

F62 Admissions made by an accused during the investigative and/or judicial committee process administered by the Jehovah's Witness organisation may not be admissible in criminal proceedings because of the circumstances in which they are made, including that incentives such as reduction in penalty are offered if an admission is made.

This suggested finding should not be made for the reasons outlined in paragraphs 9.340 to 9.344.

11.67 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F63:

F63 The number of people to whom a survivor of child sexual abuse is required to divulge the detail of her complaint exacerbates the trauma already suffered by a survivor of such abuse.

For the reasons provided in paragraphs 9.345 to 9.348, this suggested finding should not be made.

11.68 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F64:

F64 There is significant risk of contamination of a survivor's evidence as a result of the number of times and circumstances in which a survivor is required to divulge the detail of her complaint before her abuse is, if ever, reported to the authorities.

This suggested finding should be removed and replaced as follows given the reasons outlined in paragraphs 9.349 to 9.351:

There may be a risk of contamination of a survivor's evidence as a result of the number of times and circumstances in which a survivor is required to

divulge the detail of her complaint before her abuse is, if ever, reported to the authorities.

Response to suggested findings on Mr Jackson's stated empathy on survivors

11.69 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F65:

F65 Mr Jackson's failure to have read or be familiar with the testimony of the survivor witnesses yet to have read or otherwise familiarised himself with the testimony of Jehovah's Witness witnesses belies his stated empathy for the survivors and his stated recognition of the importance of their perspectives.

This suggested finding is completely untrue and should be amended to reflect what Mr Geoffrey Jackson himself explained, as elaborated on in paragraphs 9.353 and 10.6:

I wasn't aware of the fact that I would be called before the Commission ... I haven't lived in Australia for 36 years, and I haven't certainly had a chance to look through the files ... The reason I came here was to care for my ailing father, and that has taken a lot of my time.

Response to suggested findings on the system of prevention of child sexual abuse—WWCC

11.70 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F66:

F66 The documented practice of the Jehovah's Witness organisation of not reporting child sexual abuse to the authorities undermines the efficacy of the working with children check system, a system to which the organisation says it subscribes and with which it says it complies.

For the reasons given in paragraph 9.355, this suggested finding is too broadly stated and should not be made in the terms expressed.

Response to suggested findings on the system of prevention of child sexual abuse—risk of reoffending

11.71 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F67:

F67 The practices and procedures of the Jehovah's Witness organisation for the prevention of child sexual abuse, and in particular for the management of the risk of an abuser

reoffending, do not take account of the actual risk of an offender reoffending and accordingly place children in the organisation at significant risk of sexual abuse.

For the reasons in paragraphs 9.358 to 9.362, this suggested finding ought to be disregarded.

Response to suggested findings on the accessibility of procedures and policies

11.72 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F68:

F68 The Jehovah's Witness organisation's documented procedures for reporting on and responding to allegations of child sexual abuse are deficient in that they are not documented in such a way as to be easily accessible in one document and available to all interested or affected parties and some matters that are stated to be the policies or practices of the organisation are not recorded at all.

This suggested finding should not be made for the reasons outlined in paragraphs 9.364 to 9.365.

Response to suggested findings on shunning

11.73 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F69:

F69 Members of the Jehovah's Witness organisation who no longer want to be subject to the organisation's rules and discipline have no alternative than to leave the organisation which requires that they disassociate from it.

For the reasons provided in paragraphs 9.367 to 9.369, the finding should read:

A Jehovah's Witness who no longer wants to be subject to the organisation's rules and discipline may simply stop associating with the congregation without formally disassociating from the faith.

11.74 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F70(a):

F70 The Jehovah's Witness organisation's policy of requiring its adherents to actively shun those who leave the organisation:

a) makes it extremely difficult for someone to leave the organisation

This suggested finding is incorrect: see paragraphs 9.370 to 9.375 and 10.7.

11.75 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F70(b):

F70 The Jehovah's Witness organisation's policy…:

b) is cruel on those who leave and on their friends and family who remain behind

This is contrary to the evidence given by Mr Baker: see paragraphs 9.376 to 9.378 and 10.7.

11.76 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F70(c):

F70 The Jehovah's Witness organisation's policy…:

c) is particularly cruel on those who have suffered child sexual abuse in the organisation and who wish to leave because they feel that their complaints about it have not been adequately dealt with

This is unsubstantiated: see paragraphs 9.379 to 9.380 and 10.7.

11.77 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F70(d):

F70 The Jehovah's Witness organisation's policy…:

d) is not apparently justified by the Scriptures which are cited in support of it.

This is incorrect: see paragraphs 9.381 to 9.383 and 10.7.

11.78 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F70(e):

F70 The Jehovah's Witness organisation's policy…:

e) is adopted and enforced in order to prevent people from leaving the organisation and thereby to maintain its membership.

As explained in paragraphs 9.384 to 9.386 and 10.7, this suggested finding ought to be disregarded.

11.79 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F70(f):

F70 The Jehovah's Witness organisation's policy…:

f) is in conflict with the organisation's professed support for freedom of religious choice and the belief that Jehovah God is a compassionate God who recognises the worth and dignity of all human beings.

There is no basis for such a finding: see paragraphs 9.387 to 9.390 and 10.7.

Response to suggested findings on Dr Applewhite's expert opinions

11.80 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F71:

F71 The opinions expressed by Dr Applewhite in paragraphs 36, 45 and 46 of her report are rejected because they are not substantiated by identifiable facts and assumptions or by reasons.

For the reasons outlined in paragraphs 9.392 to 9.397, the suggested finding should read:

*The opinions expressed by Dr Applewhite in paragraphs 36, 45 and 46 of her report are accepted***.**

11.81 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F72:

F72 Dr Applewhite's report contains a number of factual errors with regard to her documenting of the relevant practices and procedures of the Jehovah's Witnesses.

The suggested finding should read as follows, based on the reasons given in paragraphs 9.398 to 9.399:

Dr Applewhite's report contains a small number of inconsequential factual errors with regard to her documenting of the relevant practices and procedures of Jehovah's Witnesses.

11.82 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F73:

F73 Dr Applewhite's report is therefore rejected.

For the reasons provided in paragraphs 9.400 to 9.401, the finding should read:

Dr Applewhite's report is therefore accepted.

Response to suggested findings on Dr Applewhite's oral evidence

11.83 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F74:

F74 Dr Applewhite accepted the following components to current standards of best practice in relation to raising and responding to allegations of child sexual abuse within religious organisations, namely that religious organisations should have:

a) a process for reporting allegations of child sexual abuse which is survivor focussed and designed to ensure that the child or adult survivor feels able to come forward and be comfortable in reporting the allegation

b) a process for reporting allegations of child sexual abuse that does not require a survivor to confront the alleged perpetrator of their abuse or be in the same room as the alleged perpetrator without support

c) a system for preventing perpetrators of child sexual abuse from being put back in a position of trust with children

d) an ability to take child-safe action in order to remove children from imminent danger, or a relationship with other authorities that have that ability, and

e) strong and cooperative relationships with child protection authorities and with criminal justice authorities

These suggested findings should not be made since they do not relate to the policies and practices of Jehovah's Witnesses, as explained in paragraphs 9.403 to 9.410.

11.84 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F75:

F75 The opinion expressed by Dr Applewhite in oral evidence that requiring a survivor of child sexual abuse to present her testimony before elders and her abuser would not meet the relevant standard is accepted.

For the reasons outlined in paragraphs 9.411 to 9.413, this suggested finding should not be made since it has no direct relevance to the current policies and practices of Jehovah's Witnesses.

11.85 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F76:

F76 The opinion expressed by Dr Applewhite that requiring a survivor of child sexual abuse to present her allegation and testimony to three men without the presence of a support person would not meet the relevant standard is accepted.

This suggested finding ought to be disregarded since it has no direct relevance to the current policies and practices of Jehovah's Witnesses as explained in paragraphs 9.414 to 9.415.

11.86 Counsel Assisting's suggested finding F77:

F77 The Jehovah's Witness organisation's current policies and procedures for raising and responding to complaints or allegations of child sexual abuse do not meet all current standards of best practice.

For the reasons outlined in paragraphs 9.416 to 9.417, this suggested finding cannot be made.

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Dated: 9 November 2015

ROYAL COMMISSION INTO INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSES TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

Public Hearing - Case Study 29
(Day 147)

Level 17, Governor Macquarie Tower
Farrer Place, Sydney

On Monday, 27 July 2015 at 10am

Before
The Chair: Justice Peter McClellan AM
Commissioner: Professor Helen Milroy

Counsel Assisting: Mr Angus Stewart SC

Transcript produced by DTI

THE CHAIR: Yes.

MR STEWART: Your Honour, appearances? Stewart is my name, as your Honour and Commissioner Milroy know. I'm assisted by Joanna Blair and James Pender, solicitors assisting the Royal Commission.

MS GALLAGHER: I appear for [BCB], your Honour.

THE CHAIR: You have leave?

MS DAVID: David. I appear for [BCG].

THE CHAIR: And you have leave?

MS DAVID: I do have leave, your Honour.

MR TOKLEY: May it please the Commission, I appear with my learned friend Mr Gibson. I appear for the Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia and also the witnesses Mr O'Brien, Mr Spinks and Mr Toole.

THE CHAIR: You have leave. Is there anyone else?

MR COYNE: Yes, Commissioner, I appear with Ms Tringali for the following witnesses: Max Horley, Doug Jackson, Joe Bello, Dino Ali, Kevin Bowditch, Ron de Rooy and Allan Pencheff.

THE CHAIR: You have leave.

MS McGLINCHEY: I have authorisation to appear for Mr Monty Baker.

THE CHAIR: Yes, you have leave.

MS McGLINCHEY: Thank you.

MR STEWART: Your Honour and Commissioner, this is the 29th public hearing of the Royal Commission. This case study concerns the response of the church of the Jehovah's Witnesses and its corporation, the Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia, to reports of child sexual abuse within the Jehovah's Witness Church in Australia.

This case study will explore the experiences of two survivors of child sexual abuse and the Jehovah's Witness

Church's response to their complaints of sexual abuse whilst they were members of the Jehovah's Witness Church.

The case study will also involve an examination of the systems, policies and procedures in place within the Jehovah's Witness Church and Watchtower Australia for responding to allegations of child sexual abuse, and the mechanisms in place to prevent child sexual abuse within the Jehovah's Witness Church.

As will be seen, the Jehovah's Witness Church is a tightly controlled, rule-bound organisation, that seeks to keep its members in relative isolation from the rest of society. It has rules drawn from its own version of the Bible for, amongst other things, personal presentation, the avoidance of involvement in extra-curricular activities at school, maintenance of the constant awareness of the dangers of bad associations in the secular world, who is in the church and who is out of the church, and for family and home life.

For example, church doctrine places the father as head of the family with authority over his wife and children. The wife's role is that of helper or complement. The church teaches its members to be in subjection to it in all aspects of life.

The Jehovah's Witness Church is preoccupied with sin and sinning. If a congregation member becomes aware that another member has committed a serious sin, such as, as it is put, "fornication, adultery, homosexuality, blasphemy, apostasy, adultery and similar gross sins", he or she is obliged to report that to the congregation elders. In the case of lesser sins as between members, the church prescribes the steps that must be taken to reach a resolution. The more serious sins must be investigated by the elders who must pass judgment on the accused and his or her degree of repentance for the sin.

It is a system in which a group of men who are appointed from above, not by the congregation, stand in judgment over their fellow men, women and children on every aspect of their lives.

The result of this active involvement of the church in every aspect of the lives of congregation members is that there is no meaningful distinction between family and

church. The family is part of the church and what happens in the family is governed by the church.

During the investigation of this case study, Watchtower Australia produced some 5,000 documents pursuant to summonses issued by the Royal Commission on 4 and 28 February 2015. Those documents include 1,006 case files relating to allegations of child sexual abuse made against members of the Jehovah's Witness Church in Australia since 1950 - each file for a different alleged perpetrator of child sexual abuse. Royal Commission officers have analysed the case files and have recorded the outcomes of their analysis. The results of the analysis, together with the experiences described by two survivor witnesses, illustrate the practical application and effect of the church's policies and directives in relation to handling of complaints and managing the risk of child sexual abuse. I will say more about the results of that case file analysis a little later.

The facts identified in these submissions are drawn from witness statements and documents that will be tendered or from testimony that is expected to be given during the public hearing. It is not expected that these facts will be particularly in contest. They are set out here as a guide to the evidence that will be led.

I will structure the submissions going forward in three parts. Firstly, I will address the background to the Jehovah's Witness institution. I will then consider the child sexual abuse policies and procedures of the Jehovah's Witness Church, and finally, I will consider the child sexual abuse survivors in the church and, in particular, those who will give evidence in this study.

So, turning, then, to the background to the church as an institution, the Jehovah's Witness Church was founded towards the end of the 19th century in Pennsylvania by a small group of bible students led by Charles Taze Russell. Russell had become disillusioned with mainstream Christianity, which he argued had strayed from the first century vision of Christianity described in the Bible. Between 1870 and 1879, Russell distributed his group's first century interpretation of the Bible through a periodical that is now called "The Watchtower - Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom". In 1884, the Zion's Watchtower Tract Society was incorporated and carried on

the business of publishing and disseminating millenarian literature - that is, literature based on the belief that the end of the world is imminent.

Today the religion has a worldwide presence of 8.2 million active members in 239 countries. Over the last 25 years, the active membership of Jehovah's Witnesses worldwide has increased from 4 million members in 1990.

The Jehovah's Witness Church has been active in Australia since 1896, with a branch office first established in 1904. The Australia branch office is based in Sydney and coordinates the activities of all congregations in Australia, New Zealand and some other islands.

The primary legal entity used by the Jehovah's Witness Church today is the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. The headquarters of Watchtower Pennsylvania is in Brooklyn, New York, and is known as "Bethel", meaning "House of God". The activity of Jehovah's Witnesses worldwide is overseen by the Governing Body. The Governing Body is a council of eight men based at the headquarters in Brooklyn. It is at the apex of a highly centralised and hierarchical structure.

The Jehovah's Witnesses believe that the teachings promulgated by the Governing Body are based on God's word, and not devised by men. Teachings take the form of the Awake! and Watchtower magazines, letters containing directives to branch officers and elders, handbooks and other publications.

The Governing Body supervises more than 90 branches worldwide. A branch office is the headquarters for the Jehovah's Witness Church in a particular country or region and is also referred to as "Bethel".

Each branch office is supervised by a branch committee, which oversees districts within the branch. The Australia branch office is represented around Australia by circuit overseers who have pastoral responsibility for about 20 congregations - that is, a circuit. A circuit overseer travels weekly to different congregations in his circuit and is responsible for, among other things, ensuring that each congregation is complying with all theocratic direction given by the Governing Body. By

"theocratic", I mean a form of government in which God is recognised as the supreme civil ruler.

Congregations form the basic organisational unit of the Jehovah's Witness Church. Each congregation is overseen by a Body of Elders. Each congregation in Australia is, in the legal sense, a voluntary association, and is registered separately as a charity.

There are currently 817 congregations in Australia with over 68,000 active members. Over the past 25 years, the active membership of the church in Australia has grown 29 per cent from approximately 53,000 members in 1990. In the same period, Australia's population growth has been 38 per cent.

The Australia branch office relevantly comprises the following structures: first, a branch committee, an ecclesiastical Body of Elders that oversees and manages the operation of the Australia branch office; second, the legal department; and, third, the service department, which cares for all aspects of the spiritual activities of the Jehovah's Witness Church.

The function of each of the above structures is relevant to the Royal Commission's examination of the Jehovah's Witness Church's response to child sexual abuse in its ranks. The Royal Commission will hear evidence from three institutional witnesses who serve in each of these structures.

Terrence O'Brien is the coordinator of the Australia branch and a director and secretary of the Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia. He has actively served with the Jehovah's Witness Church for 40 years. Mr O'Brien will give evidence regarding the history and organisational structure of the Jehovah's Witness Church and he will provide an administrative perspective on the organisation's approach to the prevention and handling of child sexual abuse within Australia.

Rodney Spinks is the senior service desk elder who has served in the service department since January 2007. He is specifically responsible for inquiries related to child sexual abuse and for assisting congregation elders to implement the Australia branch office's guidelines for handling child abuse allegations and providing victim

support.

Mr Spinks will give evidence about the role of the service department in processes that relate to handling complaints of child sexual abuse in the Jehovah's Witness Church in Australia.

Vincent Toole is a solicitor who has, since 2010, overseen the operation of the legal department of the Australia branch office. Mr Toole will give evidence regarding the role of the legal department in responding to allegations and managing the risk of child sexual abuse within the Jehovah's Witness Church in Australia.

The Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia is the legal entity which facilitates the production and distribution of Bible-based literature for the church throughout Australia. Watchtower Australia is a public company limited by guarantee and a registered charity.

Within each congregation, the members comprise elders, ministerial servants and publishers. A male publisher can make spiritual advancement by becoming a ministerial servant and then an elder.

Congregational responsibilities are split between elders and ministerial servants. Elders and ministerial servants are volunteer roles taken up by those men who have been actively involved in the congregation for a period of time. The Royal Commission will hear that the Jehovah's Witness Church does not have a salaried clergy and therefore considers that it has no employees. Appointments are based on scriptural qualifications and there is prescriptive guidance as to how a ministerial servant and an elder should serve, act and behave at all times.

Each congregation is overseen by a Body of Elders. Elders are appointed to shepherd the congregation and oversee spiritual matters. Their primary responsibilities include organising field work or door-to-door preaching, running congregational disciplinary committees, leading the congregation services and Bible studies and attending to the pastoral care of the congregation. It is said that elders must be experienced men who have displayed a pattern of integrity in their lives over a period of time as ministerial servants.

Ministerial servants predominantly provide administrative support and practical assistance to the elders and service to the congregation. They care for organisational tasks, such as acting as an attendant at congregation meetings, handling sound equipment, distributing literature and managing congregation accounts and general maintenance at the Kingdom Hall.

Members of the congregation are called publishers and call each other "brother" and "sister". Publishers may be baptised or unbaptised. Baptism is the symbol of the publisher's dedication to Jehovah. Unbaptised publishers are those who have not been baptised but have been given approval to join the congregation's formal ministry and to identify themselves publicly with the Jehovah's Witness Church.

Publishers who wish to devote many hours to field service preaching may be appointed as pioneers. Regular pioneers are exemplary congregation members who have volunteered to spend a certain amount of time in the public preaching activity each month. Special pioneers serve full time in preaching work and are selected from experienced, long-serving regular pioneers.

The evidence will show that the key imperative belief of the Jehovah's Witness Church is that the Bible is the inspired word of God. This means that Jehovah's Witnesses interpret the Bible literally and take living in accordance with Bible principles extremely seriously. It is expected that evidence will be given that the Jehovah's Witness Church is strongly theocratic, meaning that "almost all internal organisational rules as well as teachings are strictly based on biblical prescriptions on how best to live according to God's plans".

The English High Court has recently recognised that "[t]his distinguishes them from other religious denominations who use the bible to shape thinking, guide behaviour and teach lessons but do not use it directly to set policy and religious practices".

Being a Jehovah's Witness is a way of life for all members. The evidence will demonstrate that devotees are expected to adhere to all doctrines established by the Governing Body. These are a pervasive influence over almost every conceivable sphere of daily life. The strict

code of moral conduct by which all members strive to live based on the scriptures is enforced by the highly formalised disciplinary process for dealing with wrongdoing within the church and its jurisdiction over all aspects of the life of Jehovah's Witnesses.

The Royal Commission will hear evidence of how a uniform set of doctrines prescribed by the Governing Body unites devotees in a tightly bonded community and separates them symbolically from the outside world. The Jehovah's Witness Church is a world-renouncing theology. Jehovah's Witnesses are counselled to keep separate from the world and to beware of secular associates who have no love for Jehovah. Further, the Royal Commission will hear evidence from two survivor witnesses who will say that they were not permitted to associate with people outside the Jehovah's Witness community and that non-Jehovah's Witnesses are referred to as "worldly people" and, as it is put, "not in the Truth".

The Royal Commission will hear evidence that separateness from the world is reinforced by various policies of the Jehovah's Witness Church. Jehovah's Witnesses are encouraged to strictly adhere to biblical principles to the exclusion of all else, including pursuit of further education. Jehovah's Witness parents are encouraged to school their own children in matters of sex education, because the alternative of school-based sex education is considered likely to result in immorality. The general practice of the Jehovah's Witness Church is to deal with allegations of child sexual abuse internally, without reference to secular authorities.

The Royal Commission will hear that the Jehovah's Witness Church is a millenarian Christian religion, meaning that they believe that the end of the world is near. Mr O'Brien will give evidence that the Jehovah's Witnesses have a doctrinal understanding of Bible prophecies regarding the "conclusion of the system of things", as it is put, which is also referred to as "the last days". Documents will be tendered which show that Jehovah's Witnesses believe that the only way to finally end child abuse is to, as they put it, "embrace God's Kingdom under Christ" and to "love God with all your heart and your neighbour as yourself" so as to be saved when the end comes.

The Royal Commission will receive evidence that all members are expected to teach and can lead bible study. Bible study is conducted in a variety of ways, including by house-to-house ministry or on the street. Mr O'Brien will give evidence that members evangelise to glorify God and are instructed to go and make disciples of all people. Jehovah's Witnesses view evangelising as a personal responsibility and the extent to which they engage in this activity is a personal decision that they make as an expression of their love for God.

Jehovah's Witnesses worship and praise Jehovah by attending organised meetings, bible study, Theocratic Ministry Schools and field service. Jehovah's Witness meetings are generally held in a place of worship called "Kingdom Hall". The Royal Commission will hear that each week, Jehovah's Witnesses around the world study the same passages in The Watchtower as directed by the Governing Body in preparation for the same program of worship at Kingdom Hall.

Documents will be tendered which show that Jehovah's Witnesses are counselled to demonstrate submission to Christ's headship by obedience to the elders, who are taken to be controlled by God for the purposes of accomplishing Jehovah's will. Mr O'Brien will give evidence that Jehovah's Witnesses accept the divine standard that "the head of every man is the Christ, in turn the head of a woman is the man".

The evidence will reveal that this belief is reflected in the patriarchal structure of the institution, where men hold positions of authority within congregations and headship in the family. Women are expected to defer to the authority of their husbands, and children are taught to obey their parents.

Moving on, then, to child sexual abuse policies and procedures, the Jehovah's Witness Church relies primarily on Bible passages to set its policies and practices. The Jehovah's Witness Church says that it has had Bible-based policies on child sexual abuse for over 30 years. Mr O'Brien will tell the Royal Commission that these policies have been refined and periodically addressed in various publications over the past several decades. Mr O'Brien will testify that the Governing Body is not involved in the administration and implementation of child

sexual abuse policies and procedures in branch offices of the Jehovah's Witness Church.

The evidence will reveal that doctrinal information is transmitted by the Governing Body through the branch offices and Bodies of Elders to individual members. From at least the 1990s, the Australia branch office has, with guidance from the Governing Body, periodically issued directives in the form of letters addressed to All Bodies of Elders providing instruction on how to respond to allegations of child sexual abuse.

In 1991, a number of articles based on biblical principles for handling wrongdoing, including child sexual abuse, were compiled in a publication for elders called, "Pay Attention to Yourselves and All Your Flock". In 2010, that publication, "Pay Attention to Yourselves", was replaced with an updated compilation of articles entitled "Shepherd the Flock of God", which is now the primary text from which an elder takes guidance on his congregation.

Additional information in support of the Jehovah's Witness Church's theocratic policies is made available to congregation members through The Watchtower and Awake! magazines and other publications.

Rodney Spinks of the service department will give evidence that the current policies of the Jehovah's Witness Church for dealing with an accusation of child sexual abuse are outlined in the following four publications: firstly, the Bible - the English edition is the New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures; secondly, the Elders' Handbook; thirdly, Watchtower Society publications, such as Organised to Do Jehovah's Will; and, fourthly, letters sent to All Bodies of Elders. In particular, a letter dated 1 October 2012, which consolidated and replaced into one letter the spiritual advice and guidance provided in various past letters from preceding years as to how Jehovah's Witnesses handle allegations of child sexual abuse.

Evidence will be put before the Royal Commission that the current policies and procedures relating to child sexual abuse within the Jehovah's Witness Church are supplemented, in particular, by the following material: first, a pivotal Watchtower article entitled "Let us Abhor What is Wicked ", published in January 1997, which

clarified in biblical terms the principles to which a congregation should have regard in considering how a child molester should be viewed and treated; and, secondly, updated guidelines issued by the Governing Body to all branch officers in August 2013 regarding how service desks should field questions from elders regarding child abuse matters.

Elders within the Jehovah's Witness Church are given periodic training on the implementation of its policies and procedures. The training takes the form of one-day programs or seminars called Kingdom Ministry Schools.

There will be evidence regarding the established disciplinary procedure adopted by the church for responding to allegations of child sexual abuse in Australia. Documents will be tendered and evidence given showing that the Jehovah's Witness Church considers that it is only authorised to address child sexual abuse in accordance with scriptural direction.

The Jehovah's Witness Church recognises child abuse to be a gross sin and crime. Its official position is that they abhor child sexual abuse and will not protect any perpetrator of such repugnant acts. Child sexual abuse is defined by the Jehovah's Witness Church as follows:

> *Child sexual abuse generally includes sexual intercourse with a minor; oral or anal sex with a minor; fondling the genitals, breasts or buttocks of a minor; voyeurism of a minor; indecent exposure to a minor; soliciting a minor for sexual conduct; or any kind of involvement with child pornography. Depending on the circumstances of the case, it may also include "sexting" with a minor. "Sexting" describes the sending of nude photos, seminude photos, or sexually explicit text messages electronically, such as by phone.*

According to the Jehovah's Witness Church, child sexual abuse is captured by the scriptural offences: firstly, "porneia", which is immoral use of the genitals between two people; secondly, "brazen or loose conduct", which includes fondling of breasts, explicitly immoral proposals, showing pornography to a child, voyeurism,

indecent exposure; and, thirdly, gross uncleanliness, which is heavy petting.

Jehovah's Witnesses are taught from the Bible that they have a personal responsibility to report wrongdoing to elders, if the wrongdoer does not voluntarily come forward. Upon receipt of an allegation, elders are directed to immediately call the branch office for direction based on the circumstances of each case. Two elders from the congregation are also directed to immediately call the legal department for legal advice on mandatory reporting obligations.

The legal department is instructed to refer the elders to the service department for scriptural direction on theocratic or judicial aspects of the case, and how to spiritually comfort and support the victim. The service department also provides guidance on when and how elders should interview a young victim of child abuse.

Two elders are directed to investigate every allegation of child sexual abuse by speaking with the victim, the alleged offender, and any other witnesses, if necessary. The weight given to the testimony of youths is at the discretion of the investigating elders. Elders are not authorised to take congregational action unless the child sexual abuse is proven according to biblical standards which are satisfied by evidence of: a confession from the accused; or the testimony of two credible witnesses to the same incident; or the testimony of two witnesses to separate incidents of the same kind of wrongdoing; or strong circumstantial evidence testified to by at least two witnesses.

Where by those rules there is insufficient evidence to substantiate the alleged child sexual abuse, the matter is held in abeyance and the elders are directed to "remain vigilant with regard to the conduct and activity of the accused". In this event, no further action is taken in relation to the complaint, and the matter is left in Jehovah's hands. If sufficient evidence is discovered, the elders must determine whether a judicial committee should be appointed to give scriptural discipline to the wrongdoer. Child sexual abuse is recognised as an offence for which a judicial committee should be formed.

The Royal Commission will hear that over the past

65 years, the requirement that there be two or more witnesses has prevented at least 125 allegations of child sexual abuse from proceeding to a judicial committee. That is not unexpected, given that by its nature there are very seldom witnesses to child sexual abuse beyond the survivor and the perpetrator.

The judicial committee is comprised of three or more elders to determine, firstly, if the individual is guilty of violating God's laws; and, secondly, whether the individual is genuinely repentant. Repentance involves a deep regret over a damaged relationship with Jehovah, remorse over the reproach brought upon Jehovah's name, and a severe longing to come back into God's favour. Documents will be tendered which show that the Jehovah's Witnesses consider that the degree of repentance ought to be commensurate with the degree of deviation.

The Royal Commission will hear that since 1950, 563 alleged perpetrators of child sexual abuse were the subject of a judicial committee hearing.

The judicial committee has wide-ranging sanctions available to it to deal with proven wrongdoing. If the wrongdoer is unrepentant, he is to disfellowshipped from the congregation. To be disfellowshipped means to be excommunicated from, or cast out of, the Jehovah's Witness Church. Congregation members are directed not to associate with disfellowshipped persons. Disfellowshipping differs from disassociation, which is an action taken by an individual who no longer wants to be known as a Jehovah's Witness.

If the wrongdoer is judged to be genuinely repentant, the sanction is to administer reproof of the wrongdoer. Reproval may be public or private and is a lesser form of discipline that allows the wrongdoer to remain a member of the congregation. Public reproval is administered before onlookers and serves to discipline the wrongdoer whilst warning the congregation that wrongdoing has been committed. Private reproval involves telling the accused that he is reproved before only those aware of the wrongdoing. A person who is judicially reproved is disqualified from special privileges, such as serving in a position of authority. Judicial restrictions are also imposed on those who are reproved. The restrictions might include being counselled by the elders about appropriate

behaviour with children.

A public announcement is made to the congregation regarding the fact, but not the grounds, of disfellowshipping or reproval.

The Royal Commission will hear that since 1950, 401 alleged perpetrators of child sexual abuse were disfellowshipped, 78 of whom were disfellowshipped on more than one occasion; and 190 alleged perpetrators of child sexual abuse were reproved, 11 of whom were reproved on more than one occasion.

Disfellowshipping decisions may be appealed within seven days. Appeal committees are formed even if there seems to be no valid basis for it, comprising, to the extent possible, impartial elders from a different congregation, who hear the case ab initio.

A disfellowshipped person may be reinstated into the congregation after the passage of sufficient time if the judicial committee determines that the individual is truly repentant and the reasons for their removal from the congregation have been abandoned. In all cases of reinstatement, documents will be tendered which show that congregational restrictions should be applied.

Since 1950, of 401 disfellowshipped alleged perpetrators of child sexual abuse, 230 were later reinstated, 35 of whom were reinstated on more than one occasion.

The case study will explore a number of risk management measures that the Jehovah's Witness Church has in place regarding how a congregation might deal with a person against whom an accusation of "child molestation" has been made.

Mr O'Brien will give evidence that the Jehovah's Witness Church believes that loving and protective parents are the best deterrent to child abuse. Mr O'Brien's evidence will be that it is the position of the Jehovah's Witness Church that parental education of children about sex and the dangers of child sexual abuse can be a major factor in its prevention. He will say that the Jehovah's Witness Church continues to educate parents via study groups and publications to help protect their children from

child sexual abuse.

Documents will be tendered which show that the Jehovah's Witness Church considers the primary responsibility for the protection of children lies with parents. Mr O'Brien will say that this is particularly so as the Jehovah's Witness Church does not have programs or facilities that separate children from their parents, such as schools or Sunday schools, and so on.

Mr O'Brien will give evidence that elders are directed to report allegations of child abuse to authorities where mandatory reporting laws apply. The Royal Commission will hear evidence from Vincent Toole, of the legal department, of his understanding of the various mandatory reporting obligations that apply across Australian States. Documents will be tendered which show that if no mandatory reporting obligations apply, elders are directed that they do not themselves need to report. The evidence will show that where a matter becomes known to the authorities, elders are directed to disclose information in their possession where legally required to do so, unless ecclesiastical privilege applies.

The Royal Commission will hear evidence that elders are directed never to discourage or sanction anyone from reporting an allegation of child sexual abuse to the authorities, and that if asked, they must make clear that this is a personal decision and a victim's absolute right. The Royal Commission will hear evidence from at least one survivor witness who, contrary to this policy, was discouraged from reporting her abuse to secular authorities by elders in the Jehovah's Witness Church. Documents will be tendered which show this is consistent with the Jehovah's Witnesses' policy not to resort to secular courts to resolve personal disputes with fellow Christians, but to rely on the elders.

Evidence will be put before the Royal Commission that of the 1,006 alleged perpetrators of child sexual abuse identified by the Jehovah's Witness Church since 1950, not one was reported by the church to secular authorities. This suggests that it is the practice of the Jehovah's Witness Church to retain information regarding child sexual abuse offences but not to report allegations of child sexual abuse to the police or other relevant authorities.

This case study will consider whether the practice of the Jehovah's Witness Church of not reporting allegations of child sexual abuse to secular authorities potentially exposes members of the church to criminal lightly for concealment of serious indictable offences under section 316 of the Crimes Act 1900 in New South Wales and failure to disclose sexual offences against minors under section 327 of the Crimes Act 1958 of the State of Victoria. The case study will consider the interaction of these offences with the confessional privilege provided for in section 127 of the Evidence Act 1995 of the Commonwealth and replicated legislation in force in New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania and the Northern Territory.

It is anticipated that documents will be tendered before the Royal Commission which will show that the Australia branch office have considered that confessional privilege would apply in circumstances where the perpetrator confessed to a child sexual abuse. The Royal Commission will hear evidence of the circumstances in which confessions relating to child sexual abuse are made to elders within a congregation and documents recording the circumstances of such confessions then provided to the branch office.

Mr O'Brien will say that the Jehovah's Witness Church complies fully with legislative requirements to ensure all relevant persons have the necessary clearances for working with children. Mr Toole will give evidence that there are approximately 7,000 elders and ministerial servants currently serving in Jehovah's Witnesses congregations in Australia who have obtained child-related police checks.

The Jehovah's Witness Church offers theocratic guidance on the sharing of information between relevant Bodies of Elders through "letters of introduction" when a member moves from one congregation to another.

When a known child molester moves to another congregation, elders are instructed to send a letter of introduction with full and complete information about the person's background and current situation to the elders of the new congregation.

Where an accused does not classify as a known child molester because there was an allegation of child abuse but this was not scripturally proven, the branch office

determines what information regarding the accusation may be shared with the new congregation.

Where a disfellowshipped person moves to a new congregation before applying for reinstatement, the new elders are directed to seek relevant information from the old congregation to determine genuine repentance for the purposes of any reinstatement application.

The Royal Commission will hear evidence that elders and ministerial servants hold positions of trust within the congregation. The Jehovah's Witness Church offers theocratic guidance on the qualification of a known child molester for such positions of responsibility.

Mr Spinks will give evidence that an Elder or ministerial servant is immediately removed if he is found to have engaged in child sexual abuse. Documents will be tendered at the hearing which show that elders are instructed to allow considerable time to pass before extending privileges of service to a former child abuser.

Since 1950, 28 alleged perpetrators of child sexual abuse were appointed to positions of authority after having been the subject of allegations of child sexual abuse. Further, of 127 alleged perpetrators of child sexual abuse deleted as elders or ministerial servants as a result of allegations of child sexual abuse, 16 were later reappointed.

In September 2014, the Jehovah's Witness Church revised its screening process for appointments to elder or ministerial positions. The current procedure requires the nominee to pass the service department's check for anything that may disqualify the individual from appointment and to answer certain questions regarding whether he has ever been involved with child sexual molestation.

Mr Toole will give evidence regarding the document retention policies of the Jehovah's Witness Church in relation to records of child sexual abuse. The current policy provides that records concerning an individual accused of child molestation are to be indefinitely retained in the congregational confidential file. The Royal Commission will hear evidence that this has been a long-standing practice of the Jehovah's Witness Church.

The Royal Commission has been contacted by 57 persons about child sexual abuse in the Jehovah's Witness Church. Of these, 34 are themselves survivors of child sexual abuse in the church.

The Royal Commission will hear evidence from two women, each of whom was sexually abused as a child in the Jehovah's Witness Church. Their cases are considered to be the most appropriate for the purposes of this case study. They are expected to testify about their experiences of: growing up as a Jehovah's Witness; being sexually abused by Jehovah's Witnesses who were in positions of authority; being discouraged from associating with non-Jehovah's Witnesses; the distress they experienced throughout the judicial committee hearing process, which involved being interviewed by a panel of males without any support; the blame that each accused sought to place on them as survivors; the absence of an explained purpose to the meetings and interviews to which they were subjected; and being discouraged from approaching authorities.

The Royal Commission will hear from both survivors that the impact of the child sexual abuse and the response of the Jehovah's Witness Church is ongoing.

I will summarise first the case of [BCB] and then the case of [BCG].

A person given the pseudonym [BCB] began associating with the Jehovah's Witness Church when she was 10 years old and was formally baptised as a Jehovah's Witness at age 18. Between 1980 and 1986, [BCB] regularly stayed overnight at the house of the Neill family, of whom the father was Bill Neill, one of two elders in the Narrogin congregation in Western Australia. [BCB]'s evidence will be that she attended weekly Bible studies led by Bill Neill at the Narrogin Kingdom Hall and his house.

From 15 years of age, [BCB] was groomed and sexually abused by Mr Neill. [BCB]'s evidence will be that Bill Neill remained a respected elder within the congregation whilst he continued to abuse [BCB]. Notwithstanding this abuse, it will be [BCB]'s evidence that she continued to respect Mr Neill and felt unable to disclose the abuse because of his position.

It will be [BCB]'s evidence that in about 1991 she

disclosed Mr Neill's abuse to a Jehovah's Witness acquaintance. Thereafter, the other elder in the congregation, Max Horley, approached [BCB] about Mr Neill's conduct. Mr Horley then arranged a meeting with Bill Neill, [BCB] and [BCB]'s husband. The Royal Commission will hear that during this meeting, [BCB] endured Bill Neill making inappropriate jokes about his conduct that was the subject of the meeting. It will be [BCB]'s evidence that having to discuss her abuse in front of a room full of men, including the perpetrator, was very distressing. The Royal Commission will hear that [BCB] felt unable to report the full extent of Bill Neill's abuse at the meeting.

Max Horley organised a second meeting, which was attended by [BCB], [BCB]'s husband, Bill Neill and Doug Jackson, who was the circuit overseer for the Narrogin congregation. During this meeting, Bill Neill lacked remorse and sought to blame [BCB] for wearing revealing clothing. It will be [BCB]'s evidence that at both meetings she felt unsafe and uncomfortable disclosing the full extent of Bill Neill's abuse. Further, [BCB]'s evidence will be that neither the purpose nor the outcome of the meetings was ever explained to her by the elders.

The Royal Commission will hear evidence that following the committee meeting, Max Horley discouraged [BCB] from further disclosures of abuse "out of respect for the Neill family". [BCB]'s evidence will be that she was left feeling unsupported by the congregation and was instead encouraged to respect her abuser. The Royal Commission will hear that Bill Neill stepped down as an elder, but that the grounds were not announced to the congregation.

Notwithstanding abuse by Bill Neill, the Royal Commission will hear that [BCB] was still expected to attend Bible studies held at the Neills' house and continued to see Bill Neill several times a week at congregational meetings. The Royal Commission will hear that Bill Neill may have later been reappointed as an elder.

[BCB] will give evidence that in about July 2014, after she had indicated that she was considering reporting her abuse to the Royal Commission, Joe Bello, an elder in her congregation at the time, asked if [BCB] "really wants to drag Jehovah's name through the mud". The Commission

will hear evidence that [BCB] felt brainwashed into believing that speaking with worldly people would bring reproach upon Jehovah's name. [BCB]'s evidence will be that, by reporting her story, she is riddled with guilt for betraying the Jehovah's Witness Church.

The Royal Commission will hear from three elders regarding their role in handling [BCB]'s allegation of abuse against Bill Neill.

Max Horley served as an elder in the Narrogin congregation from 1988. He will give evidence regarding his involvement in handling [BCB]'s allegations of child sexual abuse by Bill Neill, made in about 1991. Mr Horley's evidence will be that, in circumstances where Bill Neill denied any intentional conduct, the rule requiring two or more witnesses meant that [BCB]'s allegations could not be proven according to the scriptures. Ultimately, Bill Neill's removal as an elder was recommended by Mr Horley and Mr Jackson because [BCB]'s allegations had cast a cloud over Bill Neill's qualifications. Following Bill Neill's removal, he continued to attend meetings and was not placed on any specific restrictions. Documents will be tendered which show that the elders considered the spirituality and the seductiveness of the complainant in determining the complaint.

Doug Jackson served as a circuit overseer in Western Australia between 1990 and 1998. The Royal Commission will hear evidence regarding Mr Jackson's involvement in the judicial committee hearing into the allegations against Bill Neill during his visit to the Narrogin congregation in early 1992. Mr Jackson will give evidence regarding his recommendation that Bill Neill no longer met the scriptural qualifications for serving as an elder.

Notwithstanding Bill Neill's admission to improper conduct, a document will be tendered which shows that in the same letter that recommends his removal as an elder, Mr Jackson recommends that Bill Neill be reappointed "once this has died down and it appears that Brother Neill again has the freedom of speech."

Joe Bello has served as an elder since 1991. The Royal Commission will hear evidence regarding Mr Bello's involvement in providing shepherding care and assistance to

[BCB] during visits to her family in 2012 following [BCB]'s disclosure of Bill Neill's abuse. Mr Bello will give evidence that he did not intend to discourage [BCB] from approaching the Royal Commission.

A person given the pseudonym [BCG] was baptised as a Jehovah's Witness when she was about 16 years old. The Royal Commission will hear evidence of [BCG]'s experience growing up in a strict Jehovah's Witness family. [BCG] will give evidence that her father, [BCH], was a highly regarded Jehovah's Witness who was appointed as a ministerial servant in the Mareeba congregation in Far North Queensland in about 1984. [BCG]'s evidence will be that her father was influential within the congregation because he was well respected amongst members.

As head of the household, [BCH] dictated and enforced compliance with household rules. [BCG] was not permitted to associate with anybody outside the Jehovah's Witness community and was taught from a young age that "worldly" people could not be trusted. [BCG] was not permitted by her parents to attend school after year 10, because choosing higher education over Jehovah was frowned upon by the Jehovah's Witness Church.

When she was 17, [BCG] was sexually abused by her father on a number of occasions over a two-week period whilst her mother and siblings were away. [BCG] tried to report her father's abuse to two elders within the Mareeba congregation, both of whom were friends of her father. [BCG] will give evidence that both elders refused to speak with [BCG] without her father being present. It was not until [BCG] found the courage to tell a male friend, who approached [BCG]'s father and the elders, that the matter was investigated by the elders.

[BCG] was interviewed by three elders, all friends of her father, on a number of occasions. On each occasion, [BCG] was alone, without any support, and on one occasion, her father was also present. [BCG]'s evidence will be that instead of being protected and supported as a victim, the elders primarily sat in judgment of her credibility as a witness and made her feel to blame.

[BCG] will give evidence that the elders forced her to directly confront her father with her abuse allegations. Her father's response was to threaten [BCG] and to blame

her for seducing him.

The Royal Commission will hear that when [BCG] disclosed the abuse to her mother, her mother advised that her father had previously abused [BCG]'s older sister. At around the same time, [BCG]'s two younger sisters confirmed that they were also victims of their father's abuse. The Royal Commission will hear that although the elders were advised of the additional victims, they did not take them into consideration in their investigation.

[BCG]'s father was ultimately disfellowshipped, not for his sexual abuse of [BCG], but for unrelated, as it is put, "loose conduct" and "lying". [BCG] will give evidence that the elders would not consider the evidence of her sisters' abuse because they were not witnesses to the same event. [BCG] was devastated that her father's sexual abuse did not appear to qualify as wrongdoing in the eyes of the Jehovah's Witness Church.

[BCG]'s father immediately appealed his disfellowshipping. [BCG] was brought before an appeal committee alone to be interviewed again about the abuse. It was at this time that her father admitted the abuse and his disfellowshipping was upheld with grounds of "porneia" added.

The Royal Commission will hear that [BCG]'s father was reinstated after only a few years. [BCG] will testify that she was concerned for the safety of the congregation but was discouraged from reporting to the police and was herself threatened with disfellowshipping.

In December 1995, [BCG] wrote to Watchtower Australia regarding her father's premature reinstatement. Watchtower Australia responded in February 1996 by counselling faith in Jehovah and advising that it would make inquiries into the matters raised.

The Royal Commission will hear that when [BCG] eventually left the Jehovah's Witness Church, she was completely ostracised by members of her local congregation. [BCG] then reported her father's abuse to the police.

[BCG]'s father, [BCH], was ultimately convicted in 2004 for unlawful and indecent assault and attempted rape of [BCG] and sentenced to three years imprisonment.

[BCG]'s evidence will be that her experience of three criminal trials was easy compared to her experience of sitting through the judicial and appeal committee meetings.

The Royal Commission will hear evidence from the three elders of the Mareeba congregation - Dino Ali, Ronald de Rooy and Kevin Bowditch - regarding their role in handling [BCG]'s allegations of abuse by her father that she reported in about May 1989.

Dino Ali and Ronald de Rooy will give evidence that, in circumstances where [BCH] denied the allegations, the judicial committee was bound by the rule requiring two or more witnesses and did not have sufficient proof of the child sexual abuse to take judicial action. It was for this reason, the Royal Commission will hear, that [BCH] was ultimately disfellowshipped, not for child sexual abuse, but for "loose conduct" and for lying to the elders about his conduct.

Ronald de Rooy and Kevin Bowditch will give evidence that it was not until [BCH] confessed to the sexual abuse of [BCG] during the appeal committee hearing in 1989 that the grounds for [BCH]'s disfellowshipping were extended to include his sexual abuse of [BCG].

In 1990, [BCH] applied to the Beenleigh East congregation for reinstatement. The Royal Commission will hear evidence from Rodney Spinks and Monty Baker, both elders in the Beenleigh East congregation at that time, regarding their involvement on the judicial committee appointed to consider [BCH]'s reinstatement application.

Rodney Spinks will give evidence that [BCH]'s reinstatement application was rejected because he did not display "genuine repentance". Mr Baker will give evidence regarding the process of liaising with the Mareeba congregation, which was responsible for the decision to disfellowship [BCH], to obtain relevant information to assess [BCH]'s reinstatement application.

Allan Pencheff was an elder of the Loganholme congregation. He chaired the judicial committee that disfellowshipped [BCH] again in 2003 for lying. Mr Pencheff will give evidence that he was not aware of any reason to restrict [BCH]'s contact with children at the time [BCH] joined the Loganholme congregation, and that he

only became aware of [BCH]'s abuse allegations when criminal proceedings were brought against him between about 2001 and 2004. The Mareeba congregation recommended certain restrictions be placed on [BCH] due to the gravity of the wrongs committed, but did not recommend any restrictions regarding [BCH]'s exposure to children.

Mr Toole will give evidence that in January 2003 he provided a memorandum to the service desk, which observed that the primary issue before the Loganholme judicial committee in 2003 was [BCH]'s lying as opposed to his sexual abuse of [BCG].

In about 2001, criminal proceedings commenced against [BCH] for child sexual abuse and, in 2004, he was convicted and sentenced to three years imprisonment. The Royal Commission will hear evidence from Jason Davies, a former Queensland DPP solicitor, regarding his involvement in the prosecution of the criminal proceedings against [BCH]. Mr Davies will give evidence of his obligations of the influence of the Jehovah's Witness faith on the behaviour of those involved in the criminal proceedings. Mr Davies' evidence will be that "matters of faith sometime [sic] take precedence over secular, moral obligations and norms", and that "the religious persuasion of those involved [in the criminal proceedings] was integral to understanding the behaviour of the accused, the victim and the witnesses, at least in their reluctance to go to the police". The Royal Commission will hear that the delay between the child sexual abuse and the time at which allegations came to police attention is in part attributable to the church's practice of dealing with offending internally in accordance with its theocratic rules, without referring matters to secular authorities.

The Royal Commission will hear of the repeated applications for reinstatement made by [BCH] following his release from prison and of the factors taken into consideration by the Jehovah's Witness Church in considering these applications. The Royal Commission will hear evidence of the involvement of the church's service desk in guiding the consideration of [BCH]'s pleas for reinstatement.

Mr O'Brien will give evidence that to date he is unaware of any claims for redress having been made in relation to child sexual abuse concerning the Jehovah's

Witnesses in Australia. Watchtower Australia does not hold any insurance policy which provides cover for any claims relating to child sexual abuse. Documents will be tendered which show that in 2008, Watchtower Australia considered the formation of a separate legal entity, apparently for the purposes of minimising liability in the case of litigation.

It is expected that the case study will provide the Royal Commission with insights into systemic issues within its terms of reference in the area of institutional responses to concerns and allegations about incidents of child sexual abuse. In particular, the systemic issues that are expected to be considered arising from this case study are the following:

1. The influence of theocratic beliefs on the way in which religious institutions handle complaints and manage the risk of child sexual abuse and their interaction with government authorities;

2. The management of complaints of allegations of child sexual abuse within an institution without reference to external authorities, and the impact that that approach may have on the institution's capacity to protect children;

3. The impact of an institution's internal disciplinary mechanisms on criminal processes;

4. The impact of the record-keeping practices of institutions on the ability of those institutions to manage the risk of child sexual abuse and to respond to victims of abuse;

5. The efficacy of mechanisms to prevent child sexual abuse;

6. The adequacy of systems to support and rehabilitate survivors of child sexual abuse.

This public hearing of the Royal Commission has been listed, obviously commencing today and until Friday 7 August.

THE CHAIR: Yes, thank you, Mr Stewart. I think we might take the short adjournment now so that the cameras can be reorganised.

MR STEWART: As your Honour pleases.

SHORT ADJOURNMENT

MR STEWART: Your Honour, the first witness will be the first survivor witness, [BCB]. Her name and address are known to the Royal Commission, and she is accompanied by her husband for support.

THE CHAIR: [BCB], it will be necessary for you to be sworn. Will you take an oath on the Bible or an affirmation?

[BCB]: An oath on the Bible

<[BCB], sworn: [11.30am]

<EXAMINATION BY MR STEWART:

MR STEWART: Q. Do you have a copy of your statement dated 10 July 2015 with you?
A. Yes.

Q. Are there any amendments or corrections you would like to make to that statement?
A. No.

Q. Do you confirm the statement?

MR STEWART: I tender the statement, your Honour.

EXHIBIT #29-001 STATEMENT OF [BCB] DATED 10/07/2015

MR STEWART: Q. I would ask you, [BCB], to read your statement, perhaps commencing at the third paragraph.
A. "My full name is [BCB]. I was born on [REDACTED] 1967 and I am 47 years old. I am married to [BCC] and we have two daughters. My husband owns a business and I work for him keeping the books. I was formally baptised as a Jehovah's Witness when I was 18 years old.

I grew up on a farm near Wickepin in Western Australia. I lived on the farm until I was around 19 with my dad, my mum, and my younger brother.

In 1977, when I was about 10 years old, my mum became

a Jehovah's Witness. Between about 1977 and 1979, my mum used to take me and my brother with her to a couple of Jehovah's Witness meetings each week in Corrigin. Corrigin was about an hour's drive away from where we lived.

My dad and I were quite close up until I was about 10 years old."

THE CHAIR: [BCB], would you like Mr Stewart to read your statement for you?

THE WITNESS: No, thank you, I should be all right.

THE CHAIR: If you need to pause, or if you want Mr Stewart or your husband to help, let me know.

THE WITNESS: Okay. I just need a minute. Can I just have a minute?

THE CHAIR: Would you like us to adjourn for a minute?

THE WITNESS: Just a minute, thank you.

THE CHAIR: We will adjourn very briefly. You let us know when you are ready. But if you want your husband to read or Mr Stewart to read, that is quite appropriate. We will take a brief pause and come back when you are ready.

SHORT ADJOURNMENT.

THE CHAIR: Q. Are you all right to go?
A. Yes. "My dad and I were quite close up until I was about 10 years old. However, when I started attending Jehovah's Witness meetings with my mum, we drifted apart emotionally. My dad wasn't a Jehovah's Witness and never attended Jehovah's Witness meetings with us. He never stopped my mum, my brother or me from attending Jehovah's Witness meetings.

In or around 1979, my mum and dad decided that I should go to high school in Narrogin. Narrogin was about an hour's drive from where we lived. Because I was at school in Narrogin, my mum decided to join the Narrogin congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses. My mum, brother and I attended meetings there every Wednesday, Friday and Sunday.

The Sunday and Wednesday meetings of the Narrogin congregation were held at the Narrogin Kingdom Hall and were attended by the whole congregation. At these meetings, one of the elders would usually deliver a public talk from the platform based on a reading from The Watchtower magazine or give a talk from the Bible. At these meetings, the elders would also lead question and answer sessions and give specific training about our door-to-door preaching.

The Wednesday meeting was referred to as the Theocratic Ministry School and children were allowed to give talks about the Jehovah's Witness beliefs at this meeting. I remember that I sometimes gave talks at these meetings.

The Friday meeting was referred to as book study and usually took place at someone's house. At this meeting, a small group of families would come together to discuss biblical scripture.

I first met Bill and Bronwyn Neill and their children at a large Jehovah's Witness party in or around 1979 when I was about 12 years old. Bill and Bronwyn had a daughter named [BCE] who was two years younger than me. [BCE] and I became very good friends.

In or around 1980, Bill Neill was one of two elders at the Narrogin congregation. At the time I understood that Bill's position as an elder gave him authority in the Jehovah's Witness community. He used to give talks at the weekly congregation meetings from the platform in the Kingdom Hall. The other elder in the Narrogin congregation at the time was Jack Shaylor.

I looked up to Bill because he was an elder. Everybody in the congregation respected and trusted Bill, including my mum.

Between about 1980 and 1986 I spent a lot of time with [BCE] at the Neill family house. I used to stay at [BCE]'s house at least once a week. Often, I would attend the Friday night book study meeting led by Bill at the Neills' house and then stay over at the Neills' house until the Sunday meeting at the Kingdom Hall. [BCE]'s mum, Bronwyn, treated me like a daughter and I felt really close to her. I used to call Bill "Uncle Bill".

I recall that the Neill family talked a lot about church issues in the house. They used to discuss their belief in Jehovah. Bill in particular used to explain that all ideas and ways of behaving should be figured out according to what the Bible says. I remember that Bill would discourage [BCE] and me from forming friendships with other children who were not Jehovah's Witnesses at school.

The Neill family always seemed to me to be an affectionate family, which I really liked. For example, everyone always kissed each other on the lips when they said good night or goodbye to one another.

I remember that Bill and Bronwyn were very open with their kids about sex. Bill would often make sexual jokes in front of me. My mum never talked about anything to do with sex. I had grown up understanding that it was not something that you were supposed to talk about.

In or around 1982, when I was about 14 years old, I was staying over at [BCE]'s house, as I did almost every week. I was having a shower and [BCE], who I often shared the bathroom with, said "What's that on your tummy?" I looked down and noticed I had a rash on my stomach. Despite me not wanting her to, [BCE] went and got her mum. I only had my knickers and a singlet on. Bronwyn said she wanted to show Bill. I said, 'I don't want him to see me'. I never let my dad see me in my knickers, so I was really embarrassed. Bill came and looked at my stomach and I remember feeling really uncomfortable about him seeing me like that.

Later in 1982, I was again staying over at [BCE]'s house. On this night, as I was saying good night to Bill in the hallway of their house, he kissed me good night on the lips. Initially, this did not seem unusual to me, but he then stuck his tongue into my mouth. I pulled away and looked at him in shock. He looked at me and gave me a queer smirk-type smile. I found myself half smiling back. I was so surprised by what he had done that I just froze. I didn't know what else to do.

Every time I stayed at the Neill family house after that night until the end of 1986, I had to endure Bill tongue-kissing me good night. This often occurred in the hallway just outside [BCE]'s bedroom.

Apart from putting his tongue in my mouth when I stayed over at [BCE]'s house, Bill's behaviour towards me did not seem to change. He continued to behave the same way around his family. He continued to leave the Jehovah's Witness meetings and to be respected by the rest of the congregation. Since nothing was said about what he was doing to me, I felt like I had to act like nothing was happening.

I really didn't know what to do. I was scared and ashamed. I felt that I was somehow responsible for what Bill was doing to me. I felt like I couldn't say anything about it, because I was worried that I would get into trouble and that Bill would belt me like he belted his kids when they were naughty.

I respected Bill because he was an elder. He was also [BCE]'s dad and head of the Neill household. But I had also come to fear him. Because of his position as an elder, I felt that I couldn't tell anyone about what he was doing to me. I felt that if I told someone, it would upset Bronwyn and [BCE] as well as the members of the congregation.

Every time I thought about bringing what was happening to me out in the open, the consequences were too scary, so I stopped thinking about it. I felt like no-one would believe me.

A few months later, after Bill had once again tongue-kissed me good night at his house, [BCE] said to me, 'Did my dad just kiss you for a long time?' I assumed that [BCE] must have seen Bill kiss me. I was scared of getting into trouble and so I said to her, 'Don't worry, it's okay.' I thought at the time that by not telling [BCE] what was happening, I was protecting her. I thought that if she found out, it might cause her family to break up. I now wish I had told her.

On one occasion in or around 1983, Bill and I were out doing door-to-door preaching together. I remember that at some point, we were alone in Bill's Kombi van. Bill said to me, 'What shall we do about our little problem?' I said to him, 'I don't know.' Bill then asked me, 'Do you want me to talk to Brother Shaylor about it? You know if I do that, though, your mum and dad will find out.' I replied

no to Bill, because when he mentioned that my parents would find out, I got scared.

I was surprised that Bill suggested speaking to Brother Shaylor. At the time, I already felt guilty about what Bill was doing to me, but when Bill suggested speaking to Brother Shaylor, it removed any doubt in my mind that what was happening between Bill and me was my fault.

At the end of 1983, having completed year 10, I left high school. The following year, I studied a business course and in around April 1984 I got a job. [REDACTED]. I continued to stay at the Neill house regularly from around this time until the end of 1986.

One night, in or around 1984 when I was about 17, I stayed overnight at the Neill family house. While I was showering in the bathroom with the door locked, I heard a noise. I looked up and saw Bill perving on me over the top of the shower curtain. I guess he must have been standing on the basin to be able to see. I don't know how, but I assume that Bill had unlocked the bathroom door from the outside. I screamed 'Get out' at Bill and he left the room. Bill and I never spoke of the shower incident.

On another night also in 1984, and not long after the shower incident, I remember that Bill came into [BCE]'s room where she and I were making lots of noise and threw me over the bed. He started belting me across my buttocks with his belt. It really stung me and afterwards I had a dark red welt across my backside. Apart from the physical pain, I remember feeling humiliated, angry and shocked by what Bill had done.

On 26 October 1985, I was formally baptised as a Jehovah's Witness in a ceremony that involved being submerged in a pool of water. At the baptism, many of the other girls wore modest swimming costumes with T-shirts over the top. I remember that Bill refused to let [BCE] or I wear T-shirts over the top of our swimming costumes.

In or around 1985, when I was around 18, I noticed Bill's behaviour towards me became more sexual. He used to say things to me in front of his wife Bronwyn and in front of [BCE] like, 'You're a nymphomaniac', and, 'If you weren't in the Truth, you'd be a prostitute.' What he said didn't make sense to me, because I was a virgin.

I recall that on one occasion in or around the end of 1985, Bill tongue-kissed me in his lounge room. As he was doing it I heard Bronwyn say sharply 'Bill'. I remember thinking that we would be in trouble but nothing more was said about the incident by Bronwyn or Bill.

Up until the summer of 1985-1986, I thought Bill's behaviour was just something unpleasant that I had to put up with so I could have a good time with [BCE] and the rest of the Neill family, who I liked.

One day in the summer of 1985-1986, while I was in the pantry in the kitchen of the Neill family house, Bill came in, shut the door and started kissing me. As I was older by then, I felt able to try and resist his kissing. Bill yelled at me and said to kiss him. He pushed me up against the wall and told me to pull my dress up so that he could see my underwear. Thankfully, someone came into the kitchen at that point and Bill stopped and left me alone in the pantry.

In or around October 1986, I left my job [REDACTED] and I was very unhappy at the time because I was feeling pressured by people in the Narrogin congregation to preach full time.

After I left my job [REDACTED], I moved in to the Neill's house for a couple of months while I was looking for a new job in Narrogin. [BCE] was still living at home when I moved in with the Neill family.

Bill continued to harass me while I lived at the Neill house. At the same time, he remained a respected elder in the congregation. I became really resentful of him. I stopped referring to him as "Uncle Bill" and instead referred to him as "Bill". Looking back, I think this was my way of rebelling against him.

One day, at the end of 1986, when I was 19, I had been having a shower in the family bathroom at the Neills' house. Although the rule in the Neill house was not to lock the bathroom door, I used to lock the door because I wanted my privacy. That day, I had just stepped out of the shower and was naked when the door suddenly opened and Bill walked in. I don't know how Bill unlocked the door. I guess that he may have unlocked it with a knife or even

his fingernail. I know that Bill didn't walk in by accident because of the way he quickly opened the door, closed it again behind him and stood against it, trapping me inside.

Bill then told me, 'Sit on the floor and open your legs.' I didn't want to do what he was asking but his manner was very threatening. I felt humiliated and scared." Angus, would you be able to read the next?

MR STEWART:

I felt humiliated and scared. Bill then started fondling me and put his finger in my vagina. He then told me to stand up and he proceeded to perform oral sex on me. I felt disgusted and uncomfortable. I knew that sex was something that people were meant to enjoy and I remember thinking that there must be something wrong with me because I didn't like what was happening.

The next day I was lying in bed in my room feeling sick when Bill came into the room. He said to me, "Did you like it?". I assumed he was referring to the bathroom incident. Pointing at his crotch he said to me, "It's better with this in." I asked him to leave and he did. Once he had left the room, I got up, packed my bags, and went home to my parents' farm without saying goodbye to [BCE].

In or around early 1987, I remember telling [BCE] that I had been seeing a couple of boys. Not long after I told her that, [BCE] told me that Bill wanted to talk to me about my relationship with boys. She told me to meet Bill at the Neill family house. Even though the meeting was at his house, I understood that I was being asked to see Bill in his capacity as an elder and that I had to do as I was told. I would never have chosen to speak to Bill about my relationships with boys otherwise.

When I got to his house, Bill asked me to

wait in [BCE]'s room. He came into the room and asked me: "Can you show me your boobs?" Although I had come to expect this behaviour from Bill, I remember feeling shocked that he was asking me this. I remember that I let him look down my top. I don't know why I did what he asked. Looking back, I feel as though he could control me. Bill then said to me something like: "Can you make yourself orgasm?" I said "Yes" and he replied to me, "I thought so, you dirty bitch."

Bill was an elder for as long as I knew him. I wasn't able to see at the time, but everything he did to me was in complete disregard of all the Jehovah's Witness rules, some of which he preached, about sex and association between Brothers and Sisters.

In 1989, I told my now husband, [BCC], that Bill used to kiss me. I dreaded telling him and I couldn't bring myself to tell him any more detail about what happened than this. When I told him, he started asking me questions about what exactly had happened, and I said to him, "Don't worry, it's all over now." I didn't want to say anything more because I was scared that [BCC] would tell someone.

Later, in or around 1991, a Jehovah's Witness acquaintance of mine, [BCF], told me that she had been abused by her uncle and that she had tried to commit suicide. I told her what happened to me but I didn't mention any names. Somehow she guessed that I was talking about Bill. I freaked out and asked her not to tell anyone.

THE WITNESS: "I guess that [BCF] did tell others in the congregation as, a week or so later, a young elder from the congregation called Max Horley came to speak to me. Initially, I had no idea why he had come to see me, but he eventually revealed that he had come to talk to me about Bill and me. When he said this, I burst into tears.

I told Max about most of what Bill had done but I couldn't mention the final bathroom incident when Bill had had oral sex with me. I was so ashamed. Max was very kind and supportive. He told me that what had happened was not my fault and that I shouldn't blame myself.

Soon after, Max arranged a meeting with Bill, [BCC] and me at my house. I don't remember anyone explaining the purpose of the meeting to me. At that meeting, Max said to me, 'I believe Bill asked you if you wanted to see his penis, and you said no.' I assumed that he was referring to the incident in the bedroom the morning after Bill had oral sex with me in the bathroom, even though I had not told him about this incident myself. Bill looked at me and said, 'Don't you think I was joking?' And I said, 'I don't know.' I didn't understand why someone would joke about that sort of thing. Nobody at the meeting said anything about Bill's comment. I still don't understand why no-one at the meeting told Bill that you shouldn't joke about those sorts of things.

I did not talk about the incident in the bathroom at the first meeting. I didn't feel comfortable talking while Bill was in the room.

After that first meeting, I felt like there was a lot of stuff I had been unable to say in front of Bill. I decided to go to Max's house after the meeting to clarify things. As a result of our conversation at his house, Max organised a second meeting at my house.

The second meeting was attended by Max Horley, Doug Jackson, Bill, my husband [BCC], and me. Doug Jackson was the circuit overseer for the Narrogin congregation. Max told me this meeting was a "Committee meeting". I was not aware at the time what the purpose of the meeting was or why Doug Jackson was attending.

During the committee meeting, Bill was defensive. He said that I used to wear revealing clothing. I remember that Doug Jackson made it quite clear to both of us that the church has never allowed the victim's clothing as an excuse.

Throughout the meeting, Bill looked at me defiantly. I felt like he was challenging me to tell the full story of

what he had done. I felt uncomfortable and could not bring myself to tell the elders everything that had happened. I felt like I was still Bill's victim. I was still so scared of saying anything that would get me or Bill into trouble.

I remember that at one point in the meeting, Max said to me, 'Is there anything else you wish to tell us?' I remember looking across the room at Bill and saying 'No'. It was already very hard to talk about sex in a room full of men. It was especially hard to talk about what Bill had done to me while he was sitting there in front of me. I didn't feel like it was a safe environment and I was scared of what the consequences would be if I told the whole truth. Perhaps if a Sister who I was comfortable with had been there too, it might have been easier.

At the end of the meeting, the elders asked Bill to say something to me, so he said, 'I'm sorry.' I took that to mean that he was sorry for everything that had happened, although his demeanour was not in any way remorseful and I could tell that he wasn't sorry.

Nobody explained to me what the outcome of the meeting was or if anything would happen to Bill as a result of what I had reported.

After the meeting, Doug Jackson gave me a magazine article that had been published by The Watchtower a few years before. He encouraged me to read through it. The article was about child sexual abuse. At the time, I don't think I had thought of what had happened to me as child sexual abuse, because Bill hadn't had sex with me. But reading that article made me realise that what happened to me was child sexual abuse.

I don't remember discussing contacting the police with anybody at that time either before or after the committee meeting.

Not long after the committee meeting, Bronwyn Neill rang me and asked me about my conversation with [BCF]. I said to Bronwyn, '[BCF] told me that she had been abused by her uncle and I told [BCF] what had happened to me.' Bronwyn said to me, 'Bill didn't abuse you.' I got scared, so I said to Bronwyn, 'I didn't actually say that.' What I told Bronwyn was true. I had never actually used the

word 'abuse' when I spoke to [BCF] or during my discussions with elders as I hadn't understood at the time that I had been abused.

As soon as I got off the phone to Bronwyn, I rang Max Horley to tell him about what Bronwyn had said to me. He told me that he would sort it out. Later that day, Max rang me back and said to me, '[BCB], the Neills have asked that you not tell any more people about Bill out of respect for the family.' I respected Max and did as I was told. I didn't tell anyone else about what had happened to me, not even my best friend at the time. Thinking back, I now see that I was being asked to respect the man who had done those things to me, but nobody was offering me any respect or proper support.

A few weeks after the committee meeting, the elders announced to the congregation that Bill had stepped down as an elder. I was sitting in the congregation at the time. The elders did not announce to the congregation why Bill was standing down. Although I understood the reasons for privacy, I have since felt that people in the congregation should have been warned about someone like Bill.

After the committee meeting, I don't recall being offered any support by Doug Jackson or Max Horley, though it's possible that they may have said something to me. Overall, however, I remember that I didn't feel supported. No-one in the congregation talked to me about what had happened to me, and Bill's wife, Bronwyn, ignored me for some time. This was especially hard because I loved Bronwyn like a mother.

Even though I had reported what Bill had done, I was still expected to attend book study meetings that were being held at the Neills' house. I continued to see Bill several times a week at congregational meetings and at annual district conventions. Everything just seemed to carry on as normal, but I felt physically sick every time I saw Bill.

I continued to attend the Narrogin congregation for three more years and continued to see Bill at meetings during this period. In 1994, I moved out of the area and started attending a different Jehovah's Witness congregation.

I understand that Bill has since died, although I don't know when.

I still consider myself to be a Jehovah's Witness and, until very recently, attended meetings at the [REDACTED] congregation in Western Australia.

In or around December 2012, I provided a written statement to two elders in the [REDACTED] congregation. Their names are Joe Bello and David Wood. The statement summarised Bill's sexual abuse of me. I provided Joe and David with my statement as I thought that others might have also been abused by Bill and that my statement might be able to help support their cases.

In or around July 2014, Joe Bello came to visit [BCC] and me at my house on an unrelated matter. During this visit, I raised the subject of Bill's sexual abuse of me and told Joe that I was considering reporting my story to the Royal Commission.

Around the same time, Joe Bello rang and had a conversation with [BCC] on the phone. During the conversation, Joe said to [BCC], 'You should ask [BCB] if she really wants to drag Jehovah's name through the mud.' When [BCC] told me what Joe had said, I felt upset. It was not me that gave Jehovah a bad name; it was Bill.

For some time after the visit from Joe Bello I was quite upset. My mother encouraged me to write down my feelings, so I wrote a note recording my feelings at the time about Bill's sexual abuse of me, the response of the elders at Narrogin congregation, the response of the elders at the [REDACTED] congregation, and my reasons for reporting my story to the Royal Commission. Some time after, my mother handed this note to David Wood, one of the elders in the [REDACTED] congregation. The handwritten note is at WAT.0001.002.0497.

In around September 2014, I contacted the Royal Commission and reported my story. I have huge feelings of guilt about coming forward with my story. I feel as though I am betraying the Jehovah's Witnesses and bringing reproach on to them. When I speak to officers at the Royal Commission, my chest gets tight, I have heart palpitations, and I have difficulty breathing because of my anxiety about the betrayal.

Since reporting my story to the Royal Commission, I have stopped attending meetings at [REDACTED] congregation. I am sad about this, because it means that I no longer see a lot of my friends from the congregation. Telling my story to the Royal Commission has brought up a lot of feelings of anger in relation to what Bill did to me and the way I have been treated by the Jehovah's Witnesses.

I've spent too many years suffering over this whole situation. It has held me back from living a normal life and I really want to move on.

The abuse definitely changed who I was. It destroyed my confidence and my self-esteem. Even though the sexual abuse stopped when I was 19, I have continued to feel like Bill's victim well into my adult life.

I continued to keep Bill's sexual abuse of me a secret for a long time. Over the years of our marriage I have told [BCC] more detail of what happened with Bill. It wasn't until just before my nervous breakdown" - about 12 years ago - "that I finally confided fully in some of my friends. Once I started talking about what happened, it was like opening a can of worms and I became very ill. I was lucky to get help from a wonderful psychiatrist.

I've had a lot of therapy to address what Bill did to me, but I still have trouble feeling a sense of closure about what happened. I still feel that Bill was never made to face any consequences for what he did to me.

I feel like Bill's position as an elder contributed to his power over me. I now think that I was brainwashed into thinking that speaking to people outside the church or to the 'worldly' people would bring reproach upon Jehovah's name. I think that had I been allowed to speak to other non-Jehovah's Witness children at school, maybe someone might have reported what happened to me and I wouldn't have become the victim that I feel I am now.

As Bill is now dead, I don't have to worry about seeing him at Jehovah's Witness conventions any more. I still struggle with my thoughts and feelings about the abuse, but I have an amazing group of 'spiritual' sisters and friends, as well as my lovely husband, [BCC], and my

two beautiful daughters.

I would like to see a number of things change in the way that the Jehovah's Witnesses deal with child sexual abuse. First of all, I would like the Jehovah's Witnesses to take allegations of child abuse more seriously and to report them to the police.

I also think that those victims that are brave enough to report to elders should be properly supported and protected. I definitely did not feel protected when I disclosed my abuse to Max Horley and Doug Jackson in 1991. I found the experience of reporting my abuse to a room full of men, including the man who had abused me, very distressing.

I have never been offered any compensation by the Jehovah's Witnesses for what happened to me. I have never made any claim for compensation because I didn't think that I would be entitled to any. I am worried about what others will think of me asking for compensation. I know that many people have been through worse suffering than me in their lives. I don't want more than I'm entitled to. I only want to be treated fairly as a victim of abuse that was perpetrated by a member of the Jehovah's Witnesses. I just want fair and just compensation for what Bill did."

MR STEWART: Q. I do have a few questions I want to ask by way of clarification or elaboration.

You speak in paragraph 12 of your statement - and perhaps that can come up on the screen - about meetings being held, including at someone's house. Were those meetings organised by the elders?
A. Yes.

Q. After Bill Neill had stood down - after the elders had met with you and so on, and he stood down, you say in paragraph 16 that you continued to attend meetings at the Neills' home. Did he, as presiding overseer - who organised those meetings, because he was no longer an elder? Were those meetings organised by --
A. They must have been organised by Max Horley.

Q. So those types of meetings, were they always organised by the elders --
A. Yes.

Q. -- in the congregation?
A. Yes.

Q. Did you ask not to have to continue attending meetings at the Neills' home?
A. I didn't - did I ask? I did ask to change book study groups, that's right. I asked to go to the one at the hall.

Q. Was that so that you did not have to attend at the Neills' home?
A. Yes, I didn't want to, because Bronwyn wasn't talking to me, and I didn't want to see Bill in their house.

Q. And who did you ask that of?
A. I don't remember, but maybe I spoke to my mum, maybe I asked Max. [BCC] said maybe I spoke to Max. I don't remember.

Q. All right. That's fine. You don't remember. Do you remember what response you got?
A. I was just told that I had to go there.

Q. If we scroll up to paragraph 17 on the statement, you say in the last sentence that you remember being discouraged from forming friendships with other children who were not Jehovah's Witnesses. This is when you were still at school?
A. Yes.

Q. Did you have an understanding of why you were discouraged from forming such friendships or what was said to be the teaching behind that?
A. There were a couple of scriptures. One was "bad association spoils useful habits", and the other one was that Jesus said that we are no part of this world, so - I had friends at school, they were nice girls. But we were just friends at school, not outside of school.

Q. And in what you were taught as a young girl growing up in the Jehovah's Witness Church, were you taught anything about the police or how to view or understand the police and their role?
A. No, I don't remember anything specifically being said about the police.

Q. You say in paragraph 30, at the end of 1983, having completed year 10, you left high school. Why did you leave high school at that time?
A. I - the Neills didn't encourage further education, and they encouraged us to either get married and have children or to pioneer, which is preach full time, and so I didn't really consider doing TAE, as it was in those days - didn't consider going to university; didn't - it wasn't a consideration for me. And so I was going to leave after year 10, but my dad said, "You don't have any qualifications to get a job," so he encouraged me to do a year 11 vocational business course, which was actually part of the school. And I'm glad he did that, because then I was able to get a good job.

Q. And your father was not part of the Jehovah's Witness Church; is that right?
A. No.

Q. And your experience of what the Neills told you - and presumably their daughters - about leaving school, was that something you experienced in other families in the Jehovah's Witness Church?
A. It just wasn't - university wasn't really talked about as an option. Most people just left after year 10 and got a job.

Q. If we could look at your paragraph 73, you say that after you contacted the Royal Commission and reported your story, you had huge feelings of guilt about coming forward with the story, and you felt as though you were betraying the Jehovah's Witnesses in doing so. Are you able to identify what is the source of that guilt? Why do you feel that it is a betrayal?
A. Because it's - it's an ugly story and it doesn't portray them in a very good light, like the people who dealt with my - the brothers who dealt with my situation, and I feel like I'm - I do feel like I'm dragging Jehovah's name through the mud.

Q. You have given in your statement some details of the impact that the abuse has had on your health. Is there anything you would like to add in relation to that or anything you would like the brothers to know about the effect of child sexual abuse?
A. Yes, I've been - when I had my breakdown - I was not well before that, I was going downhill for a long time

before that. I was getting paranoid. I was thinking that - I was thinking that people at school - when I dropped the kids off at school, I was thinking that they were all talking about me and judging me. I was thinking that the neighbours were all judging me, talking about me. One morning, the lawnmower man came to mow the lawns and I thought he was going around to all the doors and windows and deliberately trying to scare me, and I went into the games room with the kids and hid behind the doll's house and I said to them, "Don't let him see me", and they were laughing and going "What's wrong with you mummy?" And I think I scared them a little bit, or they just thought I was being strange. And when I told my friend about what happened to me, because she - she knew, she guessed, that this is - when - the reason why I had my breakdown was because I told my close friend a little bit about what happened, and she knew who it was, and just - I got scared that it was all going to come out and everyone was going to know about it and it really scared me, and the next couple of weeks I lost 15 kilos because I was so anxious. I was really sick. I couldn't get out of bed. I had no energy. I was hyperventilating. I was breathing into a paper bag all day long, and one day - my dad was staying with me every day. They were probably scared for me. And he said, "Have you eaten anything today?" And I said "No", and he said, "You should eat something." So he made me a piece of toast and I was chewing it and chewing it, and I ended up having to spit it out because I had no saliva in my mouth, and thank goodness I ended up going to the psychiatrist and he put me on anti-depressants and - otherwise, I don't know what I would have done. I just wanted to go to sleep and not wake up. And I thought about taking sleeping pills, but - I just kept thinking about my husband and my kids and I couldn't do it to them.

MR STEWART: Thank you. I've no further questions, your Honour.

THE CHAIR: Does anyone else have any questions?

MR COYNE: No, your Honour.

MS GALLAGHER: I do, your Honour, if the Commission pleases.

<EXAMINATION BY MS GALLAGHER:

MS GALLAGHER: Q. [BCB], obviously I represent you before the Commission. If I could take you to your initial complaint, if you like, to [BCF]. You talk about it at paragraph 48 of your statement. She had indicated to you that she had suffered abuse from her uncle?
A. Yes.

Q. Then you told her, as you note in your statement, that something had happened to you. Is that right?
A. Yes.

Q. Did you give her any details - not about the perpetrator, but about what had happened to you?
A. A little bit. Like I know I said in my statement that I told her what happened to me, but I didn't tell her everything that happened to me. I just said - I said, "Something similar happened to me."

Q. Did she give you the specifics of her abuse?
A. Not really - oh, it was a long time ago. I can't really remember exactly.

Q. When you say "something similar happened to me" --
A. Yes.

Q. -- did you tell her any more about what had happened to you?
A. Yes, I - well, I told her about how my friend's father had - used to stick his tongue in my mouth when he kissed me and that he came into the bathroom and perved at me. I think that might have been all that I spoke to her about. Oh, I did tell her about him coming into my room and wanting to show me his penis.

Q. Is the next thing that you can recall, just in relation to how these meetings came about with Max Horley and Doug Jackson and Bill Neill - is it the case that you were out preaching --
A. Yes.

Q. -- and Max drove up to you?
A. He drove up to me, yes. I was out in preaching work, and he drove up to me and said, "Can I come and visit you this afternoon?" And he wanted to visit my husband and I.

Q. Who were you with at the time, if anybody?
A. I think I was with my husband.

Q. Do you remember what you said to him when he asked, "Can I come and visit?"
A. Yes, I said he could come round that afternoon, yes.

Q. And did Max come alone to your home on that occasion?
A. Yes, yes, the first time.

Q. Do you remember what he said to you?
A. Yes, he started talking about, "If you told a friend something, some information that was quite serious, and they said you should tell the elders and you didn't" - hold on. I can't remember exactly how he said it.

Q. Did you eventually work out what he was talking about?
A. Yes, he was trying to - he was trying to - I think he was trying to explain that [BCF] was obviously feeling bad because she had told someone about what I had said and was worried about my reaction.

Q. And is it the case that you realised that he was talking about --
A. That's when I realised --

Q. -- the contact with Bill Neill?
A. -- that [BCF] had told somebody about what I had told her.

Q. And you burst into tears at that time?
A. Yes, yes.

Q. The next thing you recall, is it the case, is that there was a meeting with Max present; is that right, Doug Jackson and --
A. No, the next one was - the next meeting was Max and Bill and my husband and I.

Q. So Max and Bill and your husband and yourself?
A. Yes.

Q. So two elders were present?
A. Yes.

Q. But one of them was your abuser?
A. Yes.

Q. Is that right?
A. Yes.

Q. And was that at your home?
A. That was in my lounge room.

Q. You were 22 at the time; is that right?
A. Yes, I think I was 22, yes. We had just been married for a couple of years.

Q. And you were both in the faith; is that right?
A. Yes.

Q. You remain in the faith; is that right?
A. I'm taking a break at the moment.

Q. But at the time, you certainly, is it the case, didn't feel that you could question the process of what was occurring?
A. I was just doing as I was told.

Q. When you say you were just doing as you were told, do you mean from Max Horley?
A. Yes. I assumed that he knew the correct procedure, and I was just going along with what he said, because I respected him.

Q. Were you told by Max that if there had been indecent contact between you and Bill, that you could go to the police?
A. No.

Q. That you should go to the police?
A. No.

Q. That it was criminal behaviour --
A. No.

Q. -- that you were alleging?
A. No.

Q. When Bill Neill attended with Max, were you pressed for detail as to what Bill had done to you?
A. Yes, Max said, "I believe that Bill" - in the course of whatever they were asking me, he said, "I believe that Bill asked you if you wanted to see his penis." And I said

"Yes", and then Bill said - looked at me and said, "Do you think I was joking?" And I said, "I don't know."

Q. Did you feel at the time that you were really being invited to question your own belief in what had happened?
A. Yes. I was - I was questioning whether I misunderstood.

Q. The next meeting was also at your home; is that right?
A. Yes.

Q. And present was Doug Jackson and Max Horley and Bill again?
A. Yes.

Q. Looking back on it now, how do you feel about the appropriateness of the first meeting - Max coming with Bill, your abuser, to your home?
A. I felt very, very uncomfortable. I couldn't say anything about what really happened, with him there, because I felt like he still had control over me in what I said, and that whatever I said would be - he would be cross-examining me and saying that it was my word against his.

Q. So when you say "he" would be cross-examining, you meant your abuser?
A. Bill.

Q. Bill Neill?
A. Yes.

Q. You were fearful of that, and, indeed, it did occur; is that right?
A. Yes.

Q. In relation to the second meeting, you describe in your statement that Bill was defensive and, I think you describe, defiant as well?
A. Yes.

Q. Spoke about you wearing revealing clothing?
A. Yes.

Q. Did you feel the same way, in the sense that your version, your credibility, was being tested?
A. Yes, definitely.

Q. And that you weren't being supported in your version of events?
A. Yes. I didn't feel supported at all.

Q. Did you understand what the process was?
A. No.

Q. Did you understand why this was occurring, why these people were attending your home and violating your space, if you like, in relation to this inquiry?
A. I didn't question their methods, because I thought they would know the correct procedure, because they were the authority in the church, in the Jehovah's Witnesses.

Q. And did you understand it was an inquiry as to whether or not Bill should remain an elder? Was that ever explained to you?
A. Not really. I guess I still just thought it was my word against his and that they were just trying to find out what happened.

Q. Having been raised from 10 in the faith of Jehovah's Witnesses, did you understand the rules, if you like, about when someone makes an accusation against another, that is --
A. With minor incidents, you approach the person and try to sort it out with each other, if you can. If you can't, you - I know now that you can talk to two trusted friends, two trusted sisters in the congregation. I didn't understand that at the time, though. I don't know whether that was ever a rule?

Q. When I say "a rule", do you understand that reliance upon biblical teaching is noted for this, that for someone to be found guilty within the church of wrongdoing, or within the faith, they have to either have confessed or that there be two or more witnesses?
A. I don't - I didn't know any kind of - I didn't know that then.

Q. Can I ask you this: did you feel, when the two elders were at your home at the second meeting and Max was present with Doug and Bill - did you feel in control of the process?
A. No.

Q. Did you feel supported?
A. No, I didn't feel supported. I guess in a way I was trying to control it, because I didn't tell the full story.

Q. Yes. Do you feel now that you should have been encouraged at that time to go to the police?
A. Yes.

Q. Do you have an understanding now that Bill Neill's conduct towards you in relation to the tongue kissing is at least assaults of an indecent kind?
A. Yes.

Q. And that the incident in the bathroom where you were penetrated and oral sex performed upon you were arguably incidents of sexual intercourse without consent?
A. Yes.

Q. Just in relation to the process that took place, do you think you should have been confronted by your abuser at the time, in your own home?
A. No.

Q. And do you think there should have been females involved?
A. Yes.

Q. Did you feel, during the process, particularly when Bronwyn phoned you - someone that you loved and cared about, and indicated to you that Bill hadn't abused you - you have given evidence about phoning Max and telling him about that, and then Max calling you back and saying, "Please stop talking about this", effectively, out of respect for --
A. The family.

Q. -- the Neill family - did you feel that that was the emphasis, respect for the Neill family?
A. At the time, I just did as I was told.

Q. In relation to the issue of compensation, it's the case that you have spent seven years in therapy with a psychiatrist. You are no longer seeing a psychiatrist at the moment; is that right?
A. No.

Q. You are currently on antidepressants, you remain on

antidepressants?
A. Yes.

Q. You are currently undergoing neuro-emotional therapy with a chiropractor?
A. Yes.

Q. All of those things of course cost you money; correct?
A. Yes.

Q. And you would welcome compensation, if it were offered by the Faith; is that right?
A. I would, yes.

Q. Is it the case that you are also grateful to the Royal Commission?
A. Absolutely. Absolutely.

MS GALLAGHER: Thank you.

THE WITNESS: Thank you, thank you so much.

THE CHAIR: Does anyone else have any questions? .

MR COYNE: No, your Honour.

THE CHAIR: Thank you, [BCB]. Thank you for coming in and telling us your story. You are formally excused.

<THE WITNESS WITHDREW

MR STEWART: The next witness, your Honour, will be Max Horley.

THE CHAIR: Do you have any better copies of Mr Horley's statement? The ones we have are quite hard to read.

MR STEWART: That is being arranged, I am told, your Honour.

THE CHAIR: Mr Horley, it's necessary for you to be sworn. Will you take an oath on the Bible or an affirmation?

MR HORLEY: An oath on the Bible, thank you.

<MAXWELL FREDERICK HORLEY, sworn: [12.40pm]

<EXAMINATION BY MR STEWART:

MR STEWART: Would your Honour like me to wait until we have copies --

THE CHAIR: No, no, keep going.

MR STEWART: Q. Mr Horley, do you have before you a copy of your statement?

THE CHAIR: I think we need to identify him first.

MR STEWART: Q. What are your full names, Mr Horley?
A. Full name, Maxwell Frederick Horley.

Q. Do you have a copy of your statement dated 7 July 2015 before you?
A. Yes.

Q. Are there any corrections or amendments you would like to make to that statement?
A. No, I think it's complete.

Q. Do you confirm the statement as true and correct?
A. Yes.

MR STEWART: I tender the statement.

THE CHAIR: It will become exhibit 29-002.

EXHIBIT #29-002 STATEMENT OF MAXWELL FREDERICK HORLEY DATED 07/07/2015

MR STEWART: Q. You have been a Jehovah's Witness essentially your whole life; is that right?
A. That's correct.

Q. You have been a Dawesville congregation elder since November 2012, and you served there as secretary; is that right?
A. That's correct, yes.

Q. You were appointed an elder in the Narrogin congregation in 1988 and you served there as secretary too; is that right?

A. Yes. That's correct, yes.

Q. And there was only one other elder there at that time, and that was Bill Neill?
A. When I was first appointed there were two elders. One was quite elderly and I think he then moved back to Perth. So that left Bill and I. Later on, there were two other elders appointed, and we had a situation arose where they - one was stood down and one moved away, so that left Bill and I at the time that this incident occurred.

Q. And the first elderly elder that you referred to, who moved back to Perth, was that Jack Shaylor?
A. That's correct.

Q. When Bill Neill was stood down in 1992, you became the presiding overseer; is that right?
A. That's correct, yes.

Q. Speaking generally now, but in your experience, as secretary of a congregation, what files or records do you keep?
A. We keep copies of the letters that are sent from the branch; we keep publisher record cards that report all their time spent in the ministry, collate that information each month and send the details to the branch; we write letters when someone moves to another congregation, send a letter of introduction along with that. We also receive letters from other congregations when publishers move in. We keep records of committee cases that are held, judicial committee cases and things like that, of a sensitive nature, are kept on file, too, in case we need to refer back to them at a later time. But those are usually only seen by the ones acting on that committee at the time.

Q. Is there a file or a record for each member of the congregation?
A. No, only the publisher record card, which details how much time they've spent in the ministry each month.

Q. In respect of the files of a sensitive nature or records of a sensitive nature that you describe following committee hearings, judicial committee hearings, and so on, for how long are those retained?
A. I know we've had some information recently that after a certain period of time they are destroyed. But ones involving this particular type of case are supposed to be

kept indefinitely.

Q. And who has access to those records?
A. If it's a judicial case, then only the committee members that served on that committee, I understand, have access to go into that. They are all kept in the same place, but in the congregation I serve in now, all of the elders have access to the congregation file if they need to refer back to some of the letters that are on there or other reports, and so on.

Q. And what information or records are passed on to the branch office?
A. The report each month for how much ministry is conducted by the congregation is compiled, and that is sent each month. Each year there is information logged about different activities that the congregation - how many publishers there are, how many unbaptised publishers, and so on. That's just a brief overview that's also sent to the branch. If we need - if they request information, then we might need to send a letter to them requesting that information; and sometimes for clarification of information we might contact them in that way.

Q. I gather from the documents I've seen that the congregation elders will also report to the branch on the outcome of judicial committee hearings?
A. Oh, that's correct, sorry, yes. Yes.

Q. If we could have a look at paragraph 2.2 of your statement, on page 2, you will see in the last line you mention victims being encouraged to report abuse. Are we to understand that as reports to the elders; is that right?
A. Yes.

Q. Also, in 2.3, in the last sentence, you say:

The relevant Bible principles make it clear that failure to report another's wrongdoing can make one responsible before God, and this is emphasised to the congregation.

I take it again that the reference there to reporting another's wrongdoing is the report to an elder?
A. Yes, in Leviticus, those who become aware of a wrongdoing, not actually having done it themselves, but if they hear of it, then they report it to the elders so

that if the person isn't forthcoming, then the elders can step in and handle it.

Q. So these references in these paragraphs to reporting - that's not reporting to the secular authorities?
A. No, it is just to the elders at that stage.

Q. Now, is it the expectation that a member of the church must report any other member's wrongdoing to the elders, or is it only particular types of wrongdoing?
A. The encouragement is, depending on the seriousness of it, I guess, too, that they go to the person that has committed the wrongdoing and encourage them to go to the elders first, and basically making a proviso that if they don't, then the person who has become aware of it will approach the elders and let them know of it. Does that make myself clear enough?

Q. So I can understand that in respect of, say, less-serious issues that arise between people. Are there particular kinds of transgressions or wrongdoing, or sins as I understand you would call it, that must be reported to the elders?
A. Sins that we would have brought to the elders' attention more are of the serious nature - things that could result in a judicial committee case being formed, so matters of a sexual nature and things like that.

Other matters, where it's just someone is upset at somebody, we would encourage them to go ahead and try and sort that problem out themselves. If it became worse and eventually the elders were called in to try and arbitrate, or whatever - but normally following the Bible principles, they try to work those situations out themselves.

Q. Can you assist by explaining where the line is drawn or how the line is drawn between what is of a more serious nature requiring reporting and what isn't?
A. Yes, the more serious-nature are things set out in the scriptures that could result in someone being removed from the congregation if they are unrepentant. So sexual immorality and all the stages and things that that covers - homosexuality, bestiality, all of those sorts of things.

Q. And that would include child sexual abuse?
A. Absolutely, yes.

Q. And those things are the ones, I take it, that are set out in the handbooks?
A. Yes, how we go about instituting the protocol and handling of those aspects, yes.

Q. Turning to the case specifically of [BCB], and perhaps we can have up on the screen paragraph 49 of [BCB]'s statement, you will see that [BCB] has said that you asked to speak to her on the basis of information you had received. Do you recall or remember the person [BCF] who is referred to there? That is a friend of hers to whom she had spoken. The first name of that person, which we are avoiding saying, should be on a list in front of you?
A. Yes. I remember, but I don't remember her coming to see me.

Q. Do you remember how you first got to hear of these issues that [BCB] raised in relation to Bill Neill?
A. From my recollection, it was [BCB] and [BCC] that came to see me at my home and tell me about the allegations.

Q. When you say from your recollection, you seem somewhat hesitant about that. Is that because of the passage of time?
A. Yes, yes.

THE CHAIR: Q. Mr Horley, this allegation, I take it, when it came to you, you would have seen as a serious one?
A. Absolutely. It was a huge breach of trust, your Honour.

Q. As a consequence, I assume it would have stood out for you at the time as something unusual?
A. At the time it was something that I hadn't dealt with before and, yes, it was a very serious nature. I took it as a huge breach of trust, not only for the person involved but for the whole congregation. It would have repercussions that would flow through.

Q. The matter was reported to you because you were in a position of responsibility?
A. Yes.

Q. Did you take any notes?
A. No, I didn't.

Q. Can you help us --

A. I may have done at the time, I'm sorry, but --

Q. You may have done?
A. I may have.

Q. Where are they now?
A. They would have been destroyed.

Q. Why?
A. We don't like to have any notes outside of what's kept on file in the congregation.

Q. Why don't you like to have notes of a serious allegation?
A. There are brief notes kept in the file, but all other notes are destroyed.

Q. Why is that?
A. I guess it's because we don't want them to fall into the wrong hands and other people to find them and they go through them.

Q. What are the "wrong hands"?
A. Well, we don't want our wives knowing what our stuff - what sort of things we are dealing with; we don't want other people in the congregation coming across that information.

Q. So you want to keep it secret to the elders; is that what it amounts to?
A. I don't know about "secret", but we want to try and limit the amount of people that have to have a look at that information, yes.

Q. And why is it that you want to limit the people who will have access to the information?
A. Just to protect them, I guess. We don't --

Q. Protect who?
A. Protect the person that's involved in it and the rest of the congregation, so that they don't have to know these - I don't know, it's just - it's the protocol that we've had and so we've just followed that information, yes.

Q. And would you do the same thing today if someone came and reported to you a serious allegation of sexual assault? Would you destroy any notes?

A. Yes, that's our practice.

Q. What about telling other authorities - are you aware of your obligations if someone tells you of a serious allegation of sexual assault?
A. We - if we have any hesitation, we contact the branch for advice on how we should proceed legally and scripturally. We don't attend - we don't report it to the police; I think we encourage them to do that, but we give them the assistance to do that if they need that.

Q. How do you encourage people to report to the police?
A. My understanding is a little bit unclear, because I've never had to do it, so I'm not fully aware on the process, but if it did come to me, I would be just saying, "Look, this is a matter that you need to talk to the police about, or the legal authorities, and pursue it that way."

Q. The allegation that came to you you accepted was serious. Have you, in your time as an elder, had any other people come to you to report a serious allegation of a sexual nature?
A. Not of sexual assault, but generally misconduct on their own part or someone that they know of.

Q. What do you mean by "misconduct"?
A. Well, if someone has committed immorality with somebody else, then that has been brought to my attention, either by the person that has done it, in the way of confession, or it may be that they have heard about it and brought it to my attention and we have investigated it and handled it that way.

THE CHAIR: Yes, Mr Stewart.

MR STEWART: Q. You said a moment ago to his Honour, Mr Horley, in relation to reporting to the police, that you would say to the person, "Look, this is a matter that you need to talk to the police about, or the legal authorities, and pursue it in that way." Now, what sort of matter would that be? What sort of matter, in your mind, would be one that you would say to someone they must go and report to the police?
A. It would be in the matters of an abuse situation, where someone had been forcibly - something like this instance or probably even worse, or if someone had been raped or, you know, that sort of a matter, where police

proceedings would be needed.

Q. In this particular case, what were you told initially? You say you spoke with [BCB] and her husband. What was reported to you?
A. That the elder concerned had acted inappropriately whilst she had been staying at his home. From my recollection, it was more to do with the fondling of her breasts, but I think there was also an accusation about him watching her in the shower and - and that's - from the most of my recollection, I think there was some sort of inappropriate kissing of some sort, too, but --

Q. And these events occurred when she was a minor?
A. That's correct. She was staying at his home. She had finished school and was working at a [REDACTED], and because her family lived 45 minutes out of town she would stay with them during the week and go home to her family on the weekends.

Q. And did it occur to you that these were serious allegations that were made?
A. Any breach of trust, and particularly by an elder in that situation, was viewed very seriously.

Q. And that fondling the breasts of a minor, but, indeed, anyone without their consent, would be a crime?
A. I think that occurred to me at the time, and certainly has done since then, but the way that we handle it now is totally different to what we did back then.

Q. We will stick with back then for now.
A. Yes.

Q. And observing someone whilst showering without their consent is a serious allegation, not only within the church's view --
A. Absolutely.

Q. -- but even outside the church?
A. Mmm.

Q. And inappropriate kissing - in other words, by that I take it you mean tongue-kissing?
A. That's what I understand.

Q. Of a minor?

A. Yes.

Q. That's a crime, too. Did you appreciate that at the time?
A. Probably not like I should have done. Well, it shocked me to have that accusation brought to my attention. I knew it wasn't right. I didn't realise it might have been a criminal matter, though.

Q. And did you give any consideration to whether you should report it to the police?
A. I didn't, no.

Q. Did you give any consideration to whether [BCB] should be encouraged to report it to the police?
A. No, I didn't.

MR STEWART: Would this be a convenient time?

THE CHAIR: Very well, we will take the luncheon adjournment.

LUNCHEON ADJOURNMENT

MR STEWART: Your Honour, as I will probably be referring to it during the course of the afternoon, now would be a good time to tender the tender bundle. There should be two volumes at this stage and they can be tendered.

THE CHAIR: The tender bundle will be exhibit 29-003.

EXHIBIT #29-003 TWO-VOLUME TENDER BUNDLE

MR STEWART: Q. You spoke, Mr Horley, about receiving a report from [BCB] and her husband. There was a meeting, too, with you and Bill Neill and [BCB] and her husband where this matter was discussed; is that right?
A. I don't recall that particular meeting, no.

Q. [BCB] has given evidence with regard to that meeting. It's paragraph 51 of [BCB]'s statement. She gave further evidence about it orally earlier.
A. I'm sorry, I don't recall any of that.

Q. You're not saying it didn't happen?
A. No, I'm not saying it didn't happen. I don't recall it happening.

Q. Because it would be in keeping with the practice, wouldn't it, that an accuser must make the accusation to the accused, in the face of the accused; is that right?
A. It would have been done with another elder present. That's why - the only meeting I remember taking place was with Doug Jackson and myself and [BCB] and possibly her husband there and the accused, too.

Q. And Bill Neill as well?
A. Yes.

Q. So there was a meeting, in your memory, too, where [BCB] had to make her allegations to Bill Neill?
A. Yes.

Q. And with you and Mr Jackson present as well, and [BCB]'s husband?
A. I can't be positive that her husband was there, but, yes, that was - that meeting took place.

Q. Because it's a biblical principle for Jehovah's Witnesses, as I understand it, that an accused must be faced by the accuser, or has the right to be faced by the

accuser; is that right?
A. That's the way we understood it at that time. Our process has changed slightly now that we - in certain circumstances, and in this case in particular, the accuser, in that situation, would not have to meet accused. They could do that separately.

THE CHAIR: Q. When did the process change?
A. During the 1990s, your Honour.

Q. Do you realise how inappropriate that process is?
A. Having the two meet together?

Q. Yes.
A. I can understand that, yes, and I guess that's why it had to change.

Q. You do understand the position it puts --
A. Absolutely.

Q. -- a young woman in, do you?
A. Yes.

Q. Did you, at the time, reflect on that, when it was happening that way?
A. No, I didn't. I was just following the procedure that we had in place.

MR STEWART: Q. On the question of it changing, which I'll come to in a moment, let's deal with what it was at the time you dealt with it. That was governed by the Pay Attention to Yourselves manual; is that right?
A. I can't recall whether that had been released yet. I had three handbooks prior to that, when I was first appointed as an elder, that we used to refer to, and the ks91 book basically compiled that information and had updates in it as well.

Q. We'll have a look at it. That's in the tender bundle, 29-003 and, in particular, it's at tab 80. Perhaps we can scroll down, and then on to the next page. As you've indicated, that was 1991. It is 1991. So that was applicable from 1991, I take it, and through until when Shepherd the Flock of God was published in 2010, if I'm not mistaken; is that right?
A. That's correct. But even though it's copyrighted 1991, the elder schools weren't all held in 1991, to my

understanding. I think our elder school might have been taking place in 1992, after this event had already occurred.

Q. All right. Your inquiry into this was in early 1992, wasn't it?
A. Yes.

Q. Was there any change on this point; in other words, the point of the process of someone who has an accusation having to make it in the presence of the person against whom the accusation was made?
A. I don't believe so, at this stage.

Q. I'd be surprised if there was, because it comes from the Old Testament, doesn't it?
A. To establish, yes.

Q. It comes from Deuteronomy.
A. Okay.

Q. If we have look in tab 80, which we have, the Pay Attention to Yourselves and to all the Flock, and particularly at page 119, which has the Ringtail reference 0051, scroll down so that we have the heading at the top of the page. "Judicial Committee Hearing Procedure", and "After opening with prayer" and so on, the next bold heading, "Present the witnesses one at a time unless the wrongdoer confesses". In the second paragraph it says:

> *Accusers should be willing to assume their responsibility, as was required in Israel.*

That was the responsibility to face those whom they accused; am I right?
A. That's correct.

Q. I think, Mr Horley, you've got a copy of the New World Translation there with you, because that particular scripture, Deuteronomy, bears having regard to. Deuteronomy 17:6 and 7 says:

> *On the testimony of two witnesses or of three witnesses the one who is to die should be put to death. He must not be put to death on the testimony of one witness. The hand of the witnesses should be the*

first to come against him to put him to death, and the hand of all the people afterward. You must remove what is bad from your midst.

From that, as I understand it, it was taken that the accuser must make the accusation in the face of the accused; is that right?
A. That's the understanding, yes.

Q. Then if we have regard to the next edition of the Elders' Handbook, the current one at tab 120, at page 89, Ringtail reference 0090, and scroll down to the foot of the page:

The chairman should invite the accused to make a personal statement. If the accused contends that he is innocent, the witnesses to the wrongdoing should be presented and their testimony should be given in the presence of the accused. It is best that the witnesses give their testimony in person.

So this is what has applied since 2010. So in the light of that, what is the change of the procedure that you are referring to, Mr Horley, because these documents don't seem to bear it out?
A. These are dealing with judicial committee cases of serious - in matters of serious wrongdoing that could result in removal from the congregation or disfellowshipping. The information or the way that we looked at handling the situation at the time was to establish what actually had taken place, so two elders investigate the matter and establish the facts, and try to decide whether it needs to go to a judicial committee hearing and, in this particular case, we couldn't establish - we didn't have either a confession or witnesses to the events to go to a judicial committee.

Q. You didn't have a second witness?
A. That's right.

Q. I'll come back to that. But dealing with this question --

THE CHAIR: Q. Would it be the same today, if you didn't

have a second witness?
A. We would take our - we contact the branch first and follow their advice, but, as I think was brought out in the preamble this morning, that is still the procedure, that we'd have to establish it with two witnesses to be able to take it to a judicial committee hearing.

Q. So if there was an allegation of a rape, and even though you might have formed the view that the complainant was clearly telling the truth, having regard to what she said, if there was no other person to give evidence about the rape, it wouldn't go any further?
A. I would have to seek counsel from the society to handle that situation. I don't know how we would proceed. I've never had to come across that yet.

Q. Do you understand that a great many allegations of sexual assault --
A. Absolutely.

Q. -- are not witnessed by another person?
A. That's right, your Honour.

Q. How does your church handle that situation then?
A. Usually, it would be by interviewing the person and trying to get them to confess to the wrongdoing that had taken place. That's - that's generally been - in the instances I've been involved with, that's the solution that we've had so far. The person has - or we've had more than one witness, actually, to the event, but usually the ones that I've dealt with so far we've had a confession from the wrongdoer and we've been able to proceed to a judicial committee case from that.

Q. Are you saying to us that without that confession it couldn't go to a judicial committee?
A. I think - that's the understanding that I have at the moment, yes.

Q. Do you think that's a good place for the church to end up?
A. Not - not for the people that are bringing the accusations forward. It's a very sad situation for them.

Q. Would the church be accepting of that situation?
A. I'm - again, I'm not aware of what the intricate policies are on that, what we would be advised to do in

that situation now. The information we have is that we approach the branch and we take direction from them on how to proceed. Whether that would go to a judicial committee or further investigation or whatever - I've never been in that situation, so I don't know what the advice would be from them.

Q. What about your own perspective, though, on it?
A. Well, I know --

Q. You've been an elder for many years. Do you think it's appropriate for the church to operate in that way?
A. I guess in matters of this nature it would be handled differently from some case where someone is admitting to sexual immorality, particularly when you've got a victim, and in particular a young victim like this, that, yes, it would need to be investigated fully and followed through with, yes.

THE CHAIR: Yes, Mr Stewart.

MR STEWART: Q. Just dealing still with the present situation, requiring a single witness, still on tab 120, which is Shepherd the Flock of God, but at page 72, Ringtail WAT.0003.001.0073 - if we could go back one page, to the previous page, you'll see the heading "Evidence Establishing Wrongdoing", and under that heading it then deals with what evidence is acceptable in order to decide whether a judicial committee should be formed. If we then go to paragraph 39 on WAT.0003.001.0073, it deals with the situation you were just addressing, Mr Horley:

> *If the accused denies the accusation ...*

And if you go about six or seven lines down, it says:

> *If the accuser or the accused is unwilling to meet with the elders or if the accused continues to deny the accusation of a single witness and the wrongdoing is not established, the elders will leave matters in Jehovah's hands.*

So the position would seem to be that that is the current position, 2010 and subsequent, that the single witness rule still applies.
A. That's correct.

Q. So to the extent that you said earlier that you thought that the current procedure may be different, that would not be right.
A. I stand corrected. I'd go on what the publication here says, yes.

Q. There's another aspect to the two-witnesses rule, as I understand it, because two references are given. One is in Deuteronomy and the other is in John, where it says if there are two witnesses, then guilt is regarded as established. Is the rule applied in that way, too; in other words, one witness is not enough and two witnesses are conclusive?
A. That's correct.

Q. What happens if there is a situation where there are two witnesses but you have grounds to disbelieve them?
A. To disbelieve them?

Q. Yes.
A. I don't know. I've never come across that. Yeah, interesting.

Q. Your understanding of the origin of this one-witness rule is that passage in Deuteronomy that I looked at earlier; is that right?
A. Going on the information there, it would be one of the references, yes.

Q. We'll ask other people this in due course, obviously from the branch office, but in your understanding, does the church have the flexibility to move from that, to say, "Well, that may have been the case back then, but in the modern world we recognise that the two-witnesses rule is a problem and we will not apply it anymore." Does the church have the flexibility to do that?
A. Not to my knowledge.

Q. Because it's written in the scripture?
A. That's what we base our teachings on mainly, yes.

Q. But that same passage that I read you says that the accused *[sic]* must essentially throw the first stone to kill the accused. I take it you don't do that?
A. No, obviously not.

Q. So what's the distinction? Why flexibility on the one and not on the other?
A. Again, I'd take my advice from the branch on how we would proceed with a situation like that today. At the time we followed the procedures that we had in place, and I haven't had a modern or more modern example of how to proceed in that situation. But looking at what the publication says there, we would follow those directions after the advice of the branch.

Q. Something else that [BCB] says in her testimony - she says she had these meetings but no-one explained to her what the purpose was or how they fitted into any sort of procedure. Do you accept that?
A. I can't recall her questioning it at the time and I don't know exactly what was said in that meeting. It's basically just the allegations that I recall from that meeting.

Q. Do you accept this, at least, that for someone who is feeling vulnerable and struggling to give details of intimate things that have happened to her, that part of the support that might be offered is to ensure that it is explained to her just what process she is engaged in?
A. Yes, and there are support - support things in place to - to help a victim like that. The publications that come out through the 1990s that were available to everyone basically set out what those support practices were, and if she didn't feel comfortable coming to the elders to discuss those things, then it was possible for her to speak to a mature sister in the congregation, confide in her and draw comfort from her. If the mature sister didn't know how to handle the situation she might approach the elders to find direction and be able to help the one that was ailing.

Q. Even if an allegation had come to the elders in that way, via, as you describe it, a mature sister, you would still require the survivor of that abuse to put her allegations to the abuser in the abuser's presence?
A. Again, I think that's where the shepherding books have brought the information, in that they don't have to face the accused nowadays. It's - we can take her information from her and then we speak to the accused separately.

Q. Well, I don't see that in the shepherding book. I showed you the passage which seems to require exactly the opposite. Is there some other passage you wish to refer

to?
A. I can't recall where it is offhand, but I thought that was the procedure that I've looked at in the past.

Q. The point is, though, that you do have a procedure, so even if the allegation comes through a mature sister, you then have a procedure to follow to investigate whether to accept those allegations or not; is that right?
A. The provision of her being able to speak to another sister was to provide the comfort after the fact, or to draw - yes, to try and have someone else to speak to her about it other than the elders, if she didn't feel comfortable talking to the elders.

Q. So are you saying in your understanding the elders would not have to speak to the victim herself?
A. No, that's not true. No, we would still have to handle it. If the matter hadn't been handled already, then the elders would have to speak to her and try and establish the facts and speak to the accused --

THE CHAIR: Q. I'm not sure I'm understanding. She speaks to a mature sister, but I think Mr Stewart is asking you whether the process of investigation after that would be the same, and that is, she would have to bring her accusation against the abuser before two elders?
A. That's correct.

Q. And that would be, in that circumstance, two men, the elders --
A. Yes.

Q. -- the alleged abuser and the woman; is that right?
A. My understanding of it is that the accused would not have to be present at that meeting. The two elders would discuss it with the victim, and we would speak to the accused person separately.

Q. But if it was only the woman's allegation, without any eyewitness to it, that would be where it would end unless the --
A. No.

Q. -- abuser --
A. Confessed.

Q. -- confessed. If he didn't confess, that's the end of

it?
A. Yes.

Q. That's true today?
A. Yes.

Q. Let's assume that you had an allegation from a 12-year-old girl, say. Would it be the same process?
A. Well, again, I'd have to seek advice from the branch on that to see what our process would be, because the circumstances and all those things are involved in it; we would proceed following their direction.

Q. But I assume that from the manuals, from the written documents, the process, as you would understand it without seeking further advice, would require the 12-year-old girl to speak to two mature men --
A. Yes.

Q. -- to make her allegation?
A. In that case, presuming that her parents weren't the instigators of the case, then they would probably be there as a support for her as well.

Q. What do you mean by "instigators"? Do you mean if her father wasn't the abuser?
A. That's right.

Q. What's the point at which one's parents would not be there?
A. Again, not knowing exactly what the branch would direct, we would follow their direction on what they would advise in each individual circumstance. They may feel if the girl was old enough to make her own decisions and talk openly, that that would - yes. Again, I haven't dealt with a situation like that, so I can't really say.

MR STEWART: Q. Just to clarify, in saying that your understanding of the current procedure is that it would not be required that the victim makes allegations in the accused's presence, that would be in the investigation as to whether or not there should be a judicial committee; is that right?
A. That's my understanding, yes.

Q. Once a judicial committee is formed, once the decision is made to form a judicial committee, then those

allegations or accusations would have to be made by the victim in the face of the abuser or the accused; is that right?
A. Yes, if he hadn't confessed to wrongdoing, then the witnesses are brought forward to add weight to the accusations.

Q. And one of the witnesses, obviously, would be the person who had suffered the abuse?
A. That's correct, yes.

Q. Can [BCB]'s statement at paragraphs 52 and 53 be shown, please. Here [BCB] is talking about what she was able to speak about. She says she did not talk about the incident in the bathroom, so one might say that's the most severe of the various incidents:

> *I didn't feel comfortable talking while Bill was in the room. After that first meeting I felt that there was a lot of stuff I had been unable to say in front of Bill. I decided to go to Max's house after the meeting to clarify things.*

Then there was a second meeting. The point is, do you accept that in the face of the person accused, it may be very difficult for a person who has suffered abuse to say everything that happened to them?
A. Absolutely, yes.

Q. And in front of other men as well, at least two elders; is that right?
A. That's true, yes.

Q. So it's not a process that is necessarily going to come out with the full story, is it?
A. Obviously not at the first meeting and, in this case, that's borne out, but - yep.

Q. If we can look at paragraph 62 of [BCB]'s statement, you'll see that this is dealing with a conversation after, as I understand it, Bill Neill had accepted the recommendation to stand down, and [BCB] says that you called her and said that the Neills had asked that she not tell any more people about Bill out of respect for the family. Do you recall that conversation?
A. Not the way it's presented here. I remember talking

to [BCB], and the intent was that we didn't want any more gossip spreading through the congregation, and it wasn't to protect the Neill family; it was try and protect the congregation, keep it so that there wasn't so many people talking about it. We didn't want people in the community talking about it as well. We tried - we wanted to keep it as quiet as possible, not to try to cover it up, or anything like that, but just to try to stop the conversation.

Q. The essence of it, though, was to say to her that she should not talk to anyone else about it?
A. That was in the recommendation to her not to talk to others, as it would have been to the Neill family and anyone else that tried to raise the matter. We would have tried to keep it under wraps or keep it - yeah, try and limit the conversation about Neill.

Q. You appreciate she couldn't have spoken to anybody outside the congregation, could she, because she shouldn't be associating with them?
A. She was still working in the community. She had other people that she would have known, so it was possible to have spoken to other people.

Q. But to speak to them about something as intimate as this would be associating with them in a way beyond what her secular employment required?
A. That's correct, yes.

Q. Therefore, in the eyes of the church, she shouldn't do that; she shouldn't speak to anyone outside the Jehovah's Witnesses about this incident?
A. Whom she chose as associates was still left entirely to her. She may have had close friends. I don't think that's the case here, but, again, it was just to limit the conversation, we would have asked her not to spread things.

Q. Isn't it the case that she's not supposed to have close friends or associates outside of the Jehovah's Witnesses?
A. We discourage them from having close relationships with people outside of Jehovah's Witnesses, but whether they take that advice or not is entirely up to them. We don't police it; we don't go around with a big stick, beating them because they choose to associate with other people.

Q. The point is, though, from your perspective, that she should not be discussing something of this level of intimacy with someone outside of the Jehovah's Witnesses; am I right?
A. That was - that was basically the input, the intent behind that conversation, to try and limit the conversation.

Q. Yes, well, it's slightly different, isn't it? It's directed at the congregation. Are you saying she shouldn't talk about it to anyone else so that it protects the congregation; it doesn't get around within the congregation; is that right?
A. As well, yes. We wanted to limit the spread of the gossip about the --

Q. Do you see that leaves her with no-one she can talk to?
A. No. As I said before, she was able to talk to - if she could find someone that she could communicate and confide in, like a mature woman in the congregation, she was encouraged to do that. If she wanted to speak to the elders - either to myself or something like that - she could do that as well. We didn't - it was entirely just to try and stop the spread of gossip within and outside.

Q. That's the point, isn't it. You're saying two different things. On the one hand you're saying she's told not to tell anyone or speak to anyone; then, on the other hand, you're saying she can speak to someone. Now, which is it?
A. If she chose to speak to another sister, that would have to be done in confidence, so the woman that she spoke to would have to keep her confidence and not talk about it to anyone else either.

Q. Do you understand or appreciate how she felt silenced and unsupported by this instruction or request from you? Do you appreciate that?
A. Yes, I do.

Q. Of course, the teachings of the church are that victims of sexual abuse need to be treated with extreme thoughtfulness and kindness - I quoted from the Pay Attention to Yourselves. You're familiar with that, aren't you?

A. Yes.

Q. So, in this case, would you accept that you didn't meet that standard?
A. I didn't speak to her in a harsh manner. I feel sad if she interpreted it that way. I didn't mean to cut off any support or the feeling that she had support in the congregation and, as I said, the intent was purely to try and limit the conversation around the incident in the congregation and spreading further. But I in no way meant it to come across as harsh or leaving her with nowhere to go or anything like that.

Q. Well, did you offer to her alternatives? Did you offer to her a support person or support people who might assist her through this period?
A. I can't recall doing that at the time, no.

Q. You say that ultimately it was due to lack of clear proof from either party which left you and Doug Jackson unable to assemble a judicial committee and take the matter further. Was this, then, an instance of the application of the two-witnesses rule?
A. Yes.

Q. I'm just looking at how that rule was formulated back then. So that's back to tab 80, the Pay Attention to Yourselves and to All the Flock and, in particular, at page 111, which is Ringtail 43. "What kind of evidence is acceptable?" It sets out there:

> *There must be two or three eyewitnesses, not just persons repeating what they have heard; no action can be taken if there is only one witness.*

Then there are two biblical origins for that rule. Do you have an appreciation as to why that rule is still applied in the 21st century when availability of evidence and notions of proof have changed and developed?
A. I guess because we still stick to the Bible principles, we try to follow that line of reasoning. I'm trying to remember what the latest publication says on that type of evidence, too, but I still - I think the two or three witnesses is still - still the current teaching in the new book.

Q. In this particular case you've expressed the sympathy and concern you had for [BCB]. You didn't have any reason to disbelieve her, did you?
A. No, I didn't - as shocking as it was.

Q. She was clearly quite distressed?
A. Absolutely, yes.

Q. When you say in your statement that you didn't have clear proof, what sort of clear proof might there be in a case like this?
A. If the accused had said, "Yes, I did this," or, "Yes, I did that," or there was evidence that he had done something else along similar lines, then it would have.

Q. I'll take you to the documents in a minute, but as we'll see from those, it became a situation of you and Mr Jackson recommending to Mr Neill that he stand down; is that right?
A. That was the ultimate outcome, yes.

Q. Stand down as presiding overseer and as elder and, in a sense, be returned to be a normal congregation member - is that how we're to understand it?
A. That's right, yes.

Q. And an announcement was made to the congregation that he was standing down?
A. No. The wording would be that he had been removed as an elder. That terminology of "standing down" was something that was used commonly, but it was - always means they were removed from the congregation. It was not a decision that he made; it was a decision that was made by the elders in harmony with the branch decision as well. That recommendation was sent to the branch. The branch would write back and say, "Yes, that decision is accepted, he's no longer serving as an elder."

Q. So by saying he's removed as an elder, are you saying that necessarily conveys that that's been a decision by others about him, not his own decision?
A. Yes.

Q. So does it then necessarily convey some --
A. Disciplinary action.

Q. -- criticism or sanction of him?

A. Absolutely.

Q. So the congregation would typically be left not knowing --
A. The details.

Q. -- what had happened or what it was?
A. Yes.

Q. Would an announcement of the reasons for this decision not have assisted in protecting members of the congregation, at least knowing what it is that is being said about him?
A. Those that were aware of the situation would have known exactly why he was being removed. Those that weren't would have known that the congregation - that there would have been reasons for it, although not knowing the details. They trust in our decisions then to do that.

Q. Any particular steps taken to protect children in the congregation?
A. Are there now?

Q. No, then, following the decision to remove Bill Neill as an elder?
A. The publications that we have encourage families to discuss that situation with their children and to warn them and to be aware of the dangers. Appreciating that sometimes it's the father that instigates that, that makes it very difficult, but, still, the mother has a role in it as well. And in a situation if we can see a danger area, for example, if another young girl had been going to stay at Bill's place, then we would perhaps speak to the parents about that and warn them that that not be an appropriate place for them to let their daughter visit. We would probably even speak to the accused at that time and say, "It's probably better you don't have that person stay there," too.

Q. How big was the congregation at that time?
A. We had around 90 publishers.

Q. That's a typical size congregation, is it?
A. No. You can get a lot smaller. That one had originally been about 50. It had grown to 90 by that time. Visiting that congregation recently, there were around about 60 publishers at the time. So anywhere between 50 to

100 is fairly average.

Q. Just on the question of establishing what happened, you would accept, I take it, that police have better resources than you, as elders do, to investigate the commission of a crime?
A. And, yes, different training and abilities to do that as well. Yes, yes.

Q. And technology available to them - they have lawful authority, they can do things, they have expertise, you accept all of that?
A. Mmm.

Q. So should you not have at least told [BCB] that she has this option available to her, to go to the police, who may be able to get to the bottom of it?
A. I wasn't aware of the policies and procedures at that time. We hadn't - there was very little information available on whether we should go to the police or anything like that. I have to admit that I didn't consider that at the time.

Q. By policies and procedures, are you talking about internal to the church?
A. Yes.

Q. Because going down to the police station or phoning the police doesn't require a policy or procedure, does it?
A. I guess not, no. If I may say, if she had pursued that, I wouldn't have tried to stop her from doing it. As I said, I just wasn't aware of the situation at that time.

Q. Now, if we can look at the reports that you and Mr Jackson then sent to the branch, it's at tab 70 in the bundle. Have you had the opportunity to see this document in the last days or weeks?
A. Yes.

Q. You have? So you'll see it's dated 1 February 1992, addressed to Watchtower Society, which is the branch office, and on the second page, if we scroll to the end, you'll see that it's signed off by Doug Jackson as the circuit overseer and yourself as the secretary. I take it you signed that, did you?
A. Yes, that's my signature.

Q. And you agreed with what was in it?
A. Yes.

Q. If we go back to the first page, the third paragraph, or perhaps the start:

Dear Brothers,
I am writing in reply to your letter...
concerning Brother William Neill now
serving as an elder ...

And then it goes on. You will see the paragraph starting:

We also spoke to other brothers and sisters
in the congregation who knew about the
matter through another sister ...

You'll see it then says:

The sister who has spread the information
has since left Narrogin. It appears that a
number of brothers know about the matter
and unfortunately there may be worldly
people who also know but we are not sure.

This distinction between the brothers and the worldly people knowing - what is the relevance of that? Why did it matter if there were worldly people who knew?
A. I guess we didn't want anything to detract about - from the cleanness of the congregation.

Q. Are you concerned about the reputation of the congregation?
A. Yes, and Jehovah's name.

Q. Then the next paragraph:

After interviewing the brothers and sisters
and reviewing the scriptures, Our Kingdom
Ministry, November 1972, Question Box and
the Watchtower November 15, 1977 ... we
felt that "uncleanness" had been committed
on several occasion but it was not "loose
conduct".

Starting with "uncleanness", what was your conception of what uncleanness is, as distinct from loose conduct?

A. In this case, unintentional touching of the breast, as opposed to loose conduct, where it's brazen, a deliberate act.

Q. So you accepted that some acts had occurred, but you felt unable to accept that they were intentional; is that the point you got to?
A. The accused - that was all that he actually owned up to when the accusations were put to him. He said, "I may have touched her breasts when saying goodnight to her," but he didn't say anything about - well, he refused to admit to deliberately touching her.

Q. Then you say:

We felt that Brother Neill could not speak with confidence and we recommended to him that he step down as an elder due to those points which we reviewed with him.

What are you intending to convey there? How are we to understand that, that he was not able to speak with confidence?
A. He no longer had freedom of speech in front of the congregation. If he had to stand up and give counsel to the congregation relating to sexual matters, or, in particular, child abuse, then he would not have the confidence of the congregation, or he wouldn't have had freeness of speech in being able to say those sorts of things.

Q. That's because there were members in the congregation who knew this story?
A. That's true.

THE CHAIR: Q. You say in the letter that uncleanness had been committed on "several occasions". Do you see that?
A. Yes, I - I don't know if that's - would have been a little bit exaggerated there, but --

Q. Well, they're your words.
A. I've signed the letter, yes. That was - I wasn't the one that wrote it, but --

Q. Are we to understand that you were conveying that you accepted that there was accidental touching on several

occasions?
A. I don't - I don't agree with the "several" occasions.

Q. But it's in the letter?
A. Yes, it is.

Q. Well, what are we to understand. Did you sign a letter that wasn't true?
A. I probably didn't think seriously enough about that wording at the time when I signed it. It was a generalisation of the situation and - yes, I guess, your Honour, I didn't take seriously the wording of it at that time.

Q. Well, here you were reporting on a serious allegation, but you say you didn't take the reporting, or the wording, seriously at the time?
A. I don't really know how to answer that, your Honour. It's - what you're saying is probably true, yes.

Q. How would you feel if you had made the complaint and the person who was reporting on the outcome didn't take seriously the wording in the letter that they were signing?
A. I can see the point that you're making, sir, yes.

Q. Tell me this: you told us earlier that apart from the touching of the breast allegation, [BCB] made other allegations to you; correct?
A. Yes, I believe so. Yes.

Q. There's no reference to those allegations at all in this letter, is there?
A. No.

Q. Why not?
A. I can't answer that, I'm sorry - not that I'm refusing to, it's just that I can't think of reasons why they're not in there.

MR STEWART: Q. When you record there "we recommended to him that he step down as an elder" and "He agreed to this", that seems to suggest you offered him the opportunity to step down, and he did, rather than you removed him. Is there a distinction to be had. How are we to understand that?
A. No, it's just an unfortunate choice of words there.

Q. So he was definitely deleted or removed?
A. Removed, yes.

Q. Then you say in the letter:

... we feel no further action or restrictions need apply.

Why was that? Did you consider there were actions or restrictions that might be imposed?
A. In the case of a judicial committee, restrictions against commenting and having parts on meetings and things are what we refer to as restrictions. At this time we didn't believe that Bill Neill needed to have those restrictions put upon him.

Q. What about not having church meetings, Bible studies, in his home? That strikes as an appropriate or potentially appropriate restriction which might offer some safety?
A. I agree, yes. I don't think that action was taken at the time.

Q. Well, it wasn't taken. The point is: did you consider it?
A. I can't recall considering it, no.

Q. Then if we look at the second-to-last paragraph on the second page, near the end of the paragraph, it says:

Also, brothers, I would recommend that once this has died down and it appears that Brother Neill again has the freedom of speech that he be recommended as an elder again so that he can be of help in the congregation as he has done in the past.

By this "dying down", you mean once the controversy has abated, I take it?
A. It would take a long time, many years in fact, for that - for that to have died down. Again, it's an unfortunate wording. In hindsight we would have worded that much differently to what it is there. Matters of this nature take many years, if ever, to die down completely.

Q. That was really the focus of your concern there, in taking action against Mr Neill was about his reputation; is that right?

A. Not at all.

Q. Well, his reputation in the congregation, his freedom of speech?
A. His - sorry, what was the question again?

Q. That was at the centre of your concern in deciding to remove him as an elder - his reputation in the congregation?
A. Not so much his reputation, but - oh, how can I word it?

Q. It appears your concern is with his efficacy as an elder?
A. Yes.

Q. Is that right?
A. That's right.

Q. Your concern as an elder there, as I understand it from this letter, was about the proper functioning of your organisation; is that right?
A. Yes.

Q. It wasn't about the protection of children in your congregation?
A. Probably not.

Q. It wasn't about what support you could offer to [BCB]?
A. That must have had some bearing on it, but, yes, it was more with his qualifications to teach.

Q. You say in your statement that you understand that Bill Neill was later reappointed as an elder in a different congregation; is that right?
A. Yes.

Q. As I understand it, you had nothing to do with that?
A. No, that's true.

Q. Under the existing practices, should you not have been consulted about that, having been the elder involved in his removal?
A. I was surprised at the time, yes.

Q. Then if we look at tab 74 of that bundle, this is now a letter from you earlier this year. You'll see it is to

the service desk on 6 January 2015 and what you describe as

> *... a brief summary of events leading to the deletion of Brother Neill from serving as an elder in the Narrogin, WA, Congregation whilst I was serving there.*

How did this letter come about?
A. I beg your pardon?

Q. How did this letter come about. What brought you to write this letter in 2015 to the branch?
A. Someone from the branch contacted me and asked me what my recollections were and would I please put them in a letter and send it to them.

Q. Was it explained to you why that information was being sought?
A. I think mention was made about the Royal Commission, but I thought it was one of the - one of the situations that was being looked at and it might proceed to the Royal Commission.

Q. By this time, of course, Bill Neill was deceased?
A. Yes.

Q. And you knew that?
A. Yes. I attended his funeral.

Q. And that was, as I understand it, about 11 years ago - would that be right?
A. Quite possibly. I don't know exactly the time, but, yes, that sounds about right.

Q. A goodly number of years ago?
A. Yes.

Q. Now, this correspondence is addressed to the service desk. I take it that it was someone from the service desk who contacted you in the way which you've mentioned?
A. Yes.

Q. In your understanding, what's the distinction between when you correspond with the service desk or the legal department?
A. It may have been a member of the legal department that contacted me, but the letter was addressed to the service

department - service desk, yes.

Q. Moving away from this particular letter, generally as an elder when you're corresponding with the branch --
A. You send stuff to the service desk.

Q. -- it seems to me that some correspondence is with the legal department and some is with the service desk. I'm asking what your understanding is as to when you would communicate with the service desk as distinct from when you would communicate with the legal department?
A. If the legal department had said, "Send it to us at the legal department", that's how the letter would have been addressed. In this case they asked us to send it to the service department, or the service desk.

Q. But moving away from this letter, generally in your work as an elder, when would you contact the service desk as opposed to the legal department, and vice versa?
A. The legal department I would contact in cases pertaining to legal matters. Our information now is if a case of child abuse was raised, we would contact the legal desk straightaway. But, normally, anything goes through the service desk, then they assign it to the appropriate department from there.

Q. Just to understand you, so you'd contact the service desk but expect it to be passed on to the legal department, is that what you say?
A. They would decide if that's where it needed to go, yes. But as I said about contacting the legal department in matters pertaining to legal cases and things like that, if we needed direction in a hurry, that's who we'd contact.

Q. Generally, with regard to direction as to how to handle investigations and complaints, would that come from the service desk?
A. Yes.

Q. You say in that letter in the fourth paragraph:

> *When [BCB] raised the allegations against Brother Bill concerning being touched inappropriately I viewed it very seriously. I listened to both to try and ascertain the facts ... Sadly, it became a matter of her word against his as there were no*

witnesses ... [BCB] was an attractive young sister and often got around the house in her nightwear as was the custom of the other children.

What do you consider to be the relevance of that observation?
A. That was one comment that Bill had made to me, that she was wearing her nightwear at the time.

Q. Well, it suggests that you thought that might have somehow lessened Bill Neill's culpability?
A. Not at all, no. In fact, it should have raised stronger warning bells than it did at the time, because it all - it pointed to the fact that he obviously had noticed it and he was affected by that.

Q. Because you accept, of course, that a child can't consent, can't validly consent to being sexually abused - you accept that, of course?
A. Yes.

Q. And can never be blamed for it?
A. Yes.

Q. That's in the church's own teachings, isn't it, that children can't seduce and should not be blamed?
A. Mmm.

MR STEWART: Those are my questions, your Honour.

THE CHAIR: Does anyone else have any questions?

MS GALLAGHER: Yes, I do.

<**EXAMINATION BY MS GALLAGHER:**

MS GALLAGHER: Q. My name is Gallagher and I represent [BCB].
A. Okay.

Q. Just in relation to the letter that counsel assisting was just referring to behind tab 74, you note in that letter, don't you - is that in front of you there?
A. Yes.

Q. Not only the part of the letter that was just referred

to by counsel assisting, but you note also, don't you, that "Bill would kiss her good night as he did with his daughters" - do you see that there?
A. Yes.

Q. That was very much lessening Mr Neill's conduct, wasn't it? Do you understand what I mean by that? You know the allegation to have been, don't you, that he inserted his tongue into her mouth when he kissed her good night?
A. Bill never admitted to that. The way that he put it across was that he would say good night to all of the girls before they went to bed.

Q. So what about the accusation from the person who was abused - the accusation was, wasn't it, that the tongue was inserted into her mouth?
A. I believe so, yes. I can't - I can't recall that being said at the time, but it's quite possible that it was.

Q. You took no notes of your initial discussion with [BCB] and [BCC]?
A. No.

Q. Your recollection was that they came to your home, that is [BCB] and [BCC]; is that right?
A. That's what I recall, yes.

Q. You understand that [BCB]'s recollection is that you approached her after being told of an allegation from another member of the faith; correct?
A. That may be so. I don't recall that.

Q. And certainly if somebody has been told of an allegation of wrongdoing, the faith requires them to come forward and tell an elder; is that right?
A. Sorry, I don't understand that question.

Q. If somebody is told of a wrongdoing --
A. Yes.

Q. -- the Jehovah's Witness faith requires that person to inform an elder; isn't that so?
A. They give the - yes - the short answer, yes.

Q. And that's how you came - do you recall, that's how

you came upon the information that there was an allegation of wrongdoing from Bill Neill, not from [BCB], but from another source?
A. No, I don't recall that.

Q. In some questions asked by counsel assisting, just as to taking Mr Neill to [BCB]'s home, your evidence was, is this correct, that you did not explain what the process was that was under way at that time; is that correct?
A. That's possible.

Q. Well, did you or did you not explain to her what was going on?
A. In the information here, it's put across that I went to see them with Bill on my own. I don't recall that happening. I thought I only went to see them with Doug Jackson and I don't recall it being in their home. Normally, those sort of events take place at the Kingdom Hall, which --

Q. You were 28 at the time, weren't you? Does that accord with your recollection?
A. I was about 30, 32.

Q. 32?
A. By 1992, yes.

Q. So still quite a young man?
A. That's right.

Q. How old was Bill Neill at the time, do you know?
A. I wouldn't like to hazard a guess.

Q. Certainly, he was more senior than you?
A. Absolutely, yes.

Q. He was a presiding overseer, wasn't he?
A. Yes.

Q. So that certainly if [BCB]'s recollection is accurate that you attended with Bill Neill, it would have been a situation where he would have been the most senior person in the room - do you agree with that proposition?
A. Certainly would have been the oldest, yes.

Q. Sorry?
A. He would have been the oldest and the most experienced

from the church, yes.

Q. And the more senior member of the church in the room?
A. Mmm.

Q. And you know, don't you, that [BCB] and [BCC] were both quite devout at that time?
A. Yes.

Q. In the sense that it would have been obvious to you that you were, as an elder, trusted by them?
A. Yep.

Q. And that they were handing themselves over to your guidance - do you agree with that proposition?
A. Yes.

Q. So that, looking back on it now, can you see that taking the abuser to somebody's home is totally inappropriate?
A. Yes.

Q. Is it the case, sir, that the thrust of the inquiry in relation to somebody being involved in wrongdoing is to protect the congregation?
A. Yes.

Q. Could we go to tab 84 and page 0309, which is page 29, the second column. If I could refer you to the second column at about point 7 down the page, the sentence commencing:

It is not his status as an authority figure ...

Can you see that there in the second column?
A. No, not yet.

Q. I'm sorry, your Honour, I understand it is tab 84. I beg your pardon. It is Let Us Abhor What is Wicked. It is tab 85, page 29 in the top right of the page 0309. If you could go to the second column, about point 7 down that:

It is not his status as an authority figure ...

Do you see that, sir?

A. Not yet. Oh, yes.

Q.
It is not his status as an authority figure that should be of concern, but, rather, the unblemished purity of the congregation.

A. Yes.

Q. That was the purpose of your inquiry, wasn't it - to protect the congregation from Bill Neill?
A. Yes, yes.

Q. Not to protect [BCB]?
A. Well, her included in the congregation. She was part of the congregation.

Q. As a victim of abuse --
A. Yes.

Q. -- she wasn't protected, but as a member of the congregation you were seeking to protect her; is that right?
A. As well, yes.

Q. You indicated that you did not speak harshly to [BCB]. When you were being asked questions by counsel assisting he put to you that victims should be treated with kindness, and you agreed with that and indicated you didn't speak harshly to her?
A. Yes.

Q. Do you agree, though, that when a young woman has made allegations of sexual impropriety against an elder, that taking that elder to her is harsh treatment of her?
A. I can understand how she would view it that way, yes, and --

Q. Well, do you?
A. -- on the surface - if I try to put myself in her position, yes, I would feel exactly the same.

Q. In making this inquiry and going to her and having her face her abuser, or, that is, the accused face his accuser, it was all about disciplining Bill Neill, wasn't it?
A. Mmm-hmm.

Q. And certainly it's the case now that if there is a police inquiry on foot in regards to a matter, that disciplinary proceedings run parallel with that - do you agree with that?
A. I don't have any experience with that at this time, so I --

Q. In the sense that --
A. Sorry.

Q. -- if there is a police inquiry on foot, certainly members of the church and the congregation are told not to interfere with the police inquiry; is that right?
A. I would think that would be reasonable, yes. I don't remember instructions in that way, but it does make sense, yes.

Q. If you were to be confronted with this situation today, what would you do differently to what you did then?
A. The first thing would be to contact the branch for direction, look up any of the relevant information that we've got, the latest information, and proceed following their direction.

Q. Before contacting the branch, what would you do in relation to what you knew of the complaint?
A. Try and establish the facts from the information --

Q. How would you do that?
A. Often times, if someone comes to us, we hear the information just on a one-on-one, but I think the indications are that it's better to have two elders there so that we can present that to the branch with the two of us, like on a conference call or something.

Q. Specifically in relation to [BCB]'s situation, what would you do differently today, or would you conduct yourself in exactly the same way as you did?
A. No, I wouldn't do the same.

Q. What would you do differently?
A. Being the only other elder there, and if the circuit overseer wasn't due to visit like that, like he was in that case, I would have called an elder from another congregation and we would have heard her allegations together and then we would approach the branch for direction.

Q. Would you have a female, a sister, involved in relation to talking with the person who was making complaint about sexual impropriety?
A. That would be up to the person making the accusations, I would think. If she wanted to have someone there as a support, I think that would be the case.

THE CHAIR: Q. Mr Horley, I understand how the church is organised, but what the process means is that the investigation, in a case such as this one, of a woman's allegations is made entirely by men; correct?
A. I'm sorry, the --

Q. The investigation within the church is conducted entirely by men?
A. That's correct, yes.

Q. Do you think that's appropriate when the allegation comes from a woman, and maybe a young woman?
A. That's - that's the procedure that we have in place.

Q. I know, but I'm asking you a different question.
A. Well, that sort of comes into my personal feelings. I think I would still have to be bound by what the branch directs me to do.

Q. Secondly, as here, you, as an elder, were being asked to investigate allegations of a person who you had worked with as an elder.
A. Yes.

Q. Now, to an outsider, that doesn't seem like a fair process. Do you understand why that is?
A. Yes, and that's why we would have another elder there - in this case, the circuit overseer visited. He didn't know Bill as well as I did, so he tended to be a little bit more impersonal in the --

Q. Well, he might, but you are still there?
A. Yes.

Q. And you know this elder well and had worked with him.
A. Yes, and I remember at the time I was very shocked at the treatment or the allegations that were made against him. So, to me, he had betrayed me as much as the congregation - obviously not as much as the person that -

the victim in this case, but, to me, it went against everything that we'd been taught and trained as as elders. Bill was a man that I had known for about 16 years, in growing up as a teenager in the congregation and looking to him and respecting him. Then being appointed as an elder, myself, being mentored by him in the way that we should treat the flock, with tenderness and care, and we were taught to be a hiding place, a refuge, somewhere they could go and seek help and to really care for their spiritual needs, and now this situation, Bill had completely betrayed all of those things. So it wasn't like I was looking at things from a siding with him. It was sticking with the teachings that I had been trained in and looking at it impartially and trying to look at it that way.

Q. You ultimately reported that his conduct was the result of accidental touching, didn't you?
A. That was his description.

Q. That's what you reported.
A. Okay.

Q. That's what you found.
A. Right.

Q. Correct?
A. That was - yes, that was only - that's all that he admitted to.

Q. Yes, and that's what your finding was. Now, again, to an outsider, could you see that an outsider may think that when someone who you know well is being investigated by you, that that may not be a fair process?
A. I can understand how they would see that, yes.

Q. Do you think that that's a process that the church should change?
A. I don't know how to comment on that. They may have made changes in that process - not according to the book that we have, but where it says that we contact the branch, then - then the direction that they give in that instance would - may give us further bearing on that.

THE CHAIR: Yes.

MS GALLAGHER: Q. I won't keep you much longer, Mr Horley, but have you come to know about the full extent

of [BCB]'s allegation against Bill Neill?
A. No. I only know what was dealt with at the time.

Q. So you don't know that, for about three or four years, she was subject to indecent assaults, effectively, where she was tongue-kissed by this elder?
A. No, I'm not aware of that.

Q. That she was, on one occasion, forced to sit on the bathroom floor, spread her legs and have his finger inserted into her vagina?
A. No, I'm not aware of that.

Q. Does that come as a shock to you --
A. Absolutely.

Q. -- that she actually endured that, or experienced that at the hands of Bill Neill?
A. Yes, it's a shock, yes.

Q. And do you think the fact that it's only coming to light now has something to do with the process that you engaged in when she made an initial complaint?
A. I feel very saddened if that is the case.

Q. It's understandable that it would be - do you agree with that - in the sense that she's confronted with her abuser and somebody who she would know was close to her abuser, and you've just given that evidence. It's understandable that she wouldn't make full disclosure - that's correct, isn't it?
A. I can see what you're saying, yes.

Q. She needs a more nurturing and supportive environment in which to make full disclosure, doesn't she?
A. It would appear that way, yes, from what you're saying.

Q. What is the church going to do about that? Do you have any thoughts on that, going into the future?
A. I don't have any comments on how they arrive at the decisions that they make. I just follow the procedures that they have there in place. At the time we did the best we could with the information that we had. Now, handling the situation again might be completely different.

MS GALLAGHER: Thank you, your Honour, nothing further.

THE CHAIR: Does anyone else have any questions.

MR COYNE: No, your Honour.

MR TOKLEY: No, your Honour.

MR STEWART: Nothing further, your Honour.

THE CHAIR: Thank you, Mr Horley, you're excused.

THE WITNESS WITHDREW

MR STEWART: The next witness is Mr Doug Jackson.

THE CHAIR: Mr Jackson, it's necessary for you to be sworn. Will you take an oath on the Bible or an affirmation?

MR JACKSON: Affirmation.

THE CHAIR: Affirmation?

THE WITNESS: On the Bible.

THE CHAIR: It's your choice, which one would you do.

THE WITNESS: The Bible.

<DOUGLAS JAMES JACKSON, sworn: [3.31pm]

<EXAMINATION BY MR STEWART:

MR STEWART: Q. Will you state your full name, Mr Jackson?
A. Douglas James Jackson.

Q. And, Mr Jackson, do you have before you a copy of your statement dated 10 July 2015?
A. I do.

Q. Are there any amendments or corrections you'd like to make to the statement?
A. I don't think so.

Q. Will you confirm the statement as being true and correct?

A. I do.

MR STEWART: I tender the statement, your Honour.

THE CHAIR: That will be exhibit 29-004.

EXHIBIT #29-004 STATEMENT OF DOUGLAS JAMES JACKSON DATED 10/07/2015

MR STEWART: Q. You were baptised as a Jehovah's Witness in 1963; is that right?
A. Correct.

Q. You were appointed as an elder in the Swan Hill congregation in Victoria in 1971?
A. Correct.

Q. Having been a Witness for only four years; is that right?
A. Four years?

Q. You had been, when you were first appointed an elder?
A. Oh - no, 1963 I was baptised, 1971 an elder.

Q. In other words, only four years from being baptised to being an elder - I beg your pardon, that's my arithmetic there. I apologise. You subsequently served as an elder in other congregations in Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia; is that right?
A. Yes.

Q. And in 1990 you were appointed by the Australia branch to serve as a circuit overseer?
A. Correct.

Q. What does that entail, Mr Jackson?
A. I would visit 20 congregations in a circuit - around 20, it could be less, could be more - and it involved giving - having at that time, which is not the case now, three meetings, Tuesday, Thursday and then one on Sunday with the congregation, and also a meeting that was held with the elders and ministerial servants with an outline from the governing body, and we'd share in the ministry as well during that particular week with various ones in the congregation.

Q. How many congregations would you typically have within

your responsibility?
A. Around 20, but it could be more, it could be less. It just depends. In that circuit, I can't remember now.

Q. You were the circuit overseer responsible for the Narrogin congregation from 1990 to the end of 1992; is that right?
A. I don't think it was the end, but it was some time in 1992 that I changed, but I'm not too sure.

Q. But it's in that period that you had an involvement in the allegations by [BCB] against Bill Neill; is that right?
A. Correct.

Q. So it was in that capacity as circuit overseer responsible for, amongst others, the Narrogin congregation?
A. Correct.

Q. To your recollection, how big was the Narrogin congregation?
A. Oh, I'm not too sure - around 80.

Q. And you then served as circuit overseer until 1998; is that right?
A. That's correct - not on that circuit, though.

Q. And then as district overseer until 2014?
A. Correct.

Q. What is the role of a district overseer?
A. A district overseer is mainly looking after what we used to call circuit assemblies on weekends which were two days, and they took up the majority of our time, plus we'd share in the ministry with the circuit overseer as well - basically, it was giving talks at these circuit assemblies.

Q. Do you hold any position of responsibility in the church currently?
A. Only serving as an elder.

Q. In which congregation is that?
A. Windsor Gardens in South Australia.

Q. In your statement, paragraph 2.2, if we can call that up, you say:

From about the 1990s I recall that matters

of child sexual abuse began to be dealt with as a special category and elders were directed to report any such complaints or allegations immediately to the Branch Office and to follow their direction in regard to reporting the matter to the authorities ...

Do you know what brought about that change?
A. I don't know for sure. I would say it was because of the situation of child abuse starting to be increased and these matters being brought to the fore.

Q. Was it that the particular issue was about giving direction with regard to reporting the matters to the authorities, or was it handling it more generally?
A. At that time, there was information relating to reporting the matter to the authorities, but that was brought about later on in the 1990s and into the 2000s.

Q. In paragraph 4.1 of your statement --
A. I don't seem to have that. Sorry.

Q. It should also be on the screen in front of you.
A. Oh.

Q. You say:

[BCB]'s case is the only case involving child sexual abuse in which I have ever been involved.

The records available to the Royal Commission suggest there has been another case. You are going to be shown a name. I am not wanting you to say the name out aloud, because I'd rather keep it confidential, but it's to see whether that perhaps jogs your memory as to another case that you were involved in?
A. No, sorry.

Q. It doesn't jog your memory? So as far as you can remember, sitting there now, there was just this one case of child sexual abuse in your years that you had to deal with?
A. Yes.

Q. You were the circuit overseer and in that capacity you

were told by Max Horley about the allegations against Bill Neill; is that right?
A. Correct.

Q. Horley and Neill were the two elders of that congregation at that time - the only two elders; is that right?
A. As far as I can remember, I think that was the case, yes.

Q. Because Frank Shaylor had retired and moved back to Perth is evidence we've heard from Mr Horley?
A. Yeah, I - yeah.

Q. What do you recall Mr Horley telling you?
A. Well, as far as I know, it is that he approached me and mentioned to me regarding the allegations that had been made and that we - and then we decided that we were going to investigate it more.

Q. And what were the allegations?
A. Well, I was under the impression that it was just that Bill Neill had been watching [BCB] in the shower and, also, too, I think it was mentioning the touching of the breast once.

Q. That's the most you can remember of what Max Horley told you when he informed you about this matter?
A. I think that was the case, yes.

Q. At the stage that he informed you, what did he tell you that he had done about it up until then?
A. I would say that he would have investigated it, but I can't remember exactly what he said.

Q. Did he tell you whether he had met with [BCB] and/or with Mr Neill?
A. I would say that he would have met with both, yes, but I can't remember if he told me that.

Q. And then, as I understand it, you and he resolved to investigate the matter together; is that right?
A. Correct.

Q. What did you do in order to investigate it?
A. Well, we had meetings with [BCB] and with Mr Neill and, also, others knew about it and we also got some

information from them as well within the congregation. I can't remember how many, but I know that possibly there was a few others as well.

Q. Do you remember what information they were able to give you?
A. I cannot remember that, no, just the allegations that had been made regarding the watching in the shower. I don't know if it dealt with touching of the breast or any other activity at all by him.

Q. Because there was no-one else who was a witness to these events, was there?
A. No, no.

Q. So you say you met with [BCB] and with Bill Neill. That was in a common meeting; is that right?
A. I can't recall whether it was, first of all, just through a common meeting, or whether we met separately with [BCB] and, also, with Bill Neill, and then even collectively, I'm not sure.

Q. [BCB] says that she was unaware of the purpose of the meetings that she was attending or what role those meetings were playing. Do you accept that?
A. Oh, no, I don't, because we would have told her why we were meeting because of her concern of what was happening.

Q. I'll come back to the question of what you would have told her, but dealing first with the question of what you actually remember, do you remember anything that you did tell her, or is it too long ago?
A. No, too long, I'm sorry.

Q. Reverting to the less safe ground, as it were, what do you say you would have told her?
A. How do you mean, what would I say?

Q. You started saying earlier, "I would have told her something about what the meeting was about." I'm just asking you --
A. I just said --

Q. You and I must try to not speak at the same time --
A. Sorry.

Q. -- Mr Jackson. What is it that you think you would

have told her in explaining what the meeting or meetings were about?
A. Well, about the allegations that she made against Bill Neill.

Q. That you were investigating them?
A. Yes.

Q. And more than that?
A. Possibly we would have told her - asked her whether these were true, the watching in the shower and the touching of the breast as well. That would be - I'd say that's what I would have said the meeting was about.

Q. You would appreciate that what you were doing was part of a process which is set out in the church's documents and protocols; is that right?
A. Correct, yes.

Q. You and Mr Horley were doing an investigation to see whether there was sufficient evidence to establish these allegations as true which, had they been established, would have led to a judicial committee; is that right?
A. Yes, yes. Yes, that's true.

Q. And you were experienced in those matters - those procedural matters?
A. Well, it was the first situation that I've ever had where I was dealing with that type of thing.

Q. Well, specifically, child sexual abuse?
A. Yes, yes.

Q. But you'd had other investigations in relation to --
A. Yes.

Q. -- other serious allegations of one form or another, I take it?
A. Yes. Yes, but nothing like that.

Q. Perhaps adultery?
A. Yes.

Q. Or --
A. Yes.

Q. -- lying?

A. Yeah - not lying, but adultery, yes.

Q. And various others. So you were familiar with the procedure you were embarking on?
A. Yes.

Q. And you understand that [BCB] would not have been familiar with that procedure?
A. Correct.

Q. So she would have these two men - you and Mr Horley - asking her questions, but not knowing how that fitted in to an overall procedure?
A. That's correct, although in the publications, with situations like that, or adultery, lying, there is mention, even back then in the 1990s of the procedures, so the publications did have a bit of information regarding what would happen.

Q. Well, the publication you're referring to is the publication which is for elders - the Elders' Handbook, isn't it?
A. No, there's information in The Watchtowers and the Awake! relating to that. Even with child abuse, there's information there.

Q. Well, specifically, I'm addressing the procedures to be followed.
A. Oh, right, sorry.

Q. Because what [BCB] says is that she didn't know what these meetings were about or how they fitted in to any overall procedure, and you would accept that she wouldn't know that?
A. Well, as far as I can recall, maybe she didn't, but I thought I - we would have explained it to her.

Q. Well, all you've said you would have explained is that you were investigating her allegations and asked her --
A. Yes.

Q. -- whether they were true?
A. Yes.

Q. And she'd be left in the relative dark as to how that fitted into whether there might be a judicial committee, what might happen thereafter --

A. Yes.

Q. -- what evidence would be sufficient, what evidence would not be sufficient, do you agree?
A. Yes, correct

Q. And you see that that would leave her in a position of vulnerability and perhaps confusion?
A. Yes. I do now, yes.

Q. So you would accept that in investigative procedures such as this, an important component to support someone who is making allegations of abuse is to fully apprise them of the procedure and what's happening so they feel comfortable in it?
A. Yes, and I think that's what we've been trained to do more so in these later years.

Q. Mr Jackson, back to the particular meetings that you had, do I understand you to say that you're not sure whether there was a meeting that had [BCB] and Mr Neill in at the same time, or do you accept that there was such a meeting?
A. I cannot recall it, but I'd say, yes, there was.

Q. That would be the normal procedure at that time, wouldn't it?
A. Yes.

Q. Would that be the normal procedure even today, in other words, that someone who is making serious allegations against someone must be prepared to make them in their presence?
A. Well, now it's a matter of, first of all, hearing both sides separately and then maybe trying to get them together to see if it's correct or not.

Q. Even hearing them separately, if you then decided as part of that preliminary investigation that there was sufficient evidence and to convene a judicial committee, you would then have to put them together; is that right - in other words, the witnesses, including the abused, would have to speak in the presence of the accused?
A. Well, not - yes, but not necessarily always the case. It could be that, you know, there was convincing evidence from others as well. Yes, you put them under pressure if you put them both together.

Q. That's my point. You say if there were two other witnesses of the incident, not the person who was abused, and the perpetrator hasn't admitted or confessed - you have two other witnesses. In that situation you may not have to have the person who has suffered the abuse giving evidence in the presence of the accused; is that right?
A. Yes.

Q. But where there isn't that situation, where there aren't two independent witnesses, then she would have to? She would have --
A. Yes.

Q. -- to give evidence in the presence of the accused?
A. Yes. I just can't remember whether we did or whether we didn't under those circumstances.

Q. Well, you didn't - to be fair, what you were doing, you hadn't reached judicial committee stage --
A. No.

Q. -- and you never did; is that right? But talking generally now, even the present position is that if a judicial committee is formed, leaving aside the situation where one has at least two other independent witnesses, the victim of the abuse would have to bear witness or give evidence in the face of the accused; is that right?
A. Yes, yes.

Q. And that's set out in the Shepherd the Flock of God --
A. Yes.

Q. -- handbook, isn't it?
A. Yes.

Q. And you yourself I think accepted a moment ago that that puts a lot of strain and pressure on the person who has suffered, doesn't it?
A. Yes, it does, and that's where, even now, we're encouraged - if there's some type of support, for example, in child abuse, maybe the parents, the husband or wife, or other supports, maybe a close friend, something like that. It just depends on the circumstances.

THE CHAIR: Q. Mr Jackson, do you have any knowledge of the developments in the investigation and trial of sexual

assault matters in the ordinary course?
A. No, sorry, I don't, your Honour.

Q. You don't know anything about the research which has led to changes in process so that victims don't have to face the alleged abuser in the course of the trial?
A. I don't, but I'd say that's why our organisation has changed where it's not necessarily doing that anymore, and that we do have a support with us, if required.

Q. It's not a question of support; it's a question of the traumatic circumstance for a victim --
A. Yes.

Q. -- in having to confront --
A. Yes.

Q. -- their alleged abuser. You understand?
A. Yes.

Q. You say that's now understood by your church?
A. I'd say - I'd say it would be, yes.

Q. When you say you say it would be, can you point to anything that confirms that it is understood?
A. Well, offhand, no, I can't, sorry, but I'd say the way that now we are dealing with matters that we must be taking that into consideration.

Q. Perhaps you can explain that to me? How are you dealing with matters that suggests you're taking that into consideration?
A. In a situation of child abuse then, one, we would have some type of support there maybe from - not "maybe", but from those sources, either friend, parents, husband, wives, and maybe we don't - because I haven't been involved with them, maybe we don't directly have that one-on-one, where we used to many times, if it was just one-on-one basis of one accusation against the other.

Q. I'm not sure I'm understanding, but the civil courts have come to understand that the trauma that can be involved for a victim in having face-to-face contact with the alleged abuser - it can be a very traumatic experience.
A. Yes.

Q. Does your church understand that?

A. I would say yes, they do now, yes.

Q. How would it be accommodated then if the investigation is in relation to an allegation by a woman that she was abused by a man in the church?
A. Well, first of all, we would - maybe two would listen to her and get some comments from her about the allegation and then we would see the person separately and talk to that individual.

Q. Then what would you do after that?
A. Well, we'd contact the branch if we felt there was - those allegations were correct and were truthful and follow the procedures, either talking to the legal side of the branch, and then take the procedure or take the information from them that they would give us.

Q. When you say you'd take those steps if you thought the allegation was truthful, if you just have an interview with a female complainant, who says she's the victim, and then follow that with an interview with the alleged abuser, would that be sufficient for you to be able to determine that the allegation was truthful?
A. Yes, it would.

Q. So you wouldn't need a second witness?
A. Not necessary under those circumstances like that.

Q. Is that a significant change from some years ago?
A. Very significant, yes.

Q. Is that change relevant to sexual assault and other types of misconduct, or only sexual assault?
A. Well, offhand, I'm not too sure just how to answer that, because I'm not aware of it, and I haven't been involved in anything lately and I'm just not sure the material really has any - that we have had anything relevant to that.

THE CHAIR: Yes, Mr Stewart.

MR STEWART: As your Honour pleases.

Q. Mr Jackson, are you familiar with the manual or guide Shepherd the Flock of God? Can we have tab 120 on the screen, and particularly at Ringtail 90, otherwise page 89. This has applied since 2010; is that right?

A. Yes.

Q. It's essentially a guide to elders; is that right?
A. Yes, it is.

Q. And as to how to handle various situations. You'll see this particular chapter, chapter 7, sets out the judicial hearing procedure - do you see that?
A. Yes.

Q. Towards the foot of that page you'll see in paragraph 2:

> *The Chairman should invite the accused to make a personal statement. If the accused contends that he is innocent, the witnesses to the wrongdoing should be presented and their testimony be given in the presence of the accused. It is best that the witnesses give their testimony in person.*

Then --
A. I just haven't got that coming up. I've got 2, but not the rest of it.

Q. The top of the next page. There is the possibility then:

> *However, it may be that the witnesses live a great distance away or for some reason are not able to be physically present. If so, their testimony may be presented in the hearing of the accused by a secure phone call or perhaps submitted in writing and read to the accused.*

A. Yes.

Q. Are you saying that that exception might also be used to allow, in cases of child sexual abuse, or sexual assault generally, the accuser to not be in the presence of the accused?
A. Here it's if the person lives a long distance away, but it can still - again, you're looking at the circumstances of the case and just the emotional condition of the person.

THE CHAIR: Q. I think Mr Stewart is suggesting to you that that is not to be found in this document.
A. Oh, I'm using the principle of that, though, just with your question.

Q. I think he's putting to you that the principle is not there, either.
A. No. Okay, so maybe then it doesn't apply.

Q. Well, he'd like to know what the true position is.
A. This is the position here where it says:

> *However, it may be that the witnesses live a great distance away or for some reason are not able to be physically present.*

So I can't go beyond that. But sometimes situations arise where, you know, the emotional state of the person, we try to help them as much as we can.

Q. This document proceeds, you'll see in the previous page I think it is, the starting point for the judicial hearing procedure is to try to put the accused at ease. Do you see that?
A. Yep, I do, thank you.

Q. Then in the first paragraph those words are placed in heavy type. Do you see that?
A. Yes.

Q. There is no mention there, or anywhere, of how you manage the victim, is there - or the accuser?
A. No, but we have had Watchtowers that relate to how we need to be very conscious of the person as well as regards to the way that they are going through what they're going through, the emotional state.

Q. Well, you mean that the person who brings the allegation may be suffering considerable stress --
A. Sorry, no, I thought you meant the person. Yeah.

Q. My question is directed to: there doesn't seem to be any acknowledgment that the person who brings the allegation may be suffering stress and need assistance. Do you see that?
A. Yes, yes. Yeah.

Q. Can you help me --
A. That's correct.

Q. -- with why that's not there?
A. No, I can't. Sorry, no.

THE CHAIR: Mr Stewart, I think we'll come back in the morning.

MR STEWART: I have just one question about this page that's open, if I might.

Q. At page 90, Ringtail 91, just on this question, you see paragraph 3 on this question of observers, I understood you to say that your understanding is that the present position is that observers can be present to give moral support, but you see this document says expressly observers should not be present for moral support. Do you see that?
A. Yes, yes. Yes, but --

Q. This is the guide you have to follow, isn't it?
A. Yes, it is, but again, there have been information as regards to situations where, for example, parents, if they have been asked, they can go there, through letters that we've had, where they have been told - we have been told that if it is a minor, parents can be there, a husband or wife, if the guilty party wants to have them there, they can do that. But, again, that does say that there. I'm just quoting other information that we've had, for example, letters later than 2010.

THE CHAIR: We'll come back to that in the morning. We'll adjourn until 10 o'clock.

AT 4PM THE COMMISSION WAS ADJOURNED TO TUESDAY, 28 JULY 2015 AT 10AM

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WATCHTOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

SUBMISSION

IN RESPONSE TO SUMMONS TO PRODUCE

DOCUMENTS NO. S-NSW-391

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Our Position Statement

Jehovah's Witnesses abhor child abuse, a crime that sadly occurs in all sectors of society. The safety of our children is of the utmost importance. For decades, our journals *The Watchtower* and *Awake!*, as well as our website jw.org, have featured articles for both Jehovah's Witnesses and the general public on how to protect children from abuse.

These articles include:

- "Jehovah's Witnesses Educate Parents and Children to Protect Against Sexual Predators", jw.org, posted September 2014;
- "A Danger That Concerns Every Parent", "How to Protect Your Children" and "Make Your Family a Safe Haven", *Awake!* of October 2007;
- "Let Us Abhor What Is Wicked", *The Watchtower* of January 1, 1997;
- "Your Child Is in Danger!", "How Can We Protect Our Children?" and "Prevention in the Home", *Awake!* of October 8, 1993; and
- "Child Molesting—Every Mother's Nightmare", *Awake!* of January 22, 1985.

Jehovah's Witnesses do not separate children from their parents. We do not have any programs, such as Sunday Schools, youth groups or day care centres, in which we take custody of children from their parents. We believe that loving and protective parents are the best deterrent to child abuse. Thus, we continue to educate parents and provide them with valuable tools to help them educate and protect their children.—Deuteronomy 6:6, 7.

We have no paid clergy. Congregation elders comply with mandatory reporting laws. (Romans 13:1) They provide abuse victims and their families with spiritual comfort from the Bible. (Isaiah 32:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:14) The victim and his or her parents have the absolute right to report the matter to the governmental authorities. (Galatians 6:5) Congregation elders do not shield abusers from the authorities or from the consequences of their actions. (Galatians 6:7) Anyone who commits the sin of child abuse faces expulsion from the congregation. If such a person is serving in a position of responsibility, he is removed. Any suggestion that Jehovah's Witnesses cover up child abuse is absolutely false.

We are committed to doing all we can to prevent child sexual abuse and to provide spiritual comfort to any who have suffered from this terrible sin and crime.

Jehovah's Witnesses – Background

Jehovah's Witnesses are a Christian religion with 8,201,545 active members in 115,416 congregations in 239 lands. In 2014, a total of 19,950,019 attended the annual religious event commemorating the Memorial of Christ's Death. The 'Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses' is based in the United States and provides ecclesiastical guidance of our worship. Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania is a legal entity used in the United States. Branch offices have been established around the world to assist in organising our worship which includes our well-known public ministry, the distribution of Bibles and Bible-based publications to members of the faith (equivalent to parishioners) and to the general public, and to provide assistance to congregations.

As stated on our website, Jehovah's Witnesses:

> *[C]ome from hundreds of ethnic and language backgrounds, yet we are united by common goals. Above all, we want to honor Jehovah, the God of the Bible and the Creator of all things. We do our best to imitate Jesus Christ and are proud to be called Christians. Each of us regularly spends time helping people learn about the Bible and God's Kingdom. Because we witness, or talk, about Jehovah God and his Kingdom, we are known as Jehovah's Witnesses.—http://www.jw.org/en/*

Jehovah's Witnesses, although imperfect, take living in accordance with Bible principles extremely seriously and are known worldwide as law-abiding citizens. We actively promote respect for human rights and the care and protection of children.

Jehovah's Witness parents have the responsibility to train, educate, counsel, care and protect their children. Consequently, there are no activities or events which separate children from their parents.

Our beliefs are widely published and distributed to all, without charge, in printed form and through the extensive information made publicly available on the jw.org website. *The Watchtower* magazine currently has a worldwide distribution of nearly 53 million copies in 228 languages and the *Awake!* magazine, 51 million copies in 101 languages, making these two journals the most widely distributed periodicals in the world. In addition, millions of people worldwide access these and other publications each month by visiting the jw.org website.

Jehovah's Witnesses – In Australia

Jehovah's Witnesses have been active in Australia since 1896, with a branch office first established here in 1904. There are presently 817 congregations in Australia with over 68,000 parishioners. In 2014, over 118,000 were in attendance at our annual religious event to commemorate the Memorial of Christ's Death. As with our publications, all congregation meetings and assemblies are open to the general public.

The translation, production and distribution of Christian publications throughout the Australasia region is facilitated by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia (ABN 42 002 861 225). This is the entity used to transmit our Bible-based guidance to congregations throughout the country. Each congregation in Australia is registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission.

Oversight of Congregations

Elders (equivalent to pastors) and ministerial servants (equivalent to deacons) care for various responsibilities within congregations. The majority of elders are themselves parents and maintain secular employment to support their families. Our congregation structure does not involve a salaried clergy and as such, our organization has no employees. Therefore, we have no contractual arrangement that enables us to direct such persons to move from one congregation to another.

In addition to their teaching role, elders have the responsibility to provide spiritual support and pastoral care to members of the congregation. On the other hand, a ministerial servant's role in the congregation is predominately an administrative support function, such as congregation accounting and maintaining the meeting place known as a 'Kingdom Hall'.

For various periods of time over the past 10 years, 16,505 different individuals have served as elders and ministerial servants throughout Australia, although a large number have discontinued due to secular commitments, health, family, age, or are deceased. Currently, there are 6,978 elders and 4,693 ministerial servants in Australia.

Jehovah's Witnesses – Our View of Child Sexual Abuse

Child abuse is abhorrent to us and we do not protect any perpetrator of such repugnant acts from the consequences of their sin. Sexual abuse of children is both a terrible sin and a crime. This is in harmony with the Bible principle recorded at Romans 12:9: "*Abhor what is wicked.*"

Additionally, at Romans 13:1 we are commanded to: "*Let every person be in subjection to the superior* [governmental] *authorities.*" Consequently, we do not shield any perpetrator of child sexual abuse from the consequences, both spiritual and legal, of their offences.

For over 30 years our Bible-based policy on child sexual abuse has been available to the public. In situations where the abuse of a child is suspected, the *Awake!,* January 22, 1985, page 8, made it clear what is required:

> *First, the child—and other children too—must be protected from any further abuse. This must be done, whatever the cost. In many cases the accused molester will have to be confronted. But whatever it takes, it is important that the child should feel confident that the molester will never be able to get at her (or him) again.*
>
> *Second, the child must be given a lot of love and emotional support. Parents must make it very clear that the little victim is not to blame. The crime and anything that happens as a result of it—even if a close relative goes to prison—is not her (or his) fault. But that reassurance will have to be given many times, so that the victim comes to believe it—and to believe that the parents believe it too!*

This Bible-based policy has been restated in our publications over many decades. For instance, *The Watchtower*, January 1, 1997, page 29, stated that:

> *Depending on the law of the land where he lives, the molester may well have to serve a prison term or face other sanctions from the State. The congregation will not protect him from this.*
>
> *A dedicated adult Christian who falls into the sin of child sexual abuse reveals an unnatural fleshly weakness.*

Our religious beliefs and practices are epitomised in a letter to all bodies of elders dated *October 1, 2012, Re: Child Abuse* (Policy Letter) page 3, paragraph 9, which provides that:

> *As spiritual shepherds, elders should continue to make every effort to protect all in the congregation, especially children from the unwholesome practices of the world. (Isa 32:1,2) One of these is child sexual abuse. We abhor the sexual abuse of children and will not protect any perpetrator of such repugnant acts from the consequences of his gross sin. (Rom 12:9)*

Therefore, given the extremely high importance we place on addressing child sexual abuse and protecting children, elders are instructed to conduct a spiritual investigation of each and every accusation of child abuse against a congregation member to determine whether the accused should be expelled from the congregation as an unrepentant child molester. (1 Corinthians 5:11-13) If the elders determine that a congregation member who committed child sexual abuse is genuinely repentant for his sin (Acts 3:19; 26:20), the genuinely repentant sinner will be allowed to remain a member of the congregation. However, the elders will monitor the repentant sinner's conduct to protect children and the sinner will be disqualified from serving in any position of responsibility in any congregation.

Ongoing Program of Worship and Education

Our Activities Do Not Separate Parents from Children

Jehovah's Witnesses do not separate children from their parents. We do not have any programs, such as Sunday Schools, youth groups, or day care centres, in which we take custody of children from their parents. We believe that loving and protective parents are the best deterrent to child abuse. Thus, we continue to educate parents and provide them with valuable tools to help them educate and protect their children. This is in harmony with Scriptural principles at Deuteronomy 6:6, 7 and Ephesians 6:4.

Program of Parental and Child Education

For decades, *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* journals and other Bible-based publications have featured articles designed to educate both Jehovah's Witnesses and the general public on how to protect children from sexual abuse and to be alert to any inappropriate behavior. In recent years, our jw.org website has also made such resources accessible to a wider audience (see for example, http://www.jw.org/en/search/?q=child+abuse). These resources include advice for parents on how to initiate an age-appropriate conversation with each child concerning what to do if confronted by any inappropriate behaviour. We believe that parental education of children about sex and the dangers of child sexual abuse in this way can be a major factor in helping to prevent child sexual abuse. Child-safeguarding experts whom we have consulted, agree that in a religious organisation that does not sponsor programs that separate children from their parents, the best way to safeguard children is to educate parents on how they can protect their children from becoming a victim of child sexual abuse.

Regular Study Program

The information published by Jehovah's Witnesses also forms the basis for information considered at our weekly congregation meetings, in either a lecture format or through an audience discussion. Larger conventions held three times each year provide education for families through Bible-based lectures, video presentations, re-enactments and interviews. As part of their weekly routine of worship, each family schedules a Family Worship Evening, to consider resources relevant to their situation.

Training of Elders and Ministerial Servants

Each congregation is visited for review by an experienced travelling elder known as a 'circuit overseer', who is a representative of the organisation. Twice each year, he visits approximately 20 congregations in his circuit for a period of a week at a time. His role is to provide pastoral encouragement to the congregations. During each visit he also meets with the elders to review our Scriptural doctrine and the application of Bible principles to ensure each congregation is complying with any theocratic direction given, including that related to child protection.

Periodic one-day programs are also held for all congregation elders. For example, following the release of *Shepherd The Flock of God* (Elders' Handbook) in 2010, 'Kingdom Ministry Schools' as they are known, were scheduled for all congregation elders to review and discuss the contents of the Elders' Handbook and the implementation of its Bible-based procedures. In 2013, a further series of Kingdom Ministry Schools were conducted for all elders, which reviewed the theocratic direction outlined in our Policy Letter and other publicly available Bible-based publications. The outlines of these schools relevant to our policy on child sexual abuse are included as part of our Submission Documents.

Appointment and Screening Process for Elders and Ministerial Servants

Congregation elders and ministerial servants are volunteers who have been actively associated with a congregation for a period of time before appointment, usually several years or more. Ministerial servants are chosen from among Scripturally qualified congregation members. After a ministerial servant has served effectively in assisting the elders for some time, he may be recommended to serve as an elder.

Any appointment of an elder or ministerial servant occurs after a person meets the qualifying Scriptural criteria as recorded at 1 Timothy 3:1-13, Titus 1:5-9, 1 Peter 5:2 and James 3:17, 18. For example, a fundamental requirement is:

> *[H]e should also have a fine testimony from outsiders so that he does not fall into reproach . . . Also, let these be tested as to fitness first; then let them serve as ministers, as they are free from accusation . . . For the men who minister in a fine manner are acquiring for themselves a fine standing and great freeness of speech in the faith.*—1 Timothy 3:7-13.

These Scriptural qualifications are explained in detail in the Jehovah's Witnesses' Handbook, *Organized to Do Jehovah's Will* (Chapters 5 & 6), an article entitled "Are You Qualified to Serve?", *The Watchtower*, September 1, 1990, and the Elders' Handbook (Chapter 3, paragraphs 1-10). Moreover, the current process to appoint elders and ministerial servants is outlined in the letter to all bodies of elders dated July 13, 2014 *Re: Appointment and Deletion of Elders and Ministerial Servants*.

In each instance, before making a recommendation for appointment, the local body of elders carefully reviews the above-mentioned references. The recommendation is forwarded to the circuit overseer who contacts the branch office to determine whether there is a record of child sexual abuse in the past. If not, at the circuit overseer's next scheduled visit to the congregation, he would chair a meeting of the body of elders to process the appointment.

If the decision is unanimous in the affirmative, the circuit overseer and another elder meet with the individual and ask the following questions:

- "Is there anything from your past, even before baptism, or in your personal or family life that disqualifies you or that would prevent you from accepting this appointment?
- Is there any reason why your appointment should not be announced to the congregation?
- Have you ever been involved at any time in the past with child molestation?"

(Please refer to the Letter to all bodies of elders dated July 13, 2014, *Re: Appointments and Deletions of Elders and Ministerial Servants*, paragraph 4.)

Working With Children Checks

The footnote on page two of the July 13, 2014 letter states that: "In the states or territory of Australia where an appointed brother is required to obtain a Working With Children Check (WWCC), the announcement will be held in abeyance until he provides a WWCC number/notification to the coordinator of the body of elders." Once all the requirements of the WWCC have been met, the body of elders notifies the branch office and then the announcement is made. (Please refer to our Submission Documents.)

Removal of Elders and Ministerial Servants

If an elder or ministerial servant is found to no longer Scripturally qualify because of an issue relating to child sexual abuse, the matter is immediately referred to the circuit overseer. The circuit overseer advises the congregation and the branch office of the deletion, and the deletion is then announced to the congregation. (Letter to all bodies of elders dated July 13, 2014, *Re: Appointments and Deletions of Elders and Ministerial Servants*, paragraphs 10-12.)

Our Child Protection Policy

Our approach to child protection is outlined in the Policy Letter and in the Elders' Handbook, which are made available to every elder. However, additional information in support of our theocratic policy is made available to congregation members and the general public through *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* journals and other publications.

Concerning the protection of children from sexual predators, our Policy Letter at paragraph 9 clearly states that:

> *We abhor the sexual abuse of children and will not protect any perpetrator of such repugnant acts from the consequences of his gross sin. (Rom 12:9) Elders should take seriously their responsibility in this matter so that the congregation will be safeguarded from any valid accusation of neglect in protecting children from sexual abuse.*

While our Bible-based religious beliefs and practices remain unchanged, our procedures for child protection have continued to be refined. Over the years, as we have noted areas where our procedures could be strengthened, we have followed through in making necessary changes. This is a continual process to ensure that we have a strong, Scripturally-based policy that protects children and complies with the law.

Our Policy Letter addresses both the legal and the congregational issues regarding any accusation of child sexual abuse. As a religious organisation, we are only authorised to address these matters in accord with Scriptural direction when dealing with them internally. Therefore, dealing with allegations of child sexual abuse spiritually in no way precludes any other options for redress a survivor or their parent/guardian may choose to pursue.

How We Address Accusations of Child Sexual Abuse

In our Policy Letter, elders are given a clear, unambiguous definition of what constitutes child sexual abuse. Paragraph 3 of the Policy Letter states:

> *Child sexual abuse generally includes sexual intercourse with a minor; oral or anal sex with a minor; fondling the genitals, breasts, or buttocks of a minor; voyeurism of a minor; indecent exposure to a minor; soliciting a minor for sexual conduct; or any kind of involvement with child pornography. Depending on the circumstances of the case, it may also include "sexting" with a minor. "Sexting" describes the sending of nude photos, seminude photos, or sexually explicit text messages electronically, such as by phone.*

In any circumstances, where the elders learn that the victim remains in danger of further abuse, the elders are reminded that, "*First, the child—and other children too—must be protected from any further abuse. This must be done, whatever the cost*." —*Awake!*, January 22, 1985, page 8.

Concerning reporting of child abuse to the authorities, we believe that a victim or parent/guardian has the absolute right to do so. Thus, our elders have been given clear instruction in this regard in chapter 12 of the Elders' Handbook, page 131, paragraph 19, which states:

> *Child abuse is a crime. Never suggest to anyone that they should not report an allegation of child abuse to the police or other authorities. If you are asked, make it clear that whether to report the matter to the authorities or not is a personal decision for each individual to make and that there are no congregation sanctions for either decision. Elders will not criticize anyone who reports such an allegation to the authorities. If the victim wishes to make a report, it is his or her absolute right to do so. —Gal[atians]. 6:5.*

Congregation members are well aware of their absolute right to report child abuse to the authorities. For example, *The Watchtower*, August 1, 2005, page 14, stated:

> *In our time, rape is also a major crime with severe penalties. The victim has every right to report the matter to the police. In this way the proper authorities can punish the offender. And if the victim is a minor, the parents may want to initiate these actions.*

Also, the *Awake!* of October 8, 1993, in the Teaching Box at page 9, "If Your Child Is Abused," states:

> *Some legal experts advise reporting the abuse to the authorities as soon as possible. In some lands the legal system may require this.*

Further, paragraph 10 of the Policy Letter states:

> *Regardless of whether the law requires the elders to report an accusation to the authorities, steps need to be taken to protect children.*

As an organisation, we direct our elders to comply with legislation regarding mandatory reporting by clergy of allegations of child sexual abuse.

Contacting the Legal Department

Elders are directed to immediately contact the Legal Department when an allegation of child sexual abuse comes to their attention. Paragraph 4 of our Policy Letter states:

> *. . . when elders learn of an accusation of child abuse, two elders from their congregation should immediately call the Legal Department for legal advice.*

State and Territory mandatory reporting laws differ and are subject to change over time. Our elders may not be able to keep up-to-date with all of the developments in these laws. Therefore, elders are specifically instructed, upon hearing of any accusation, and before addressing the allegations with the alleged perpetrator, to contact the Legal Department.

The purpose of this direction is two-fold:

1. To ensure that congregation elders are fully apprised of and comply with the relevant and up-to-date reporting obligations applicable in the State or Territory in which they reside; and
2. Even in the absence of a mandatory reporting obligation, to ensure that elders convey to the victim (and/or their parent/guardian) that they have an absolute right to report the matter to the police and that elders should provide whatever support is needed in each instance.

We have instructed our Legal Department to specifically direct all elders who contact us that they are to advise the victim (and/or their parent/guardian) that they are completely free to report the matter to the police or other appropriate authority. Further, the Legal Department is instructed to then refer the call to the Service Department, which will provide Scriptural direction to the elders on how they can spiritually comfort and support the victim and his or her family. Elders are also reminded on how to handle the matter in harmony with Bible principles.

Elders Serve as Spiritual Shepherds of the Flock

Congregation elders are encouraged by the Bible to "*Shepherd the flock of God in their care.*" (1 Peter 5:2) This means that each elder would serve as a spiritual protection for members of the congregation or to " . . . *be like a hiding place from the wind, A place of concealment from the rain storm.*" (Isaiah 32:2) Likewise, the elders serve as a source of spiritual refreshment and encouragement as they "*speak consolingly to those who are depressed,* [and] *support the weak.*" (1 Thessalonians 5:14) This protective concern for each member of the congregation would especially extend to the protection of children from any type of sexual abuse.

Our Policy Letter dated October 1, 2012, paragraph 9 puts it this way:

> *As spiritual shepherds, elders should continue to make every effort to protect all in the congregation, especially children, from the unwholesome practices of the world. (Isa. 32:1, 2) One of these is child sexual abuse. We abhor the sexual abuse of children and will not protect any perpetrator of such repugnant acts from the consequences of his gross sin. (Rom. 12:9) Elders should take seriously their responsibility in this matter so that the congregations will be safeguarded from any valid accusation of neglect in protecting children from sexual abuse.*

Thus, when an allegation is made against a congregation member of the sin of child sexual abuse or any other gross violation of God's law comes to the attention of the body of elders, they are instructed to conduct a spiritual investigation according to Bible guidelines. To do so, they select two elders to look into the allegation. The two elders, with the consent of the parent(s)/guardian, would talk to the victim with the parent(s)/guardian present. If the victim is a very young minor, the two elders would talk just with the parent(s)/guardian alone, to ascertain the exact nature of the allegation. The elders would also privately talk to the alleged offender, without the victim being present. The elders would ask the accused questions about the allegations, and if necessary, seek information from any other witnesses.

If sufficient evidence is discovered by the two elders that establishes, under the rules of evidence set out in the Bible (as discussed under the next sub-heading), that the sin has been committed, the two elders make a verbal report to the body of elders. A decision is then made to form what Jehovah's Witnesses call a 'judicial committee'. The elders would contact the circuit overseer to designate an experienced elder from the circuit to serve as chairman of the committee. Two or more elders from the congregation would also be appointed to serve on this committee.

A judicial committee is a special shepherding arrangement to determine if the individual accused is guilty of a violation of God's law and also to determine whether or not he is repentant. If the offender is unrepentant he will be 'disfellowshipped' (equivalent to being excommunicated) from the congregation. Following a disfellowshipping, an announcement of the decision is made to the congregation informing them that the perpetrator is no longer one of Jehovah's Witnesses. A disfellowshipped person will be treated by all Jehovah's Witnesses in harmony with the admonition of the Apostle John: ". . . *do not receive him into your homes or say a greeting to him*." (2 John 10) Thus, in the case of child sexual abuse, disfellowshipping is clearly a strong measure toward protecting children.

Even if a sinner is determined by the judicial committee to be genuinely repentant, the committee will follow the Scriptural injunction to "*Reprove before all onlookers those who practice sin, as a warning to the rest*." (1 Timothy 5:20) This includes an announcement made to the congregation that the sinner "has been reproved". A few weeks after an announcement of reproof is made, a warning lecture about the wrongness of the conduct and how to avoid it will generally be presented to the entire congregation. In cases of child sexual abuse, this will serve as a warning to help parents protect their children from any potential danger. Therefore, whether the judicial committee disfellowships or reproves, congregation members are aided in their ability to protect children from child sexual abuse should a congregation member commit this sin.

Allegations for Which Scriptural Proof is Insufficient

As in the case of rules of evidence in any secular legal system, congregations also have rules of evidence. These are set out in the Bible. Bible standards require clear evidence for the elders to judge an errant one guilty of serious sin. That evidence may be in the form of an admission, the testimony of two or more witnesses, or compelling circumstantial evidence testified to by at least two witnesses.

The Policy Letter states this on page 3, paragraph 11:

> *However, in evaluating the evidence for internal congregational purposes, they must bear in mind the Bible's clear direction: "No single witness should rise up against a man respecting any error or any sin . . . At the mouth of two witnesses or at the mouth of three witnesses the matter should stand good." (Deut. 19:15) This requirement to consider testimony of two or three witnesses was confirmed by Jesus. (Matt. 18:16* ["On the testimony of two or three witnesses every matter may be established."]*) Thus, although they investigate every*

> *allegation, the elders are not authorized by the Scriptures to take congregational action unless there is a confession or there are two credible witnesses. . . .* [However,] *if two persons are witnesses to separate incidents of the same kind of wrongdoing, their testimony can be deemed sufficient to take judicial action. (1 Tim. 5:19, 24, 25)*

When the rules of evidence of the Bible do not authorise the elders to take further judicial action and the matter has to be held in abeyance, our Policy Letter further directs that "*the elders should remain vigilant with regard to the conduct and activity of the accused*".

How We Assist Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse

As well as supporting the efforts of parents/guardians in protecting their children, congregation elders are encouraged to be supportive of child and adult survivors of abuse. Ancillary to any mental health care or professional therapy that a survivor may seek, local congregation elders will provide spiritual comfort and pastoral care from the Scriptures. For example, elders are encouraged to "*Speak consolingly to those who are depressed*." (1 Thessalonians 5:14) Elders also need to be good listeners and to use the Bible to "*Be quick to listen, slow to speak*."—James 1:19.

Spiritual comfort provided by elders to a survivor is not viewed as a substitute for professional therapy or legal redress. Elders focus on reassuring the survivor that he or she is the innocent victim, that they are loved by God, and that they have the care and full support of the elders and the congregation.

As expressed in the *Awake!,* January 22, 1985, page 8:

> *[T]he child must be given a lot of love and emotional support. Parents must make it very clear that the little victim is not to blame. The crime and anything that happens as a result of it—even if a close relative goes to prison—is not her (or his) fault. But that reassurance will have to be given many times, so that the victim comes to believe it—and to believe that the parents believe it too!*

Extensive material is published by Jehovah's Witnesses to assist elders and members of the congregation on how best to provide such spiritual support.

Our Submission to the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry

Pursuant to Item 2 of the Schedule, we enclose a copy of our complete submission to the *Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into the Handling of Child Abuse by Religious and Other Organisations*.

Contact Information

Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia
12-14 Zouch Road, Denham Court, New South Wales 2565
Tel 02 9829 5600
Fax 02 9829 3616
Email InboxLGL.AU@jw.org
Website www.jw.org



WATCHTOWER
BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

PO BOX 280, INGLEBURN, NSW 1890 AUSTRALIA ABN 42 002 861 225

PHONE: (02) 9829 5600
FAX: (02) 9829 3616

SD:SSD December 9, 2014

The Body of Elders
Kalamunda - Perth WA (15636)

Re: BCH

Dear Brothers:

We received the attached letter dated November 26, from BCH concerning a plea for reinstatement. As you are aware, the allegations of child abuse against BCH by his daughters have been clearly documented and explained to him in the past.

Therefore, as previously advised, "Regardless of the time elapsed, there would be no need to consider BCH 's claims of repentance while he continues to deny clearly established offenses. ***Until he fully acknowledges to Jehovah and the judicial committee his sins of child abuse and of lying in connection with these offenses, it would be difficult for a committee or the victims to consider that he is repentant.*** In view of this, and in harmony with the *ks10* elder's textbook, on page 118, two members of the committee should acknowledge receipt of the request and briefly inform him."—See our letters to Kalamunda dated January 31, 2014, December 27, 2013, and February 12, 2013.

Before meeting with him, if we can be of assistance, please have two elders contact our Service Department to discuss the matter. However, rather than informing him that the branch office is responsible for the matter, we commend you for supporting the decision made by the original judicial committee, regardless of how BCH now chooses to recall events.

We take this opportunity to send our warmest Christian love and best wishes.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B.&T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

Attachment (1)

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

WATCHTOWER
BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

PO BOX 280, INGLEBURN, NSW 1890 AUSTRALIA ABN 42 002 861 225

PHONE: (02) 9829 5600
FAX: (02) 9829 3616

SD:SSD January 31, 2014

The Body of Elders
Kalamunda - Perth WA

Re: BCH

Dear Brothers:

After receiving correspondence dated January 20 from the committee handling REDACTED BCH s request for reinstatement, we are seeking the cooperation of the body of elders in carefully considering our response.

In replying to our letter of December 27, 2013, the committee writes, "Please do not think we are questioning the decision not to reinstate BCH the original committee, and the branch, obviously have 'credible evidence' that contradicts his side of the story, so your response was expected. However, as a committee we feel at a distinct disadvantage in trying to handle this case, simply because we do not have access to the 'credible evidence' to which you refer. Without knowing exactly what he is supposed to have done, we cannot tell if he is genuinely repentant of committing these offences. Obviously we are hearing only his side of the story, hence this letter: Is it possible for us to have access to the evidence you have, or even just a summary of it? This would enable us to challenge his claim that there cannot be any genuine evidence, as he did not commit any offence against his other daughters. . . . While this case is only a plea for reinstatement, if it had been an original judicial committee hearing, then (as discussed in *ks*10 7:2), the testimony of the witnesses would 'be given in the presence of the accused' or if necessary, would be 'submitted in writing and read to the accused.' Presumably this was done at the original judicial hearing, although he claims it wasn't and because we do not have any details of the evidence, we are not able to re-read the evidence to him. If it is not possible for us to be given a copy (or summary) of the evidence to read to him, would it be possible for his plea for reinstatement to be heard by the original committee, or ones who do have this evidence? This possibility has not been discussed with him, but in the past he has said he would be prepared to travel if necessary, if it is the only way to establish that he is repentant. . . . So, in summary, is it possible for us to have more details of the evidence against him or, if not, for those who do have the evidence to hear his plea for reinstatement? . . . We apologise for having to trouble you with this case again. However, it does distress us, (and the whole congregation in fact), to see someone, who for so many years has conducted himself faultlessly and appears to be totally repentant, yet is not accepted back into the congregation. We, as a committee, would also like to be convinced in our own mind that this is justified and hence our requests above."

As with the previous letters we received, the reasoning quoted above from the reinstatement committee is not in harmony with theocratic procedure. As noted in *ks10* 11:8, "The elders on the original committee may be *aware of important factors not apparent to others*, so it usually best to respect their judgement." (Italics ours) The local committee does not need to review the evidence with BCH, but simply trust their fellow elders who judged the case, and the branch office that reviewed the case. (Compare Prov. 18:17) Those who judged and reviewed the case established that the evidence of the witnesses was credible. On the other hand, your local committee is now hearing the testimony of one man, who is a self-confessed and convicted child molester with an extensive history of lying. Regardless of how convincing he may seem or how adamant his denial, the Biblical principle remains the same: "The witness of two men is true." (John

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

8:17; Deut. 19:15) In the same way that elders cannot judge a person guilty without proving there is a confession or two witnesses to the wrongdoing, they cannot make a judgement on the testimony of one witness—in this case BCH —to refute the credible evidence established by a judicial committee. Therefore, it is inconsistent to say he "appears to be totally repentant" while he continues to deny the proven sexual abuse of his daughters.

To help your body of elders reason on the implications of what is being suggested by the reinstatement committee in requesting a summary of the evidence, picture a situation where a disfellowshipped person moves to a number of different congregations. The original committee may have highly confidential information and testimony from victims. Those victims are assured that their testimony will be treated with confidentiality by the elders who handled the case. Anything less would circumvent our published theocratic procedure. For example, our letter to all bodies of elders dated September 7, 2011, regarding the sealed record of a judicial case, states, "If there is a need to open these files in the future, such as in connection with a plea for reinstatement, this should be done only by the elders who are assigned by the body to handle the matter." If successive congregations were made aware of confidential evidence and victim statements, perhaps a dozen or more elders could become aware of what the victims believed was confidential between them and the original committee. As sometimes explained to outside enquirers, "Confidential shepherding makes it easier for those who seek the elders' help to do so without worrying that what they say to the elders will be divulged later."—*ks10* 6:18.

Finally, the suggestion that BCH travel to Queensland to meet with a judicial committee in the congregation that disfellowshipped him seems impractical while he continues to deny the offences. If, as it appears, the intention is to establish his innocence, the original committee would be obliged to conclude that, "Regardless of the time elapsed, there would be no need to consider BCH 's claims of repentance while he continues to deny clearly established offences."—See our letters to Kalamunda dated February 12, 2012, and December 27, 2013.

Brothers, as you say, the congregation may "see someone, who for so many years has conducted himself faultlessly and appears to be totally repentant, yet is not accepted back into the congregation." However, these individuals are not aware of the facts. They do not see the ongoing physical and emotional suffering of the victims of sexual abuse by BCH , or his adamant denial of what the victims know to be true. That is why, as elders, we must be firm for righteousness in defence of the innocent victims of child sexual abuse.—1 Pet. 3:12.

So they are aware of our additional comments, we have copied in the body of elders in Loganholme Congregation, Queensland, and your circuit overseer.

We are confident in your willingness to cooperate with the direction provided. Be assured, Jehovah is aware of all the factors in this difficult case and will ultimately judge. (Isa. 33:22) In the meantime, we commend your efforts to "Shepherd the flock of God under your care." (1 Pet. 5:2) We also take this opportunity to send you our warm Christian love and greetings.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B.&T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

cc: Loganholme - Brisbane QLD
Jeffrey Riessen

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

SD

CA 28 JAN 2014

Kalamunda Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses

REDACTED

20th January 2014

Service Desk
Australia Branch
PO Box 280
Ingleburn. NSW 1890

Re: SD:SSG, December 27, 2013, BCH – Request for Reinstatement

Dear Brothers,

Thank you for your response to our recommendation of reinstatement of BCH.

Please do not think we are questioning the decision not to reinstate BCH – the original committee, and the Branch, obviously have "credible evidence" that contradicts his side of the story, so your response was expected. However, as a committee we feel at a distinct disadvantage in trying to handle this case, simply because we do not have access to the "credible evidence" to which you refer. Without knowing exactly what he is supposed to have done, we cannot tell if he is genuinely repentant of committing these offences. Obviously we are hearing only his side of the story, hence this letter: Is it possible for us to have access to the evidence you have, or even just a summary of it? This would enable us to challenge his claim that there cannot be any genuine evidence, as he did not commit any offence against his other daughters.

While this case is only a plea for reinstatement, if it had been an original judicial committee hearing, then, (as discussed in KS 7/2), the testimony of the witnesses would "be given in the presence of the accused" or if necessary, would be "submitted in writing and read to the accused". Presumably this was done at the original judicial hearing, although he claims it wasn't and because we do not have any details of the evidence, we are not able to 're-read the evidence' to him. If it is not possible for us to be given a copy (or summary) of the evidence to read to him, would it possible for his plea for reinstatement to be heard by the original committee, or ones who do have this evidence? This possibility has not been discussed with him, but in the past he has said he would be prepared to travel if necessary, if it is the only way to establish that he is repentant.

So, in summary, is it possible for us to have more details of the evidence against him or, if not, for those who do have the evidence to hear his plea for reinstatement?

We apologise for having to trouble you with this case again. However, it does distress us, (and the whole congregation in fact), to see someone, who for so many years has conducted himself faultlessly and appears to be totally repentant, yet is not accepted back into the congregation. We, as a committee, would also like to be convinced in our own mind that this is justified and hence our requests above.

We send our warm Christian love and thanks for your continuing support in these difficult situations.

Your brothers,

Allan Chesney | Phil Dent | James Wedlake

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SD:SSG December 27, 2013

The Body of Elders
Kalamunda - Perth WA

Re: BCH – plea for reinstatement

Dear Brothers:

We received your correspondence of December 15, 2013, regarding BCH 's further request for reinstatement. Although you have assigned a new committee to "allow for a fresh look at the situation," our previous direction would still apply.

Although he continues to deny or misrepresent the offences involving two of his daughters, you explain that the "current committee has observed his conduct over several years, considered all the evidence we currently have and listened to BCH 's personal testimony and we also conclude that he is truly repentant." However, as noted in your letter, the local elders do not have access to the "credible testimony" from three of his daughters as considered by the judicial committee. In addition, this case has been carefully reviewed by the branch office. In this regard, our letter of February 23, 2013, stated in part:

> At least three of BCH s daughters have provided clear and credible testimony of sexual abuse by their father. This includes the daughter who serves as a REDACTE Her testimony is balanced and reliable, as opposed to BCH 's long-established pattern of lying to elders and judicial committees.
>
> In addition to the conclusions drawn by various judicial committees, his deceitfulness is well known to responsible brothers here at the branch. As the matters have been clearly established judicially, and despite his repeated requests, there is no need for the local committee to review the original case with him. Rather, as the situation remains unchanged, we can only repeat the comments from our previous letters: ***Until he fully acknowledges to Jehovah and the judicial committee his sins of child abuse and of lying in connection with these offences, it would be difficult for a committee or the victims to consider that he was repentant***. In view of this, and in harmony with the *ks10* elders' textbook, on page 118, two members of the committee should acknowledge receipt of the request and briefly inform him.
>
> Despite his persuasiveness and the difficulty of the situation, we again advise extreme caution in recommending the reinstatement of a child abuser who has a proven history of dishonesty. If responding to future requests, two elders could briefly remind him that the only basis for reinstatement would be *genuine repentance* over the sexual abuse of his daughters and the associated lying.—*ks10* 11:4; 7:10; Prov. 6:16-19.

In summary, and regardless of the time elapsed, there would be no need to consider RE BCH 's claims of repentance while he continues to deny clearly established offences. We trust our observations are helpful. Please accept our warmest Christian love and greetings.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B.&T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

cc: Loganholme - Brisbane QLD
Jeffrey Riessen

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

SD

CA 24 DEC 2013

Kalamunda Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses

REDACTED

15th December 2013

Service Desk
Australia Branch
PO Box 280
Ingleburn NSW 1890

Re: BCH – Request for Reinstatement

Dear Brothers,

We have recently had a further application for reinstatement from BCH. On this occasion a different committee has reviewed the case, to allow for a fresh look at the situation.

We are aware that he has applied for reinstatement a number of times previously and on at least the last three occasions, the local committee involved recommended his reinstatement.

This current committee has observed his conduct over several years, considered all the evidence we currently have and listened to BCH 's personal testimony and we also conclude that he is truly repentant. We have considered very carefully your directions in the letters of September 19, 2011 and repeated in the letter of February 12, 2013 that *"At least three of* BCH *'s daughters have provided clear and credible testimony of sexual abuse by their father. This includes the daughter who serves as a* REDACTE *Her testimony is balanced and reliable, as opposed to* BCH *'s long established pattern of lying to elders and judicial committees."*

We do not of course have access to the "credible testimony" you refer to, including that of his daughter BCK REDACTED but the testimony of his other daughters, relates to events over 30 years ago and in the case of BCK , was when she was only 2-3 years old (over 40 years ago) and before BCH was in the truth. Apart from the incident with BCG , RE BCH continues to deny any indiscretion with any of his other daughters but, even if these other events did happen, they are over 30 years ago. How long can these accusations be held against him, when he shows every evidence that he has repented a long time ago?

As we look at this man now, we can see nothing against him – everything he does indicates he is conducting himself in an irreproachable manner and commensurate with someone who has truly repented over previous sins.

Your last three responses to his requests for reinstatement (9th Nov 2010, 19th Sept 2011 and 12th Feb 2013) have all said that *"Until he fully acknowledges to Jehovah and the judicial committee, his sins of child abuse and lying in connection with these offences, it would be difficult for a committee or the victims to consider that he was repentant".* BCH says that he has fully acknowledged these sins to Jehovah; he certainly has admitted molesting BCG to this committee and to the previous committees from this congregation also and clearly regrets everything, including any lying that happened. Yes he still consistently denies molesting any of his other daughters but we tend to believe him, as there would seem to be no point continuing to deny it, when he has admitted to the incident with BCG . His repeated requests for reinstatement indicate his obvious desire to be

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reinstated and he is aware that admitting to these other charges may enhance his chance of being reinstated, yet he continues to deny them. If he was to admit to these incidents now and did NOT actually do them as he claims, he would then be lying and effectively we would have forced him to do that.

We have observed his conduct over the last 3-4 years and everything he does and says indicates he is truly repentant of any sins he has committed, whether they be child molestation, lying or anything else.

We list the following as 'works that befit repentance' evident in BCH :

1. He regularly attends congregation meetings, doing so even if his wife happens to be sick.
2. He pre-studies diligently for the meetings and follows the program intently.
3. He takes his responsibilities as head of the house seriously.
4. His engagement with members of the congregation as a disfellowshipped person cannot be faulted.
5. He witnesses informally at every opportunity and has been responsible for others becoming interested in the truth.
6. He prays frequently, continually seeks forgiveness and feels that Jehovah listens to him.
7. There has been no interaction with children either inside or outside the congregation.
8. His wife has seen absolutely no evidence of him viewing pornography or seen any indiscretion on his part over the 20 or so years they have been married, whether physically, in printed matter or on the internet.
9. He does not have a complaining, justifying attitude, despite the time it is taking to prove that he is repentant and the repeated refusals of his reinstatement requests. He has obviously accepted the reproof he has received.
10. The congregation notices his exemplary conduct as a disfellowshipped person and are clearly puzzled that it is taking so long for him to be reinstated. Some have been overheard applying 2 Cor 2:5-8 to his situation and this concerns us also.

All the evidence says that anything that happened all those years ago is behind him and we cannot see anything else that he can do to prove that he is truly repentant over whatever actually happened. He admits to the incident with BCG and to any past occasions of lying and is sincerely repentant over these things. He could admit to molesting his other daughters too, just to try to get reinstated but he did that once before apparently and that resulted in the lying charges. Would we want to force him to do that again, if he was not guilty of these accusations against him?

Like the previous committee, on three occasions, this committee also have no doubt that he is truly repentant of child molestation and lying, so we request that you accept his genuine repentance and approve his plea for reinstatement.

Warm Christian love,

Your Brothers

F.A. Chesney | P. Dent | J. Wedlake

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

Service Committee Kalamunda Congregation

August 18th 2013

Dear brothers,

As you are aware, I was disfellowshipped ten years ago for "carrying on a lie". (Not for any immoral activity.)

I have not turned my back on Jehovah or stopped attending meetings. I have continued to preach the good news at every opportunity available under the circumstances.

Of course it has been a testing time. Remaining faithful to Jehovah during trials is very important to me, and my wife and I was happy to have the opportunity to prove Satan a liar, but from now on I will be more vigorously pursuing reinstatement as recommended by the faithful and discreet slave.

Have I repented and left my bad course ? - Yes. I have. As you know.
Have I produced works that befit repentance ? – Yes, I attend all the meetings, had many bible studies.
Am I now, or been practising anything wrong ? - No. I have a pure heart. My wife of 20 yrs, a faithful sister bears witness to this fact.

I wrote to BCK, as suggested, asking for her support in my reinstatement plea. You have a copy of the letter. That was 5 months ago. She has not answered. She may have written to someone at the service desk in Sydney. (The letter had my return address and it did not come back to me.)

There are no other matters involved. My conscience is perfectly clear. Jehovah will judge those making false accusations.
Jehovah is merciful, kind, loving and looks for reasons to forgive and reinstate.

I do repent about "carrying on a lie" The last thing I would ever want to do, is be like the father of the lie. I make no excuses. I did a stupid thing and feel really bad that in wanting to be reinstated, to serve Jehovah, I have wronged Jehovah, the congregation and myself.

As directed by the faithful and discreet slave, can you or the service desk please outline for me what else I can do, adjust, start or stop doing, in order to be reinstated. It seems my writing to BCK has not worked. But I do appreciate the suggestion. For the sake of Jehovahs name please help me to be reinstated.

BCH

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Sent 13/2/13.

WATCHTOWER
BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

PO BOX 280, INGLEBURN, NSW 1890 AUSTRALIA ABN 42 002 861 225

PHONE: (02) 9829 5600
FAX: (02) 9829 3616

SD February 12, 2013

The Body of Elders
Kalamunda - Perth WA

Dear Brothers:

After considering your letter of February 2, we are pleased to comment further on REDACTED's repeated requests for reinstatement.

You wrote: "We believe from the evidence available to us and of course we are only able to access one side of the picture, that he should be considered for reinstatement. He believes that he is not able to 'repent' of the lying charge against him, for following reasons: He denies any wrongdoing with his other daughters; Believes that any previous 'admissions' were given under duress or misunderstood; Did not make a plea-bargain when suggested by his solicitor. It would seem from our evidence that some of the charges against him are questionable, as they originate with his former wife who apparently has falsified evidence before at the time of her adultery."

Despite his current and persistent claims, we can only reiterate the clear direction provided in our letter of September 19, 2011, as follows:

> At least three of BCH's daughters have provided clear and credible testimony of sexual abuse by their father. This includes the daughter who serves REDACTED Her testimony is balanced and reliable, as opposed to BCH's long-established pattern of lying to elders and judicial committees.
>
> In addition to the conclusions drawn by various judicial committees, his deceitfulness is well known to responsible brothers here at the branch. As the matters have been clearly established judicially, and despite his repeated requests, there is no need for the local committee to review the original case with him. Rather, as the situation remains unchanged, we can only repeat the comments from our previous letters: ***Until he fully acknowledges to Jehovah and the judicial committee his sins of child abuse and of lying in connection with these offences, it would be difficult for a committee or the victims to consider that he was repentant***. In view of this, and in harmony with the *ks10* elders' textbook, on page 118, two members of the committee should acknowledge receipt of the request and briefly inform him.
>
> Despite his persuasiveness and the difficulty of the situation, we again advise extreme caution in recommending the reinstatement of a child abuser who has a proven history of dishonesty. If responding to future requests, two elders could briefly remind him that the only basis for reinstatement would be *genuine repentance* over the sexual abuse of his daughters and the associated lying.—*ks10* 11:4; 7:10; Prov. 6:16-19.

Thank you for ensuring that the judicial committee carefully reviews the above-mentioned details if considering further requests from BCH. And may Jehovah grant you the "wisdom from above" in handling such extremely serious matters. (Jas. 3:17) We take this opportunity to send you our warm Christian love and greetings.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B.&T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

c: Body of elders, Loganholme—QLD

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

SD

CA - 8 FEB 2013

Kalamunda Congregation
REDACTED

February 2nd 2013

Dear Brothers,

Please find enclosed a request by BCH for re-instatement.

We believe from the evidence available to us and of course we are only able to access one side of the picture, that he should be considered for reinstatement.

He believes that he is not able to "repent" of the lying charge against him, for following reasons;

- He denies any the wrongdoing with his other daughters.
- Believes that any previous 'admissions' were given under duress or misunderstood.
- Did not make a plea-bargain when suggested by his solicitor.

It would seem from our evidence that some of the charges against him are questionable, as they originate with his former wife who apparently has falsified evidence before at the time of her adultery.

We support what he says in his letter about his meeting attendance. BCH usually attends even when his wife is sick. He is a good example in conforming to his restrictions and faithfully attends all meetings. Due to this regularity some in the congregation are asking why he has not been reinstated. Of course the congregation is not aware of the facts of the case.

REDACTED is active in the congregation. She states that in all their 20 years of marriage he has never had inclinations for wrong doing as charged. His wife recently commented that he wishes to keep applying for reinstatement to demonstrate his desire to be a part of the congregation once again. Having spoken with him on numerous occasions and considering all the evidence available to us, having observed his diligence in conducting himself appropriately within the congregation over the last four years we feel that he definitely demonstrates works befitting repentance. On this basis we unanimously recommend his reinstatement. Of course we leave this in your hands and continue to pray for Jehovah's guidance in this matter.

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Your brothers

Ormonde Blakeney

Allan Chesney

Steve Johnson

Service Committee
Kalamunda Congregation
Kalamunda W.A.

Dear Brothers

17th December 2012

A. I want to make a plea for reinstatement. I love the truth, I love Jehovah. Also would like to point out that while disfellowshipped I have not faithlessly turned back or left Jehovah or his congregation. I have continued to witness about Jehovah informally at every opportunity. I still want to serve him. I have not carried on anything illicit nor have I done anything wrong but remained no part of the world. I have continued to attend all the meetings since being disfellowshipped. I have not stopped worshipping Jehovah or deviated from the path because it was incovenient or difficult. I have continued and am continuing to serve Jehovah as best as I can under the circumstances. It must be said that the strength to do so comes from Jehovah and the encouragement he provides through his organization.

B. I want to set right any matters from the past. I am willing to do whatever is necessary to come back into the congregation. Except admit to things I did not do.

C. The wrong that took place with BCG many years ago & for which I spent time in gaol, I sadly regret and apologise for my wrong.. I continued to pray for Jehovahs forgiveness after being disfellowshipped in 1989. Thankfully Jehovah is merciful and I was reinstated 20 years ago in Dec. 1992.

D. In the last ten years since I was disfellowshipped this time, it has been claimed that - I wronged other daughters, that I admitted to this, and then later denied it. And this has been used as a reason for keeping me from being reinstated. I continue to deny this because it never ever happened. If it had occurred, I would readily face up to it. It was a claim made by my ex wife to support her effort to get money from the state and she and BCG influenced the daughters to back her claim. **Why would I admit to something I knew was a scheme to blackmail me?**
I readily admit, the mothers financial situation was partly my fault because I was not able to always pay child support and owed her many thousands of dollars. It must be said though, I always paid child support and more, when I had work.

E. It is difficult to sort this out. I have prayed to Jehovah continually for guidance. Some of the facts are as follows.

1. **It has been said I have at some time admitted to these charges and later denied them.**

(a) The only time I can recall ever saying anything that could be called an admittance was when after an all night questioning, I said out of frustration, "whatever you say." I should not have said that, and I regret it.

(b)Before the trial, a plea bargain was offered by the prosecution. After prayerful consideration, I rejected it outright. Thinking of the reproach it would bring on Jehovahs name to accept it, even if there was a slim chance it would be kept out of the news if I accepted it. Then I heard that false information had been sent to the Society that the plea bargain was accepted by me, meaning an **admittance.** Then when the case went to trial the charges were **denied.** It must be remembered, the court case only concerned the one daughter as per paragraph 3 above.

(c) If this is the admittance/ denial that you are referring to, First – I dont think other daughters allegations were involved in the plea bargain. Second – at any rate **there was no plea bargain acceptance or admittance.** If the pre trial plea bargain/ admittance was accepted (admittance) There would have been no trial.
SO – I dont understand where you get admittance /denial. In the above scenario – it does not exist

I am sorry to have labored the point above, but my desire is to set things straight. If you would be so

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kind and pinpoint where you feel the admittance /denial is, that would be a great help.

2. **Other kids.** No charges were presented in court. Accusations were brought up briefly at the committal. They were not acted on by police or the prosecution. Please see No : 4 below. If they were true or could be substantiated, they would have been presented in court. As previously mentioned in par. D, the kids were coached by their mother to make up stories. Also I knew about this coaching before the case went to trial.

3. **<u>So why would I admit to anything that I first of all, knew to be fabricated, unsubstantiated as well as reportedly made up stories as found by a counselor ? Please see 4 below.</u>**

4. **My son informed me** about 2002. Before the court case
- **That** their mother took two of the daughters to a counsellor to try to get some verification of abuse.
-**That** the mother was very disappointed when the report said there was no evidence of such.
-**That** the mother had obviously coached them to make up stories. The prosecution no doubt interviewed the other daughters and must have found lack of credibility too. At any rate, whether they were *found out* to be lying or not, their stories are untrue.

5. BCK My wife RED about 23 years ago asked BCG had any thing ever happened to her. Her answer was she didnt know of anything, but would ask her mother. Her mother told her something happened when she was 3 or 4. BCG has no recollection of this and although she has repeated her mothers story, she cannot support it. It is untrue. Also I would like to point out that when BCG was 3-4 yrs old I was not even in the truth. Efforts from myself and RED to speak to BCG again have been refused because of my being disfellowshipped.

6. **Credibility under scrutiny.** It seems important to point out that the Mareeba elders presumed I lied right in the beginning when they disfellowshipped me in 1989. They thought I made up a story about my then wifes admission to me of adultery.

7. **Evidence that I was telling the truth** when separating in 1989 re : BCK 's Mother - I dont like to bring this up again. But it is necessary to prove that BCK 's mother hid the truth for years, and lied throughout this affair right from the beginning. She admitted to me that she committed adultery "No more than the fingers you can count on one hand." Her subsequent denial of those words, when questioned by the elders resulted in my being disfellowshipped in 1989, because I had left her, separating because of what she told me (The five adulteries)
I had forgiven her for one adultery already, that I found out about through work associates. She assured me it only happened once.

8. **The truth emerges, but it is disregarded by the elders.** A few years after I was disfellowshippd in 1989. Ron DeRooy, an elder from Mareeba Qld congregation, told me that my ex wife did finally admit to the elders that she said those exact words to me, but that **"Nothing can be done about it now."** I had sent him taped evidence a year or so earlier of her admitting what she said. He said he refused to listen to it. So it is proven I was telling the truth from the beginning about the reason I separated. Ron DeRooy disregarded the evidence I sent him and disregarded the proof when he heard it from her own mouth.

9. **At the (congregation) appeal** in 1989 other charges were added. I had a lot of trouble being reinstated because I kept trying to set things straight and be accurate about what happened and what did not happen. That the mother did indeed make that admission to me, and THAT is why I separated from her. Also tried to do the same with the other charges.

10. **Present disfellowshipping.** At some time since being disfellowshipped this time, somebody added the accusation as in par. 1. If you would be so kind as to let us know the identity of this accuser

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and who or where they got this information from, it would be a great help in getting this matter finally resolved. It may be a misunderstanding or misinterpretation on one or both sides.

11. **I readily admit** I had made wrong decisions. I acted rashly and impatiently and without thinking of the consequences of my actions. I sinned against Jehovah himself. Even though in his aboundant mercy he has forgiven me, it still tugs at my heart that I offended him.

12. Still, I **have never turned my back** on or left the table of Jehovah or his congregation. I made a dedication to Jehovah 38 years ago. I am sticking to Him. Yes, I made mistakes and spoke foolishly and this I truly regret.

13. **I dont feel wronged in any way.** I dont blame anyone else. If this is what Jehovah wanted, for the last ten years, I am happy to have had an opportunity to prove Satans accusations or part thereof, false. I am happy to have been disciplined. ...For whom Jehovah loves, he disciplines. I am at peace. "As humans we remember things and we will never let you live it down". As bro Sydlik said in a talk about Jehovahs loving kkindness. On the other hand Jehovah has wonderfully his mercy and loving kindness many times over. Without Jehovah and the provisions of the faithful and discreet slave he is using, I could never have kept going. Even though crippled, I will never leave him.

14. **I love righteousness.** When I see or experience righteousness, it makes my heart jump and I feel drawn to truly righteous ones. Because Jehovah and Jesus are the epitome of righteousness, they make my heart jump when I see their righteous loving and merciful acts. I am drawn to them and want to be like them.

15. **My wife** REDA who is an active sister in the congregation is happy to give a statement that in all our 20 years of marriage I have never shown any inclination to be attracted to any young girls or any other females. I am not like that and not that way inclined at all. Also that I am in no way interested in pornography or any stuff like that. I detest it.

16. **The authorities** in prison saw no danger from me in the direction of wrongdoing. I was appointed the Chef in the Officers mess. They released me early. I am not on the dangerous offender data base. They never wanted me to do a rehabilitation program on my release.

17. **I want to continue to serve Jehovah in the way he approves, <u>in the congregation.</u>** I want to put the past behind me. Even though I have always attend all the meetings, I have never in any way tried to influence others to take sides with me or spoken against Jehovahs organizational arrangement.

18. **There is no more worthwhile work** than helping people to know Jehovah and helping them to stay on the road to life. Jehovah has blessed my informal witnessing with many interested ones.
I truly regret the problems that I have caused for my family, the congregation and especially the reproach on Jehovahs name. I know I am a nobody in the congregation and that is fine. It is Jehovah and his name that matters. I accept full responsibility for my actions. I have acted foolishly. I have begged for Jehovahs forgiveness.

19. **The most important thing** in my life is the worship of Jehovah. Please let me know what else I need to do to be reinstated. I am happy to receive any counsel or admonition you have.

BCH

Kalamunda Congregation ,Western Australia

CONFIDENTIAL (KC)

WATCHTOWER
BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

BOX 280, INGLEBURN, NSW 1890 AUSTRALIA ABN 42 002 861 225

PHONE: (02) 9829 5600
FAX: (02) 9829 3616

CA 2 3 APR 2007

LLD May 31, 2006

The Judicial Committee
Loganholme Congregation of
Jehovah's Witnesses—Brisbane QLD

Dear Brothers:

We are responding to your letter dated May 6, 2006, regarding a plea for reinstatement by Mr. BCH Please accept our apologies for not responding to your correspondence earlier. You mention that BCH is nearing the end of his 5 year prison sentence and that he has made an application for reinstatement into the Christian congregation.

The judicial committee in the Camira Congregation has recommended the reinstatement of BCH Their letter indicates that they understand that he was disfellowshipped for lying. BCH was disfellowshipped twice. On the first occasion, he was disfellowshipped for child abuse and lying. On the second occasion he was disfellowshipped for lying.

BCH was serving as a ministerial servant at the time of his first disfellowshipping. He appealed the decision to disfellowship and denied any wrongdoing with his daughter, BCG However, during the appeal hearing, he finally confessed to the appeal committee, in the presence of the original committee, that he had sexually molested BCG on several occasions. When he was reinstated three years later, his family suffered much grief, as he was again denying any wrongdoing. In our letter to the Body of Elders in Mareeba, dated SD:SSB July 25, 1996, we commented on the fact that he had still not apologised for the sexual, physical, and mental abuse of his daughter BCG We asked if this factor had been taken into consideration when hearing his plea for reinstatement. Our letter stated: "If Brother BCH is genuinely repentant for his wrong conduct, he ought to do what he can to assist his family members who have suffered because of his wrong actions."

BCH was disfellowshipped again in 2003. We wrote to the elders at the time about his problem with telling the truth. During the committee hearing, further information came to light. Now, two other daughters were alleging that he had sexually abused them. Mr. BCH was charged by the police for the abuse of BCG The 2003 S-77 *Notification of Disfellowshipping or Disassociation* report states that when the matter went to court, he initially pleaded guilty but when the matter came to the attention of the congregation, he "changed his plea to not guilty to avoid being disfellowshipped." He again reverted to saying that his confession to abusing BCG had been made under duress.

After corresponding with the branch office, the judicial committee decided to disfellowship him on the charge of lying. The S-77 report stated that he "has continued to change his story depending on what he thinks is the most expedient at the time" and that on 3 separate occasions he denied the charges but later confessed. They wrote: "he has 3 daughters claiming he molested them and he continues to deny their claims and lies about it to the judicial committee and law courts to suit his own ends." Although the judicial committee were aware of further allegations of sexual abuse being raised by two other daughters, it appears that they did not make any statements to the elders at the time. Apparently, they received legal

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

advice not to disclose this information as it may have prejudiced the legal case against their father. However, we do now have a written statement by BCK one of his daughters who now serves as a missionary, in which she alleges in specific detail how her father sexually abused her. We are enclosing a copy of this statement for your information.

In summary, it is our understanding that the allegations of sexual abuse made against Mr. BCH have been clearly substantiated. The allegations made by BCG have been established repeatedly by Mr. BCH confession before many witnesses. It is extremely difficult to accept the retraction of a confession where a person has established a long history of lying to suit his own ends. Even if you were to accept his retraction, there are still two witnesses who have testified against him in writing or before a judicial committee. The Bible states that "at the mouth of two witnesses or at the mouth of three witnesses the matter should stand good." (Deuteronomy 19:15) Jesus reaffirmed this principle at Matthew 18:16 and John 8:17, 18. The apostle Paul also referred to it at 2 Corinthians 13:1 and 1 Timothy 5:19.

Mr. BCH states in his letter requesting reinstatement that "nothing is more important to me than doing Jehovah's will" and that he is "firmly resolved to maintain a good relationship with Jehovah." Is he now willing to admit to molesting his three daughters? Does he still insist that his daughters are lying and that the elders placed undue pressure on him? Has he demonstrated works of repentance commensurate with his dishonest past? Has he apologised to the victims of his abuse and acknowledged his wrongful conduct towards them and the painful suffering they have endured? The judicial committee will need to be convinced that he has clearly demonstrated works of Godly repentance and that he is not again 'changing his story depending on what he thinks is the most expedient.'—2 Corinthians 7:10-11.

We hope that these few comments are of assistance to you and take this opportunity to convey our best wishes and warm Christian love.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B. & T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

c. The Judicial Committee—Camira Congregation

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RECEIVED - 9 APR 2003
COPY: LEGAL DEPT.

NOTIFICATION OF DISFELLOWSHIPPING OR DISASSOCIATION

(Please type or print neatly in ink.)

Individual's full name: BCH (First) _____ (Middle) BCH (Last)

REDACTED (Date of birth) 11/03/03 (Date of announcement of disfellowshipping or disassociation)

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
SSA - 9 APR 2003

16709 (Congregation number) Loganholme (Congregation name) Brisbane (City) Qld (State)

Check if applicable: ☐ Elder ☐ Ministerial servant ☐ Regular pioneer (If so, include S-202 with this form.) ☐ Special pioneer
☐ Listed with the branch office as the person to receive literature and/or magazine shipments for the congregation. (If so, immediately submit an S-36 and/or M-206 form, showing a new name and address.)

1. ☐ **DISFELLOWSHIPPING.** Specify offence(s) for which disfellowshipped (See *ks91* 92-6.): Deliberate, malicious lying, bearing false witness

At any point, did the wrongdoer confess to the committee? Yes If not, what evidence substantiated the wrongdoing?

☐ **DISASSOCIATION.** Specify by what action(s) the person disassociated himself (such as resignation, non-neutral activity, failure to abstain from blood, or joining another religion): _____

Did the individual submit a *signed* letter of resignation? _____ If not, what evidence substantiated the disassociation?

2. **Give a detailed summation of the case, explaining exactly what took place.** (Use additional sheet *only* if more space is needed.) For a disfellowshipping, include the reasons why you judged the person to be unrepentant. For a disassociation, include what led to the person's decision, how he responded to efforts to assist him, and what convinced you that his position was adamant.

Decision based on Rev22:15. He pleaded guilty in a court of law to molesting 2 of his daughters. When this came to light, he changed his plea to not guilty to avoid being disfellowshipped. He has continued to change his story depending on what he thinks is the most expedient thing at the time. In at least 3 instances he has denied these charges and then confessed to them under duress. He has 3 daughters claiming he molested them and he continues to deny their claims and lies about it to judicial committees and law courts to suit he own ends.We explained that he needs to come to grips with the truth and reconcile things with his daughters to the best of his ability(Mth5:23,24)

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

3. **Did the individual appeal your decision?** No (If so, follow the instructions on the reverse side regarding appeals.)

4. **If individual was previously disfellowshipped or disassociated show:**
Person's full name at that time BCH Date of previous action _____
Date of previous reinstatement _____
Congregation that took the action Mareeba (Name of congregation) Qld (City) (State)

5. ***Each member of the appointed committee should sign this form and any additional sheets.*** (Type name below each signature.)

CHAIRMAN: Allan Pencheff — Albert Hatton — David Gee

☐ Reinstated
☐ Deceased Date: _____ (Day, Month, Year) _____ (Signature of secretary)

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

S-77-E Au 7/01 **CAREFULLY READ INSTRUCTIONS ON REVERSE SIDE** Printed in Australia

RECEIVED - 9 APR 2003

23/03/2002
Regarding Disfellowshipping of BCH

In November 2002 it came to light that BCH **had pleaded guilty in a public court of law to molesting two of his daughters. He had been disfellowshipped over 10 years earlier for molesting one of his daughters, amongst other things. As a second daughter was now involved Bro.Pencheff and Bro.Hatton met with** BCH **to explain that we needed to deal judicially with the accusation of the second daughter. At this meeting he denied he had molested either of them. We thought this to be a lie, as prior to making his court plea he had asked Bro.Gee what he should do and was told "to just tell the truth". As a result a judicial committee was formed composing of Bro.Pencheff, Bro.Hatton and Bro.Gee was formed to handle the matter as very serious and damaging lies had been involved. It came to light from another source that a third daughter had also claimed** BCH **had molested her. As we investigated** BCH **history we found that he had been carrying on lies about these matters for many years. For example, at the appeal committee that disfellowshipped him he at first denied his daughters accusation but then confessed. At a re-instatement attempt he made he hid these facts. When they probed and the facts came to light he again denied the molestation claims. However when he realised that by denying things he was not getting anywhere, he then confessed to them he had molested one of his daughters. At that time he was not re-instated because of his deception. Now, at our judicial hearing he told us he had changed his plea of guilty to not guilty to the law court. He admitted that this was as a result of his meeting with Bro.Pencheff and Bro.Hatton where it had been explained to him that if he pleaded guilty in court and not guilty to the congregation he would be disfellowshipped . He keeps changing his story to what appears to him to be the most expedient thing at the time.**
He has three daughters claiming he molested them and he denies their claims and lies about whatever happened to bring about what he thinks will be the best outcome for him at the time.
Based on Rev22:15 ("Those liking and carrying on a lie will be excluded from Gods kingdom") we had no choice but to disfellowship him.
We explained that he needs to come to grips with the truth and reconcile things to the best of his ability with his daughters in the spirit of Matt5:23,24.
He did not appeal this decision.

Bro.Allan Pencheff **Bro.Albert Hatton** **Bro. David Gee**

A.A. Hatton

CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM

To: **Service Department**

From: Legal — V. Toole

Date: January 23, 2003

Subject: BCH **- Loganholme Congregation - Qld**

The attached letter from the judicial committee handling the present case involving Brother BCH appears to indicate that they have become slightly lost with regard to the primary issue involved here which is his lying. Set out below are the facts which clearly establish that Brother BCH is either lying now or has lied in the past.

Brother BCH refused to admit to the original judicial committee in Mareeba Congregation that he molested his daughter. However, the committee made the decision to disfellowship him on other grounds. He appealed that decision and a committee made up of Brothers Jim Bennett, Donald Wilson and Joseph Maraziz handled the appeal. The original committee's decision was upheld and added further grounds to the reasons for his disfellowshipping. The appeal committee comments as follows in their report:

> "Fresh evidence under questioning of witnesses and appellant produced further more serious reasons for disfellowshipping. Namely 1. Porneia, in the form of gross sexual acts against his teenage daughter (five of six times) during the later part of last year. Under pressure of witnesses he confessed to this charge."

BCH daughters, BCG and BCL have recently reported their father to the police for sexually molesting them when they were growing up. We were advised that BCH was going to plead guilty to several of these charges. However, the brothers in Loganholme Congregation handling his case have advised that he is now going to plead not guilty to all the charges. The committee comments: "He still maintained that he has never molested any of this daughters. He claimed that he admitted to molesting his daughter BCG under duress but that it was not true."

In the present court proceedings, the elders involved in the original committees have been required to make statements to the police. While their memories of the specific events are somewhat dulled due to the passage of time, they overwhelmingly confirm that Brother BCH admitted molesting his daughter at the appeal hearing. Relevant comments from their statements on this point are as follows:

> Brother Jim Bennett: "Towards the end of the meeting, I remember one of his daughters made a statement in BCH presence concerning his conduct towards her. I can not recall which daughter it was. I can remember two things that she said that he father had done. One was that he would come into the bathroom whilst they were showering and that he had interfered with her in someway. I am unable to recall the exact words that she used or the extent of how he had interfered with her. When BCH was confronted by the statement made by his daughter BC admitted that they were true."
>
> Donald Wilson: "At some point during the course of our meeting with BCH I remember that his daughter, BCG raised an allegation that her father had gone into her bedroom and sexually interfered with her by touching or fondling her inappropriately. While I do not recall the details of what she alleged that he did to her, or how many times it had occurred, but I do recall that it involved touching and fondling her inappropriately in a sexual way. Initially BCH denied his daughter's allegation, but I recall that he finally admitted that he had done what BCG had alleged."
>
> Joseph Miraziz: "At a certain point, BCG and BCK came in and I recall that BCG made some very serious accusations against her father in connection with him sexually interfering with her. As I recall, she claimed that her father had, on a number of occasions, entered her bedroom during the night

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

and sexually abused her by fondling and massaging her private parts. Both BCG and BCK were extremely distressed during this discussion.

"I recall that, during the discussion, BCH acted in an extremely menacing way towards his daughters, even standing up, raising his voice and pointing his finger at them. I recall that on several occasions we had to ask him to his cease his actions and sit down. I found this whole situation very stressing emotionally and at one point I excused myself and went outside for a little while. After a short while I returned.

"Towards the conclusion of the meeting, I said to BCH words to the effect: "Based on the evidence of the girls, it has been established beyond doubt that you did molest them." He replied: "Yes, yes, yes, ok, get on with it." I was completely satisfied that his reply was an admission that he had done the things the girls had accused him of doing."

Two brothers from the original committee were present during the appeal and they comment as follows in their statements to the police:

Ronald De Rooy: "In middle of 1989, two other elders in the Mareeba Congregation, Dino Ali and Kevin Bowditch, and I were handling a serious matter involving BCH that had nothing to do with the matter involving his daughter, BCG

"During one of the meetings that we had with BCH his daughter BCG made some very serious accusations against her father involving sexual matters. She said using words to the effect: 'While I was in the shower, you were looking at me through the window.' While I cannot remember exactly what she also accused her father of coming into her bedroom at night on several occasions and improperly interfering with her in a sexual way.

BCH denied BCG accusation with words to the effect: 'You are making these things up. It's all in your mind. Any of my dealings with you about these matters was my teaching you about sex and marriage. It was all part of your training.'

"We found it impossible to establish whether or not BCH had sexually interfered with his daughter BCG on what was presented to us.

"However, we decided to disfellowship BCH from the congregation for his actions that had nothing to do with his daughter BCG accusations. He then appealed our decision and shortly thereafter three different elders considered the matter.

"During the appeal meeting BCG again put the accusations mentioned in paragraph 4. [mentioned above] to her father. I also remember that BCG was really upset and distraught during this meeting.

"When confronted with BCG accusations on this occasion, he continued to deny that he had done the things that she was claiming he had done and then he confessed with words to the effect: "Yes, what BCG said happened, happened."

Kevin Bowditch: "I was present when the elders heard BCH appeal. BCG was also present for part of that hearing and she again put her allegation concerning her father's conduct to him with words to the effect: 'I was laying in bed when you came into my bedroom with only a towel around you. You started speaking to me and gradually got yourself into a position where you started to touch my breasts and genitals.'

"On this occasion, when confronted by BCG accusation, he admitted that he had done what she was accusing him of doing using words to the effect: "Yes, I did do that." I cannot remember the exact words that he used, but BCH then apologised to his daughter BCG for what he had done to her."

In their signed Report dated June 15, 1990, the committee made up of Brother Rodney Spinks, Arthur Johnson and Monty Baker appointed to hear BCH application for reinstatement commented as follows:

"Original committees defined sins: 1. Loose conduct, 2. Lying, 3. Pornea, 4. Malicious slander [last 2 by appeal comm..]

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"Differed substantially from BCH account. He denied incest and claimed firstly that it was a lie and that he never confessed then after a while stated that he had confessed under pressure.

"We felt that he has constantly lied and been evasive."

In a signed letter dated March 14, 1992 to the judicial committee in Mareeba from the committee in Beenleigh Congregation hearing BCH s plea for reinstatement, Brothers Monty Baker, Michael Clarkeson and Beck state:

"We know you brothers in Mareeba are fully aware of the pattern of deceit that we speak of, but for the benefit of the brothers in St. George, who will also receive a copy of this letter we would like to give a synopsis of this pattern as follow:

"1. Upon his arrival, in his first appeal he stated the grounds for his disfellowshipping were 'Going against theocratic order' only.

"As a result of discussions with Brother Jim Bennett, who made a special point of seeing us whilst he was in Brisbane, and as you know served on the committee that heard BCH appeal against his disfellowshipping, we discovered there were more grounds for his disfellowshipping that he did not disclose to us. As follows:

...

"3. Porniea. With his daughters, to which he had vehemently denied, until recently when he conceded he interfered with one of them on a couple of occasions. Nevertheless he still claims that he has only interfered with one of them, whereas your recent letter states clearly that both of his daughters were sexually molested and that BCH admitted it in your hearings with him.

"With all of the above information, while we are not trying to 'rake over old coals' as it were but we are concerned about the way he still seems to be holding to a pattern of lying."

In conclusion, if BCH claims that he did not sexually molest his daughter, BCG then on the basis of what he had admitted to before numerous witnesses he is guilty of lying. If he claims that he did not molest his daughter even though he has admitted to doing so before the appeal committee and the other elders mentioned above, then he is saying that he lied to the them. Either way, he is guilty of lying. The committee in considering this matter does not have to concern itself about whether or not BCH did in fact molest his daughter. That has already been established by the appeal committee. The primary issue before the present committee is the charge of lying.

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WATCHTOWER
BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA
BOX 280, INGLEBURN, NSW 1890 AUSTRALIA ABN 42 002 861 225
PHONE: (02) 9829 5600
FAX: (02) 9829 3616

LLC November 1, 2002

The Presiding Overseer
Loganholme Congregation of
Jehovah's Witnesses — Brisbane QLD
REDACTED

Dear Brother Harrop:

We are writing to you in connection with Brother BCH who we understand associates with the Loganholme Congregation. Brother BCH was disfellowshipped in the Mareeba Congregation in 1989 and reinstated in 1992 in one of the Brisbane congregations.

You may be aware that Brother BCH has recently been prosecuted for sexually interfering with two of his daughters some years ago. We have been informed that it is a matter of public record that Brother BCH has pleaded guilty to four charges — three sexual assaults on his daughter BCG and an indecent dealing with his daughter BCL who is no longer involved in the truth. We are advised that he is due to be sentenced on January 24, 2003.

In 1989 when the judicial committee in Mareeba decided to disfellowship him, Brother BCH appealed the decision and an appeal committee heard the case. The appeal committee upheld the original decision and additional grounds for disfellowshipping were added at the hearing when he admitted to sexually abusing his daughter, BCG In their report about the case, the appeal committee made the following comment about Brother BCH behaviour: "it must be noted that during the appeal hearing the appellant's attitude … was in fact obstructive, devious and lying, denying earlier admissions."

Since he was disfellowshipped, Brother BCH has consistently denied that he sexually abused his daughter even though he admitted to doing so at the appeal. For example, Brother Ron de Roy, who was a member of the original committee and who heard him admit to this sin during the appeal, has told us that Brother BCH telephoned him some time after the appeal and told him that he had only admitted to this sin so that the meeting would come to an end. The committee in the Beenleigh East Congregation hearing his plea for reinstatement wrote to the Society in a letter dated August 16, 1991:

> "Of the above grounds for which he was disfellowshipped, at this point in time, he still refuses to acknowledge the porneia he committed with his daughters, … BCH is determined to maintain his innocence of the charge of porneia."

We also understand that throughout the present court proceedings up until his recent guilty plea, Brother BCH has maintained that he did not molest his daughter. We are advised that he claimed he was not disfellowshipped for molesting his daughter, but for other acts of impropriety. Brother BCH children also confirm that he has continued to deny that he molested BCG He has said to them that he is innocent of the charges for which he was disfellowshipped and on many occasions has said of his abuse of BCG "it's all in her

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head." Notwithstanding these actions, as already mentioned, we are advised that he has now pleaded guilty to three counts of sexually abusing BCG

We do not want you to follow-up the matter involving BCG since it has already been handled to the extent possible at this stage. We simply provide it as background information to assist you to be aware of the kind of actions that Brother BCH has exhibited in connection with past wrongdoing of the kind that we now want you to handle.

As mentioned already, Brother BCH has pleaded guilty to sexually abusing another of his daughters, BCL We understand that the incident in question occurred in 1988 when BCL was approximately 6 years of age. She claims that Brother BCH told her to go and have a shower which she thought at the time was a bit strange. When she got into the shower, he got undressed and got into the shower with her. He then took her hand and placed it on his penis. He then started to wash her vaginal area and digitally penetrated her. This is the first that we have heard of this accusation which, we understand, has never been handled. We therefore want the elders in your congregation to handle the matter and we suggest that you proceed to do so in the following manner.

Two elders should be appointed to approach Brother BCH and inform him that they are aware that he has been charged by two of his daughters, BCG and BCL of sexually molesting them. The elders should also inform him that they are aware that it is a matter of public record that he has entered a plea of guilty to three charges of sexual assault in relation to BCG and to one charge of sexually interfering with BCL when she was approximately 6 years of age. He should be asked to explain his actions. We would like to think that he would be forthcoming with sufficient information to enable the matter to be handled judicially. If he is not prepared to cooperate and provide the elders with an admission of his wrongdoing, even though he has already done so on the public record, he should be told that when he is sentenced on January 24, 2003, without any further contact with the elders, he will likely be disfellowshipped for sexually abusing BCL as a child as well as for being dishonest.

Once the two brothers have met with Brother BCH , we would like them to contact the legal department before proceeding any further with the case. If you have any questions concerning this matter, or need any additional information before approaching Brother BCH please do not hesitate to contact us.

Please accept our warm Christian love and best wishes as you handle this important matter.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B. & T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

[redacted]-OCT-02 11:15 REDACTED BCK BCK P.01

ONE OF SEVEN

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

ATTENTION: Vin Toole

BCK

October 23 2002

Dear Brothers,

In my letter dated October 13 2002, I spoke about how my father has abused my two sisters BCG and BCL BCL has spoken to me about what my father did to her and because this matter has not been dealt with - I feel I have an obligation to let you know what she told me. She mentioned that he used to make her take a shower with him and forced her wash his private parts for him. She is thoroughly disgusted with him and his behavior. I am convinced that if these things had not of happened to my sister BCL she would not be in the position she is in today, being an unwed mother of three.

Also in my letter dated October 13 2002, I spoke of an incident that happened to myself in 1978, at an International Convention here in Sydney. We were camping in the show grounds. I have made a statement to the police concerning this incident. This matter also has never been dealt with by the brothers - that I am aware of, and it was of a similar nature to what happened to BCL If you would like a copy of this police statement - please let me know.

I hope this information will be of assistance in keeping Jehovah's congregations clean and protected from destructive and damaging influences.

Yours sincerely,

BCK

CONFIDENTIAL

[redacted]

MAREEBA CONGREGATION.
P.O. Box 387
MAREEBA
4880.
19/12/95

Dear Bro,

A sister in our congregation has rang up Bethel and was encouraged to write a letter which is enclosed

Your fellow Worker
Bro Ron de Kerz.

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

WATCHTOWER
BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

PHONE: (02) 605 1099

BOX 280, INGLEBURN, N.S.W. 2565 AUSTRALIA A.C.N. 002 861 225 FAX: (02) 829 3616

SD:SSA September 5, 1991

The Body of Elders
Beenleigh East Congregation
of Jehovah's Witnesses — Qld

Dear Brothers:

Thank you very much for the letter regarding Mr. BCH Your comments have been most helpful. He has again written to us and we will enclose a copy of his latest letter.

From what you say, he still has a problem telling the truth. You mention he denied that he had "slept along side the sister. The very next morning he rang Brother Baker's home and confessed to sleeping along side her." He needs to reinforce in his heart the importance of following Jehovah's standard of truthfulness and hatred of lying. You indicate his health problems may effect his memory. If this is the case, this should be taken into consideration.

Regarding the offenses with his teenage daugther, we understand you have information from the elders in Mareeba on this matter. Mr. BCH says he is willing to go to Mareeba to meet with the elders there if need be. This would be a personal decision. However, if he did choose to visit Mareeba, no doubt the brothers could clarify this point.

Caution is required when a disfellowshipped person continues to mislead the elders. Page 182 of the publication Pay Attention to Yourselves and To All the Flock indicates that elders considering pleas for reinstatement should look at "the overall pattern whether the person is repentant over wrongdoing of which he really was guilty or for which clear evidence existed." Even though a disfellowshipped person may deny certain matters raised during the original judicial committee hearing for which there was no positive proof, if his overall pattern indicates that he has Jehovah's forgiveness and is genuinely repentant, consideration can be given to reinstatement. A very fine discussion of godly repentance is found in Insight On The Scriptures (Volume 2) under the heading "Repentance."

Be assured of our appreciation for the time and effort you spend in caring for these important matters. We pray Jehovah may bless your desire to carry out his will. If you believe we can be of further assistance, do not hesitate to correspond with us. We will send a copy of our letter to the elders in Mareeba so they are aware of our thinking. Please accept our warm Christian love and greetings.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B.&T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

cc: The Body of Elders
Mareeba Cong. — Qld
Encl.

CONFIDENTIAL(RC)

SD 7 AUG 1989

OUR BROTHER HAD SEPPARATED FROM HIS WIFE ON DUBIOUS GROUNDS FOR
A VERY SHORT TIME AND STARTED TO DATE A SISTER [redacted] (HAS BEEN REPROVED)
WHO ALSO HAD VERY RECENTLY SEPARATED FROM HER HUSBAND.
THIS ALL OCCURED ABOUT THE SAME TIME.
OUR BROTHER WAS STRONGLY COUNCELLED AND SHOWN WT. ARTICLES ON HIS
WRONG COURSE.
THIS WAS DISREGARDED AND HE CONTINUED UNASHAMEDLY AND BLATENTLY
TO FOLLOW THE COURSE HE WAS ON.
AT ANOTHER MEETING AGAIN HE WAS GIVEN STRONG COUNCIL BUT CONTINUED
ON HIS COURSE.
ANOTHER BODY OF ELDERS BECAME INVOLVED AND THEY LIKEWISE GAVE THE
SAME STRONG COUNCIL. THIS TOO WAS DISREGARDED.
HIS ATTITUDE WAS HE FELT THE COUNSEL DID NOT APPLY AND WHAT RIGHT
DID THE ELDERS HAVE GIVING THE COUNSEL
FELT IT WAS WRONG IN HIS CASE
HE CONTINUED TO SHOW A BLATENT DISREGARD FOR AUTHORITY AND BECAUSE
THERE WERE NO WORKS AT ALL TO SHOW REPENTANCE EVEN AFTER BEING
SHOWN THE WT. 68 P. 255 WHIS FITTED HIS CASE(HE FELT IT MAY BE OLD
AND THERE MAY BE MORE RECENT MARERIAL, THAT THIS WAS IRRELIVANT)
AS A JUDICIAL COMM. BECAUSE OF HIS BLATENT DISREGARD FOR AUTHORITY
WHICH AMOUNTED TO LOOSE CONDUCT THE DECISION WAS TO DISFELLOWSHIP.
A FURTHER REASONTO COME TO THIS DECISION WAS THAT ON SEVERAL OCASSIONS
THE BROTHER HAD LIED.
WITTNESSES WERE PRESENTED BUT THE BR. EITHER DENIED WHAT HE HAD
SAID OR HAD FORGOTTENW WHAT HE HAD SAID.
SO ON THE TWO GROUNDS 1.LOOSE CONDUCT AND 2. LYING THE BR. WAS DISFELLOWSHIPED

KEVIN BOWDITCH
DINO ALI
RON de ROOY (CHAIRMAN) A.R. de Rooy

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

SD 7 AUG 1989

Mareeba Kingdom Hall
July 23. 1989

Concerning BCH Appeal

Appeal Committee... J.Bennett (Chairman)
D.Wilson
J.Maraziz

Charge. Loose Conduct and Lying.
Reason for appeal.. Repentance AFTER disfellowship action.

After exhaustive hearing of all evidence it was apparent that the original committee had sound scriptual grounds for their action.

The basis for the appeal according to the appellant's letter was repentance after the committee had anounced their decision. On the basis of this letter the appeal committee must uphold the decision of the original committee. However it must be noted that during the appeal hearing the appellant's attitude demonstrated no such repentance. It was in fact obstructive, devious and lying, denying earlier admisions.

Fresh evidence under questioning of witnesses and appellant produced further more serious reasons for disfellowshiping. Namely 1. Porneia, in the form of gross sexual acts against his teenage daughter (five or six times) during the latter part of last year. Under pressure of witnesses he confessed to this charge. 2. Malicious slander against his wife, claiming he had caught VD from her and that she was guilty of numerious acts of adultry. Confronted with witnesses he admitted to the truth of the charge, and that he had no evidence to back up his statements.

Very full information should be kept on the congregation files due to threats of legal action by both the appellant and his wife.

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J.Bennett Chairman. D.Wilson. J.Miraziz.

DO NOT DESTROY CA 18 JAN 1993

NOTIFICATION OF DISFELLOWSHIPPING OR DISASSOCIATION

(Please use typewriter or neatly print all information in ink.)

MAREEBA	MAREEBA	QLD	12781
Name of congregation	City	State	Congregation Number

BCH

	12.7.89	13-11-92
Name of disfellowshipped or disassociated person	Date disfellowshipped or disassociated	Date reinstated

Check if applicable: ☐ Elder ☑ Ministerial servant ☐ Regular or special pioneer ☐ Listed with the Society as person to receive literature or magazine shipments to congregation (If so, new name and address should be sent to the Society.)

Offense(s) for which disfellowshipped (if disassociated give reason):

LOOSE CONDUCT & LYING

Please give a brief but complete review of the matter: (1) What led up to the wrongdoing? (2) Was the individual previously counselled or reproved? (3) What factors, including lack of works befitting repentance, convinced you that this action was necessary? (See Point #3 on other side.) (Use additional sheet if more space is needed.)

What evidence established the wrongdoing, such as confession, two or more witnesses?

Elders who served on the committee sign below. (Print or type names below the line. Sign on the line.) (If disassociation, committee selected to handle the matter should sign.) (Indicate who served as chairman.)

* _____ * _____

KEVIN BOWDITCH * A. Rae Rooy DINO ALI

RON de ROOY (CHAIRMAN)

Did individual appeal your decision? YES If so, this form should be sent to the Society by the appeal committee with their letter. If the original committee has further observations they should put them in writing and give them to the appeal committee to send to the Society.

If individual was previously disfellowshipped or disassociated show: 1. Date _____

2. Name at that time _____ 3. Date reinstated _____

NOTE: Send *original* copy of this form to the Society along with S-79a and S-79b cards you have filled out. Retain a copy of this form for the congregation's confidential files. After the Society receives these forms, the S-79b card will be returned to you. If person is reinstated (or dies) send the S-79b card to the Society, and on your copy of this S-77 form record the date of reinstatement (or death).

(SEE OVER)

S-77 12/87

CONFIDENTIAL (ROY)

REDACTED
WA , 6210
6th January, 2015

Service Desk
Watchtower Society,
Box 280 Ingleburn,
NSW, 1890

Re: - Deletion of Bro William Neil

Dear Brothers,

This is a brief summary of events leading to the deletion of Bro. Neil from serving as an elder in the Narrogin, WA, Congregation around 1993 whilst I was serving there.

Bro. Bill had served from about 1975 and had a family of a wife and six children, four girls and two boys. Sister BCB (nee REDACT) grew up on a farm some 45 minutes REDACTED Her mother, BCD, was a faithful witness while her father was an unbeliever.

BCB stayed with Bro Neil's family on numerous occasions as she was growing up as some of his daughters were a similar age. This became more frequent when she began working in town as it meant she was saved the long drive home after work. While staying with them, she was always treated as part of the family, sitting in on the family study and meeting preparation and attending meetings. It no doubt helped her to make the truth her own and dedicate her life to Jehovah.

When BCB raised the allegations against Brother Bill concerning being touched inappropriately I viewed it very seriously. I listened to both to try to ascertain the facts and our Circuit Overseer at the time, Brother Doug Jackson, also did the same during his visit. Sadly, it became a matter of her word against his as there were no witnesses to the alleged events. BCB was an attractive young sister and often got around the house in her nightwear as was the custom of the other children. When it was time for them to go to bed, Bill would kiss her good night as he did with his daughters.

The situation raised doubts in my mind about Brother Bill's freeness of speech and this was compounded by the way he dealt with a couple of other situations in the congregation at the time. His comments and actions towards these others who were having problems of a different kind showed a lack of loving concern and willingness to help.

When I discussed these matters with the Circuit Overseer, he agreed with my recommendation that Brother Bill no longer qualified as an elder.

Please feel free to contact me if I can be of further assistance,

Your Brother,

Max Horley

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

WATCHTOWER
BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

PO BOX 280, INGLEBURN, NSW 1890 AUSTRALIA ABN 42 002 861 225 PHONE: (02) 9829 5600 FAX: (02) 9829 3616

SD:SSD January 1, 2015

The Body of Elders
REDACT Perth WA (15677)

Re: BCB

Dear Brothers:

Thank you for your letter dated December 17 relating to BCB We appreciate your keeping us informed by both the written and telephone reports. In acknowledging receipt of your letter, we express our appreciation for the ongoing support you have provided as loving shepherds to our dear sister.

Moreover, while we are not suggesting further action at this stage, please keep us informed of any developments. We pray Jehovah continues to bless your efforts to shepherd his flock, and we send our very warm Christian love and greetings.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B.&T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

LLF 2 3 DEC 2014

REDACTED Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses
REDACTED

17 December 2014

CONFIDENTIAL

Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia

PO Box 280

INGLEBURN NSW 1890

Dear Brothers,

ACCUSATION OF CHILD ABUSE

We refer to the attached handwritten letter received from BCB of REDACTED REDACTED on 10 December 2014 in relation to the above matter.

The following background information is provided:

Background

1) BCB is of good standing; however, she has struggled spiritually from time to time with meeting attendance and field service. She is 47 years old having been born in 1967.
2) The alleged perpetrator is Brother Bill Neil, now deceased, who was serving as an elder in the Narrogin Congregation in Western Australia. His wife's name is Bronwyn Neil. The allegation of child abuse is reported to have occurred from 1982 to 1986 inclusive, when BCB was 15 to 19 years of age. The accusation of child abuse was apparently reported to the Body of Elders in the Narrogin Congregation by BCB in 1989 when she was 22 years of age. We are advised that the matter was handled at the time by Brother Max Horley and the Circuit Overseer.

Involvement of the REDAC Congregation

3) Brothers Joe Bello and David Wood undertook a shepherding visit to BCB approximately one year ago. At this time, BCB outlined the alleged child abuse that had previously occurred. This was for the purpose of simply advising the brothers in the event of anything arising in the future. No further action was requested by BCB and, as the matter had been dealt with many years ago, the brothers offered comfort from the Scriptures.

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4) Following this visit, Brother Bello recalls sending a letter to the Watchtower B. & T. Society and receiving a response, possibly by email. However, no record has been kept of this letter and response.
5) Sometime after the events described in 3) and 4) above, BCB handed Brother Joe Bello a typewritten letter giving further information of the accusation of child abuse. A further couple of weeks after receipt of the first letter, a second letter was handed to Brother Bello giving additional details of the accusation. Following receipt of the second letter, Brother Bello destroyed the first letter as it had been superseded. Brother Bello was then approached by BCB 's husband, BCC who requested that the second letter be handed back to them as it was the only copy. The second letter was duly given back to BCC
6) In about July 2014, Brother Bello paid a friendly visit to both BCC and BCB at their home. It was only at this time that BCB made mention that she was considering reporting the matter to the Royal Commission on Child Abuse and seeking compensation. Brother Bello offered comfort and encouragement from the Scriptures and *did not* suggest to BCB that she should not report the allegation of child abuse to the authorities. No further action was taken on the matter at this time.
7) During the recent Circuit Overseer's visit by Brother Warren Reynolds to the REDACTED Congregation from 4 to 9 November 2014, both Brother Reynolds and Brother David Wood visited BCB at her home expecting to discuss her concerns in relation to the allegation of child abuse; however, BCB did not take the opportunity to raise the matter. As a result, the accusation of child abuse was not discussed.
8) Subsequent to this, the attached handwritten letter was given to Brother David Wood by BCB 's mother, BCD , at a congregation meeting on Wednesday, 10 December 2014. It should be noted that the letter is not signed and is not dated, but is reported to have been written by BCB Furthermore, BCD now aged 79, apparently only found out about the accusation of child abuse a week prior to handing over the letter and had no previous knowledge.
9) Brothers David Wood and Robert Boardman then telephoned the Watchtower B. & T. Society's branch office on Friday, 12 December 2014 and spoke to the Service Department to seek their direction.
10) Brothers Wood and Boardman also briefly met with BCC and BCB on Sunday, 14 December 2014. The purpose of this meeting was to ascertain the congregation where the alleged abuse occurred and the period involved.

Your further direction on this accusation of child abuse is sought. Thank you for your assistance with this important matter. It is our privilege to serve unitedly with you in furtherance of Kingdom interests.

Your brothers,

Joseph Bello

Joe Bello

David Wood

Robert Boardman

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- REDACTED
- I feel like BCE was REDACTED was trying to protect herself.
- I feel like when they asked Max to tell me not to tell anymore people they were trying to control me again.
- Why did Max go along with this, did he check with the C.O. before he told me that.
- I feel like they got away scot-free, even though Bill is dead, he didn't pay any consequence really.
- I feel like I've done so much therapy and gone through so much pain and yet I still have trouble with feeling closure.
- I feel like if I ask for compensation for this, I am being presuptuous, after all he's dead, what can he do.
- I think that there are other people who have been through worse suffering during their lives than me, so who am I to complain or ask for compensation.
- At the same time, because the authorities know now, as well as all the professional people I've dealt with over the years (Psychiatrist, etc) know I was abused by an Elder in the Jehovahs Witness organisation, I think it would be a worse witness if I wasn't treated fairly as a victim of abuse by a member of a religious institution.
- Joe told BCC that I should ask myself if I really want to drag Jehovahs name through the mud by reporting it to the Royal Commission, but I haven't done anything wrong - Bill was the one to do that, not me.
- I'm worried about what others will think of me asking for compensation, that I'm a greedy, selfish, lazy person who just wants the easy way of life.
- I don't know whether I need to talk to the C.O. or if the Royal Commission will send someone else, what do I say anyway? I'm afraid to speak up about what I want.
- I need someone to tell me what I'm entitled to as a fair and just compensation. I don't want more than I have a right to, but I don't want to be treated like the Catholic Church and swept under the rug or paid out to hush me up.

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SD SJA

CA 24 DEC 2012

REDACTED Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses
c/o Joseph Bello
REDACTED

Service Desk
Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia
PO Box 280
Ingleburn, NSW 1890

18/12/2012

Dear Brothers,

Included with this letter is a summary of events experienced by BCB when she was a young girl. The matter involves child abuse and was handled at the time. However BCB has provided these details as others may have suffered a similar experience with the same brother and this may help support their cases.

Brother David Wood and I have heard the account from BCB and can confirm that it matches the details contained with this letter.

Christian love

Joseph Bello (Joseph Bello)
Joseph Bello
Coordinator

David Wood
Service Overseer

REDACTED Congregation

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I met the Neill family in 1980 when I was about 13, BCE was 2 years younger than me. We used to stay at each other's place, they lived at REDACTED and I lived on a farm REDACTED Bronwyn treated me like a daughter, so I felt really close to her. I was really skinny then, I remember "Uncle" Bill calling me a stick insect. It used to be fun staying there, they had the first Witness party I remember going to . BCE used to have lots of Barbie dolls, which I never had. She played 'Barbies' til she was about 16, Barbie and Ken were often 'having sex'. The Neills were very open with the kids about sex.

When Bronwyn was REDACTED (it would have been about 1982) I was having a shower (BCE and I always shared the bathroom) when BCE said "What's that on your tummy?" I loked down and I had a rash on my stomach. BCE said she would get her mum. I didn't want her to but she got her anyway. I had my knickers and singlet on, Bronwyn looked at my tummy and said she hoped it wasn't German Measles because she thought she might be pregnant. She said she wanted to show Uncle Bill but I said I didn't want him to see me. I never even let my Dad see me in my knickers so I was really embarrassed. She said "It's OK, he's done First Aid so he'll know. Just keep your singlet on." So he came in and she pulled up my singlet to show him my tummy. He did seem to be speculating for a while and then said I'd better go to the Doctors to be sure. Bronwyn took me to her Doctor, but I didn't have German Measles.

The Neills always kissed each other on the lips when they said goodnight or goodbye, everyone, parents and kids. I thought it was nice that they were so affectionate as my parents weren't very affectionate, especially my Dad. It was not very long after the Measles incident (I was 15) that I was saying goodnight to Uncle Bill in the hallway that he stuck his tongue in my mouth when he kissed me. I looked at him in shock, but he just gave me this queer smirk, and I found myself half-smiling back, and thus began our "little secret". Every time I stayed there after that, I had to endure the tongue when he said goodnight to me.

One day a few months later, BCE must have seen something, because she asked me afterwards "Did my Dad just kiss you for a long time?" I got scared of getting in trouble (Bill always belted his kids with his belt when they were naughty) so I said "Don't worry, it's OK."

About a year later (1983), he must have been feeling guilty or something, we were doing Return Visits in their Combi van, and Bill and I were alone in the van, when he said to me "What shall we do about 'our little secret'?" I said I didn't know. Then he asked me if I wanted him to talk to Brother Jack Shaylor about it, but that if he did my Mum and Dad would find out. I got scared and said no. Then he stopped doing it for while, I may not have been staying there as much as BCE and I might have had a bit of a falling out. I think I was 16.

Then when I was about 17 (1984), it started again. I always shared the bathroom with BCE (they's moved to REDACTED but if I couldn't I always locked the door. This was in defiance of Bronwyn's orders as she'd told all of us never to lock the bathroom door in case of emergency so they could get in. One day I was having a shower by myself when I heard a noise and looked up. Bill was perving at me over the top of the shower cubicle (he was standing on the basin). I screamed at him to get out, so he did. I don't know if this had happened before or if that was the first time I'd caught him out.

Once when he kissed my in the loungeroom (I was about 18 so it must have been about 1985) I heard Bronwyn say sharply "Bill!", so REDACTED I thought there would be trouble, but nothing happened. Another time I was in the pantry (this was quite a large room) when he came in and shut the door and started kissing me. I was a bit older now and didn't want to put up with this anymore, so I tried to resist, but he yelled at me to kiss him back and shoved me up against to wall, which really frightened me, then he told me to pull up my dress so he could see me in my underwear. Thankfully

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someone came into the kitchen just then, but I was starting to get really scared. Up until then I thought it was just something unpleasant that I had to put up with so I could have a good time with my friends and the rest of the family, as they always had lots of people over every weekend. I think that's why I became a bit wild with kissing boys, because I kind of had to prove to myself that it could be a nice experience and that there wasn't something wrong with me because I didn't like him doing it.

I was about 18 or 19 (1986) when I was living there, as I was trying to find a job in town, and BCE and I were starting to rub each other up the wrong way. I was never allowed to disagree with anything they said, so I learned to keep my opinions to myself. Bronwyn always blamed me for our disagreements, so I was starting to think I should just move back home.

REDACTED had just moved to Narrogin and asked if I would share a house with her as she was pioneering and living in a caravan. The decision was made easy (despite the Neills arguing that the Society doesn't approve of single sisters living by themselves) when the last night I was at the Neills' I had just got out of the shower when Bill came in. I had locked the door but he opened it with a knife in the lock. I was naked and he told me to sit one the floor and open my legs. Then he started touching me down there, and told me to stand up and then had oral sex with me. Then REDA pushed open the door so Bill pushed him out again. I'm not sure if REDA saw anything, he was quite young. Thankfully Bill left then. The next day I was lying in bed feeling sick, when he came into the room (I shared with BCE but she was at work). He asked me if I liked it. I just looked at him and said nothing. Then he said "It's better with this in", pointing at his crutch. "Would you like to see it?" I said "Go away" so he left. Then I packed my bags and went home to the farm without even saying goodbye to BCE

Just before I married BCC in 1989 I was dreading telling him, so I told him the bare minimum and said that the whole thing stopped ages ago and there's nothing to worry about.

It was about 1991 that I was talking to REDACTED (nee RED) and REDACTED before RED's wedding. REDA said that RED was nervous because she'd been abused by her uncle when she was young. I said that I'd had a similar experience. REDAC said "I thought so, me too and also REDACTED, nee REDA). Someone with lots of kids." I said yes, I was really shocked, but no names were mentioned. When a friend, REDACTED needed to stay somewhere and the Neills offered to have her, I mentioned to her to be careful of Bill. I'm not sure if she really believed me. Then another girl BCF told me about how she tried to commit suicide because of the trauma from her uncle abusing her, I told her what happened to me, but no names. She guessed it was Bill, and I freaked out and asked her not to tell, but she did tell someone. As soon as Max Horley, the young Elder REDACTED heard the rumour he came straight to me to find out. I told him about most of it but I couldn't mention the bathroom incident when he had oral sex with me, I was so ashamed. It was hard talking about it in front of Bill. At the committee meeting Bill said I wore revealing clothing, but the Circuit Overseer, Doug Jackson, made it quite clear to both of us that the Society has never allowed the victim's clothing as an excuse. Bill was asked to say something to me, so he said "I'm sorry."

Just after the meeting Bronwyn rang me and confronted me with "What did you say to BCF ?" I told her BCF was telling me about how her uncle abused her and so I told her about what happened to me. She said "Bill didn't abuse you." I didn't know what Bill had told her, but he was supposed to tell Bronwyn everything. I got scared so I said "I didn't actually say that". I never actually used the word abuse as I didn't really understand what it meant. Then she asked me about what REDAC had said. When I told her she said "That was her grandfather." I didn't think to question her.

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I rang Max straight away to tell him what she said and he said he's sort it out. He rang me back to say that the family had requested that I not tell any more people out of respect for the family. So I didn't tell anyone, not even my then best friend REDACT but where was the respect for me?
At the next couple of meetings Bronwyn was ignoring me, and I felt bad because I really loved her like a second mother. Then the next meeting she came up behind me and said "Don't worry, I still love you." Like I'd done something wrong.
Over the years of our marriage I occasionally let some detail out to BCC about what happened, but it wasn't until just before my nervous breakdown 10 years ago that I finally confided in REDACTED the first true girl friend I ever had. I also confided in Brother Craig Barton, our group study conductor. It was like opening a can of worms, and I was very very ill, but I got the best help possible from my wonderful Psychiatrist REDACTED Bill Neill is dead now, so I don't have to worry about seeing him at conventions anymore. I still struggle with my thoughts and feelings all the time, but I have an amazing group of Sisters and friends, as well as my lovely husband BCC and my two beautiful daughters, REDACTED

This is my testimony

BCB

18·12·2012

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SB 6 FEB 1992

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN CIRCUIT W2 OF

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

Doug Jackson
REDACTED

February 1, 1992

Watchtower Society
Box 280
Ingleburn 2565

Dear Brothers,

I am writing in reply to your letter SB:SSA dated January 13, 1992 concerning Brother William Neil now serving as an elder in the Narrogin Congregation and his conduct with a young sister in the congregation some years back.

I investigated the matter further with the other elder in the Narrogin congregation, Brother Max Horley, and spoke to the sister involved and her husband and also other brothers and sister in the congregation. We gave counsel to both the husband and the wife about going to the elders and setting the matter straight with Jehovah; James 5:13-15. Then showed that after we have done this, that if we have repented Jehovah would forgive us. We also made mention of the Awake October 8, 1991 which the sister had read lately and appreciated the support from it and how she could continue to get support from the elder which we highlighted as important. We also highlighted the part on page 11 of that Awake about "A Spiritual Recovery". Her husband is also very supportive and a great help. At present she still has a nervous and scared feeling when she is talking to Brother Neil.

We also spoke to other brothers and sisters in the congregation who knew about the matter through another sister who had spread the story after being told about it by the sister with whom Brother Neil had conducted himself in an unchristian way. The sister who has spread the information has since left Narrogin. It appears that a number of brothers know about the matter and unfortunately there may be worldly people who also know but we are not sure. The brothers we spoke to feel that Brother Neil is no longer "free from accusation" and does not have "freeness of speech", 1Tim. 3:2,10; Titus 1:6,7.

After interviewing the brothers and sisters and reviewing the scriptures, Our Kingdom Ministry, November 1972 Question Box and the Watchtower November 15, 1977 pages 698,699 we felt that "uncleanness" had been committed on several occasion but it was not "loose conduct". We felt that Brother Neil could not speak with confidence and we recommended to him that he step down as an elder due to these points which we reviewed with him. He agreed to this and that he would accept the direction of ourselves as elders and the organization. He has been given strong counsel and we feel that no further action or restrictions need apply.

Brother Max Horley (the other elder who worked with me) and myself were both impressed by Brother Neil's acceptance of counsel and his humility

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throughout the ordeal. Brother Neil and his family have served in an exemplary way for many years in this assignment. He came to Narrogin to serve where the need is great and has faithfully shown his loyalty to his assignment. He has truly repented of what happened and constantly reproved himself and has taken the counsel from us well. Now that it is all in the open and discipline has been applied and accepted he feels much better about his relationship with Jehovah. I said to him that the next few months would be hard but for him and his family to lean heavily on Jehovah, his organization and to have the remaining elder visit him regularly. Also brothers, I would recommend that once this has died down and it appears that Brother Neil again has the freedom of speech that he be recommended as an elder again so that he can be of help in the congregation as he has done in the past.

In the meantime I would like to recommend that Brother Max Horley becomes the presiding overseer and his address and telephone number is:-

Maxwell F. Horley
REDACTED

In writing we send our Christian love,

Your brothers,

Doug Jackson
Circuit Overseer

Max Horley
Secretary

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WATCHTOWER
BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

BOX 280, INGLEBURN, NSW 1890 AUSTRALIA ABN 42 002 861 225 PHONE: (02) 9829 5600 FAX: (02) 9829 3616

LLH January 20, 2003

The Body of Elders
REDACTED

CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Brothers:

Recently we arranged for two elders, REDACTED to interview REDACTED REDACTED regarding an accusation made by REDACTED against him of child abuse. Essentially, REDACTED has admitted the claims made by REDACTED has had a previous accusation of sexual abuse made against him by REDACTED a former sister, but he has denied this. He has admitted to an "accidental contact" with another sister REDACTED REDAC Suspicion exists that others may have been molested.
REDACTED

REDACTED He himself has suffered abuse at the hands of others. However, our responsibility to provide a safe environment for our children requires that his conduct be monitored to ensure this, and that we take whatever precautions are warranted to protect the congregation. For this reason the spirit represented in the restrictions that would be imposed on a baptised known child abuser should guide the elders if consideration is ever given to extending privileges to him in the congregation. The Society should be consulted. The consequences that flow from such abhorrent behaviour cannot be evaded.—*The Watchtower*, January 1, 1997 "Let Us Abhor What Is Wicked" pages 26-9.

Many times when these matters are considered we think of the perpetrator, his personality and the privileges he may have lost when his sins have been exposed. Very little thought is given to the suffering and in many cases the irreparable damage done to the victim. Out hearts must go out to those suffering emotional, psychological and spiritual damage caused by the selfish conduct of others. To say that a victim was a willing participant or the victim was not forced is to completely ignore the often-unconscious pressure or dominance exerted by the perpetrator, reflecting a dangerous callousness.

REDACTED

We count it a privilege to be associated with you in the furtherance of Kingdom interests worldwide. Please accept our Christian love and best wishes.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B.&T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

A NONPROFIT CORPORATION—INCORPORATED IN NEW SOUTH WALES

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WATCHTOWER
BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

BOX 280, INGLEBURN, NSW 1890 AUSTRALIA ABN 42 002 861 225 PHONE: (02) 9829 5600 FAX: (02) 9829 3616

LLH April 23, 2004

The Body of Elders
REDACTED

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Dear Brothers:

We would like to thank you for the comprehensive report provided on the matter of alleged child molestation on the part of REDACTED It would seem that nothing further could be done at this time. In the absence of any evidence to the contrary, we will have to accept the denial of the accused. If the police and the Department of Community Services are unable to proceed then the matter will have to be left in abeyance. Please keep us informed on any future developments.

It is evident that much work will be required of the elders to ensure that the ill feeling generated by these allegations does not further upset the peace of the congregation. We would suggest that in making a shepherding call on the family of the victim you explain the Scriptural requirements for testing evidence. When investigating allegations of any kind, elders must be guided by Bible principles, including the Bible's clear direction on hearing testimony: "No single witness should rise up against a man respecting any error or any sin ... At the mouth of two witnesses or at the mouth of three witnesses the matter should stand good." (Deuteronomy 19:15) Additionally, Deuteronomy 17:6 states: "At the mouth of two witnesses or of three witnesses the one dying should be put to death. He will not be put to death at the mouth of one witness." Jesus himself reaffirmed this principle at Matthew 18:16 and John 8:17, 18, and the apostle Paul did also at 2 Corinthians 13:1 and 1 Timothy 5:19.

It is recognized that child molesters usually engage in such practices away from the presence of others, and thus establishing a matter by two witnesses may not be possible in a particular incident. Of course, that does not mean that the victim is not telling the truth and we would never imply that we disbelieve the victim's testimony because two witnesses cannot be found. However, often other incriminating evidence is available to corroborate the victim's claim. The molester may have assaulted more than one child. If two victims testify to separate incidents of the same kind of wrongdoing, their testimony may be deemed sufficient to take congregational action against the perpetrator. However, even if the elders cannot take such action, they are expected to report the allegation to the branch office, which has been done in this instance. At times, accusations are made with a wrong motive, and on investigation prove to be without substance or are withdrawn. To outsiders, who are not privy to all the facts, inaction on the part of elders may give the impression they do not believe the complaint by the alleged victim or are unwilling to act, but be assured that the elders under the direction of the Faithful and Discreet Slave will do all that is possible to exercise justice.—See *The Watchtower* November 1, 1995, p.28

Hoping that this information is helpful to you, we send our warm love and best wishes for Jehovah's guidance and blessing.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B.&T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

A NON-PROFIT CORPORATION—INCORPORATED IN NEW SOUTH WALES

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WATCHTOWER
BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA
BOX 280, INGLEBURN, N.S.W. 2565 AUSTRALIA A.C.N. 002 861 225
PHONE (02) 605 1099
FAX (02) 829 3616

April 23, 1992

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Dear Brothers:

After the recent Kingdom Ministry School, the Society received many expressions of appreciation from you brothers for the fine instruction presented. Indeed, not only did the school remind us of the privilege we have as elders but it provided us with practical direction on how to care properly for our many responsibilities.

As elders, you certainly have much to do —keeping your families spiritually strong, studying and preparing for meetings, caring for judicial matters, working at assemblies and conventions. Some of you willingly expend yourselves in building and maintaining Kingdom Halls and even in doing construction work at Bethel or on branch projects. And all of this is in addition to your taking the lead in the field ministry.

Your work in shepherding God's people is also very much needed and deeply appreciated. (1 Pet. 5:1-3) We often receive reports of your hard work in giving spiritual encouragement and personal attention to the needs of individual members of the congregation, some of whom are experiencing very serious problems. This is true of many who have been victims of child abuse. They also need our loving understanding and help. Many of these, even after learning the truth, continue to suffer emotional scars and must cope with unhappy memories. The Kingdom Ministry School drew attention to some of the things that the Bible and the Society's publications show that you, as spiritual shepherds, can do to help such victims. We would like to review some of these points and others with you. We also hope to answer various questions that you have asked about meeting the needs of such victims of child abuse, particularly those sexually abused.

HELPING VICTIMS OF CHILD ABUSE

Many children who have been continually violated by adults grow up with severe emotional scars and certainly need much loving attention. Thus, you will want to be conscious of treating such victims of abuse with much thoughtfulness and kindness. (See *"Pay Attention to Yourselves and to All the Flock,"* page 17.) Such an attitude helps to assure the victim that you really care for him and that you are "like a hiding place from the wind and a place of concealment from the rainstorm." (Isa. 32:2) Like Jesus, we should be "tenderly compassionate."—Eph. 4:32.

One way you can show sincere interest is by being a good listener. James counselled: "Every man must be swift about hearing, slow about speaking." (Jas. 1:19) Further, Proverbs 21:13 says: "As for anyone stopping up his ear from the complaining cry of the lowly one, he himself also will call and not be answered." So as patient spiritual counsellors, listen carefully when a victim's problem is being discussed. The October 1, 1983, issue of *The Watchtower,* on page 28, cautions against telling a sufferer who seeks assistance "just to forget" what occurred. Many have found great relief simply in talking with a sympathetic, nonjudgmental elder who can provide "the good word" of encouragement. (Prov. 12:25) Though you may need to ask tactful

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questions to help the victim express matters, avoid probing unnecessarily or repeatedly into the details of the abuse, which can have a discouraging effect.

Many victims of abuse have learned to handle their emotional scars quite well, which is commendable. If the victim is leading a calm and peaceful life, then there is no need to dredge up memories that have been handled and put in the past. Others can be helped to put this problem to rest. On the other hand, there are still others, as described at Psalm 55: 17, who 'cannot but show concern and moan' over their turmoil. In such cases, it may be very difficult for them to heal completely. Still, we want to help such ones feel that there is hope. By reasoning on the Scriptures and strengthening the victim with words of consolation and encouragement, elders may be able to help such troubled ones put the bad experiences behind them.—Job 16:5; 1 Pet. 5:12.

BALANCING YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

It must be recognized that the time you can spend in helping an abuse victim is limited. Therefore, this shepherding responsibility must be balanced with your other responsibilities, which include caring for the spiritual, emotional, and material needs of your own family and assisting those in the congregation who have other problems. In some cases an incest survivor wants more attention than you can give. So some elders have found it beneficial to put boundaries, or some limits, on the time they spend. Depending on the individual's need, it may take several visits to get the desired relief for the victim, if this is possible. If the individual approaches you looking for help at times when you cannot discuss the problem extensively, perhaps giving some brief words of encouragement assuring that one of Jehovah's love, reading an appropriate scripture, or offering a short prayer, will affirm to the sufferer your interest and willingness to help to the extent possible.

Sometimes abuse victims approach capable older sisters for help. It is understood that a sister should not be in the awkward position of trying to help in a situation that would appropriately be cared for by an elder, but the sister can give victims emotional support and encouragement as her circumstances and time allow. (See the March 15, 1990, issue of *The Watchtower*, page 28.) If the sister is approached by a child-abuse victim and endeavours to help her, she should periodically let the elders know what is being accomplished. If an abuse victim accuses a member of the Christian congregation of having molested her, then it would not be appropriate for a sister to become involved in this aspect of the matter. It is best for the victim to be assisted by the elders.

Just as good judgment is needed in selecting brothers to serve on a judicial committee, depending on what is involved, so, too, it would be wise to select among yourselves those best fitted to assist certain abuse victims. Since elders have varied abilities, some may be more effective than others in handling these cases.—Compare 1 Corinthians 12:4.

WHAT ABOUT PROFESSIONAL THERAPY?

There are times when an emotionally distressed Christian may seek professional help. Whether or not a brother or a sister pursues treatment from psychiatrists, psychologists, or therapists is a personal decision as long as the therapy does not conflict with Bible principles. (See *The Watchtower* of April 15, 1975, pages 255-6.) Potential problems may be avoided if a patient, or a companion, explains to the therapist the importance of the sufferer's religious beliefs.

Some medical professionals and therapists offer group therapy to those suffering from the effects of child abuse. While participating in group therapy by a professional therapist is a personal decision, there could be problems of revealing confidential facts about other members of the Christian congregation during such therapy if a Christian does not exercise discretion. (See July 8, 1982, issue of *Awake!*, page 8.) Thus, elders can give cautions to their brothers and sisters, such as those outlined

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in the October 15, 1988, issue of *The Watchtower,* page 29, under the subheading "Talk Therapies." They can be helped to see that talking indiscriminately to others about child abuse may result in circulating damaging and harmful talk.—Prov. 17:9.

It must be recognized that elders as such are not mental-health professionals or therapists but are spiritual shepherds. (1 Pet. 5:2) Consequently, they should not conduct sessions where victims have come together for what some may view as group therapy. Nor should elders spend time reading secular publications dealing with worldly psychology or psychiatry. They should not take on a role similar to that of a professional therapist. Someone who has a serious mental or emotional illness may need professional help.

If a current case of child abuse comes to light in your congregation, elders should do what they can to protect children from further abuse. (See *"Pay Attention to Yourselves and to All the Flock,"* page 93.) How might this be accomplished? In the Addendum presented at the Kingdom Ministry School, direction was given that when elders receive reports of physical or sexual abuse of a child, they should contact the Society immediately for advice. Thereafter, if it is established that a member of the congregation is guilty of sexually abusing a child, a judicial committee would meet with this one, following theocratic procedures, unless otherwise directed by the Society. If the person is not repentant over the gross sin, disfellowshipping action would be warranted. Additionally, elders can encourage parents to review the January 22, 1985, issue of *Awake!,* which provides suggestions on what they can do to protect their children from sexual abuse by anyone, inside or outside the family. —See also *Awake!* issues of June 22, 1982, and December 22, 1986.

Hopefully, the above direction will assist you brothers lovingly to help victims of abuse, as well as others in the congregation who face different problems. May Jehovah's rich blessing continue to be with you in carrying out your many responsibilities as shepherds of the flock. With this letter we send our warm Christian love and best wishes.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B.&T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

P.S. The presiding overseer should arrange to read this letter to the body of elders. Thereafter, the secretary should place it in the congregation file. In the future if elders are called upon to assist a victim of child abuse, this letter should be reviewed by them. It would be beneficial for the elders to spend some time discussing points made in the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* articles referred to in this letter.

A copy of the information "What Elders Can Say to Abuse Victims," which appears on the following page, may be made for each elder.

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WHAT ELDERS CAN SAY TO ABUSE VICTIMS

The apostle Paul said to "speak consolingly to the depressed souls." (1 Thess. 5:14) So, in line with James 5:13-15, elders want to use God's Word in helping victims to heal, as stressed in *The Watchtower* of April 1, 1990, pages 13 and 14, paragraphs 12-14, under the subheading "The Bible's Counsel—Uniquely Wise." In addition, becoming well acquainted with fine Bible-based articles in *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* is also vital. In fact, one of the reasons for the articles on sexual abuse in the October 8, 1991, issue of *Awake!* was to aid elders in giving more effective Scriptural assistance to abuse victims. The response, as described in the April 8, 1992, *Awake!,* shows how effective and acceptable these articles proved to be to the victims. The article "Help for the Victims of Incest" in the October 1, 1983, issue of *The Watchtower* explains that victims often are filled with shame, anger, and frequently an overwhelming sense of guilt because of such abuse. Thus, strive to help such ones see that they were not at fault; they were being victimized.

Help such ones to see that their worth as individuals is not diminished by the shameful way they were treated. The important thing is how Jehovah views them. By means of the ransom sacrifice, Jehovah purchased such ones with the "precious blood" of Jesus. (1 Pet. 1:19) Surely, if Jehovah paid such a price, he must love them dearly as he loves all who put their faith in that valuable shed blood. (John 3:16) Jehovah considers desirable all of the "great crowd," who have "washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Despite any past abuse, they now have a clean standing as God's friends and are assured that "God will wipe out every tear from their eyes." He is not insensitive to their suffering but will help them heal their emotional scars as they call upon him in faith. He guarantees to heal the wounds completely in the future.—Rev. 7:9, 14, 17; Isa. 65:17; Hag. 2:7; see "Will You Benefit From Undeserved Kindness?" in the February 15, 1990, issue of *The Watchtower*.

By earnest prayer and by considering upbuilding, wholesome things, the excelling 'peace of God will guard the heart and mental powers' of these ones. (Phil. 4:6-9) Remind them of the value of keeping their mind on maintaining fine works. When followed, this divine counsel can be most beneficial, enabling them to move forward and find joy. (Titus 3:8) When an individual fills his mind with the many lovable things in God's Word, he is strengthened and refreshed. (Ps. 19:7, 8, 14) Not only can this lessen the pain of any past abuse but it can also restore one's spiritual health.

In some instances, emotional pains of this nature simply have to be endured. Yet, such endurance produces "an approved condition." (Rom. 5:3-5) As "the Father of tender mercies and the God of all comfort," Jehovah promises to give us sufficient strength so that we are not overwhelmed by grief. (2 Cor. 1:3, 4) The apostle Paul contended with "a thorn in the flesh." Although this made it harder for him to carry out his ministry, he was able to endure faithfully with the strength provided by Jehovah. (2 Cor. 12:7-10) Today, too, a depressed person needs to keep as active as he can with field service, meeting attendance, and close association with the congregation.

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WATCHTOWER
BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA
PO BOX 280, INGLEBURN, NSW 1890 AUSTRALIA ABN 42 002 861 225
PHONE: (02) 9829 5600
FAX: (02) 9829 3616

August 1, 1995

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Re: Protecting victims of child abuse

Dear Brothers:

We are pleased to outline below some guidelines that we hope will be helpful to you in protecting victims of child abuse and in dealing with a brother or sister in the congregation who has been guilty of sexually abusing a child.

When a member of the congregation is accused of child molestation, the elders should contact the Society immediately. Some states make it mandatory that elders report an accusation to the proper authorities but other states do not. In those states where such is required, oftentimes the parent, the guardian, or the accused person himself can do the reporting. In this way confidentiality is not violated. Ecclesiastical privilege is not available in all states and where available it is restricted to special circumstances. Still, whether or not the accusation is reported to the authorities, when it is established that a member of the congregation is guilty of child abuse, appropriate steps should be taken in keeping with initial direction from the Society. It is important to first obtain the Society's direction to protect both the elders and the organization.

Additionally, steps should be taken to protect the child, or other children, from further sexual abuse. Obviously, parents would be keenly interested in taking adequate precautions in this regard. Helpful information along these lines can be reviewed in the January 22, 1985, and October 8, 1993, issues of *Awake!* Loving elders, too, will want to act in a way that demonstrates their protective care, since the word "overseer" carries the thought of one who watches over, a guardian, a shepherd of the flock. (See *"Pay Attention to Yourselves and to All the Flock,"* pages 90 and 93.) Thus, they would want to take steps to protect a child abuse victim when a judicial committee determines that the child molester is repentant and will remain a member of the Christian congregation. The same concern would be shown when a paedophile is disfellowshipped and later cleans up his life and is reinstated.

It would be appropriate to talk very frankly to a former child abuser, strongly cautioning him as to the dangers of hugging or holding children on his lap and that he should never be in the presence of a child without another adult being present. This may prevent putting that one in the way of temptation or unfounded accusation. At the same time, it is good to remember that the Bible, at Matthew 12:31 and 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, shows it is possible for a person to stop his or her wrongful course, repent, and thereafter live in harmony with God's righteous standards. This is true of all wrongdoers even a former child abuser.

While it is unscriptural to say that a former child abuser could never enjoy exemplary privileges of service in the congregation, certainly the elders will want to be very cautious, especially when one had repeatedly engaged in this kind of wrongdoing or had been disfellowshipped for such an offence. Before extending privileges, therefore, it is necessary that one would meet the qualification of having a fine testimony from individuals inside and outside the

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congregation. This means that he must have lived down the reproach which resulted from his wrongdoing. Generally, it will take a considerable number of years to achieve such irreprehensibility depending on the notoriety involved. So it would be up to the elders to determine whether such a one is extended privileges, taking into account all factors in each individual case. (1 Tim. 3:7) At any rate, this should never be done hastily. Considerable time should always pass before a former child abuser is used, if ever.

What if a former child abuser moves to another congregation? The Congregation's Publisher Record card(s) for that person should be sent to the new congregation, along with a letter of introduction. If he is under judicial restrictions, the committee in his former congregation should clearly and discreetly inform the elders in the new congregation about the problem, outlining the counsel given and the restrictions imposed and pointing out what they have been doing to monitor and assist him. Even if years have passed and the individual is no longer restricted but there is still some concern (as outlined in the preceding paragraph), the elders in the new congregation should be informed. However to maintain confidentiality, this should be restricted to just the basic details and only to the brothers handling the case in the new congregation. It would be wise for the chairman of the judicial committee to first contact the Society.

It is hoped that the above direction will help you brothers in handling matters in the congregation so as to protect victims and potential victims from child abuse, and at the same time, balance justice with mercy. With this letter we send our warm Christian love and greetings.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B. & T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

PS to secretary: This letter should be retained in the congregation's permanent file of policy letters, as listed in *Index to Letters—For Bodies of Elders* (S-22).

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

WRITING COMMITTEE

Via CompuServe

GEA:EP March 4, 1997 No. 163W

Watch Tower Society
AUSTRALIA

Dear Brothers:

This is further on your letter AB February 19, 1997, No. 173, in which you ask for guidance in handling cases where baptized Witnesses are accused of child abuse or where child abusers wish to become baptized Witnesses. Last week the Publishing Committee sent you a brief letter explaining the policy on seeking to preserve "clergy confidentiality" in legal cases involving this problem.

However, there were other questions that you asked, particularly in view of the information in the article "Let Us Abhor What Is Wicked" in the January 1, 1997, issue of *The Watchtower.* For your information, the Governing Body is in the process of studying the way the Scriptural principles in that article can be implemented by congregation elders. When that investigation is complete, it is likely that a letter will be sent to the bodies of elders to help them handle things wisely. We believe that such a letter would answer most of the questions in your letter.

If the Governing Body decides not to write a letter about this to the congregations, we will send you additional information when the study by the Governing Body is completed. We hope that will be soon. Meantime, if you have specific problems, feel free to write to the Governing Body for help.

This is a sensitive issue, and we are happy to see that you are trying to handle it in a balanced, Scriptural way. Please be assured of our warm love and Christian greetings.

Your brothers and fellow servants,

Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society
OF PENNSYLVANIA

For the Writing Committee

c: Executive Offices

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WATCHTOWER
BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

PO BOX 280, INGLEBURN, NSW 1890 AUSTRALIA ABN 42 002 861 225 PHONE: (02) 9829 5600 FAX: (02) 9829 3616

March 14, 1997

CONFIDENTIAL

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Re: Protecting victims of child abuse and information to be provided to branch office

Dear Brothers:

A matter of serious concern was addressed in the article "Let Us Abhor What Is Wicked," published in the January 1, 1997, issue of *The Watchtower*. This concern involves the purity of Jehovah's organization in these last days. It is our responsibility to protect the flock of God from these threatening influences.—Isa. 32:1, 2.

We wish to take necessary steps that will help protect the congregation, especially our children, from the unwholesome practices that are constantly worsening in the world. We are grateful that the truth has limited the spread of child sexual abuse in Jehovah's organization.

WHO IS A 'KNOWN CHILD MOLESTER'?

What is child molestation? *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary* defines "paedophilia" as "sexual perversion in which children are the preferred sexual object." (See "Questions From Readers" in *The Watchtower* of February 1, 1997, page 29.) Deuteronomy 23:17, 18 condemns such practices as "detestable." (See the footnotes to verses 17 and 18 in the *Reference Bible*. Also, it would be helpful to see the footnote on page 10 of the October 8, 1993, issue of *Awake!)* In harmony with these references, we are herein discussing sexual perversion in which children are the object of sexual abuse, including fondling by an adult. We are not discussing a situation wherein a consenting minor, who is approaching adulthood, has sexual relations with an adult who is a few years older than the minor. Rather, we are referring, for example, to situations in which it is established by a congregation judicial committee that an adult brother or sister has been guilty of sexually abusing a young child or has been sexually involved with a nonconsenting minor who is approaching adulthood.

Who is a known child molester? The January 1, 1997, *Watchtower* article "Let Us Abhor What Is Wicked" mentions on page 29 that a man "known to have been a child molester" would not qualify for privileges in the congregation. An individual "known" to be a former child molester has reference to the perception of that one in the community and in the Christian congregation. In the eyes of the congregation, a man known to have been a child molester is not "free from accusation" and "irreprehensible," nor does he have "a fine testimony from those on the outside." (1 Tim. 3:1-7, 10; 5:22: Titus 1 :7) In view of his past, people in the community would not respect him, and the brothers might even stumble over his appointment.

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PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN

What can we do to protect our children and preserve the cleanness of Jehovah's organization? The primary responsibility for protecting our children rests upon the parents. Fine suggestions for parents can be found in the January 22, 1985, *Awake!* article "Child Molesting—You *Can* Protect Your Child." Other articles that parents do well to consider are those in the October 8, *1993, Awake!* entitled "How Can We Protect Our Children" and the December 1, 1996, *Watchtower* entitled "Parents, Find Pleasure in Your Children," specifically pages 13 and 14, paragraphs 18 and 19.

What can the elders do to help protect our children? The elders should be alert to the activity of any who are known to have molested children in the past. Individuals who have manifested a weakness in this regard should be sensitive to their need not to be alone with children. They should refrain from holding children or displaying other forms of affection for them. It would be appropriate for elders to give kindly cautions to any who are doing things that may be a temptation or a cause for concern to others in the congregation.—1 Cor. 10: 12, 32.

What should elders do when a former child molester moves to another congregation? As outlined in the February 1991 *Our Kingdom Ministry* "Question Box" and the August 1, 1995, letter to all bodies of elders, our policy is always to send a letter of introduction when a publisher moves to another congregation. It is *imperative that this be done when one who is known to have been a child molester moves.* The secretary should write on behalf of the elders to the new congregation's body of elders and outline this publisher's background and what the elders in the old congregation have been doing to assist him. Any needed cautions should be provided to the new congregation's body of elders. This letter should not be read to or discussed with the congregation. This information should be kept in the congregation s confidential files where it can be reviewed by any elder. The elders should send a copy of this letter to the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society in one of the "Special Blue" envelopes.

PRIVILEGES OF SERVICE IN THE CONGREGATION

In the January 1, 1997, issue of *The Watchtower,* the article "Let Us Abhor What Is Wicked" stated on page 29: "For the protection of our children, a man known to have been a child molester *does not qualify for a responsible position in the congregation. Moreover, he cannot be a pioneer or serve in any other special full-time service."* We have had a number of inquiries asking how this applies in the congregation, and this is being given consideration.

It may be possible that some who were guilty of child molestation were or are now serving as elders, ministerial servants, or regular or special pioneers. Others may have been guilty of child molestation before they were baptized. The bodies of elders should not query individuals. However, the body of elders should discuss this matter and give the Society a report on anyone who is currently serving or who formerly served in a Society-appointed position in your congregation who is known to have been guilty of child molestation in the past.

In your report please answer the following questions: How long ago did he commit the sin? What was his age at the time? What was the age of his victim(s)? Was it a one-time occurrence or a practice? If it was a practice, to what extent? How is he viewed in the community and by the authorities? Has he lived down any notoriety in the community? Are members of the congregation aware of what took place? How do they and/or his victim(s) view him? Has

CONFIDENTIAL (RS)

he ever been disfellowshipped, reproved, counselled, or otherwise dealt with? If he has moved to another congregation, please identify the congregation to which he has moved. Was that congregation advised of his past conduct of child molestation, and, if so, when? [If you have not advised them, this should be done now, and you should send a copy of your letter to the Society in a "Special Blue" envelope.] This information should be sent to the Society along with any other observations that the body of elders has. Please send this to the Society in the "Special Blue" envelope so that the factors involved may be given due consideration; this information is not to be made available to those not involved.

Jehovah has been blessing the efforts of his people to get the vital Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making work done. Isaiah 52:11 states: "Keep yourselves clean, you who are carrying the utensils of Jehovah." We must be ever vigilant to demonstrate to Jehovah that we want to keep the organization he uses in these last days fit for this all-essential trust. May Jehovah bless your efforts to that end.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B. & T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

PS to body of elders: A meeting of the body of elders should be arranged to read and discuss this letter together. **This letter is confidential and should not be copied but should be kept in the congregation's confidential file. Elders should not discuss this information with others.** It is provided so that you can appropriately apply the spirit of the Scriptural information in the January 1, 1997, *Watchtower* article "Let Us Abhor What Is Wicked."

PS to secretary: This letter should be retained in the congregation's permanent file of policy letters, as listed in *Index to Letters—For Bodies of Elders* (S-22).

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WATCHTOWER
BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

BOX 280, INGLEBURN, N.S.W. 2565 AUSTRALIA A.C.N. 002 861 225

PHONE: (02) 9829 5600
FAX: (02) 9829 3616

May 1, 1997

CONFIDENTIAL

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Dear Brothers:

A matter of serious concern was addressed in the article "Let Us Abhor What Is Wicked," published in the January 1, 1997, issue of *The Watchtower*. This concern involves the purity of Jehovah's organization in these last days. It is our responsibility to protect the flock of God from these threatening influences.—Isa. 32:1, 2.

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It may be possible that some who were guilty of child molestation were or are now serving as elders, ministerial servants, or regular or special pioneers. Others may have been guilty of child molestation before they were baptized. The bodies of elders should not query individuals. However, the body of elders should discuss this matter and give the Society a report on anyone who is currently serving or who formerly served in a Society-appointed position in your congregation who is known to have been guilty of child molestation in the past.

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In your report please answer the following questions: How long ago did he commit the sin? What was his age at the time? What was the age of his victim(s)? Was it a one-time occurrence or a practice? If it was a practice, to what extent? How is he viewed in the community and by the authorities? Has he lived down any notoriety in the community? Are members of the congregation aware of what took place? How do they and/or his victim(s) view him? Has he ever been disfellowshipped, reproved, counseled, or otherwise dealt with? If he has moved to another congregation, please identify the congregation to which he has moved. Was that congregation advised of his past conduct of child molestation, and, if so, when? [If you have not advised them, this should be done now, and you should send a copy of your letter to the Society in a "Special Blue" envelope.) This information should be sent to the Society along with any other observations that the body of elders has. Please send this to the Society in the "Special Blue" envelope so that the factors involved may be given due consideration; this information is not to be made available to those not involved.

Jehovah has been blessing the efforts of his people to get the vital Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making work done. Isaiah 52:11 states: "Keep yourselves clean, you who are carrying the utensils of Jehovah." We must be ever vigilant to demonstrate to Jehovah that we want to keep the organization he uses in these last days fit for this all-essential trust. May Jehovah bless your efforts to that end.

Your brothers.

Watchtower B.&T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

P.S. to Body of Elders: A meeting of the body of elders should be arranged to read and discuss this letter together. **This letter is confidential and should not be copied but should be kept in the congregation's confidential file. Elders should not discuss this information with others. It** is provided so that you can appropriately apply the spirit of the Scriptural information in the January 1, 1997, *Watchtower* article "Let Us Abhor What Is Wicked."

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UNITED STATES BRANCH
EXECUTIVE OFFICES

GSC:AT February 12, 1998 No. 174S

Via CompuServe

Watch Tower Society
AUSTRALIA

Dear Brothers:

We are writing per your letter dated SA:LLA October 29, 1997, No. 121. The Legal Department had considered your letter and then made inquiry of the Writing Committee about the possibility of putting something in the publications concerning the law regarding confidentiality with regard to child abuse cases.

It is the opinion of the Writing and Service Committees that nothing be put in print in the publications, either in *The Watchtower* or *Our Kingdom Ministry*, concerning this subject. However, if the publishers in Australia need further information in this area, what do you propose to include in an article in *Our Kingdom Ministry* or possibly in a letter if it is really needed? Could we hear from you on this point before anything further is done?

Please be assured of our warm Christian love and best wishes.

Your brothers,

Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society
of Pennsylvania

For the Service Committee

Cc: Legal Department
Writing Committee

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

UNITED STATES BRANCH
EXECUTIVE OFFICES

GSC/AS January 21, 1999 No. 176S

Via CompuServe

Watch Tower Society
AUSTRALIA

Dear Brothers:

We are writing further to you on the subject of child abuse. We understand some of the questions set out in your letter of October 29, 1997, No. 121 were not answered. We have in our files a letter dated December 16, 1997 discussing these matters, but it appears this was never sent to you, but was mistakenly filed away. We apologize for this. We will now address your questions.

It is understood that if the law requires elders to report cases of child abuse, they should comply with the law and do so. Of course, it would be better if the person confessing to having engaged in such activity would himself report it, but if he does not do so, the elders should do it. Where the law does not obligate the elders to report cases that come to their attention, there is no need for them to do so, but if the matter becomes known to the authorities and they are required to disclose information they have in their possession, they will do so unless they can claim ecclesiastical privilege.

In view of this, we do not think there will be any problem in following the procedure in *ks*91, page 97 regarding having the body of elders appoint two elders to see whether there is substance to an accusation. The body of elders would no doubt assign the elder to whom the accusation is made and probably the presiding overseer to investigate the matter. Of course, what has been stated in previous letters about contacting the Society should be followed in these cases.

You raised the question as to how much should be said when notifying the elders in a congregation to which a "known child molester" moves. We believe that what is said in the Society's March 14, 1997 letter can be followed without difficulty. The letter of introduction should also state what the elders in the former congregation have been doing to assist him and any needed cautions should be provided to the body of elders in the new congregation. The supplemental school for elders held early in 1997 had some additional material that may be helpful. Please refer to part 135 for this. You should keep in mind that the March 14, 1997 letter was prepared with a view toward qualifications for appointed service and does not address legal obligations, including the duty to report.

As to the question of reporting a matter that is many years old to the authorities when such an individual moves to a state where reporting is mandatory, the elders should determine what the law requires and comply with that. You now have the letter from the Service Committee dated GSC:AD December 31, 1998, No. 164S concerning the appointment of persons after 20 years

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has passed. Of course, this refers to theocratic procedures within the congregation. What should be done with regard to reporting would depend on what the local law states.

You asked whether the elders should tell the accused that they are obligated to make a report where such is the case. Probably from a legal viewpoint there is no obligation to tell the accused that a report will be made, but we do think that from the moral viewpoint the accused should be told what the law requires and that we have an obligation to comply with it. Even if there is no legal requirement that we make a report, it would be a kindness to the accused to let him know that should the matter later become known to the authorities, the law may require the elders to reveal what they know of the matter. (Romans 13:4; Matt. 22:21) You were given approval in a letter from the Service Committee dated GSC:AS July 24, 1998 to publish some information in your edition of *Our Kingdom Ministry* concerning keeping certain matters confidential. We do not know whether this has been done yet, but it should prove helpful to the elders in these circumstances.

If a report is made, it would be preferable to keep only a brief record in the file that a report was made. However, if a written report is made, or a written statement is taken, then a copy of that report or statement should be retained in the congregation's file. Of course, if a judicial committee is formed, the normal documentation would be retained in the files.

Concerning the possibility that brothers from Bethel may be called upon as witnesses, we do not see that there is much risk in that, since in most cases the authorities will look to the local congregation for witnesses and records about a particular case. It would be a rare case where the local brothers would not have the information but those in Bethel would. As to the attorney-client privilege, it is our understanding that those working under the supervision of a lawyer are also protected by the privilege. Therefore, discussions with those brothers in your Legal Department who take calls under the supervision of an attorney should be protected by the privilege. Of course, the matter may need to be reported to the Service Department, and we do not know whether the privilege could be extended to them. In any event, it should be a rare case when one of these brothers would be called as a witness.

Thank you for your continued concern regarding the serious matter of child abuse. We all look forward to the time when such conduct will no longer occur. We regret the delay in sending you this information, and hope what we have now stated will be helpful.

Please be assured of our warm Christian love and best wishes.

Your brothers,

Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society
of Pennsylvania

For the Service Committee

CONFIDENTIAL (RCD)

WORLD HEADQUARTERS OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES
25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483 • Tel. 718 560-5000

SC:AT September 7, 2005 No. 115S

Via BSN

Branch Committee
AUSTRALIA

Dear Brothers:

We are providing you with revised guidelines for use by the Service Desk(s) when handling certain matters. The attachment dated September 1, 2005, replaces the guidelines of March 31, 1997. The information in the revised guidelines is confidential and should only be distributed to the Service Desk(s) in your branch office. Comments in the guidelines are not to be included in the letters your Service Desk(s) sends out to answer questions raised by those who make inquiries.

The following are some notable adjustments that are included in the updated guidelines.

1) In point 1, a statement was added to the effect that elders are to not interview a victim or a victim's relatives when determining what the current feeling is toward an individual guilty of child abuse. Elders are to communicate with the branch office if they feel that this needs to be done. The branch office should be very cautious before giving elders permission to interview anyone, whether it is the victim or the victim's relatives.

2) In the "Factors to consider" for point 3, the statement is added that if twenty or more years have passed an individual who has built up a good record may serve in a position of trust provided there is no outcry.

3) In point 7, the reference is removed about elders meeting with a brother who is reaching out so as to make him aware of what is stated in the January 1, 1997, issue of *The Watchtower*.

4) In the "Factors to consider" for point 7, direction is given to the effect that if a brother has not *previously served* as an elder or ministerial servant, it would be appropriate to ask him privately if he has ever been involved in the past with child sexual molestation. This would most appropriately be done when two elders meet with him about his receiving an appointment from the branch office.

5) For point 8, it has been clarified that those guilty of child abuse would not qualify to serve as an auxiliary or regular pioneer since they would not be considered exemplary.

6) In point 9, a statement is included about restricting a known child abuser from using the Kingdom Hall for a wedding ceremony.

7) Another statement added to point 9 is that a book study should not be held in the home of a known child abuser.

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8) In point 11, it is explained that a former child abuser is not to work in the field ministry with children, including his own children, unless another adult publisher who is in good standing in the congregation accompanies him.

9) In point 11, a statement concerning Caesar restricting a known child abuser from participating in the ministry is provided along with instructions on how the elders are to handle this type of matter.

10) In point 11, direction is also given about what precautions to take when the elders are notified that a child abuser is living in the territory.

11) A final change with point 11 is the removal of the reference about elders speaking with an individual who desires to be baptized so as to make him aware of what is stated in the January 1, 1997, issue of *The Watchtower*.

12) For point 12, a statement was added to the effect that when a former child abuser is appointed to a position of trust, there is no need to pass information about his sin to another congregation's elders.

13) Also, in point 12, in the "Factors to consider" section, it is mentioned that if an individual is disfellowshipped there is no need to mention all the details of the person's sin. The elders would simply inform the new congregation that the individual was guilty of child abuse.

We trust this information will be helpful to you. Please be assured of our warm Christian love and best wishes.

Your brothers,

Service Committee

Enc.

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GUIDELINES FOR BRANCH SERVICE DESK USE ONLY—September 1, 2005

Questions have come up with regard to the January 1, 1997, *Watchtower* article "Let Us Abhor What Is Wicked." Set out below are suggestions and guidelines that should help you in formulating answers to some of these questions. Following the information in the answer section, factors to consider when making decisions are offered. These comments are not to be included in the letters your service desk sends out to answer questions raised by those who make inquiries but are for the guidance of the service desk only.

1. ***According to the article, a former child molester does not qualify for a responsible position in the congregation. Does that mean he would automatically be disqualified even if the molestation took place before his becoming a baptized Christian?***

Answer: Not necessarily, because someone who has come into the truth has been 'made new in the force actuating his mind and has put on the new personality.' (Eph. 4:22-24) While he has been "washed clean" from sins committed prior to baptism, his past conduct could still have an effect on his qualifying for congregation responsibilities. (1 Cor. 6:11) Therefore, all of the factors would need to be carefully weighed. In any case, he should never be recommended hastily. In view of potential difficulty, while the elders make the recommendation, the final decision is always made by the branch office, not by the local elders.

The following questions should be considered when determining whether he qualifies to serve: How many years ago did he commit the sin? What was the extent of the conduct? Was it a single incident, or was it repeated? What were the circumstances? What was his age at the time? What was the age of his victim? Is there an outcry about his situation? Were the authorities ever informed of his actions? If so, what action did they take and do they have him listed as a sex offender? How do the community and the secular authorities view him? If he were extended privileges would this be disturbing to others, including the victim(s) and their relatives? Has he given clear indication by his words and actions that he is now guided by God's spirit? (Gal. 5:16; Rom. 8:5) Has he demonstrated that he is "self-controlled?" (Gal. 5:23; Titus 1:8) Does he have a reputation of being "free from accusation," "irreprehensible," "having a fine testimony from those on the outside?" (1 Tim. 3:1-7, 10; 5:22; Titus 1:7.). How do his victim(s) and/or relatives view him now? Are members of the congregation aware of what took place? How do they view him?

As to determining how a former child molester is viewed, when the abuse took place many years ago there is no need for elders to conduct interviews either with members of the congregation or with the one(s) wronged or his or her relatives in order to determine what the current feeling is toward him. Doing so may bring up painful memories and cause further harm. Rather, from their own observation, elders are to explain the relationship between the victim and the former abuser.

On the other hand, if the elders believe it is necessary or prudent to approach the injured party or his or her relatives, they should write the branch office for approval before doing so, providing the reasons why they believe it is necessary to do so. The branch office should consider very carefully how the victim or the victim's family would potentially be affected if they were to be interviewed.

2. ***What if a man who molested a child before getting baptized is already serving in a responsible position? Must he now step aside?***

Answer: Possibly not, but it depends on the circumstances. The elders should consider the matter and make a recommendation to the branch office. (See the answer to Question 1.)

Factors to consider: As with the previous situation, we believe there may be some circumstances that would enable him to continue serving. The elders would need to carefully consider the same questions and Scriptural principles outlined above. If he has served faithfully in a position of trust for many years, there is no evidence of repeating his past wrongdoing, his previous wrongdoing is known only by the respon-

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sible brothers, the congregation has respect for him, there is no outcry, and everything else points to his currently enjoying Jehovah's blessing, we think the branch office could allow him to retain his congregation privilege. Such a case could be decided on an individual basis.

3. If a man molested a child many years ago after getting baptized, could he retain his privilege of service? If so, under what circumstances could he continue to serve? Is there a time limit on how long ago the offense must have occurred?

Answer: Yes, it is possible. The elders should carefully consider the matter and provide full details in making a recommendation to the branch office. (See the answer to Question 1.) The following example illustrates under what circumstances a man might continue to serve: A Christian may have sexually molested a child many years ago, perhaps even several decades. The matter was handled at that time by the congregation. Since that time, he has had an exemplary record of theocratic service and has been serving faithfully. He has not repeated the sin and there is no evidence that he is a threat to children. Over many years he has performed "works that befit repentance." (Acts 26:20) In every respect, he has demonstrated himself to be chaste in conduct. All indications point to his having Jehovah's blessing. Given these circumstances and the fact that no present questions are being raised about his qualifications nor is there a cry for his removal, we believe that he might continue to serve. Of course, each situation would be judged individually.

Factors to consider: In the case of an individual who has committed child abuse while baptized, if twenty or more years have passed and the brother has built up a faithful record of service, there is no outcry, and everything else points to his currently enjoying Jehovah's blessing, the branch office may decide a valid basis exists to allow him to continue to serve in a position of trust, if he otherwise qualifies

If a former child molester continues in a position of responsibility—whether the sin occurred before or after baptism—there may be some serious problems if he later molests a child. This could bring great reproach on Jehovah's name and it could affect the faith and confidence that our brothers have in Jehovah's organization. So, the branch office is to consider this matter very carefully, considering all the potential implications and factors, before allowing a former child molester to serve.

4. The article on page 29 states that a "man known to have been a child molester" does not qualify for congregation privileges. What is meant by "known?"

Answer: A man "known" to be a former child molester has reference to the perception of the community and the Christian congregation. It would be one who has sexually abused a minor and is still viewed negatively by the victim's family, the congregation, or the elders; or one who is viewed by the community or secular authorities as someone who is a sexual abuser of minors, whether the abuse has been established by the congregation or not. Such a man is not "free from accusation," "irreprehensible," nor does he have "a fine testimony from those on the outside." (1 Tim. 3:1-7, 10; 5:22; Titus 1:7) In view of his notorious past, people in the community would not respect him and the brothers may even stumble if he were appointed.

Factors to consider: The term "known" needs to be qualified. At times, information regarding a man is known only to the elders. The fact that they have knowledge of his past sin should not automatically rule out his serving. There may be unusual circumstances that would indicate this is not necessary.

5. ***From a theocratic standpoint, whom do we regard as a "child molester?"***

Answer: The February 1, 1997, *Watchtower* "Questions From Readers" quotes *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*, which defines "pedophilia" as "sexual perversion in which children are the preferred sexual object." In referring to the article "Let Us Abhor What Is Wicked," the above-referred to "Questions From Readers" made the point "that what *The Watchtower* was discussing was a ***child's*** being made the ob-

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ject of sexual abuse, including fondling, by an ***adult."*** [Italics ours.] The January 1, 1997, *Watchtower* also refers to a child molester in the congregation as "a baptized *adult* Christian." Thus, from a theocratic standpoint, we would generally regard a "child molester" as an adult.

In other words, child sexual abuse occurs when an adult uses a child to gratify his or her own sexual desires. It may involve what the Bible calls fornication, or *por◎nei'a*, which could include manipulation of genitalia, sexual intercourse, and oral or anal sex. Some abusive acts may amount to what the Bible condemns as "loose conduct", such as the fondling of breasts, explicitly immoral proposals, showing pornography to a child, voyeurism, and indecent exposure. (Gal. 5:19-21; see footnote on page 10 of the October 8, 1993, issue of *Awake!*) Since the adult involves a child in such activities, all of these actions would be considered child sexual abuse.

Yet, the level of seriousness is not the same in every case. (For instance, an adult who rapes or fondles the genitalia of a child, would be much more culpable than someone who showed pornography to a child, even though such unclean actions could escalate.) Thus, the elders handling the matter would have to determine what the adult actually did.

6. ***At what age would we regard a child molester an adult? Does the age of the child who is the "victim" play a factor?***

Answer: The word "adult" is broadly defined, and so we cannot specify a certain age when one becomes an adult. From a legal standpoint, the definition depends on the country in which one lives. For instance, in the United States, one is generally viewed as an adult somewhere between the ages of 18 and 21. In other countries, the legal age may be defined differently. From a theocratic standpoint, the Bible does not indicate a specific calendar age at which time one enters adulthood. Therefore, each case would need to be dealt with on an individual basis.

When judging whether an individual is a child molester, you would need to consider the ages of both the "molester" and the "child." As pointed out in the March 14, 1997, letter to all bodies of elders, in judging cases of alleged child abuse, we are not referring to a situation where an adult has sexual relations with a consenting minor who is approaching adulthood and who is only a few years younger than the adult. Rather, we are referring to a situation where it is established that an adult brother or sister has been guilty of sexually abusing a young child or a non-consenting minor who is approaching adulthood. So it is important that the ages of both the "molester" and the "child" be considered. If some doubt existed as to whether an act constituted child molestation and whether privileges should be revoked, extended or retained by a man, the elders should refer the matter to the branch office and provide complete details.

7. Should the elders ask a man who is reaching out for congregation privileges if he ever molested a child?

Answer: No. It is not the duty of elders to query an individual about whether he ever molested children. It would also not be appropriate for elders to meet with brothers reaching out for privileges to make them aware of what is stated in the January 1, 1997, *Watchtower*. The point the elders should have in mind is that they should avoid recommending any man "known" as a former child molester.

Factors to consider: When the branch office approves a recommendation for one to be a ministerial servant or elder, we ask two elders to speak with a man before announcing his appointment. They will ask if there is anything in his past or in his personal or family life that would prevent him from being qualified to accept the appointment, or if there is any other reason why his appointment should not be announced. If he has never *previously served* as an elder or a ministerial servant, the elders should specifically ask him if he has ever been involved in the past with child sexual molestation. If he confesses to sexually molesting a

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child in the past, then the S-2 form is returned to the branch and the matter can be reconsidered. If the branch office is keeping track of such ones, as has been suggested, they would be aware of his past conduct if he is later recommended.

8. What does page 29 mean when it says that a known child molester "cannot be a pioneer"?

Answer: It means that if in the perception of the community or in the minds of those in the congregation a man is "known" to be a former child molester, he would not qualify as an auxiliary or regular pioneer.

Factors to consider: An auxiliary or regular pioneer is to be "an exemplary publisher." A person guilty of child abuse is not exemplary and would therefore not meet the qualifications of a regular pioneer. (See the *Organized* book page 113, paragraph 2.) It is also understood that a former child molester would not qualify as a special pioneer, a Bethel family member, an international servant, a missionary, for the traveling work, or any similar special full-time service. This would be so even if he is not perceived by the community to be a former child molester. However, if the offense was many years ago, the answers to Questions 1, 2, and 3 should be considered.

9. The article says that a former child molester could "have parts on the Theocratic Ministry School and non-teaching parts in the Service Meeting." What might these parts include? What other duties could he handle in the congregation? Are there other restrictions that would apply to him?

Answer: Anyone guilty of child molestation is not exemplary and so should not be extended to him any specific responsibility that could be construed as an assigned duty, even though some assignments might be considered minor. He should not be used to handle accounts, literature, magazines, or territories. Nor would he be used as an attendant, microphone handler, to operate sound equipment, to represent the congregation in prayer, or to present "Announcements" on the Service Meeting. He would not be used as the reader at the Congregation Book Study or *Watchtower* Study, nor to conduct a meeting for field service. It would be advisable not to have a book study in his home. And, he would not qualify to auxiliary or regular pioneer. Whereas he could volunteer to assist with general care of the Kingdom Hall where he attends meetings, he could not be approved to work on other Kingdom Halls or Assembly Halls. He may give student talks on the Theocratic Ministry School and share in non-teaching parts on the Service Meeting, provided that his doing so will not be offensive to those in the congregation who know of his past wrongdoing. In any case, he would not be given a teaching part, one that would normally be assigned to an elder or a capable ministerial servant who has cultivated good speaking ability. (See "Question Box" in the February 1975 and October 1976 *Kingdom Ministry*.)

Also, he should not be allowed to use the Kingdom Hall for his wedding. Since he is not in good standing and cannot be used in positions of responsibility within the congregation, it would be better for him to have the wedding ceremony in another location. Additionally, even if after many years have passed, it would not be good to have a book study in the home of a known child abuser since this may be a stumbling block for those who may know of brother's past.

Factors to consider: A Service Meeting teaching part would include being chairman of an introductory part on this meeting, presenting a talk, conducting an interview, and handling a question-and-answer part. He would not qualify for this. In the United States, there is little chance he could be used for such anyway because there is usually a sufficient number of elders and ministerial servants in each congregation to care for these parts. Logically, the expression "non-teaching parts" on the Service Meeting would primarily refer to participating in demonstrations or interviews under the direction of an elder or capable ministerial servant, as there is little else he could participate in on the Service Meeting. In the Theocratic Ministry School he could only give student talks.

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10. What procedure does the Society follow in handling letters of inquiry or reports that a publisher knows of an appointed one who molested a child in the past?

Answer: If the inquirer telephones the branch office, he should be encouraged to put his comments in writing and to provide the branch office with the complete details. If the inquirer writes, we could answer in harmony with the Scriptural principles presented earlier.

Factors to consider: It may be that letters will be received from publishers that say they know one who molested a child and he now has a congregation privilege. Some publishers have asked: 'What responsibility do I have to report him?' Others are very angry and have demanded his removal. Letters may be received from elders asking such questions and expressing similar views.

The validity of the accusation(s) should be verified to the degree possible. In the case of an elder writing, he should ascertain any legal responsibility he may have to the report the matter to the authorities. If the individual writing has not already done so, he should notify the Legal Department. Individuals should not be discouraged from reporting matters to the authorities, but should be reminded of the need for confidentiality, especially when speaking with others, thus avoiding any charge of slander.

11. What can the congregation elders do to protect children?

Answer: The elders should periodically remind parents of the need to review with their children articles in the organization's publications. (You may refer them to pages 170-71 of the book *Learning from the Great Teacher*) Elders want to be alert to the activity of any who are known to have molested children in the past. As the January 1. 1997, *Watchtower* points out on page 29: "True, not every child molester repeats the sin, *but many do*." An individual who has manifested a weakness in this regard should be sensitive to his need to not be alone with children. He should refrain from holding or from displaying other forms of affection for children. He must recognize that he had a weakness in this area in the past. The advice at 1 Corinthians 10:12 is wise counsel for one who has shown this kind of weakness. In the spirit of Galatians 6:1 elders should kindly, but firmly, endeavor to readjust any who have had a problem in the past and seem to be showing affection to children or cultivating inappropriate association with such ones. It also would be appropriate for elders to kindly caution any who are doing things that may be a cause for concern to others in the congregation. (l Cor. 10:32) By giving such specific, clear and pointed counsel, elders would be imitating Jehovah who gives specific advice to help his servants avoid temptation. (See the March 15, 1970, issue of *The Watchtower* "Questions from Readers," pages 190, 191.) At the same time, the response to this counsel by the former molester would be a basis for the elders to decide if he is determined to "abstain from every form of wickedness," and to clear himself of even any hint of wrongdoing. Does he in every respect demonstrate himself to be chaste?—l Thess. 5:22.

When a former child molester (perhaps known only to the elders) begins attending congregation meetings, or a molester is shown mercy and not disfellowshipped, designated elders should kindly, but frankly, discuss with him what type of actions regarding children should be clearly avoided. This would include not allowing children (other than his own) to spend the night in his home, not cultivating friendships with children, and the like.

Additionally, a former abuser should be told not to work alone with children in the field ministry. He should always be accompanied by another adult publisher who is in good standing in the congregation. This also applies to working with his own minor children in the field ministry. If he chooses to do so, there still should always be another adult present. This serves to protect the minor who might answer the door, the former abuser and the reputation of the congregation. In some cases, Caesar may place the restriction that a former abuser cannot engage in the house-to-house witnessing. (Rom. 13:1-7; Gal. 6:7) The elders could determine whether the restrictions apply to other forms of the field ministry such as telephone witnessing or

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letter writing. The elders may allow the individual to share in these forms of service alone if there is no objection from his parole officer or other government official or agency. If there is an objection, perhaps he can be allowed to participate in the company of another qualified adult publishers.

Factors to consider: This direction could apply in several situations, such as: When a "known" former child molester begins attending congregation meetings; when a judicial committee determines that a child molester is repentant and will remain a member of the Christian congregation; when a child molester is disfellowshipped and later cleans up his life and is reinstated.

Whenever the elders are notified of a known sex offender living in the territory, they are to mark the address on the territory card as a "Do Not Call." Thereafter, two elders should visit these addresses every six months to a year to give the individuals an opportunity to hear the good news and verify whether the sex offender still lives there.

12. What should be done if a former child molester moves to another congregation?

Answer: The normal procedure of sending a letter to the new congregation should be followed. As outlined in the February 1991 *Our Kingdom Ministry* "Question Box" and in the August 1, 1995, letter to all bodies of elders in the United States, our policy is always to send a letter of introduction when a publisher moves to another congregation. While this should be done in every case, it is imperative that this be done when one who is known to be a former child molester moves. On behalf of the elders, the Congregation Service Committee should write to the new congregation's body of elders and outline the publisher's background and what the elders in the former congregation have done to assist him. Any needed cautions should be provided to the new congregation's body of elders. This information is for the use of the elders only, and should be kept in the congregation's confidential files. The elders should send a copy of this letter to the branch office in one of the "SPECIAL BLUE" envelopes. If a "known" child abuser has moved and information about him has not been sent to the body of elders where he is now serving, then this should be done now.

If more than 20 years have passed and a former child abuser has a good record in the truth, and the branch office decides that he could be appointed to a position of trust—such as an elder, ministerial servant, or regular pioneer—the congregation elders will not have to pass on information regarding the past sin to another congregation's elders.

Factors to consider: If an individual is disfellowshipped, there is no need to forward detailed information to another congregation until the individual submits a request for reinstatement. The elders in the new congregation should only be told that the individual was guilty of child abuse.

We hope that these guidelines will help you in providing some direction and help to the brothers who write in from the field.

Your brothers,

FOR THE SERVICE COMMITTEE

CONFIDENTIAL (RO)

AN October 27, 2008
Dear Brothers:
It appears this was not sent on the date as shown below. We apologize for the misunderstanding.
Your brothers,
Service Committee

WORLD HEADQUARTERS OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES
25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483 • Tel. 718 560-5000

GAO:LPJ October 16, 2008 No. 148S

Via E-Mail

TIME-SENSITIVE

Branch Committee
AUSTRALIA

Re: Privacy Laws and Proposed Revision of S-77 Form

Dear Brothers:

We have at hand your letter dated LLD September 12, 2008, No. 105, and its enclosures, regarding the matter referenced above. You ask for our approval of the adjusted S-77 form *(Notification of Disfellowshipping or Disassociation*) and the Instructions for Completing the S-77 form. You also ask if *all* of the Scriptural references listed on the Instructions for specific disfellowshipping offenses need be listed on the adjusted S-77 form. In addition, you also ask how the adjusted S-77 form is to be identified, distinguishing it from the previous form.

We approve your proposed letter to All Bodies of Elders as well as your proposed adjusted S-77 form and Instructions. Also, *all* of the Scriptural references listed on the Instructions for specific disfellowshipping offenses should be listed on the adjusted S-77 form. As for designating your adjusted S-77 form, use "S-77-E-Au (10/08)."

Finally, we thank you for your explanation of how you propose to track persons accused of or disfellowshipped for child molestation or other abuse, and we look forward to receiving your further correspondence regarding the merits of forming a separate legal entity to minimize liability exposure.

Please be assured of our warm Christian love and best wishes.

Your brothers,

Service Committee

c: U.S. Legal Department

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WATCHTOWER
BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA
PO BOX 280, INGLEBURN, NSW 1890 AUSTRALIA ABN 42 002 861 225
PHONE: (02) 9829 5600
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SC:LLD November 20, 2008

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Re: New Arrangement for Notification of Disfellowshipping and Disassociation

Dear Brothers:

We would like to advise you of some adjustments that are being implemented in order to simplify the procedure involved in notifying the branch office of persons have been disfellowshipped or who have disassociated themselves from the congregation. These adjustments will also impact on the retention of documents related to such matters. We enclose 10 copies of the revised *Notification of Disfellowshipping or Disassociation* (S-77) along with a separate form containing adjusted *Instructions for Completing the Notification of Disfellowshipping or Disassociation* (*S-77*) (S-77i). The congregation secretary should immediately destroy/shred all unused versions of the previous S-77 form.

There are three fundamental changes regarding the notification procedure. We encourage all elders to become familiar with the adjusted procedures which are summarised below.

1. Offences and Scriptural References

Under the heading **"DISFELLOWSHIPPING"** the judicial committee must identify the offence(s) for which the disfellowshipping action was taken, along with the appropriate Scriptural references. Only offences and Scriptural references listed on the S-77i ("Instructions") should be used. Please note that **all** Scriptural references cited on the S-77i ("Instructions") should be listed. For example:

> *Porneia* (Lev. 20:10, 13, 15, 16; Rom. 1:24, 26, 27, 32; 1 Cor. 6:9, 10; Deut. 23:17, 18)
> Drunkenness (1 Cor. 5:11; 6:9, 10)

At times, you will need to discern which offence is applicable. For example, "Child abuse" is not an offence listed on the S-77i ("Instructions"). In this case, the Scriptural offence will likely be shown as:

> Gross uncleanness (Eph. 4:19, Gal. 5:19), or
> *Porneia* (Lev. 20:10, 13, 15, 16; Rom. 1:24, 26, 27, 32; 1 Cor. 6:9, 10; Deut. 23:17, 18)

Nothing apart from the offence and Scriptural references listed on the S-77i ("Instructions") should be recorded on this section of the form. Sufficient space has been provided to list several offences and Scriptural references. Before sending the S-77, the judicial committee chairman will review the S-77i ("Instructions") and check off each box under the heading "Reporting." After making a copy of the S-77 and summation (referred to the next paragraph) the chairman will post the two original documents to the branch office using a special blue envelope.

2. Summation

Previously, the judicial committee completed section 2 of the form by providing a summation of what took place. From now on, we would like the judicial committee to *always include a separate sheet* briefly summarising what took place. The summation should be concise and include the reasons why the judicial committee judged the person to be unrepentant. It would

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rarely be necessary for a summation to be longer than one page. The summation should not be stapled or fixed in a permanent way to the S-77 form.

In some instances, specific details may be necessary. For example, if a person is being disfellowshipped for viewing pornography, your comments would need to give insight on why such wrongdoing was considered to be "Gross uncleanness."—See our letter To All Bodies of Elders of June 7, 2006.

Usually, only the S-77 and summation will be sent to the branch office. However, where a person provides the elders with a letter of disassociation, this letter should also be sent to the branch office. As mentioned, a copy of each of these documents should be retained by the chairman of the judicial committee.

3. Document Retention

After the branch office processes the S-77 and summation, you will be sent a date-stamped copy of the S-77. In some cases, the branch office will add additional comments to the back page of the form. Once the date-stamped S-77 form is received, it should be placed in a sealed envelope in the congregation's confidential file. The front of the envelope should be dated and show the name of the disfellowshiped person as well as the names of the elders who comprised the judicial committee.

All other documents regarding the case should be destroyed. This includes any notes that the elders who served on the judicial may have retained, previous copies of the S-77, and the summation. The chairman of the judicial committee will be responsible to ensure all documents, with the exception of the date-stamped S-77 form, are destroyed. The chairman should then sign and date the back page of the S-77. The only exception to this would be the signed letter of disassociation. This letter should be retained in the congregation permanent file.

May we take this opportunity to express our heartfelt appreciation for your tireless efforts to shepherd the flock in your care. (1 Peter 5:2) Please be assured of our warm love and best wishes.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B. & T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

c. All Travelling Overseers
Enclosures:

1 x "Sample" *Notification of Disfellowshipping or Disassociation* (S-77a) [cream colour]
2 x *Instructions for Completing the Notification of Disfellowshipping or Disassociation* (*S-77*) (S-77i)
10 x *Notification of Disfellowshipping or Disassociation* (S-77) [blue colour]

PS to presiding overseer: After becoming thoroughly familiar with the contents of this letter and the enclosed letter dated LLD November 21, 2008, please make immediate arrangements for a meeting of the body of elders to read, discuss, and implement the direction provided in both of these letters.

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WATCHTOWER
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LLD November 21, 2008

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Re: Retention of Confidential Records

Dear Brothers:

No doubt you are aware of the increased emphasis governments are placing on the collection, retention, and dissemination of personal information. In an effort to minimise the unnecessary accumulation of confidential information, we wrote to you in our letter SC:LLD November 20, 2008, regarding the revised method of reporting disfellowshipping action and disassociation. Please read the November 20 letter before reading this letter.

We would like you to select two or three qualified elders from your body who are experienced in handling judicial matters to review the congregation permanent file. If there is only one elder in the local congregation, this brother will need to follow through as directed below. The selected elder(s) will undertake a review of all documents in the permanent files, other than letters from the branch office, and separate them into two categories:

1. Records regarding persons who remain disfellowshiped, disassociated, or who have been reinstated. These records must be sent to the branch office.
2. Persons reproved by a judicial committee, removed as an unbaptised publisher, and other non-judicial files containing personal information. These records are not required by the branch office.

INFORMATION TO BE SENT TO THE BRANCH OFFICE

Disfellowshipped or disassociated persons: The selected elder(s) will open and read each judicial file. After becoming thoroughly familiar with the contents, the selected elder(s) will complete a replacement copy on the new *Notification of Disfellowshipping or Disassociation* (S-77) form in harmony with the directions provided in our letter SC:LLD November 20, 2008. The selected elder(s) will print or type their names on the new S-77 form under the heading "The Judicial Committee" and place their signature on the space provided. Under their signatures, they should type in the names of the elders who served on the original judicial committee. A brief summation of the case should be prepared for each new S-77 form. The summation should not be stapled or fixed in a permanent way to the S-77 form. Please refer to the sample copy of the completed S-77 form enclosed in our November 20 letter.

Once the above procedure has been followed, the chairman will post all of the completed documents to the branch office via registered post marked "Attention Service Department." You will receive a date-stamped copy of the S-77 back from the branch. This copy should be placed in the congregation file and all other documents relating to the matter should be destroyed according to the instructions in our November 20 letter.

Reinstated persons: The selected elder(s) may destroy the record if more than five years have passed since the reinstatement, unless there is there is a good reason for retaining it

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(For example, a matter involving child abuse. See our letter September 25, 1984.) If a record is to be retained, the selected elder(s) will prepare a new S-77 form and summation as discussed above and send these to the branch office via registered post marked "Attention Service Department." After receiving a date-stamped copy of the S-77 form all other documents relating to the matter should be destroyed as discussed above.

INFORMATION THAT WILL NOT BE SENT TO THE BRANCH OFFICE

Persons reproved by a judicial committee or removed as an unbaptised publisher: The selected elder(s) may destroy records of persons reproved by a judicial committee if judicial restrictions have been removed and more than three years have passed since the matter was handled, unless there is there is a good reason for retaining it. Similarly, if a person previously removed as an unbaptised publisher and is now a publisher again or a baptised member of the congregation, the record may be destroyed unless there is there is a good reason for retaining it.

If a record is to be retained in either of these cases, the selected elder(s) will prepare a brief summation of the matter containing only pertinent information and destroy all other records. No copies of these records should be sent to the branch office.

Non-judicial files: The selected elder(s) may also want to review all other files in the congregation's permanent file (For example, letters of introduction and other general correspondence.) These files should also be destroyed unless there is a good reason to retain them. These records should not be sent to the branch office. For general information on the retention of congregation records, please refer to the Question Box in the February 1974 *Our Kingdom Ministry*.

We would like all bodies of elders to ensure that confidential records relating to the new S-77 form are dealt with immediately. We therefore ask you to handle this matter urgently, so that we receive your correspondence by December 20, 2008. We realise that considerable time will be involved in following through with these instructions and we express our sincere appreciation for your diligent assistance in dealing with this important matter. May Jehovah continue to bless the self-sacrificing spirit you and your dear families show. We send our warm Christian love and best wishes.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B. & T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

c. All travelling overseers

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WATCHTOWER
BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

PO BOX 280, INGLEBURN, NSW 1890 AUSTRALIA ABN 42 002 861 225

PHONE: (02) 9829 5600
FAX: (02) 9829 3616

LLD January 10, 2012

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Re: Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse in South Australia

Dear Brothers:

As mentioned in last year's Kingdom Ministry School, we would like to remind all elders that new legislation in South Australia has extended the obligations of mandatory reporting of child abuse further than has previously been the case. Ministers of religion and volunteers in a religious organisation, which would include elders, ministerial servants, and possibly pioneers, are now obliged to report child abuse if they have a reasonable suspicion that a child has been abused or is likely to be abused.

Since pioneers and ministerial servants will usually report any allegation or suspicion of child abuse to the elders, it is now even more important that elders contact the branch office immediately upon hearing of such. This should be done before any further inquiries or investigations take place.

We send our warm Christian love and best wishes.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B. & T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

c. Selected Travelling Overseers

PS to secretary: This letter should be retained in the "AUSTRALIA BRANCH" section of the congregation's permanent file of policy letters.

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WATCHTOWER
BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA
PO BOX 280, INGLEBURN, NSW 1890 AUSTRALIA ABN 42 002 861 225
PHONE: (02) 9829 5600
FAX: (02) 9829 3616

October 1, 2012

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Re: Child abuse

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Dear Brothers:

1. This letter updates the letters to all bodies of elders regarding child abuse dated August 1, 1995; March 14, 1997; July 20, 1998; April 1, 2004; June 5, 2006; and May 24, 2010. Those letters should be removed from the congregation permanent file of policy letters and be destroyed. *No one should keep originals or copies of any of those letters.*

2. Additionally, much fine direction has been included in the *Shepherding* textbook. Thus, elders should first consult the *Shepherding* textbook and review the Scriptural principles involved. They should thereafter study the additional points outlined in this letter. As you review this letter, please note that paragraphs 3-7 set forth **legal** concerns regarding accusations of child abuse. Paragraphs 8-20 set forth **congregational** concerns. This letter should be carefully consulted anytime a matter involving child abuse arises.

LEGAL CONCERNS REGARDING ACCUSATIONS OF CHILD ABUSE

3. **What is child abuse from a legal standpoint?** Child abuse includes the sexual or physical abuse of a minor (generally a person less than 18 years of age). It would also include the extreme neglect of a minor by his parent or guardian. Child sexual abuse generally includes sexual intercourse with a minor; oral or anal sex with a minor; fondling the genitals, breasts, or buttocks of a minor; voyeurism of a minor; indecent exposure to a minor; soliciting a minor for sexual conduct; or any kind of involvement with child pornography. Depending on the circumstances of the case, it may also include "sexting" with a minor. "Sexting" describes the sending of nude photos, seminude photos, or sexually explicit text messages electronically, such as by phone.

4. Some states have child-abuse reporting laws that, depending on the facts, mandate elders to report an accusation to the authorities. Thus, when elders learn of an accusation of child abuse, two elders from their congregation should *immediately* call the Legal Department for legal advice. If the individuals involved are in different congregations, each body of elders should arrange for two of their elders to call the Legal Department. A call should be made even when both persons involved in sexual misconduct are minors. The elders should *not* ask an alleged victim, the accused person, or relatives of the victim or accused to call the Legal Department. The elders should call the Legal Department even in the following situations:

- The alleged abuse occurred many years ago.
- The alleged abuse is based on the testimony of only one witness.
- The alleged abuse is believed to be a repressed memory.
- The alleged abuse involved perpetrators or victims who are deceased.
- The alleged abuse is believed to have already been reported to the authorities by someone.
- The alleged perpetrator or victim is no longer a member of the congregation.
- The alleged abuse occurred before the alleged perpetrator or victim was baptized.
- The alleged victim is now an adult.
- The alleged abuse occurred in the past, and you are not certain whether the elders involved at the time called the Legal Department for direction.

5. The Legal Department will provide you with legal advice based on the facts and the applicable law. If the individual who is accused of the child abuse is associated with a congregation, please provide the Legal Department with his date of birth and, if applicable, his date of baptism. The same information should be provided in connection with any victim(s). After a report has been made to the Legal Department, depending on the need, the elders may be directed to contact the Service Department for assistance with questions regarding theocratic or judicial aspects of the case or regarding how to protect children.

6. Two elders should also call the Legal Department regarding any prison inmate who has been accused of child abuse in the past and who is now associating with a congregation, such as by attending congregation meetings held in the prison. This would apply whether he is baptized or not. In some cases, elders may not be authorized to inquire of the offense that an inmate may have committed. But if the elders learn that the alleged offense has to do with child abuse, they should call the Legal Department immediately.

7. If the elders become aware of minors associated with a congregation **"sexting"** with other minors or of adults "sexting" with minors, the Legal Department should be called *immediately*. The Legal Department does not need to be called when the elders receive reports of adults (that is, cases in which all parties involved are at least 18 years old) "sexting" one another.

CONGREGATIONAL CONCERNS REGARDING ACCUSATIONS OF CHILD *SEXUAL* ABUSE

8. **What is child molestation from a congregational standpoint?** *Webster*'s *Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary* defines "pedophilia" as "sexual perversion in which children are the preferred sexual object." (See "Questions From Readers" in *The Watchtower* of February 1, 1997, page 29.) Deuteronomy 23:17, 18 condemns such practices as "detestable." (See the footnotes to verses 17 and 18 in the *Reference Bible*. Also, see the footnote on page 10 of the October 8, 1993, issue of *Awake!*) In harmony with these references, we are herein discussing sexual perversion in which children are the object of sexual abuse, including fondling, by an adult. We are not discussing a situation wherein a minor who is a willing participant and who is approaching adulthood has sexual relations with an adult who is a few years older than the minor nor, generally speaking, are we discussing situations in which only minors are involved. Rather, we are referring to situations in which it is established that an adult brother or sister has been guilty of sexually abusing a young child or has been sexually involved with a minor who is approaching adulthood and who was not a willing participant.

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9. As spiritual shepherds, elders should continue to make every effort to protect all in the congregation, especially children, from the unwholesome practices of the world. (Isa. 32:1, 2) One of these is child sexual abuse. We abhor the sexual abuse of children and will not protect any perpetrator of such repugnant acts from the consequences of his gross sin. (Rom. 12:9) Elders should take seriously their responsibility in this matter so that the congregations will be safeguarded from any valid accusation of neglect in protecting children from sexual abuse.

10. Regardless of whether the law requires the elders to report an accusation to the authorities, steps need to be taken to protect children. Elders should help the parents of the children involved to understand that they have the primary responsibility for protecting their children. Obviously, such parents will be keenly interested in taking precautions in this regard. Our publications contain helpful information on how parents can protect their children.—*w10* 11/1 p. 13; *w08* 10/1 p. 21; *g* 10/07 pp. 3-11; *lr* pp. 170-171; *g03* 2/8 p. 9; *g99* 4/8 pp. 9, 11; *g97* 4/8 p. 14; *w96* 12/1 pp. 13-14; *fy* pp. 61-62; *g93* 10/8 pp. 5-13.

11. In addition, the elders should investigate *every* allegation of child sexual abuse. When elders learn of an accusation, in addition to this letter, they should carefully review the direction outlined in the *Shepherding* textbook, chapter 12, paragraphs 18-21. However, in evaluating the evidence for internal congregational purposes, they must bear in mind the Bible's clear direction: "No single witness should rise up against a man respecting any error or any sin . . . At the mouth of two witnesses or at the mouth of three witnesses the matter should stand good." (Deut. 19:15) This requirement to consider testimony of two or three witnesses was confirmed by Jesus. (Matt. 18:16) Thus, although they investigate every allegation, the elders are not authorized by the Scriptures to take congregational action unless there is a confession or there are two credible witnesses. However, even though the elders are not authorized to take congregation action when there is only one witness, the elders should remain vigilant with regard to the conduct and activity of the accused. (See paragraph 12 of this letter.) If two persons are witnesses to separate incidents of the same kind of wrongdoing, their testimony can be deemed sufficient to take judicial action. (1 Tim. 5:19, 24, 25) If the person is not repentant over the gross sin, disfellowshipping action would be warranted. If the decision is to reprove, the reproof should be announced. (*ks10* chap. 7 par. 20, second bullet) This will serve as a protection for the congregation. Information concerning an individual accused of child molestation, proved or otherwise, should be placed in the congregation confidential file and marked "Do Not Destroy" and kept indefinitely. This includes *Notification of Disfellowshipping or Disassociation* (S-77) forms on individuals who have been disfellowshipped for child sexual abuse and then later reinstated. **Because of the delicate nature of handling a judicial case where an adult sexually abuses a child, please contact your circuit overseer.** He will designate an experienced elder from your circuit to serve as chairman of the judicial committee.

12. Loving elders should take steps to protect children, especially when a judicial committee determines that the one who has sexually abused a child is repentant and will be allowed to remain a member of the Christian congregation. The same concern would be shown when one who has sexually abused a child is disfellowshipped, later cleans up his life, and is reinstated. The elders should be especially mindful of the activity of any who are known to have sexually abused a child in the past. They should also ensure that newly-appointed elders are made aware of this caution. It would be appropriate for elders to talk kindly but very frankly to individuals who have manifested a weakness in this regard, strongly cautioning them to refrain from displaying affection for children, to avoid hugging or holding children on their lap, never to be alone with a child (other than their own), not to allow children to spend the night in

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their home, not to work alone in field service (hence, they should always be accompanied by another adult), and not to cultivate friendships with children. This not only serves to protect children but will help to prevent those who have sexually abused a child from putting themselves in the way of temptation, being subjected to an unfounded accusation, or doing things that may cause concern to others in the congregation. (1 Cor. 10:12, 32) If the individual does not follow this direction from the elders, the elders should *immediately* call the Service Department for assistance.

13. **If the individual does not follow the above direction from the elders, or if the elders believe he may be a "predator," the elders should immediately call the Service Department for assistance.** A "predator" is one who clearly lacks self-control and by his actions provides reason to believe he will continue to prey on children. Not every individual who has sexually abused a child in the past is considered a "predator." **The branch office, not the local body of elders, determines whether an individual who has sexually abused children in the past will be considered a "predator."** If the branch office determines that an individual will be considered a "predator," parents with minor children will need to be warned of the danger that exists so that they can protect their children. In such a case, and **only after receiving direction and instructions from the Service Department,** two elders should be assigned to meet with the parents of minor children in order to provide a warning. At the same time that parents are warned about an individual, it would be appropriate for the elders to inform the individual that parents in the congregation will be discreetly informed.

14. What step should be taken when you learn of an adult who has been viewing **child pornography?** As stated in paragraph 4 of this letter, two elders should call the Legal Department. After receiving legal direction, the elders will be directed to contact the Service Department for theocratic direction.

15. **Who is considered a known child molester?** The January 1, 1997, *Watchtower* article "Let Us Abhor What Is Wicked" mentions on page 29 that a man "known to have been a child molester" does not qualify for privileges in the congregation. The expression "known to have been a child molester" has reference to how such a man is considered in the community and in the Christian congregation. In the eyes of the congregation, an adult "known" to be a former child molester is not "free from accusation" or "irreprehensible," nor does he have "a fine testimony from people on the outside." (1 Tim. 3:1-7, 10; 5:22; Titus 1:7) In view of his past, those in the community would not respect him and congregation members might be stumbled over his appointment. **Keep in mind that the branch office, not the local body of elders, determines whether one who has sexually abused a child is considered a known child molester.**

16. **When a known child molester moves to another congregation,** the elders should follow the procedure set forth in the *Shepherding* textbook, chapter 12, paragraph 20. If a known child molester is in prison and is transferred to another facility or is released, it is important to inform the appropriate congregation of his situation in writing, if it is possible to do so. This direction also applies when one considered a "predator," as outlined in paragraph 13 of this letter, moves to another congregation.

17. From time to time, **local authorities may inform you** that a sex offender is living in your area. The notice usually provides the address of the individual and may state the nature of his criminal activity. In such a case, the elders should list that address on the appropriate ter-

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ritory card as a "Do Not Call." Thereafter, two elders can periodically make calls on that address. Following this direction will assist you in protecting the flock.

18. **Sexual misconduct involving only minors:** What steps should elders take when minors (generally a person less than 18 years of age) engage in sexual misconduct with one another? As stated in paragraph 4 of this letter, two elders should call the Legal Department even when both persons are minors. Minors who have sexual contact with one another are generally not considered as child molesters by the congregation. However, regardless of the ages of those involved, such misconduct is serious. Elders should be alert to render assistance and to protect children. The body of elders should also arrange for the minor(s) to receive assistance in the presence of their believing parent(s), in harmony with the principles and guidelines found in the Scriptures and in our publications.

19. When baptized minors become involved in **"sexting,"** the elders must use good judgment in determining whether the wrongdoing has escalated to a point warranting judicial action. Helpful information can be found in "Questions From Readers" in the July 15, 2006, issue of *The Watchtower*. Please review this material carefully before concluding that a baptized minor is guilty of gross uncleanness or "brazen conduct, loose conduct." (*ks10* chap. 5 par. 9) However, if the baptized minor has been previously counseled and persists in the wrong course, in most cases, judicial action is taken. Each case must be evaluated on its own merit. If elders have questions regarding a specific case they should contact the Service Department. Also, keep in mind that Christian parents should be included in any discussions the elders have with a minor who may be involved in "sexting."

20. The potential serious consequences associated with **"sexting"** underscore the importance of Christian parents supervising their children's use of cellular telephones and other means of electronic communication. Excellent suggestions can be found on pages 6-7 of the November 2009 issue of *Awake!* (Matt. 24:45) When a minor has been involved in "sexting," elders can use such excellent material to offer Scriptural counsel and encouragement to both the parents and the child.—1 Pet. 5:2, 3.

HELPING VICTIMS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

21. Some Christians may become troubled with memories and feelings associated with past child sexual abuse. When an elder is approached by someone concerned or distraught about such memories, he should "speak consolingly." (1 Thess. 5:14) Elders should manifest an empathetic, compassionate, patient, and supportive response to those approaching them about such memories. An elder must never be alone with or become the sole confidant of a sister to whom he is not closely related. Helpful suggestions and guidelines can be found in the *Shepherding* textbook, chapter 4, paragraphs 21-28. **The elders should carefully review this material when helping victims of child sexual abuse.**

RESTRICTIONS AND PRIVILEGES

22. It cannot be said in every case that one who has sexually abused a child could never qualify for privileges of service in the congregation. However, the elders will certainly want to be very cautious, especially when dealing with one who had repeatedly engaged in this kind of wrongdoing or who had been disfellowshipped for such an offense. Before privileges can be extended, such a man must meet the Scriptural qualifications of being "self-controlled" and "irreprehensible." He must "also have a fine testimony" from individuals inside and outside the congregation. (Titus 1:6-8; 1 Tim. 3:2, 7) Elders should keep in mind what is stated in the January 1, 1997, *Watchtower* article "Let Us Abhor What Is Wicked," page 29, paragraph 2:

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"Child sexual abuse reveals an unnatural fleshly weakness. Experience has shown that such an adult may well molest other children. True, not every child molester repeats the sin, but many do. And the congregation cannot read hearts to tell who is and who is not liable to molest children again. (Jeremiah 17:9) Hence, Paul's counsel to Timothy applies with special force in the case of baptized adults who have molested children: 'Never lay your hands hastily upon any man; neither be a sharer in the sins of others.' (1 Timothy 5:22)."

23. Hence, privileges of service should never be extended hastily. Considerable time should always pass before one who has sexually abused a child is recommended, if ever. It would be up to the local body of elders to determine whether such a recommendation should be made to the branch office, taking into account all factors in each individual case. Please note that unless specifically approved by the branch office, one who has sexually abused a child should not be used to conduct any meetings held in the congregation or in a prison, and he does not qualify to work on any Kingdom Hall project other than one involving the congregation where he serves as a publisher.

24. If the elders as a body conclude that one who has sexually abused a child in the distant past may now qualify for privileges, they should assign two elders to call the Service Department.

25. In view of the foregoing, each elder should make the following notation next to chapter 3, paragraph 20; chapter 5, paragraph 10, second bullet; chapter 7, paragraph 20, second bullet; and chapter 12, paragraph 18, of the *Shepherding* textbook: "See letter dated October 1, 2012, to all bodies of elders."

26. It is hoped that the direction provided in this letter will help you brothers in handling matters in the congregation so as to protect children from sexual abuse and, at the same time, balance Bible-based justice and mercy. We also hope this direction will assist you to lovingly help victims of child sexual abuse. May Jehovah's rich blessing continue to be with you in carrying out your many responsibilities as shepherds of the flock. With this letter we send our warm Christian love and best wishes.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B.&T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

cc: Traveling overseers

PS to secretary: This letter should be retained in the congregation permanent file of policy letters. You may wish to update the congregation copy of *Index to Letters for Bodies of Elders* (S-22) at this time as well.

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WATCHTOWER
BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

PO BOX 280, INGLEBURN, NSW 1890 AUSTRALIA ABN 42 002 861 225 PHONE: (02) 9829 5600 FAX: (02) 9829 3616

October 2, 2012

TO ALL CIRCUIT OVERSEERS

Re: Child abuse

Dear Brothers:

As outlined in paragraph 11 of the October 1, 2012, letter to all bodies of elders, the elders will contact you when handling judicial cases involving child sexual abuse. When you are contacted, please identify the brother on the special committee list who is best qualified to serve as chairman of the judicial committee. He will serve on the committee along with two elders from the local congregation. This provision will enable the two local elders to gain experience by observing how the experienced elder handles matters. Also, the two local elders will be able to shepherd the victim, the victim's family, the family of the accused, and any others who require assistance.

When preparing the list of brothers qualified to serve on special committees, please make a notation next to the names of any brothers whom you feel are qualified to handle judicial cases involving child abuse. (*tg* chap. 23 par. 4) This should prove helpful to you if you are contacted by the body of elders for assistance. In due course, *Traveling Overseer Guidelines* will be updated to reflect this adjusted procedure.

We send our warm Christian love.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B.&T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

cc: District overseers

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

WORLD HEADQUARTERS

HSI:HSE August 27, 2013 No. C-20907S

CONFIDENTIAL

Branch Committee
ALL BRANCHES

Re: *Guidelines for Branch Office Service Desks* (S-66)

Dear Brothers:

We are pleased to inform you of the release of *Guidelines for Branch Office Service Desks* (S-66). These revised deskman guidelines take into account the latest direction to all bodies of elders on child abuse matters. The S-66 replaces the current *Guidelines for Branch Service Desk Use Only*—September 1, 2005, which were sent with our letter to all branches dated SC:AT September 7, 2005, and which were then later updated in our letter to all branch offices GAJ:AT April 30, 2007. These older guidelines should be destroyed.

The S-66 document is now available to Branch Committee and Country Committee members who have access to the "Highly Confidential" security role in the Materials Distribution System (MDS). As explained below, translations of the S-66 will be made available in MDS in other languages. The Branch or Country committee is responsible to provide a printed copy of the S-66 to each member of the Branch or Country committee as well as to each of the elders serving as deskmen in the Service Department. (*Branch Organization* 6:36) No one else is authorized to access the S-66. Electronic copies should not be distributed and the S-66 will not be made available in any Research library.

As a further aid to your understanding the latest refinements to these guidelines, the MDS item also contains a copy of the S-66 showing the additions and deletions that were made. A printed copy of that second document may also be provided to each authorized brother for his review. Once he has reviewed that document showing the revisions, it should be destroyed. On October 1, 2013, that second document will be removed permanently from the MDS item.

Since it is understood that translations of the S-66 will be needed, vernacular editions of the S-66 may be made available by translation branches on MDS in the major languages. Since the S-66 is considered non-publication material, the Translation Department should not take the lead in translating this material. (See *Branch Organization* 8:23 and the circular letter to all branches dated GED:ETA June 29, 2010) **Only Service Department deskmen or their secretaries who are elders should be used for the translation work.** In the case of the S-66, any translation inquiries that cannot be answered by the Branch Committee should be referred to the Service Committee in a numbered letter.

Please be assured of our warm Christian love and best wishes.

Your brothers,

Service Committee

c: Governing Body
WHQ Legal Department
Writing Committee
Writing Prepress

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GUIDELINES FOR BRANCH OFFICE SERVICE DESKS

1. The January 1, 1997, *Watchtower* article "Let Us Abhor What Is Wicked" explains the congregational viewpoint of child abuse. The October 1, 2012, letter to all bodies of elders provided instructions in connection with handling child abuse matters that may arise in the congregation. As questions come up from the field in this regard, what is outlined in these *Guidelines for Branch Office Service Desks* (S-66) should help you in formulating answers to some of these questions. Copies of the guidelines are *only* to be given to Branch Committee members and service desks. While references to the accused or to the victim are in the masculine gender, the guidelines apply equally to females.

2. The specific comments that are found below are not to be included in the letters the deskman may send out to answer questions raised by those who make inquiries but are for the guidance of the service desk only. As you consider each matter, do so prayerfully and carefully, allowing holy spirit to guide your mind and heart, so that any direction given to the field reflects divine wisdom and discernment as well as love and concern for the sheep.—1 Ki. 3:9; Prov. 2:1-12; Acts 20:28; 1 Cor. 2:10-13; Jas. 1:5; 1 Pet. 5:2, 3.

QUESTION 1: According to the January 1, 1997, *Watchtower* article, "a man known to have been a child molester does not qualify for a responsible position in the congregation." Does that mean he would automatically be disqualified even if the molestation took place before his becoming a baptized Christian?

3. **Answer:** Not necessarily. Someone who has come into the truth has been 'made new in the force actuating his mind and has put on the new personality.' (Eph. 4:22-24) While he has been "washed clean" from sins committed prior to baptism, his past conduct could still have an effect on his qualifying for congregation responsibilities. (1 Cor. 6:11) Therefore, all of the factors would need to be carefully weighed. In any case, he should never be recommended hastily. In view of potential difficulty, although the elders make the recommendation, the final decision is always made by the branch office, not by the local elders.

4. The following questions should be considered when determining whether he qualifies to serve: How many years ago did he commit the sin? What was the extent of the conduct? Was it a single incident, or was it repeated? What were the circumstances? What was his age at the time? What was the age of his victim? Is there an outcry about him? Were the authorities ever informed of his actions? If so, what action did they take, and do they have him listed as a sex offender? How do the community and the secular authorities view him? If he were extended privileges, would this be disturbing to others, including the victim or the victim's relatives? Has he ever been disfellowshipped, reproved, counseled, or otherwise dealt with? Has he given clear indication by his words and actions that he is now guided by God's spirit and can be trusted? (Rom. 8:5; Gal. 5:16) Has he demonstrated that he is "self-controlled"? (Titus 1:8; Gal. 5:23) Does he have a reputation of being "free from accusation," "irreprehensible," having "a fine testimony from people on the outside"? (1 Tim. 3:1-7, 10; 5:22; Titus 1:7) How do the victim and the victim's relatives view him now? Are members of the congregation aware of what took place? How do they view him?

5. As to determining how a former child molester is now viewed when the abuse took place many years ago, there is no need for elders to conduct interviews either with members of the congregation or with the one wronged or with the wronged one's relatives in order to determine what the current feeling is toward the former child molester. Doing so might bring up painful memories and cause further harm. Rather, from their *own observation*, elders are to evaluate and report the relationship between the victim and the former abuser, if possible.

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6. On the other hand, if the elders believe it is necessary or prudent to approach the victim or the victim's relatives, they should contact the branch office for approval before doing so, providing the reasons why they believe it is necessary to do so. The branch office should consider very carefully how the victim and the victim's family would potentially be affected if they were to be interviewed.

QUESTION 2: What if a man who molested a child before getting baptized is already serving in a responsible position? Must he now step aside?

7. **Answer:** Possibly not, but it depends on the circumstances. The elders should consider the matter and make a recommendation to the branch office.—See the answer to Question 1.

8. **Factors to consider:** As with the previous situation, we believe there may be some circumstances that would enable him to continue serving. The elders would need to consider carefully the same questions and Scriptural principles outlined above. If he has served faithfully in a position of trust for many years, if there is no evidence of repeating his past wrongdoing, if his previous wrongdoing is known only by the responsible brothers, if the congregation has respect for him, if there is no outcry, and if everything else points to his currently enjoying Jehovah's blessing, we believe the branch office could allow him to retain his congregation privilege. Such a case would be decided on an individual basis.

QUESTION 3: If a man molested a child many years ago after getting baptized, could he retain his privilege of service? If so, under what circumstances could he continue to serve? Is there a certain amount of time that must have passed?

9. **Answer:** It is possible for him to retain his privilege. The elders should carefully consider the matter and provide full details in making a recommendation to the branch office. (See the answer to Question 1.) The following example illustrates under what circumstances a man might continue to serve: A Christian may have sexually molested a child many years ago, perhaps even several decades. The matter was handled at that time by the congregation. Since that time, he has had an exemplary record of theocratic service and has been serving faithfully. He has not repeated the sin, he has gone on record before Jehovah and the elders that there have been no other incidents of child abuse, and there is no evidence that he is a threat to children. Over many years he has performed "works that befit repentance." (Acts 26:20) In every respect, he has demonstrated himself to be chaste in conduct. All indications point to his having Jehovah's blessing. Given these circumstances and the fact that no present questions are being raised about his qualifications and there is no cry for his removal, we believe that he might continue to serve. Of course, each situation would be judged individually.

10. **Factors to consider:** In the case of an individual who has committed child abuse while baptized, if 20 or more years have passed and (1) the brother has built up a faithful record of service, (2) there is no outcry, and (3) everything else points to his currently enjoying Jehovah's blessing, the branch office may decide that a valid basis exists to allow him to continue to serve in a position of trust, if he otherwise qualifies.

11. If a former child molester continues in a position of responsibility—whether the sin occurred before or after baptism—there may be some serious problems if he later molests a child. This could bring great reproach on Jehovah's name, and it could affect the faith and confidence that our brothers have in Jehovah's organization. So the branch office is to consider this matter very carefully, weighing all the potential implications and factors before determining how a former child molester is to be used in the congregation.

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Question 4: The January 1, 1997, *Watchtower* article on page 29 states that "a man known to have been a child molester" does not qualify for congregation privileges. What is meant by "known"?

12. **Answer:** "A man known to have been a child molester" has reference to the perception of the community and the Christian congregation. It may be one who has sexually abused a minor and who is still viewed negatively by the victim's family, the congregation, or the elders, or it may be one who is viewed by the community or secular authorities as someone who is a sexual abuser of minors, whether the abuse has been established by the congregation or not. Such a man is not "free from accusation" or "irreprehensible." Neither does he have "a fine testimony from people on the outside." (1 Tim. 3:1-7, 10; 5:22; Titus 1:7) In view of his notorious past, people in the community would not respect him, and the brothers may even stumble if he were appointed.

13. **Factors to consider:** The term "known" needs to be qualified. At times, information regarding a man is known only to the elders. The fact that they have knowledge of his past sin should not automatically rule out his serving. There may be unusual circumstances that would indicate this is not necessary. At times, the branch office may determine that a man qualifies for congregation privileges, as he is not considered to be a "known" child molester. He may then move to another congregation. In such cases, the elders would not normally mention anything about his past conduct in the letter of introduction unless the branch office has determined that there is reason to do so.

14. In the case of a man who molested a child in the distant past, the branch office will advise the elders first to use him on a gradual basis *before* appointing him to a position of trust. In this way, he continues to build a record of righteousness, and this will often reveal whether the victim, or perhaps others, has concerns about his having privileges. For example, it may be he can be given duties such as passing microphones, operating sound equipment, and helping with literature or magazines. After the elders have observed him for a while and as he continues to build a commendable record, they may recommend to the branch office that he be allowed to use his home for meetings for field service or be given other special privileges, such as pioneering, offering congregation prayer, or other congregational assignments that require one to be exemplary. As he continues to give evidence of being guided by God's spirit and if there is no apparent outcry, the elders may eventually recommend that he be appointed as a ministerial servant.

QUESTION 5: From a congregational standpoint, whom do we regard as "a child molester"?

15. **Answer:** The February 1, 1997, *Watchtower* "Questions From Readers" quotes *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary,* which defines "pedophilia" as "sexual perversion in which children are the preferred sexual object." In referring to the article "Let Us Abhor What Is Wicked," the above-referred-to "Questions From Readers" made the point that "what *The Watchtower* was discussing was a *child's* being made the object of sexual abuse, including fondling, by an *adult."* The January 1, 1997, *Watchtower* also refers to a child molester in the congregation as "a baptized *adult* Christian." The October 1, 2012, letter to all bodies of elders says, "We are referring to situations in which it is established that an adult brother or sister has been guilty of sexually abusing a young child or has been sexually involved with a minor who is approaching adulthood who was not a willing participant." Thus, from a congregational standpoint, "a child molester" refers to an adult.

16. In other words, child sexual abuse occurs when an adult uses a child to gratify his own sexual desires. It may involve what the Bible calls fornication, or *por·nei'a*, which could include manipulation of genitalia, sexual intercourse, and oral or anal sex. Some abusive acts, such as the fondling of breasts, explicitly immoral proposals, showing pornography to a child, voyeurism, and indecent exposure, may amount to what the Bible condemns as brazen conduct. (Gal. 5:19-21; *ks10*

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chap. 5 par. 10, second bullet point; *g* 10/07 p. 3, ftn.; *g93* 10/8 p. 10, ftn.) Since the adult involves a child in such activities, all of these actions would be considered child sexual abuse.

17. Yet, the level of seriousness is not the same in every case. (For instance, an adult who rapes a child or fondles the genitalia of a child would be much more culpable than someone who showed pornography to a child, even though such an unclean action could escalate.) Thus, the elders handling the matter would have to determine what the adult actually did.

18. **Factors to consider:** At times, the conduct of an individual may not be classified as child abuse from the perspective of the congregation, but from a legal standpoint he may be viewed as guilty of such. If his name appears on some public listing of sex offenders, he may not be considered one who is "free from accusation," "irreprehensible," 'having a fine testimony from people on the outside' and thus not qualify to serve in an appointed position or to be used for even minor privileges while this situation exists. (1 Tim. 3:1-7, 10; 5:22; Titus 1:7) However, this may need to be considered on a case-by-case basis.

19. Viewing child pornography is a serious violation of Jehovah's standards, and any involved in such conduct would need strong counsel and, depending on the frequency and the extent of his viewing, could be subject to judicial action. (See the April 10, 2012, letter to all bodies of elders.) Nonetheless, if the one who views child pornography does not involve anyone else in his actions, this is not considered to be child abuse from a congregational standpoint. Still, the elders should be alert to the conduct of the individual and provide any appropriate Scriptural counsel in connection with his interactions with children.

QUESTION 6: At what age would we regard someone as an adult who could be guilty of child molestation? Is the age of the victim a factor?

20. **Answer:** The word "adult" is broadly defined, and so we cannot specify a certain age when one becomes an adult. From a legal standpoint, the definition depends on the area in which one lives. For instance, in the United States, one is often viewed as an adult when one is 18 years old. In other countries, the legal age may be defined differently. From a congregational standpoint, the Bible does not indicate a specific calendar age at which time one enters adulthood. Therefore, each case would need to be dealt with on an individual basis.

21. When judging whether an individual is a child molester, you would need to consider the ages of both the "molester" and the "child." As pointed out in the October 1, 2012, letter to all bodies of elders, we are not referring to a situation in which an adult has had sexual relations with a minor who was approaching adulthood and who was a willing participant and who was only a few years younger than the adult. Rather, we are referring to a situation in which it is established that an adult brother or sister has been guilty of sexually abusing a young child or of sexual activity with a minor approaching adulthood who was not a willing participant. So it is important that the ages of both are considered. If some doubt exists as to whether an act constituted child molestation and whether privileges should be revoked, extended, or retained, the elders should refer the matter to the branch office and provide complete details.

22. **Factors to consider:** As already mentioned, the difference in age between the adult and the minor is a key factor. Also, what is the emotional and spiritual maturity of the minor? Has the minor already demonstrated a pattern of immoral behavior? For example, is the minor sexually active? Was the adult dating the minor with the consent of the minor's parents and with a view toward marriage? Or is it apparent that the adult took advantage of the inexperience or immaturity of the minor? Again, each case would need to be evaluated on its own merits, since the age and maturity of the minor play a factor.

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23. While minors who have sexual contact with minors are not considered to be child molesters by the congregation, it is still necessary for two elders to call the branch office. Elders should be alert to render spiritual assistance to minors in the presence of their believing parent(s), especially in the case of a minor who was taken advantage of by another minor who was significantly older.—See the October 1, 2012, letter to all bodies of elders, paragraph 18.

QUESTION 7: Should the elders ask a man who is reaching out for congregation privileges whether he has ever molested a child?

24. **Answer:** No. It is not the duty of elders to query an individual about whether he ever molested children. It would also not be appropriate for elders to arrange meetings to explain to brothers reaching out for privileges what is stated in the January 1, 1997, *Watchtower*. The point the elders should have in mind is that they should avoid recommending any "man known to have been a child molester."

25. **Factors to consider:** When the branch office approves a recommendation for one to be a ministerial servant or an elder, we ask two elders to speak with the man before his appointment is announced. They will ask if there is anything in his past or in his personal or family life that would prevent him from being qualified to accept the appointment or if there is any other reason why his appointment should not be announced. If he has never *previously served* as an elder or a ministerial servant, the elders should specifically ask him if he has ever been involved in the past with child sexual molestation. If he confesses to sexually molesting a child in the past, then the S-2 form or S-52 appointment letter is returned to the branch office and the matter is reconsidered.—See the *Shepherding* textbook, chapter 3, paragraphs 12 and 13.

QUESTION 8: What does page 29 of the January 1, 1997, *Watchtower* article mean when it says that "a man known to have been a child molester . . . cannot be a pioneer"?

26. **Answer:** It means that if the perception of the community or the congregation is that a man is a sexual abuser of minors, he would not qualify as an auxiliary pioneer or as a regular pioneer.

27. **Factors to consider:** An auxiliary pioneer or a regular pioneer is to be "an exemplary publisher." A person guilty of child abuse is not exemplary and would therefore not meet the qualifications of a pioneer. (See the *Organized* book, page 113, paragraph 2.) It is also understood that a known child molester would not qualify as a special pioneer, as a Bethel family member, as an international servant, as a missionary, for the traveling work, or for any similar special full-time service. This would be so even if he is not perceived by the community to be a known child molester. However, if the offense was many years ago, the answers to Questions 1-4 should be considered.

QUESTION 9: The January 1, 1997, *Watchtower* article says that a known child molester could "have parts in the Theocratic Ministry School and nonteaching parts in the Service Meeting." What might these parts include? What other duties could he handle in the congregation? Are there other restrictions that would apply to him?

28. **Answer:** Anyone who is a known child molester is not exemplary and so there should not be extended to him any specific responsibility that could be construed as an assigned duty, even though some assignments might be considered minor. He should not be used to handle accounts, literature, magazines, or territories. Nor would he be used as an attendant, a microphone handler, an operator of sound equipment, or as one who represents the congregation in prayer. He would not be used as the reader at the Congregation Bible Study or the *Watchtower* Study or to conduct a meeting for field service. It would be advisable not to use his home for meetings for field service. And he would not qualify to auxiliary pioneer or regular pioneer. Although he could volunteer to assist

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with general care of the Kingdom Hall where he attends meetings, he could not be approved to work on other Kingdom Halls or Assembly Halls. He may give student talks on the Theocratic Ministry School and share in nonteaching parts on the Service Meeting, provided that his doing so will not be offensive to those in the congregation who know of his past wrongdoing. In any case, he would not be given a teaching part, one that would normally be assigned to an elder or a capable ministerial servant who has cultivated good speaking ability.

29. He should not be allowed to use the Kingdom Hall for his wedding. Since he is not in good standing, it would be better for him to have the wedding ceremony in another location. Additionally, even after many years have passed, it would not be good to use his home for the meetings for field service since this may be a stumbling block for those who may know of the brother's past.

30. **Factors to consider:** A Service Meeting teaching part would include presenting a talk, conducting an interview, and handling a question-and-answer part. He would not qualify for these. Logically, the expression "nonteaching parts in the Service Meeting" would primarily refer to participating in demonstrations or interviews under the direction of an elder or capable ministerial servant. In the Theocratic Ministry School, he could only be assigned student talks.

QUESTION 10: What procedure does the branch office follow in handling letters of inquiry or reports that a publisher knows of an appointed one who molested a child in the past?

31. **Answer:** If the inquirer telephones the branch office, the service desk should ask him for the name of the accused person and, if available, the congregation where he attends. If there is an indication that the matter has already been reported to the branch office, the service desk can offer the caller spiritual encouragement and comfort, as needed. If it cannot be determined if the branch office already has a record of the matter, the call taker will listen to the caller's concerns, take note of the allegation, and encourage him to discuss his concerns with his local elders and to ask his elders to call the branch office. If the elders do not call within 24 hours, the branch office will call the elders. If the inquirer writes, an answer could be provided in harmony with the Scriptural principles presented earlier.

32. **Factors to consider:** It may be that letters will be received from publishers who say they know one who molested a child and who now has a congregation privilege. Some publishers have asked, "What responsibility do I have to report him?" Others have been very angry and have demanded his removal. Letters or calls may be received from elders asking such questions and expressing similar views.

33. The validity of the accusation should be verified to the degree possible. In the case of an elder's calling or writing, he should be informed of any legal responsibility he may have to report the matter to the authorities. Individuals should not be discouraged from reporting matters to the authorities but should be reminded of the need for confidentiality when speaking with others, thus avoiding any charge of slander.

QUESTION 11: What can the congregation elders do to protect children?

34. **Answer:** The elders should periodically remind parents of the need to review with their children articles in the organization's publications. (You may refer them to pages 170-171 of the book *Learn From the Great Teacher*.) Elders want to be alert to the activity of any who are <u>known</u> to have molested children in the past. As the January 1, 1997, *Watchtower* points out on page 29: "True, not every child molester repeats the sin, *but many do."* An individual who has manifested a weakness in this regard should be sure he is never alone with other people's children. He should refrain from holding them or from displaying other forms of affection for them. He must recognize

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that he has had a weakness in this area in the past. The advice at 1 Corinthians 10:12 is wise counsel for one who has shown this kind of weakness. In the spirit of Galatians 6:1, elders should kindly, but firmly, endeavor to readjust any who have had a problem in the past and seem to be showing affection to children or cultivating inappropriate association with such ones. It also would be appropriate for elders to kindly caution any who are doing things that may be a cause for concern to others in the congregation. (l Cor. 10:32) By giving specific, clear, and pointed counsel, elders imitate Jehovah, who gives specific advice to help his servants avoid temptation. (See the March 15, 1970, issue of *The Watchtower,* "Questions From Readers," pages 190-191.) At the same time, the response to this counsel by the former molester would be a basis for the elders to decide if he is determined to "abstain from every form of wickedness" and to clear himself of even any hint of wrongdoing. Does he in every respect demonstrate himself to be chaste?—l Thess. 5:22.

35. When a former child molester (perhaps known only to the elders) begins attending congregation meetings or when a molester is shown mercy and is not disfellowshipped, designated elders should kindly, but frankly, discuss with him what type of actions regarding children he should clearly avoid. This would include not allowing children (other than his own) to spend the night in his home, not cultivating friendships with children, and the like. In addition, ensure that newly appointed elders are aware of his past history of child abuse and any of the restrictions that have been imposed.—See the October 1, 2012, letter to all bodies of elders, paragraph 12.

36. Additionally, a known child molester should be told not to work alone with children in the field ministry. He should always be accompanied by another adult publisher who is in good standing in the congregation. This also applies to working with his own minor children in the field ministry. If he chooses to do so, there still should always be another adult present. This serves to protect any minor who answers the door, the former abuser, and the reputation of the congregation. In some cases, Caesar may place the restriction that a former abuser cannot engage in house-to-house witnessing. (Rom. 13:1-7; Gal. 6:7) The elders could determine whether the restrictions apply to other forms of the field ministry, such as telephone witnessing, witnessing by means of electronic media, or letter writing. If allowed to share in these forms of service, the elders would arrange for him to do so in the company of another qualified adult publisher.

37. **Factors to consider:** This direction could apply in several situations, such as when a "known" former child molester begins attending congregation meetings, when a judicial committee determines that a child molester is repentant and will remain a member of the Christian congregation, or when a child molester is disfellowshipped and later cleans up his life and is reinstated.

38. Whenever the elders become aware of a sex offender living in the territory, they are to mark the address on the territory card as a "Do Not Call." Thereafter, two elders should periodically visit the address, perhaps every six months to a year. They will verify whether the sex offender still lives there and give him an opportunity to hear the good news.—See the October 1, 2012, letter to all bodies of elders, paragraph 17.

39. What if a known child molester does not comply with the direction from the elders? Two elders should offer him firm but loving counsel. (Gal. 6:1; 2 Tim. 4:2) If after repeated counsel he continues to disregard the restrictions that have been placed on him, the elders should contact the branch office and explain the situation. The service desk will obtain the answers from the elders to the following questions: How often has the individual been counseled? What has been his response? What is he doing that is raising concern? Why do the elders believe that he lacks self-control and will continue to prey on children? Did the elders present a warning talk to the congregation? Has the body of elders concluded that his actions constitute brazen conduct and merit judicial action? The service desk under the direction of the Branch Committee will carefully examine all of these

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factors in order to determine whether the individual should be considered a "predator" and whether the elders can proceed judicially.

40. If the branch office advises the elders to inform the parents of minor children that an individual is a "predator," there is no need for elders to go into all the details with the parents. The elders would simply warn the parents that they should be sure to watch their children at all times when he is present. They should also tell the parents that there is no need for them to speak with others about the matter. The elders will take the lead in making sure that all parents of minor children in the congregation are aware. At the same time, the elders will inform the "known" child molester that the parents will be discreetly informed.

QUESTION 12: What should be done if a "known" child molester or one who is considered to be a "predator" moves to another congregation?

41. **Answer:** The normal procedure of sending a letter to the new congregation should be followed. As outlined in the February 1991 *Our Kingdom Ministry* "Question Box" and in the November 17, 2010, letter to all bodies of elders, our policy is always to send a letter of introduction when a publisher moves to another congregation. While this should be done in every case, it is imperative that this be done when a "known" child molester moves. As indicated in the *Shepherding* textbook, chapter 12, paragraph 20, the Congregation Service Committee, on behalf of the elders, should write to the new congregation's body of elders and outline the publisher's background and what the elders in the former congregation have done to assist him. Any needed cautions should be provided to the new congregation's body of elders. This information is for the use of the elders only and should be kept in the congregation's confidential files. The elders should send a copy of this letter to the branch office in one of the special blue envelopes. If a "known" child molester has moved and information about him has not been sent to the body of elders where he is now serving, then this should be done now. In the case of a "predator," the elders of the congregation where the individual has moved will consult with the branch office to determine what warning should be given to the parents of minor children.

42. If more than 20 years have passed and a former child abuser has a good record in the truth and the branch office decides that he could be appointed to a position of trust—such as an elder, ministerial servant, or regular pioneer—the congregation elders will not have to pass on information regarding the past sin to another congregation's elders.

43. **Factors to consider:** If an individual is disfellowshipped, there is no need to forward his *Congregation's Publisher Record* (S-21) card *or the confidential file* to the congregation where he lives or attends meetings; however, a brief letter should be sent to the body of elders in whose territory he lives to inform them that a disfellowshipped person who was guilty of child abuse lives in their territory and, if known, they can provide the address. A copy of the letter should be sent to the branch office. No detailed information is sent to another congregation until the individual submits a request for reinstatement.—See the *Shepherding* textbook, chapter 10, paragraph 2.

QUESTION 13: Should the fiancée or wife of a brother who is restricted because of being guilty of child abuse in the past be informed about his past wrongdoing?

44. **Answer:** With regard to one who is married, he should note that the *Family Happiness* book says that marriage is based on love and respect. At 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, Paul states that love is "kind" and "does not look for its own interests." Love also "rejoices with the truth." Additionally, page 30, paragraph 8, of the *Family Happiness* book mentions this: "Those who wish to enjoy a happy marriage show respect for their mates by 'keeping an eye, not in personal interest upon just [their] own matters, but also in personal interest upon those of [their mates].' (Philippians 2:4) They

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do not consider what is good only for themselves—which would be selfish. Instead, they consider what is best also for their mates. Indeed, they give that the priority." Therefore, in the case of a known child abuser who is married, the elders should encourage the former abuser to share this critical information about his past with his wife if he has not already done so. ***The same would apply to a brother who is engaged or is contemplating marriage.*** Page 25, paragraph 21, of the *Family Happiness* book states: "An honorable courtship also includes honest communication. As your courtship progresses toward marriage, certain matters will need to be discussed openly. Where will you live? Will both of you work secularly? Do you want to have children? Also, it is only fair to reveal things, perhaps in one's past, that could affect the marriage." In view of this, you should alert a former child abuser of the importance of discussing his past abuse with his fiancée before marriage.

45. When inquiries are received from congregations, the elders may be directed to assign two elders to speak with each known child abuser to whom the above direction would apply. The elders may share the references cited above to help him appreciate the importance of complying with this direction. When meeting with the known child abuser, make him aware of the need to communicate this information about his past child abuse to his wife or fiancée. The elders should write, date, and sign a brief confidential memorandum for the former child abuser's file. Thereafter, the elders can discreetly inquire of the wife or fiancée as to whether she was informed about his past abuse.

QUESTION 14: When should elders interview a young child who is a victim of child abuse?

46. **Answer:** When the elders call the branch office regarding a child abuse matter, they may ask about the need to interview the victim. In such cases, help the elders to balance the need to investigate with the dangers of inadvertently further traumatizing a young child abuse victim. For example, has the accused already confessed to the wrongdoing? Is there more than one accuser and thereby already sufficient evidence to handle the matter judicially? (Deut. 19:15; John 8:17) In such cases, there is likely no need to interview the young child.

47. If the branch office agrees for the elders to speak with the child, the service desk can share all or part of the following guidelines to help the elders thoroughly prepare for the interview. The service desk should also refer the elders to the principles found in the *Shepherding* textbook, chapter 12, paragraph 21, which will help them evaluate whether the testimony has the ring of truth.

48. **Recognize the headship principle.—Eph. 6:2, 3.**

- Be sure you have the consent of a parent or legal guardian to interview the child.
- Make every effort to have at least one dedicated parent or legal guardian present for the interview.

49. **Conduct the interview in a loving manner.—Isa. 32:1, 2.**

- Although it is preferred to have only one elder conduct the interview, another elder should be present as an observer.
- Be kind, unhurried, and establish a rapport with the child.
- Sit next to the child, rather than across from or standing over the child. This will be less threatening.
- Ask the parent to allow the child to tell the story without his interrupting or interpreting.
- You could inadvertently intimidate the child by asking the same question multiple times.
- You should not use dolls or toys in an attempt to recreate the event.
- Sincerely and frequently commend the child at appropriate times, knowing how difficult this interview may be for the child.

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50. **Ask questions skillfully.—Prov. 20:5.**

- Start with open-ended questions, such as:
  "Please tell us what you can about . . ."
  "What else do you remember about . . .?"
- Then gently move to more focused questions, such as:
  "Where did it happen?"
  "Who else was there?"
  "Please tell us more about what you can remember about . . ."

51. **Give no cause for stumbling.—2 Cor. 6:3.**

- If the child senses that the elders think they already know everything, the child may not feel the need to speak up. Biased, leading questions or statements like the following should not be used because they could influence a child to please the elders and change what he would otherwise have said:
  "Did Brother So-and-so do something bad to you?"
  "Brother So-and-so is such a nice person; I don't see how this could be."

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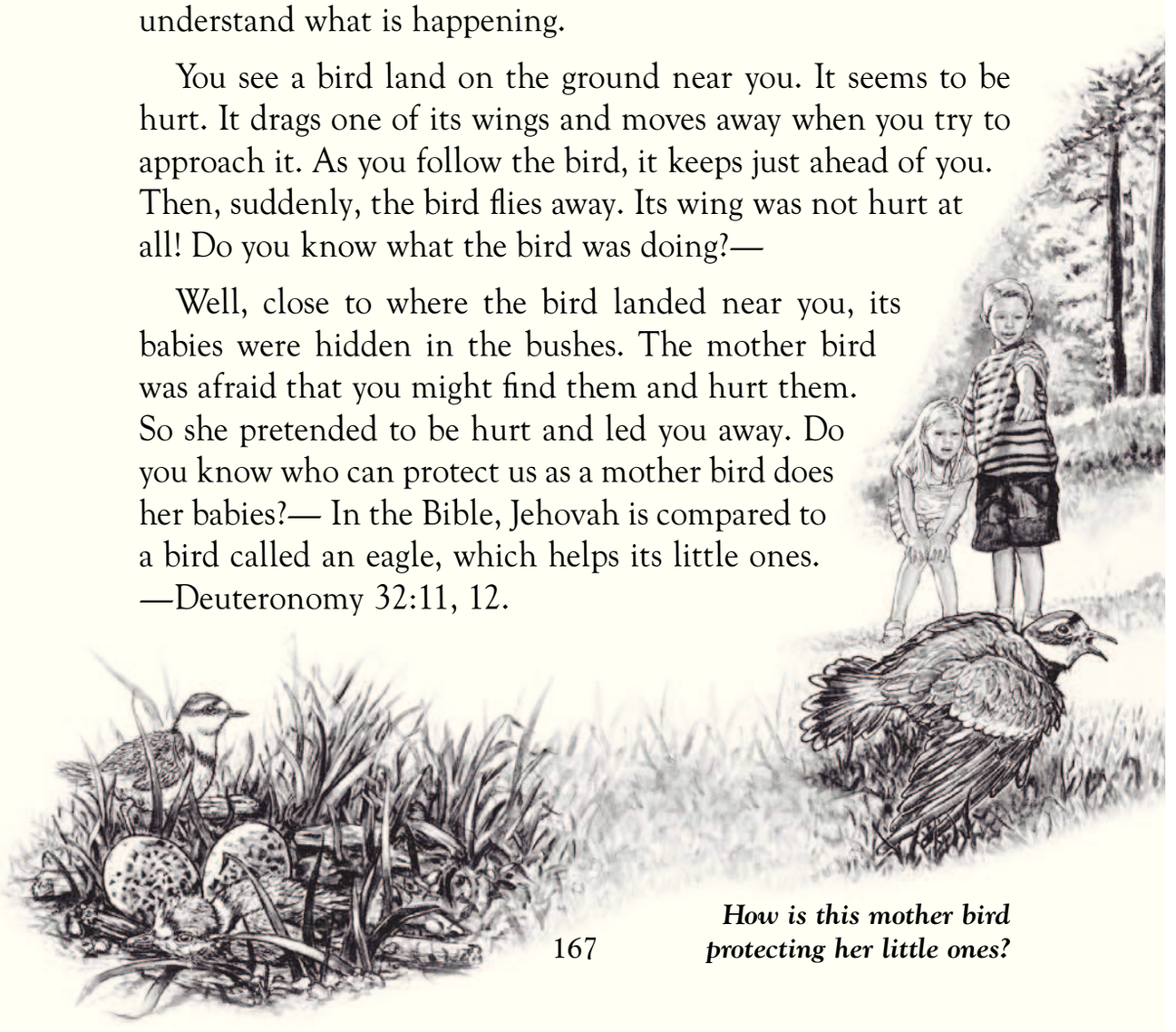
CHAPTER 32

HOW JESUS WAS PROTECTED

JEHOVAH sometimes does things in a wonderful way to protect those who are young and who are unable to protect themselves. If you go walking in the country, you may see one way that Jehovah does this. But at first you may not really understand what is happening.

You see a bird land on the ground near you. It seems to be hurt. It drags one of its wings and moves away when you try to approach it. As you follow the bird, it keeps just ahead of you. Then, suddenly, the bird flies away. Its wing was not hurt at all! Do you know what the bird was doing?—

Well, close to where the bird landed near you, its babies were hidden in the bushes. The mother bird was afraid that you might find them and hurt them. So she pretended to be hurt and led you away. Do you know who can protect us as a mother bird does her babies?— In the Bible, Jehovah is compared to a bird called an eagle, which helps its little ones. —Deuteronomy 32:11, 12.

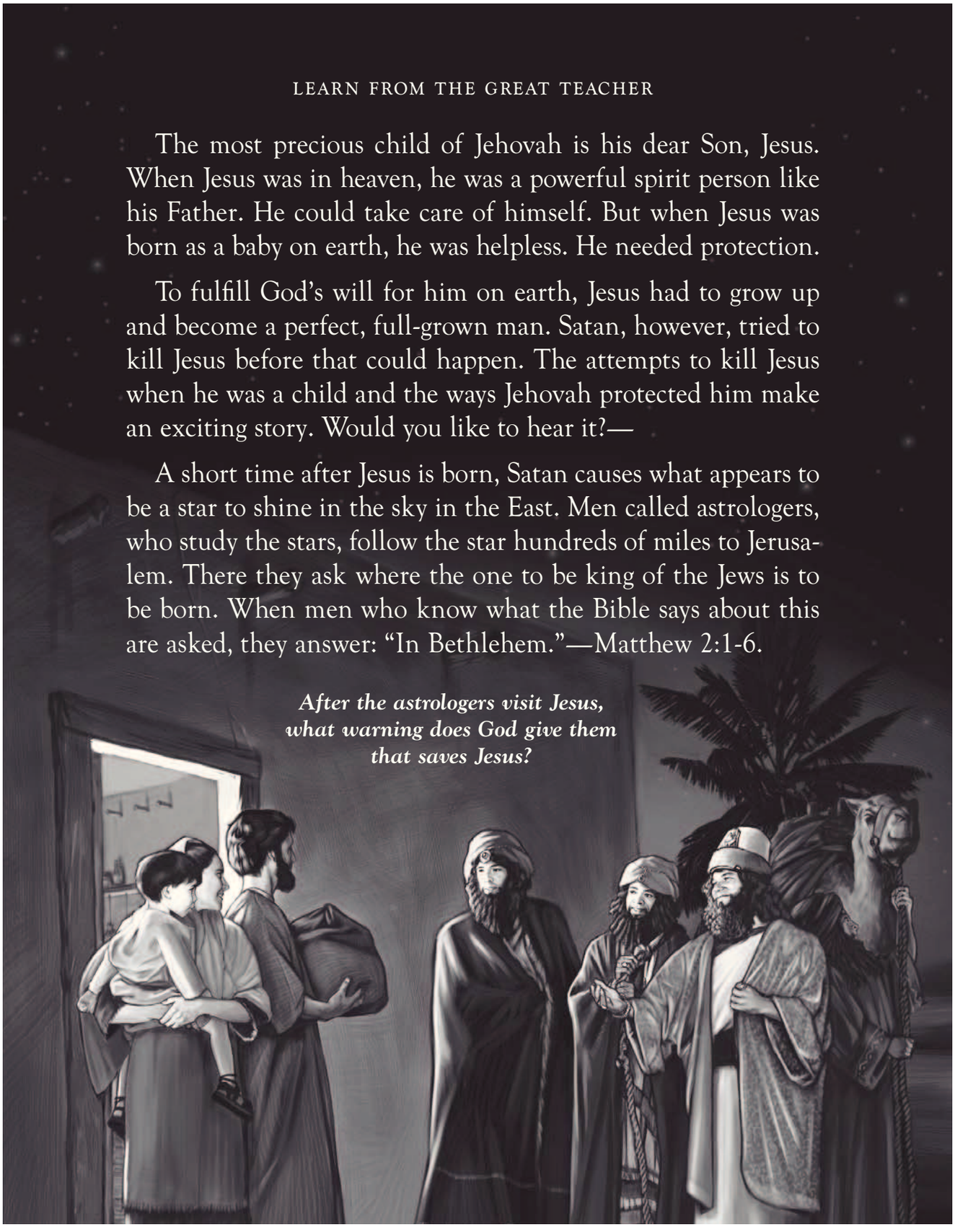


How is this mother bird protecting her little ones?

The most precious child of Jehovah is his dear Son, Jesus. When Jesus was in heaven, he was a powerful spirit person like his Father. He could take care of himself. But when Jesus was born as a baby on earth, he was helpless. He needed protection.

To fulfill God's will for him on earth, Jesus had to grow up and become a perfect, full-grown man. Satan, however, tried to kill Jesus before that could happen. The attempts to kill Jesus when he was a child and the ways Jehovah protected him make an exciting story. Would you like to hear it?—

A short time after Jesus is born, Satan causes what appears to be a star to shine in the sky in the East. Men called astrologers, who study the stars, follow the star hundreds of miles to Jerusalem. There they ask where the one to be king of the Jews is to be born. When men who know what the Bible says about this are asked, they answer: "In Bethlehem."—Matthew 2:1-6.



After the astrologers visit Jesus, what warning does God give them that saves Jesus?

After Herod, the bad king in Jerusalem, hears about this new king who has recently been born in the nearby town of Bethlehem, he tells the astrologers: 'Search and find the child, and then come back and tell me.' Do you know why Herod wants to know where to find Jesus?— It is because Herod is jealous and wants to kill him!

How does God protect his Son?— Well, when the astrologers find Jesus, they give him gifts. Later God gives the astrologers a warning in a dream not to return to Herod. So they go home another way without returning to Jerusalem. When Herod finds out that the astrologers have left, he is very angry. In an effort to kill Jesus, Herod has all the boys in Bethlehem under two years of age killed! But by then, Jesus is gone.

Do you know how Jesus escapes?— After the astrologers leave to go home, Jehovah gives a warning to Mary's husband, Joseph, to get up and run far away to Egypt. There Jesus is safe from bad Herod. Years later, when Mary and Joseph return from Egypt with Jesus, God gives another warning to Joseph. He tells him in a dream to move to Nazareth, where Jesus will be safe. —Matthew 2:7-23.



How is young Jesus saved again?

Do you see how Jehovah protected his Son?— Who would you say is like the little birds hidden by their mother in the bushes or like Jesus when he was

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a small child? Aren't you like them?— There are those who want to hurt you too. Do you know who?—

The Bible says that Satan is like a roaring lion who wants to eat us. And just as lions often pick on small animals, Satan and his demons often pick on children. (1 Peter 5:8) But Jehovah is stronger than Satan. Jehovah can protect his children or undo anything bad that Satan does to them.

Do you remember from Chapter 10 of this book what the Devil and his demons try to get us to do?— Yes, they try to get us to have the kind of sex relations that God says is wrong. But who only should have sex relations?— Yes, two grown people of the opposite sex who are married to each other.

However, sad to say, some grown-ups like to have sex with children. When they do, boys and girls may begin to do bad things that they have learned from these grown-ups. They also begin to use their sex organs in a wrong way. That is what happened a long time ago in the city of Sodom. The Bible says that people there, "*from boy* to old man," tried to have sex with men who had come to visit Lot.—Genesis 19:4, 5.

So just as Jesus needed protection, you also need to be protected from grown-ups—and even from other children—who may try to have sex with you. Usually, these people will pretend to be your friends. They may even offer you something if you will promise not to tell others about what they want to do with you. But these people are selfish, like Satan and his demons, and they only want to get pleasure for themselves. And they try to get this pleasure by having sex with children. *This is very wrong!*

What should you say and do if someone tries to touch you in a wrong way?



Do you know what they may do to get pleasure for themselves?— Well, they may try to rub your sex organs. Or they will even rub their sex organs against yours. But you should never let anybody play with your penis or vulva. Not even your own brother or sister or your mother or father. *These parts of your body are private.*

How can you protect your body from people who do bad things like this?— First of all, do not let anybody play with your sex organs. If someone tries to do this, say firmly in a loud voice: "*Stop that! I'm going to tell on you!*" And if that person says that what happened is your fault, don't believe that. It is not true. Just go and tell on him no matter who it is! You should do so even if he says that what you are doing together is a secret just between you and him. Even if that person promises you nice presents or makes scary threats, you should get away from him and tell on him anyway.

You do not have to be afraid, but you do need to be careful. When your parents warn you about people or places that could be a danger to you, you need to listen to them. If you do, you take away a bad person's chance to hurt you.

Read about protecting yourself from wrong sex acts, at Genesis 39:7-12; Proverbs 4:14-16; 14:15, 16; 1 Corinthians 6:18; and 2 Peter 2:14.

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Child Molesting

Every Mother's Nightmare

FOR the young mother, it was a nightmare come true. When her four-year-old daughter complained of abdominal pains, she took her to see a doctor. The doctor, after a thorough examination, gravely told the mother that her little girl was the victim of sexual molestation. She had been raped. The mother informed the New York City authorities, who quickly determined that the abuse occurred at a Bronx, New York, day-care center.

Investigations at the center yielded horrifying results. First one, then another, then still another child revealed that they, too, had been molested. At least 30 children eventually claimed that they had been abused in that same center. One of them had gonorrhea. Then reports surfaced that children had been molested at another day-care center. Then at another. Eventually seven day-care centers had to be investigated in the New York City area alone.

As each new case was publicized, reports of child molesting started coming in from other parts of the country. The scandal spread. Parents asked one another: "What's happening?" What indeed! Was this just a freakish rash of molestation incidents? Or was it something very widespread that was only now being noticed?

A Widespread Problem

The fact is, sexual molestation of children has been going on for a long time and today it *is* widespread. In 1983, the head of New York City's Advisory Task Force on Rape reported 'a dramatic increase in the number of young children who are victims of rape, incest, and other forms of sexual abuse.' Dr. David Finkelhor of the Family Violence Research Program at the University of New Hampshire conducted a large-scale study of the subject. He found that the children of 9 percent of the parents interviewed had been sexually abused. Fifteen percent of the women and 6 percent of the men had themselves been sexually abused as children!

Exact statistics are difficult to come by. In the United States, the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect has records of 55,399 cases of children being sexually molested in one year. But these are only cases of incestuous abuse. Abuse by friends, neighbors, teachers, and so forth—as well as by strangers—would increase that figure to a considerable extent. And a spokesman for the Child Welfare League of America told *Awake!* that "the figures we have are only the tip of the iceberg."

A report in the magazine *Ladies Home Journal* estimates: "Sexual abuse of young girls is four times more common than rape of adult women. Between the ages of five and 13, one in four little girls falls prey to some form of sexual abuse by adults—whether it be exhibitionism, inappropriate fondling, rape, or incest. Although young females are the most common victims, 20 to 25 percent of those attacked are little boys."

Doctors are convinced of the harmful and long-term effects of such abuse. Hence, parents wonder: 'Are my children at risk? What steps can I take to protect them? What sort of person would try to harm them?'

Child Molesting

'Who Would Do a Thing Like That?'



MOST parents would answer this question wrong. When we think of sexual molestation, most of us probably picture a weird stranger who exposes himself to children or lures them away into a car or to some wooded area. Publicity has also been given to groups that lure children away to exploit them for pornography or child prostitution. Such things *do* happen, but these people are far from the usual type of child molester. So who are the usual child molesters?

Sue was molested by a man who was running a church group. He ran a youth club, and everybody agreed that he was very pleasant. But he sexually abused Sue and other girls. Another young girl wrote to an advice column to tell that her favorite uncle had taken to pulling her onto his lap and fondling her improperly. One man remembers that as a boy he was habitually abused by the grown son of a close family friend. An 11-year-old boy was molested by the aunt that he lived with. A New York woman reports being molested by her grandfather when she was seven years old. A 15-year-old boy was molested by his doctor during a medical examination. For Pam, it was even worse. For many years, her own father molested her. And Mary was molested by two older brothers and an older first cousin.

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In fact, probably less than a third of sexual assaults on children are committed by strangers. Usually the victim knows the assailant. Often the abuser is a relative. Thus, in most cases children are molested by people they know and trust, which makes the problem of protecting them more difficult.

The Molester at Work

Many parents have another misconception. They envision molestation as being violent, with the child fighting and screaming for mercy. This may not be the case at all, at least not in the beginning. At the outset, sexual abuse may be disguised as playful or affectionate contact, and go on from there. The abuser is likely to persuade and pressure the child, using all the built-in authority of an older person. Do you remember what it was like when you were a child and were trained to obey adults even when they told you to do things you did not like, such as go to bed early or eat all your vegetables? Molesters take advantage of this training. One convicted abuser said: "Show me an obedient child, and I'll show you an easy victim."

One child was receiving obscene phone calls. When asked why she had not put the phone down, she said she thought it was rude to do that when someone was still talking! A woman of 30 remembers having been approached at the age of 5 by her grandfather. He said to her: "Good girls do this for Grandpa and never tell their mothers." How many five-year-olds would be able to see through such a deception?

And do you remember how you loved presents and treats as a child? Abusers often use this childish trait to get an abusive relationship started. For example, what would your child do if the school janitor said: "Stay with me for a while in the office after school, and I will give you some money"? or if the baby-sitter said: "I will let you sit up late and watch television, if you do something for me first"?

Sometimes molesters misuse a child's natural love of secrets. Wasn't it exciting, when you were young, to have a secret? One little girl had a secret that she kept from her parents. But one day her parents saw her acting in a precocious, sexual manner. When asked where she had learned such a thing, the little girl said: "It's a secret." Her father explained that sometimes we should not keep a secret, so the little girl revealed her secret. A 40-year-old man with a family of his own, who was a close family relative, had pushed her down and sexually assaulted her.

She was molested by her minister

Finally, threats may be involved, subtle threats that strike at a child's sense of security. A grown woman tells of having been abused by her stepfather when she was a child. She says he abused her for four years, starting when she was six. Why did she not tell her mother? "He said that if I ever told anybody about it, the police would come get him and my mother would lose her job. The family would starve and it would all be my fault."

Author Gail Sheehy covers many of these points in the following observation: "We forget how grownups seemed omnipotent to us when we ourselves were children." She adds: "It is very easy for a parent or babysitter to initiate sexual activities under the guise of normal bathing and hygiene inspection. The child gets the message something is wrong only when secrecy is introduced: 'Don't tell your mommy that we did that'—and sufficient intimidation can be laid in with a single stroke—'or she won't love you anymore.'" Would your child be able to withstand that sort of psychological blackmail?

The Child's Best Defense

So you see, molesters can be the most unexpected of people and they can use sophisticated and cunning tactics. Child molestation is probably almost as old as history. But as this generation progresses, and more and more people are "lovers of themselves, . . . having no natural affection, . . . without self-control," the threat is becoming greater. (2 Timothy 3:1-3) However, children do have one very strong defense. What is that? Their parents. These are the adults best able to protect them from other adults who may wish to molest them. Let us see how.

Child Molesting

You Can Protect Your Child



A YOUNG woman who was molested as a girl by her brother and her brother-in-law says: "I was afraid, so I did not tell anyone. For this reason, I would like to warn all parents: 'Please teach your children not to let anyone in the family, or outside the family, put their hands on them in any wrong way. If anyone tries to, do not be afraid to tell on them.'" She adds: "It can happen to any child at any time!"

In this degenerating world, we must take definite steps to protect our children from sexual molestation. It is not wise to leave things to chance and just hope that nothing will happen.

The First Line of Defense

The first line of defense is to avoid situations that leave our children vulnerable. For example, parents are advised to be careful about using as baby-sitters young adults who seem to prefer being with children rather than with folks their own age. One clinical psychologist reports that two thirds of the molesters he is treating committed the offense while baby-sitting.

Dr. Suzanne M. Sgroi mentions two more situations that have led to trouble: Children doubling up (in beds or rooms) with adults or teenagers, and large family gatherings where the grown-ups get in-

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volved in enjoying themselves and just assume that the older children are taking care of the young ones.

The truth is, the more we can keep our children under our own supervision, the less opportunity molesters will have to get at them. Ann, a mother of three, goes to the extent of not allowing her youngest child, a 14-year-old boy, to wander around the shopping mall—or even to go into public rest rooms—alone. The boy probably finds this very restrictive, but his mother has her reasons. She was molested as a child.

However, parents cannot always keep such a close watch on their children. Working parents may have no choice but to use day-care facilities or to leave their children with relatives or baby-sitters. Children have to go to school, and parents cannot always be with them. Relatives and friends come to visit. And then there are the neighbors! How can we protect our children when they are so vulnerable? Really, there is only one way—

Talk to Your Child About the Danger

Psychologist Debrah Shulman said: "It's foolish to pretend to children that dangers do not exist. Children are aware of their vulnerability and are naturally concerned about their own safety. It's part of a parent's job to give them the tools to deal with danger realistically. If presented honestly and positively such information will not threaten children, it will reassure them." Yes, we have to talk to them about it.

This is easy to say but not so easy to do, especially since the greatest danger is from friends and relatives. We may already have warned our children against the stranger who wants to lure them into the woods or carry them away in a car. But how can we give them "the tools" to protect themselves from ones they know, respect, and even love?

Follow Their Instincts

Ann, the mother referred to previously, reports that she was only five years old when a male relative molested her. Nevertheless, she knew that he was doing something wrong, although she did not know how to stop him. And, unhappily, she could not talk to her parents about it. The lines of communication were not very good at that time.

Ann's experience demonstrates that



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children usually have a natural sense of what is fit and proper. We have to reinforce this instinct, tell them that they should obey it even if an adult tells them differently. A simple and determined "No, I don't want you to do that!" is often enough to deter a molester. Ann's experience also shows the need for open lines of communication with our children.

Recently a husband and wife were discussing this problem between themselves. Becoming concerned, they asked their

If the Worst Should Happen

No parent can give a child complete protection against sexual molestation, although taking sensible precautions will enormously reduce the possibility that anything will happen. However, if parents have established good family communication, it may be that children will talk about it in the event that the worst should happen. Sometimes, though, children are so shocked by or ashamed of the experience that they will not discuss it. Hence, parents need to be alert. Here are some signs that researchers say *may* show that something has happened.

Be suspicious of any changes in the normal routine. In one case, a teacher asked that certain children come to school long before others. Watch for any telling signs in children such as declining grades or extreme anxiety around a specific adult. One woman who was victimized by her brother and her father as a girl said: "I came at the bottom of a class of 42, and nobody tried to find out why."

Pay attention to physical symptoms, such as headaches, vomiting or loss of appetite, and difficulty in sleeping. Genital complaints, such as soreness, are particularly important. Be aware of precocious sexuality in language, dress, or behavior. Be on the lookout for sudden changes in behavior that might indicate a problem. If a child becomes unusually withdrawn or shows an inclination to avoid one member of the family, a warning bell should sound. We also have to listen for the oblique messages that our children send us. The statement, "I don't like that math teacher any more" may be the child's way of trying to broach this difficult subject.

If parents see anything like this in their child, they should try to find out what is wrong. The child has a problem, and it may be a problem of molestation. If so, the child needs help. Unfortunately, many children do not get that help. Molested children have been accused of inventing the incident, although researchers assure us that children rarely, if ever, invent such things. Incest has been covered up so as not to break up the family.

However, if molestation—and especially incest—is discovered to have occurred, two things must be done immediately:

First, the child—and other children too—must be protected from any further abuse. This must be done, whatever the cost. In many cases the accused molester will have to be confronted. But whatever it takes, it is important that the child should feel confident that the molester will never be able to get at her (or him) again.

Second, the child must be given a lot of love and emotional support. Parents must make it very clear that the little victim is not to blame. The crime and anything that happens as a result of it—even if a close relative goes to prison—is not her (or his) fault. But that reassurance will have to be given many times, so that the victim comes to believe it—and to believe that the parents believe it too!

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child if she had ever been molested. To their horror, the child said yes. An old and trusted friend of the family had repeatedly done so. The family had excellent communication with their children, so why had the child not said something before? Simply because she did not know how. Once the subject was mentioned, the child was more than willing to discuss it.

How Can We Tell Them?

First, we have to bring the subject up. One suggestion is that if ever a scandal is reported in the news, parents could use it as an opportunity to ask their children: "Did anyone ever do anything like that to you?" and then go on to tell them how to act if anyone tries to.

Parents who teach their children about the Bible can use parts of it as a starting point. They can use the story of Dinah, the daughter of Jacob, to explain the boundaries that exist in what one person may do to another. (Genesis 34:1-4) The story of Tamar and Amnon can be used to show that there are things that even close relatives are not permitted to do to each other. (2 Samuel 13:10-16) And we should make sure they understand that if something like that does happen to them, we want to know about it. We will not get angry with them if they tell us.

Mary was molested when she was a little girl, so she made very sure to put her three daughters on guard against molesters. How did she do it? As soon as they were old enough to understand, she told them: "If anyone touches you in the wrong place, tell me and I will not be angry." How would they know where the wrong places are? Mary says that when they were about three years old she showed them. When she was bathing them or getting them ready for bed, she pointed out the parts of their body that other people should not touch. As they got a little older, she presented situations: "Nobody should touch you there, even if it is a schoolteacher or a policeman. Not even Mummy or Daddy should touch you there. And a doctor should only touch you there if Mummy or Daddy is with you!"

Did this work? Mary remembers one occasion when a relative was playing with her six-year-old daughter. The things the relative was doing started to make the little girl feel uncomfortable. What did she do? She just walked away from him. Mary is not sure whether the relative had bad intentions or not. But she is delighted that her daughter was able to walk away from the situation when it started to feel "not right," or "strange."

Hence, just as parents warn their children against going off with strangers, playing in a busy street, and putting their hands on electric wires, they should also tell them about avoiding molestation. They should explain the boundaries on their bodies that others—even their own parents—should not transgress. They should clearly state that if something *does* happen, they want to know about it. And they will not blame the children.

"If anyone touches you in the wrong place, tell me"

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The "What if . . . ?" Game

Sometimes adults will use their greater experience and intelligence to deceive children into joining them in some inappropriate activity, and children may not spot the deception without help. So Linda Tschirhart Sanford, author of the book *The Silent Children,* suggests a tool that could be used to counter this in advance: the "What if . . . ?" game. From time to time, ask the children what they would do in certain situations: "What if the baby sitter said that you could stay up late watching television if you got in the bathtub with him and played games? What would you tell him?" "What if someone you knew took you for a ride and wanted to put his hands where he should not? What would you do?" "What would you do if an older friend touched you in a way you did not like, or wanted to undress you and play a secret game with you?"

Tell children the right names for the parts of their body

In teaching the child how to answer, parents can show that there are occasions when they can say no to an adult. There are also occasions when they should reveal secrets. If they are trained to say things like "I will just go and ask Mummy first," they will be able to discourage most potential molesters. If the child learns the right answers in the "What if . . . ?" game, it is gaining some good tools to protect itself. If it gives a wrong answer, well, go back over the question and suggest a different answer.

Give Them the Words

The following experience shows another problem that children face in the matter of molestation: A woman relates that she was abused as a child and tried to tell her mother about it. But she did not have the right words and could not explain what had happened. Her mother thought that someone was just trying to be affectionate and that the little girl had misunderstood the situation and blown it out of proportion.

Because of similar experiences, social workers encourage parents to tell their children the right names for parts of their bodies. Give them the vocabulary to express themselves in case the worst happens.

Alert but Balanced

One of a parent's worst nightmares is that their child might be sexually molested. However, we need to remember that *most* adults are not going to molest our children. Most of our relatives love them and would be as concerned as we are to protect them from abuse.

On the other hand, it *can* happen. And merely hoping that it will not happen is not enough. The Biblical proverb says: "Shrewd is the one that has seen the calamity and proceeds to conceal himself." (Proverbs 22:3) Hence, it is wise to be cautious, especially in view of the times we live in. If we avoid, to the extent possible, putting our children in situations that leave them vulnerable, if we explain to them the boundaries that even adults are not to cross, and if we teach them how to react in case any adult should try to cross those boundaries, then we are doing a lot to protect our children from the molester.



To End Child Abuse

The remedy works when practiced, not when preached

THE new morality is not new. It is only a new name for the old immorality. The tree is still rotten, its fruit still worthless. Its wisdom is unrighteous, its "children" prove it so. As it occurred in the days of Noah and in the days of Lot, so it is occurring in these last days of another immoral system. The crop being reaped is the same, only this time it's a bumper harvest. And not at all practical—very, very impractical. Especially so for the children.

The Bible's remedy is practical, for children and everyone else. Even the professional people who are involved with the problem of child abuse offer similar solutions, up to a point. They know that bad family conditions cause children to run away from home, and that a high percentage of runaways end up on the streets and in prostitution and pornography and suffer appalling abuse. Some are escaping incest at home, homes broken by divorce, chronic conflicts with parents, lack of loving attention, and some are swayed by their peers. Whatever the specific causes, the remedy is the healing of family breakdown. So say the experts.

So does the Bible. It calls for close communication between parent and child. Concerning righteous principles, the command is: "You must inculcate them in your son and speak of them when you sit in your house and when you walk on the road and when you lie down and when you get up."—Deuteronomy 6:7.

The Bible counsels both parents and children on how to act: "Children, be obedient to your parents in union with the Lord, for this is righteous . . . And you, fathers, do not be irritating your children, but go on bringing them up in

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the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah."—Ephesians 6:1, 4.

Psychiatrists agree. They say parents must be fair and set good examples, but children need regulations and discipline. One psychotherapist confirms this, saying: "We abandon our children also when, hoping to make 'friends' of them, we renounce our responsibilities as models and as law-givers. This is a betrayal that children feel acutely because no need is stronger to a growing child than the sense of boundaries and limits. The child experiences them as love." The Bible confirms this. "The one whom Jehovah loves he reproves, even as a father does a son in whom he finds pleasure." —Proverbs 3:12.

Some say that more sex education in the schools is what is needed; others contend it's already too explicit and goes too far. One illustrated booklet for children, prepared by a Syracuse University professor, says: "All thoughts are normal." "Masturbation is a normal expression of sex for both males and females at any age. Enjoy it." Homosexuality is your business, "so choose the sexual life you want." "A lot of people wonder about oral and anal sex, and some think it is 'perverted.' We think there is nothing wrong with any kind of sex." "Pornography is harmless."

Perhaps Johnny can't read or write because his teachers are too busy indoctrinating him with the "normality" of sexual perversions. Sex instruction for children can be too much too soon. Dr. Greenwood warns: "Parents in their efforts to be liberal often overeducate, and they may be giving their children material they're not yet ready to cope with." Regardless of the pros and cons of sex education, the hard fact is the tremendous increase in child prostitution, sodomy, pornography and incest.

Those who greedily exploit children in these ways fit the Bible's description, found at Ephesians 4:19: "Having come to be past all moral sense, they gave themselves over to loose conduct to work uncleanness of every sort with greediness." They fit those of Noah's day: "Jehovah saw that the badness of man was abundant in the earth and every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only bad all the time."—Genesis 6:5.

Only the Bible's solution will end the abuse of children. Jesus summed it up: 'Love God with your whole heart. Love your neighbor as yourself.' (Matthew 22: 37-39) The apostle Paul repeated it: "Love does not work evil to one's neighbor; therefore love is the law's fulfillment." —Romans 13:10.

This solution of brotherly love is practical. When applied, it works. Too many are hearers of God's Word but not doers of it. Too many say "Lord, Lord," but don't listen to Jesus or do Jehovah's will. —James 1:22; Matthew 7:21.

In God's due time all who embrace his kingdom under Christ will become able to keep this law of love perfectly. Then will come fulfillment of Proverbs 2:21, 22: "The upright are the ones that will reside in the earth, and the blameless are the ones that will be left over in it. As regards the wicked, they will be cut off from the very earth; and as for the treacherous, they will be torn away from it."

This is the only way, the final way, to end child abuse.

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What Parents Can Do

LOOKING at their own lack of training and ability, many parents might think it would be easier to leave sex education all to the school. But, then, some conscientious parents are confused. They have heard stories about sex education given without a moral background and they rightly worry. Children are now being told that premarital sex, sodomy and other forms of sexual deviation are normal and, though not desirable, are not to be condemned.

Some advocates say conventional standards of morality are irrelevant. One such claims that "the core of the ethical problem is not whether a boy or girl remains or does not remain a virgin, but whether sex is used exploitatively and self-centeredly, or in a meaningful and dignified way." Is this what you want your child taught? How do unmarried people use sex in a meaningful and "dignified" way if they violate the divine command to "flee from fornication"?—1 Cor. 6:18.

What can you do about the situation? Fight the giving of sex education in the schools? For the true Christian the direction is given: The servant "of the Lord does not need to fight, but needs to be gentle toward all, qualified to teach, keeping himself restrained under evil." (2 Tim. 2:24) If a parent objects to what is being taught and wants to protect his child, he can ask to have his child released from such classes.

In fairness to the courses taught at some schools, however, it must be admitted that not all is bad. There is teaching in hygiene, disease prevention, care of children, family responsibility, and so forth. Further, there is some effort to refer students to others for guidance, such as the textbook that urges those with concerns about homosexuality to speak to their doctor or some other counselor. It also speaks against "misuse of oneself" in discussing masturbation. But there are veiled statements that leave the reader feeling it is up to each one to decide the matter for himself; there is no honest condemnation of wrong acts.

Christian parents take the course that the text at 2 Timothy 2:24 recommends, namely, to be "qualified to teach." Such parents have learned to be well equipped to combat the misinformation their children get in some schools in the teaching of evolution and the setting of materialistic goals by perhaps well-meaning teachers. With answers given in home training, parents can be confident that their children have a defense.

If your church has not provided you with the information to combat faith-eroding teachings of today and no longer

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upholds the Bible as the source of moral teaching, why not find out where you can be taught and trained to aid your children?

Help Available

Jehovah's witnesses as Christians sense the need to fortify youth and equip parents to fill present-day needs. They take the position that "wisdom is for a protection." (Eccl. 7:12) Repeatedly their *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines have presented articles to aid parents on how to approach sexual matters with their young ones, what to discuss and how to say it. Examples are the articles in *Awake!* of December 8, 1968, and June 8, 1965, on a father talking to his sons and the July 8, 1965, issue on a mother talking to her daughters. These took up such matters as conception, birth, proper use of sexual powers, bodily functions, dating and self-control. Others of their publications also provide helpful instruction, all on a fine basis of Biblical morality.

At their conventions the Witnesses receive frank and straightforward material in talks and even dramas that make application of the points taught. At the 1969 "Peace on Earth" International Assembly sessions they heard talks warning against the illicit satisfaction of fornication and adultery and the dangers of toying with sexual immorality. During 1970 additional counsel along these lines will be given at their assemblies. More worthwhile occupation of time and abilities are set before youthful attenders who are with their parents for this instruction. Yes, it is sometimes beneficial to have group instruction. But the setting must be right, with parents or other responsible adults present and with good motives.

In your home, put information about sex on the right basis. Found it upon the "discipline and authoritative advice of Jehovah." (Eph. 6:4) This is much more valuable source material than the conceited, always-changing views of humans who call for "new values" as to "when and how we should have sexual experiences." Dr. Mary Calderone, one of the prime backers of sex courses in schools, says: "Separate yourselves from your parents. I don't believe the old 'Thou shalt nots' apply anymore." Is this what you want your children to hear and defenselessly believe? They need fortifying!

Some Suggestions

Teach your own children that possession of sexual powers brings responsibility to the Designer and calls for respect for his original purpose. Use the Scriptures to show what is honorable use, that these are powers of procreation, a wonderful thing! (Gen. 1:28) Show that there must be deep mutual love between a husband and his wife, a giving that brings pleasure to another and thus disciplines in unselfishness. (Prov. 5:15-23; Eph. 5:21-33) Explain that confinement of one's sexual interests to one's marriage mate is a sound requirement for life.—Heb. 13:4.

As you see from the above Scripture references, the Bible can be used as a source and as a model of tasteful and forceful expression for teaching. Use it and thus counter the influence of declining moral standards.

Give such teaching in a wholesome atmosphere of respect for God and decency. Use proper terminology. Warm teaching, with association of the knowledge to its proper use, is better than detached presentation of cold biological facts with too many details. If children want to know more, they will usually ask. At times ask them questions or encourage them to ask questions. In that way they learn what they want and need to know. Make it a conversation rather than lecturing or preaching. Look up information together.

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Be sure the child sees the practical wisdom as well as the obedience to God's law that is involved, that it is not a matter of being prudish.

With discernment several children can be taught together. In this way they come to face the subject without feeling it is a deep, dark secret. After the smaller ones have been simply taught and leave, then the older ones who ask for and need more details can get some elaboration on the matter by the parents. Or, they may select another time, such as when walking home from a visit or shopping, to speak to their children who need information to prepare them for changes in their body or to counter the misinformation they will be hearing from other children.

When is the best time to start with this training of children? Before they start to school. But remember, a small question requires only a small answer. It is unwise to swamp the child with all the clinical details. Make answers clear and direct, honest and simple. Children are quick to detect deceit and hypocrisy. That will result in a loss of confidence. Elaborate only if further questions come. Usually a simple answer suffices.

One of the reasons for not giving them more than they need at such a young age gives basis to some of the strongest objections against forcing the teaching of sex upon children in the lower grades. Age five to adolescence is viewed as the "latency period," when a child's sexual interests are not intense, other things being pursued. It is a time to let a child enjoy growing up, being a child. The child can be damaged or disturbed at this period by unwanted sex talk that can lead to sexual difficulties later on.

Then there is a period in life when more information must be given without waiting for questions from the child. It is when the bodies of youngsters begin to develop the capacity to carry out the marvelous function of procreation. Children need to be told in advance what to expect. They should be taught what changes will occur in their bodies and in their feelings toward the opposite sex. But again, this should be suitable to their age and need. It is best not to make a "big" thing out of it, either then or with children at other sessions. It should not be made an obsession. A physician and author, Dr. Melvin Anchell, says he can teach all that a child needs to know about sex, giving it the medical viewpoint, in about fifteen minutes. But that is the medical viewpoint; there is also God's viewpoint.

There is another matter that is a parental responsibility. What the parents fail to curb in the way of reading and viewing could damage the child's mind. Do you really know what your child reads? What do others, his school chums, offer him to read? One mother was shocked to find some scandalous material tucked under the mattress of her son's bed. Are you serious about the quality of your son's food? Then be serious about the quality of his reading matter. Comics often exploit sex and violence, as does TV.

What Your Family Needs

While the suggestions above may be a help, there is something else you need in order to combat the rising tide of loose conduct and adverse effects of possibly harmful sex instruction. Just as one must have something firm and solid onto which one can fasten a lifesaving rope if it is to be truly useful, so there must be a well-rounded-out knowledge of the Bible if one is to have the background that will give solid support to this kind of parentally taught sex information. This can be had by a regular, weekly Bible study in your home.

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Jehovah's witnesses provide this service free of charge, at a time convenient to you in the privacy of your own home, using your own Bible. There is no obligation except to agree to prepare in advance for the best results. The book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life* contains the course of study. It takes only about six months to cover the material. The fact that in less than two years this publication has reached the astounding circulation of some 23 million copies in many languages is proof enough that it is supplying a need.

More than a million free home Bible studies are being conducted by Jehovah's witnesses each week all around the world. Why not avail yourself of this fine provision? In this way you can fortify your family with the basis in faith that it needs to endure in this era of sex obsession. It will spare you many heartaches and crises in family life.

Parents, do not let your God-given responsibility toward your children in this or any other matter be wrested from you, either by your own apathy or by the questionable motives of some others. The fact that some advocates of sex education in schools advise their followers to "sneak in" such courses and claim that they are merely expanding already-existing programs shows dishonesty on their part and does raise questions about their motives.

The effect of sex education can be bad, depending upon the manner in which it is taught and the content of the material. A conscientious parent will acquaint himself with what is taught and know who has edited the material. Thus he will be able to counteract effectively any misinformation that his child gets in classes.

If information given in some programs serves to supplement that which parents are morally responsible to give their children, then it may be good. It can be learned along with related facts and other studies in school.

But in either case, the final effect upon *your* children will be determined in great measure by what you as the parent do to discharge your own responsibility in the matter. Avail yourself of the Bible-study course that will erect a firm foundation of faith upon which you can build the spirituality of your family. Use the timely material in the Watch Tower publications to aid you to teach your children Bible principles. Build all aspects of a close family relationship. The warm, loving atmosphere of Christian family life is the wholesome climate in which to nurture youth to responsible manhood and womanhood.—Eph. 5:15-23; 6:1-4.

"Plowing with Twelve Spans"

◆ Persons who read the Bible account at 1 Kings 19:19 might conclude that the prophet Elisha was plowing with a team of twelve pairs of bulls. They might wonder how he ever managed to do this. However, travelers in Bible lands have reported some interesting facts about plowing methods there. Considering these reports will help us get a clearer picture of how Elisha plowed.

Since the small plows of the farmers in the Middle East do not make a very deep furrow, farmers there will arrange to plow in company with fellow farmers. One traveler reported that he had seen more than a dozen plows at work in the same field, each with its own plowman and team of oxen before him. Evidently, Elisha was not behind a single plow to which twenty-four bulls were yoked, but he was in charge of the last of twelve plows.

Your Child Is in DANGER!

The molestation of children is an ugly reality in this sick world. *Lear's* magazine said: "It affects more of us than cancer, more of us than heart disease, more of us than AIDS." *Awake!* thus feels an obligation to try to alert its readers to this danger and what can be done about it. —Compare Ezekiel 3: 17-21; Romans 13: 11-13.

IN RECENT years a global outcry has arisen over the molestation of children. But the media attention, replete with celebrities who have publicly disclosed their own experiences of childhood abuse, has led to some popular misconceptions. Some believe that all this talk about attacks on children is simply the latest fad. In truth, though, there is little new about such sexual assault. It is nearly as old as human history itself.

An Ancient Problem

Some 4,000 years ago, the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were famous for depravity. Pedophilia was apparently among the region's many vices. Genesis 19:4 describes a sex-crazed mob of Sodomites ranging "from boy to old man" seeking to rape Lot's two male guests. Consider: Why would mere boys be inflamed with the idea of raping males? Clearly they had already been introduced to homosexual perversions.

Centuries later, the nation of Israel moved into the region of Canaan. So steeped was this land in incest, sodomy, bestiality, prostitution, and even the ritualized sacrifice of little children to demon gods that all these vile acts had to be expressly forbidden in the Mosaic Law. (Leviticus 18:6, 21-23; 19:29; Jeremiah 32:35) Despite divine warnings, rebellious Israelites, including some of their rulers, adopted these despicable practices.—Psalm 106: 35-38.

Ancient Greece and Rome, however, were far worse than Israel in this regard. Infanticide was common to both, and in Greece it was a widely accepted practice for older men to have relations with young boys. Boy brothels flourished in every ancient Greek city. In the Roman Empire, child prostitution was so prevalent that special taxes and holidays were set up specifically for that trade. In the arenas, girls were raped and forced into acts of bestiality. Similar atrocities were prevalent in many other ancient nations.

What about modern times? Is mankind too civilized for such horrible sex acts to flourish today? Students of the Bible cannot accept this notion. They well know that the apostle Paul characterized our era as "critical times hard to deal with." He detailed the

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rampant self-love, the love of pleasure, and the disintegration of natural family love that overrun modern society and added: "Wicked men and impostors will advance from bad to worse." (2 Timothy 3:1-5, 13; Revelation 12:7-12) Has child molestation, so often perpetrated by "wicked men and impostors," got worse?

An Urgent Problem

Assaults on children are often cloaked in secrecy, so much so that they have been called perhaps the most unreported of crimes. Even so, such crimes have evidently spiraled upward in recent decades. In the United States, a survey on the subject was conducted by the *Los Angeles Times*. It found that 27 percent of the women and 16 percent of the men had been sexually abused as children. Shocking as these statistics are, other careful estimates for the United States have run considerably higher.

In Malaysia, reports of child molestation have quadrupled over the past decade. In Thailand, some 75 percent of the men in one survey admitted to using child prostitutes. In Germany, officials estimate that as many as 300,000 children are sexually abused each year. According to South Africa's *Cape Times*, the number of reports of such assaults soared by 175 percent in a recent three-year period. In the Netherlands and Canada, researchers found that about one third of all women had been sexually abused as children. In Finland, 18 percent of the ninth-grade girls (15 or 16 years old) and 7 percent of the boys reported having had sexual contact with someone at least five years their senior.

In various countries disturbing reports have surfaced about religious cults that abuse children with sadistic sexual practices and torture. Often, those who report that they were victims of such crimes are treated with incredulity, not compassion.

So child molestation is neither new nor rare; it is a long-standing problem that is epidemic today. Its impact can be devastating. Many survivors suffer profound feelings of worthlessness and low self-esteem. Experts in the field have listed some common aftereffects of incest on girls, such as running away, drug and alcohol abuse, depression, attempted suicide, delinquency, promiscuity, sleep disturbances, and learning problems. Long-range effects may include poor parenting skills, frigidity, distrust of men, marriage to a pedophile, lesbianism, prostitution, and child molestation itself.

These aftereffects are not inevitable for a victim; nor could anyone rightly excuse wrong conduct solely on the grounds of having been assaulted in the past. Abuse does not predestine its victims to be immoral or delinquent; nor does it dissolve all their personal responsibility for the choices they make later in life. But these common outcomes for victims are real dangers. They add urgency to the question, How can we protect children from molestation?

Awake!

Why *Awake!* Is Published *Awake!* is for the enlightenment of the entire family. It shows how to cope with today's problems. It reports the news, tells about people in many lands, examines religion and science. But it does more. It probes beneath the surface and points to the real meaning behind current events, yet it always stays politically neutral and does not exalt one race above another. Most important, this magazine builds confidence in the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure new world before the generation that saw the events of 1914 passes away.

Would you welcome more information? Write Watch Tower at the appropriate address on page 5. This is part of a worldwide Bible educational work that is supported by voluntary donations.

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How Can We Protect OUR CHILDREN?

AFTER using children to satisfy perverted lusts, after robbing them of their security and their sense of innocence, child molesters still want something else from their victims—SILENCE. To secure that silence, they use shame, secrecy, even outright terror. Children are thus robbed of their best weapon against abuse —the will to tell, to speak up and ask an adult for protection.

"Don't ever tell. It will be our secret."

"No one would believe you."

"If you tell, your parents will hate you. They'll know it was your fault."

"Don't you want to be my special friend anymore?"

"You don't want me to go to jail, do you?"

"I'll kill your parents if you tell."

Tragically, adult society often unwittingly collaborates with child abusers. How so? By refusing to be aware of this danger, by fostering a hush-hush attitude about it, by believing oft-repeated myths. Ignorance, misinformation, and silence give safe haven to abusers, not their victims.

For example, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops concluded recently that it was a "general conspiracy of silence" that allowed gross child abuse to persist among the Catholic clergy for decades. *Time* magazine, in reporting on the widespread plague of incest, also cited a "conspiracy of silence" as a factor that "only helps perpetuate the tragedy" in families.

However, *Time* noted that this conspiracy is crumbling at last. Why? In a word, education. It is as *Asiaweek* magazine put it: "All experts agree that the best defence against child abuse is public awareness." To defend their children, parents must understand the realities of the threat. Don't be left in the dark by

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misconceptions that protect child abusers and not children.—See box below.

Educate Your Child!

Wise King Solomon told his son that knowledge, wisdom, and thinking ability could protect him "from the bad way, from the man speaking perverse things." (Proverbs 2:10-12) Isn't that just what children need? The FBI pamphlet *Child Molesters: A Behavioral Analysis* says this under the heading "The Ideal Victim": "For most children sex is a taboo subject about which they receive little accurate information, especially from their parents." Don't let your children be "ideal victims." Educate them about sex.* For example, no child should reach puberty unaware of how the body will change during this time. Ignorance will make them confused, ashamed—and vulnerable.

A woman we'll call Janet was sexually abused as a child, and years later her own two children were sexually abused. She recalls: "The way we were brought up, we never talked

* See *Awake!* of February 22, 1992, pages 3-11, and July 8, 1992, page 30.

Common Misconceptions

Misconception: Child abusers are usually strangers, deranged misfits who abduct children and use physical force to abuse them.

In the vast majority of cases—from 85 to 90 percent by some estimates—the abuser is a person the child knows and trusts. Rather than using force, abusers often manipulate the child into sexual acts gradually, taking advantage of the child's limited experience and reasoning ability. (Compare 1 Corinthians 13:11 and Proverbs 22:15.) These abusers are not the drooling loners of the stereotype. Many are quite religious, respected, and well liked in the community. According to the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation, "to assume that someone is not a pedophile simply because he is nice, goes to church, works hard, is kind to animals, and so on, is absurd." Recent research suggests that it is also wrong to assume that all abusers are male or that all victims are female.

Misconception: Children fantasize or lie about sexual abuse.

Under normal circumstances children lack the experience or sophistication in sexual matters to invent explicit claims of abuse, although some small children may become confused about details. Even the most skeptical of researchers agree that most claims of abuse are valid. Consider the book *Sex Abuse Hysteria—Salem Witch Trials Revisited*, which focuses on false claims of abuse.* This book admits: "Genuine sex abuse of children is widespread and the vast majority of sex abuse allegations of children . . . are likely to be justified (perhaps 95% or more)." Children find it enormously difficult to report abuse. When they do lie about abuse, it is most often to deny that it happened even though it actually did.

Misconception: Children are seductive and frequently bring the abuse on themselves by their conduct.

This notion is particularly warped, since, in effect, it blames the victim for the abuse. Children have no real concept of sexuality. They have no idea of what such activity implies or of how it will change them. They are therefore incapable of consenting to it in any meaningful way. It is the abuser, and the abuser alone, who bears the blame for the abuse.—Compare Luke 11:11, 12.

Misconception: When children disclose abuse, parents should teach them to refrain from talking about it and to 'put it behind them.'

Who is best served if the child keeps silent about the abuse? Is it not *the abuser*? In fact, studies have shown that denial with emotional suppression may be the least effective way to deal with the trauma of abuse. Of the nine coping methods used by one group of adult survivors studied in England, the ones who denied, avoided, or suppressed the issue suffered the greater emotional maladjustment and distress in adult life. If you experienced a terrifying assault, would you want to be told not to talk about it? Why tell a child such a thing? Allowing the child the normal reaction to such a terrible event, such as grief, anger, mourning, will give him the opportunity eventually to put the abuse in the past.

* In some divorce cases, contending adults have been known to use an accusation of child abuse as a weapon.

about sex. So I grew up embarrassed about it. It was shameful. And when I had kids, it was the same. I could talk to other people's kids but not to my own. I think that's unhealthy because children are vulnerable if you don't talk to them about these things."

Abuse prevention can be taught early. When you teach children to name such body parts as the vagina, the breasts, the anus, the penis, tell them that these places are good, they are special—but they are private. "Other people are not allowed to handle them—not even Mommy or Daddy—and not even a doctor unless Mommy or Daddy is there or has said it is OK."* Ideally, such statements should come from *both parents or each adult guardian.*

In *The Safe Child Book,* Sherryll Kraizer notes that while children should feel free to ignore, scream at, or run from an abuser, many children who are abused explain later that they didn't want to seem rude. Children thus need to know that some grown-ups do bad things and that not even a child has to obey *anyone* who tells him or her to do something wrong. At such times a child has a perfect right to say no, just as did Daniel and his companions to the Babylonian adults who wanted them to eat unclean food.—Daniel 1:4, 8; 3:16-18.

One widely recommended teaching tool is the "What if . . . ?" game. You might, for example, ask: "What if your teacher told you to hit another child? What would you do?" Or: "What if (Mommy, Daddy, a minister, a policeman) told you to jump off a tall building?" The child's answer may be inadequate or simply wrong, but don't correct harshly. The game need not include shock or scare tactics; in fact, experts recommend that it be played in a gentle, loving, even playful manner.

Next, teach children to fend off displays of affection that are inappropriate or that make them feel uncomfortable. Ask, for example, "What if a friend of Mommy and Daddy wanted to kiss you in a way that made you feel funny?"* It is often best to encourage the child to act out what he or she would do, making it a "Let's pretend" game.

In the same way, children can learn to resist other tactics of abusers. For example, you might ask: "What if someone says, 'You know, you're my favorite. Don't you want to be my friend?'" When the child learns to resist such ploys, discuss others. You might ask: "If someone says, 'You don't want to hurt my feelings, do you?' What will you say?" Show the child how to say no through words and clear, firm body language. Remember, abusers often test how children respond to subtle advances. So a child must be taught to resist firmly and say, "I'm telling on you."

Be Thorough in Your Training

Do not limit such training to a onetime talk. Children need much repetition. Use your own

* Of course, parents must bathe and change very little children, and at such times parents wash the private parts. But teach your children to bathe themselves early on; some child-care experts recommend that they learn to wash their own private parts by the age of three if possible.

* Some experts caution that if you force your child to kiss or hug every person who asks for such displays of affection, you may undermine this training. Thus, some parents teach children to make polite excuses or substitutions when unwanted demands are made of them.

He Cried Out for Help

"PLEA to Jehovah Halts Molester's Attack on Youth," declared a headline in the U.S. newspaper *The Arizona Republic,* on May 5, 1993. The alleged molester abducted the 13-year-old youth at gunpoint, taking him to the perpetrator's apartment. When the youth cried out, "Jehovah, help me!" the molester was shaken and let the boy go free. The police later apprehended the man.

While calling upon Jehovah's name is certainly appropriate under such circumstances, it does not mean that God's servants will be free from attack in these critical "last days." (2 Timothy 3:1-5, 13) Christian parents must therefore train their children to be cautious with *all* strangers, regardless of apparent authority.

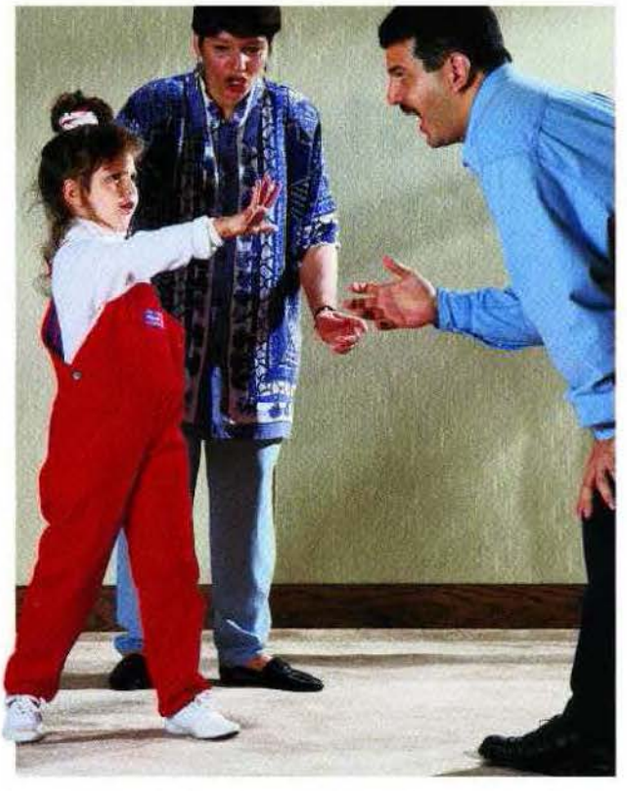
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judgment in determining just how explicit the training should be. But be thorough.

Be sure, for example, to forestall any attempt by an abuser to create a secret pact. Children should know that it is *never* all right for an adult to ask them to keep a secret from either parent. Reassure them that it is *always* proper for them to tell—even if they had promised not to. (Compare Numbers 30: 12, 16.) Some abusers blackmail the child if they know that the child has disobeyed some family rule. "I won't tell on you if you won't tell on me" is the message. So children should know that they will never get in trouble for telling—even under these circumstances. It is safe to tell.

Your training should also be threat-resistant. Some abusers have killed small animals in front of a child and threatened to do the same to the child's parents. Others have warned their victim that they will abuse younger siblings. So teach children that they should *always* tell on an abuser, no matter what scary threats are made.

In this regard the Bible can be a helpful teaching tool. Because it so vividly stresses Jehovah's almighty power, it can take the bite out of abusers' threats. Children need to know that no matter what threats are made, Jehovah is able to help his people. (Daniel 3:8-30) Even when bad people hurt those Jehovah loves, he can always undo the damage afterward and make things better again. (Job, chapters 1, 2; 42:10-17; Isaiah 65:17) Assure them that Jehovah sees everything, including the people who do bad things and the good people who do their best to resist them.—Compare Hebrews 4:13.



Teach children to use words and clear, firm body language to resist improper advances

Cautious as Serpents

It is the rare pedophile who uses physical force to molest a child. They generally prefer to befriend children first. Jesus' advice to be "cautious as serpents" is thus appropriate. (Matthew 10:16) Close supervision by loving parents is one of the best safeguards against abuse. Some molesters look for a child alone in a public place and strike up a conversation to spark the child's curiosity. ("Do you like motorcycles?" "Come see the puppies out in my truck.") True, you cannot be with your children at all times. And child-care experts recognize that children need some freedom to move around. But wise parents are cautious about granting children too much freedom prematurely.

Make sure you get to know *well* any

If Your Child Is Abused

TO STOP abuse, you must know it when you see it. In the numerous books on the subject experts have listed dozens of telltale signs of abuse that parents can watch for. These include: complaints of pain while urinating or defecating, genital infections, abrasions or lesions in the genital area, the sudden onset of bed-wetting, appetite loss or other eating problems, precocious sexual behavior, a sudden fear of such places as school or parts of the house, periods of panic, an extreme fear of undressing, a fear of being alone with a familiar person, and self-mutilation.

However, be careful about jumping to conclusions. Most of these symptoms do not by themselves necessarily mean that a child has actually been sexually abused. Each could indicate some other problem. But if you see disturbing symptoms, gently broach the subject, perhaps with such a statement as: "If anyone ever touches you in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable, I want you to know that you can always tell me, and I'll do all I can to protect you. Has anything like that ever happened to you?"—Proverbs 20:5.

If your child discloses sexual abuse, you will no doubt feel shattered. But remember: Your reaction will play a major role in the child's recovery. Your child has been carrying an unbearable burden and needs you, with all your adult strength, to lift it from her or his shoulders. Praise the child for being so brave as to tell you what happened. Repeatedly reassure the child that you will do your best to provide protection; that the abuse was the abuser's fault, not the child's; that the child is not "bad"; that you love the child.

Some legal experts advise reporting the abuse to the authorities as soon as possible. In some lands the legal system may require this. But in other places the legal system may offer little hope of successful prosecution.

What, though, when the abuser is one's own beloved mate? Sad to say, many women fail to take decisive action. To be sure, it is never easy to face the ugly reality of a mate who is a child abuser. Emotional ties, and even financial dependency, can be overwhelmingly strong. The wronged wife may also realize that taking action could cost her husband his family, his job, his reputation.* The hard truth is, though, that he may just be reaping what he has sown. (Galatians 6:7) Innocent children, on the other hand, stand to lose much more if they are not believed and protected. Their whole future is at stake. They do not have the resources that adults have. Trauma can scar and shape them adversely for life. They are the ones who need and deserve tender treatment. —Compare Genesis 33:13, 14.

Parents must therefore make every reasonable effort to protect their children! Many responsible parents choose to seek out professional help for an abused child. Just as you would with a medical doctor, make sure that any such professional will respect your religious views.# Help your child rebuild his or her shattered self-esteem through a steady outpouring of parental love.

* In reality, the molester is already in trouble and badly needs help. Even if the perpetrator claims to be sorry, the wronged mate may consider: Why didn't he confess before being exposed by his victim?

For instance, when Jehovah's Witnesses are confronted with issues involving blood transfusion, they make sure that the doctor respects their religious beliefs.

adults or older youths who are close to your children, using extra caution when deciding who should care for your children in your absence. Be wary of baby-sitters who make your children feel funny or ill at ease. Likewise, beware of teenagers who seem to have an excessive interest in younger children and have no friends their own age. Thoroughly check out day-care facilities and schools. Tour the entire premises and interview the staff, observing carefully how they interact with children. Ask if they mind if you drop in to check on your children at unexpected times; if this is not allowed, look elsewhere.—See *Awake!* of December 8, 1987, pages 3-11.

The sad truth is, however, that not even the best of parents can control everything that happens to their children.—Ecclesiastes 9:11.

If parents work together, there is one thing they *can* control: the home environment. And since the home is where most child abuse occurs, that will be the focus of the next article.

Prevention IN THE HOME

IT IS NOT the stranger in a trench coat, the loner lurking in the bushes, who poses the greatest threat to children. It is a member of the family. The vast majority of sexual abuse occurs in the home. So how can the home be made more resistant to abuse?

Monique was nine years old when he started abusing her. He began by spying on her as she undressed; then he started visiting her room at night and touching her private parts. When she resisted him, he was furious. Once he even attacked her with a hammer and threw her down a flight of stairs. "No one would believe me," Monique recalls—not even her mother. The abuser was Monique's stepfather.

In his book *Slaughter of the Innocents,* historian Dr. Sander J. Breiner examines the evidence of child abuse in five ancient societies—Egypt, China, Greece, Rome, and Israel. He concludes that while abuse did exist in Israel, it was relatively rare compared to the other four civilizations. Why? Unlike their neighbors, the people in Israel were taught to have respect for women and children—an enlightened view they owed to the Holy Scriptures. When the Israelites applied divine law to family life, they prevented child abuse. Today's families need these clean, practical standards more than ever.

Moral Laws

Does Bible law have an impact on your family? For instance, Leviticus 18:6 reads: "You people must not come near, any man of you, to any close fleshly relative of his to lay bare nakedness. I am Jehovah." Similarly the Christian congregation today enforces strong laws against all forms of sexual abuse. Anyone who sexually abuses a child risks being disfellowshipped, put out of the congregation.* —1 Corinthians 6:9, 10.

All families should know and review such laws together. Deuteronomy 6:6, 7 urges: "And these words that I am commanding you today must prove to be on your heart; and you must inculcate them in your son and speak of them when you sit in your house and when you walk on the road and when you lie down and when you get up." Inculcating these laws means more than occasionally lecturing your children. It involves a regular give-and-take discussion. From time to time,

* Sexual abuse of a child occurs when someone uses a child to gratify his or her own sexual desires. It often involves what the Bible calls fornication, or *por·nei'a,* which could include fondling of genitalia, sexual intercourse, and oral or anal sex. Some abusive acts, such as the fondling of breasts, explicitly immoral proposals, showing pornography to a child, voyeurism, and indecent exposure, may amount to what the Bible condemns as "loose conduct."—Galatians 5:19-21; see *The Watchtower* of March 15, 1983, footnote on page 30.

both mother and father should reaffirm God's laws on incest and the loving reasons for these laws.

You might also use such stories as that of Tamar and Amnon, David's children, to show children that in sexual matters there are boundaries that no one—close relatives included—should ever cross.—Genesis 9:20-29; 2 Samuel 13:10-16.

Respect for these principles can be shown even in practical living arrangements. In one Oriental country, research has shown that much incest occurs in families where children sleep with parents even when there is no economic necessity for this. Similarly, it is generally unwise to have opposite-sex siblings share a bed or a room as they grow older, if this is at all avoidable. Even when cramped living conditions are a fact of life, parents should use good judgment in deciding on where each family member should sleep.

Bible law forbids drunkenness, suggesting that it can lead to perversion. (Proverbs 23:29-33) According to one study, some 60 to 70 percent of incest victims reported that their abusing parent had been drinking when the abuse started.

A Loving Family Head

Researchers find that abuse is more common among families with domineering husbands. The widely held view that women exist merely to fulfill male needs is Scripturally wrong. Some men use this unchristian opinion to justify turning to a daughter for anything they cannot get from a wife. This type of oppression can cause women in these circumstances to lose their emotional balance. Many lose even the natural urge to protect their own children. (Compare Ecclesiastes 7:7.) One study, on the other hand, found that when workaholic fathers were largely absent from the home setting, sometimes mother-son sexual abuse has festered.

What about your family? Do you as husband take the role of head seriously, or do you abdicate it to your wife? (1 Corinthians 11:3) Do you treat your wife with love, honor, and respect? (Ephesians 5:25; 1 Peter 3:7) Do her views count? (Genesis 21:12; Proverbs 31:26, 28) And what about your children? Do you see them as precious? (Psalm 127:3) Or do you view them as mere burdens, readily

One survivor of years of incest said: "Abuse kills children, it kills their trust, their right to feel innocent. That's why children have to be protected. Because now I have to rebuild my whole life. Why make more children do that?" Why indeed?

Listen to the Children!

IN BRITISH COLUMBIA, Canada, a recent study examined the careers of 30 child molesters. The results were chilling. The 30 individuals had, between them, abused 2,099 children. Fully half of them held positions of trust—teachers, ministers, administrators, and child-care workers. One molester, a 50-year-old dentist, had abused nearly 500 children over a 26-year period.

However, *The Globe and Mail* of Toronto notes: "In 80 per cent of cases, one or more sectors of the community (including friends or colleagues of the offender, families of victims, other children, some victims) denied or minimized the abuse." Not surprisingly, "the report suggests that denial and disbelief allow abuse to continue."

Some of the victims had told on the abusers. However, "parents of young victims were unwilling to accept what their children were telling them," *The Globe and Mail* quotes the report as saying. Similarly, a government official in Germany recently cited a report that child victims of sexual abuse have to approach adults with their story as many as seven times before they are believed.

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exploitable? (Compare 2 Corinthians 12:14.) Eliminate warped, unscriptural views of family roles in your household, and you will make it more resistant to abuse.

An Emotionally Safe Place

One young woman whom we'll call Sandi says: "My whole family was set up for abuse. It was isolated, and each member was isolated from the other." Isolation, rigidity, and obsessive secrecy—these unhealthy, unscriptural attitudes are trademarks of the abusive household. (Compare 2 Samuel 12:12; Proverbs 18:1; Philippians 4:5.) Create a home atmosphere that is emotionally safe for children. Home should be a place where they feel built up, where they feel free to open their hearts and speak freely.

Also, children have a great need for physical expressions of love—hugging, caressing, handholding, romping. Do not overreact to the dangers of sexual abuse by withholding these demonstrations of love. Teach children through open, warm affection and praise that they are *valued*. Sandi remembers: "My mom's view was that to give anyone any commendation for anything was wrong. It would give you a big head." Sandi suffered at least ten years of sexual abuse in silence. Children who are not secure in the knowledge that they are beloved, worthwhile individuals may be more susceptible to an abuser's praise, his "affection," or his threats to withdraw it.

"Get Help Now"

"IF YOU are a man and you are sexually involved with children, you may be saying to yourself, 'She likes it,' or 'He asked for it,' or 'I'm teaching her about sex.' You're lying to yourself. Real men are not involved sexually with children. If there's any part of you that really cares about that child, stop it. Get help now." —A proposed public service announcement, quoted in the book *By Silence Betrayed*.

A pedophile who sexually abused hundreds of boys over a 40-year period admitted that the boys who had an *emotional need* for a friend like him made the "best" victims. Don't create such a need in your child.

Break the Cycle of Abuse

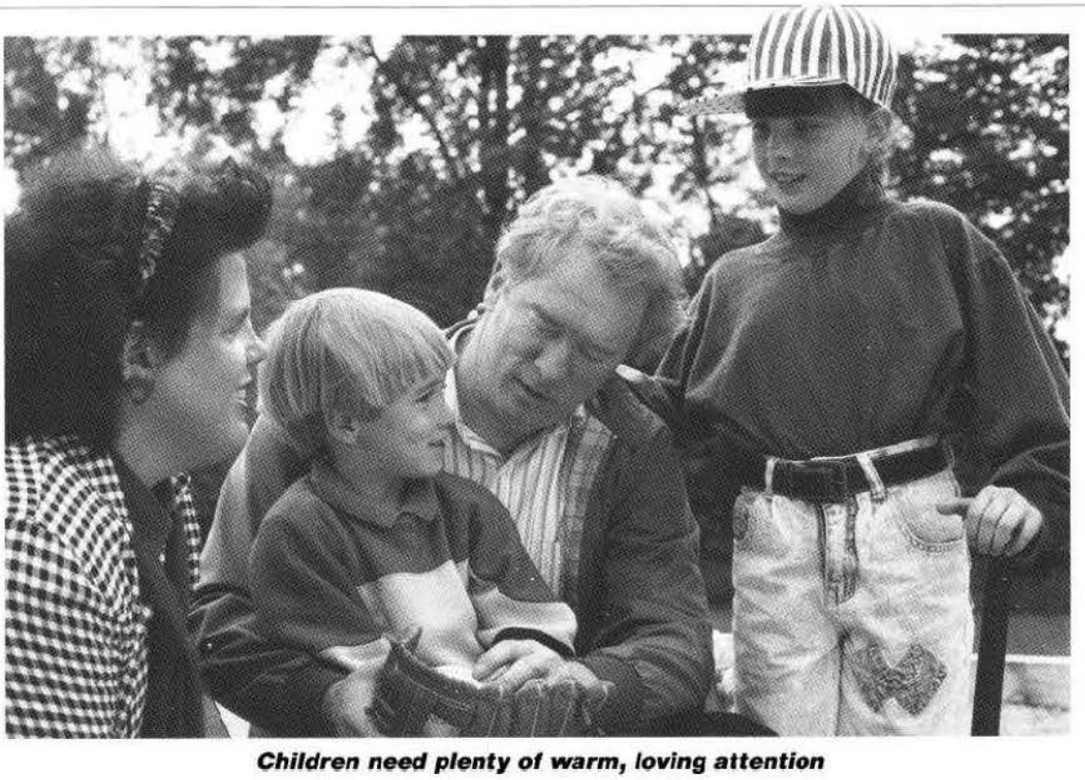
Under severe trial Job said: "My soul certainly feels a loathing toward my life. I will give vent to my concern about myself. I will speak in the bitterness of my soul!" (Job 10:1) Likewise, many parents have found that they can help their children by helping themselves. *The Harvard Mental Health Letter* noted recently: "Strong social sanctions against the expression of pain by men apparently perpetuate the cycle of abuse." It seems that men who never get to express their pain about having been sexually abused are more likely to become abusers themselves. *The Safe Child Book* reports that most child molesters were themselves sexually abused as children but never got help to recover. They express their pain and anger by abusing other children.*—See also Job 7:11; 32:20.

The risk to children may also be higher when mothers do not come to terms with past abuse. For example, researchers report that women who were sexually abused as girls often marry men who are child abusers. Furthermore, if a woman has not come to terms with past abuse, she may understandably find it difficult to discuss abuse with her children. If abuse occurs, she may be less able to discern it and take positive action. Then the children pay an awful price for the mother's inaction.

Thus, abuse may pass from one generation to the next. Of course, many individuals who choose not to discuss their painful past seem able to cope well enough in life, and that is commendable. But in many the pain is deeper, and they do need to make a concerted effort

* While most child molesters were abused as children, this does not mean that abuse *makes* children become abusers. Less than a third of abused children become child molesters.

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Children need plenty of warm, loving attention

—including, if necessary, seeking competent professional help—to heal such severe childhood wounds. Their goal is not to wallow in self-pity. They want to break this sick, hurtful cycle of child abuse affecting their family. —See *Awake!* of October 8, 1991, pages 3 to 11.

The End of Abuse

Properly applied, the foregoing information can do much to reduce the chances of child abuse in your home. Remember, though, that abusers work in secrecy, they take advantage of trust, and they use adult tactics on innocent children. Inevitably, then, some of them do seem to get away with their disgusting crimes.

However, rest assured that God sees what they do. (Job 34:22) Unless they repent and change, he will not forget their vile acts. He will bring them out into the open in his due time. (Compare Matthew 10:26.) And he will exact justice. Jehovah God promises a time when all such treacherous people will be 'torn away from the earth,' and only the meek and gentle who love God and fellowman will be allowed to remain. (Proverbs 2:22; Psalm 37:10, 11, 29; 2 Peter 2:9-12) We have that marvelous hope of a new world thanks to the ransom sacrifice of Jesus Christ. (1 Timothy 2:6) Then, and only then, will abuse end forever.

In the meantime we must do all we can to protect our children. They are so precious! Most parents will readily put their own safety at risk in order to protect their little children. (Compare John 15:13.) If we don't protect our children, the consequences can be horrible. If we do, we give them a wonderful gift—a childhood that feels innocent and free from calamity. They can feel just as the psalmist did, who wrote: "I will say to Jehovah: 'You are my refuge and my stronghold, my God, in whom I will trust.'"—Psalm 91:2.

Consoling Adult Survivors of Childhood Trauma

THEY were an outgoing young couple, highly respected in the congregation. But his tone was urgent when he asked if the elder would call on them, and she had tears in her eyes. She was suffering from episodes of severe depression and self-hatred, even thoughts of suicide. She had been sexually abused as a youngster. Thankful that Jehovah's organization has provided direction on how to help the victims of such crimes, the elder studied the Society's letters to elders as well as the October 8, 1991, *Awake!* articles and the October 1, 1983, *Watchtower* article that dealt with this subject. Here are a few useful points derived from these sources.

1. Listen, listen, listen. When a child skins his knee, his first impulse is to run to Mommy or Daddy for comfort. But an abused child may never even have had that option. So as an adult, he still has that same need—to tell, to talk it out, to be comforted by a sympathetic listener. (Compare Job 10:1; 32:20.) When the elder visited the couple mentioned above, the husband was surprised by how little the elder spoke and how much he listened. The husband, a very practical, helpful man, found that he had been trying to fix the problem by answering emotion with logic, trying to correct feelings that seemed irrational to him. He learned that his wife needed empathy more than answers. (Compare Romans 12:15.) She needed to hear that she had valid reasons for feeling the way she did.

2. Expose the lies. Abuse teaches children that they are dirty, unlovable, worthless. Like false religious doctrines, these ideas can make a healthy relationship with Jehovah very difficult. So expose the lies, and replace them with the truth—gently, repeatedly, patiently. Reason from the Scriptures. (2 Corinthians 10:4, 5) For example: "I understand that you feel dirty. But how does Jehovah feel about you? If he allowed his Son to die and provide a ransom for you, doesn't that mean he loves you? [John 3:16] In His eyes, did the abuse make *you* dirty, or did it make the *abuser* dirty? Remember, Jesus said: 'There is nothing from outside a man that passes into him that can defile him; but the things that issue forth out of a man are the things that defile a man.' [Mark 7:15] Did the abuse really issue forth out of *you*, a little child? Or did the abuser purpose it in his own mind?"

3. Speak consolingly. Each individual is unique, so Paul's counsel to "speak consolingly to the depressed souls" applies differently in each case. (1 Thessalonians 5:14) Simplistic talk, however, rarely seems to console. For instance, merely telling an abuse survivor to read the Bible more, preach more, or 'just throw your burden on Jehovah'—helpful though these suggestions are at times—may not produce results. (Psalm 55:22; compare Galatians 6:2.) Many are already doing these things as best they can and berate themselves mercilessly for not doing better.—Compare 1 John 3:19, 20.

Similarly, telling abuse survivors simply to forget the past may do more harm than good. If they could do so, likely they would have—and would not have needed help to arrive at such a simple solution.* Remember, theirs is a severe emotional trauma. For comparison's sake, just imagine coming upon a car crash victim lying moaning amid the wreckage. Would you just tell him not to think about the pain? Clearly, more is needed.

If you are not sure that what you are saying is consoling and helpful, why not ask the depressed one? After all, even counsel that is true and Scriptural needs to be timely and appropriate as well.—Compare Proverbs 25:11.

After a few visits, the sister began to see some improvement in her outlook, and her husband was better able to help her through the hard times. Both have since been able to speak consolingly to others who have been through similar traumas. How faith-strengthening to see Jehovah, "the God of all comfort," working through his Word and his people to "bind up the brokenhearted" in these troubled times.—2 Corinthians 1:3; Isaiah 61:1.

* True, the apostle Paul did counsel Christians to 'forget the things behind.' But Paul was here referring to his former prestige and worldly success, which were now "a lot of refuse" to him. He was not referring to his past tribulations, of which he spoke freely.—Philippians 3:4-6, 8, 13; compare 2 Corinthians 11:23-27.



A Danger That Concerns Every Parent

HEATHER and Scott are a vivacious, happy couple, the parents of a bright, healthy three-year-old boy.* They take good care of their son. In today's world, that is no easy job. It involves a wide array of worries and responsibilities. There are so many things that children need to be taught! Heather and Scott feel strongly about one responsibility in particular: They want to protect their child from the dangers of sexual abuse. Why?

"My father was a cold, angry drunk," Heather says. "He beat me terribly, and he molested me and my sisters."# It is widely agreed that such abuse can inflict deep emotional scars. No wonder Heather is determined to protect her son! Scott feels the same about protecting him.

Many parents are concerned about child abuse. Perhaps you are as well. Unlike Scott and Heather, you may not have come face-to-face with abuse and its effects, but you have no doubt heard shocking reports about the prevalence of this disgusting practice. Around the world good parents are horrified to learn what is happening to children in their area.

Not surprisingly, one researcher in the field of sexual abuse called the rates of child abuse "one of the most discouraging discoveries of our era." That is certainly sad news, but are such developments surprising? Not to students of the Bible. God's Word explains that we are living in a troubled period of time called "the last days," a time marked by a prevalence of "fierce" behavior, when people would be "lovers of themselves" and would have "no natural affection." —2 Timothy 3:1-5.

Sexual abuse is a daunting issue. Indeed, some parents feel overwhelmed when they contemplate the sheer wickedness of the people who seek out children to abuse them sexually. However, is this problem too much for parents to handle? Or are there some practical steps that parents can take to keep their children safe? The following articles will address these questions.

* Names in this series of articles have been changed.

Sexual abuse of a child occurs when an adult uses a child to gratify his or her own sexual desires. It often involves what the Bible calls fornication, or *por·nei'a*, which could include fondling of genitalia, sexual intercourse, and oral or anal sex. Some abusive acts—such as the fondling of breasts, explicitly immoral proposals, showing pornography to a child, voyeurism, and indecent exposure—may amount to what the Bible condemns as "loose conduct" or "uncleanness . . . with greediness."—Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 4:19.

How to Protect Your Children

FEW of us want to dwell on the subject of sexual abuse of children. Parents shudder at the very thought of it! Such abuse, however, is a frightening and unpleasant reality in today's world, and its effects on children can be devastating. Is the matter worth considering? Well, what would you be willing to give for the sake of your child's safety? Learning about the unpleasant realities of abuse is surely a small price to pay. Such knowledge can really make a difference.

Do not let the plague of abuse rob you of your courage. At the very least, you have power that your child does not have—strengths that it will take years, even decades, for your child to gain. The passing years have brought you a fund of knowledge, experience, and wisdom. The key is to enhance those strengths and put them to use in protecting your child. We will discuss three basic steps that every parent can take. They are as follows: (1) Become your child's first line of defense against abuse, (2) give your child some needed background education, and (3) equip your child with some basic protective tools.

SEXUAL ABUSE —A GLOBAL PROBLEM

In 2006 the secretary-general of the United Nations transmitted to the UN General Assembly a world report on violence against children that had been compiled by an independent expert for the UN. During a recent year, according to the report, an estimated 150 million girls and 73 million boys under 18 years of age experienced "forced sexual intercourse or other forms of sexual violence." Those numbers are staggering, but the report notes: "This is certainly an underestimate." A review of studies from 21 countries suggested that in some places as many as 36 percent of women and 29 percent of men had been subjected to some form of sexual victimization in childhood. The majority of the perpetrators were relatives!

Are You the First Line of Defense?

The primary responsibility for protecting children against abuse belongs to parents, not to children. So educating parents comes before educating children. If you are a parent, there are a few things you need to know about child abuse. You need to know who abuse children and how they go about it. Parents often think of molesters as strangers who lurk in the shadows, seeking ways to kidnap and rape children. Such monsters certainly do exist. The news media bring them to our

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Be your child's first line of defense

attention very often. However, they are relatively rare. In about 90 percent of the cases of sexual abuse of a child, the perpetrator is someone the child already knows and trusts.

Naturally, you do not want to believe that an affable neighbor, teacher, health-care worker, coach, or relative could lust after your child. In truth, most people are not like that. There is no need to become suspicious of everybody around you. Still, you can protect your child by learning how the typical abuser operates.—See the box on page 6.

Knowing such tactics can make you, the parent, better prepared to act as the first line of defense. For instance, if someone who appears more interested in children than in adults singles out your child for special attention and gifts or offers free babysitting or private excursions with your child, what will you do? Decide that the person must be a molester? No. *Do not be quick to jump to conclusions.* Such behavior may be quite innocent. Nonetheless, it can put you on the alert. The Bible says: "Anyone inexperienced puts faith in every word, but the shrewd one considers his steps." —Proverbs 14:15.

Remember, any offer that sounds too good to be true may be just that. Carefully screen anyone who volunteers to spend time alone with your child. Let such an individual know that you are likely to check on your child at any time. Melissa and Brad, young parents of three boys, are cautious about leaving a child alone with an adult. When one son had music lessons at home, Melissa told the instructor: "I'll be in and out of the room while you're here." Such vigilance may sound extreme, but these parents would rather be safe than sorry.

Be actively involved in your child's activities, friendships, and schoolwork. Learn all the details about any planned excursion. One mental-health professional who spent 33 years working with cases of sexual abuse notes that he has seen countless cases



Be involved in your child's activities

Languages: Afrikaans, Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Bulgarian, Cebuano, Chichewa, Chinese, Chinese (Simplified), Croatian, Czech,# Danish,+ Dutch,+ English,+⊙ Estonian, Finnish,+⊙ French,#+ Georgian, German,#+ Greek, Hebrew, Hiligaynon, Hungarian, Iloko, Indonesian, Italian,#+ Japanese,#+ Korean,#+ Lithuanian, Macedonian, Malagasy, Malayalam, Myanmar, Norwegian,+ Polish,#+ Portuguese,#+⊙ Romanian, Russian,#+⊙ Serbian, Sesotho, Sinhala, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish,#+⊙ Swahili, Swedish,+ Tagalog, Tamil, Thai, Tsonga, Tswana, Turkish, Ukrainian, Xhosa, Zulu

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A PATTERN OF SEDUCTION

An abuser is likely to be too clever to use force on his victims. Rather, he may prefer to seduce children gradually. He begins by selecting a target, often a child who seems vulnerable and trusting, thus relatively easy to control. Next, he singles out that child for special attention. He may also try to win the trust of the child's parents. Molesters are often expert at pretending to be sincerely interested in the child and the family.

In time, the molester will begin grooming the child for abuse. He gradually becomes more physical with the child through innocent-looking displays of affection, playful wrestling, and tickling. He may give generous gifts and begin to separate the child from friends, siblings, and parents, in order to spend time alone with the child. At some point he may ask the child to keep some minor secret from the parents—perhaps a gift or plans for some future excursion. Such tactics set the stage for seduction. When the abuser has won the child's trust and that of the parents, he is ready to make his move.

Again, he is likely to be subtle about it rather than violent or forceful. He may exploit the child's natural curiosity about sex, offering to act as a "teacher," or he may suggest that they play a "special game" together that only they will know about. He may try exposing the child to pornography in order to make such behavior seem normal.

If he succeeds in molesting the child, he is now eager to ensure that the child does not tell anyone about it. He may use a variety of tactics, including threats, blackmail, and blame, or perhaps a combination of these. For example, he may say: "It's your fault. You didn't tell me to stop." He may add: "If you tell your parents, they'll call the police and send me to jail forever." Or he may say: "It's our secret. If you tell, no one will believe you. If your parents ever do find out, I will hurt them." There is no end to the devious and malicious tactics such individuals will try.

that could have been prevented by simple vigilance on the parents' part. He quotes one convicted molester as saying: "Parents literally give us their children. . . . They sure made it easy for me." Remember, most molesters prefer easy targets. Parents who are actively involved in their children's lives make their children difficult targets.

Another way to act as your child's first line of defense is to be a good listener. Children will rarely disclose abuse directly; they are too ashamed and worried about the reaction. So listen carefully, even for subtle clues.* If your child says something that concerns you, calmly use questions to draw him out.# If he says that he does not want a certain babysitter to come back, ask why. If he says that an adult plays funny games with him, ask him: "What kind of game? What does he do?" If he complains that someone tickled him, ask him, "Where did he tickle you?" Do not be quick to dismiss a child's answers. Abusers tell a child that no one will believe him; all too often, that is true. And if a child has been abused, being believed and supported by a parent is a big step toward recovery.

Give Your Child Background Education

One reference work on the subject of child abuse quotes a convicted molester as saying: "Give me a kid who knows nothing about sex, and you've given me my next victim." Those chilling words are a useful reminder to parents. Children who are ignorant about sex are much easier for molesters to fool. The Bible says that knowledge and wisdom can deliver us "from the man speaking perverse things."

* Experts note that many abused children give nonverbal clues that something is wrong. For example, if a child suddenly regresses to behavior he had outgrown some time earlier, such as bed-wetting, clinginess, or fear of being alone, he may be sending a signal that something serious is upsetting him. Such symptoms should not be taken as definite proof of abuse. Calmly draw out your child to learn the cause of the distress so that you can offer comfort, reassurance, and protection.

For the sake of simplicity, both the abuser and the victim are referred to here as males. Regardless of gender, though, the same principles apply.

Give your child background education

(Proverbs 2:10-12) Is that not what you want for your child? Then, as your second basic step in protecting him, do not hold back from teaching him about this important subject.

How, though, do you go about it? More than a few parents find the subject of sex a bit awkward to discuss with children. Your child may find the subject even more awkward, and he is not likely to bring it up with you. So take the initiative. Melissa says: "We started early, with naming the body parts. We used real words, not baby words, to show them that there is nothing funny or shameful about any part of their body." Instruction about abuse follows naturally. Many parents simply tell their children that the parts of their body that a bathing suit covers are private and special.

Says Heather, mentioned in the preceding article: "Scott and I told our son that his penis is private, personal, and not a toy. It's not for anyone to play with—not for Mommy, not for Daddy, not even for a doctor. When we take him to the doctor, I explain that he's only going to make sure everything is OK, and that's why he may touch there." Both parents take part in these little talks from time to time, and they assure the child that he can always come to them and tell them if anyone touches him in a way that's wrong or makes him feel uncomfortable. Experts in child care and abuse prevention recommend that all parents have similar talks with their children.

Many have found the book *Learn From the Great Teacher** to be a real help in teaching this subject. Chapter 32, "How Jesus Was Protected," has a direct yet comforting message for children on the dangers of abuse and the importance of staying safe. "The book has given us a perfect way to reinforce what we have told our children personally," says Melissa.

In today's world children need to know that there are some people who want to touch children or get children to touch them in ways that are wrong. These warnings need not fill children with fear or make them distrust all adults. "It's just a safety message," says Heather. "And it's one message among many others, most of them having nothing to do with abuse. It hasn't made my son fearful at all."

Your child's education should include a balanced view of obedience. Teaching a child to obey is an important and difficult lesson. (Colossians 3:20) However, such lessons can go too far. If a child is taught that he must *always* obey *any* adult, regardless of the circumstances, he is vulnerable to abuse. Molesters are quick to notice when children are overly compliant. Wise parents teach their children that obedience is relative. For Christians, that is not as complicated as it may sound. It simply means saying to them: "If anybody tells you to do something that Jehovah God says is wrong, you don't have to do it. Even Mommy or Daddy should never tell you to do something that Jehovah says is wrong. And you can



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Equip your child with basic protective tools

always tell either Mommy or Daddy if someone tries to get you to do something wrong."

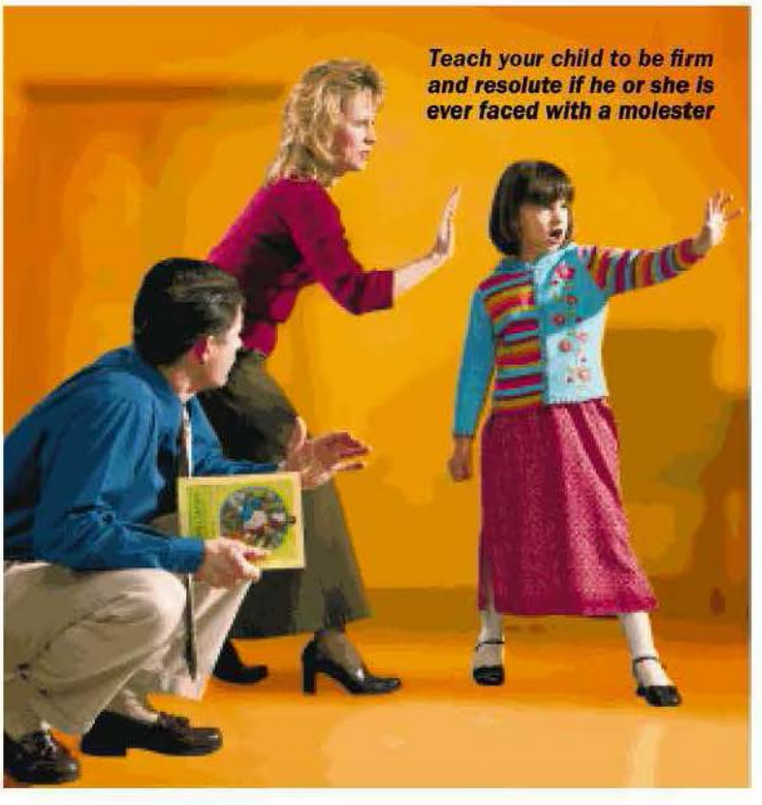
Finally, let your child know that no one should ask him to keep a secret from you. Tell him that if anyone asks him to keep any kind of secret from you, he should always come and let you know. No matter what he is told—even if scary threats are made or he has done something wrong himself—it is *always* OK to come to Mommy or Daddy and tell them all about it. Such instruction need not scare your child. You can reassure him that most people would never do such things—touch him where they shouldn't, ask him to disobey God, or ask him to keep a secret. Like a planned escape route in case of fire, these are just-in-case messages and will probably never be needed.

Equip Your Child With Some Basic Protective Tools

The third step we will discuss is to give your child some simple actions to take in case someone tries to take advantage of him when you are not there. One method that is often recommended is like a game. Parents ask "What if . . . ?" and the child answers. You might say, "What if we were at the store together and we got separated? How would you find me?" The child's answer may not be exactly what you would hope for, but you can guide him along with further questions, such as "Can you think of anything you could do that would be safer?"

You can use similar questions to ask a child what the safest response would be if someone tried to touch him in a wrong way. If the child is easily alarmed by such questions, you might try telling a story about another child. For example: "A little girl is with a relative she likes, but then he tries to touch her where he shouldn't. What do you think she should do to stay safe?"

What should you teach your child to do in situations like the one above? Notes one author: "A firm 'No!' or 'Don't do that!' or 'Leave me alone!' does wonders to frighten the seductive offender into retreat and into rethinking his or her choice of victim." Help your child act out brief scenarios so that he feels confident to refuse loudly, get away quickly, and report to you whatever has happened. A child who seems to understand the training thoroughly may easily forget it within a few weeks or months. So repeat this training regularly.



Teach your child to be firm and resolute if he or she is ever faced with a molester

All the child's direct caregivers, including the males—whether father, stepfather, or other male relatives—should be part of these discussions. Why? Because all involved in such teaching are, in effect, promising the child that they will never commit such acts of abuse. Sadly, much sexual abuse occurs right within the confines of the family. The following article will discuss how you can make your family a safe haven in an abusive world.



Make Your Family a Safe Haven

"HAVING no natural affection." With those sad words, the Bible describes many people of our time, a period called "the last days." (2 Timothy 3:1, 3, 4) The epidemic of child abuse in the family furnishes vivid proof of the truth of that prophecy. In fact, the original Greek word *a'stor·gos,* rendered in English "having no natural affection," suggested a lack of the love that should exist among family members, especially between parents and children.* And all too often that is the setting in which child abuse occurs.

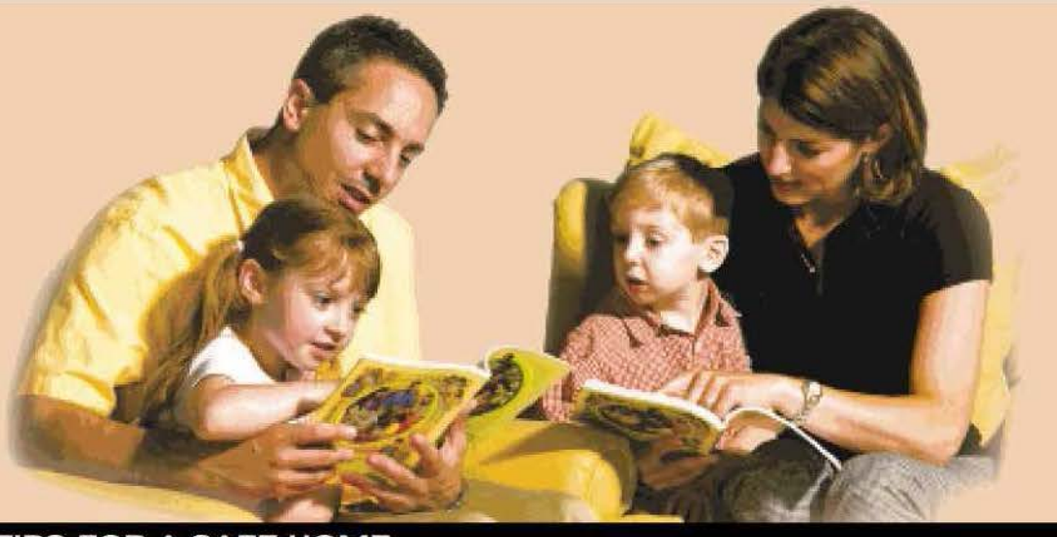
Some researchers say that the most common perpetrator of sexual abuse is the male parent figure. Other male relatives also commonly molest. While most victims are girls, many boys are abused as well. Female perpetrators are not as rare as you might assume. Perhaps the most underreported form of abuse is sibling incest, where an older or more powerful child bullies or seduces a younger or weaker brother or sister into sexual acts. As a parent, you surely find all such acts repugnant.

How can you keep these problems from arising in your family? Clearly, every member of every family needs to learn and to value some principles that rule out abusive conduct. The best place to find that kind of guidance is in God's Word, the Bible.

God's Word and Physical Relations

To be safe, every family needs to embrace the Bible's standard of morality. The Bible is not prudish when it comes to discussing sex. It is dignified, yet frank and to the point. It shows that God designed sexual intimacy to be a real blessing to husband and wife. (Proverbs 5:15-20) However, it condemns sexual conduct outside that arrangement. For instance, the Bible speaks openly against incest. In Leviticus chapter 18, a wide variety of incestuous relationships are forbidden. Note these words in particular: "You people must not come near, any man of you, to *any close fleshly relative of his* to lay bare nakedness [to

* This ancient Greek word has been defined: "Hard-hearted towards kindred." One Bible translation thus renders this verse: "They will . . . lack normal affection for their families."



TIPS FOR A SAFE HOME

Internet: If your children have access to the Internet, they need instructions on how to use it safely. There are countless pornographic sites as well as chat rooms and other social networks where pedophiles seek out and seduce children. It is wise to keep the computer in an open area where parents can more easily monitor its use. Without parental supervision children should never give out personal information or arrange to see anyone they have met over the Internet.—Psalm 26:4.

Alcoholic Beverages: In many cases of sexual abuse of a child, alcohol has played a role. Experience shows that adults who overindulge tend to lower their inhibitions; some give in to desires they might otherwise have suppressed. At any rate, this danger adds another reason to heed the Bible's counsel to avoid drunkenness and overdrinking.—Proverbs 20:1; 23:20, 31-33; 1 Peter 4:3.

Privacy: One woman recalls: "After Mom died, my father was the only one in the house who had curtains on his windows or a door into his bedroom. He gave us no privacy—even in the bathroom." This man molested all his daughters. Every family member needs to understand the importance of privacy. As parents need privacy from their children at certain times, so they need to give children an appropriate measure of privacy as they mature. Wise parents treat others as they themselves want to be treated. —Matthew 7:12.

have sexual intercourse]. I am Jehovah."—Leviticus 18:6.

Jehovah listed acts of incest among the "detestable things" punishable by death. (Leviticus 18:26, 29) Clearly, the Creator has very high standards on this matter. Today, many governments take a similar view, outlawing the sexual abuse of children within the family. Often, the law holds that a child who is subjected to sexual relations by an adult has been raped. Why use that strong word if physical force was not involved?

Many authorities have come to recognize what the Bible has said all along about children—that they tend to be unable to reason in the way that adults do. For example, Proverbs 22:15 says: "Foolishness is tied up with the heart of a boy." And the apostle Paul was inspired to write: "When I was a babe, I used to . . . think as a babe, to reason as a babe; but now that I have become a man, I have done away with the traits of a babe."—1 Corinthians 13:11.

A child cannot understand the full meaning of sexual acts, nor can a child imagine the consequences that will follow over the years.

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Let Us Abhor What Is Wicked

JEHOVAH is a holy God. In ancient times he was "the Holy One of Israel," and as such he demanded that Israel be clean, unsullied. (Psalm 89:18) He told his chosen people: "You must prove yourselves holy, because I am holy." (Leviticus 11:45) Anyone who wanted to "ascend into the mountain of Jehovah" had to be "innocent in his hands and clean in heart." (Psalm 24: 3, 4) That meant more than merely avoiding sinful acts. It meant "the hating of bad."—Proverbs 8:13.

Lovingly, Jehovah laid down detailed laws so that the nation of Israel could identify and avoid wrongdoing. (Romans 7:7, 12) These laws included strict guidelines on morality. Adultery, homosexual acts, incestuous relationships, and bestiality were all identified as unholy spiritual pollutants. (Leviticus 18:23; 20:10-17) Those guilty of such degraded acts were cut off from the nation of Israel.

When the congregation of anointed Christians became "the Israel of God," similar moral standards were laid down for them. (Galatians 6:16) Christians too were to "abhor what is wicked." (Romans 12:9) Jehovah's words to Israel also applied to them: "You must be holy, because I am holy." (1 Peter 1:15, 16) Such unholy practices as fornication, adultery, homosexual acts, bestiality, and incest were not to corrupt the Christian congregation. Those refusing to stop engaging in such things would be excluded from God's Kingdom. (Romans 1:26, 27; 2:22; 1 Corinthians 6:9, 10; Hebrews 13:4) In these "last days," the same standards apply to the "other sheep." (2 Timothy 3:1; John 10:16) As a result, anointed Christians and other sheep make up a clean and wholesome people, able to carry the name of their God as Jehovah's Witnesses.—Isaiah 43:10.

Keeping the Congregation Clean

In contrast, the world condones all kinds of immorality. Although true Christians are different, they should not forget that many who now serve Jehovah were once in the world. There are many who, before they knew our holy God, saw no reason not to indulge the desires and fantasies of their fallen flesh, wallowing in a "low sink of debauchery." (1 Peter 4:4) The apostle Paul, after describing the disgusting practices of degraded people of the nations, said: "That is what some of you were." Still, he went on to say: "But you have been washed clean, but you have been sanctified, but you have been declared righteous in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and with the spirit of our God."—1 Corinthians 6:11.

What a comforting statement that is! Whatever a person did earlier in life, he changes when the glorious good news about the Christ has an effect on his heart. He exercises faith and dedicates himself to Jehovah God. From then on he lives a morally pure life, washed clean in God's eyes. (Hebrews 9:14) The sins that he committed previously are pardoned, and he can 'stretch forward to the things ahead.'* —Philippians 3:13, 14; Romans 4:7, 8.

* See "Questions From Readers" in the May 1, 1996, issue of *The Watchtower*.

Jehovah forgave repentant David for murder and adultery, and He forgave repentant Manasseh for immoral idolatry and much bloodshed. (2 Samuel 12:9, 13; 2 Chronicles 33:2-6, 10-13) We can be truly grateful that he is prepared to forgive us too if we repent and approach him in sincerity and humility. Still, despite Jehovah's forgiving David and Manasseh, these two men—and Israel with them—had to live with the consequences of their sinful acts. (2 Samuel 12:11, 12; Jeremiah 15:3-5) In a similar way, while Jehovah forgives repentant sinners, there may be consequences of their actions that cannot be avoided.

Inevitable Consequences

For example, a man who lives a life of immoral debauchery and contracts AIDS may accept the truth and turn his life around to the point of dedication and baptism. Now he is a spiritually clean Christian having a relationship with God and a wonderful hope for the future; but he still has AIDS. He may eventually die of the disease, a sad but inescapable consequence of his former conduct. For some Christians the effects of former gross immorality may persist in other ways. For years after their baptism, perhaps for the rest of their lives in this system of things, they may have to fight urges in their flesh to return to their previous immoral life-style. With the help of Jehovah's spirit, many succeed in resisting. But they have to wage a constant battle.—Galatians 5:16, 17.

Such ones do not sin as long as they control their urges. But if they are men, they may wisely decide not to 'reach out' for responsibility in the congregation while still having to struggle with powerful fleshly impulses. (1 Timothy 3:1) Why? Because they know the trust that the congregation puts in the elders. (Isaiah 32:1, 2; Hebrews 13:17) They realize that the elders are consulted on many intimate matters and have to handle sensitive situations. It would be neither loving, wise, nor reasonable for one waging a constant fight with unclean fleshly desires to reach out for such a responsible position.—Proverbs 14:16; John 15:12, 13; Romans 12:1.

For a man who was a child molester before he was baptized, there may be another consequence. When he learns the truth, he repents and turns around, not bringing that cruel sin into the congregation. He may thereafter make fine progress, completely overcome his wrong impulses, and even be inclined to 'reach out' for a responsible position in the congregation. What, though, if he still has to live down notoriety in the community as a former child molester? Would he "be irreprehensible, . . . have a fine testimony from people on the outside, . . . [be] free from accusation"? (1 Timothy 3:1-7, 10; Titus 1:7) No, he would not. Hence, he would not qualify for congregation privileges.

When a Dedicated Christian Sins

Jehovah understands that we are weak and that even after baptism we may fall into sin. The apostle John wrote to Christians of his day: "I am writing you these things that you may not commit a sin. And yet, if anyone does commit a sin, we have a helper with the Father, Jesus Christ, a righteous one. And he is a propitiatory sacrifice for our sins, yet not for ours only but also for the whole world's." (1 John 2:1, 2) Yes, on the basis of Jesus' sacrifice, Jehovah will forgive baptized Christians who fall into sin—if they truly repent and abandon their wrong course.

An example of this was seen in the first-century congregation at Corinth. The

apostle Paul heard of a case of incestuous fornication in that young congregation, and he gave instructions that the man involved be disfellowshipped. Later, the sinner repented, and Paul exhorted the congregation to reinstate him. (1 Corinthians 5:1, 13; 2 Corinthians 2:5-9) Thus, by the healing power of Jehovah's loving kindness and the great value of Jesus' ransom sacrifice, the man was cleansed of his sin. Similar things may happen today. Again, though, even if a baptized person who commits a serious sin repents and is forgiven in Jehovah's eyes, there may still be ongoing consequences of his sin.—Proverbs 10:16, 17; Galatians 6:7.

For example, if a dedicated girl commits fornication, she may bitterly regret her act and eventually be restored to spiritual health with the help of the congregation. But what if she is pregnant because of her immorality? Then her whole life has been inescapably changed by what she did. A man who commits adultery may repent and not be disfellowshipped. But his innocent mate has Scriptural grounds to divorce him, and she may choose to do so. (Matthew 19:9) If she does, the man, although forgiven by Jehovah, will live the rest of his life with this grave consequence of his sin.—1 John 1:9.

What of a man who unlovingly divorces his wife in order to marry another woman? Perhaps he will eventually repent and be reinstated in the congregation. Over the years he may make progress and "press on to maturity." (Hebrews 6:1) But as long as his first wife lives without a mate, he will not qualify to serve in a responsible position in the congregation. He is not "a husband of one wife" because he had no Scriptural right to divorce his first wife. —1 Timothy 3:2, 12.

Are these not powerful reasons why a Christian should cultivate an abhorrence of what is wicked?

What of a Child Molester?

What if a baptized adult Christian sexually molests a child? Is the sinner so wicked that Jehovah will never forgive him? Not necessarily so. Jesus said that 'blasphemy against the holy spirit' was unforgivable. And Paul said that there is no sacrifice for sins left for one who *practices* sin willfully despite knowing the truth. (Luke 12:10; Hebrews 10:26, 27) But nowhere does the Bible say that an adult Christian who sexually abuses a child—whether incestuously or otherwise—cannot be forgiven. Indeed, his sins can be washed clean if he repents sincerely from the heart and turns his conduct around. However, he may still have to struggle with the wrong fleshly impulses he cultivated. (Ephesians 1:7) And there may be consequences that he cannot avoid.

While Jehovah forgives repentant sinners, there may be consequences of their actions that cannot be avoided

Depending on the law of the land where he lives, the molester may well have to serve a prison term or face other sanctions from the State. The congregation will not protect him from this. Moreover, the man has revealed a serious weakness that henceforth will have to be taken into account. If he seems to be repentant, he will be encouraged to make spiritual progress, share in the field service, even have parts in the Theocratic Ministry School and nonteaching parts in the Service Meeting. This does not mean, though, that he will qualify to serve in a position of responsibility in the congregation. What are the Scriptural reasons for this?

For one thing, an elder must be "self-controlled." (Titus 1:8) True, none of us have perfect self-control. (Romans 7:21-25) But a dedicated adult Christian who falls into the sin of child sexual abuse reveals an unnatural fleshly weakness. Experience has shown that such an adult may well molest other children. True, not every child molester repeats the sin, but many do. And the congregation cannot read hearts to tell who is and who is not liable to molest children again. (Jeremiah 17:9) Hence, Paul's counsel to Timothy applies with special force in the case of baptized adults who have molested children: "Never lay your hands hastily upon any man; neither be a sharer in the sins of others." (1 Timothy 5:22) For the protection of our children, a man known to have been a child molester does not qualify for a responsible position in the congregation. Moreover, he cannot be a pioneer or serve in any other special, full-time service.—Compare the principle at Exodus 21:28, 29.

Some may ask, 'Have not some committed other types of sin and apparently repented, only to repeat their sin later?' Yes, that has happened, but there are other factors to consider. If, for example, an individual makes immoral advances to another adult, the adult should be able to resist his or her advances. Children are much easier to deceive, confuse, or terrorize. The Bible speaks of a child's lack of wisdom. (Proverbs 22:15; 1 Corinthians 13:11) Jesus used children as an example of humble innocence. (Matthew 18:4; Luke 18:16, 17) The innocence of a child includes a complete lack of experience. Most children are open, eager to please, and thus vulnerable to abuse by a scheming adult whom they know and trust. Therefore, the congregation has a responsibility before Jehovah to protect its children.

Well-trained children learn to obey and honor their parents, the elders, and other adults. (Ephesians 6:1, 2; 1 Timothy 5:1, 2; Hebrews 13:7) It would be a shocking perversion if one of these authority figures were to misuse that child's innocent trust so as to seduce or force him or her to submit to sexual acts. Those who have been sexually molested in this way often struggle for years to overcome the resulting emotional trauma. Hence, a child molester is subject to severe congregational discipline and restrictions. It is not his status as an authority figure that should be of concern but, rather, the unblemished purity of the congregation.—1 Corinthians 5:6; 2 Peter 3:14.

If a child molester sincerely repents, he will recognize the wisdom of applying Bible principles. If he truly learns to abhor what is wicked, he will despise what he did and struggle to avoid repeating his sin. (Proverbs 8:13; Romans 12:9) Further, he will surely thank Jehovah for the greatness of His love, as a result of which a repentant sinner, such as he is, can still worship our holy God and hope to be among "the upright" who will reside on earth forever. —Proverbs 2:21.

to give up in the fight against any tendency to become discouraged. I have learned to view Jehovah as my Father and his organization as my Mother. I have come to realize that if we make the effort, Jehovah can use any one of us to be an effective servant of his.

Even though I at times have felt that I was, as it were, "thrown down," I have 'not been destroyed.' I have never been abandoned by Jehovah and his organization, nor by my family and my Christian brothers. Thanks to my reaching out for the Bible and starting to read it, I regained spiritual strength. I am grateful to Jehovah God, who gives "power beyond what is normal" when we trust in him.—2 Corinthians 4:7.

With full confidence and complete trust in Jehovah, I am eagerly looking forward to the future. I am confident that very soon Jehovah God will fulfill his promise about a restored paradise here on earth along with all the wonderful blessings it will bring. —Revelation 21:3, 4.

Comfort for those with a "stricken spirit"

TODAY, Satan's world has come to be "past all moral sense." (Ephesians 4:19; 1 John 5:19) Adultery and fornication are pandemic. In many lands 50 percent or more of marriages end in divorce. Homosexuality is widely accepted. Sexual violence—rape—is often in the news. Pornography is a billion-dollar industry.—Romans 1:26, 27.

Among the vilest perversions is the sexual abuse of innocent children. Like the wisdom of Satan's world, child sexual abuse is "animal, demonic." (James 3:15) In the United States alone, *Time* magazine says, "more than 400,000 reports of verifiable sexual assaults are filed with authorities each year by teachers and doctors." When victims of this abuse become adults, many still carry painful wounds, and those wounds are real! The Bible says: "The spirit [mental inclination, inner feelings and thoughts] of a man can put up with his malady; but as for a stricken [wounded, afflicted] spirit, who can bear it?"—Proverbs 18:14.

The good news of God's Kingdom appeals to people of all kinds, including "the brokenhearted" and those with a "downhearted spirit." (Isaiah 61:1-4) Not surprisingly, many who are in emotional pain respond to the invitation: "Let anyone thirsting come; let anyone that wishes take life's water free." (Revelation 22:17) The Christian congregation can be a place of comfort for these. They rejoice to learn that suffering will soon be a thing of the past. (Isaiah 65: 17) Until that time, though, they may need to be 'comforted' and have their wounds 'bound up.' Well did Paul counsel Christians: "Speak consolingly to the depressed souls, support the weak, be long-suffering toward all."—1 Thessalonians 5:14.

"Repressed Memories"

In recent years some have been "brokenhearted" for reasons that others find difficult to understand. They are adults who, on the basis of what have been described as "repressed memories," say that they were sexually abused when they were children.* Some have no thought of having been molested until, unexpectedly, they experience flashbacks and "memories" of an adult (or adults)

* "Repressed memories" and similar expressions are enclosed in quotation marks to distinguish them from the more typical memories that all of us have.

abusing them when they were young. Do any in the Christian congregation have such disturbing thoughts? In a few lands, yes, and these dedicated ones may experience deep distress, anger, guilt, shame, or loneliness. Like David they may feel isolated from God and cry out: "Why, O Jehovah, do you keep standing afar off? Why do you keep yourself hid in times of distress?"—Psalm 10:1.

Many aspects of these "memories" are not well understood by mental-health professionals. Still, such "memories" can affect the spirituality of dedicated Christians. So we look with confidence to God's Word for guidance in handling them. The Bible provides "discernment in all things." (2 Timothy 2:7; 3:16) It also helps all concerned to put faith in Jehovah, "the Father of tender mercies and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation."—2 Corinthians 1:3, 4.

Did It Really Happen?

In the world, there is much controversy as to what these "memories" are and to what extent they represent things that actually happened. Jehovah's Witnesses are "no part of the world" and take no part in this controversy. (John 17:16) According to published reports, "memories" have sometimes proved to be accurate. For example, after insurance adjuster Frank Fitzpatrick "remembered" being molested by a certain priest, almost one hundred others came forward to claim that they too had been abused by the same priest. The priest reportedly admitted to the abuse.

It is noteworthy, however, that a number of individuals have been unable to corroborate their "memories." Some afflicted in this way have had vivid recollections of a certain individual committing abuse or of the abuse being committed in a specific place. Later, though, legitimate evidence to the contrary made it clear that these "remembered" details could not be true.

Providing a Refuge

Nevertheless, how can comfort be given to those who experience a "stricken spirit" because of such "memories"? Remember Jesus' parable of the neighborly Samaritan. A man was set upon by robbers, beaten, and stripped of his possessions. When the Samaritan came along, his heart went out to the wounded man. What did he do? Did he insist on hearing every last detail about the beating? Or did the Samaritan get a description of the robbers and immediately chase after them? No. The man was hurt! So the Samaritan gently dressed his wounds and lovingly carried him to the safety of a nearby inn where he could recover.—Luke 10: 30-37.

True, there is a difference between physical wounds and a "stricken spirit" caused by actual childhood sexual abuse. But both cause great suffering. Hence, what the Samaritan did for the wounded Jew shows what can be done to help an afflicted fellow Christian. The first priority is to give loving comfort and to help him recover.

The Devil afflicted faithful Job, apparently confident that either emotional or physical pain would break his integrity. (Job 1:11; 2:5) Since then, Satan has often tried to use suffering—whether he directly causes it or not—to weaken the faith of God's servants. (Compare 2 Corinthians 12:7-9.) Can we doubt that the Devil now plays upon child abuse and the "downhearted spirit" of many adults who suffered this (or are troubled by "memories" of having suffered it) to try to weaken the faith of Christians? Like Jesus when under attack by Satan, a Christian who suffers pain but who stalwartly refuses to abandon his integrity is saying: "Go away, Satan!"—Matthew 4:10.

Stay Spiritually Strong

"The faithful and discreet slave" has published information to help handle the spir-

itual and emotional hurt caused by child abuse. (Matthew 24:45-47) Experience shows that the sufferer is helped if he can rely on the 'power of the Lord and the mightiness of his strength,' putting on "the complete suit of armor from God." (Ephesians 6:10-17) This armor includes Bible "truth," which exposes Satan as the ultimate enemy and dissipates the darkness in which he and his henchmen work. (John 3:19) Then, there is "the breastplate of righteousness." The afflicted one should strive to hold to righteous standards. For example, some have strong impulses to harm themselves or to commit immorality. Every time they resist these impulses, they win a victory!

Spiritual armor also includes "the good news of peace." Talking to others about Jehovah's purposes strengthens the one talking as well as anyone who listens. (1 Timothy 4:16) If you should be one with a "stricken spirit," making it difficult for you to talk about the good news, try to accompany another Christian as he or she does this vital work. And do not forget "the large shield of faith." Have faith that Jehovah loves you and that he will restore all that you have lost. Believe without reservation that Jesus also loves you, and he proved this by dying for you. (John 3:16) Satan has always falsely claimed that Jehovah does not care for his servants. That is just another of his gross, vicious lies.—John 8:44; compare Job 4:1, 15-18; 42:10-15.

If pain of heart makes it difficult to believe that Jehovah is concerned about you, it will help to associate with others who firmly believe that he does have concern. (Psalm 119: 107, 111; Proverbs 18:1; Hebrews 10:23-25) Refuse to allow Satan to rob you of the prize of life. Remember, "the helmet of salvation" is part of the armor; so is "the sword of the spirit." The Bible is inspired by holy spirit, which Satan cannot defeat. (2 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 4:12) Its healing words can soothe emotional pain.—Compare Psalm 107:20; 2 Corinthians 10:4, 5.

Finally, pray constantly for the strength to endure. (Romans 12:12; Ephesians 6:18) Heartfelt prayer sustained Jesus through intense emotional agony, and it can help you too. (Luke 22:41-43) Is it difficult for you to pray? Ask others to pray with you and for you. (Colossians 1:3; James 5:14) Holy spirit will support your prayers. (Compare Romans 8:26, 27.) As with a painful physical illness, some with deep emotional wounds may not be completely healed in this system of things. But with Jehovah's help we can endure, and endurance is victory, as it was in Jesus' case. (John 16:33) "Trust in [Jehovah] at all times, O people. Before him pour out your heart. God is a refuge for us." —Psalm 62:8.

What of the Alleged Abuser?

A person who actually abuses a child sexually is a rapist and should be viewed as such. Anyone victimized in this way has the right to accuse his abuser. Still, an accusation should not be made hastily if it is based solely on "repressed memories" of abuse. In this case the most important thing is for the sufferer to regain a degree of emotional stability. After the passage of some time, he may be in a better position to assess the "memories" and decide what, if anything, he wants to do about them.

Consider the case of Donna. She reportedly had eating disorders and went to a counselor—apparently one of dubious competence. Soon she was accusing her father of incest and he was taken to court. The jury was deadlocked, so the father did not go to prison, but he was left with $100,000 in legal bills. Then, after all that, Donna told her parents that she no longer believed that the abuse happened!

Wisely, Solomon said: "Do not go forth to conduct a legal case hastily." (Proverbs 25:8) If there is some valid reason to suspect that the alleged perpetrator is still abusing children, a warning may have to be given. The congregation elders can help in such a case. Otherwise, take your time. Eventually, you may be content to let the matter drop. If, though, you want to confront the alleged perpetrator (after first assessing how you would feel about the possible responses), you have a right to do so.

During the time that the one experiencing "memories" is healing, awkward situations may arise. For example, an individual may have vivid mental images of being molested by someone he or she sees every day. No rules can be laid down for handling this. "Each one will carry his own load." (Galatians 6:5) Sometimes one may feel that a relative or a member of one's immediate family is involved. Remember the dubious nature of some "repressed memories" when it comes to identifying the one suspected of being a perpetrator. In such a situation, as long as the matter has not been firmly established, keeping contact with the family—at least by occasional visits, by letter, or by telephone—would show that one is trying to follow a Scriptural course.—Compare Ephesians 6:1-3.

What Can Elders Do?

If the elders are approached by a member of the congregation who is experiencing flashbacks or "repressed memories" of child abuse, two of them are usually assigned to help. These elders should kindly encourage the afflicted one to focus for the time being on coping with the emotional distress. The names of any "remembered" abusers should be kept in strict confidence.

The elders' primary task is to act as shepherds. (Isaiah 32:1, 2; 1 Peter 5:2, 3) They should be especially careful to "clothe [themselves] with the tender affections of compassion, kindness, lowliness of mind, mildness, and long-suffering." (Colossians 3:12) Let them listen in a kindly way and then apply healing words from the Scriptures. (Proverbs 12:18) Some who are afflicted with painful "memories" have expressed appreciation for elders who make regular visits or even telephone calls to check to see how they are doing. Such contacts need not take a lot of time, but they show that Jehovah's organization cares. When the afflicted one realizes that his Christian brothers truly love him, he may be helped to recover a considerable degree of emotional balance.

What if the sufferer decides that he wants to make an accusation?* Then the two elders can advise him that, in line with the principle at Matthew 18:15, he should personally approach the accused about the matter. If the accuser is not emotionally able to do this face-to-face, it can be done by telephone or perhaps by writing a letter. In this way the one accused is given the opportunity to go on record before Jehovah with his answer to the accusation. He may even be able to present evidence that he could not have committed the abuse. Or perhaps the one accused will confess, and a reconciliation may be achieved. What a blessing that would be! If there is a confession, the two elders can handle matters further in accordance with Scriptural principles.

If the accusation is denied, the elders should explain to the accuser that nothing more can be done in a judicial way. And the congregation will continue to view the one accused as an innocent person. The Bible says that there must be two or three witnesses before judicial action can be taken. (2 Corinthians 13:1; 1 Timothy 5:19) Even if more than one person "remembers" abuse

* It may also be necessary for the step outlined in this paragraph to be taken if the matter has become common knowledge in the congregation.

by the same individual, the nature of these recalls is just too uncertain to base judicial decisions on them without other supporting evidence. This does not mean that such "memories" are viewed as false (or that they are viewed as true). But Bible principles must be followed in establishing a matter judicially.

What if the one accused—though denying the wrongdoing—is really guilty? Does he "get away with it," as it were? Certainly not! The question of his guilt or innocence can be safely left in Jehovah's hands. "The sins of some men are publicly manifest, leading directly to judgment, but as for other men their sins also become manifest later." (1 Timothy 5:24; Romans 12:19; 14:12) The book of Proverbs says: "The expectation of the righteous ones is a rejoicing, but the very hope of the wicked ones will perish." "When a wicked man dies, his hope perishes." (Proverbs 10:28; 11:7) Ultimately, Jehovah God and Christ Jesus render everlasting judgment in justice.—1 Corinthians 4:5.

Resisting the Devil

When dedicated souls endure in the face of great physical or emotional pain, what an evidence it is of their inner strength and love for God! And what a testimony to the power of Jehovah's spirit to sustain them! —Compare 2 Corinthians 4:7.

Peter's words apply to such ones: "Take your stand against [Satan] solid in the faith." (1 Peter 5:9) Doing so may not be easy. Sometimes, it may even be difficult to think clearly and logically. But take heart! Soon, the Devil and his crafty acts will no longer exist. Truly, we long for that time when "God himself . . . will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away."—Revelation 21:3, 4.

Box Meal Gives Witness

IN THE days following the earthquake in Kobe, Japan, last January, people in the affected area had a hard time finding food. Still, Jehovah's Witnesses did not lack sustenance, thanks to the kind assistance of their friends. For the first two or three days after the quake, nearby congregations provided rice balls. Soon, caring friends were providing box meals. To the box meals, many attached notes expressing concern for the affected ones. Those who received the meals said that every meal was "salted" as they could not hold back their tears when reading the notes.

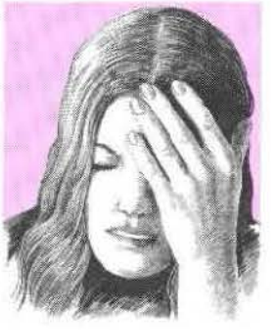
Jehovah's Witnesses shared their food with others who were in need. One Witness found himself eating his lunch while traveling by car with a non-Witness colleague working in the same company. So he shared one of the box meals he had received.

"Where did you buy this box lunch?" his colleague asked. The brother explained the relief work of the Witnesses. "I haven't eaten vegetables for days. I'm going to save some and take it home for my family," the man said appreciatively.

The third time this happened, the colleague handed 3,000 yen (about $35, U.S.) to the Witness and said: "I'm familiar with your activities, so please let me make a donation to your work. I appreciate your sharing your lunch with me. Really, your friends are all such nice people."

Help for the Victims of Incest

"FOR most of her life Rachel has been ridden with guilt, convinced of her own worthlessness, and trapped in a sense of hopeless isolation." What could so blemish the life of a British housewife and mother?



A 16-year-old girl from California said: "I now have a pain deep in my heart that will never go away, and it hurts, truly hurts." What could cause her such anguish?

The answer in both cases is the same: incest. Both of these women were sexually abused by their fathers when they were children. Unhappily, there are many like them. Studies in the United States suggest that one in five girls and one in ten boys suffer sexual molestation before they grow up. In most cases, the crime is committed by someone the young victim knows, and in many cases it is incestuous. Reports from other countries tell a similar story.

As the world becomes more degenerate, this problem will likely get worse. Even now, many women coming into the Christian congregation have emotional difficulties because of incest committed against them when they were children. Some have gone to professional counselors and psychologists for help, but many turn to the congregation, looking to their Christian brothers and sisters for support. Is there any way mature ones in the congregation, even if they are not professionals in the field of mental health, can help them? Often there is.—1 Thessalonians 5:11.

If you have any doubt about the harm incest does, consider the expressions of some of its victims many years after the crime: "For 15 years I kept all those things in, so I was engulfed by years of guilt . . . How I hated men!"

"Almost worse than the actual molesting is the guilt."

"I can truly say I think I would have killed myself by now because of the memories."

"I don't want to get married because of the memory of sex. And I surely don't want any children."

A study prepared by Doctors Bruce A. Woodling (of the University of Southern California School of Medicine) and Peter D. Kossoris (a deputy district attorney) confirms the above, stating: "Older women who were incestuously molested as children or adolescents are commonly depressed and neurotically anxious." A University of Washington study published in *Medical Times* adds: "Problems reported

Incestuous child abuse is sexual abuse of children by an older relative. Usually, it is by a male relative—such as a father, stepfather, uncle or older brother. Sometimes, but much more rarely, it is by a female relative. According to the book *The Silent Children*, incestuous abuse can range from improper fondling to oral-genital contact to intercourse. Of course, affectionate physical contact between children and older people is proper. But when the older person finds these contacts arousing, or when he does things alone with the child that he would not do if the child's mother were present, this will likely lead to sexual abuse of the child.

include: feelings of guilt and depression; negative self-image; difficulties in interpersonal relationships associated with an underlying mistrust of men, inadequate social skills, and sexual dysfunction."

Why is incest so shattering? The magazine *Child Welfare* draws attention to the situation of a daughter molested by her father: "The daughter who has been molested is dependent on her father for protection and care. . . . She dares not express or even feel the depths of her anger at being used. She must comply with her father's demands or risk losing the parental love that she needs."

A former victim rightly insists that incest "is selfish and reprehensible . . . and a grotesque violation of a child's trust and dependency."

Some little girls who were victims of incest thought that the only way men would love them was sexually, so they behaved precociously toward other men besides the one victimizing them. Other victims, when they grew to be teenagers, were overly interested in sex, even promiscuous. Many have feelings of deep anger, worthlessness and, especially, guilt. They feel guilty because of what happened, guilty because they did not stop it, guilty because of the harmful emotions, guilty if they had any pleasurable feelings during the experience, and, if the incest affected the parents' marriage, guilty because of that.

Is there any way they can be helped to handle such emotional turmoil?

It Does Not Help to Say . . .

One woman who was having problems because she had been a victim of incest over many years went to the elders in the congregation to discuss her problem. "They told me to forget about it," she reports. The well-intentioned reasoning behind that advice was doubtless that since the bad experiences were all in the past and nothing could be done about them now the best thing to do was to put them out of her mind and think good thoughts. (Philippians 4:8) Unhappily, it is not as simple as that.

Why not? Well, think of someone who has had an arm severely disabled in an accident. His friends visit him to help him. Would it help for them to say to him: 'Oh, forget about it!' Of course not. There is no way he can forget about it.

Similarly, many women who have been incestuously abused are unable just to forget about it. For some, it is stamped on their consciousness like an emotional scar. One victim wrote: "My grandfather assaulted me when I was seven years old, not just once but on a number of occasions. My naiveté left me defenseless. Now I feel the repercussions constantly. It's been a living nightmare ever since. The memory can be pushed back for a while only to resurface and make me sick to my stomach. I feel ashamed and dirty, and I wasn't even to blame."

True, the emotional scars of incest (and other traumatic experiences) are not visible. But they are just as real as physical scars. So how can those be helped who have them? One way is to listen to the victim and encourage her to "talk it out."

> "The memory can be pushed back for a while only to resurface and make me sick"

It Might Help to Say . . .

The counselor should be helpful, not judgmental. The apostle Paul encouraged Christians: "Become kind to one anoth-

er, tenderly compassionate." (Ephesians 4:32) In counseling situations, these qualities are vital.

Thus, a woman who was victimized over many years by her father when she was a girl says: "Elders (or whoever else is approached) should be superkind." Another who was also abused by her father says: "The main thing is not to be shocked. Be calm and understanding, not pushing for every detail but being willing to listen to whatever you are told. Try to understand the victim's emotions."

Being calm and understanding is not always easy. One woman admitted that she often spoke excitedly, even belligerently, when discussing her problem. Is such conduct disrespectful? Perhaps. But a "tenderly compassionate," mature Christian will quickly realize that it is not meant personally. It is an expression of inner turmoil.—Philippians 2:1-4.

Additionally, those counseling incest victims need to listen, just as Jehovah God listens. (Psalm 69:33) They should not be quick to make comments or judgments. (Proverbs 18:13; James 1:19) Does listening and giving comfort really help? Yes, indeed. One victim reports: "I was able to talk it over with a sister older than I, and what a relief I felt! I . . . wept with her." Another said: "I think just having somebody to talk to was the thing that helped me most."

If the victim is suffering from severe emotional turmoil, a more experienced counselor may be able to help her determine the reason for that turmoil and how she can deal with it. Questions such as the following may help to draw out hidden feelings: "Do you want to discuss what happened? How do you feel about yourself? How do you feel about your father [or uncle, or whoever the abuser was]? Do you blame yourself for what happened? Do you think it makes you worse than other people?" A loving counselor will show that he is not shocked by the answers. Rather, he will explain that such feelings are not uncommon. Some have felt better when they learned this.

What if the victim reveals that she feels worthless because of the experience? A young woman who was abused by her grandfather, father and stepfather, says: "They [the counselors] could help her realize she is worth a lot. I used to feel different from my friends at school. I felt dirty compared with them. Then as a teenager I got into trouble a few times. But now I know that Jehovah does not hold this experience against me. He views me as a worthwhile person." —Psalm 25:8; 1 John 4:18, 19.

Victims often feel anger too. In her book *The Silent Children* Linda T. Sanford explains why, saying: "As the child grows older, she learns the real meaning of the sexual activity and becomes aware of the adult's gross inappropriateness. Therefore she feels betrayed. She had looked up to and trusted this older person. She learns that his reassurances were monumental lies."

'Just having somebody to talk to helped me the most'

Some of this anger—and some of the guilt feelings victims experience—may be defused if the abuser straightforwardly admits what he did and apologizes. One victim, whose father was arrested after the incest was exposed, said: "About three years ago, my father gave me a nice present and said: 'I just want you to know I am really sorry for a lot of the things that happened between us.' I knew what he meant and accepted his

apology. Now I have a good relationship with him."

Unhappily, however, many abusers flatly deny everything or admit to only a fraction of what they did. By the time a disturbed woman seeks help, the abuser may even be dead. But the anger may still be there. Those counseling may, nonetheless, be able to help her. They can kindly point out that her anger is completely understandable. Even Jehovah remains angry at sinners who do not repent.—John 3:36.

However, they may tactfully point out the dangers of letting anger overwhelm a person. (Ephesians 4:26) They may help her to reason on this by gently asking questions such as, "Is your anger helping you or is it harming you? By letting anger affect you so much, are you still letting him influence your life? Do you *really* think he has got away with something? Is not Jehovah the Judge even of those who commit crimes in secret?" —Psalm 69:5; Luke 8:17; Romans 12:19.

Reasoning, but not in a lecturing tone, on Romans 12:21 may help. The purpose of the counsel is to help, not to discipline or apply pressure. Rather than telling the victim how she *should* feel, it is far more beneficial to listen and find out how she *does* feel, and, by gently probing with questions, to help her to see for herself why she feels that way.

If discussions reveal a deep feeling of guilt, it should be pointed out that incest committed against a young child is *never* the child's fault. True, young children often act affectionately toward adults. But they have no idea about adult sex. As the book *The Silent Children* points out: "The child never intended the closeness and warmth to become sexual. Incest is an adult's interpretation of the child's wishes—an interpretation greatly colored by the adult's own needs."

Surely one who was sexually abused as a child can be certain of God's understanding and loving acceptance. Why, Jehovah forgives even those who, unlike the abused child, commit gross sins—if they repent and change their course of action!—1 Corinthians 6:9-11.

A Realistic View

Helping victims of emotional trauma is not easy. It cannot be handled in a few minutes in a crowded Kingdom Hall. It takes patience, love, kindness, repeated efforts and, especially, time. There are no miracle cures. It takes a lot of talking —and praying—before a disturbed victim achieves emotional stability. The bad experience is never forgotten. But the victim can learn to live with the memory.

Thus one victim said: "I still get feelings of worthlessness. But I tell myself it is not true. And in about a day, the feeling goes." Another victim said: "I've learned from the Scriptures to be forgiving, to help others and not to feel sorry for myself." Another added: "They helped me to see that Jehovah loves me still . . . I'm going to overcome all my problems with the help of Jehovah."—Psalm 55:22.

The Permanent Solution

While Jesus was on earth, he miraculously healed those who were physically scarred, the 'lame and maimed.' (Matthew 15:30) In the approaching New Order, that miracle will be repeated many times over as all physical sickness is removed.—Isaiah 33:24.

In the case of those suffering emotional scars, often the loving, patient help of mature Christian men and women applying the soothing influence of God's Word can help them to handle their problems and still find joy in Jehovah's service. (James 5:13-15) However, in the New Order, we are promised: "The former dis-

tresses will actually be forgotten." (Isaiah 65:16) Thus, all servants of God look forward with confidence to the time when God "will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away." (Revelation 21:4) This will be the final healing of all sicknesses, including emotional ones.

Questions From Readers

■ **Does Jesus' promise of everlasting life, as given at John 11:25, 26, apply only to the anointed, or do these words embrace also the "great crowd," who look forward to life in the Paradise earth?**

At certain times in the past *The Watchtower* has suggested that the application of this scripture is limited to those Christians who gain heavenly life. Evidently this view was taken because Jesus was there speaking to persons who later would be given that hope. But a careful examination of these scriptures shows that Jesus was not making such a limitation. As the articles for study in this issue of *The Watchtower* confirm, our viewpoint on John 11:25, 26 must be the broader one that includes those persons whose hope is to live forever in the Paradise earth. Why do we make this statement?

Note what Martha says about the dead Lazarus at John 11:24: "I know he will rise in the resurrection on the last day." Which resurrection did she there have in mind? Why, the resurrection that Abraham, and other integrity-keeping Jews looked forward to in faith—an earthly resurrection! How, then, would Jesus' following words appeal to Martha? They would convey to her the situation with regard to the earthly resurrection.

Jesus next identified himself as the one who would raise the dead. But he did not say that he was talking only about *some* of the dead who exercised faith in him. He is "the resurrection and the life" for all who attain to everlasting life, whether in heaven or on earth. All of what Jesus goes on to say, in verses 25 and 26, may be applied to both groups, though in different ways. Anointed Christians "come to life" in that they are raised to immortal heavenly life. Those of the dead who will live forever on earth are resurrected and then are gradually brought to perfection.—Compare Revelation 20:4.

It is certainly true of the anointed, as stated in verse 26, that they will "never die at all" after being resurrected. They then 'see God just as he is,' so that they are no longer "walking by faith." (1 John 3:2; 2 Corinthians 5:7) So when Jesus says, "Everyone that is living *and exercises faith in me,*" he introduces a factor that is especially significant with regard to those today whose hope is to attain to everlasting life on earth. Righteousness is already imputed to the "great crowd" because "they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." They are already living in the flesh with the hope of surviving the great tribulation, and their lives are considered righteous lives, like that of Abraham of old. They, together with resurrected mankind, must continue to exercise faith during Christ's millennial reign in order to attain to everlasting life in human perfection.—Revelation 7:9, 10, 14, 15; 21:3, 4.

Actually, this is not an entirely new viewpoint. From time to time through the years, the Watch Tower Society's publications have suggested a broader application of John 11:24-26. For example, *The Watchtower* of June 1, 1959, page 337, said of the witnesses of Jehovah gathered out of all nations: "Those who expect to live on this earth hope also to survive the end of this world, and to live on into the new world without ever dying." It cited Hebrews 11: 1, 6 and John 11:26 in support. And *The Watchtower* of April 15, 1976, page 243, likewise included resurrected mankind along with the "great crowd" of Armageddon survivors in those same words of Jesus: "Everyone that is living and exercises faith in me will never die at all. Do you believe this?"

Do you?

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December 20, 1998

CONFIDENTIAL

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Dear Brothers:

We are here providing, for your future reference, information that was presented at the 15-hour supplementary course for congregation elders on certain serious matters.

Child Molestation: The Society's letter to all bodies of elders dated May 1, 1997, page 2, paragraph 5, states: *"[G]ive the Society a report on anyone who is currently serving or who formerly served in a Society-appointed position in your congregation who is known to have been guilty of child molestation in the past."* Reports indicate that some elders think this direction does not apply if before his baptism the person sexually abused a child. However, even in such a situation, the elders should write the branch office. This is true even if what occurred was many years ago. If any body of elders has not yet reported such a matter, they should immediately do so. Furthermore, any correspondence put in the confidential congregation file about an individual accused of child molestation, proven or otherwise, should be marked "Do Not Destroy" and be kept indefinitely.

In the Kingdom Ministry School Supplementary Course for Congregation Elders there was a panel discussion in Unit 5b, "**USE DISCERNMENT IN HANDLING SERIOUS MATTERS**." This portion of the course addressed questions related to the problems associated with child abuse. Question 6 to the panel asked: "What factors should be considered in determining what congregation privileges, if any, a former child molester can enjoy?" The answer included the statement: "There are also legal considerations." Some have inquired about how and why legal considerations should affect our recommendations of those who have been guilty of child abuse in the past.

Those who are appointed to privileges of service, such as elders and ministerial servants, are put in a position of trust. One who is extended privileges in the congregation is judged by others as being worthy of trust. This includes being more liberal in leaving children in their care and oversight. The congregation would be left unprotected if we prematurely appointed someone who was a child abuser as a ministerial servant or an elder. In addition, court officials and lawyers will hold responsible any organization that knowingly appoints former child abusers to positions of trust, if one of these, thereafter, commits a further act of child abuse. This could result in costly lawsuits, involving dedicated funds that should be used to further the Kingdom work. So, legal considerations must also be weighed along with the degree of notoriety, the extent of the misconduct, how many years ago the sin occurred, and how the brother is now viewed by the congregation and people in the community including those he victimized.

Scriptural Freedom to Remarry: The 1991 Kingdom Ministry School textbook, page 135, paragraph 1, describes a situation where an adulterous mate unilaterally obtains a divorce over the objection of the innocent mate. In such a case, the guilty one is not free to remarry.

What if the innocent mate consents to the divorce by signing the divorce papers? Does this free the guilty mate to remarry? Yes, Jesus' counsel at Matthew 5:37 applies here: "Let your *Yes* mean Yes, your *No*, No." If the innocent mate, perhaps in an effort to protect herself financially or to obtain custody of children, agrees to a divorce obtained by her adulterous husband, the adulterous one is then free to remarry. Although the innocent one may claim forgiveness, by signing the divorce papers she indi-

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cates her rejection of the adulterous mate. Since she has rejected that one, she holds no further claim on him, and he is Scripturally free to remarry.

Another situation involving the Scriptural freedom to remarry is where an unscriptural divorce is obtained and then, some time later, one of the mates commits fornication. In such a case, does either one have a Scriptural basis to remarry?

If a man takes the initiative and divorces his mate without a Scriptural basis and his divorced wife later commits adultery, both are free to remarry. This is because, by his previous unscriptural action of divorcing his wife, the husband has given evidence of his wanting to reject her. What is stated in the 1991 Kingdom Ministry School textbook, page 135, paragraph 6, applies: *"A person who commits adultery after having been divorced by his or her mate on unscriptural grounds would be Scripturally free to remarry, since he or she had already been rejected by the mate that obtained the divorce."* However, the converse is not necessarily true. If the one who initiated the unscriptural divorce later commits adultery, that one is still obligated to confess to the mate, although they are legally divorced. The innocent mate must be given the opportunity to determine whether to forgive or not. However, in both cases, the one committing adultery would need to meet with a judicial committee.

While the principles outlined above should prove helpful in handling inquiries from publishers about the Scriptural freedom to remarry, the elders should always exercise extreme caution when providing an answer. They should never inform a publisher that there appears to be a basis for Scriptural freedom to divorce and remarry, *unless conclusive evidence has been established* (1) that adultery was committed, (2) that the innocent mate has rejected the guilty one, and (3) that a legal, final divorce has been obtained. Because of the numerous factors involved in such matters, in many cases it will be best to write the Society. When doing so, always provide as many details as possible, including the names of the individuals involved. The Society will then provide the needed assistance.

When a divorced brother or sister wishes to remarry, the elders should kindly request to see the divorce papers to make sure that that one is legally free to do so. They should also determine that it has been established that both parties involved are Scripturally free to remarry. (Matt. 19:9) This will help servants of Jehovah to preserve the cleanness of the congregation and avoid entering adulterous marriages. Always review the Society's letter to all bodies of elders dated TB:COS September 25, 1988, regarding guidelines on wedding procedures before agreeing to solemnize any marriage.

Please be assured of our prayers on your behalf as you endeavour to fulfil your weighty responsibilities as shepherds of the flock. We send herewith a warm expression of our Christian love and best wishes.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B. & T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

P.S. to Body of Elders: At the next meeting of the entire body of elders, the presiding overseer should have this letter read and should have each elder make the following notations in the margins of his personal copy of the 1991 Kingdom Ministry School textbook:

On page 93, next to paragraphs 10-11: See the Society's letters dated December 20, 1998; May 1, 1997; SA November 1, 1995; April 23, 1992; and August 25, 1989.

On page 135, next to paragraphs 1-6: See the Society's letter dated December 20, 1998.

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July 20, 1998

CONFIDENTIAL

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Re: Child abuse and Scriptural freedom to remarry

Dear Brothers:

We are here providing, for your future reference, information that was presented at the 15-hour supplementary course for congregation elders on certain serious matters.

Child Molestation: The Society's letter to all bodies of elders dated March 14, 1997, page 2, paragraph 5, states: *"[G]ive the Society a report on anyone who is currently serving or who formerly served in a Society-appointed position in your congregation who is known to have been guilty of child molestation in the past."* Reports indicate that some elders think this direction does not apply if before his baptism the person sexually abused a child. However, even in such a situation, the elders should write the branch office. This is true even if what occurred was many years ago. If any body of elders has not yet reported such a matter, they should immediately do so. Furthermore, any correspondence put in the confidential congregation file about an individual accused of child molestation, proven or otherwise, should be marked "Do Not Destroy" and be kept indefinitely.

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Those who are appointed to privileges of service, such as elders and ministerial servants, are put in a position of trust. One who is extended privileges in the congregation is judged by others as being worthy of trust. This includes being more liberal in leaving children in their care and oversight. The congregation would be left unprotected if we prematurely appointed someone who was a child abuser as a ministerial servant or an elder. In addition, court officials and lawyers will hold responsible any organization that knowingly appoints former child abusers to positions of trust, if one of these, thereafter, commits a further act of child abuse. This could result in costly lawsuits, involving dedicated funds that should be used to further the Kingdom work. So, legal considerations must also be weighed along with the degree of notoriety, the extent of the misconduct, how many years ago the sin occurred, and how the brother is now viewed by the congregation and people in the community including those he victimized.

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Scriptural Freedom to Remarry: The 1991 Kingdom Ministry School textbook, page 135, paragraph 1, describes a situation where an adulterous mate unilaterally obtains a divorce over the objection of the innocent mate. In such a case, the guilty one is not free to remarry.

What if the innocent mate consents to the divorce by signing the divorce papers? Does this free the guilty mate to remarry? It appears that in most countries, both parties must consent to the divorce by "signing the divorce papers." However, this is not the case in Australia. In this country, we have what is known as a "no-fault" divorce, that is, the only requirement for getting a divorce is the "irretrievable breakdown of the marriage." This is evidenced by the parties living separately and apart for at least twelve months with no reasonable likelihood of them getting together again. In effect, a person may unilaterally seek a divorce with or without their spouse's consent. A signature from the innocent party is not required for a legal divorce to proceed. Therefore, **in all cases of divorce,** the elders should establish who initiated the divorce and whether or not the spouse is in agreement. It would be helpful for both parties to sign a statement to this effect so that a permanent record is kept in the congregation's files.

Another situation involving the Scriptural freedom to remarry is where an unscriptural divorce is obtained and then, some time later, one of the mates commits fornication. In such a case, does either one have a Scriptural basis to remarry?

If a man takes the initiative and divorces his mate without a Scriptural basis and his divorced wife later commits adultery, both are free to remarry. This is because, by his previous unscriptural action of divorcing his wife, the husband has given evidence of his wanting to reject her. What is stated in the 1991 Kingdom Ministry School textbook, page 135, paragraph 6, applies: *"A person who commits adultery after having been divorced by his or her mate on unscriptural grounds would be Scripturally free to remarry, since he or she had already been rejected by the mate that obtained the divorce."* However, the converse is not necessarily true. If the one who initiated the unscriptural divorce later commits adultery, that one is still obligated to confess to the mate, although they are legally divorced. The innocent mate must be given the opportunity to determine whether to forgive or not. However, in both cases, the one committing adultery would need to meet with a judicial committee.

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Your brothers,

Watchtower B. & T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

PS to body of elders: At the next meeting of the entire body of elders, the presiding overseer should have this letter read and should have each elder make the following notations in the margins of his personal copy of the 1991 Kingdom Ministry School textbook:

On page 93, next to paragraphs 10-11: See the Society's letters dated July 20, 1998; March 14, 1997; August 1, 1995.

On page 135, next to paragraphs 1-6: See the Society's letter dated July 20, 1998.

PS to secretary: This letter should be retained in the congregation's permanent file of policy letters, as listed in *Index to Letters—For Bodies of Elders* (S-22).

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WORLD HEADQUARTERS OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES
25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483 • Tel. 718 560-5000

GAJ:LPX August 19, 2008 No. 542S

Via E-Mail

TIME-SENSITIVE

Branch Committee
AUSTRALIA

Re: Privacy Laws and Proposed Revision of S-77 Form

Dear Brothers:

We have at hand your letter dated AB:LLA July 15, 2008, No. 322, regarding Australia's *Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act, 2000*, and your proposed adjustments to the S-77 form. We apologize for our delay in replying, but we are happy to do so now. You say that organizations subject to the privacy law must on request provide individuals with any personal information held about them and that organizations may retain "sensitive" information (which includes information about religious, ethnic or sexual practices) only with the individual's consent.

To avoid the inclusion of sensitive information that would be viewed as undesirable under the privacy law, you propose that:

- the S-77 form include a series of check-off boxes without Scriptural references of the disfellowshipping offense(s) instead of the current form's request for a summation and explanation of the offense(s);
- the S-77 form include a statement of the primary purposes for retaining the form as well as statements from the branch and the judicial committee chairman that all other records have been destroyed;
- a S-77 form instruction sheet be provided separate from the S-77 form itself because separate instructions would not be subject to disclosure as they would not contain personal information;
- the judicial committee prepare a detailed summary of the case on a separate sheet that would be sent to the Service Desk but would be discarded after the matter has been considered and finalized by the Service Desk.

While we agree in general with your recommendations, we think it would be better to show the series of disfellowshipping offenses (now shown as check-off boxes) in the <u>separate instruction sheet</u> instead of listing these as check-off boxes on the S-77 form itself. In the instruction sheet, we wish for you to show the appropriate Scriptural citations next to each offense. The judicial committee can be instructed to copy the appropriate wording (along with the corresponding Scriptural citation) from the instruction sheet to the S-77 form. Furthermore, the point on "Lying" should be adjusted to say "Malicious lying." We look forward to reviewing the adjusted form and instruction sheet.

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We also wonder how you propose to track those who have been accused of, and/or disfellowshipped for, child molestation and other abuse to protect against their being appointed to positions of responsibility in the future. Please let us know how you will be tracking such persons.

Also, in view of the privacy law's express exemption of 'small businesses' (i.e., those with less than $3,000,000 (Australian) in annual turnover), we wonder if the formation of a new legal entity that would supervise religious activities only, but would receive little if any income, might come within the statutory exemption with respect to any judicial or other personal records it would keep. (Mark 12:17; Romans 13:1, 7) We would appreciate your thoughts on the possible formation of such a new legal entity.—Proverbs 15:22.

We appreciate your hard work on behalf of the brothers in Australia and send our warm Christian love and best wishes.

Your brothers,

Service Committee

c: U.S. Legal Department

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

AUSTRALIA BRANCH

LLD September 12, 2008 No. 105

Via E-Mail

TIME SENSITIVE

SERVICE COMMITTEE

Re: Privacy Laws and Proposed Revision of S-77 Form

Dear Brothers:

Thank you for your reply dated GAJ:LPX August 19, 2008, No. 542S. We have now adjusted the S-77 form and separate instruction sheet in harmony your recommendations. We enclose copies of these documents for your approval. Additionally, we attach a draft letter addressed to all bodies of elders in our country in which we explain the adjusted procedure. We are unsure if you consider it necessary for the elders to list *all* of the Scriptural references connected with an offence or if citing some of the relevant Scriptures would suffice. We would appreciate any suggestions you may have regarding the contents of this letter.

We note that *Branch Organization* 18:26 states that the United States branch "revises … English forms" and in *Branch Organization* 18:20 it says that "dates are changed when forms are revised in English." Therefore, regarding the proposed adjusted S-77-E form, could you advise how we may represent this change on the form? Will the United States branch provide a new revision date (the current date is 10/06)? We already use the edition code "Au" to show that we have changed other local information on the form.

You ask about how we propose to track persons who are accused and/or disfellowshipped for child molestation and other abuse. We intend to continue doing what we have done in the past, that is, maintaining a list of such individuals along with the necessary details of what transpired. All appointments processed by the Service Department are checked against that list of names. We see no major difficulties in our continuing to collect and retain this needed information for several reasons:

(1) The *Privacy Act* (Act) permits "sensitive information" to be collected if it relates to a member of the organization or to an individual who has regular contact with the organization provided "at or before the time of collecting the information, the organization undertakes to the individual whom the information concerns that the organization will not disclose the information without the individual's consent." There should be little difficulty in explaining this process to the individual concerned and obtaining this consent when the matter or allegation is handled; and

(2) On a completely separate basis, the Act also permits "sensitive information" to be collected, without consent from the individual concerned, if "the collection is necessary for the establishment, exercise or defence of a legal or equitable claim." The collection and retention of this kind of information is needed to enable the organization to defend itself against potential future legal claims in connection with individuals who have been involved in child molestation and other abuse situations. This provision should also provide the organization with the necessary basis to retain "sensitive information" of this kind collected in the past, without the consent of the individual.

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You also ask if we have considered the formation of a new legal entity which might come under the 'small business' exemption. We confirm that we are presently considering the formation of a separate legal entity for the purposes of minimizing liability in the case of litigation and we intend to correspond with you regarding this matter in the near future. However, we do not feel that forming a separate legal entity will result in exemption from privacy legislation in the long term. The Australian Law Reform Commission has recently recommended that parliament abolish the "small business" exemption and that all businesses should come under the Act. It is highly likely that this recommendation will be adopted in the not-too-distant future.

We look forward to your response and send our warm Christian love and best wishes.

Your brothers,

H. V. Mouritz
For the Australia Branch Committee

Encls: WHQ105a.doc [S-77 *Notification of Disfellowshipping or Disassociation*]
WHQ105b.doc [Instructions for completing the S-77 form]
WHQ105c.doc [Draft letter to All Bodies of Elders]

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SC:SD February 1, 2009

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Re: Retention of confidential records

Dear Brothers:

At this time, we are writing to provide further direction and clarification in regard to the retention of confidential records. Please note the following guidelines:

Matters resulting in disfellowshipping or disassociation: As you are aware, for all cases of disfellowshipping or disassociation an S-77 form must be completed along with a separate summation of the matter, usually no more than one page in length. These documents are forwarded to the branch office, processed, and a stamped copy of the S-77 form is returned to you. The chairman of the judicial committee then completes the back page of the S-77 form, and all other documents regarding the case should be destroyed, including any copy of the summation. The S-77 form (only) is then placed in a sealed envelope in the congregation's confidential file. (The only exception to this involves signed letters of disassociation, which are kept along with the stamped S-77 form.)

Other serious matters: We have, however, received many inquiries concerning document retention relating to serious matters that do not result in disfellowshipping. These may concern persons judicially reproved, allegations of serious wrongdoing that cannot be established, and matters that are investigated and handled by two elders. In these and other similar situations, a summation of no more than one page should be written and held in the confidential file. All other documents and correspondence relating to the matter should then be destroyed. Summations concerning persons judicially reproved should be kept for a minimum period of five years. All other summations may be retained for as long as the body of elders deems necessary.

Child abuse matters: In regard to all matters involving allegations or established cases of child abuse, the above-mentioned direction will apply, with one exception. All documents relating to the matter should be sent to the branch office, instead of being destroyed. This will facilitate the congregation retaining **only** a stamped S-77 form in matters resulting in disfellowshipping, or a single page summation for all other situations.

Summation of cases: In regard to the summation itself, it is reasonable to conclude that as each case is unique, the content and length (within one page) of each summation will vary. However, certain details should be included in each summation, such as:

- congregation name and date
- contact details for the coordinator of the body of elders
- names and signatures of each brother involved in investigating the matter or serving on the judicial committee

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- details such as the specific nature of the allegation that has been raised, or clear proof of wrongdoing that Scripturally established the matter.

Letters of introduction: Generally speaking, when each elder has had opportunity to read the letter, there would be no need for it to be retained. However, when the letter of introduction recommends a brother to continue serving in an appointed capacity, the letter should be retained until that recommendation is handled, either at the time of the circuit overseer's visit, or by way of an S-52 appointment letter being supplied by the branch office between visits of the circuit overseer. Additionally, any letter of introduction that refers to matters of child abuse should be retained in the confidential file for as long as the accused person remains in the congregation. Should this person move, a new letter should be prepared and sent to the elders in the new congregation outlining the individual's background, current restrictions that apply, what the elders have been doing to protect minors and to assist him, and their present experience with him. In all such cases, a copy of the letter of introduction must be sent to the branch office in a special blue envelope. Any previous letter of introduction held in the congregation's file can then be destroyed.

Minutes of elders' meetings: We also understand that many congregations use and retain a minutes book, detailing items for discussion and attention at meetings of the body of elders. In this regard, please note the following direction provided to the presiding overseer, now known as the coordinator of the body of elders, as found in *"Pay Attention to Yourselves and to All the Flock"*, page 71, paragraph 12: "Compiles Scriptural and practical *agendas* outlining points for discussion at regular elders' meetings throughout the year." In addition, page 70, paragraph 11 states: "Make sure that either you or another elder *takes notes* as to decisions made and who will carry them out." Therefore, it would be appropriate that notes taken at a meeting of the body of elders are made on the agenda itself, or on other loose-leaf sheets of paper. Once the noted items have been completed, perhaps in the weeks or months following the meeting, these agendas and notes should be destroyed. This would negate the need for a minutes book to be used or retained.

We appreciate that the direction provided in this letter does not cover every possible scenario involving documents that a congregation may come to possess. Reasonableness and good judgment will be necessary by the body of elders in determining the appropriate course of action concerning documents that have not been addressed herein. However, we trust that the clarification provided by means of this correspondence is of assistance to you, and it is our prayer that Jehovah may continue to bless your efforts to "shepherd the flock of God in your care." (1 Peter 5:2) We take this opportunity to send our warm Christian love and greetings.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B.&T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

c: All Travelling Overseers

PS to secretary: This letter should be retained in the "AUSTRALIA BRANCH" section of the congregation's permanent file of policy letters.

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November 17, 2010

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Re: Letters of introduction

Dear Brothers:

Much fine direction on the subject of letters of introduction has been included in the *Shepherding* textbook. For example, paragraphs 30 and 31 of chapter 3 deal with letters of introduction when elders and ministerial servants move. Paragraph 22 of chapter 7 deals with letters of introduction when a publisher with judicial restrictions moves. Paragraph 2 of chapter 10 deals with what should be sent when a disfellowshipped or disassociated person moves. And paragraphs 20 and 21 of chapter 12 provide updated direction on letters of introduction when a known child molester or an accused child molester moves. Thus, the July 1, 2006, letter to all bodies of elders regarding letters of introduction should be removed from the congregation permanent file of policy letters and be destroyed. However, please note the following additional points that are not included in the *Shepherding* textbook.

Format: A letter of introduction should always contain the following information: (1) the date of the letter, (2) the previous congregation's full name and complete mailing address, (3) the new congregation's full name and complete mailing address, and (4) signatures of the Congregation Service Committee, with their names typed or printed underneath their signatures. (*be* pp. 71-73) Some also find it helpful to use a regarding line (as shown above) so that the recipient may easily identify the purpose of the letter.

Congregation publisher: When a publisher (active or inactive) moves to another congregation, a letter of introduction and the *Congregation's Publisher Record* (S-21) cards should be promptly sent to the congregation where the publisher moved. (The last record card of an inactive publisher should be retained indefinitely by the congregation where the publisher moved.) If the previous service committee knows where the publisher moved, they may take the initiative and send these items without waiting for a formal request from the new congregation. What information should be conveyed in the letter of introduction? Ask yourself: What information would we want to receive if this person were moving into our congregation? (Matt. 7:12) Clearly state the publisher's full name, the names of any immediate family members, and any privileges the publisher or his family members have enjoyed, such as assignments on the Theocratic Ministry School, working with the Regional Building Committee, auxiliary pioneer service, and so forth. These elements should be included in all letters of introduction. If the person was reproved in the distant past but is not presently under restrictions, there may be no need to mention past judicial action unless the offense involved child molestation, adulterous marriage, or some other notorious wrongdoing.

Regular pioneer: In addition to the information previously described for a congregation publisher, the letter of introduction for a regular pioneer should clearly state whether the pioneer is recommended to continue serving as such. The regular pioneer appointment letter (S-202) should also be forwarded to the congregation where the pioneer is moving. The secretary of the new congregation will make the needed adjustments to the form and send it to the branch office.

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A revised appointment letter will then be sent to the new congregation. If a regular pioneer moves out of the branch territory, the pioneer appointment letter should be mailed to *your* branch office with a cover letter providing the date of the move and the name, city, state, and country of the congregation where the pioneer will be associating.

Each elder should make the following notation next to the penultimate bullet in paragraph 16 of chapter 2 in the *Shepherding* textbook: “See letter dated November 17, 2010, regarding letters of introduction.”

Carefully following these guidelines will help you to protect the flock and to render needed spiritual assistance to Jehovah’s precious sheep. We pray that Jehovah will continue to “give you peace constantly in every way” as you faithfully serve him in these last days. —2 Thess. 3:16.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B.&T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

cc: Traveling overseers

PS to secretary: This letter should be retained in the congregation permanent file of policy letters. You may wish to update the congregation copy of *Index to Letters for Bodies of Elders* (S-22).

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September 7, 2011

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Re: Correspondence from branch office and congregation file

Dear Brothers:

This letter replaces the letter dated December 6, 2010, to all bodies of elders. That letter should be removed from the congregation permanent file of policy letters and be destroyed. Paragraphs 3-5 of this letter have been revised to reflect updated direction on the routing and printing of letters. Paragraph 9 has been revised to include direction on the review of *Congregation's Publisher Record* (S-21) cards by field service group overseers and assistants. Selected notations previously made in the *Shepherding* textbook will need to be updated as well.

Letters to individuals and congregations: At times, the branch office will send letters to individuals in care of the coordinator of the body of elders because of not having the mailing address of the individual. Such correspondence should be given to the addressee without being opened by the coordinator of the body of elders. Generally speaking, routine letters addressed to congregations do not need to be read to the congregation. Rather, at the next Service Meeting, the coordinator of the body of elders will arrange for an announcement to be made that a letter on that subject has been posted on the information board. Any exceptions to this direction will be noted in the postscript of the letter.

Letters to bodies of elders: It is preferred that letters addressed to bodies of elders be viewed on the jw.org Web site by each elder rather than be read as a body unless otherwise directed. Doing so limits the number of elders' meetings required and allows each elder to examine the letter in greater detail. Upon receipt of a letter to the body of elders, the coordinator of the body of elders or secretary should print two copies of the letter. The secretary can immediately place one copy in the congregation file as directed and can route the other copy to any elders who do not have access to a computer and the Internet. Once the routed copy is returned to the secretary, it should be destroyed. Of course, if each elder has confirmed that he is able to regularly view letters on the site, there is no need for a second copy of each letter to be printed and routed.

Although during the course of printing letters from the site electronic files are copied to a user's computer, such files should not be retained. Neither should individual elders compile their own library of printed letters. In most cases, it should be possible for elders to read letters from the screen rather than printing a hard copy.

***Index to Letters—For Bodies of Elders* (S-22):** Periodically, *Index to Letters* will be revised. The coordinator of the body of elders or secretary should print one copy for the congregation file. He should also provide a copy to each elder who does not have access to a computer and the Internet. A list of letters comprising the congregation permanent file of policy letters is provided at the end of the index. Each letter in that list should be sorted in date order in the congregation file. Those letters should be kept separate from other items in the congregation file. Most congregations find it helpful to keep a separate binder of those letters with the *Index to*

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Letters at the front of the binder. As those letters are replaced or as new ones are added in the future, direction will be given to update the congregation permanent file of policy letters. You will likely find it helpful to update your copy of *Index to Letters* at that time as well.

We wish to offer the following caution. There are some older letters that are referred to in *Index to Letters*. In some cases those older letters contain just one or two policy matters that currently apply. The other points in the letter may have been revised. Thus, while researching a specific point in one of the older letters, you may notice other policy matters that may or may not still apply. Therefore, exercise care in using that older direction. If those points of policy are not referred to in *Index to Letters*, it is likely because the matter has been addressed in the *Shepherding* textbook or in more recent correspondence.

Congregation file categories: Besides correspondence to be retained in the congregation permanent file of policy letters, the branch office sends annual correspondence (such as district convention instructions, guidelines for visitors to Bethel, and pioneer encouragement letters and outlines). At times, letters are sent to inform the elders or the congregation of a specific problem or temporary need. Additionally, the congregation may have paperwork regarding ownership of the Kingdom Hall, instructions for congregation accounting, and direction on requesting literature and magazines. If the branch office does not specifically direct that the correspondence should be retained in the congregation permanent file of policy letters, it will be up to the elders to determine how to file such material. If the branch office does not specifically direct how long a piece of correspondence or documentation should be retained, the elders may make the decision based on local laws and circumstances. The attached list suggests some categories that may be useful in filing material *other* than items to be retained in the congregation permanent file of policy letters. Additional categories may be used as needed.

- Accounts
- Assemblies/Conventions
- Bethel visitors information
- Circuit overseer's report on visit
- Confidential reports (sealed envelopes)
- Elders and ministerial servants
- Field service reports
- Forms
- Hospital Liaison Committee/DPA cards
- jw.org Web site
- Kingdom Hall
- Letters of introduction
- Literature/Magazines
- Miscellaneous
- Notes from elders' meetings
- Pioneers
- Regional Building Committee
- Talk outlines
- Territory

Confidentiality and security: The congregation files and records should be kept locked in a safe and secure place, preferably at the Kingdom Hall. However, if the Kingdom Hall is in any way vulnerable, then such records may be kept in the home of a responsible elder, such as the secretary, under lock and key to prevent unauthorized entry. Although the secretary is primarily responsible for the organization of the congregation file, each elder may be provided with a key to the file.—Each elder should make the following notation next to the second bullet point in paragraph 16 in chapter 2 of the *Shepherding* textbook: "See letter dated September 7, 2011, to all bodies of elders regarding updated direction on keys to congregation file."

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Field service and meeting attendance records: The box at the Kingdom Hall for collecting field service reports will continue to be used. It may be useful to the secretary in gathering the field service reports collected by the group overseers. Individual publishers may put their reports in the box at the Kingdom Hall if they desire or are otherwise unable to give them to their group overseer. The *Congregation's Publisher Record* (S-21) cards should be retained showing at least the last eight years of activity for each publisher. Cards from more than eight years ago may be destroyed. At least the last 12 months of activity should be retained in the current file of cards. The last card of an inactive publisher should be retained in the current file indefinitely. The current file of cards should be divided into two sections—"Active" and "Inactive." The section for active publishers should be arranged alphabetically, with the cards subdivided into sections for regular and special pioneers, baptized publishers, and unbaptized publishers. Monthly *Field Service Report* (S-4) slips, after being tabulated and posted on the *Congregation's Publisher Record* cards, do not have to be retained. A record card should be filled out for the monthly totals of all publishers, auxiliary pioneers, and regular and special pioneers. Such cards, as well as meeting attendance records for the congregation, will be kept at least two years. Although the record cards are part of the congregation file, they may be kept by the secretary and made available to the other elders upon request. The field service group overseer (or servant) and his assistant should periodically review the cards of the publishers in their group with the goal of learning what each publisher's strengths and weaknesses are and then offering appropriate assistance. If the assistant is not an elder or a ministerial servant, the group overseer (or servant) should orally share the information with him, noting areas of concern.

Appointment and deletion of elders and ministerial servants: Records related to the appointment and deletion of elders and ministerial servants should be kept indefinitely.

Judicial files: After a duly appointed judicial committee has met with an individual and decided to disfellowship him, to reprove him, or to dismiss the case because of a lack of evidence, a report on the proceedings is signed by the judicial committee. (The same is true of a committee handling a request for disassociation or two brothers handling wrongdoing involving an unbaptized publisher.) Such reports, including *Notification of Disfellowshipping or Disassociation* (S-77) forms, should be placed in a sealed envelope. On the front of the envelope should be listed the name of the individual, the action taken by the congregation (if any), the date of the action, and the names of the elders who handled the matter. The sealed envelope should be placed in the congregation file by the secretary. If there is a need to open these files in the future, such as in connection with a plea for reinstatement, this should be done only by the elders who are assigned by the body to handle the matter. In cases of reinstatement, the reinstatement date should appear on the outside of the sealed envelope along with the names of those serving on the reinstatement committee. The date all restrictions are removed after reinstatement or reproof should also be noted on the outside of the sealed envelope. No judicial information should be posted on *Congregation's Publisher Record* (S-21) cards.

After a disfellowshipped or disassociated person has been reinstated a full five years, if the judicial committee feels there is no longer any need to retain the file material, it can be destroyed. (The same applies to records involving judicial reproof.) If these brothers are not available or qualified, the determination may be made by the Congregation Service Committee or qualified elders designated by them. If there is some reason why the committee feels that it would be better to retain the material longer, it can be kept as long as necessary. If a man or a

CONFIDENTIAL (RS)

woman has entered into an adulterous marriage, the file should be kept for five years after reinstatement and thereafter at least until the death or remarriage of the innocent mate. Judicial files involving child abuse should be marked "Do Not Destroy" and should be kept indefinitely. *Notification of Disfellowshipping or Disassociation* forms on individuals who have not been reinstated should also be kept indefinitely.

In view of the foregoing, each elder should make the following notation next to paragraphs 39 and 62 in chapter 5; paragraphs 21 and 34 in chapter 7; paragraph 2 in chapter 9; paragraph 13 in chapter 11; and paragraph 17 in chapter 12 of the *Shepherding* textbook: "See letter dated September 7, 2011, to all bodies of elders regarding filing confidential material."

We trust this direction will be helpful to you as you seek to imitate our orderly God, Jehovah. (1 Cor. 14:33) Please accept an expression of our warm Christian love.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B. & T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

cc: Traveling overseers

PS to secretary: This letter should be retained in the congregation permanent file of policy letters. You may wish to update the congregation copy of *Index to Letters—For Bodies of Elders* (S-22).

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July 13, 2014

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Re: Appointment and deletion of elders and ministerial servants

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CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

Dear Brothers:

1. As previously announced, effective September 1, 2014, circuit overseers will be responsible for the appointment and deletion of elders and ministerial servants. This letter provides further direction regarding this adjustment.

2. **Appointments during a regular visit to a congregation:** At least one month before the circuit overseer's visit, the Congregation Service Committee should send to the circuit overseer the full name, date of birth, and date of baptism of any brother the body of elders will be recommending for appointment as an elder or a ministerial servant. The *Recommendations for Appointment of Elders and Ministerial Servants* (S-62) form should be used for this purpose.—See paragraph 14.

3. No earlier than a day or two before the start of the visit, perhaps when other congregation records are provided, the elders should provide the circuit overseer with background information that will help him have a complete view of the qualifications of the brother(s) being recommended for appointment. Such information would include letters of recommendation (or perhaps letters of introduction) from a previous congregation. During the meeting with the elders later in the week, the circuit overseer will discuss the Scriptural qualifications of each brother recommended. (*ks10* chap. 3 pars. 1-10) If the circuit overseer determines that the brother does not measure up to the Scriptural requirements to a reasonable degree, he will advise the elders accordingly and inform them how they can help the brother to qualify in the future.

4. When the circuit overseer decides to appoint a brother, the circuit overseer and another elder will meet with the brother to inform him of his appointment. If the brother is (1) being appointed for the first time as a ministerial servant or (2) being reappointed as an elder or a ministerial servant for reasons other than his move from one congregation to another, the circuit overseer will ask the following questions: "Is there anything from your past, even before baptism, or in your personal or family life that disqualifies you or that would prevent you from accepting this appointment? Is there any reason why your appointment should not be announced to the congregation?

Have you ever been involved at any time in the past with child sexual molestation?" (This revises the direction in the *Shepherding* textbook, chapter 3, paragraph 13.) If the brother answers no to the questions, the circuit overseer will provide the elders with a signed appointment letter that includes the brother's name in the list of those appointed during the visit. The appointment should be announced to the congregation at the next Service Meeting.[1]

5. If the brother approved for appointment is not present at the conclusion of the visit and it is necessary to ask him the three questions mentioned in paragraph 4, the circuit overseer will not include the brother's name in the appointment letter, if any, left with the elders at the end of the visit. Rather, when the brother returns, the coordinator of the body of elders should assign two elders to ask the brother the three questions. The coordinator of the body of elders will then inform the circuit overseer of the brother's answers. If the brother answers no to the questions, the circuit overseer will provide the elders with a signed appointment letter. At the Service Meeting following the receipt of the appointment letter, the brother's appointment should be announced to the congregation.[1]

6. If the brother approved for appointment is not present at the conclusion of the visit but it is not necessary to ask him the three questions mentioned in paragraph 4, the circuit overseer will include the brother's name in the appointment letter left with the elders at the end of the visit. When the brother returns, two elders should meet with the brother to inform him of his appointment before it is announced to the congregation.[1]

7. **Appointments between regular visits to a congregation:** When a brother moves into the congregation with a favorable letter of recommendation for reappointment and the next visit of the circuit overseer is not in the near future, the body of elders may recommend his immediate reappointment. In such cases, the Congregation Service Committee should submit the *Recommendations for Appointment of Elders and Ministerial Servants* (S-62) form to the circuit overseer along with a copy of the letter of recommendation from the service committee of his former congregation. (See paragraph 14.) If the recommendation is approved, an appointment letter will be sent to the body of elders. A brother who has been reappointed as an elder or a ministerial servant should be informed of his appointment before it is announced to the congregation.

8. **Appointments of coordinators of the body of elders:** The circuit overseer is responsible for the appointment of the coordinator of the body of elders. When needed, this appointment will be made during his regular visit to the congregation. If a temporary adjustment is made apart from the circuit overseer's visit, the Congregation Service Committee should immediately notify the circuit overseer, explaining the reason for the change. Whether the change in the coordinator of the body of elders is permanent or temporary, a *Coordinator of the Body of Elders/Secretary Change of Address* (S-29) form should be sent to the Service Department.

9. **Deletions during a regular visit to a congregation:** Recommendations for deletion because of poor judgment not of a judicial nature are usually best considered with the elders during the visit of the circuit overseer. At the start of the circuit overseer's visit, the elders should provide any background information that will help the circuit overseer have a complete view of the qualifications of a brother recommended for deletion. During his meeting with the elders later in the week, the circuit overseer will discuss the Scriptural qualifications of the brother. (*ks10* chap. 3 pars. 15-24) If the

[1] In the states and territories of Australia where an appointed brother is required to obtain a Working With Children Check (WWCC), the procedure outlined in the relevant policy letter for that particular state (as contained in the congregation permanent file of policy letters (S-22) for Australia), will need to be followed before the brother's appointment is announced to the congregation.

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circuit overseer agrees with the recommendation, the brother will be informed of his deletion. If the brother agrees with the decision, the circuit overseer will generate a letter of deletion. The announcement of deletion should be made at the next Service Meeting. (*ks10* chap. 3 par. 26) If the brother disagrees with the decision, he will be informed of his right to appeal.—See paragraph 13.

10. **Deletions between regular visits to a congregation:** If serious questions arise concerning a brother's qualifications and the next visit of the circuit overseer is not in the near future, the body of elders should follow the procedure outlined in the *Shepherding* textbook, chapter 3, paragraphs 22-24. If, after reviewing a brother's qualifications the elders decide to recommend his deletion, the Congregation Service Committee should send the recommendation of the body of elders to the circuit overseer immediately. The letter should provide complete details and indicate whether or not the brother agrees with the recommendation. (*ks10* chap. 3 par. 25) If the circuit overseer agrees with the recommendation and believes it should be processed immediately, he will send a letter of deletion to the body of elders. Upon receipt of the letter, the coordinator of the body of elders should assign two elders to inform the brother of the circuit overseer's decision. If the brother accepts the circuit overseer's decision, the announcement should be made at the next Service Meeting. (*ks10* chap. 3 par. 26) If the brother does not accept the decision, he should be informed of his right to appeal, the announcement to the congregation should be held in abeyance, and the coordinator of the body of elders should inform the circuit overseer.—See paragraph 13.

11. **Transfers to another congregation:** When an elder or a ministerial servant moves out of the congregation, an announcement of deletion would not be made to the congregation. At the next visit of the circuit overseer, the elders should inform the circuit overseer of the brother's move.

12. **Resignations, deletions for judicial reasons, and deaths:** The Congregation Service Committee should immediately inform the circuit overseer of (1) the deletion of an elder or a ministerial servant because of resignation, judicial reproof, disfellowshipping, or disassociation or (2) the death of an elder or a ministerial servant. For deletions resulting from judicial reproof, disfellowshipping, or disassociation, the information sent to the circuit overseer should include the specific judicial offense and the action taken by the committee. When a brother resigns for personal reasons, the information sent to the circuit overseer should include full details as to why he chose to relinquish his privilege of service. In cases involving judicial reproof or the resignation by a brother, the circuit overseer will send a letter of deletion to the body of elders. No letter of deletion will be sent in cases of disfellowshipping, disassociation, or death.

13. **Appealing deletions:** If an elder or a ministerial servant disagrees with his deletion by the circuit overseer and wishes to appeal, he should immediately write a brief letter to the Service Department, with a copy to the body of elders and the circuit overseer, explaining why he disagrees with the deletion. The announcement of deletion should be held in abeyance, and the letter of deletion should be destroyed (if one had been generated). Thereafter, the Service Department will select an experienced circuit overseer who will then rehear the entire matter with the original circuit overseer. After the circuit overseers hearing the appeal reach a joint decision, there is no further right to appeal. If it is decided that the brother should be deleted, the circuit overseer will generate a letter of deletion to the body of elders. Upon receipt of the letter of deletion, the announcement of deletion should be made at the next Service Meeting.

14. ***Recommendations for Appointment of Elders and Ministerial Servants* (S-62) form:** Beginning August 1, 2014, the *Recommendations for Appointment of Elders and Ministerial Servants* form should be used to submit to the circuit overseer the names, birth dates, and baptism dates of brothers being recommended for appointment in conjunction with a regular visit. Effective Sep-

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tember 1, 2014, this form should also be used to submit recommendations for appointments between visits. Enhancements to jw.org are under way to provide a Web version of the form. In the event that this new Web form is not available by the time it is needed, the Congregation Service Committee should submit this information by means of the PDF version of the form, using the jw.org Inbox feature. The PDF version of the form, containing editable fields, will be posted in the "Forms" section of jw.org in the near future.

15. **Congregation file:** Records related to the appointment and deletion of elders and ministerial servants should be retained indefinitely. This would include S-2 forms and S-52 acknowledgement letters from the branch office and letters of appointment and deletion from circuit overseers. In connection with any deletion, a brief explanation of the reason for the brother's deletion should also be kept. Such background material will be helpful in supplying the circuit overseer with complete details in the event a brother is recommended for reappointment in the future.

16. ***Shepherding* textbook adjustments:** The adjusted procedures described in this letter update a number of paragraphs in the *Shepherding* textbook. Each elder should make the following notations in his copy:

- In chapter 2, paragraph 13, and in chapter 3, paragraphs 11-13, 27, and 29, cross out the existing sentences and write in the margins the following: "See letter dated July 13, 2014."
- In chapter 3, paragraph 6, cross out the words "and the branch office."
- In chapter 3, in the subheading preceding paragraph 11, cross out the words "Branch Office" and replace them with the words "Circuit Overseer."
- In chapter 3, cross out the subheading preceding paragraph 12 and replace it with the subheading "Appointments Made During the Visit of the Circuit Overseer."
- In chapter 3, insert before paragraph 14 the new subheading "Recommendations Not Approved by the Circuit Overseer."
- In chapter 3, paragraph 14, in the first and fourth sentences, cross out the words "branch office" and replace them with the words "circuit overseer." In the third sentence of the same paragraph, cross out the word "neither" and replace it with the word "not," and cross out the words "nor read to him from the confidential letter received from the branch office that explains why he was not appointed."
- In chapter 3, paragraph 23, cross out the existing sentences in the last bullet point.
- In chapter 3, in the subheading preceding paragraph 25, cross out the words "Branch Office" and replace them with the words "Circuit Overseer."
- In chapter 3, paragraph 25, in the first sentence, cross out the words "branch office" and replace them with the words "circuit overseer."
- In chapter 3, paragraph 25, in the penultimate sentence of the first bullet point, cross out the words "branch office" and replace them with the words "circuit overseer."
- In chapter 3, paragraph 25, second bullet point, at the end of the third sentence, cross out the words "branch office" and replace them with the words "circuit overseer." Cross out the sentence "If he disagrees, he may submit a letter along with the elders' letter of explanation, stating why he does not accept the recommendation." Write in the margin the following: "See letter dated July 13, 2014."
- In chapter 3, paragraph 26, cross out the first two sentences and write in the margin the following: "See letter dated July 13, 2014."
- In chapter 3, paragraph 28, cross out the word "include" and replace it with the words "send to the Service Department."

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17. If any questions arise concerning the procedures outlined in this letter, please contact your circuit overseer for assistance. We send our warm Christian love.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B.&T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

c: Traveling overseers

PS to secretary:

This letter should be retained in the congregation permanent file of policy letters. You may wish to update the congregation copy of *Index to Letters for Bodies of Elders* (S-22) at this time as well.

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WATCHTOWER
BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA
PO BOX 280, INGLEBURN, NSW 1890 AUSTRALIA ABN 42 002 861 225
PHONE: (02) 9829 5600
FAX: (02) 9829 3616

July 14, 2014

TO ALL CIRCUIT OVERSEERS

Re: Appointment and deletion of elders and ministerial servants

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Dear Brothers:

1. As an appointed representative of the Governing Body and in accord with the Scriptural precedent at Acts 14:23, beginning September 1, 2014, you will be responsible for the appointment and deletion of elders and ministerial servants, based on the recommendations of the local elders. Of course, the process of elders notifying you of the names of brothers they wish to recommend for appointment during your next visit will take place prior to September 1. When considering the appointment or deletion of an elder or a ministerial servant at any time, you should **feel free to consult with the Service Department or another experienced circuit overseer** if this would be helpful in making a decision.

2. The responsibility of appointing and deleting elders and ministerial servants is a weighty one. It is entrusted to men who are kind, impartial, and just. (Ex. 18:21) When handling recommendations, whether for appointment or deletion, you should avoid imposing your personal viewpoints and opinions or setting arbitrary rules. (1 Cor. 4:6) You should strive to imitate Jehovah and his Son by caring for matters with love and patience. (Deut. 10:17; 16:18, 19; Isa. 42:1-4) In this way, you demonstrate deep respect and submission to Jehovah and to the Head of the Christian congregation, Jesus Christ. (Eph. 1:22, 23) We are confident you will continue to make these thoughts a matter of prayer.

3. **Appointments during a regular visit to a congregation:** At least one month before your visit to the congregation, the Congregation Service Committee will send to you the full name, date of birth, and date of baptism of any brother the body of elders will be recommending for appointment as an elder or a ministerial servant. The *Recommendations for Appointment of Elders and Ministerial Servants* (S-62) form will be used for this purpose. (See paragraph 22.) If the jw.org Web form is used, the names will automatically be sent to the Service Department. If this information is received via the jw.org Inbox feature, hard copy, or in any other manner, you should for-

ward this information immediately to the Service Department. The Service Department will notify you whether there are any reasons a recommendation should not be considered. If this occurs, you should inform the body of elders accordingly.

4. No earlier than a day or two before the start of the visit, perhaps when other congregation records are provided, the elders will provide you with background information that will help you have a complete view of the qualifications of the brother(s) being recommended for appointment. Such information would include letters of recommendation (or perhaps letters of introduction) from a previous congregation. During the week, you should make an effort to observe those whom the elders are recommending. (*tg* chap. 20 par. 2) During the meeting with the elders later in the week, you should discuss the Scriptural qualifications of each brother recommended.—*tg* chap. 20 par. 1; *ks10* chap. 3 pars. 1-10.

5. Along with this letter, we have provided a checklist to assist you in considering the qualifications of brothers being recommended. The checklist should not be read word-for-word to the elders, since a variety of scenarios are described and not all will apply. Neither should copies of the checklist be given to the elders. If you determine that the brother does not measure up to the Scriptural requirements to a reasonable degree, you will advise the elders accordingly and inform them how they can help the brother to qualify in the future.

6. When you decide to appoint a brother, you and another elder will meet with the brother to inform him of his appointment. If the brother is (1) being appointed for the first time as a ministerial servant or (2) being reappointed as an elder or a ministerial servant for reasons <u>other than</u> his move from one congregation to another, you should ask the following questions: "Is there anything from your past, even before baptism, or in your personal or family life that disqualifies you or that would prevent you from accepting this appointment? Is there any reason why your appointment should not be announced to the congregation? Have you ever been involved at any time in the past with child sexual molestation?" (This revises the direction in the *Shepherding* textbook, chapter 3, paragraph 13.) If the brother answers no to the questions, you should provide the elders with a signed appointment letter that includes the brother's name in the list of those appointed during the visit. (See paragraph 21.) You should inform the Service Department of the appointment using the *Notification of Appointment or Deletion* (S-2) form. (See paragraph 23.) The appointment will be announced to the congregation at the next Service Meeting.[1]

7. If the brother approved for appointment is not present at the conclusion of the visit and it is necessary to ask him the three questions mentioned in paragraph 6, you should <u>not</u> include the brother's name in the appointment letter, if any, left with the elders at the end of the visit. Rather, when the brother returns, the coordinator of the body of elders will assign two elders to ask the brother the three questions. The coordinator of the body of elders will then inform you of the brother's answers. If the brother answers no to the questions, you should provide the elders with a signed appointment letter. (See paragraph 21.) At the Service Meeting following the receipt of the appointment letter, the brother's appointment will be announced to the congregation.[1]

8. If the brother approved for appointment is not present at the conclusion of the visit but it is <u>not</u> necessary to ask him the three questions mentioned in paragraph 6, you should include the brother's name in the appointment letter left with the elders at the end of the visit. When the brother returns,

[1] In the states and territories of Australia where an appointed brother is required to obtain a Working With Children Check (WWCC), the procedure outlined in the relevant policy letter for that particular state (as contained in the congregation permanent file of policy letters (S-22) for Australia), will need to be followed before the brother's appointment is announced to the congregation.

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two elders will meet with the brother to inform him of his appointment before it is announced to the congregation.[1]

9. **Appointments between regular visits to a congregation:** When a brother moves into a congregation with a favorable letter of recommendation for reappointment and your next visit is not in the near future, the body of elders may recommend his immediate reappointment. In such cases, the Congregation Service Committee will submit the *Recommendations for Appointment of Elders and Ministerial Servants* (S-62) form to you along with a copy of the letter of recommendation from the service committee of his former congregation. (See paragraph 22.) If the recommendation is approved, you should generate an appointment letter to be sent to the new body of elders and inform the Service Department of the appointment using the *Notification of Appointment or Deletion* (S-2) form. (See paragraphs 21 and 23.) If there are disqualifying factors mentioned or questions raised in the letter of introduction from the brother's former congregation, you may encourage the elders to wait until your next visit to make the recommendation so they have an opportunity to observe the brother for a time.

10. **Appointments recommended by the Service Department:** At times, the Service Department will assign an appointed elder or ministerial servant, such as a special pioneer or a graduate of the School for Kingdom Evangelizers, to serve in a particular congregation. In such cases, the Service Department will recommend that the brother be appointed in the congregation. Thereafter, you may generate an appointment letter to the new congregation and inform the Service Department using the *Notification of Appointment or Deletion* (S-2) form.—See paragraphs 21 and 23.

11. **Appointments of coordinators of the body of elders:** You are responsible for the appointment of the coordinator of the body of elders. When needed, this appointment will be made during your regular visit to the congregation. You should review the qualifications mentioned in the *Shepherding* textbook, chapter 2, paragraph 11, with the body of elders. This should be done early in the week of your visit, preferably on Tuesday evening following the congregation meetings that night. These points should again be reviewed with the elders later in the week when discussing their recommendations with them. The name of the brother appointed as the new coordinator of the body of elders should be listed in the appointment letter with "(CBOE)" appearing after his name.—See paragraph 21.

12. If a temporary adjustment in the coordinator of the body of elders is made apart from your visit, the Congregation Service Committee should immediately notify you, explaining the reason for the change. Whether the change in the coordinator of the body of elders is permanent or temporary, a *Coordinator of the Body of Elders/Secretary Change of Address* (S-29) form should be sent to the Service Department.

13. **Appointments of assembly overseers and assistant assembly overseers:** You are responsible for the appointment of assembly overseers and assistant assembly overseers. Although no appointment letters need to be generated, you should inform the Service Department of the appointment by means of the *Notification of Appointment or Deletion* (S-2) form.—See paragraph 23.

14. **Deletions during a regular visit to a congregation:** Recommendations for deletion because of poor judgment not of a judicial nature are best considered during your visit to the congregation. At the start of the visit, the elders will provide any background information that will help you have a complete view of the qualifications of a brother recommended for deletion. During your meeting with the elders later in the week, you should discuss the Scriptural qualifications of the brother. (*ks10* chap. 3 pars. 15-24) If you agree with the recommendation, you and another elder should in-

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form the brother of the deletion sometime before the conclusion of the visit. Of course, an elder who attends the meeting to discuss his qualifications will be informed of the decision at that time.

15. If the brother agrees with the decision, you should generate a letter of deletion to be left with the body of elders and inform the Service Department using the *Notification of Appointment or Deletion* (S-2) form. (See paragraphs 21 and 23.) The announcement of the deletion will be made at the next Service Meeting. (*ks10* chap. 3 par. 26) If the brother disagrees with your decision, he should be informed of his right to appeal.—See paragraph 20.

16. **Deletions between regular visits to a congregation:** If serious questions arise concerning a brother's qualifications and your next visit is not in the near future, the body of elders should follow the procedure outlined in the *Shepherding* textbook, chapter 3, paragraphs 22-24. If after reviewing a brother's qualifications the elders decide to recommend his deletion, the Congregation Service Committee may submit their recommendation to you immediately. Their letter should provide complete details and indicate whether or not the brother agrees with their recommendation. (*ks10* chap. 3 par. 25) If you agree with the recommendation and believe it should be processed immediately, you should send a letter of deletion to the body of elders. (See paragraph 21.) Upon receipt of the letter, the coordinator of the body of elders will assign two elders to inform the brother of your decision. If the brother accepts the decision, the announcement will be made at the next Service Meeting. (*ks10* chap. 3 par. 26) You should inform the Service Department using the *Notification of Appointment or Deletion* (S-2) form. (See paragraph 23.) If the brother does not accept the decision, he will be informed of his right to appeal, the announcement to the congregation will be held in abeyance, and the coordinator of the body of elders will inform you.—See paragraph 20.

17. If the letter recommending a brother's deletion indicates that the brother disagrees with the elders' recommendation or if the reason for the recommendation is an issue of poor judgment that is not widely known, you may decide to wait until your next visit to consider the matter. In such cases, you should inform the body of elders accordingly. Meanwhile, the brother will continue to serve as an elder or a ministerial servant, and the body of elders will determine what congregation responsibilities he will have in the interim, according to the circumstances.

18. **Transfers to another congregation:** At the start of each visit, the elders should inform you of any elders or ministerial servants who moved out of the congregation since the last visit. If jw.org still lists the brother as serving in the congregation, you should inform the Service Department by means of the *Notification of Appointment or Deletion* (S-2) form. (See paragraph 23.) In such cases, a letter of deletion should not be provided.

19. **Resignations, deletions for judicial reasons, and deaths:** The Congregation Service Committee will immediately inform you of (1) the deletion of an elder or a ministerial servant because of resignation, judicial reproof, disfellowshipping, or disassociation or (2) the death of an elder or a ministerial servant. You should thereafter inform the Service Department using the *Notification of Appointment or Deletion* (S-2) form. (See paragraph 23.) For deletions resulting from judicial reproof or the resignation of a brother, you should also generate a deletion letter to the body of elders. (See paragraph 21.) No letter of deletion should be sent in cases of disfellowshipping, disassociation, or death.

20. **Handling appeals of deletions:** If an elder or a ministerial servant disagrees with his deletion and wishes to appeal the decision, he should immediately write a brief letter to the Service Department, with a copy to the body of elders and you, explaining why he disagrees with the dele-

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tion. The announcement of deletion will be held in abeyance, and the letter of deletion will be destroyed (if one had been generated). Thereafter, the Service Department will select an experienced circuit overseer who will then rehear the entire matter with you. You should listen to the brother carefully and deal with him kindly and justly. You may consult the Service Department for advice. After you and the other brother hearing the appeal reach a joint decision, there is no further right to appeal. If it is decided that the brother should be deleted, you should generate a letter of deletion to the body of elders and inform the Service Department using the *Notification of Appointment or Deletion* (S-2) form. (See paragraph 23.) Once the body of elders receives the letter of deletion, the announcement of deletion will be made at the next Service Meeting.

21. **Letters of appointment and deletion:** At the end of this letter, a sample letter of appointment and deletion has been provided. Please note that the letter should include your own circuit letterhead, should be addressed to the body of elders, and should include the names of those being appointed or deleted in the congregation. The original, signed letter will be left with (or sent to) the elders for them to place in the congregation confidential file. The date of the letter will be considered the official date of the appointments and/or deletions noted therein. Please use the wording exactly as shown, which will make it clear that you, in your capacity as an appointed circuit overseer, are making the appointments or deletions.

22. ***Recommendations for Appointment of Elders and Ministerial Servants*** **(S-62) form:** Beginning August 1, 2014, the Congregation Service Committee should use the *Recommendations for Appointment of Elders and Ministerial Servants* form to submit to you the names, birth dates, and baptism dates of brothers being recommended for appointment in conjunction with a regular visit. Effective September 1, 2014, this form should also be used to submit recommendations for appointments between visits. Enhancements to jw.org are under way to provide a Web version of the form. In the event that this new Web form is not available by the time it is needed, the service committee should submit this information by means of the PDF version of the form, using the jw.org Inbox feature. The PDF version of the form, containing editable fields, will be posted in the "Forms" section of jw.org in the near future.

23. ***Notification of Appointment or Deletion*** **(S-2) form:** You should use this form to inform the Service Department of any appointments or deletions you make, whether in conjunction with a regular visit to congregations, between visits, or in conjunction with the formation of a new congregation. Enhancements to jw.org are under way to provide a Web version of the form. In the event that this new Web form is not available by the time it is needed, you should submit this information by means of the PDF version of the form, using the jw.org Inbox feature. The PDF version of the form, containing editable fields, will be posted in the "Forms" section of jw.org in the near future.

24. **Substitute circuit overseers:** In the event a substitute circuit overseer will serve a congregation, it may still be possible for him to contact you and discuss any recommendation(s) sometime after the meeting with the elders but before the conclusion of the visit. At the conclusion of the visit, the substitute circuit overseer should forward his recommendation(s) and those of the body of elders to you for consideration. You will handle the recommendation(s) as you would other recommendations for appointment or deletion that are received between visits. You should inform the elders that the substitute is not authorized to make appointments or deletions.

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25. In due course, *Traveling Overseer Guidelines* will be updated to reflect the changes described in this letter. It has been decided that substitute circuit overseers will be provided access to *Traveling Overseer Guidelines* once the revised version is completed. In the meantime, please provide them with a copy of this letter and its attachments. We send our warm Christian love.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B. & T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

c: Substitute circuit overseers

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CONSIDERATIONS WHEN MAKING APPOINTMENTS AND DELETIONS

(1Ti 3:1-13; Tit 1:5-9; 1Pe 5:2; Jas 3:17, 18)

Before making appointments of **elders and ministerial servants,** please consider the following, keeping in mind that each brother must "measure up to a reasonable degree" (*ks10* 3:1-2):

☐ **Experience and Maturity**
- Sufficient age, life experience, and respect of congregation—*tg* 20:6-7; *km* 5/00 8; *w89* 7/1 29.
- Baptized at least one year—*w11* 4/15 11 par. 11.
- If baptized many years ago, why only now being recommended?

☐ **Family**
- Wife and any children living at home good examples—*tg* 20:2; *ks10* 3:5; *w96* 10/15 21 pars. 6-7; *w88* 3/1 24 par. 5.
- Regular family worship—*ks10* 3:5.
- Scriptural marriage—*ks10* 3:8; 12:9-17.
- Separated or unscripturally divorced—*ks10* 3:9.

☐ **Field Service Activity**
- Meaningful, zealous share—*ks10* 3:4; *od* 56 par. 1.
- Restricted share because of other spiritual obligations or theocratic projects—*tg* 20:33; see also *Index to Letters for Bodies of Elders* (S-22).

☐ **Tested as to Fitness**
- Shows himself to be a spiritual man—*ks10* 3:3.
- Cares for responsibilities—*od* 57 par. 1; *km* 5/00 8.

☐ **Viewpoint of Elders**
- Recommendation is not unanimous—*tg* 20:20; *ks10* 2:8-9.

☐ **Past Difficulties**
- Reproved within the past three years or reinstated within the past five years—*ks10* 3:7; *w90* 9/1 24 par. 5.
- Notoriety subsided due to past deletion or wrongdoing—*tg* 20:17; *ks10* 3:7-8, 10.
- Pornography—See *Index to Letters for Bodies of Elders* (S-22).
- Child abuse—See *Index to Letters for Bodies of Elders* (S-22).

Before making appointments of **elders**, please *also* consider the following:

☐ **Shepherding**
- Received training by elders—*tg* 20:6.

☐ **Teaching**
- Able to teach from platform or on one-to-one basis—*tg* 20:2; *w90* 9/1 27 par. 20.

☐ **Past Difficulties**
- If deleted as an elder, should he serve first for a time as a ministerial servant?—*ks10* 3:10.

Before **deleting** an elder or a ministerial servant, please consider the following:

☐ Sufficient Scriptural disqualification?—*ks10* 3:15-21.
☐ Two witnesses to establish accusation?
☐ Extenuating circumstances that affect field service average, meeting attendance, and so forth?—*tg* 20:31; see *Index to Letters for Bodies of Elders* (S-22).
☐ Sufficient firm but loving counsel given by elders?—*tg* 20:31; *ks10* 3:22.
☐ Basis to show extra consideration because of faithfully serving for many years?—*ks10* 3:22.
☐ Brother agree with decision?

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SAMPLE

JOHN C. OVERSEER, NY-61

123 Kingdom Hall Dr., Anywhere NY 12345-6789

September 6, 2014

BODY OF ELDERS
CENTRAL CONGREGATION OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES, ANYWHERE, NY
C/O DAVID COORDINATOR
345 MAIN ST
ANYWHERE NY 12345-6789

Re: Appointments and deletions of elders and ministerial servants

Dear Brothers:

This is to confirm that I have appointed the following **elder(s):**

John Andrew Elder (CBOE)
James Alan Olderman, Jr.

This is to confirm that I have appointed the following **ministerial servant(s):**

David Robert Servant

This is to confirm that I have **deleted** the following brother(s) from serving as an elder or a ministerial servant**:**

Michael James Publisher

Please accept an expression of my warm Christian love.

Your brother,

John C. Overseer
John C. Overseer, NY-61

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WATCHTOWER
BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA
PO BOX 280, INGLEBURN, NSW 1890 AUSTRALIA ABN 42 002 861 225
PHONE: (02) 9829 5600
FAX: (02) 9829 3616

August 25, 2014

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Re: Regular pioneers

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Dear Brothers:

1. This letter replaces the letters dated December 1, 1998, October 2, 2001, and September 5, 2007, to all bodies of elders. Those letters should be removed from the congregation permanent file of policy letters and should be destroyed.

2. **Appointments:** The local elders, rather than the branch office, are responsible for the appointment of regular pioneers. However, as outlined in paragraph 5 below, **announcements of such appointments should not be made until the branch office registers the appointments.**

3. When a publisher submits an *Application for Regular Pioneer Service* (S-205), the Congregation Service Committee will obtain comments from the appropriate group overseer and then meet promptly to consider the applicant's qualifications, keeping in mind the following guidelines:

- The information provided by the applicant should be *complete and correct*, including the applicant's full name (no nicknames), birth date, and baptism date. If the applicant cannot recall his baptism date, the month, day, and year should be estimated.
- The applicant must be baptized for at least a full six months.—*od* pp. 113-114.
- The applicant must have a reputation for fine Christian conduct inside and outside the congregation, and the fruitage of God's spirit must be evident in his life.—*km* 8/86 pp. 5-6 par. 22; *od* pp. 113-114.
- The applicant must be able to follow a practical schedule and spend the required number of hours in field service.—*od* p. 114.
- Those who discontinue pioneer service must be off the pioneer list a full six months before starting again.
- The applicant must not have been reproved or reinstated within the past year, and all restrictions must have been lifted.

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- The applicant should indicate the date he wishes to begin pioneering. No retroactive appointments should be made unless there are *significant extenuating circumstances,* such as an application that was lost by the elders.
- If the applicant has marked "yes" to the question, "Have you ever engaged in sexual child molestation?" and this is the first time the elders have learned of the abuse, two elders should *immediately* call the Legal Department for legal advice. Also, please review the January 1, 1997, issue of *The Watchtower,* pages 26-29, and the February 1, 1997, issue of *The Watchtower,* page 29, along with the most recent direction provided for elders on the subject of child abuse. Thereafter, if the body of elders wishes to appoint the individual as a regular pioneer, they should assign two elders to call the Service Department *before* announcing the appointment.

4. Once the service committee has decided whether or not to appoint the applicant, the entire body of elders should be updated on how matters were handled. This should be done before any announcement of appointment is made to the congregation. If the service committee agrees that the applicant is not qualified to serve as a regular pioneer, they should explain their reasons to the applicant. (*km* 8/86 p. 6 pars. 24-26) If the service committee agrees to appoint the applicant as a regular pioneer, they should sign the application and enter it on jw.org as described in paragraph 5. The original application should be kept in the congregation file. Applications should *not* be sent to the branch office unless specific instructions are given to do so.

5. The secretary (or other brother who has been granted the "Enter Member Information" role and who has been assigned to assist him in using jw.org) should enter information from the approved application into the appropriate section of jw.org. (After logging in, click on "Help" [at the top right of the screen] to get detailed instructions for using the site and entering pioneer information.) After the information has been submitted, the new pioneer's name will be listed under the section "Appointed Pioneers Not Yet Registered." The secretary should check the site every few days until the pioneer's name is listed under the section "Regular Pioneers." Thereafter, the elders should print out the new regular pioneer welcome letter (S-236), found under the "Documents" tab in the "Forms" section, and provide a copy to the new pioneer informing him of the appointment. It is not necessary to transfer the pioneer's identification number to the *Congregation's Publisher Record* (S-21) card. An announcement should be made to the congregation at the next Service Meeting that the publisher has been appointed as a regular pioneer. Please *do not* announce to the congregation the appointment of the regular pioneer until his name is listed under the section "Regular Pioneers," thus indicating that the appointment has been registered by the branch office.

6. **Deletions:** Before deleting an individual as a regular pioneer because of a pioneer's inability to meet the hour requirement, the Congregation Service Committee should obtain comments from the appropriate group overseer. They should also consider whether the pioneer may qualify for special consideration. (See paragraphs 17-21.) The entire body of elders should be updated on how matters were handled before any announcement is made to the congregation. If consideration must be given to deleting a regular pioneer because he may no longer qualify as an exemplary Christian, the final decision in the matter should be agreed upon by the entire body of elders. If it is decided that the pioneer should be deleted, choose the appropriate reason on jw.org. Choose the option "Personal reasons" for discontinuation because of health, family responsibilities, secular work, and so forth. Choose the option "No longer qualifies" for discontinuation because of a poor example, reproof by a judicial committee, disfellowshipping, and so forth.

7. If the pioneer was reproved by a judicial committee, he is automatically disqualified and his deletion should be reported immediately on jw.org. If the deletion is because the pioneer has failed to set a good example and he has not responded to counsel, he should be informed of the de-

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cision. Announcements of deletion should read as follows: "This is to inform the congregation that Brother [individual's name] is no longer serving as a regular pioneer."

8. **Congregation changes:** If a pioneer transfers to another congregation, the secretary of his former congregation should indicate his deletion on jw.org and should show the reason as transferring to another congregation. Type the name of the new congregation or area in the space provided. Include the country if the pioneer is transferring to a congregation outside the branch territory.

9. The secretary of the new congregation should add the pioneer by entering the appropriate information on jw.org as follows:

- **If transferring from a congregation in the same branch territory:** Click on the appropriate link and enter the pioneer's name and former congregation. Then click "Search."
- **If transferring from a congregation in another branch territory:** If the pioneer would like to continue serving as a pioneer, enter his information as if he were a newly appointed pioneer. Be sure to complete the section for full-time service history.

10. **Changes to pioneer information:** Changes to a pioneer's name, birth date, baptism date, marital status, or spouse's name may be made on jw.org. If any other information about the pioneer needs to change, please contact the Service Department.

11. **S-202 letters:** If you are able to use jw.org, please destroy any S-202 letters in the congregation file *after* you verify that the pioneer information shown on the site is correct.

12. Those congregations not yet able to use jw.org may continue to send approved *Applications for Regular Pioneer Service* (S-205) to the branch office so that the appointments may be registered. In this circumstance, please *do not* announce to the congregation the appointment of the regular pioneer until you receive an S-202 letter indicating that the appointment has been registered. Congregations not yet able to use jw.org may also continue to use the S-202 letter to inform the branch office of a change in a pioneer's personal information or to inform another congregation that a pioneer is transferring to their congregation.

13. ***Field Service Reports* (S-4):** *Field Service Reports* for regular pioneers should be handled in the same way that publisher reports are handled. Late reports should be added to the total activity for regular pioneers on the following month's report to the branch office.

14. **Procedure for extending and posting hour credit:** The branch office, its representatives overseeing construction or renovation projects, and Convention Committees may assign regular pioneers to assist with a particular project, for which they may be extended hour credit to help them meet their monthly requirement. Hour credit could also be extended to a regular pioneer when working on his own Kingdom Hall if this is done at the request of the branch office or its representatives overseeing the project. Assembly Hall Committees may, in limited cases, grant hour credit to pioneers for work performed at Assembly Halls.

15. When a pioneer's assistance is authorized, he will keep a record of the hours spent working on the project during the month. He will report this activity to the congregation at the same time he reports his field service activity.

16. Hour credit extended to pioneers should not be included with the field service report submitted to the branch office. Such hour credit should be noted in the "Remarks" column of the *Congregation's Publisher Record* (S-21) card and should not be included in the "Hours" column.

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The figure in the "Hours" column should reflect the actual hours spent by the pioneer in field service. (Some time should be spent in the ministry during each month.) How much credit can a pioneer receive for sharing in theocratic projects? Those properly authorized are given credit to the extent that the total number of hours actually spent in field service plus time spent on special projects does not exceed the monthly goal of 70 hours. No credit will be carried over to any other month.

17. **Special consideration:** If a regular pioneer reaches at least 800 hours for the year, consideration may be extended to him, rather than removing him as a pioneer. Of course, there may be legitimate reasons why a regular pioneer may not be able to reach even 800 hours for the year.

18. In some situations, pioneers spend more hours in a month on theocratic projects than they can receive hour credit for. Later in the service year, they may need to take a vacation, spend time in secular work, or care for some other pressing issue that precludes their reaching the 70-hour goal for one or more months. They may thus fall short of the 840 hours for the service year. In that circumstance, when the body of elders reviews the activity of the regular pioneers at the end of the service year, they should take into consideration all that such pioneers are doing on behalf of Kingdom interests and grant special consideration to them. A pioneer would not lose his privileges if he has worked extensively on theocratic projects. The elders, being aware of the pioneer's work to support Kingdom interests, will offer warm commendation. A notation can be made on the *Congregation's Publisher Record* (S-21) card to indicate that special consideration has been granted.

19. Special consideration should also be granted to pioneers who serve in construction oversight or on Hospital Liaison Committees, Disaster Relief Committees, Assembly Hall Committees, or Convention Committees if they fall short of the annual pioneer hour requirement. All such assignments are forms of sacred service. The spirituality, availability, and willing spirit of pioneers allow them to support Kingdom interests in a special way.

20. **Infirm regular pioneers:** In rare circumstances, a brother or sister may be approved to remain as a pioneer without having a minimum hour requirement. This provision is only for exemplary, longtime pioneers who have a heartfelt desire to serve always as regular pioneers and who feel they would be taking a backward step if they had to discontinue but who are unable to meet the hour requirement because of infirmity. The elders may consider designating such a pioneer as an infirm regular pioneer if he (1) is over 50 years old and (2) has pioneered for at least 15 cumulative years. **This decision should be made only after consulting with the circuit overseer regarding the situation.** This arrangement is not a provision to allow an individual to care for sick relatives, do added secular work, and so forth. Those who first enter the pioneer service when they are 60 or 70 years old do not come under this arrangement simply because of their age. If an older pioneer who develops health problems is willing to transfer to the publisher ranks, there is no need to give consideration to allowing this brother to serve as an infirm regular pioneer.

21. When the body of elders decides that a pioneer may serve as an infirm regular pioneer, a notation should be made on the *Congregation's Publisher Record* (S-21) card indicating this status for the pioneer. It is not necessary to notify the branch office of this decision. Two members of the Congregation Service Committee should meet with the pioneer to inform him of this loving provision made in his behalf. Encourage the pioneer to continue exerting himself in his ministry to the extent that his circumstances allow. (Luke 13:24; Col. 3:23, 24) Assure the infirm pioneer that he has the full support of the elders in the congregation and that Jehovah is aware of the sacrifices that the pioneer has made during the pioneer's many years of service.—Heb. 6:10, 11.

22. **Pioneers consistently not meeting the regular pioneer hour requirement:** Pioneers are expected to meet the hour requirement on a consistent basis. Do not allow an extended period of time to pass before giving attention to a pioneer who is not meeting the hour requirement for reasons

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other than those mentioned in paragraphs 17-21 of this letter. Be prompt in talking to the pioneer so that you clearly understand why he has not been able to meet the hour requirement. Is it because of health problems, increased family responsibilities, or secular work? Or has he been self-sparing and somewhat disorganized? Are other activities consuming his time and energy? Once you have identified the problem, you will be able to provide assistance as directed in the July 1998 *Our Kingdom Ministry* insert.

23. After reviewing what is stated in *Our Kingdom Ministry*, determine whether the problem is temporary (lasting one, two, or three months) or ongoing, one that will not be solved in a short period of time. Of course, additional factors should be taken into consideration before a decision is made. How long has the individual been serving as a full-time minister? What is the age of the pioneer? Can special consideration be extended to the individual? In other words, are there legitimate reasons for the temporary problem that the pioneer has experienced, so that he can be allowed to continue pioneering without making up the lost time? Or might it be better for him to discontinue regular pioneer service until his circumstances change? Discontinuing pioneer service for a time may relieve him of the stress of trying to meet the hour requirement while coping with difficult or adverse circumstances. Be balanced and use good judgment when making such decisions. Consider what course of action will be in the best interests of the individual and, at the same time, will uphold the high standards of regular pioneer service.

24. Once the decision has been made, you should follow through without delay. If you delay in handling matters, further problems may develop. A pioneer may begin to minimize the need to meet the hour requirement. Or he may feel stress, wondering when the elders will recommend his removal. A pioneer may try unrealistically to increase the hours he spends in field service in an attempt to reach the hour requirement, thinking that is the only course to be taken. These situations may cause the pioneer to develop a poor attitude or even health problems. Therefore, the long-term interests of the pioneer are best served when elders promptly handle matters.

25. We know you brothers will use good judgment and discretion when handling matters pertaining to the appointment and deletion of regular pioneers. May Jehovah continue to bless your efforts to render loving assistance to pioneers and the efforts of the pioneers as they share with us in preaching the good news "to the most distant part of the earth." (Acts 1:8) We send our warm Christian love.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B. & T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

c: Circuit overseers

PS to secretary:

This letter should be retained in the congregation permanent file of policy letters. You may wish to update the congregation copy of *Index to Letters for Bodies of Elders* (S-22) at this time as well.

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"SHEPHERD THE FLOCK OF GOD"



"SHEPHERD THE FLOCK OF GOD"

—1 PETER 5:2

See letter dated October 7, 2010, to all bodies of elders regarding spiral binding of this textbook.
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This publication is congregation property. A copy is issued to each appointed elder. If an elder is deleted for reasons other than moving to another congregation with a favorable recommendation, he should turn over this handbook to the Congregation Service Committee. The secretary should keep the book in the congregation's file so that it may be returned to the brother if he is reappointed as an elder. No copies are to be made of any part of this publication. Neither is it to be converted into any electronic format.

This Book Issued To _____

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English (*ks10*-E)

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Chapter One

Shepherd the Flock of God

A good shepherd will strive to imitate Jehovah and his Son as shepherds by loving the sheep in the following areas:

Feeding the sheep

Leading the sheep

Protecting the sheep

1. Jehovah has entrusted elders with the responsibility to care for his precious sheep that he purchased with the blood of his Son. (Acts 20:28) This is a serious responsibility, but through holy spirit, elders can properly care for the sheep. Not only has Jehovah provided his own example as the Supreme Overseer but he has also sent to the earth his own Son, "the fine shepherd," to leave "a model" for us. (John 10:11; 1 Pet. 2:21, 25) God's written Word is "beneficial for teaching, for reproving, for setting things straight, for disciplining in righteousness." (2 Tim. 3:16) In addition, he gives timely direction through "the faithful and discreet slave." (Matt. 24:45) This publication has been prepared to help elders to "shepherd the flock of God."—1 Pet. 5:2.

2. *"Shepherd the Flock of God"* has been designed as a handbook for elders to supply vital information that will help them care for congregation matters. This publication is divided into chapters, each pertaining to a particular aspect of your work. Each chapter is numbered, and each paragraph within the chapter is also numbered. Therefore, paragraphs are referred to by chapter and paragraph number. For example, chapter 5, paragraph 10, would be written as

"5:10." All cross-references are by chapter-paragraph notation. Because of efforts to simplify this publication, it does not cover every aspect of our work as elders. At times you may need to consult other publications and letters to the body of elders for detailed information. Be alert to future direction and adjustments so as to stay up-to-date on theocratic direction.

3. As an elder, your ultimate objective is to imitate the Supreme Overseer, Jehovah, and his Son in the way you treat the sheep. (Eph. 5:1) Jehovah sets the example for overseers as a God of love and as the perfect Judge in that he is just at all times and in all of his ways.

Our Loving Overseer

4. Jehovah's love for us is expressed in action. He took the initiative to send his Son to die in our behalf. (John 3:16) He has given us knowledge of the truth and the privilege of being associated with the visible part of his universal organization. (John 6:44; Rev. 7:9, 10) Because of God's love, we enjoy food, clothing, life, a measure of health, and innumerable other blessings. God lovingly considers our limitations. (Ps. 103:14) How many are the expressions of love Jehovah has showered down on us, yet none of us deserve his love! Jehovah's example teaches us how to demonstrate love to others, especially those in the congregation.—1 John 4:19.

5. Our loving Supreme Overseer has also been a Guardian and Protector of his people both physically and spiritually. (Ps. 145:20; Prov. 18:10) Elders should also be guardians and protectors of his people. The basic idea inherent in the Greek word for overseer is protective care. Elders strive to be alert to the needs of individual publishers and families, stepping forward to assist in practical ways when there is a need. (Isa. 32:1, 2) When we imitate Jehovah, the flock in our

care is helped to feel secure and content.—1 Thess. 2: 7, 8.

A Lover of Justice and a God of Mercy

6. Jehovah's justice and mercy became evident in the way he handled the rebellion in Eden. Justice prevailed in the judgment he pronounced upon those three unrepentant rebels against his sovereignty. Yet, mercy was also demonstrated when he foretold a deliverer for the unborn offspring of Adam and Eve. (Gen. 3:15) In justice Jehovah has allowed mankind to suffer the due recompense for sin. (Deut. 32:4, 5) But in mercy he has made provision for their redemption and has given them hope of everlasting life. The ransom provision itself satisfies justice—a perfect life for a perfect life. (1 Tim. 2:6) What mercy that provision reflects! It is undeserved kindness to those in desperate need.—John 1:17; Eph. 1:7.

7. Jehovah shows himself to be just and merciful with groups of people as well as with individuals. David was worthy of death because of his sin with Bathsheba, but God extended him great mercy because of his sincere repentance and heartfelt remorse over his conduct. (2 Sam. 12:13; Ps. 51:4, 17) Jehovah extended to natural Israel the opportunity to supply the members of the bride of Christ. But when the required number failed to respond, Jehovah mercifully extended the invitation to the Samaritans and then to people of the nations.—Acts 8:14; 10:45; 15:14; Rom. 11:25.

8. Although elders today cannot read the heart, they must be both just and merciful in their dealings with others. In giving counsel and in judging, elders should hold to God's standard with everyone. What Jehovah expects of elders is revealed at Deuteronomy 1:16, 17; Micah 6:8; and Matthew 5:7. The elders' love for impartiality, justice, and mercy will assist them in

keeping the congregation clean and strengthening the faith of the flock.

9. To be an effective elder, you must care for Jehovah's precious sheep in the same way that he does—with loving-kindness, impartiality, and merciful judgment. Jehovah's people and, more important, Jehovah and his Son greatly appreciate your diligent efforts in behalf of the congregation. We pray for Jehovah's blessing to "be with the spirit you show." —2 Tim. 4:22.

Chapter Two

How Elders Work Together as a Body

Demonstrate that you accept Jesus as Head of the congregation

Have productive elders' meetings

Be well-organized to care for the congregation's needs

Pursue peace with one another as spiritual men

1. Jehovah has appointed Jesus Christ as Head of the Christian congregation. (Eph. 1:22, 23) Revelation 1:20 depicts Jesus as holding the anointed elders in his right hand, thus, by extension, indicating that he controls all bodies of elders for the purpose of accomplishing Jehovah's will. (*re* pp. 28-29, 136) **Accepting Jesus as Head of the congregation promotes cooperation and unity** on the body. You demonstrate submission to Christ's headship when you do the following:

- Let the Bible be your guide in making decisions. —John 7:16-18.
- Obey direction coming from agencies used by "the faithful and discreet slave," including Branch Committees, traveling overseers, and others appointed by the Governing Body to take the lead.—Matt. 24:45-47; Heb. 13:17.
- Avoid imposing personal viewpoints and opinions or arbitrary rules on the congregation or the body of elders.—1 Cor. 4:6.

- Listen carefully to the expressions of fellow elders.—Rom. 12:10b; Jas. 1:19.
- Deal in a kind and loving manner with each individual in the congregation, including fellow elders, not lording it over them.—Matt. 11:28-30; John 21:15-17; 1 Pet. 5:1-3, 5.
- Pray when a discussion of the body of elders seems to falter.—Jas. 1:5.

Elders' Meetings

2. The body of elders is a Scriptural entity. (Acts 14:23; 20:17; Titus 1:5; compare 1 Cor. 12:19, 20) When the body of elders discusses a matter, **Christ, by means of the holy spirit, can influence any elder** to make an expression that results in a wise decision, one that may not have been reached if the elders had been consulted individually.—Acts 15:6-21.

3. **When to hold elders' meetings:** Normally the body of elders holds four meetings a year. In addition to the two meetings held in conjunction with the visits of the circuit overseer, they should schedule another meeting about three months after each visit. The body of elders can arrange other meetings any time that circumstances necessitate. Limit additional meetings to their purpose and objectives. Endeavor to keep comments succinct and relevant to the matter under consideration. Unnecessary meetings, or unduly lengthy meetings, consume valuable time that the elders can better spend with their families, in the ministry, and in shepherding. (Matt. 24:14; 1 Tim. 3:4; 1 Pet. 5:2) Before compiling an agenda, the coordinator of the body of elders should contact the other elders individually for their input to determine what matters they would like to discuss. The circuit overseer compiles the agenda for the meeting held during his visit. In addition to points he himself puts on the agenda, the circuit overseer should contact the coordinator for any input from the body of

elders. Meetings should normally not exceed two hours in length.

4. While it is not wrong for an elder to contact the branch office if he feels the need, it is generally best to discuss matters as a body first. Then, if necessary, *write* to the branch office. If there is a truly urgent matter requiring assistance from the branch office, it is best for *two* elders to call together to explain the situation and to make a note of the direction given.

5. **Suggested matters to include on the agenda for elders' meetings:** Spiritual matters should be of principal concern. (Phil. 1:9-11) Elders can obtain appropriate ideas regarding matters to discuss by considering the counsel found in the letters to Timothy and Titus and in such passages as Acts 20:17-35 and 1 Peter 5:1-11. If necessary, elders can allow time on the agenda for matters of a mechanical, nonspiritual nature. These items would include problems that an individual elder, the Congregation Service Committee, or the operating committee cannot resolve separately. The coordinator of the body of elders should give a copy of the agenda to each elder far enough in advance of the meeting to allow time to do research and to give prayerful thought to what will be discussed.—Prov. 21:5.

6. The coordinator should set the pace of the discussion by sticking to the agenda as much as possible and by keeping the main points to the fore. By concluding each matter before opening another, he can ensure that the meeting flows smoothly. The secretary or another designated elder should take notes of the decisions and indicate who will follow through and the time schedule for completion. In some cases the coordinator may ask the elder recommending an item for the agenda to take the lead in presenting it for discussion.

7. Elders' meetings will be more productive if brothers speak up, using "freeness of speech." (1 Tim.

3:13) The coordinator should avoid dominating the discussion, being careful as to when and how he expresses himself. There should be no wrath or debates evident in elders' meetings. (1 Tim. 2:8) Speak on the points under discussion only when you have something meaningful to add.—Prov. 10:19.

8. **It should be possible for bodies of elders to be unanimous in most of their decisions.** (Acts 15:25) The body of elders should always base their decisions on Bible principles and written direction from "the faithful and discreet slave." (Matt. 24:45) In cases that do not involve specific Bible laws or where there is no direction from the faithful slave, the body of elders must exercise their collective judgment and conscience. First, have the best interests of the entire congregation in mind, and second, consider what may spiritually assist any individual involved.

9. During the discussion, no one should insist on his personal viewpoint. **If a decision is not unanimous, the minority should give willing support to the final decision.** If in the opinion of the minority a Bible-based decision still has not been reached, the minority should continue to cooperate with the rest of the body and bring the matter to the attention of the circuit overseer during his regular visit. If the matter is urgent, write to the branch office.

How the Body of Elders Is Organized

10. The body should be well-organized to care for the needs of the congregation. All the elders should know their respective responsibilities. Just as individual members of the human body carry out certain functions without direct participation by other body members, individual elders have certain latitude to make decisions so as to carry out their respective re-

sponsibilities. (1 Cor. 12:12-31) Certain essential assignments in each congregation are outlined below.

He must be less than 80 years of age.

Coordinator of the Body of Elders

11. The coordinator should be, if possible, one who has loyally served with the organization for many years. The congregation should respect him for his hard work in the ministry and for his efforts as a shepherd in behalf of the congregation. (Acts 20:24, 31) He should be a good organizer and care for his responsibilities in real earnest. (Rom. 12:8) He should possess genuine humility and appreciate his fellow elders and the value of a multitude of counselors. (Prov. 15:22; Phil. 2:3, 4; Jas. 4:10) He should care about people, loving them and being interested in their spiritual welfare. (John 13:34, 35; 15:13; 1 Pet. 5: 2, 3) He should have the respect and cooperation of the congregation and his fellow elders on the body. He must be a spiritual man and should be approachable.

12. The coordinator's duties include the following:

- Serves as chairman of meetings of the body of elders.
- He or another elder contacts the group overseers to determine the situation of each household when a disaster occurs. (*km* 2/97 p. 7) Notifies circuit overseer of results when compiled.
- Directly oversees the attendant, sound, and stage departments. Another elder may assist.
- Receives congregation mail, and passes it along to the secretary for circulation and filing.
- Compiles Scriptural and practical agendas outlining points for discussion at regular elders' meetings throughout the year.

- Distinguishes between items that individual elders can handle and those needing attention by the entire body of elders, so as to avoid unnecessarily taking the time of the entire body.—*w96* 1/15 p. 18 pars. 13-14.
- Makes sure that there is appropriate follow-through on decisions made by elders.
- Assigns Service Meeting parts. He may ask other elders to assist.
- Supervises the assigning of approved conductors and readers for the Congregation Bible Study.
- Arranges for public Bible discourses. Another elder or a well-qualified ministerial servant may assist.
- Approves all announcements made to the congregation, especially those of a judicial nature.
- Takes the lead in caring for details in preparation for the circuit overseer's visit.
- Serves as chairman of the Congregation Service Committee when considering regular or auxiliary pioneer applications, unassigned territory applications, or similar matters as required by the branch office.
- Calls a meeting of the body of elders when judicial matters arise if he is present when a matter comes to light.
- Arranges for two elders (a member of the Congregation Service Committee and usually the group overseer) to meet with each person desiring to become a new publisher.
- Along with the service overseer, determines whether it is advisable for another publisher to conduct a Bible study with the child of a Christian parent.—*km* 11/03 p. 3.
- Arranges for elders to review questions with baptismal candidates. If the assigned elder needs

to take someone along when meeting with a sister, another elder should be used. However, if needed, a capable ministerial servant may accompany the assigned elder to review the questions in "Part I—Elementary Bible Teachings" and "Part III—Jehovah's Arrangement of Things." If the congregation has very few elders, capable ministerial servants who have demonstrated good judgment and discernment may be assigned to review the questions in "Part I—Elementary Bible Teachings" and "Part III—Jehovah's Arrangement of Things." If the assigned ministerial servant needs to take someone along when meeting with a sister, another capable ministerial servant should be used. In all cases, only elders should be assigned to consider "Part II—Jehovah's Righteous Requirements."

- Arranges for two elders, one of them being the individual's group overseer, to meet with each baptized publisher one year following baptism to provide encouragement and helpful suggestions.
- Arranges for quarterly audit of congregation accounts.
- Authorizes payment of all normal operating expenses of the congregation.
- Approves the items placed on the congregation information board.—*km* 1/89 p. 7.

~~13. When needed, at the conclusion of his regular visit, the circuit overseer will submit a recommendation to the branch office for appointment of the coordinator of the body of elders. If a temporary adjustment is made apart from the circuit overseer's visit, the body of elders should immediately notify the branch office in a letter, signed by the Congregation Service Committee, explaining the reason for the change. A *Coordinator of the Body of Elders/Secretary*~~

See July 13, 2014, letter to all bodies of elders regarding the appointment and deletion of elders and ministerial servants.

~~*Change of Address* (S-29) form should accompany the letter.~~

14. If the coordinator will be away for a time, the body of elders should select one from among their number to act as a replacement during the absence. Mail and correspondence will be handled by the replacement during the time of absence.

Congregation Secretary

15. The body of elders selects the secretary and notifies the branch office by means of the *Coordinator of the Body of Elders/Secretary Change of Address* (S-29) form. The secretary should have good organizational ability and be known as one who does not procrastinate. (Rom. 12:11) He should have the ability to write in a way that is clear and understandable. If necessary, the body of elders may select an elder to assist him or a capable ministerial servant to assist in caring for some routine matters.

16. The secretary's duties include the following:

- Maintains the congregation records, including correspondence from the branch office, in an orderly way.
- Keeps congregation records, including *Congregation's Publisher Record* (S-21) cards, in an accessible but secure place (at the Kingdom Hall if possible) for use by any elder when the need arises. Although the secretary is primarily responsible for the organization of the congregation's file, each elder may be provided with a key to the file. *Every elder* should have access to the *Congregation's Publisher Record* cards, letters from the branch office, and other common records. Only elders directly handling a matter should open and view sealed confidential judicial records.
- Files sealed envelopes containing confidential records on disciplinary cases, including reports

This bullet point reflects updates provided in the September 7, 2011, letter to all bodies of elders with regard to keys to the congregation file.

made by the judicial committees. Information concerning an individual accused of child molestation, proved or otherwise, should be placed in congregation's confidential file and marked "Do Not Destroy" and kept indefinitely.

- Directly oversees those caring for accounts.
- Circulates among the elders photocopies of all letters from the branch office and traveling overseers, and files the originals for reference.
- Keeps records concerning Kingdom Hall ownership, loans, insurance, deeds, and other matters.
- Keeps a list of business items that elders or the congregation must handle in the future, such as utility bills, tax matters, and government items, and checks to be certain these are cared for on time.
- Notifies coordinator when a publisher has been baptized one year.
- Oversees district convention matters.
- Along with service overseer, takes the lead in organizing efforts to care for inactive ones.—See 4:12, 15.
- Compiles field service reports. Keeps *Congregation's Publisher Record* cards up-to-date. Promptly informs group overseers regarding publishers in their group who did not report time for the month.
- Transmits monthly reports promptly; sends communications prepared by other brothers as needed.
- Keeps body of elders informed of any problems that the pioneers are experiencing. With service overseer, reviews the activity of regular pioneers near midpoint of service year so that any having difficulty meeting the hour requirement can be given assistance.

See November 17, 2010, letter to all bodies of elders regarding letters of introduction.

- Promptly sends *Congregation's Publisher Record* card and a letter of introduction signed by the Congregation Service Committee to the congregation to which a publisher moves, without waiting for a formal request from the new congregation. If necessary, initiates correspondence requesting such when a publisher moves into his congregation.
- Ensures that there is an adequate supply of *Report of Meeting Attendance* (S-3) forms for use by the attendants.

Service Overseer

17. The service overseer takes a keen interest in the publishers' share in the ministry and their effectiveness. He is enthusiastic about the ministry and motivates others to have a full share. He is skillful in various aspects of the work, capable of training others, and alert to do so.

18. The service overseer's duties include the following:

- Schedules regular visits to all field service groups so that once each month he visits a different group. (In smaller congregations with few groups, he may arrange to visit each one twice during the year.) During his visit, he conducts meetings for field service, works with the group in the field ministry from house to house, and helps publishers with their return visits and Bible studies. Reviews *Congregation's Publisher Record* (S-21) cards with the group overseer, and checks the arrangements for field service.
- Takes the lead, working with the body of elders, in arranging meetings for field service at convenient times and locations during the day and in the evenings. Arranges for someone to conduct meetings for service, as needed. Organizes wit-

nessing on holidays and during special campaigns.

- If congregation territory is large enough, promotes and monitors the working of personal territories.—*km* 12/06 p. 8; *od* pp. 103-104; *km* 6/81 p. 3.
- Shows genuine interest in the Bible study activity, helping the publishers to conduct effective studies and to direct interest to the organization.
- Directly oversees the work of brothers assigned to handle literature, magazines, and territory. Ensures that there will be sufficient literature for upcoming campaigns. Makes sure there is always a supply of *Field Service Reports* (S-4), *House-to-House Records* (S-8), and so forth.—*km* 7/92 p. 3; *km* 4/87 p. 4; *km* 4/86 p. 3.
- Verifies with literature servant quantities of literature to be requested from the branch office.
- Reviews the territory file once a year, making a list of houses where it is not advisable to call. Under his direction, elders will determine whether these householders would accept visits from Jehovah's Witnesses. Elders should adhere to recent direction from the branch office in contacting such ones.
- Presents recommendations to the Congregation Service Committee regarding adjustments of publishers assigned to field service groups.
- He and the coordinator of the body of elders determine together if it is advisable for a publisher to conduct a Bible study with the child of a Christian parent.—*km* 11/03 p. 3.
- Along with secretary reviews the activity of the regular pioneers near the midpoint of the service year so that any having difficulty meeting the hour requirement can be given assistance.

- Along with the secretary, takes the lead in coordinating efforts to care for inactive ones.—See 4:12, 15.

Congregation Service Committee

19. The Congregation Service Committee works under the direction of the body of elders and consists of the coordinator, the secretary, and the service overseer. This committee can make certain minor decisions that are in harmony with the judgment of the entire body. However, **these brothers do not function apart from the body, and their opinions do not carry more weight than those of the other elders.**

20. If unusual factors are involved or if the Congregation Service Committee is unsure of the thinking of the body, the entire body of elders should discuss matters and make a decision.

21. The duties of the Congregation Service Committee involve the following:

- Approves use of the Kingdom Hall for weddings and funerals.—*km* 11/08 p. 3; *od* pp. 42, 122.
- Assigns publishers to field service groups after consulting with group overseers involved.
- Signs correspondence regarding appointment or deletion of elders, ministerial servants, and pioneers.
- Signs letters of introduction to the elders of a publisher's new congregation.
- Processes applications for auxiliary and regular pioneer work, for Bethel service, and for other special service privileges.
- Approves publishers who have special needs for accommodations for a district convention.—*km* 12/07 p. 3, par. 6.

- Writes the branch office when a publisher plans to move and wishes to obtain information regarding congregations having a need for assistance.—*od* pp. 111-112.
- Determines whether to destroy records concerning a person reinstated five years if the judicial committee is unavailable or unqualified. May designate other elders to handle this.
- A member of the service committee is included in the meeting with each Bible student desirous of becoming an unbaptized publisher.—*w88* 11/15 p. 17.
- A member of the service committee gives direction on conducting a study with an inactive brother or sister who needs temporary spiritual help.—See 4:15; *od* pp. 85-86.
- If a member of the service committee is absent, another elder may substitute.

Group Overseer

22. The group overseer is responsible to assist all in his assigned group to make spiritual advancement. (1 Tim. 4:15) He should be an alert, caring shepherd and a zealous evangelizer. The entire body of elders chooses group overseers. In view of the importance of this assignment, **the body of elders should select those elders most qualified to fulfill *all the aspects* of this assignment.**

23. The responsibilities include the following:

- **Takes an active interest in the spirituality of each person in the field service group.** Takes note of who is missing during congregation meetings, seeks to determine the reason, and provides needed assistance. Along with his assistant (or another elder or qualified ministerial servant), periodically arranges to visit all in his group to provide encouragement and

See February 2, 2014, letter to all bodies of elders regarding shepherding.

counsel, concentrating on those who are weak, irregular in meeting attendance or field activity, ill, depressed, or inactive.

- **Assists and trains ministerial servants in the group to reach out and qualify for congregation responsibilities.** It is best that *another elder* accompany him when visiting someone in the group having serious problems. However, he may select a qualified ministerial servant to accompany him when visiting publishers to offer encouragement, which will allow the overseer to observe how the servant reasons on matters. The overseer can ask the ministerial servant in advance to be prepared to share a scripture or a thought from a publication, relate an encouraging experience, or offer prayer. Afterward, the overseer reviews with the ministerial servant the reasons the call was handled the way it was.
- **Assists each one in the group to have a regular, meaningful, and joyful share in the ministry.** If possible, is present for meetings for field service on weekends to take the lead. If he cannot be present, makes sure his group will be cared for, either by his assistant or by another qualified publisher. Periodically reviews with his assistant the record cards of those in his group to determine their strengths and weaknesses in the ministry. (If the assistant is not an elder or a ministerial servant, then the overseer orally shares information with him, noting areas of concern.) Regularly arranges to work in the ministry with each one to provide encouragement and training in all aspects of the work. Assists in the collection of monthly field service reports. Endeavors promptly to obtain late reports for the secretary. Promptly provides assistance if any have not participated for an entire month.

Watchtower Study Conductor

24. Since *The Watchtower* is the principal means by which the faithful and discreet slave dispenses spiritual food, the conductor chosen by the body of elders **should be one of the best teachers on the body.** (Jas. 3:1) He should also be one who has "great freeness of speech."—1 Tim. 3:13.

25. The following will help the conductor to carry out this assignment in a way that will enable the congregation to receive the most benefit from the lesson. —*w03* 9/1 pp. 21-22.

- Presents **brief, well-prepared opening remarks** for one to one and a half minutes. Highlights the theme and theme scripture, and tries to stimulate interest in the lesson. May do this by calling attention to the subheadings, by mentioning questions in the teaching box, or by raising two or three rhetorical questions answered by the lesson. Demonstrates warmth and enthusiasm.
- **Does not comment excessively.** Avoids any tendency to summarize or enhance comments from the audience. If the audience fails to comment on an important point, perhaps asking a specific auxiliary question will stimulate the thinking of the audience and prompt an appropriate comment. Should not ask additional questions unnecessarily, as this tends to stifle commenting.
- **Concentrates on the theme and main points, and highlights the practical value of the lesson** rather than focusing on details. Since much research has been done in producing the lesson, he avoids bringing into the discussion extensive outside theocratic or secular material from personal research.

- **Highlights artwork and teaching boxes in the lesson.**

See April 22, 2012, letter to all bodies of elders regarding reading scriptures at the *Watchtower* Study.

- **Focuses on the Bible.** Encourages the audience to comment on the scriptures in the lesson. Has the designated scriptures read and commented on. However, the paragraphs should be read uninterrupted.
- **Encourages as many as possible to participate.** Tactfully trains the audience that first answer should be a direct answer to the printed question. After that, audience may comment on cited scriptures, supporting arguments, practical application of the material, and so forth. Encourages individuals to comment in their own words. Calls on only one person at a time. Does not scold the audience if answers are not forthcoming.
- **Considers the review box** with the congregation.
- Keeps concluding remarks under one and a half minutes.
- Limits the study to **no more than 60 minutes,** excluding the songs and closing prayer.

Theocratic Ministry School Overseer

26. Since the Theocratic Ministry School trains publishers to present the Kingdom message in a clear and effective way, the body of elders should select a good teacher for this assignment. The body should also choose the auxiliary counselor and any counselors for secondary schools. In congregations that have few elders, qualified ministerial servants may be used as counselors for secondary schools. Instructions regarding the school are found in the book *Benefit From Theocratic Ministry School Education* and the current schedule.

Pursue Peace With One Another as Spiritual Men

27. Each body of elders is made up of imperfect men with different backgrounds and personalities. If these factors are allowed to cause strained relations, the free flow of Jehovah's spirit can be restricted and the congregation may be adversely affected. (Jas. 3: 16, 18) You must therefore work hard to **pursue peace** with your fellow elders. (Rom. 12:18; 14:19; 1 Pet. 3:11) The Hebrew word translated "peace" includes the idea of friendship. (*it*-2 p. 591) Thus, elders should **cultivate and maintain friendships with one another,** not merely tolerate one another.

28. By pursuing peace, you demonstrate that you are a spiritual man. **A spiritual man displays self-sacrificing love and other aspects of the fruitage of God's spirit,** such as peace, long-suffering, kindness, mildness, and self-control. (Gal. 5:22, 23) You can demonstrate love by not finding fault with your fellow elders but by accepting their limitations along with their excelling qualities. "Love . . . does not get puffed up, . . . does not look for its own interests, does not become provoked. It does not keep account of the injury. . . . It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." (1 Cor. 13:4-7; Matt. 7:1-5) At the same time, you should not hold back from giving fellow elders and their families counsel when needed.—Ps. 141:5; Prov. 27:5.

29. **A spiritual man takes the lead in showing honor to his fellow elders.** (Rom. 12:10) One way you can do this is by keeping communication open and free, especially if there are differences in background. Younger elders should be respectful of older, more experienced elders on the body and demonstrate patience. (Lev. 19:32) Older elders will not be quick to take offense when younger elders give suggestions or offer counsel.—Job 32:4-6; Eccl. 7:9; Joel 2: 28; 1 Pet. 5:5.

30. **A spiritual man develops "the mind of Christ."** (1 Cor. 2:16) Jesus was humble even though he was the greatest man who ever lived. (John 13:5, 12-17; Phil. 2:5-8) Humility will enable you to accept counsel. (Prov. 12:15) Even if you feel the counsel was not entirely justified, try to learn from it. (Prov. 17:10) Seek to imitate Jesus when you feel you are being mistreated. "When [Jesus] was being reviled, he did not go reviling in return. When he was suffering, he did not go threatening, but kept on committing himself to the one who judges righteously." (1 Pet. 2:23) Remember that the peace and well-being of the congregation is more important than personal interests. —Rom. 15:1-3; 1 Cor. 10:23, 24.

Chapter Three

Appointment and Deletion of Elders and Ministerial Servants

Closely examine Scriptural qualifications when considering brothers

Be particularly cautious when considering brothers who have had difficulties in the past

When meeting to inform a brother of his appointment, do not be hurried; allow sufficient time

Situations that may raise questions about an appointed man's qualifications

Follow proper procedure when reviewing an appointed man's qualifications

When an appointed brother moves into the congregation

Closely Examine Scriptural Qualifications

1. **Before meeting to consider recommending brothers** as ministerial servants or elders, individual elders should personally review the inspired qualifications found at 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:2; and James 3:17, 18. (*w01* 1/15 p. 13 par. 10) Helpful comments on the Scriptural qualifications can be found in chapters 5 and 6 of *Organized to Do Jehovah's Will.*

2. **During the meeting, closely examine the *Scriptural qualifications*** of brothers who may qualify, and make sure that the brother being considered measures up to a reasonable degree. Pray for God's spirit to guide you. (*w01* 1/15 p. 14 par. 13) The

Governing Body and its representatives rely heavily upon your good judgment and spiritual discernment in making your recommendations.

3. Natural ability does not qualify a brother for appointment. **He must be a spiritual man,** giving evidence that holy spirit is operating on him. (Gal. 6:1; 2 Tim. 1:14; *w01* 1/15 p. 14 par. 11) Is he zealous for fine works? (Titus 2:12, 14; 1 Pet. 3:13) Is he a good example in his attendance and participation at congregation meetings? (Heb. 10:24, 25) Does he demonstrate a zeal for the ministry? (Matt. 28:19, 20) Is he a student of the Bible? (1 Tim. 4:15) Does he endeavor to help his family spiritually, regularly studying with his wife and his children living at home? (Eph. 5:29; 6:4) Does he manifest the fruitage of the spirit in his daily life?—Gal. 5:22, 23.

4. **The congregation expects elders and ministerial servants to take the lead in the ministry.** (*od* p. 56 par. 1; *w91* 1/15 pp. 12-13) What is the brother's attitude toward preaching? Is he visible in the ministry? Is he doing all he can in view of his age, health, family obligations, and other theocratic responsibilities? To appoint a brother to a position of responsibility who is not exemplary in the ministry will adversely affect the congregation's zeal for the ministry.

5. Though it is the brother who must measure up to the Scriptural qualifications, you should also **consider the spirituality of those in his household.** If his wife is baptized, is she a good example? A wife's conduct often reflects favorably or unfavorably upon her husband. (1 Tim. 3:11) If the wife is spiritually weak, he should be doing all that he can to assist her. For instance, is he making Family Worship a priority? He should also have "believing children that [are] not under a charge of debauchery nor unruly." (Titus 1:6; see *ks10* 3:15.) As a general rule, he should have well-behaved minor children who are *"believing."* They

should either be progressing toward dedication to God or be already baptized as Jehovah's Witnesses. The Scriptural qualification involves having "children in subjection with all seriousness." (1 Tim. 3:4) The conduct of *adult* children still living in the home also reflects upon him.—*w90* 9/1 p. 25 par. 7; *w88* 3/1 p. 24 par. 5.

Cautions Before Recommending Certain Brothers

6. Elders should make sure they have full and complete information regarding the brothers they intend to recommend to the circuit overseer ~~and branch office~~, especially those in the following circumstances.

7. **Brother previously reproved or disfellowshipped:** When was he reproved or disfellowshipped? What was the offense? In a case of reproof, did the judicial committee make an announcement? If disfellowshipped, what is the date of reinstatement? When were the last restrictions lifted? Was he reproved or disfellowshipped on any other occasions? What convinces you that he has lived down his past wrongdoing and that others now view him as a good example? (*w90* 9/1 p. 24 par. 5) If the wrongdoing took place in another congregation, have you communicated with the elders there to determine how that congregation views him? Recommending him prematurely tends to minimize the seriousness of wrongdoing in his own eyes and in the eyes of others. It is also disturbing to those who still have his bad course fresh in their memories.

8. **Guilty of adultery in the past:** It will likely take longer for him to live down his wrong and gain a good reputation. *Before discussing his recommendation with the circuit overseer,* you should know the answers to the following questions: When did the adultery occur? Was he reproved or disfellowshipped? In a case of reproof, did the judicial committee make an

announcement? Did the innocent mate reject him? How do you know this? If he divorced, did he remarry? Did he marry the individual with whom he committed adultery? Is there evidence that he schemed to put away his former mate or that he pressured her to accept a divorce? Did the adultery break up the marriage of the other person? How were others affected by his adultery? Is the innocent mate still alive? Did the innocent mate remarry? What convinces you that he has lived down his past wrongdoing and is now viewed with respect? If the wrongdoing took place in another congregation, correspond with the elders there to get their comments on your recommendation.

9. **Separated or unscripturally divorced:** Who is primarily to blame for the marital problems? What were the circumstances surrounding the separation or divorce? Who is responsible for the separation or pursued the divorce? Did both sign the decree indicating their agreement? How long ago did it occur? What is the brother doing to try to reconcile? Is his mate unwilling to cooperate with his efforts? If so, why? How is his situation viewed by the congregations involved? How do the elders of the mate's congregation feel about the brother? When separation and divorce are involved, there may be deficiencies on the part of both mates that make it necessary to limit special privileges because neither of them is exemplary.—*w88* 11/1 p. 21 par. 7.

10. **Brothers who served in an appointed position in the past:** A clear understanding of the reasons for the previous deletion or resignation is necessary before making a recommendation. With what congregation did he previously serve, and when was he deleted? What were the reasons why he stopped serving? What makes his circumstances different now? What progress has he made since his deletion?

See April 10, 2012, letter to all bodies of elders regarding pornography.

Circuit Overseer

Depending on the length of time since his deletion, if he previously served as an elder and his deletion was not the result of gross wrongdoing, it may not be necessary for him to serve first as a ministerial servant. If the removal took place in another congregation, you will need to correspond with the elders in that congregation for details of the situation and to get their view of his possible reappointment.

Making Recommendations to the ~~Branch Office~~

See July 13, 2014, letter to all bodies of elders regarding the appointment and deletion of elders and ministerial servants.

~~11. The body of elders may recommend a brother as an elder or a ministerial servant on the following occasions:~~

- ~~The circuit overseer visits the congregation. He will submit *S-2* forms to the branch office, providing comments on the brother's qualifications and indicating whether the circuit overseer agrees with the recommendation or not, and why.~~
- ~~A brother moves into the congregation with a letter of recommendation to reappoint, and the next visit of the circuit overseer is *not in the near future*. If the body of elders in the new congregation concurs that the brother qualifies, the Congregation Service Committee may send a letter to the branch office recommending his immediate reappointment. The letter from the new congregation should include the brother's full name, birth date, and baptism date. A copy of the letter of recommendation signed by the service committee from his former congregation must be included. The branch office will not act on the recommendation unless the entire Congregation Service Committee of each congregation signs their respective letter. If the recommendation is approved, an *S-52* appointment letter will be sent to the congregation.~~

Appointments Made During the Visit of the Circuit Overseer

~~After You Receive the Response From the Branch Office~~

~~12. When the body of elders receives notice from the branch office of the appointment of a brother as an elder or a ministerial servant, the coordinator should assign two elders to meet with the brother before announcing the appointment. The atmosphere during the discussion should emphasize the seriousness of the matter; the elders should **not rush the discussion or handle it in a casual manner.**~~

See July 13, 2014, letter to all bodies of elders regarding the appointment and deletion of elders and ministerial servants.

~~13. In every case, the elders must ask the following questions: "Is there anything from your past, even before baptism, or in your personal or family life that disqualifies you or that would prevent you from accepting this appointment? Is there any reason why your appointment should not be announced to the congregation?" If the brother has not previously served as an elder or a ministerial servant, ask the following question: "Have you ever been involved at any time in the past with child sexual molestation?" If he answers yes to any of these questions, do not announce the appointment. Return the S-2 form or S-52 appointment letter to the branch office, and provide a complete explanation as to why the appointment should be annulled. If the brother answers no to these questions and accepts the appointment, the elders might direct his attention to information provided by "the faithful and discreet slave" that will help him fulfill his new privilege of service. Matt. 24:45; *od* chaps. 5-6.~~

Recommendations Not Approved by the Circuit Overseer

14. If the ~~branch office~~ circuit overseer does not appoint a recommended brother, the elders should endeavor to help him qualify. Two elders may speak with the brother at an appropriate time and discreetly explain what he needs to do to qualify. **The elders should ~~neither~~ not inform him that the body of elders recommended him ~~nor read to him from the~~**

~~**confidential letter received from the branch office** that explains why he was not appointed~~. On occasion the ~~branch office~~ will not approve a recommendation so as to allow time for the brother to develop maturity and experience or to live down past conduct. In such cases, there may be no need to discuss matters with the brother.

circuit overseer

Situations That May Raise Questions About an Appointed Man's Qualifications

See April 10, 2012, letter to all bodies of elders regarding pornography. See also March 6, 2012, letter to all bodies of elders for direction on considering the qualifications of appointed men in connection with higher education.

15. **Members of the brother's household are involved in serious wrongdoing:** *The brother's qualifications should automatically be reviewed if this occurs.* If the brother's wife or children, including adult children living in his home, have serious problems, the body should seek to determine whether the head of the household was negligent. Was he permissive? Was he alert to provide needed direction, anticipating potential problems? Was he conducting a regular family study? Was he giving his family needed time and attention? When he became aware of serious wrongdoing, did he promptly inform the body of elders so that they could properly investigate the matter? Did he shield his family from discipline or try to manipulate the elders' handling of the situation? Does he continue to have the respect and confidence of the congregation as an exemplary family head? If one of his children was guilty of serious sin, are the other children doing well spiritually? If the brother has done all that can reasonably be expected and especially if he has had spiritual success with others in his household, rejection of his fine direction by one family member would not necessarily disqualify him if he continues to have the respect of the congregation.—*w88* 3/1 p. 24; *w78* 2/1 pp. 31-32; *w72* 2/15 p. 126.

16. **A disfellowshipped or disassociated family member moves back into the home:** This is a

decision for the family head, not the body of elders. However, such a decision may cause many problems. If the brother has allowed a disfellowshipped or disassociated family member to move into his home, the body of elders should review his qualifications. Is the disfellowshipped or disassociated individual unable to live on his own, or has he moved back because it is an easier life? Are there valid reasons for allowing him back in the home, or is it primarily so that the Christian family members can resume a measure of association with him? Did the family avoid unnecessary contact with him when he was living outside the home? Is the arrangement temporary or permanent? What is the disfellowshipped or disassociated individual's conduct? What spiritual effect is he having on others in the household, especially siblings? Is the congregation disturbed by the brother's decision? Have a number lost respect for him?—*km* 8/02 pp. 3-4; *w81* 9/15 pp. 28-29.

17. **Bankruptcy:** If an elder or a ministerial servant declares bankruptcy, causing members of the congregation or the community to become upset, the elders should review his qualifications. Did the brother lack self-control in his spending or fail to use reasonable foresight in his business decisions? Does he have a reputation for being honest and responsible? Is he viewed as one who conscientiously tries to pay his debts? Does he feel a moral responsibility to repay canceled debts if former creditors would accept payment? Does he still have the respect of the congregation? Does he continue to have "a fine testimony from people on the outside"?—1 Tim. 3:7; *w94* 9/15 pp. 30-31; *w68* pp. 223-224.

18. **Tacit approval of a marriage between a baptized Christian and a person who is not baptized:** An appointed man should be loyal to Jehovah's standards, including the Scriptural directive to marry "only in the Lord." (1 Cor. 7:39; 2 Cor. 6:14,

15; Titus 1:8; *w04* 7/1 p. 31) This directive applies to all Christians, even those who are inactive. Questions about a brother's qualifications would result if he gave tacit approval to a marriage between a baptized Christian and a person who is not baptized. Participating in, supporting, or assisting in the courtship, wedding, or reception implies approval. Questions would also arise if the brother did not get involved personally but allowed his wife or others in his household to do so. If an elder or a ministerial servant displays poor judgment in these areas to a degree that it raises serious questions in the minds of others, he may be Scripturally disqualified from serving.—*w02* 5/1 p. 17 pars. 13-15; *w01* 5/15 pp. 20-21 pars. 16-17.

19. **If it comes to light or an appointed brother confesses that he has committed a disfellowshipping offense years in the past:** The body of elders may determine he can continue to serve if the following is true: The immorality or other serious wrongdoing occurred more than a few years ago, and he is genuinely repentant, recognizing that he should have come forward immediately when he sinned. (Perhaps he has even confessed to his sin, seeking help with his guilty conscience.) He has been serving faithfully for many years, has evidence of God's blessing, and has the respect of the congregation.

See October 1, 2012, letter to all bodies of elders regarding child abuse.

20. If the sin occurred before he was appointed as an elder or a ministerial servant, the elders will need to take into consideration the fact that he should have mentioned this possible impediment to his being qualified when elders interviewed him just prior to announcing his appointment. Moreover, the nature of the sin may reflect greatly on his qualifications to serve. For example, the sin may involve past child abuse, and this would likely disqualify him for many years.—*w97* 1/1 pp. 26-29; *w77* pp. 697-698.

21. If the wrongdoing occurred *within the past few years while he was serving* as an elder or a ministerial servant, he is disqualified from serving as such, not being "free from accusation." (1 Tim. 3:2, 10; Titus 1: 6, 7) Depending on the circumstances, the situation may also need to be handled by a judicial committee. —See 5:43-44.

Procedure for Reviewing the Qualifications of Appointed Brothers Who Experience Difficulties

22. Do not be quick to recommend deletion unless there is a solid basis for doing so. It may be possible to assist the brother so that he can correct the reasons for disqualification and continue to serve. Has the brother served faithfully for many years? What has he done or failed to do that raises questions? How did he react to counsel? Has he had such difficulties in the past, and how did he then respond to efforts to help? Was his wrongdoing really so serious that it requires restricting his privileges? Possibly he just made a mistake, using poor judgment on an occasion. The congregation in general may still have respect for him and confidence in him as an elder or a ministerial servant. Perhaps the matter is not widely known, if at all. If he realizes his action was unwise, has learned from his mistake, has a good attitude, and wants to improve, it may be that he can continue to serve.

23. **If it is necessary to review an *elder's* qualifications,** the body of elders should consider the matter, with the brother in question present, using the following procedure:

- After seeking Jehovah's guidance in prayer, make sure all the facts are presented. Maintain a respectful, orderly atmosphere that is conducive to such a discussion.
- Allow the brother adequate time to express his feelings and to answer any questions. Ask him

for his view of the matters being discussed regarding his qualifications.

- Ask the brother to leave the room while the other elders continue their discussion and make a decision on what they will recommend.
- Invite the brother back into the room. If the decision is to recommend his deletion, inform him of this and the Scriptural reasons.
- Give the brother the opportunity to comment on the decision. This allows the elders to hear the brother's defense of himself if he chooses to make a defense. It may be necessary for the brother to leave the room again so that the elders can discuss the matter further before making a final decision.
- ~~If the elders decide to recommend his deletion and the brother disagrees with that recommendation, they should inform him that he may submit a letter stating why he does not agree with the recommendation. His letter should be included with the elders' letter of explanation to the branch office.~~

24. **If the qualifications of a *ministerial servant* are being reviewed,** the same basic procedure is followed except that rather than having the brother present during the meeting of the body of elders, it would usually be sufficient for two elders to speak with him in advance to hear him out. If the body of elders decides to recommend his deletion, the two elders would meet with him again to inform him of the decision and the Scriptural reasons and to give him the opportunity to express himself. If he disagrees with the elders' decision, he may submit a letter to the body of elders stating why he does not agree with the recommendation. The elders will consider his letter and determine whether to hold to their decision or not. If the visit of the circuit over-

seer is close, it would be good to discuss the matter with him.

Recommending Deletions to the ~~Branch Office~~

Circuit Overseer

25. The **approval of the ~~branch office~~ is required** when deletions of elders and ministerial servants are recommended in the following circumstances:

circuit overseer

- A brother **resigns for personal reasons.** Two elders should first discuss the matter with him. Why does he wish to resign? Is he Scripturally disqualified? If his personal circumstances hinder him from doing what he would like, can the elders be of any assistance and encouragement? Until his circumstances change, perhaps they can lighten his load for a period of time while he continues to serve. If, after this discussion, he still feels he wants to resign, then the Congregation Service Committee should write the ~~branch office~~ and give sufficient information so that the reasons for resignation are clear. Full details should be provided as to why he chose to relinquish his privilege of service.

circuit overseer

- The elders recommend deletion due to **poor judgment not of a judicial nature.** In most cases, it is best to consider such matters during the visit of the circuit overseer. However, if serious questions arise concerning a brother's qualifications and the next visit of the circuit overseer is not in the near future, the elders should make their recommendation to the ~~branch office~~. They should supply the following information: What has he done or failed to do that raises questions? What is he doing now, or not doing, that is different from when you recommended him for appointment? Does he agree with the recommendation for his deletion? ~~If he disagrees, he may submit a letter along with the~~

circuit overseer

See July 13, 2014, letter to all bodies of elders regarding the appointment and deletion of elders and ministerial servants.

elders' letter of explanation, stating why he does not accept the recommendation. Meanwhile, he will continue to serve as an elder or a ministerial servant. The body of elders will determine what congregation responsibilities he will have in the interim, according to the circumstances.

See July 13, 2014, letter to all bodies of elders regarding the appointment and deletion of elders and ministerial servants.

26. An **announcement of deletion** should be made to the congregation only after receiving from the branch office the returned S-2 form or an S-52 letter indicating that the recommendation has been approved. In such a case, the brother should be informed of his deletion before the announcement is made. The announcement should read as follows: **"Brother [name of person] is no longer serving as an elder (a ministerial servant)."**

See July 13, 2014, letter to all bodies of elders regarding the appointment and deletion of elders and ministerial servants.

27. In addition to the above situations, the branch office should be informed whenever an elder or a ministerial servant is no longer serving for the following reasons:

- **Moving or death:** The circuit overseer will inform the branch office following his next visit to the congregation. In such cases, an announcement of deletion would not be made to the congregation.
- **Disassociation, disfellowshipping, or reproof by a judicial committee:** After a judicial charge is clearly established, **an announcement of deletion** should be made to the congregation at the next Service Meeting without waiting for an acknowledgment from the branch office. The Congregation Service Committee should **inform the branch office immediately** of the deletion, providing full information about the case. Include the specific judicial offense, the name of any other person involved, any counsel given, and how the wrongdoing became known to the elders. Please

~~also specify the action taken (whether disassociation, disfellowshipping, or judicial reproof, and whether an announcement of reproof was made to the congregation). If one disassociates himself or is disfellowshipped, an announcement to that effect is made to the congregation. If the case is handled just prior to the visit of the circuit overseer, the deletion may be included with his report to the branch office and the details of the case provided in a confidential supplementary letter.~~

send to the Service Department

28. If the coordinator or secretary is being deleted, fill out and ~~include~~ the *Coordinator of the Body of Elders/Secretary Change of Address* (S-29) form.

~~29. **Information concerning the deletion of an elder or a ministerial servant should be retained indefinitely in the congregation's confidential file.** This would include S-2 forms and S-52 acknowledgment letters from the branch office and related correspondence. Such background material will be helpful in supplying the branch office with complete details in the event the brother is recommended for reappointment in the future.~~

See July 13, 2014, letter to all bodies of elders regarding the appointment and deletion of elders and ministerial servants.

When an Appointed Brother Moves to Another Congregation

30. The Congregation Service Committee should send a **letter of introduction** to the elders in the new congregation that plainly states whether the body of elders recommends that he continue to serve. Did he serve in other congregations? What is his total time of serving in an appointed capacity? In what assignments does he have experience? All three members of the Congregation Service Committee should sign the letter of introduction.

31. If any of the elders have *serious reservations* about the qualifications of an appointed brother who is moving, the body of elders should meet as soon as possible to determine whether they will recommend him for reappointment or not. If they do not recommend him, two or more elders should meet with him before he leaves and clearly explain the reason for the body's decision. The letter of introduction should clearly explain their concerns and the counsel they gave him.

When an Appointed Brother Moves Into the Congregation

32. **Elders and ministerial servants** who move to a new congregation ***with a favorable letter of recommendation*** *and who have a favorable recommendation from the elders of the new congregation* but who have not yet been reappointed may be used to handle Bible highlights, parts on the Service Meeting, public talks, and so forth, according to their abilities. They may attend a Kingdom Ministry School. In addition, they can be present with the ministerial servants during the meeting the circuit overseer conducts with the appointed servants in the congregation. If the circuit overseer's outline includes additional information for elders only, recommended elders who have not yet been reappointed can remain as this information is discussed. However, they should not be present when recommendations and local congregation needs are considered. If the brother is not recommended for reappointment either by the previous body of elders or by the new body of elders, he would not be eligible to attend the spiritual programs mentioned above. Brothers who served as elders in their former congregation do not function in an official capacity as elders (such as by serving on judicial committees or attending meetings of the body of elders) in their new congregation until they are reappointed.

- If an elder or a ministerial servant regularly moves away to live at a second residence, he should not be appointed in both congregations. One congregation should hold the *Congregation's Publisher Record* (S-21) card. Each time he leaves, the elders should write a letter to the congregation where he will be temporarily, explaining his circumstances and how he was being used. The elders of the congregation he is visiting can use him to care for duties and responsibilities in the congregation as outlined above. Even if he will be away for more than three months, he should send his field service reports to his home congregation.

Chapter Four

Assisting Those Who Are Weak

Be alert to symptoms of spiritual weakness

Help the weak to adopt and maintain a good spiritual routine

Provide the needed help promptly

1. Elders need to maintain the proper attitude toward assisting others. The apostle Paul referred to an outstanding quality of Jesus when he wrote: "We, though, who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those not strong, and not to be pleasing ourselves. . . . For even the Christ did not please himself." (Rom. 15:1-3) Paul told the Ephesian elders: "You must assist those who are weak." (Acts 20:35) Elders should be keenly aware of the need to "speak consolingly to the depressed souls, support the weak, be long-suffering toward all." (1 Thess. 5:14) By doing so, elders imitate the Great Shepherd, Jehovah!—Ps. 23: 1-4.

2. Today, Jehovah is having a loving work done that harmonizes with his ancient promise: "I will search for my sheep and care for them. . . . I will deliver them out of all the places to which they have been scattered . . . In a good pasturage I shall feed them . . . The lost one I shall search for, . . . and the broken one I shall bandage and the ailing one I shall strengthen."—Ezek. 34:11-16.

3. What, though, if your efforts do not seem to be producing good results? Do not give up quickly. Adjusting an imperfect heart can be a delicate and time-consuming endeavor, but it can lead to great

satisfaction. (Ps. 103:13, 14; 2 Cor. 13:7-9) Be supportive yet balanced in the amount of time you spend on those with chronic problems.

Symptoms of Spiritual Weakness

4. **Alert, loving shepherds will detect symptoms of spiritual unsteadiness** in others and **then act decisively** to help them before the problems escalate into serious sins. (Gal. 6:1, 2) Symptoms of spiritual fatigue include: lack of self-control in eating, drinking, and pursuit of pleasure; a complacent spirit; loss of enthusiasm for the truth, including daily Bible reading and personal study; harboring serious and lingering doubts; neglecting association at congregation meetings; and becoming overly critical of elders and the organization.—*w86* 1/15 pp. 18-19.

5. **Signs of spiritual weakness are usually symptoms of neglecting one or more aspects of a good spiritual routine.** Once you recognize signs of spiritual weakness, help the weak one see how he can make improvement. Scriptural shepherding calls can often encourage individuals to identify any spiritual weakness and avoid falling into serious sin. Try to motivate him to take advantage of the following Scriptural provisions to strengthen his faith: prayer for help by holy spirit (Luke 11:13; Gal. 5:22, 23; 1 Pet. 4:7); daily Bible reading and personal study in Christian publications (Ps. 1:1, 2); meditation on Scriptural matters (Ps. 77:12); regular attendance at meetings, assemblies, and conventions (Neh. 8:1-3, 8, 10; Heb. 10:23-25); regular participation in field service (Acts 20:18-21); willingness to accept spiritual help from congregation elders as well as from traveling overseers.—Rom. 1:11, 12; Heb. 13:17.

See February 2, 2014, letter to all bodies of elders regarding shepherding.

Shepherding That Encourages

6. The primary objective of a shepherding call is to impart a spiritual gift, to help make firm, and to

have an interchange of encouragement. (Rom. 1:11, 12) An elder may shepherd at the publisher's home, at the Kingdom Hall, while in field service, over the telephone, or on other occasions. The following basic points will assist in making encouraging visits to the homes of publishers.

- **Make an appointment:** Show consideration by making an appointment. If there is a serious problem you plan to discuss, it would be proper to inform the publisher of this before making the call.
- **Prepare:** Pray for Jehovah's guidance. Consider the individual's circumstances in determining his spiritual condition. Give thought to what kind of direction, encouragement, or counsel will be most beneficial. When there is a serious problem, arrange for another elder to accompany you. On other calls, you may take a qualified ministerial servant.
- **Keep the atmosphere relaxed, loving, and positive:** Express genuine concern for the individual's welfare. Give warm commendation for the good things he has done and is doing. Listen carefully. If you perceive that he might have a problem, tactfully draw the person out. Adapt your comments according to the need.
- **Use the Bible:** God's Word should be the primary source of information because it "exerts power." (Heb. 4:12) Skillful use of it lets Jehovah speak to the heart of the brother or sister.
- **Do not stay too long:** If an agreed-upon time is established, stick to it. If necessary, set up another visit to continue the discussion.
- **Conclude with a prayer:** A prayer is appropriate and truly appreciated.—Phil. 4:6, 7.
- **Follow up to see if further aid is needed and can be given.**

Giving Effective Counsel

7. Giving counsel is not only a privilege but also a weighty responsibility. **Be alert to give counsel before bad trends progress too far.** (Prov. 27:5, 6) Before proceeding with counsel, give careful thought as to what should be said and how to present the counsel in order to obtain the best results. Your endeavor should be to readjust the person so that he will grow spiritually.—Gal. 6:1.

8. Take sufficient time to listen; get all the facts. (Jas. 1:19; Prov. 18:13) It is essential to get the whole picture if you are to manifest true understanding, insight, and discernment in handling any question or problem.

9. Carefully plan your remarks; weigh your words. Endeavor to express yourself in a loving way. Remember that you are dealing with Jehovah's sheep and they should be treated with tenderness. (Ps. 100:3; *w89* 9/15 p. 19) Generally, it is beneficial to preface exhortation with specific, sincere commendation.

10. Carefully base what you say on the Bible and on Bible-based publications. (Ps. 119:105) Rather than expressing your personal opinion, let the Bible shape your view of what needs to be said. Endeavor to reach the heart, not just the mind.

11. In sensitive areas, such as dress and grooming and entertainment, it may be wise to seek the observations of another elder before providing counsel. This will ensure that your counsel is solidly based on God's Word and is not simply your personal opinion or preference. (Eccl. 7:16) If the counsel is appropriate, then you should speak to the individual without delay.

Assisting Those Who Are Inactive

12. The service overseer, along with the secretary, should be alert to assign each inactive publisher in

the territory to a group overseer. The group overseer should then endeavor to provide needed help, either personally or through another qualified elder in the group. Depending on the circumstances, group servants or assistants may accompany an elder when he visits an inactive one.

13. The principal objective of a visit is to help inactive ones appreciate that Jehovah cares for them. The shepherds should endeavor to be warm and upbuilding. They might share a few encouraging Scriptural points from chapter 24 of *Draw Close to Jehovah* or from the article "You Are Precious in God's Eyes!," which appeared in the April 1, 1995, *Watchtower,* pages 10-15, or from *The Watchtower* of November 15, 2008, pages 8-16. Other material may be used, according to the needs and circumstances of the person.

14. When an inactive person has been involved in serious wrongdoing and now desires to return to the congregation, the shepherds need to reflect Jehovah's endearing quality of love. If the person acknowledges that he has sinned against Jehovah and he demonstrates genuine repentance, the shepherds will help him to appreciate that he can receive Jehovah's forgiveness. Loving discipline may be required.—Heb. 12:7-11; see *The Watchtower* of November 15, 2008, pages 14-15, paragraphs 12-13.

15. A Bible study may be helpful in some cases when an inactive publisher wishes to resume activity with the congregation. The group overseer may discuss this with the service overseer, who will then consult with the other members of the service committee. If the service committee arranges for a Bible study, they should consider who is best suited to conduct the study, weighing the circumstances that are involved. They should also determine what material should be used. With inactive ones who have a good

knowledge of Bible truth but who have been sidetracked from Christian activities, a study of section 4 of *Draw Close to Jehovah* may help them to rekindle their love for Jehovah.—*od* pp. 85-86.

16. If the person has been *inactive for only a short time,* a helping hand from an experienced publisher might be all that is needed to reactivate the individual in the field service. A Bible study may not be necessary.

17. Before a *longtime inactive one* is invited to share again in the ministry, two elders should meet with him to see if he meets the basic requirements to serve as a publisher, as outlined on pages 79-81 of *Organized to Do Jehovah's Will.—km* 11/00 "Question Box."

Assisting Those With Marital Problems

18. The way married people discharge their marital responsibilities affects their relationship with Jehovah. (1 Pet. 3:7) In addition, a marriage can either bring honor to Jehovah and the congregation or cause reproach. Therefore, if fellow Christians experience marital difficulties resulting in one or both parties approaching the elders to seek help, the elders should try to provide loving counsel from the Scriptures and practical suggestions from Christian publications. Usually it is best to have both mates present. If only one is present, discuss only what he or she can do to improve the situation.

19. Elders should **be modest** as they try to provide help. Because they cannot know everything that occurs in a marriage, they should avoid taking sides. (Prov. 18:13) Likely both mates could make improvement and must share the blame for their marital problems. (Rom. 3:23; Jas. 3:2) Jehovah has not given elders the authority to make marital decisions for others. (2 Cor. 1:24; Gal. 6:5; *w88* 11/1 p. 21) Though

the elders can offer assistance, it is up to the couple to decide how they will handle their marital affairs.

20. **If a Christian is contemplating separation,** the elders can point out what the Scriptures say. (1 Cor. 7:10, 11) They can explain that there are a few exceptional situations that some have viewed as a basis for separation. (*lv* pp. 219-221; *w88* 11/1 pp. 22-25) If the Christian is considering obtaining a divorce, the elders should explain that divorce does not free him to remarry unless adultery occurs. (Matt. 19:9) In addition, the extreme step of divorce may make it more difficult to reconcile. Elders should not encourage separation or divorce; neither should they forbid it. Separation and divorce are personal matters, and each Christian will have to accept the consequences for his decision. (Gal. 6:7) However, the elders may determine that a publisher's decisions in this area disqualify him or her from receiving special privileges normally given to those viewed as exemplary.

Encouraging Those Who Were Abused in Their Childhood

21. Those who as children were abused, sexually or otherwise, many times grow up to be adults with emotional scars. They are in need of much loving attention. Thus, you will want to **be conscious of treating such ones with thoughtfulness, tenderness, and kindness.** Such an attitude helps to assure them that you really care for them and that you are "like a hiding place from the wind and a place of concealment from the rainstorm." (Isa. 32:2) Like God, we should be "tenderly compassionate." (Eph. 4:32) When offering encouragement to such ones, select from the body of elders those elders best qualified to give the needed assistance. Remember that elders have varied abilities; some may be more effective than others in handling these cases.—1 Cor. 12:4.

22. It must be recognized that **elders as such are not mental-health professionals or therapists but are spiritual shepherds.** (1 Pet. 5:2) Consequently, you should not conduct sessions for what some may view as group therapy. It is not necessary to spend time reading secular publications dealing with worldly psychology or psychiatry. You should not take on a role similar to that of a professional therapist. Someone who has serious mental or emotional illness may need professional help.—*w88* 10/15 p. 27.

23. One way you can show sincere interest is by being a good listener. (Prov. 21:13; Jas. 1:19) The October 1, 1983, issue of *The Watchtower,* on page 28, cautions against telling a sufferer who seeks assistance just to forget what occurred. Many have found great relief simply in talking with a sympathetic, nonjudgmental elder who can provide "the good word" of encouragement. (Prov. 12:25) God's Word has healing power. Jehovah can heal "brokenhearted ones." (Ps. 30:2; 147:3) Though you may need to ask tactful questions to help an afflicted one express himself, avoid probing unnecessarily or repeatedly into the details of the abuse, which can have a negative effect. After patiently listening, apply the soothing oil of God's Word. (Jas. 5:13-15) 'The peace of God excels all thought,' including disquieting thoughts.—Phil. 4:7; Ps. 94:19; *w95* 1/1 p. 9 pars. 18-20; *g91* 10/8 pp. 3-11.

24. **Sometimes a sister who suffered abuse as a child may approach a capable older sister for help.** It is understood that a sister would not get involved in matters that need the attention of the elders. She can, however, give such a sister emotional support and encouragement as her circumstances and time allow. (*w90* 3/15 p. 28) If the elders are aware that a sister is offering such help, they should

check with her from time to time as to the progress being made.

25. There are times when an emotionally distressed Christian may seek **professional help.** Whether a Christian or his family pursues treatment from psychiatrists, psychologists, or therapists is a personal decision. An elder should not assume the responsibility of recommending a specific practitioner or facility. He may draw attention to or discuss material in the publications that provides cautions regarding therapies that may conflict with Bible principles. (*w88* 10/15 pp. 28-29; *w82* 6/15 pp. 25-29; *w75* pp. 255-256) While participating in group therapy by a professional therapist is a matter for personal decision, there could be a revealing of confidential facts about other members of the Christian congregation during such sessions if a Christian does not exercise discretion.

26. Elders must recognize that the time they can spend in helping those who are disturbed emotionally is limited. Therefore, they must **balance this shepherding responsibility with all their other responsibilities,** which include caring for the spiritual, emotional, and material needs of their own family and assisting all in the congregation. In some cases an abuse victim may ask for more attention than you can give. Elders need to maintain soundness of mind. (1 Pet. 4:7) Some elders have found it beneficial to place limits on the time they spend in shepherding. It may take several visits to get the desired relief for the victim, if this is possible. If the individual approaches you looking for help at times when you cannot discuss the problem extensively, perhaps giving some brief words of encouragement, assuring that one of Jehovah's love, reading an appropriate scripture, or offering a short prayer will affirm to the sufferer your interest and willingness to help to the extent possible. Also, discussing Biblical examples

of some who had to endure a terrible childhood and yet succeeded in becoming faithful servants of Jehovah can help sufferers see that they need not be permanent victims of a bad family life.—*w01* 4/15 pp. 25-28.

Cautions Regarding Assisting Sisters

27. Elders and ministerial servants must **never meet alone** with a sister not closely related to them and should avoid becoming the sole confidant of an individual of the opposite sex who is experiencing marital problems. This includes lengthy phone conversations. Of course, this does not mean that it would be inappropriate for an elder to talk with a sister while in the full view of others at her home, at congregation meetings, or in the field service.—*w06* 9/15 p. 26 par. 7.

28. It is important never to meet alone with a sister who is **a victim of abuse, suffers from depression, or for any other reason is in a delicate emotional state.** A woman in such an emotional state may be more vulnerable and may be prone to develop improper feelings toward an elder meeting with her. So that this does not occur, it is the course of wisdom to have different pairs of elders involved in shepherding such a sister. This would serve as a protection for the elders, as well as for the sister, because it is possible for an elder to develop improper feelings for a sister he is comforting or counseling. —Jer. 17:9.

Chapter Five

Determining Whether a Judicial Committee Should Be Formed

Act promptly upon receiving a report of serious wrongdoing

Is the alleged offense serious?

Has the wrongdoing been established?

Are there other factors to be considered?

1. Elders should **act promptly** when they receive a report of serious wrongdoing so as to safeguard the congregation and provide assistance to the wrongdoer. (Jude 4) Neglecting to care for such matters can hinder the flow of Jehovah's holy spirit to the congregation. Elders must first assess whether the alleged wrongdoing, if established, is serious enough to require a judicial committee.

Offenses Requiring Judicial Decisions

2. Listed below are offenses that may require review by a judicial committee. Of course, this list is not comprehensive. There may be other matters that would also merit the attention of a judicial committee. The elders must use good judgment and reasonableness when evaluating the seriousness of the alleged wrongdoing. They should consider the extent and nature of the misconduct, intent and motive, frequency or practice, and so forth. If there is a question about whether certain wrongdoing merits judicial action, the body of elders may write to the branch

office requesting further direction concerning the case.

3. **Manslaughter:** Aside from deliberate murder, bloodguilt may be incurred if a person causes loss of life through carelessness or because of violating a traffic law or other safety law of Caesar. The elders should investigate and if warranted appoint a judicial committee to hear the matter. The committee should base its decision on clearly established facts, not simply on a decision that may have been made by secular authorities.—Deut. 22:8; *w06* 9/15 p. 30.

4. **Attempted suicide** may be the result of deep despair or major depression. Deal carefully and compassionately with such a person. In most cases a judicial hearing is not required.—Ps. 88:3, 17, 18; Prov. 15: 13; Eccl. 7:7; *w90* 3/1 pp. 5-9; 3/15 pp. 26-30; *g90* 9/8 pp. 22-23; *w83* 8/1 pp. 3-11.

5. ***Por·nei'a:*** (Lev. 20:10, 13, 15, 16; Rom. 1:24, 26, 27, 32; 1 Cor. 6:9, 10) *Por·nei'a* involves **immoral use of** the genitals, whether in a natural or in a perverted way, with **lewd intent.** There must have been another party to the immorality—a human of either sex or a beast. Willing participation incurs guilt and requires judicial action. It is not a casual touching of the sex organs but involves the **manipulation** of the genitals. It includes oral sex, anal sex, and manipulation of the genitals *between individuals not married to each other.* (*lv* p. 99; *w06* 7/15 pp. 29-30; *w04* 2/15 p. 13; *w00* 11/1 p. 8 par. 6; *w83* 6/1 pp. 23-26) *Por-nei'a* does not require skin-to-skin contact, copulation (as in penetration), or sexual climax.

See March 6, 2012, letter to all bodies of elders for further comments on the definition of *porneia*.

6. Self-abuse, or masturbation of oneself, is not *por·nei'a.*

7. One who was **raped** would not be guilty of *por-nei'a.* Discernment is needed in considering claims of rape, taking into consideration such factors as the mental disposition of the person, the circumstances that led up to the incident, and any delay in

reporting.—*w03* 2/1 pp. 30-31; *it*-1 pp. 862-864; *w83* 3/15 p. 30 ftn.

8. In all cases involving the possibility of *por·nei'a,* it is the responsibility of the judicial committee to use the Scriptures to weigh carefully the facts in each case. This responsibility is especially serious when it involves the Scriptural freedom to remarry. (Mal. 2: 16a) In situations in which the elders are uncertain or divided on their conclusions, it is best to write the branch office.

9. **Brazen conduct, loose conduct:** (Gal. 5:19) The Greek word translated "brazen conduct," or "loose conduct," is *a·sel'gei·a. Strong's Greek Dictionary* uses very forceful terms to define it: "licentiousness; filth[iness], lasciviousness, wantonness." *The New Thayer's Greek English Lexicon* adds to the list "unbridled lust, . . . outrageousness, shamelessness, insolence." Another lexicon defines *a·sel'gei·a* as conduct that "violates all bounds of what is socially acceptable." Rather than relating to bad conduct of a somewhat petty or minor nature, "brazen conduct" describes acts that reflect an attitude that betrays disrespect, disregard, or even contempt for divine standards, laws, and authority. Therefore, two elements are involved in brazen conduct: (1) The conduct itself is a serious violation of Jehovah's laws, and (2) the attitude of the wrongdoer toward God's laws is disrespectful, insolent.—*w06* 7/15 p. 30; *w83* 3/15 p. 31; *w73* pp. 574-576.

10. Though this is not an exhaustive list, brazen conduct may be involved in the following if the wrongdoer has an **insolent, contemptuous attitude** made evident by a practice of these things:

- Willful, continued, unnecessary **association with disfellowshipped nonrelatives** despite repeated counsel.—Matt. 18:17b; 1 Cor. 5:11, 13; 2 John 10, 11; *w81* 9/15 pp. 25-26.

- **Child sexual abuse:** This would include fondling of breasts, an explicitly immoral proposal, showing pornography to a child, voyeurism, indecent exposure, and so forth.
- **Continuing to date or pursue a romantic relationship with a person though not legally or Scripturally free** to marry, despite repeated counsel and generally after a warning talk to the congregation.—Gal. 5:19; 2 Thess. 3:6, 14, 15.

See October 1, 2012, letter to all bodies of elders regarding child abuse.

11. **Evidence (testified to by at least two witnesses) that the accused stayed all night in the same house with a person of the opposite sex (or in the same house with a known homosexual) under improper circumstances.**—If questions are raised regarding Scriptural freedom to remarry, see 12:12.

- **Elders should use good judgment in assessing the situation before forming a judicial committee.** Were the two persons *alone* together *all night?* Is there evidence of a *romantic relationship?* Are there understandable reasons, such as an unexpected emergency, that caused the situation?
- If there are no extenuating circumstances, a judicial committee would be formed on the basis of strong circumstantial evidence of *por·nei'a.*
- Depending upon the attitude of the accused, there might even be evidence of brazen conduct.

Consider the following examples:

- A married brother spends an inordinate amount of time with his female secretary after work hours but insists there is no romantic interest. His concerned wife informs the elders, who give him strong counsel. Later, when he claims to be leaving overnight for a "business trip," his

suspicious wife and a relative follow him to the secretary's home. They observe the secretary invite him inside at 10 p.m. and continue watching *all night* until he leaves the home at 7 a.m. When the elders speak to him, he admits that he spent the night alone with his secretary, but he denies that he committed adultery. In such a case, the elders have a basis to take judicial action because there is strong circumstantial evidence of *por·nei'a* and there may be elements of brazen conduct. The innocent mate's conscience may allow her to choose to divorce him and remarry; the elders would not take action against her for making this decision.

Below are examples in which judicial action would likely not be warranted:

- An elderly Christian living alone has a member of the opposite sex move into the home to help care for him. There is no evidence of a romantic attachment or reason to suspect sexual immorality.
- After attending a social gathering at a single sister's home, a brother walks to a train station to catch the train home. After waiting for some time, the brother learns that the last train for the day has already left the station. He walks back to the sister's home, but by the time he arrives, everyone has left and it is quite late. The sister allows him to sleep in the living room while she sleeps in her bedroom.
- A single brother visits a married couple for several days. One night after everyone goes to bed, the husband is called to an emergency at his place of work and does not return until morning. The wife and the single brother are alone in the home all night sleeping in separate bedrooms.

12. The elders cannot apply one rule to every case; each situation has unique circumstances. After two elders have thoroughly investigated, the body of elders should use good judgment in determining whether serious wrongdoing has occurred. If elders are unsure how to proceed, they should consult with the branch office.

13. **Gross uncleanness, uncleanness with greediness:** (2 Cor. 12:21; Gal. 5:19; Eph. 4:19) Galatians 5:19-21 lists many vices that are not classed as *por·nei'a* but that could lead to one's being disqualified from God's Kingdom. Among them are uncleanness (Greek, *a·ka·thar·si'a*). When one practices uncleanness to a **gross,** or serious, degree, it can be grounds for disfellowshipping from the Christian congregation. Elders should use good judgment in discerning whether the conduct is minor uncleanness that can be handled by counsel or is gross uncleanness that requires the formation of a judicial committee.—*w06* 7/15 pp. 29-31; *w83* 3/15 p. 31.

14. Though this is not an exhaustive list, gross uncleanness **may be** involved in the following:

- **Passion-arousing heavy petting or caressing of breasts on numerous occasions** between individuals not married to each other. If such conduct occurred on a few isolated occasions, especially between two persons involved in a courtship with the intent to marry, counsel from two elders may suffice to handle such minor uncleanness. The elders should inform the coordinator of the situation. However, if the conduct occurred *on numerous occasions* and the actions escalated in gravity and frequency, it may constitute gross uncleanness with greediness, requiring judicial action. *Their wrongdoing may constitute brazen conduct if they give evidence of a disrespectful, insolent attitude toward God's laws.* For example, the individuals may

have no honorable intentions of pursuing marriage.

- **A practice of engaging in immoral conversations by telephone, in Internet chat rooms, or through similar electronic means** can involve obscene speech or gross uncleanness, either of which can be a basis for judicial action. (*g00* 1/22 pp. 20-21; *km* 11/99 p. 4) If such conduct occurred on a few isolated occasions, judicial action may not be necessary. Counsel from two elders is sufficient to handle such minor uncleanness. The elders should inform the coordinator of the situation. However, such conduct may escalate in gravity and by frequent repetition become gross uncleanness with greediness requiring judicial action, especially if the individual had been previously counseled.

This bullet point reflects updates provided in the April 10, 2012, letter to all bodies of elders regarding pornography. See that letter for additional information.

- **An entrenched practice of viewing, perhaps over a considerable period of time, abhorrent forms of pornography that is sexually degrading.** Such pornography may include homosexuality (sex between those of the same gender), group sex, bestiality, sadistic torture, bondage, gang rape, the brutalizing of women, or child pornography. Brazen conduct would be involved if the offender was promoting such material, such as by inviting others to view it, thus giving evidence of a brazen attitude.—*w12* 3/15 pp. 30-31; *w06* 7/15 p. 31.
- **Misuse of tobacco:** Elders should use good judgment in weighing the circumstances and extent of the wrongdoing so as to determine whether a judicial committee should be formed. For example, an elder or two may handle matters by means of counsel if a Christian smoked a few cigarettes in private. The coordinator of the body of elders should be informed. However, a judicial committee is required for a practice of

using tobacco. (Mark 15:23; 2 Cor. 7:1; *w06* 7/15 pp. 30-31) When questions arise, consult with the branch office.

- **Extreme physical uncleanness:** (Deut. 23:12-14; 2 Cor. 7:1) Every effort should be made to help the offender see the need to keep his body and place of residence physically clean. Before disfellowshipping would be considered, elders would need to be certain that the uncleanness is pronounced and offensive, bringing much reproach upon Jehovah's good name and his people in the community. Appropriate counsel should be given. If this is not heeded, then marking may be necessary. (2 Thess. 3:14) If there is blatant, willful disregard of the counsel given and extremely offensive unclean conditions continue, disfellowshipping action may be necessary.

15. **Misuse of addictive drugs:** (2 Cor. 7:1; Rev. 21:8, *Kingdom Interlinear;* 22:15, *Int*) Please note: the use of addictive drugs *under medical supervision,* such as for pain management, would not necessarily require judicial review. When questions arise, consult with the branch office.

16. **Apostasy:** Apostasy is a standing away from true worship, a falling away, defection, rebellion, abandonment. It includes the following:

- **Celebrating *false religious* holidays:** (Ex. 32:4-6; Jer. 7:16-19) Not all holidays directly involve false religion and require judicial action.
- **Participation in interfaith activities:** (2 Cor. 6:14, 15, 17, 18) Apostate acts include bowing before altars and images and sharing in false religious songs and prayers.—Rev. 18:2, 4.
- **Deliberately spreading teachings contrary to Bible truth as taught by Jehovah's Witnesses:** (Acts 21:21, ftn.; 2 John 7, 9, 10) Any with sincere doubts should be helped. Firm,

loving counsel should be given. (2 Tim. 2:16-19, 23-26; Jude 22, 23) If one obstinately *is speaking about or deliberately spreading false teachings,* this may be or may lead to apostasy. If there is no response after a first and a second admonition, a judicial committee should be formed. —Titus 3:10, 11; *w89* 10/1 p. 19; *w86* 4/1 pp. 30-31; *w86* 3/15 p. 15.

- **Causing divisions and promoting sects:** This would be deliberate action disrupting the unity of the congregation or undermining the confidence of the brothers in Jehovah's arrangement. It may involve or lead to apostasy.—Rom. 16:17, 18; Titus 3:10, 11; *it*-2 p. 886.
- **Continuing in employment that makes one an accomplice to or a promoter of false worship** would subject one to disfellowshipping after being allowed a reasonable amount of time, perhaps up to six months, to make the needed adjustments.—*w99* 4/15 pp. 28-30; *km* 9/76 pp. 3-6.
- The practice of **spiritism.**—Deut. 18:9-13; 1 Cor. 10:21, 22; Gal. 5:20.
- **Idolatry:** (1 Cor. 6:9, 10; 10:14) Idolatry includes the use of images, including pictures, in false religious worship.

17. **Drunkenness:** (1 Cor. 5:11; 6:9, 10; *it*-1 p. 656) A judicial committee is required when there is a practice of drunkenness or a single incident of drunkenness that brings notoriety. (*w83* 5/1 p. 8) A Scriptural description of drunkenness can be found in the following references: Job 12:25; Psalm 107:27; Proverbs 20:1; 23:29-35; Isaiah 24:20.

18. If an individual confesses to an elder that on one occasion he overindulged in alcohol to the point of drunkenness in the privacy of his own home *and there was no notoriety,* it may suffice for the elder to

give strong counsel. In any case, the elder should inform the coordinator of the matter.

19. **Gluttony:** (Prov. 23:20, 21; *w04* 11/1 pp. 30-31) A glutton **routinely shows a lack of restraint,** even gorging himself on food to the point of feeling very uncomfortable or becoming sick. **Gluttony is determined, not by someone's size, but by his attitude toward food.**

20. **Stealing, thievery:** (1 Cor. 6:9, 10; Eph. 4:28; *w86* 11/15 p. 14) Though all stealing is wrong, the body of elders should use discernment in weighing the circumstances and the extent of the involvement in wrongdoing to determine whether it is a judicial matter.

21. **Deliberate, malicious lying; bearing false witness:** (Prov. 6:16, 19; Col. 3:9; Rev. 22:15; *it*-2 pp. 244-245) Though all lying is bad, judicial action is taken only if there has been a practice of deliberate, malicious lying. "Malicious" means deliberately harmful, harboring ill will or enmity. Lying that justifies judicial action involves more than just exaggerations or petty, misleading statements of relatively minor consequence or lying because of momentary pressure or fear of man.—Matt. 26:69-75.

22. Generally, elders should not consider administering discipline if a Christian charges another Christian with making false statements in a court dispute. For example, this may involve divorce, child custody and support, and so forth. The Christian making the charge can express his concerns to the court that has the responsibility to determine what is truthful when rendering a judgment.

23. **Fraud, slander:** (Lev. 19:16; Matt. 18:15-17; *it*-1 pp. 870, 989-991; *od* pp. 147-150; *w97* 3/15 pp. 17-22) Fraud is defined as "the intentional use of deception, trickery, or perversion of truth for the purpose of inducing another to part with some valuable thing

belonging to him or to give up a legal right." (*w97* 3/15 p. 21) Slander is defined as a false report meant to do harm to the good name and reputation of another. Such talk is generally malicious. Slander is not identical to negative gossip. Negative gossip may be true; slander is always false. Negative gossip requires counsel but not judicial action. (*w89* 10/15 p. 10; *it-1* p. 990 par. 2) The congregation would not consider forming a judicial committee unless the offended Christian had taken steps one and two of Matthew 18:15, 16 and had initiated step three of Matthew 18: 17.—*od* pp. 147-149.

24. If asked, elders could participate in step two, but they do not represent the body of elders. If the matter proceeds to step three, any elders who were witnesses in step two could serve only as witnesses in step three. They would not be used to serve on the judicial committee in step three.

25. It is not the place of elders to become arbitrators of financial agreements. They are not debt collectors. Nor should they be involved in formulating contracts or written agreements, not even signing as witnesses to such. The same holds true should the matter reach step three.

26. The body of elders may first need to **investigate** before appointing a judicial committee. If so, the brothers involved in step two would not be used to investigate; they would be interviewed as witnesses.

27. It is not considered slander to make an accusation to the police, the court, the elders, or others who have authority to look into matters and render a judgment. (*it*-1 p. 990) This is true even if the accusation is not proved.—*w97* 8/15 p. 28 par. 1.

28. **Reviling:** (1 Cor. 6:10; *it*-2 pp. 801-802) Reviling involves "subjecting a person to insulting speech, heaping abuse upon him." (*it*-2 p. 801) The body of

elders should weigh the circumstances and extent of wrongdoing so as to determine whether a judicial committee should be formed. Elders should not be quick to take judicial action unless the reviling is extreme, disrupts the peace of the congregation, and persists despite repeated counsel.

29. **Obscene speech:** (Eph. 5:3-5; Col. 3:8) Obviously, certain words are more offensive than others. Profanity is any kind of language that profanes. However, obscene speech involves sexually explicit, filthy expressions. (*g03* 6/8 p. 19-20; *w83* 2/1 p. 4) Is the speech sexually explicit? Does it persist despite repeated counsel? This would include obscenities used both in written and in oral communication, such as Internet chat rooms, phone sex, or e-mail.

30. **Greed—gambling, extortion:** (1 Cor. 5:10, 11; 6:10; 1 Tim. 3:8; *it*-1 pp. 789, 1005-1006; *w89* 1/15 p. 22) Christians should avoid gambling in all its various forms, including lotteries. (Isa. 65:11; *g02* 7/22 pp. 4-8; *w89* 7/15 p. 30; *g82* 7/8 pp. 25-27; *g81* 11/22 p. 27) If a person makes a practice of gambling and after repeated counsel unrepentantly pursues a course of greediness, judicial action would be appropriate.—*w80* 9/1 pp. 29-30; *w67* p. 356.

31. An individual continuing in employment directly involved with gambling or employment making him a clear accomplice or promoter of gambling would be subject to judicial action, usually after being allowed time, perhaps up to six months, to make the needed adjustments. (*w95* 5/15 p. 23 par. 11; *km* 9/76 pp. 3-6) In questionable cases it is best to consult with the branch office.

32. If a business gives out prizes or prize money to winners of a contest or to potential customers for advertising, accepting the gift is an individual's decision to make. However, a person needs to be careful that accepting such a prize does not stir up greed.

(Rom. 14:21; 1 Cor. 10:31-33; *g75* 7/8 p. 28; *w73* p. 127) The elders do well not to involve themselves in what individuals do with regard to petty gambling solely for entertainment. They may need to give counsel if this becomes a cause of stumbling for others or affects the spirituality of the individual or the congregation.—*w02* 11/1 p. 31.

33. A Christian who **greedily and unrepentantly extorts a high bride-price** may be disfellowshipped from the congregation.—1 Cor. 5:11, 13; 6:9, 10; Heb. 13:5; *w98* 9/15 pp. 24-25.

34. **Adamant refusal to provide materially for one's own family, leaving wife and children destitute when having the means to provide:** (1 Tim. 5:8; *w88* 11/1 pp. 22-23; *km* 9/73 p. 8) Some of the factors the body of elders should consider before forming a judicial committee are:

- Does the Christian *adamantly* refuse to provide for his family, or is the failure to provide because of other factors, such as health or financial difficulties? Is he doing what he *reasonably* can do to provide necessities for the family?
- Has counsel been previously given, and has there been an opportunity for the person to respond?
- Does his wife have material resources affording a secure life so that the family is not destitute?
- If the family is destitute, is it because they have rejected the family head's provisions by choosing to live apart from him?
- When a separation is involved, to what extent is the other mate responsible?

35. **Fits of anger, violence:** (Prov. 22:24, 25; Mal. 2:16; Gal. 5:20; *g01* 11/8 p. 12; *g97* 6/8 p. 20; *fy* p. 150; *g93* 2/8 p. 14) Judicial action would be warranted if an individual repeatedly and unrepentantly gave in

to violent fits of anger despite counsel. In questionable cases it is best to contact the branch office.

36. If a Christian took up **professional boxing** and refused to stop despite repeated counsel, judicial action would be appropriate.—*w81* 7/1 pp. 30-31.

Evidence Establishing Wrongdoing

37. Even though a Christian has been accused of wrongdoing serious enough to require judicial action, **a judicial committee should not be formed unless the wrongdoing has been *established.*** What kind of evidence is acceptable?

- **Confession** (admission of wrongdoing), either written or oral, may be accepted as conclusive proof without other corroborating evidence. (Josh. 7:19) There must be two witnesses to a confession, and the confession must be **clear and unambiguous**. For example, a statement from a married Christian that his mate is "Scripturally free" would not by itself be viewed as a clear confession of adultery.

  A guilty plea entered in court by a Christian as part of a plea bargain, perhaps on the advice of an attorney so as to avoid the possibility of a harsher sentence, would generally not in itself be viewed as an admission of guilt in the congregation.

- There must be **two or three eyewitnesses,** not just people repeating hearsay; no action can be taken if there is only one witness.—Deut. 19:15; John 8:17.

- If there are two or three **witnesses to the same kind of wrongdoing but each one is witness to a separate incident,** the elders can consider their testimony. While such evidence is acceptable to establish guilt, it is preferable to

have two witnesses to the same occurrence of wrongdoing.

- The **testimony of youths** may be considered; it is up to the elders to determine whether the testimony has the ring of truth.
- The **testimony of unbelievers and disfellowshipped or disassociated ones** may also be considered, but it must be weighed carefully.

38. **If wrongdoing has not been established but serious questions have been raised,** the body of elders should **appoint two elders to investigate the matter promptly.** For example, there may be just one witness. If so, it would be loving for the witness first to confront the accused and encourage him to take the initiative to approach the elders. The elders can then allow the accused a few days to approach them. (For the witness by himself to confront the accused may not be advisable in all cases—for example, if the witness and the accused were involved in sexual immorality together or if the witness was a victim of incest or rape by the accused or is a child and the victim of sexual abuse. Or it may be that the witness is extremely timid.) Whether the witness approaches the accused or not, the two elders appointed should speak with the accused regarding the accusation.—*w97* 8/15 p. 27.

39. **If the accused denies the accusation,** the investigating elders should try to arrange a meeting with him and the accuser together. (Note: If the accusation involves child sexual abuse and the victim is currently a minor, the elders should contact the branch office before arranging a meeting with the child and the alleged abuser.) If the accuser or the accused is unwilling to meet with the elders or if the accused continues to deny the accusation of a single witness and the wrongdoing is not established, the elders will leave matters in Jehovah's hands. (Deut.

19:15-17; 1 Tim. 5:19, 24, 25; *w95* 11/1 pp. 28-29) The investigating elders should compose a record, sign it, put it in a sealed envelope, and place it in the congregation's confidential file. Additional evidence may later come to light to establish matters.

See September 7, 2011, letter to all bodies of elders for further direction on filing confidential material.

Those Who Have Not Associated for Many Years

40. In deciding whether to form a judicial committee or not, the body of elders should consider the following:

- Does he still profess to be a Witness?
- Is he generally recognized as a Witness in the congregation or the community?
- Does his conduct continue to affect any other person, such as in some cases of adultery or child abuse?
- Does the person have a measure of contact or association with the congregation so that a leavening, or corrupting, influence exists?
- Is the person willing to meet with a committee, thus admitting accountability to the Christian congregation?

41. Depending upon length of inactivity and other factors suggested above, elders may determine to hold the matter in abeyance. In such a case, they would make a record of the person's questionable conduct for the congregation file. When the individual again shows interest in returning to the congregation, they can clarify these matters.

42. If the sinful conduct is known only to believing family members and no congregation action has been taken, believing relatives will likely determine to curtail family association severely, viewing the relative as bad association.—1 Cor. 15:33; *w85* 7/15 p. 19 par. 14.

Wrongdoing That Occurred Years in the Past

43. Depending upon the circumstances, the situation may need to be handled by a judicial committee. But if the immorality or other serious wrongdoing occurred more than a few years ago and the individual is genuinely repentant and recognizes that he should have come forward immediately when he sinned, good counsel by elders may be sufficient.

44. The body of elders may appoint two elders to gather the facts. Thereafter, the body would determine whether a judicial committee is needed or not, taking into consideration answers to the following questions:

- Was the wrongdoing in the distant past?
- How widely known is the matter?
- Does the erring one show evidence of spiritual progress as opposed to evidence that progress is being hindered?
- Will counsel be sufficient to restore him, or will more be required for him to have a clean conscience?
- Are there works befitting repentance?
- Did he voluntarily confess, or did the matter come to light by other means?
- How will respect for the body of elders be affected in the congregation?
- If *por·nei'a* was involved, has a confession been made to the innocent mate?
- To what degree have lives been affected or damaged by the wrongdoing? For example, does the matter involve child abuse or adultery?

45. If the individual is serving as a ministerial servant, elder, or pioneer, his qualifications should be examined. If the body of elders determines that he no longer qualifies, a report should be submitted to the branch office.—See 3:19-21.

Was the Wrongdoer's Baptism Valid?

46. When dealing with wrongdoers, **the elders should not raise questions about the validity of the individual's baptism.** If the individual raises the issue, the elders may refer him to the February 15, 2010, *Watchtower,* page 22. Further information on rebaptism can be found in the February 15, 1964, *Watchtower,* pages 123-126, and the March 1, 1960, *Watchtower,* pages 159-160. Rebaptism is a personal matter.

47. At times a wrongdoer will claim that his baptism is not valid and that he feels he is not accountable to a judicial committee because he secretly engaged in wrongdoing shortly before he was baptized. If the elders had been aware of his serious wrongdoing committed just before baptism, likely they would not have approved him for baptism. However, this does not necessarily mean that he did not make a valid dedication. Some individuals make a dedication long before the baptism; others have made a dedication shortly before. The elders are not in a position to read the heart and know for a certainty how Jehovah viewed the person at the time he was baptized. If the elders learn that a baptized individual secretly engaged in serious wrongdoing while he was an unbaptized publisher but the wrongdoing ceased before baptism, they should give counsel and encouragement. **A judicial committee should not be formed for prebaptism wrongdoing.** (1 Cor. 6:9-11) However, if the individual resumed serious wrongdoing after baptism, the elders would generally deal with him on the basis of what he has professed to be, a dedicated and baptized Christian, and would meet with him judicially. Thereafter, if he feels he should be rebaptized, this would be a personal decision. However, a person should not get rebaptized simply because he gains improved understanding or appreciation of the truth or some Scriptural doctrine. —Prov. 4:18.

48. There are rare occasions when it is obvious that the baptism was invalid because serious wrongdoing did not cease before baptism, even for a brief period of time. For example, it may be that at the time of baptism, the individual was *living* immorally with a member of the opposite or the same sex, was *a member* of a non-neutral organization, or something similar. If there are questions, the branch office should be consulted.

Which Congregation Should Handle the Matter?

49. Bodies of elders should cooperate if there is a question regarding which congregation should handle a case of wrongdoing. Which congregation has the facts? Which congregation can handle the case most effectively? Jurisdiction should not become an issue.

50. If a wrongdoer moves before a case has been concluded, it is usually best for the elders of the original congregation to follow through if possible and if distance permits. They are acquainted with the person and his circumstances. If he has moved a great distance away, the brothers of the original congregation should not insist on handling matters if the wrongdoer says he is unable to return to the congregation for the hearing. In such a case, it may be advisable to refer matters to the elders of the congregation where he now lives. There should be good communication between the two bodies.

51. If the elders learn that a publisher who is visiting the area for a short period of time is guilty of wrongdoing, they should promptly report the matter to the elders of his congregation.

If Wrongdoing Involves Publishers From Different Congregations

52. If a member of a congregation confesses to wrongdoing that involves a person in another con-

gregation, the elders should promptly pass along what they know to the elders of the other congregation and allow them time to investigate. Does the other individual admit the wrong? Do their accounts match, or are there significant differences? The judicial committees should communicate freely and cooperate in obtaining the facts. There are **many advantages to interviewing individuals jointly** to ascertain what actually occurred and to clarify discrepancies. (Prov. 18:13, 17) If a joint hearing is held, thereafter the judicial committee of each congregation will withdraw and handle the case of the person from its own congregation. **The judicial committee in one congregation should generally not conclude its case before the elders of the other congregation have fully investigated the situation.**

Unbaptized Publishers Who Engage in Serious Wrongdoing

53. The elders should promptly handle a case of serious wrongdoing by an unbaptized publisher. While a judicial committee would not be formed, the elders should select two elders to meet with him, perhaps the ones who approved him as an unbaptized publisher. They should try to readjust him and to determine whether he continues to qualify.—*od* pp. 157-158; *w88* 11/15 pp. 17-20.

54. The assigned elders may determine to place certain restrictions on the individual for a time, including not commenting at meetings, giving talks on the Theocratic Ministry School, or sharing in the public ministry.

55. If the wrongdoing is widely known or might become widely known later and the wrongdoer is repentant, the two elders should inform the service committee, who will arrange for the following

announcement to be made during the Service Meeting: **"A matter involving [name of person] has been handled, and he [she] continues to serve as an unbaptized publisher with the congregation."**

56. There may be reasons for the body of elders to determine that a Scriptural talk about the sort of wrongdoing involved should be given to the congregation a few weeks after the announcement.

57. If the unbaptized publisher does not respond to the elders' assistance, thus displaying an unrepentant attitude, the two elders should inform him that he no longer qualifies as an unbaptized publisher. Or if he informs the elders that he no longer desires to be a publisher, they will accept his decision. In either case, the elders will have the following announcement made during the Service Meeting: **"[Name of person] is no longer recognized as an unbaptized publisher."** Because of his unrepentant wrongdoing, it would be best for a time not to call on him if he raises his hand to comment at meetings.

58. If the elders see that such a person is a threat to the flock, they can privately warn those endangered. For example, despite the announcement, the wrongdoer might attempt to socialize with youths in the congregation. In that situation, the elders would speak privately to the parents of the endangered ones and maybe to those youths also.

59. There is **no specific arrangement for an appeal** or a seven-day waiting period before announcing the decision that one is no longer recognized as an unbaptized publisher. If he expresses dissatisfaction with the conclusion, the body of elders should choose two different elders to review the case.

60. If someone who was previously removed as an unbaptized publisher begins to make progress and wishes once again to share in the ministry, two elders

(perhaps those who met with him earlier) should meet with him to determine his qualifications. If he qualifies, an announcement should be made that he is an unbaptized publisher. There is no need to wait until he reports field service again to make the announcement.

61. **If the unbaptized publisher is a minor by law,** the two elders should first speak with the Christian parents to discern what occurred, the child's attitude, and the corrective steps that the parents are taking. If the parents have the situation in hand, the two elders may choose not to meet with the minor but will check with the parents from time to time to offer helpful counsel, specific suggestions, and loving encouragement.

62. When an unbaptized publisher is involved in wrongdoing, the two elders assigned to meet with him should prepare a written record of the case. The secretary files this record in the same manner as he files judicial cases.

See September 7, 2011, letter to all bodies of elders for further direction on filing confidential material.

Chapter Six

Preparing for the Judicial Hearing

Select the elders for the judicial committee carefully

Elders are accountable to Jehovah for the judgment they render

Make proper arrangements for the hearing

Selecting the Judicial Committee and Chairman

1. If a judicial committee is needed, the elders who are present at the Kingdom Hall should determine which elders will serve on the committee and which one will be chairman. (See 2:12) The elders chosen should be men of discernment and good judgment. Extensive details of the case do not need to be conveyed to the entire body, but enough information should be presented for the elders to determine whether a disfellowshipping offense has actually been committed and, if so, who is best qualified to handle the particular type of case that has arisen. (*km* 9/77 pp. 5-6) It is usually best for newer elders to serve first with more experienced ones. They would never serve as observers on a judicial case. However, complex cases may warrant having four or even five experienced elders on the committee.

2. If the elders know that the accused has strong feelings against a particular elder, it would be better not to use him. An elder who is a close relative or has been in business with the accused or has had a special friendship with him would not normally serve on the committee. (*km* 9/77 p. 6) If there are not enough elders locally to make up the committee, the

body of elders may request the assistance of an elder in a neighboring congregation by contacting the body of elders where he serves. In such situations, you may also contact the circuit overseer for recommendations.

Preparing Your Mind and Heart to Judge

3. Serving on a judicial committee is a heavy responsibility. You are judging for Jehovah and are accountable to him for the judgment you render. (2 Chron. 19:6, 7) Your decision will likely have long-lasting and far-reaching consequences for the individual involved, his Christian family members, and others in the congregation. ***Each time*** **you serve on a judicial committee, you should first review Chapters 5-7 of this publication.**

4. Allowing an unrepentant wrongdoer to remain in the congregation could result in a leavening influence. (Gal. 5:9) Failure to remove the individual may also minimize the wrong in the mind of the wrongdoer and in the minds of others who may know of his sin. (Eccl. 8:11) On the other hand, an individual unjustly dealt with may have difficulty recovering his spirituality.—Matt. 18:6.

5. You can render a good judgment with Jehovah's help. (Matt. 18:18-20) Pray for wisdom, discernment, and God's holy spirit. (1 Ki. 3:9; Phil. 1:9, 10; Jas. 1:5) Do careful, thorough research using Bible-based publications, not relying solely on past experience in handling judicial matters. (Prov. 15:28) Endeavor to obtain a clear picture regarding what occurred and what the individual's true attitude is. —Prov. 18:13, 17.

Inviting the Accused to the Judicial Hearing

6. It is best for two elders to invite him orally. Their invitation should include the following information:

- Make clear that the meeting is a judicial hearing.
- Explain what his course of action is *alleged* to have been.
- State the time and place of the hearing and how the person can contact the chairman if the person is unable to meet at the scheduled time and location.

7. If circumstances permit, **hold the hearing at the Kingdom Hall.** This theocratic setting will put all in a more respectful frame of mind; it will also help to ensure greater confidentiality for the proceedings.

8. The assigned elders should make every effort to arrange for a judicial hearing right away. Leaving the matter unresolved can harm the congregation and the accused. **If the accused does not make himself available to receive an *oral* invitation** despite *repeated efforts* by the judicial committee, then the judicial committee should send a written invitation. (Do not leave confidential information on an answering machine or voice mail or send by way of e-mail.) A written invitation signed by the judicial committee should include the same information as outlined above for an oral invitation. If possible, send the invitation in such a way that the elders can verify that the addressee received it. If they are unsuccessful in their diligent efforts to invite him and they cannot confirm that he received the invitation, they should hold the matter in abeyance.

9. **If he accepts the judicial committee's invitation, yet fails to appear,** the judicial committee should reschedule the hearing and endeavor to invite the accused again. If he does not attend after it is confirmed that he received the second invitation and if it is evident that he is unwilling to cooperate with the judicial committee, the committee will proceed with

the hearing but will not make a decision until evidence and testimony by witnesses are considered.

10. **If the accused makes known to the elders his adamant refusal to meet with a judicial committee,** the judicial committee may proceed in his absence without extending further invitations. —See 7:29.

Meeting With Marriage Mates

11. **If the accused is a married sister,** it is best to have her believing husband present for the hearing. He is her head, and his efforts to restore her and direct her can be very helpful. (1 Cor. 11:3) If unusual circumstances are involved or the elders feel it would be best not to invite the husband because of their concerns for the safety of the wife, the elders should call the branch office.

12. **If the accused is a married brother,** his wife would normally not attend the hearing. However, if the husband wants his wife to be present, she may attend a portion of the hearing. The judicial committee should maintain confidentiality.

13. **If the husband committed adultery,** he has an obligation to inform his wife of the facts. The judicial committee should promptly inquire of the Christian wife as to what her husband has told her. If he refuses to inform her of his adultery, the elders should inform her that because of her husband's conduct, it is up to her to decide whether to pursue a Scriptural divorce or not. Furthermore, they should inform the innocent mate that her resuming sexual relations with the guilty mate would negate any claim to Scriptural freedom. But they should not give her further details. On the other hand, the elders may find that while the husband did confess adultery to his wife, he did not tell her the full extent of his wrong conduct and left out important information that the wife should know. The elders should not pro-

vide this confidential information to the wife, but they can suggest that she speak with her husband again. Even if he does not tell her anything more, this will alert her to the fact that he is withholding information from her, and this may help her to determine whether to forgive or not.

Meeting With Baptized Minors

14. It is best to meet with the youth and his Christian parents, since they have the responsibility to raise and train him. If the accused is living in the home of his believing parents but is no longer a minor, the elders would not generally invite the parents to the hearing. However, if the accused living in his parents' home has recently become an adult and the parents ask to be present and the accused has no objection, the judicial committee may decide to allow them to attend *a portion of the hearing.*

Meeting With Incarcerated Ones

15. When the judicial committee endeavors to meet with the incarcerated accused wrongdoer, the secular authorities may not allow all three members to meet with him at the same time. If so, a judicial committee should not handle the case over the telephone with a conference-line arrangement. The elders should endeavor to arrange for two members of the committee to meet with him in person in a confidential setting. Others should not be present when the accused person is interviewed. Afterward, the two brothers would discuss the case with the third member of the committee, and the judicial committee may then render a decision. Two members of the judicial committee should inform him of the decision. If he is disfellowshipped, the elders should inform him and tell him of his option to appeal, and so forth. If the authorities allow only one elder at a time to speak with him, the judicial committee should

decide in advance what questions to ask. Then two on the judicial committee should talk with him *separately* and ask the same questions. Thereafter, the judicial committee should convene to make a decision. In unusual cases, the branch office should be contacted.

If the Accused Threatens Suicide

16. In judicial cases where the accused threatens suicide, it may be best for the committee to suspend the hearing to focus on helping him regain his balance. (See 7:12) They should assure him of the committee's desire to help him, then broach the subject of depression and suicide, using the Scriptures and Bible-based publications. (Prov. 3:11, 12; 4:13; Heb. 12:5, 6, 11-13) Depending upon his emotional state, it may be best to do this a day or two later. The elders can prepare by reviewing articles that will help them deal sensitively with the depressed individual. (*w00* 9/15 pp. 3-7; *w88* 10/15 pp. 25-29; 11/15 pp. 21-24; *w82* 6/1 pp. 9-14) The judicial committee should avoid prolonging the case unnecessarily, as this can cause stress for the accused. They should take notes for the confidential file, outlining the dates of their conversations and the scriptures and articles that were considered. They should sign it and place it in the file for the case. The judicial committee should communicate with the branch office if there are questions about a certain case.

If the Accused Threatens Legal Action

17. If the accused threatens legal action against the elders, the elders should suspend proceedings and promptly telephone the branch office.

18. **If a member of the media or an attorney representing the accused contacts the elders,** they should not give him any information about the case or verify that there is a judicial committee. Rath-

er, they should give the following explanation: "The spiritual and physical welfare of Jehovah's Witnesses is of paramount concern to the elders, who have been appointed to 'shepherd the flock.' The elders extend this shepherding confidentially. Confidential shepherding makes it easier for those who seek the elders' help to do so without worrying that what they say to the elders will be divulged later. Consequently, we do not comment on whether elders are currently or have formerly met to assist any member of the congregation." If there is a need to do so, the elders may obtain the inquirer's name and phone number and inform him that their attorney will contact him. The elders should then promptly telephone the branch office.

19. If the authorities request confidential congregation records or ask that elders give testimony regarding confidential congregation matters, the elders should promptly telephone the branch office.

Chapter Seven

Judicial Hearing Procedure

Try to put the accused at ease

Establish the facts and ascertain his attitude

If repentance is unclear, try to lead him to repentance during the initial meeting

If repentance is commensurate with the extent of wrongdoing, reprove the wrongdoer from the Scriptures

If not convinced of sufficient repentance, inform the wrongdoer of the decision to disfellowship, explaining how he can repair his damaged relationship with Jehovah

1. The judicial hearing should be opened with prayer with the accused present. The judicial committee should feel free to seek Jehovah's wisdom through prayer at any time during their private deliberations. (Jas. 1:5) The chairman should state the reason for the meeting. He may offer a Scriptural point at the outset, such as from Proverbs 28:13 or James 5: 14, 15. The elders on the judicial committee should **convey their desire to be helpful and try to put the accused at ease.** They should be quick to listen but slow to indicate a preference or a leaning one way or the other. Even if the accused is belligerent, they should treat him kindly and respectfully, **never harshly.**—*w89* 9/15 pp. 19-20.

2. **The chairman should invite the accused to make a personal statement.** If the accused contends that he is innocent, the witnesses to the wrongdoing should be presented and their testimony

should be given in the presence of the accused. It is best that the witnesses give their testimony in person. However, it may be that the witnesses live a great distance away or for some reason are not able to be physically present. If so, their testimony may be presented in the hearing of the accused by a secure phone call or perhaps submitted in writing and read to the accused. The accused should be given opportunity to respond to the testimony. If he wishes to present witnesses to establish his innocence, the judicial committee should allow them to give their testimony.

3. **Hear only those witnesses who have relevant testimony** regarding the alleged wrongdoing. Those who intend to testify only about the character of the accused should not be allowed to do so. The witnesses should not hear details and testimony of other witnesses. Observers should not be present for moral support. **Recording devices should not be allowed.**

4. In the rare event that testimony presented during the hearing causes the judicial committee to conclude that the matter should not be handled judicially, the hearing should be suspended. Inform the person that he will be contacted further regarding the matter. The body of elders should then be consulted to determine whether the judicial committee should be disbanded.

5. The committee should first seek to **establish the facts and ascertain the attitude** of the accused. This requires skillful and discreet questions. The judicial committee should be thorough but not inquire about needless details, especially in regard to sexual misconduct. However, in some instances, when Scriptural freedom to divorce and remarry may be an issue, details may need to be clarified. When the elders on the judicial committee feel that they have a clear picture, they may excuse the accused

from the room and discuss the case and the individual's repentance or lack thereof.

Determining Genuine Repentance

6. In Greek, two verbs are used in connection with repentance. The first stresses a changed viewpoint or disposition. The second emphasizes a feeling of regret. Therefore, repentance involves a deep regret over a damaged relationship with Jehovah, remorse over the reproach brought upon Jehovah's name and people, and a sincere longing to come back into God's favor. It includes a heart-motivated rejection of the bad course as something repugnant, hated. (Rom. 12:9) Such an attitude should be demonstrated by "fruits that befit repentance," making evident to an adequate degree a sinner's claimed repentance.—Luke 3:8; *it*-2 pp. 770-777.

7. Judging repentance is not simply a matter of determining whether the wrongdoer is weak or wicked. **Weakness is not synonymous with repentance.** (*w95* 1/1, pp. 27-29) Neither should the judicial committee's decision be determined by the notoriety of the wrong. The judicial committee should look for clear works of repentance commensurate with his wrongdoing. (2 Cor. 7:10, 11) In order to extend mercy, the committee must be **convinced** that the wrongdoer has a changed heart condition and that he has a zeal to right the wrong and is absolutely determined to avoid it in the future. Even if this is the individual's first time before a judicial committee, it is necessary to determine whether his actions and attitude indicate that he has repented and can thus remain in the congregation.

8. The extent to which the person deviates from righteousness may be major or minor, and logically **the degree of regret (repentance) ought to be commensurate with the degree of deviation.** Was the individual caught off guard so that he

momentarily succumbed to temptation, or did he plan to do wrong? Was he unaware of the gravity of his sin, or did he deliberately ignore counsel or warnings? Was it a single offense, or was it a practice? The more an individual repeats serious sin, the more that one reasonably gives evidence of being like wicked people who are "practicers of what is hurtful."—Ps. 28:3; *it*-2 p. 771 par. 5.

9. While there is no such thing as automatic disfellowshipping, **an individual may have gone so far into sin that he may not be able to demonstrate sufficient repentance** to the judicial committee at the time of the hearing. If so, he must be disfellowshipped, allowing time to pass for him to prove his repentance. Or it may be that the individual has been dealt with judicially a number of times in the past. Because he appeared repentant, he was reproved each time. Now he has sinned again. In such cases his *life course* may indicate a lack of repentance. —*w81* 9/1 p. 26 par. 23.

10. Below are **some indications of repentance.** However, none of these is the sole criterion for determining whether the sinner is repentant or not.

- Was his confession voluntary, or did he have to be accused by others? Some offenders are so deeply ashamed or have such difficulty expressing themselves that they are reluctant to speak.
- Is the individual truthful? (Acts 5:1-10) When questioned, are his answers forthright? Is he cooperative with the judicial committee? The judicial committee should be especially cautious if the individual has shown himself to be guilty of hypocrisy, lying, or deliberate efforts to deceive.
- Has he contritely prayed to Jehovah and sought his forgiveness and mercy? Keep in mind that some wrongdoers, though repentant, find it difficult to pray.—Jas. 5:14.

- Has he made restitution, expressed willingness to do so, or apologized to offended ones, those damaged by his sinful course? Has he sought forgiveness of those wronged?—*w92* 9/15 p. 10; *w81* 9/1 pp. 25-26; *w73* p. 351.
- In cases of adultery, has he confessed to the innocent mate and asked for forgiveness?—*w73* pp. 351-352; *w68* pp. 319-320.

  Note: The option to forgive adultery rests with the innocent mate. The guilty mate cannot be viewed as repentant if, after committing adultery, he refuses to inform her and allow her the opportunity to forgive. If the wrongdoer is unwilling to confess and ask for forgiveness because of *fear of violence* by the innocent mate, contact the branch office before proceeding.
- Does he manifest a spirit of agony and regret over having damaged his relationship with Jehovah?—Ps. 32:3-5; 51:1-4.
- Does he demonstrate godly sadness or worldly sadness? (2 Cor. 7:8-11) Is his sadness primarily because of hurting Jehovah and bringing Him into reproach or because of the disappointment he has caused to family and friends and the shame he has experienced? (Ezra 10:1; Luke 22:59-62) Individuals vary in their emotional makeup and control. Tears do not necessarily indicate sincere repentance; neither does a lack of strong emotion show a lack of repentance. —Gen. 25:29-34; 27:34.
- Does he accept responsibility for his error, or does he minimize or justify his bad course? —1 Sam. 15:24; 2 Sam. 12:13.
- Does he recognize the fact that lesser sins led up to the wrongdoing, and is he determined to avoid these?

11. Each case is different. The judicial committee should consider all the unique factors involved, including any **extenuating circumstances.** For example, the wrongdoer may have been a victim of some type of abuse in the past. Extenuating circumstances do not excuse the wrongdoing. (*g93* 10/8 p. 4) However, discerning them will help the judicial committee to understand better the wrongdoer and his response to the judicial committee. Nevertheless, **there would be no basis to extend mercy if fruits of repentance are lacking.**

12. The same is true regarding wrongdoers who suffer from **mental or emotional problems.** (See 6:16) The congregation cannot overlook his wrongdoing if he is able to discharge normal responsibilities toward himself and the community in a reasonably acceptable manner and others generally view him as one who could be held accountable for what he does and says. However, the judicial committee should show consideration and patience in their dealings with him and be especially aware of the need for discernment in evaluating his repentance. On the other hand, if the judicial committee discerns that his mental condition is so severe that others generally regard him as not being responsible for what he does, they may recommend to the body of elders that no judicial action be taken, explaining the reasons for their recommendation.

If Repentance Is Unclear

13. If the wrongdoer's degree of repentance is unclear, the committee should invite him back into the room for further discussion. They should use God's Word to help him understand why his conduct was wrong and how it has affected his relationship with Jehovah and the congregation. It is possible that even as late as the judicial hearing, he will demonstrate repentance to the point that mercy by the judicial

committee may be warranted. In most cases the individual will show some repentance, but is it commensurate with the degree of his wrongdoing? The judicial committee should be modest and keep in mind that if the wrongdoer has demonstrated few or no works of repentance before the judicial hearing is held, it may not be possible during the hearing to move him to demonstrate sufficient repentance to justify extending mercy. Even if it is determined that he must be disfellowshipped, their efforts to lead him to repentance may help him to begin making straight paths for his feet and work toward reinstatement. (Heb. 12:13) After trying to help him and hearing his further expressions, the judicial committee may excuse him from the room and deliberate.

14. In complex cases, if the judicial committee is not sure of the Bible's direction or the organization's counsel, the hearing may be adjourned and reconvened a *few days* later. However, an additional meeting should *not* be scheduled just to give the accused time to stop the wrongdoing or to demonstrate works of repentance. If he has demonstrated little or no repentance during the initial hearing, there would generally be no basis on which to prolong the case and schedule a second meeting.

15. At times, **complicated judicial cases may necessitate consultation** with an experienced mature elder *in another congregation* or the circuit overseer. In such a situation, inform the wrongdoer that the *decision is pending.* Do not inform him that you will be consulting with parties outside of the judicial committee, which may at times include the branch office. While pertinent details may be discussed, names should not be used when discussing the case with another elder. However, when the circuit overseer is consulted or when circumstances require that the branch office be contacted, the judicial committee should reveal the names.

16. Generally, those serving on a judicial committee should endeavor to be unanimous in their decision. Any difference of opinion can usually be resolved by discussing matters thoroughly as a judicial committee, researching the Scriptures and Christian publications, praying for wisdom and direction, and even consulting with an experienced elder outside the congregation. However, if the committee is unable to reach a unanimous conclusion, the minority should give support to the decision reached by the majority.

17. Anything submitted in writing to the committee by the alleged wrongdoer or by witnesses should be kept in strict confidence. If it is necessary to continue the matter later, the members of the committee should submit to the chairman any personal notes they have taken. The chairman will keep these notes in a secure place to prevent breaches of confidentiality. The notes may be returned to the individual elders for consultation before the hearing resumes.

If the Decision Is to Reprove

18. If the elders on the judicial committee determine that the wrongdoer is genuinely repentant, they should inform him of the decision, the judicial restrictions, and whether the reproof will be announced. They should also give reproof from the Scriptures, showing the seriousness of the wrongdoing and the minor sins that may have led up to it. Reproof is defined as "that which is designed to convince others of their having erred, in order to move them to acknowledge their mistakes and correct these." (*it*-2 p. 780) Hence, administering judicial reproof includes more than just making a decision or announcing it. It involves reinforcing the wrongdoer's resolve to do what is right. The original-language word for reproof comes from a verb meaning 'to show plainly, point out by facts, demon-

strate, show by evident or convincing reasons or arguments.' Helpful suggestions should be given to help him make needed adjustments. If witnesses testified during the hearing, they may be invited to hear the Scriptural reproof. In this way the accused is reproved "before all onlookers." (1 Tim. 5:20) The judicial committee should pray with the repentant wrongdoer before concluding the hearing.

19. In all cases of judicial reproof, the wrongdoer is disqualified from special privileges. These include pioneering, offering congregation prayer, and sharing in any parts on the Service Meeting until he has made further spiritual progress. This also includes other congregational assignments that might be given to those who are exemplary. In addition, **some judicial restrictions** will be imposed in all cases of judicial reproof. Judicial restrictions may include not commenting at congregation meetings and not giving student talks in the Theocratic Ministry School. However, the judicial committee determines what judicial restrictions to impose. When the elders inform a repentant wrongdoer of restrictions, it would be helpful to tell him the date of the next meeting, at which his progress will be reviewed. It may be discouraging to the repentant wrongdoer if restrictions are imposed for a prolonged period of time. It would be an exceptional case when many months have passed and restrictions have not been gradually lifted.

20. The judicial committee should **determine whether the reproof should be announced** to the congregation. (*w88* 11/15 p. 18; *w81* 9/1 pp. 26-27) If the individual thereafter moves, no announcement of such previous judicial reproof is made in the new congregation.—*km* 3/75 p. 4.

- The reproof should be announced if the sin is widely known or will likely become known in the congregation or community. An

announcement will safeguard the reputation of the congregation.

For example, in a case of adultery, an innocent mate may lean toward forgiveness but is not ready to resume sexual relations at the time that the judicial committee concludes the case. *If the possibility of a Scriptural divorce still exists,* an announcement would protect the reputation of the congregation and the innocent mate.

- The judicial committee may have specific reasons to believe that the congregation needs to be on guard concerning the repentant wrongdoer. Perhaps he ignored previous counsel several times concerning steps leading to the same wrongdoing.

  For example, in a case involving wrongdoing that could be viewed as child sexual abuse, announcing the reproof of a repentant wrongdoer will serve as a protection for the congregation.

See October 1, 2012, letter to all bodies of elders regarding child abuse.

21. The coordinator of the body of elders should approve the announcement before an elder reads it to the congregation. It should read as follows: **"[Name of person] has been reproved."** *Restrictions are not announced.*

See September 7, 2011, letter to all bodies of elders for direction on filing confidential material.

22. The judicial committee should monitor the spiritual progress of the repentant wrongdoer and be alert to **remove judicial restrictions** progressively as he recovers spiritually. It is not necessary for the entire body of elders to decide on the removal of restrictions, except in unusual cases. The committee should inform the body of elders when any restrictions are removed. When an elder serving on the original committee moves or is no longer serving as an elder, the body of elders will select a replacement to monitor the wrongdoer's progress. If the wrongdoer moves before the committee lifts all of his restrictions, the new congregation should receive sufficient

details so that the elders can evaluate his true spiritual condition. Provide the type of information and details you would appreciate receiving if the individual was moving into your congregation. The elders of the new congregation should choose two or three elders to continue to monitor the wrongdoer's progress and lift the remaining judicial restrictions.

23. In some cases the **elders may feel that it is necessary to warn the congregation** by means of a Scriptural talk about the type of conduct practiced. A member of the judicial committee should generally give the talk. He should explain the wrongness of the conduct and how to avoid it but without saying anything that would connect the wrongdoer with the type of sin under discussion. In the case of an announced reproof, the elders should wait a few weeks before giving such a talk; when the reproof is unannounced, there is no need to wait.

24. **Once the case has been concluded, no further judicial action is taken** unless the wrongdoer again engages in gross wrongdoing. However, in rare cases there may be an exception if *within a few days* of the decision new information comes to light that makes it obvious to the judicial committee that the wrongdoer was not repentant, perhaps because he gave misleading testimony or purposely omitted important facts during the hearing. In such instances there may be a basis for the judicial committee to reconsider its decision and decide to disfellowship, especially if no announcement of reproof had been made. When the hearing resumes, the individual would be given opportunity to hear any new evidence and to present his side of the matter. In cases of this nature, it is best to inquire of the branch office for direction before proceeding.

25. If **the wrongdoer again engages in serious wrongdoing** after the judicial committee renders a decision and completes the case, the judicial

committee that handled the previous case will not automatically handle the new case. The body of elders should meet and select the judicial committee. In most cases, the elders will choose the same elders to serve on the new judicial committee, but the body of elders may decide to use different brothers or to add another elder to the committee.

If the Decision Is to Disfellowship

26. If the wrongdoer *lacks genuine repentance,* he should be disfellowshipped. (See 7:8) The committee should inform him of its decision and endeavor to help him see how he can use the time he is disfellowshipped in a way that will repair his damaged relationship with Jehovah. The committee may share with him scriptures such as 2 Corinthians 7:10, 11 and Hebrews 12:5-7. The judicial committee should be kind and positive, assuring him that forgiveness is possible if he truly repents.

27. The following information should be conveyed **orally** to the wrongdoer after informing him of the committee's decision:

- Outline the steps necessary for future reinstatement.
- Inform the wrongdoer that he may appeal in writing within seven days if he feels a serious error in judgment has occurred. (*od* pp. 153-154) He should address his letter of appeal to the judicial committee.

28. The judicial committee should neither encourage him to appeal nor discourage him from doing so. Before dismissing him, the elders should ask if he has any questions. The judicial committee will conclude with prayer *after* dismissing the wrongdoer.

29. **If the unrepentant wrongdoer did not attend the judicial hearing,** the judicial commit-

tee should make reasonable efforts to inform him orally of their decision, his option to appeal, and so forth. The elders should not leave a message of a confidential nature on a telephone answering machine or by means of voice mail or by way of e-mail. If he does not cooperate with the efforts to inform him, the judicial committee should contact the branch office.

30. Allow the seven-day appeal period to elapse even if the person states he does not wish to appeal or if he failed to appear for the judicial hearing.

31. The coordinator of the body of elders should check the announcement to make sure that it conforms to the guidelines outlined by the organization. An elder should read the announcement. The wording should be as follows: **"[Name of person] is no longer one of Jehovah's Witnesses."**

32. Disfellowshipping takes effect at the time of making the announcement to the congregation. In the interim before the public announcement, the wrongdoer should not comment or offer prayers at congregation meetings or care for any special privileges of service. (*od* p. 154) Make the announcement in only one congregation.

33. The judicial committee should ***promptly*** **inform the branch office** of the disfellowshipping using the appropriate forms. When making the report, read and carefully follow the instructions on the form.

34. Upon conclusion of the case, the chairman should place only necessary notes and documents, a detailed summary of the case, and the S-77 forms in a sealed envelope for the congregation's confidential file. Elders on the committee should preserve nothing outside of this sealed envelope (including personal notes). On the outside of the envelope

See September 7, 2011, letter to all bodies of elders for further direction on filing confidential material.

should be written the wrongdoer's name, the names of those who served on the judicial committee (with the chairman indicated), the action taken, and the date of the action.

Chapter Eight

Appeal Hearing Procedure

The appeal committee should be modest in working with the judicial committee

The appeal committee should determine whether the accused is guilty of serious wrongdoing and whether he was repentant when he met with the judicial committee

1. If the judicial committee receives a letter of appeal within seven days from the time the wrongdoer received notification of the decision to disfellowship, the chairman should promptly call the circuit overseer, who will arrange for an appeal committee. Arrangements should be made for the appeal hearing even if there seems to be no valid basis for it. He should select the most qualified elders available to rehear the case. To the extent possible, he will select brothers from a different congregation who are impartial and have no ties or relationship to the accused, the accuser, or the judicial committee.

2. If a person appeals *after* the seven days, immediately contact the branch office for direction.

3. The chairman of the judicial committee will make the completed S-77 forms and all other related material on the case, including the judicial committee's notes, available to the appeal committee.

Objective and Approach of the Appeal Committee

4. The elders chosen for the appeal committee should approach the case with modesty and **avoid giving the impression that they are judging the judicial committee** rather than the accused. While

the appeal committee should be thorough, they must remember that the appeal process does not indicate a lack of confidence in the judicial committee. Rather, it is a kindness to the wrongdoer to assure him of a complete and fair hearing. The elders of the appeal committee should keep in mind that likely the judicial committee has more insight and experience than they do regarding the accused.

5. **Generally, there is no arrangement to hold an appeal hearing outside the circuit;** if the accused has moved, he must be willing to travel back to the area so that the judicial committee can be present for the appeal hearing. If the accused deliberately fails to appear at the appeal hearing, the disfellowshipping should be announced after reasonable efforts have been made to contact him.—*od* p. 154.

6. The appeal committee should first read the written material on the case and speak with the judicial committee. Afterward, the appeal committee should speak to the accused. Since the judicial committee has already judged him unrepentant, the appeal committee will not pray in his presence but will pray *before* inviting him into the room.

7. Conduct the hearing in a manner similar to the first judicial committee hearing. It may be necessary to rehear all the evidence relevant to the case, including that which was presented originally and any new evidence now available. For instance, if the accused continues to contend that he is innocent, the witnesses should again give their testimony in his presence, he should be given opportunity to respond, and the appeal committee should hear any additional witnesses he wishes to present to prove his innocence.

8. The judicial committee should be present to hear any testimony. If they or the accused believes that earlier testimony or evidence is being changed, this can be stated following the presentation of evidence that was allegedly altered.

9. After gathering the facts, the appeal committee should deliberate in private. They should consider the answers to two questions:

- **Was it established that the accused committed a disfellowshipping offense?**
- **Did the accused demonstrate repentance commensurate with the gravity of his wrongdoing *at the time of the hearing with the judicial committee?***

10. The appeal committee may find that while the original basis for disfellowshipping was invalid, other valid grounds for disfellowshipping exist. If so, the appeal committee should give the individual sufficient time, even several days if needed, to present any evidence or witnesses that he feels will disprove the new allegations. If the new allegations are nonetheless established and if the person does not demonstrate genuine repentance, the appeal committee may decide to uphold the disfellowshipping on these new grounds. ~~If so, the appeal committee should prepare a new report for the branch office showing the new grounds for disfellowshipping. The appeal committee should submit this along with the report composed by the judicial committee and should tell the original committee to announce the disfellowshipping.~~

If the original committee agrees with the new grounds, they should adjust the S-77 form, announce the disfellowshipping, and submit the form to the branch office. The appeal committee's brief summary should be retained in the confidential file along with a copy of the S-77 form and the brief summary of the original committee.

If the Appeal Committee Agrees With the Judicial Committee

11. If the brothers on the appeal committee feel they can accede to the judgment of the judicial committee, the appeal committee should inform the wrongdoer of the final decision in the presence of the judicial committee.

12. The judicial committee should allow seven days to pass before arranging for the disfellowshipping to be announced at the next Service Meeting.

13. ~~The appeal committee should compose a report and send this to the branch office along with the report given them by the judicial committee. The appeal committee should make sure that the report from the judicial committee is complete, including the date of announcement of the disfellowshipping.~~

The original committee should submit the completed S-77 form to the branch office. The appeal committee's brief summary should be retained in the confidential file along with a copy of the S-77 form and the brief summary of the original committee.

14. When the disfellowshipping is upheld, there is no further arrangement for appeal. However, **if an individual persists in believing a serious error in judgment has occurred,** the appeal committee should inform him that he may submit his allegations in writing to the appeal committee within seven days for transmittal to the branch office. *The appeal committee should not mention this provision unless the individual indicates that he believes a serious error in judgment has occurred.*

15. If he indicates a desire to submit a letter of appeal to the branch office, the announcement of disfellowshipping should be delayed. The appeal committee should submit the wrongdoer's letter, the report from the judicial committee, and a report from the appeal committee to the branch office. No announcement should be made until a reply is received from the branch office.

If the Appeal Committee Disagrees With the Judicial Committee

16. The appeal committee should meet privately with the judicial committee to discuss matters and explain the reason for disagreeing.

17. The accused should be invited back into the room, and the appeal committee should inform him that further consideration will be needed. He can be assured that the case will be concluded as soon as possible. **Neither the judicial committee nor the appeal committee should give any indication of their differing decisions to the individual.** After

he is dismissed, the hearing can be concluded with prayer.

18. If the judicial committee does not agree with the conclusions of the appeal committee, the elders on the judicial committee should promptly compose a letter clearly expressing their reasons for disagreement and give this to the appeal committee. The appeal committee will include this letter along with their report to the branch office. ~~On the other hand, the judicial committee may now agree with the appeal committee. If so, their letter should explain why. *Even if both committees agree not to disfellowship the individual, they will not advise him of their decision; rather, they will simply tell the person that the* ***decision is pending.*** The appeal committee will send to the branch office separate letters from both the original committee and the appeal committee that supply sufficient details to give a clear picture of the reasons for the conclusion.~~

On the other hand, if both committees now agree not to disfellowship the individual, the appeal committee should inform him of the final decision in the presence of the judicial committee. The appeal committee's brief summary should be retained in the confidential file along with the brief summary of the original committee.

19. The appeal committee should promptly compose a letter explaining the appeal committee's conclusion and the reasons. The appeal committee should send this letter along with the S-77 report given to the appeal committee by the judicial committee at the beginning of the appeal hearing and the judicial committee's letter explaining the judicial committee's thinking on the decision of the appeal committee to the branch office. The branch office will thereafter provide written direction to assist both committees with bringing the case to a conclusion.

20. After the two committees have considered the observations of the branch office and made a final decision, the original committee should inform the person involved. If the decision is to disfellowship, the judicial committee will arrange to make an appropriate announcement in the congregation and inform the branch office of the date of the announcement.

Chapter Nine

Implications of Disassociation

Disassociation is action taken by the individual

A committee is appointed to provide assistance if possible

Announce and report disassociation if established

1. Whereas disfellowshipping is an action taken by a judicial committee against an unrepentant wrongdoer, disassociation is an action taken by an individual who no longer desires to be one of Jehovah's Witnesses. (1 John 2:19) The body of elders should appoint a committee of three elders to consider the facts.

See September 7, 2011, letter to all bodies of elders for further direction on filing confidential material.

2. A judicial committee should not continue an investigation into alleged wrongdoing if the accused person makes known his decision to disassociate himself. (*w84* 7/1 p. 31) However, at no time should the elders ask the accused if he desires to disassociate himself. If the elders are handling a particularly difficult case and there is a question about whether the person has disassociated himself, it would be best for the committee to contact the branch office for further direction. If an individual is determined to disassociate himself, then the committee would prepare a summary of the alleged offense(s) and the evidence of such. This would be kept along with information regarding the disassociation. If the person later requests reinstatement, these matters would need to be considered with him at that time.

3. Actions that may indicate disassociation include the following:

- **Making known a firm decision to be known no longer as one of Jehovah's Witnesses.** If the individual is agreeable, the committee should first try to speak with him and provide spiritual assistance. (Gal. 6:1) Does he really desire to disassociate himself, or does he simply no longer want to associate actively with the congregation? Is the desire to disassociate prompted by doubts or discouragement? If he is adamant in his position, he should be encouraged to put his request in writing and sign it. If he does not, then the witnesses to his request should prepare a statement for the confidential files and sign it.
- **Joining another religious organization and making known his intention to remain with it.** If it is learned that a person has taken up association with another religious organization and thus is identified with it, a committee (not judicial) should be selected to investigate matters and endeavor to provide spiritual assistance. If the individual has joined another religious organization and intends to remain with it, he has disassociated himself.
- **Willingly and unrepentantly taking blood.** If someone willingly takes blood, perhaps because of being under extreme pressure, the committee should obtain the facts and determine the individual's attitude. If he is repentant, the committee would provide spiritual assistance in the spirit of Galatians 6:1 and Jude 22, 23. Since he is spiritually weak, he would not qualify for special privileges for a period of time, and it may be necessary to remove certain basic privileges. Depending on the circumstances, the committee may also need to arrange for an announcement to the congregation: **"The elders have handled a matter having to do with [name**

of person]. You will be glad to know that spiritual shepherds are endeavoring to render assistance." On the other hand, if the elders on the committee determine that he is unrepentant, they should announce his disassociation.

See November 6, 2014, letter to all bodies of elders regarding procedures when legal issues are involved.

- **Taking a course contrary to the neutral position of the Christian congregation.** (Isa. 2:4; John 15:17-19; *w99* 11/1 pp. 28-29) If he joins a nonneutral organization, he has disassociated himself. If his employment makes him a clear accomplice in nonneutral activities, he should generally be allowed a period of time up to six months to make an adjustment. If he does not, he has disassociated himself.—*km* 9/76 pp. 3-6.

4. The coordinator of the body of elders should approve the announcement before an elder reads it to the congregation. The announcement should be as follows: **"[Name of person] is no longer one of Jehovah's Witnesses."**

5. Since disassociation is an action taken by the publisher rather than the committee, there is no arrangement for an appeal. Therefore, the announcement of disassociation can be made on the occasion of the next Service Meeting without waiting seven days. A report of the disassociation should promptly be sent to the branch office, using the appropriate forms.—See 7:33-34.

Chapter Ten

Matters Related to Disfellowshipped and Disassociated Ones

Make yearly visits on those who qualify

Permit them to obtain personal literature at the Kingdom Hall

Assist those having undue association with disfellowshipped or disassociated relatives

1. **Once a year** the body of elders reviews a list of those in the congregation territory who are disfellowshipped or disassociated. They will **call on each one they select in order to see if he wants to return.** (*w91* 4/15 pp. 22-23) Calls should not be made on those who are active apostates, on those who are trying to lead others into sin, or on those who have made it known that they want nothing to do with God's people. The body will assign two elders to make each call, preferably elders familiar with the case. During a brief visit, the elders may kindly explain what the individual can do to return. In some cases there may be good reason for a follow-up visit. They will report the results to the Congregation Service Committee, and the body will be informed at the next meeting of the elders.

2. **If the elders learn that a disfellowshipped or disassociated person has moved,** they should not send his *Congregation's Publisher Record* (S-21) cards or the confidential file to the congregation where he lives or attends meetings. Since he cannot share in the ministry, the congregation that took disfellowshipping action or acknowledged the disasso-

ciation should retain the cards. However, a brief letter should be sent to the body of elders in whose territory he lives to inform them that a disfellowshipped or disassociated person lives in their territory and to provide his address. This will enable the local elders to follow through and make yearly visits on this one if he qualifies. Generally, there would be no need for the letter to include specific information on the details of the judicial case. However, if the elders are aware of a situation that would disqualify him from yearly visits or there is reason for the elders in the new congregation to be especially on guard, this can be explained in the letter.

3. **If someone gives evidence of repentance and a desire to be reinstated** by changing his course or asks about reinstatement, the authorized elders may speak with him and kindly explain what he needs to do in order to be reinstated.

4. Disfellowshipped and disassociated ones may obtain a personal copy of the **magazines and other literature** at the magazine and literature counters at the Kingdom Hall. *Our Kingdom Ministry* is *not* distributed to such ones. If someone is an active apostate and known to misuse our literature to oppose the organization, the local elders may decide not to make literature available to him.

5. Disfellowshipped and disassociated ones are generally expected to make their own arrangements for **transportation to and from congregation meetings.** However, in some instances a disfellowshipped or disassociated individual who is making a determined effort to regain a right standing with Jehovah may be in a situation that prevents him from obtaining transportation. It may be that he has no car and that family members or others are not able to help him. Perhaps he cannot afford public transportation, or it is not available in his area. It may be that the distance involved, personal safety, or severe

weather make it inadvisable to walk. In cases of such desperate need, the elders can determine whether some assistance may be provided. (*w81* 9/15 p. 18 par. 14) Such assistance would be viewed as similar to public transportation in that there should be no fraternizing or conversing with the disfellowshipped or disassociated person. (2 John 10, 11) The elders should monitor the situation to make sure that any arrangements made are not abused.

6. If members of the congregation are known to have **undue association with disfellowshipped or disassociated *relatives*** who are not in the household, elders should counsel and reason with those members of the congregation from the Scriptures. Review with them information from the *"God's Love"* book, pages 207-208; *The Watchtower* of April 15, 1988, pages 26-30; or the article "Display Christian Loyalty When a Relative Is Disfellowshipped" in the August 2002 *Our Kingdom Ministry.* If it is clear that a Christian is violating the spirit of the disfellowshipping decree in this regard and does not respond to counsel, it may be that he would not qualify for congregation privileges, which require one to be exemplary. He would not be dealt with judicially unless there is persistent *spiritual* association or he openly criticizes the disfellowshipping decision.

Chapter Eleven

Reinstatement Committee Procedure

Allow sufficient time for a wrongdoer to prove his repentance

Be especially cautious if the individual:

Was deceptive

Secretly practiced sin over an extended period of time

Was reproved or disfellowshipped previously

Conspired to put away his marriage mate

When a Plea for Reinstatement Is Received

1. The final decision to reinstate a disfellowshipped person is always made by a judicial committee of the congregation that took the disfellowshipping action. If possible, the elders in that congregation who served on the judicial committee should be used for the reinstatement committee. Even if the committee feels that it is much too soon to consider reinstatement, two members of the committee should acknowledge receipt of the request and briefly inform the disfellowshipped one that more time must pass. **Written requests for reinstatement should be responded to promptly.**

2. After offering prayer *without the disfellowshipped person present,* the committee will invite him into the room. The committee should endeavor to put the disfellowshipped one at ease, commending him for his progress and desire to be reinstated. The chairman invites the disfellowshipped one to make a

personal statement. The committee should seek to determine his conduct since the time of disfellowshipping and ascertain his attitude. The disfellowshipped person is then excused from the room while the committee deliberates.

3. The committee should be careful to allow sufficient time, perhaps many months, a year, or even longer, for the disfellowshipped person to prove that his profession of repentance is genuine. (*od* p. 156; *it*-2 p. 771) The committee should be especially cautious in some cases. For instance, the wrongdoer may have been deceptive, may have secretly practiced wrongdoing over a long period of time, or may have been repeatedly dealt with judicially in the past for the same or other wrongdoing. Quickly reinstating such a person may embolden others to commit serious sin, as they may feel that little or no discipline will be administered. Where there is evidence of conspiracy between individuals to put away their mates and marry each other, considerable time should elapse for them to prove their repentance and gain reinstatement.—*w83* 3/15 p. 29.

4. The reinstatement committee needs to **be balanced.** Genuine repentance and a turning away from the wrong course—not the attitude of others or merely the time elapsed—are the chief determining factors in deciding when a person may be reinstated.—1 Cor. 5:1, 11-13; 2 Cor. 2:6, 7.

5. The committee should consider the overall pattern of the wrongdoer's life. Does it now show that he is repentant? If so, elders should guard against going to extremes by exacting a point-by-point admission of sins that may not have been clearly proved.

6. **If it is determined that the individual should not be reinstated,** the committee should

explain their reasons and what they expect the individual to do in the future to qualify for reinstatement. After he is dismissed, the committee will conclude with prayer.

7. **If the disfellowshipped person has moved,** a local judicial committee will hear his request for reinstatement where he is now attending meetings. If those elders believe he should be reinstated, they will give the judicial committee of the congregation that disfellowshipped the person their recommendation. They should not let the disfellowshipped one know their recommendation; if the other committee does not agree, knowing that would only cause him frustration. The committee should merely tell him that they must correspond with the elders where he was disfellowshipped and that he will be informed of the decision in due course.

8. The local judicial committee should not pressure the original committee to reinstate the person. The elders on the original committee may be aware of important factors not apparent to others, so it is usually best to respect their judgment. Likewise, the original committee should carefully consider the recommendation of the other committee. Sufficient time may have passed, and the individual may have made drastic changes that the elders on the original committee have not observed. They should keep in mind that the elders making the recommendation have met the individual and have had opportunity to observe his conduct.

9. **If the two congregations are reasonably close to each other,** the committee of the congregation that took the disfellowshipping action should promptly arrange to meet with the disfellowshipped individual after receiving a positive recommendation from the committee of the congregation where he made his plea for reinstatement.

10. **If the elders on the committee of the congregation that took the disfellowshipping action disagree with the recommendation** to reinstate, they should clearly explain their reasons to the other committee.

If the Decision Is to Reinstate

11. If he is being reinstated, the disfellowshipped person can be invited back into the room and informed. At that time Scriptural encouragement and counsel should be given to help him to continue to make spiritual progress. Until the reinstatement is announced, he should continue to conduct himself as a disfellowshipped one. *The committee concludes with prayer with the individual present.* The committee should make sure the branch office is properly informed of the reinstatement.

12. In all cases of reinstatement, **judicial restrictions should be imposed to help** the person see the need for continuing to make 'straight paths for his feet' and out of consideration for the congregation's conscience. (Heb. 12:13) The privilege of sharing in the field service is restored when the individual is reinstated. Other privileges, such as commenting at meetings and giving Theocratic Ministry School talks, can be restored progressively when it is determined that the individual has progressed spiritually to the point that he is qualified and when it is judged by the committee that the extending of such privileges will not be offensive to the congregation. It may be discouraging to the repentant wrongdoer if restrictions are imposed for a prolonged period of time. Therefore, when informing a repentant wrongdoer of restrictions, it would be helpful for the elders to inform him of the date for the next meeting when his progress will be reviewed. The committee may also arrange for a Bible study to be conducted, if needed, which would be reported as field service. It would be

an exceptional case when many months have passed and restrictions have not been lifted.—See 7:19.

See September 7, 2011, letter to all bodies of elders for direction on filing confidential material.

13. **Reinstatement is announced** in the congregation where that person was disfellowshipped as well as in the congregation where he now attends. The coordinator of the body of elders should approve the announcement before an elder reads it to the congregation. The announcement should read as follows: **"[Name of person] is reinstated as one of Jehovah's Witnesses."** Judicial restrictions should *not* be announced. The committee where he attends will supervise the gradual removal of restrictions.

14. A committee will deal with a disassociated person similarly if he requests reinstatement.

15. When a person is reinstated, he will still need much spiritual assistance. The committee should continue to monitor the person's spiritual progress.

Chapter Twelve

Clarifications and Guidelines on Handling Certain Matters

Marking disorderly ones

Weddings

Scriptural freedom to remarry

Adulterous marriage

Child abuse

Taking brothers to court

When disasters occur

Marking Disorderly Ones

1. At times it may be necessary to mark those who display a flagrant disregard for theocratic order though not practicing a grave sin that would result in judicial action. (*w99* 7/15 pp. 29-31) This could include such things as being grossly lazy or critical or being a profitless talker who is a constant 'meddler with what does not concern him.' (2 Thess. 3:11) It may involve one who schemes to take material advantage of others, indulges in entertainment that is clearly improper, or dates when not legally or Scripturally free.—*od* p. 150-151.

2. If the disorderly conduct is *generally unknown to others* and poses no threat to their spiritual well-being, usually it is best to handle things through admonition and counsel. **The elders should not be hasty in giving a warning talk.** However, if the individual does not see the error of his way but continues to be an unwholesome influence, a warning

talk may be given to the congregation.—2 Thess. 3:6, 14, 15; *w99* 7/15 pp. 29-31; *w85* 4/15 pp. 30-31.

- **Example—mark for dating an "unbeliever":** The elders should first counsel and try to help a disorderly one. If a person *persists* in a way that is disturbing and that has the potential for spreading, they may conclude that there would be reason for a warning talk to be given to the congregation.—2 Cor. 6:14; 2 Thess. 3:11, 14; *w99* 7/15 p. 31.
- It may be that an individual is dating not an actual 'unbeliever' but an unbaptized publisher. In such cases a warning talk may not be needed, depending on the circumstances, on the attitude of the Christian, on the level of disturbance to the congregation, and other factors. Nonetheless, if he is dating with a view to marrying someone who is unbaptized, he is not obeying the Bible's counsel at 1 Corinthians 7:39 to marry "only in the Lord," and loving counsel should be given. Elders will use reasonableness and discernment in determining whether a particular situation is sufficiently serious and disturbing to require a warning talk. —*od* pp. 150-151; *w04* 7/1 pp. 30-31.

3. If the disorderly one becomes ashamed of his ways and is moved to change, then as elders of the congregation see the adjustment, they can individually decide to end the limitation they have put on personally socializing with him. This will indicate to the congregation that he is no longer marked.

Weddings

4. Elders may perform a wedding of two Christians or of two unbaptized publishers who are progressing toward baptism. If the couple have a specific elder in mind, they can personally ask him to

See October 12, 2010, letter to all bodies of elders regarding wedding procedures and Scriptural freedom to remarry.

officiate at their wedding. If the couple have no preference, the body of elders can select one of their number to do this. The elder solemnizing a marriage should make sure that he is legally qualified in the state or locality where the wedding takes place. If the speaker does not legally qualify to administer the vows, another elder who meets such legal requirements could administer the wedding vows after the speaker gives the discourse. The elder who administers the vows would complete the necessary documents. Any elder who is asked to give a wedding talk or administer the vows should conscientiously decide whether he wishes to serve in such capacity. (*w97* 4/15 p. 24; *w84* 4/15 pp. 13-14) Elders should not perform the wedding of two persons who are not seriously involved in the activities of Jehovah's Witnesses. Neither should the elders be involved, directly or indirectly, in the wedding of a baptized individual to an unbaptized, disassociated, or disfellowshipped person. (1 Cor. 5:11; 7:39) It would be improper to participate in a second wedding years after the initial ceremony, as this would imply that the first wedding was not binding.—*w06* 10/15 p. 19 par. 8.

5. Before agreeing to officiate, an elder should personally speak with the couple and tactfully but straightforwardly **inquire about their conduct during courtship.** Make sure that all involved are familiar with and follow the direction in the articles in the November 2008 *Our Kingdom Ministry,* page 3; the October 15, 2006, *Watchtower,* pages 18-31; the April 15, 1997, *Watchtower,* pages 23-26; and the April 15, 1984, *Watchtower,* pages 11-15. If it is learned that they have engaged in sexual immorality that requires assistance from a judicial committee, the couple cannot use the Kingdom Hall. If neither is disfellowshipped, it will be up to the discretion of the elder as to whether he will officiate at another location. He may also want to inquire about some of the plans for the wedding and reception and give kindly reminders if needed to help them demonstrate

reasonableness. However, he should remember that what they choose to do is a personal matter as long as this is not unscriptural. (Phil. 4:5; *w84* 4/15 pp. 11-12) The elder should also **make sure that the bride and groom are legally and Scripturally free to marry.** If either was married before, the elder should ask to see a copy of the divorce decree to make sure that the divorce was finalized. He should also be satisfied that the divorce is Scriptural. If the person's divorce occurred before baptism, the elder should not assume the individual is Scripturally free, as baptism does not dissolve previous marital ties. If either the bride or the groom is from another congregation, the elder should speak or correspond with the elders from that congregation to confirm the person's standing in the congregation, Scriptural freedom to marry, and so forth.

6. **If a couple wishes to use the Kingdom Hall,** they should submit a written request well in advance of the wedding date indicating the specific day and time they desire to use the hall. The Congregation Service Committee should promptly consider the request on behalf of the body of elders. Though it is not a requirement that all in the wedding party be baptized, the wedding party should not include any person whose lifestyle grossly conflicts with Bible principles. (*km* 11/08 p. 3; *w84* 4/15 p. 15) Any decoration of the Kingdom Hall or rearrangement of the chairs must be approved. Only music selected from *Kingdom Melodies* or that is found in our songbook may be used. The elders may permit a rehearsal at the Kingdom Hall as long as it does not interfere with other congregation arrangements.

7. **The marriage discourse** should reflect dignity, honor, and seriousness. (Heb. 13:4) Its purpose is to impress on the minds of the participants, as well as those observing, the God-given responsibilities that married couples must assume and discharge in full harmony with the Scriptures. It is not appropriate to

tell humorous stories or read poems simply to entertain or amuse the audience. If the branch office provides an outline in the local language, it should be used.

8. Since much of the direction outlined above has generally been given only to congregation elders, **appointed elders should be used to officiate at weddings, if available.** (*km* 11/08 p. 3; *w84* 4/15 pp. 13-14) Also, elders are certified teachers of God's Word, so they are the ones most qualified to highlight the important Scriptural principles that apply on this special occasion.—1 Tim. 3:2.

Scriptural Freedom to Remarry

See October 12, 2010, letter to all bodies of elders regarding wedding procedures and Scriptural freedom to remarry.

9. **Elders should be very careful** when it comes to giving direction on whether an individual is Scripturally free and should **consult with the branch office** on any questions. This is especially true since the decisions a person makes in such matters will affect not only their relationship with their marriage mate but also their relationship with Jehovah. We therefore as elders shoulder a heavy responsibility in such matters and need to be cautious when offering counsel, especially when the answer may not be readily apparent.—Luke 12:48; Jas. 3:1.

10. Scriptural freedom to remarry requires three conditions: *por·nei'a;* a rejection (refusal to reconcile) by the innocent mate; and a legal, final divorce. —Matt. 5:31, 32; 19:9; Heb. 13:4.

11. If a dedicated Christian who accuses his believing mate of adultery and **wishes to establish freedom to divorce and remarry** approaches an elder, the matter should be referred to the body of elders. The accuser is not free unless the evidence establishing wrongdoing is sufficient to warrant the formation of a judicial committee. (Deut. 19:15; John 8:17) If the accused mate is associated with another congregation, the evidence should be presented to

the elders of that congregation for review and a determination. *The publisher should be advised that he is not to view himself as Scripturally free until the elders have investigated and guilt is established.*

12. In some cases adultery is not proved, but it is established by confession or by two or more witnesses that the mate stayed *all night* in the same house with a person of the opposite sex (or a known homosexual) *under improper circumstances.* The elders should carefully consider the situation. Were the individuals together *all night?* Were *improper* circumstances involved? For example, were the two persons alone? Is there evidence of a romantic relationship? What were the sleeping arrangements? Even if adultery is not established, it may be that the Christian was involved in an immoral sleeping arrangement. Although the elders cannot tell the innocent mate that he is free to marry because adultery was not proved, in view of the circumstances, if the innocent mate is convinced that adultery did occur, the elders may allow him to take responsibility before Jehovah for obtaining a Scriptural divorce; if he remarries, no judicial action will be taken.

13. Even **if the accused mate is not one of Jehovah's Witnesses** (disfellowshipped, disassociated, or never baptized), two witnesses are also generally required to establish wrongdoing that would provide a basis for Scriptural freedom. An exception may be made, however, if the unbeliever privately makes an **unambiguous confession of adultery** to the Christian mate. In such a case, if the innocent Christian mate believes that the confession is true and does not wish to reconcile, he can submit a letter to the elders outlining his situation. The body of elders should then consider the letter. Is there any known reason to conclude other than that the unbelieving mate has been immoral? For example, was the confession worded ambiguously? Did the unbeliever

later deny making the confession? If the unbeliever is willing to speak with the elders and matters are unclear, the elders may choose to ask the accused mate directly. If there is no known reason to conclude otherwise, the innocent mate can be allowed to take responsibility before Jehovah for obtaining a Scriptural divorce; if he remarries, no judicial action will be taken.—*w77* pp. 607-608.

14. The following constitutes rejection by the innocent mate:

- The innocent mate *initiates* a divorce either before or after learning of the adultery.
- The innocent mate *signs a divorce decree indicating he does not object* to a divorce initiated by the guilty mate, either before or after learning of the adultery. Note: In some lands it is possible for the innocent mate to sign divorce documents that stipulate custody of the children and financial support without indicating he agrees with the divorce; his signing such papers in itself would *not* indicate a rejection.—*w00* 12/15 pp. 28-29.
- Though verbally expressing forgiveness and not seeking a divorce, the innocent mate *refuses to resume sexual relations for a very prolonged period of time,* a year or even years. Before indicating to the guilty mate that he is free to pursue a Scriptural divorce, the elders should consult with the branch office. Note: The innocent mate is not required to make a quick decision whether to forgive or not.—*w74* pp. 671-672.

Adulterous Marriage

15. If a divorced person remarries and he was not Scripturally free to do so—in other words, if *adultery* and *rejection by the innocent mate* had not occurred—he has entered into an adulterous marriage.

In Jehovah's eyes, he has married someone while still bound to another. Entering into such a marriage would call for judicial action.

16. If the disfellowshipped one was eventually reinstated, the elders would be very cautious in extending any special privileges. He could share in the cleaning and repair of the local Kingdom Hall. He may eventually give student talks in the Theocratic Ministry School if his doing so would not disturb others. However, **he would not be assigned to help with literature, accounts, magazines, attendants, or similar privileges in the congregation as long as the innocent former mate is alive, unmarried, and has not been guilty of *por·nei'a.***—*w83* 3/15 p. 29.

17. If a Christian did not enter into an adulterous marriage but **deliberately committed adultery in a scheming way so as to end his marriage or he pressured the innocent mate to reject him** and eventually agree to a divorce, he has dealt treacherously with her. (Mal. 2:14-16) His conduct is similar to entering into an adulterous marriage, and he would not qualify for special privileges for *many years.*

See September 7, 2011, letter to all bodies of elders for direction on filing confidential material.

Child Abuse

18. You should **immediately call the branch office** for direction if you learn of an accusation of child abuse, regardless of the age of the victim now or at the time of the alleged abuse, even if it occurred before the alleged perpetrator's baptism. The branch office will then give direction based on the circumstances involved in each situation.

See October 1, 2012, letter to all bodies of elders regarding child abuse.

19. Child abuse is a crime. **Never suggest to anyone that they should not report an allegation of child abuse to the police or other authorities.** If you are asked, make it clear that whether to report the matter to the authorities or not is a personal

decision for each individual to make and that there are no congregation sanctions for either decision. Elders will not criticize anyone who reports such an allegation to the authorities. If the victim wishes to make a report, it is his or her absolute right to do so. —Gal. 6:5.

20. When a known child molester moves to another congregation, the Congregation Service Committee should send a letter of introduction with full and complete information about his background and current situation. Any letter from the branch office concerning the child molester should not be photocopied or sent to the new congregation. However, the new congregation should be clearly informed of any restrictions imposed by the branch office. A copy of the letter of introduction should be sent to the branch office.

21. In a case in which a brother denies an allegation of child abuse and he has been accused by only one witness, the following direction is given if he moves to another congregation. The elders should consult the branch office before sending any information regarding the accusation to the elders in the new congregation. It would be helpful if your letter to the branch office provided a detailed summary of the matter and explained the spiritual condition and personal circumstances of the accused and the accuser. With regard to the accused, the following questions should be answered: (1) What is his interaction with children? (2) Does he admit to any activity with the accuser that could have been misinterpreted by the accuser as sexual abuse, or does he claim to have a poor memory of the accusation? (3) What is his response to why the accuser has made the allegation? (4) Has he had to be counseled for any other matters of a sexual nature, such as inappropriate conduct with adult sisters or pornography? (5) What is the level of his spirituality? (6) Do all the elders on the body believe that he can be trusted with children?

The following questions should be answered with regard to the accuser: (1) What is the level of maturity of the child or youth? (2) Is he (or she) describing conduct that one his age would not normally know about? (3) Is the child or his parents known to be serious, mature? (4) Is his memory consistent, or is it intermittent, or does it involve repressed memories? (*w95* 11/1 pp. 25-26) (5) What is the reputation of the parents? (6) Are they spiritually and emotionally mature? After carefully considering the matter, the branch office will then give you direction as to what information about the allegation should be shared, if any, with the elders of the new congregation.

Taking Brothers to Court

22. At 1 Corinthians 6:1-8, the apostle Paul gave strong counsel that Christians should not take other Christians before secular courts to settle personal disputes that should be settled with the help of the congregation elders.—*w97* 3/15 pp. 21-22; *w86* 11/15 p. 20; *g83* 2/8 pp. 13-15; *w73* 11/15 pp. 703-704.

- If an individual ignores God's Word on this matter, it *may* affect his congregation privileges.
- There is no difference between taking an individual brother or sister to court and taking to court a corporation whose owners are all Jehovah's Witnesses. The spirit of 1 Corinthians 6: 1-8 would be violated by relying on the secular courts to settle business disputes among corporations that are made up entirely of brothers.

23. However, there are legal matters over which the congregation does not have authority and which may therefore be taken to a secular court for judgment without violating the principle or the spirit of 1 Corinthians 6:1-8. These include:

- Getting a divorce decree, child custody and support, alimony.

- Obtaining insurance compensation. If a person suffers loss or is injured in or by an automobile owned by a spiritual brother, it might be necessary legally to sue the brother in order to obtain compensation from the brother's insurer.
- Being listed among creditors in bankruptcy procedures.
- Probating wills.
- Certain countersuits. For example, if a *worldly creditor* sues a brother, it might be necessary for the brother, for his own protection, to file a countersuit even though spiritual brothers may be included in the action.
- If a brother takes legal action against another baptized Witness, it would not be a violation of 1 Corinthians 6:1-8 for the one being sued to defend himself or to countersue. This is true whether the matter was first taken before the elders or not.

When Disasters Occur

See January 6, 2012, letter to all bodies of elders regarding disaster preparedness and response.

24. When the local congregation is affected by a disaster, elders should assist the publishers in the following ways:

- **Quickly make assessment of the immediate needs of the brothers and sisters.** Group overseers can take the lead to locate each family in their field service group and inquire of their well-being. They will next want to communicate their findings to the coordinator or another elder, if he is not available, even if all is well.
- **Take care of the immediate needs** by arranging for medical treatment and supplies, such as water, food, and shelter. (John 13:35; Gal. 6:10) If advance warning of a disaster is given, as with some major storms, elders should ensure that everyone is in a safe location and if time per-

mits, should obtain and distribute supplies that may be needed.

- **Give spiritual and emotional support** to the congregation, and resume congregation meetings as quickly as possible.—*km* 1/07 p. 4; *g96* 6/22 p. 17.
- In addition to the immediate physical needs of the brothers, is there property damage? Is damage to Kingdom Halls and individual homes major or minor? (For example, major would be roof destroyed, several feet of water in home; minor would be missing shingles on roof, windows broken, and so forth.) To **gather the necessary information,** responsible elders in the area may help in assessing the damage. Once this information is gathered, the coordinator or another elder may **inform the circuit overseer** of the damage and the health condition of the brothers and sisters in the congregation.
- When the **circuit overseer** has received the report from the elders, he **will promptly call the branch office.** The branch office will determine whether there is a need for further assistance.
- **Other assistance** may be provided, such as checking to see what government aid may be available.—*w66* 2/1 pp. 95-96.

25. If the disaster occurs in another area, elders can take the lead in assisting by doing the following:

- Remember the brothers and sisters in your prayers.—2 Cor. 1:8-11.
- If you wish to provide monetary assistance, you may send your donations to the worldwide work in the land in which you live, either through the congregation or directly. In this way, "the faithful and discreet slave," through the organizational arrangements set in place

by the Governing Body, cares for the needs of the worldwide brotherhood in an orderly manner.—Matt. 24:45-47; 1 Cor. 14:33, 40; *km* 1/05 "Question Box."

- Do not send materials or supplies to the disaster area unless specifically requested by the brothers in charge. This will assure an orderly relief effort and the proper distribution of goods.
- Please do not telephone the branch office just for information, as this can tie up phone lines that are needed to handle incoming calls from the disaster area.

26. **Following a disaster,** the publishers can make good use of opportunities to comfort others spiritually and, to the extent possible, to help in practical ways according to the need. Aiding the brothers in these ways takes time and effort. However, love for the whole association of brothers will prompt us to do what we can to help those in need.—2 Cor. 8:1-12.

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WATCHTOWER
BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

BOX 280, INGLEBURN, NSW 1890 AUSTRALIA ABN 42 002 861 225 PHONE: (02) 9829 5600 FAX: (02) 9829 3616

August 28, 2002

TO ALL CONGREGATIONS IN AUSTRALIA

Dear Brothers:

At Psalm 144:15 we read: "Happy is the people whose God is Jehovah!" We see the truthfulness of this inspired statement when we associate with our brothers and sisters at conventions, assemblies, and congregation meetings. We enjoy a warm atmosphere of peace while we benefit from fine spiritual encouragement from Jehovah and his organization. (Psalm 29:11) What a contrast to those of the world who lack true spiritual guidance and a solid hope for the future!—Isaiah 65:13.

What enables us to maintain our happy spirit? For one thing, we fear Jehovah and we deeply respect the admonition in His Word, including what the Bible says on sexual matters. (1 Corinthians 6:9, 10; Hebrews 13:4) At first, it was not easy for some of us to bring our lives into harmony with Jehovah's elevated standards. We had to make significant changes in our lifestyle before we could qualify for membership in Jehovah's clean, spirit-directed organization. Was it worth the effort? Absolutely! How happy we are to be living in harmony with God's righteous requirements!

In recent weeks, the media in this country has focused attention on the way accusations of child abuse are handled by various religious organizations. Such reports may cause some sincere individuals to ask about the procedures followed by Jehovah's Witnesses. Therefore, we believe that it will be beneficial to review with you our Bible-based position, so that you will "know how you ought to give an answer" to any who may inquire.—Colossians 4:6.

Simply stated, we abhor the sexual abuse of children and will not protect any perpetrator of such repugnant acts from the consequences of his gross sin. **(Romans 12:9)** We expect the elders to investigate every allegation of child abuse. Even one abused child is one too many. However, in evaluating the evidence, they must bear in mind the Bible's clear direction: "No single witness should rise up against a man respecting any error or any sin . . . . At the mouth of two witnesses or at the mouth of three witnesses the matter should stand good." (Deuteronomy 19:15) Later, this requirement to consider testimony of two or three witnesses was confirmed by Jesus. **(Matthew 18:16)** Thus, although they investigate every allegation, the elders are not authorized by the Scriptures to take congregational action unless there is a confession or there are two credible witnesses. However, if two persons are witnesses to separate incidents of the same kind of wrongdoing, their testimony can be deemed sufficient to take action.—1 Timothy 5:19, 24, 25.

What if someone is a proven child molester? The article "Let Us Abhor What is Wicked!" published in the January 1, 1997, issue of *The Watchtower*, had this to say on page 29: "For the protection of our children, a man known to have been a child molester does not qualify for a responsible position in the congregation. Moreover, he cannot be a pioneer or serve in any other special, full-time service." We take such decisive action because we are concerned with maintaining Bible standards and protecting our children. **(1 Timothy 3:2, 9, 10)** Everyone in the

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organization is expected to meet the same requirements, namely, to be clean physically, mentally, morally, and spiritually.—1 Corinthians 7:1; Ephesians 4:17-19; **1 Thessalonians 2:4**.

We have long instructed elders to report allegations of child abuse to the authorities where required by law to do so, even where there is only one witness. (Romans 13:1) In any case, the elders know that if the victim wishes to make a report, it is his or her absolute right to do so.—Galatians 6:5.

At least since 1981, articles have been published in our journals, *The Watchtower* and *Awake!*, with a view to educating Jehovah's people and the public on the need to protect children from child abuse. Besides the above-quoted article, there was the article "Help For the Victims of Incest," which appeared in the October 1, 1983, *Watchtower*. *Awake!* has featured such articles as "Your Child is in Danger!," "How Can We Protect Our Children?," and "Prevention in the Home" (October 8, 1993) as well as "Child Molesting—Every Mother's Nightmare," in its January 22, 1985 issue.

We believe that we have a strong, Bible-based policy on child abuse. Over the years, as we have noted areas where our policy could be strengthened, we have not hesitated to follow through. At Kingdom Ministry Schools the elders receive ongoing reminders regarding this policy and related matters. And we continue to urge the elders to follow closely the procedures that we have established.

The moral cleanness of the congregation continues to be of vital concern to the "faithful and discreet slave." (Matthew 24:45) As we keep applying Scriptural principles in our lives, our happiness will increase. We trust that these reminders will be helpful to you as you share the Kingdom hope with right-hearted ones. We have much to look forward to in the way of spiritual refreshment as we attend the "Zealous Kingdom Proclaimers" District Conventions. What a happy prospect! Yes, there is no doubt about it. "Happy is the people whose God is Jehovah!"—Psalm 144:15.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B.&T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

Note to the presiding overseer: Please have this letter read at the first Service Meeting following its receipt. The letter should be read by one of the elders. All Scriptures shown in bold type should be read.

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AUSTRALIA BRANCH
(Via CompuServe)

AB:LLA February 18, 1997 No. 173

Governing Body, Publishing Committee
Brooklyn.

Dear Brothers:

Re: Handling Child Abuse Matters - Court Subpoenas

We are writing to seek an urgent response to two questions and matters related to them, as set out below. The Society and the chairman of a judicial committee have received subpoenas to produce confidential records relating to a charge of child abuse, the return date being February 27, 1997.

For the reasons later discussed in this letter, we have determined, subject to your direction otherwise, that the Society should hand the disfellowshipping records to the court without claiming ecclesiastical privilege. We believe that the elders may also want to hand over the congregation's records, but we will leave that for them to decide. We have today discussed the issues briefly with Brother Lloyd Barry of the Governing Body and are forwarding this letter with a request for an urgent response, if that is possible.

This particular case involves a man who was disfellowshipped for homosexual acts with a young boy with whom he studied some years ago. He was disfellowshipped on his own admission and later reinstated. It appears that the brother will deny the charges in court, and the testimony of the elders, and the congregation and Society records will be needed to convict him.

There is little, if any, chance that we would be successful in a claim of ecclesiastical privilege on the records held by the Society and if we seek to claim privilege it will give the impression that we are wanting to cover over the matter. However, if we do hand over the records without putting up a fight, it will tend to undermine the stand taken by the elders when asked to produce the congregation judicial records. Until now the elders have been willing to face a jail sentence rather than disclose confidential information or records.

So, basically, our questions are, where individual elders or the Society are subpoenaed to testify to what they know, and/or records in their possession are the subject of a subpoena:

1 How should the Society respond?

2 How should the elders on the judicial committee respond?

There have been several incidences where elders have been subpoenaed to testify against a brother or a disfellowshipped person who has been accused of child abuse and we have examined the possibilities of claiming ecclesiastical privilege on numerous occasions. Hence, we are not primarily seeking a legal answer to these questions. We are

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asking for a scriptural viewpoint on the appropriate course to take in view of the confidentiality requirements outlined in the Scriptures and the Society's publications.

In some of the States of Australia legislation exists which grants qualified privilege to ministers of religion. Only matters disclosed in confession, according to the ritual of the particular religion, are privileged. As you would appreciate, not all judicial matters come within this definition, since information is gained by the elders from the testimony of others and circumstances not related to a confession. This may be the case even where there is a confession. We believe that we can extend the claim of privilege to written notes made by the elders where they pertain to an actual confession, but not to records that originate from witnesses testifying in the judicial hearing. When records are forwarded to the Society, these records are distanced from the confession and would not come within the provisions of the various State Acts.

Three of the seven states of Australia have not legislated to provide for ecclesiastical privilege and the common law operating in these states provides no basis for such privilege. To date we have relied on the fact that prosecutors and judges have been reluctant to penalise ministers who have refused to divulge the contents of a confession.

If records held by the Society are subpoenaed, and where it is clear that no privilege exists, are such records to be released? If so, what effect will this have on the elders who may not see the fine line between documents held by the Society and those held by the elders? Even though the legal principles applicable to the records held by the Society are different to those applying to those held by the elders, it would be hard for the brothers to see that difference if the Society were to release their records but encourage the elders to take a different course.

In your Interbranch Memo LLB:LSB of September 16, 1993, on page 2, it is stated: "When elders are forced to go to the hearing, they have been directed to claim ecclesiastical privileg unless ordered to testify by a judge or risk contempt of court. Then, each lder has been allowed to make his own conscientious decision. No one should view any elder in an unfavourable light for whatever decision is made in these instances." This raises several questions.

When the order is to disclose or produce the records of the judicial committee, is it a matter for the elder personally and for his conscience alone?

Why is the subject matter no longer confidential merely because a judge decides it is not confidential? It would seem to us that it is a breach of confidentiality to disclose such matters whether or not a person is ordered to do so by a judge. Perhaps the principle of protection for the brothers and the community permits disclosure of information that would otherwise be confidential. (w 1/1/97, page 29, par 4) Is that the case?

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The Watchtower has said, "Depending on the law of the land where he lives, the molester may well have to serve a prison term or face other sanctions from the State. The congregation will not protect him from this." (w 1/1/97, page 29) Does this mean that where a brother has committed a criminal offence, such as child abuse, the elders on the judicial committee or the Society, will disclose this information to the proper authorities if required to do so? If that were the case, and the brothers were aware of our stand, it would make a clear distinction between matters that may or may not be disclosed even under duress.

This also raises the question of whether elders should report child abusers or other criminal activities that they are aware of *before* they are ordered to do so by a court, particularly where they have some indication that the person may be a danger to the congregation or the community.

Of course, there are varying degrees of abuse, and the circumstances that surround the offences may vary greatly. A person may have committed an offence some 10 or 20 years ago, and the victim who is now an adult makes these accusations. The accused may admit the accusations, and while we would not permit him to serve in a responsible position, does that mean that the elders, or the Society, should testify against him in court when ordered to do so? If the elders were to testify and disclose the confidential records of his past, they would also have the opportunity to speak to his altered course of life, if that was a fact.

Where elders become aware of a person's previous record of child abuse, and that person applies for baptism, or to become an unbaptised publisher, should he not be encouraged to clear this matter with the authorities before he is approved, or at least should he not be advised by the elders that if the issue arises later, the elders will have to testify to the authorities.

The general feeling in the community and the legal profession is that churches will cover and protect child abusers, and that has proven to be the case in Christendom. We have also been accused of protecting the abuser when we refuse to reveal confidential matters, or produce confidential records.

Since these issues are arising with greater frequency as the old system decays, we feel that it is important to clarify the questions raised in this letter. It may be that the Society will need to review the extent to which it keeps records and reports of judicial proceedings involving criminal matters. Perhaps the only information we need to keep is the fact and date of the disfellowshipping. If this was the procedure *only in matters involving child abuse* it may be that this would be clear enough indication to the Society as to his past record. It may also be advisable to make an exception to the re-instatement procedure in these cases, allowing the Society to review the judicial committee's decision prior to any announcement to him or to the congregation. In that case, the elders could send a report from the disfellowshipping records of the congregation.

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There are, then, two issues that seem to cross the issue of confidentiality. Firstly, the need to protect the children in our congregations and the community, and the question of whether elders bear some responsibility if a person is permitted to continue to abuse children. Secondly, the question of where Caesar's law overrides the obligation of confidentiality.

Our questions, then, are:

1. Where it is clear that there is no ecclesiastical privilege available at law, does the obligation of the elder to maintain confidentiality cease when ordered by proper authority to disclose such information, either by personal testimony or the production of records?

2. Where the Society is called upon to produce and/or speak to the documents it holds, what stand should be taken?

We therefore seek an urgent response to these issues.

Please accept our warm Christian love,

Your brother,
H. V. Mouritz
For the Branch Committee
AUSTRALIA BRANCH

xc: Writing Committee
Service Committee

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AUSTRALIA BRANCH
(Via CompuServe)

SA:LLA October 29, 1997 No. 121

Governing Body
Attention: Publishing Committee
Brooklyn

Dear Brothers:

Re: Handling Child Abuse Matters

Thank you for your Interbranch Memo LLJ:LSD October 7, 1997 in response to our Interbranch Memo AB:LLA July 22, 1997, No. 231. We appreci te th points made and the procedure recommended for handling child abuse matters in Aus alia. There are one or two further points on which we now seek some clarification. In the main, these problems arise out of the instructions in the letter to all elders dated March 14, 1997 (US) and May 1, 1997 (Australia).

The legal position in connection with reporting in Australia is set out in our Memo No 231. In effect, with further information w have to hand, only the Community Welfare Act in the Northern Territories requir s elders to report child abuse. That act calls for "any person. . . who believes on reasonable grounds" to report the abuse. He must, "as soon as practicable after obtaining the knowledge that constitutes the reasonable grounds for his so believing, report the fact, and all material facts on which that knowledge is based . . . " We are now c nvinced that s.316 of the NSW Crimes Act, referred to in our letter No. 231, has no force in child abuse matters as ministers of religion in New South Wales are specifically exempted from reporting by s.22(3) of the Children (Care and Protection) Act 1987.

As mentioned in earlier correspondence, Ecclesiastical privilege is not available in all states, and where it is available, it is only on the basis of a confession according to the ritual of the church Not all cases of child abuse involve confession. In fact, those cases where the elders are subpoenaed or congregation records are sought, do not usually involve confession.

We have prepared and attached a flow chart of sorts, that we hope will assist in highlighting some problems that still remain in handling these cases, and in particular the consequ nces of advising the elders in another congregation. when a child abuser moves.

The paragraph numbered 1, in your letter LLJ:LSD of October 7, 1997, refers to the two elders determining if there is any "substance" to the accusation. However, we understand that the procedure for handling gross sins, as set out in *ks* 91 at pages 97 and 109, calls for the elders to first determine whether there is substance to an accusation. This point is made in the second paragraph on page 109, then three indented points are listed under that main point. The second and third indented points appear to indicate that there are three circumstances under which the body of elders may take further action. The

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second indented paragraph states that if there are two or three witnesses or a confession, then the body of elders would appoint a judicial committee. If there is insufficient evidence, but serious questions have been raised, then two elders would be assigned, it is assumed, by the body of elders, to investigate the matter. Thus, the proposed method mentioned under point 1. in both our memo No. 231 and your reply of October 7, 1997, that is, to have the elder receiving the accusation and the presiding overseer make the investigation prior to meeting with the body of elders, is a departure from normal procedure. Do we understand this correctly?

To follow the regular procedures outlined in *ks* 91 in handling child abuse matters or other criminal offences that put an individual under obligation to notify the authorities, the whole body of elders would need to have sufficient knowledge of the matter to determine the qualifications of those who will be appointed to serve on the committee. It would appear that that knowledge would be sufficient to constitute the "reasonable grounds" referred to in the reporting Acts. If they did not have "reasonable grounds", they would not appoint a committee. Thus if there is a reporting law applicable in that state, all of the elders would be under obligation to report. The others would have reasonable excuse not to report if one or two members of the body did so. Australia has just one small state where reporting laws apply, but there is quite extensive pressure from some groups for mandatory reporting in other states.

Another problem arises when a body of elders is aware of the details of an abuse matter and are not required by the state where they reside to report the matter. The offender now moves to a state where reporting is mandatory and information is forwarded to the new congregation in harmony with the Society's instructions in the March 14 letter. Perhaps the offender is not disfellowshipped, and is even making good progress with the congregation who is no longer concerned over the past abuse. Now the elders in the new congregation are under obligation to report the matter, since they now have reasonable grounds to believe that an abuse has been committed and has not been reported. So, even though it may be some time ago, and no one in the family is wanting to pursue the matter in the courts, the elders will still be obliged to report it.

This raises an additional question concerning cases where the offences were committed before baptism. The congregation may view the sin as being "dead works" and covered by the ransom sacrifice. However, if the state requires such offences to be reported, should the elders make the report even though they have not handled the matter and the sin was before he came to a knowledge of the truth? It may be a little difficult to report a person who is in good standing and accepted for baptism and against whom the congregation will take no action. Likewise, if the sin was committed after baptism, was handled by the congregation some 10 to 15 years ago, and the offender has lived an exemplary life since that time, should the elders now report this offence because he is now in a state that requires reporting of these offences? How far do we go in obeying

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Caesar's law? Or does this come under the heading of "not protecting" the molester from the consequences of his past sins as mentioned on page 29 of *The Watchtower* January 1, 1997?

Step 2, in your Letter of October 7, 1997 and our Memo No. 231 both agree that the elders should then check with the Society to determine whether reporting laws apply. If they do, then the matter should be reported and a record kept in the file. There are two points arising out of this. Firstly, we believe that the accused should be told that the elders are obliged to make a report. We believe it would be better if a direction was given to the elders published in the publications that would notify all the publishers that there may be times when elders will have to report criminal offences, where required by law to do so. Secondly, we are not sure why only a simple statement should be placed in the file. If the matter is to be reported, it is quite likely that the elders will later be called to testify when it is brought to court. If that happens, then would it not be better to have a complete record on file of the contents of the statement made to the authorities? Is there any reason that we have overlooked for not having a complete record of the statement given on file?

In the third last paragraph of your letter of October 7, 1997, when referring to our concerns that ecclesiastical privilege may be lost when the elders are conveying information to another body of elders when a molester moves, you suggest that the elders simply write that "[the abuser] is known as a child molester." However, the March 14 letter says: "The secretary should write on behalf of the elders in the old congregation to the new congregation's body of elders and outline this brother's background and what the elders in the old congregation have been doing to assist him. Any needed cautions should be provided to the new congregation's body of elders." We understand that this information is necessary to enable the elders to give adequate protection to the congregation, as well as help in the abuser's restoration. If we reduce the statement to the words suggested, are we not, at least to some extent, defeating the purpose of the communication?

The March 14 letter also makes the point that an individual "known" to be a child molester has reference to the perception of that one in the community and in the Christian congregation. But where no disciplinary action has been taken by the old congregation, possibly because of a move during the investigatory or judicial process, or because there was insufficient evidence, then we could not say that that person is a "known child abuser," since the only persons having the knowledge are those on the committee. The elders may also need to be very careful to not imply that a person is a "convicted" child abuser, that is, known in the sense that the world views a "known child abuser", and thus make ourselves liable to a charge of defamation. If the only communication the elders receive is a brief statement saying that the person is a "known child abuser", they may assume that the matter has been handled by a court of law, or that he is a current abuser, when in fact he may have committed a single offence many years ago.

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Another issue, then, is the report that is to be made to the Society, referred to in the March 14 letter under the heading "Privileges of Service in the Congregation." The letter calls for a report on any person now serving in some Society appointed position who is known to have been guilty of child abuse in the past. The penultimate paragraph calls for detailed specific information. This information is forwarded to the Service Desk, and it is this report that puts the officers of the Society in possession of knowledge that may make them liable to be called upon to testify in court. At the time of writing of our Memo No. 231, we were advised by Crown Prosecutors that the *Crimes Act* in NSW requires a person to report serious crimes. Since that time, we have determined that under the *Children (Care and Protection) Act*, ministers of religion are exempt in New South Wales, and that should protect the Bethel brothers from reporting, but it will not protect them from testifying, or producing records when subpoenaed. As for attorney-client privilege referred to, that would only protect the one brother in Bethel who holds a practicing certificate, but he would certainly not be able to handle all aspects of a case, as some involve questions of a service nature. In addition, he is not always present, and other brothers who know legal matters but who do not hold a current practicing certificate may have to answer the elder's questions when he contacts the Society. As far as the brothers at Bethel are concerned, the problem does not lie in the area of reporting, but is related to subpoenas to produce records, such as disfellowshipping notices and other communications. Since ecclesiastical privilege can only be claimed in connection with confessions, it cannot be claimed in all cases of child abuse. Where the information comes by way of confession, we can try and claim that the disfellowshipping notice is part of the "confessional ritual," but this would be a question yet to be determined by a court of law in this country.

We do appreciate very much the careful thought that has been put into the response to our questions on this subject, as well as the large amount of time that has been taken to sort these matters out, and we want to thank you for this. We would appreciate your further observations on the points made above.

We send our warm Christian love

Your brothers

W. M. LLoyd
For the Branch Committee
AUSTRALIA BRANCH

Encl.

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"CA Flowchart.doc"


"Comments on Flow Chart.doc"

xc: Service Committee, Writing Committee, H. V. Mouritz

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UNITED STATES BRANCH
EXECUTIVE OFFICES

GSC:AD December 31, 1998 No. 164S

Via CompuServe

Watch Tower Society
AUSTRALIA

Dear Brothers:

Consideration has been given to a number of questions that have been raised about how we deal with those who have been guilty of child abuse. We are providing the branches with comments on a number of the questions that have been asked. No doubt similar questions have arisen in your area. This will supplement the letter and guidelines that were sent to the branches in 1997. These guidelines are for branch use only to help your servic desk(s) in deciding on cases that come to your attention.

1. **Question:** When reviewing the qualifications of former child abuser *who is already serving* as an elder or ministerial servant or *who is being recommended* for this privilege, we understand that the branch office could consider *retaining* or *appointing* him if the wrongdoing occurred many years ago and there is no evidence that he has repeated the sin since then and presently has the congregation's re pect Do we have the correct understanding on this matter?

   Answer:In the situation described above, repentance and forgiveness are important factors to be considered when the recommendation is to retain one who is already serving or to recomm nd him, if the sin occurred many years ago. Of course, one must have the r spect of the congregation and his pattern of life must harmonize with Bible principles since the wrongdoing occurred. It is best to wait at least 20 years since the last i cident of child abuse was committed before retaining or appointing former child abusers.

2. **Question:** Would there be exceptions to the above guideline? (Would it make a difference, for example, if 20 years had not passed but he had engaged in the sin before his baptism? Would i make a difference if 20 years had not passed but the elders unanimously recommend his appointment and his victim(s) have forgiven the abuser, perhaps even writing a letter to the branch showing support of him or objecting to his removal? Would it make a difference if 20 years had not passed but the degree of wrongdoing was restricted to a few "abusive acts," as noted on page 10 in the footnote to the October 8, 1993, *Awake!*, but *porneia* was not involved?)

   Answer: There may be exceptions if a period of twenty years has not yet passed and the individual engaged in the sin before his baptism. It would be well to consider what

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the apostle Paul wrote at 1 Corinthians 6:9, 10 in dealing with such cases. In reference to whether it would make a difference if twenty years had not passed but the elders unanimously recommend the appointment, the individual has been forgiven for his sin, and the one that was wronged even writes a letter to the branch indicating his support for the individual, then the direction given in The *Watchtower* of May 1, 1996 would apply. The Questions from Readers, explained the application of Philippians 3:13 and this would have a bearing on the matter. Would it make a difference if twenty years had not passed but the degree of wrongdoing was restricted to what is defined as loose conduct? If a long time has elapsed, but less than twenty years, if the brother has been making straight paths for his feet, leading to healing, consideration could be given to such recommendation. (Hebrews 12:12, 13; James 5:15, 16) In other words, if it is clear that the individual has been restored and his pattern of life over the years shows that he has measured up to Scriptural requirements, it may be that he can serve, providing there is no current outcry. Each case may be decided on its own merits and the circumstances involved.

3. **Question:** If the wrongdoing occurred over 20 years ago and in general there is no public outcry, would we prevent a former child abuser from serving solely on the basis of the victim's (or relatives') strong feelings against him?

   Answer: If the wrongdoing occurred over twenty years ago and there are still some strong feelings against him by either the one wronged or his relatives, it would be better to wait as long as such strong feelings persist.

4. **Question:** If it is decided that a former child abuser could not serve because a period of 20 years has not passed, might he be appointed after 20 years if recommended and the circumstances are favorable?

   Answer: If it was decided that a former wrongdoer could not serve because the period of twenty years had not passed, he might be appointed after that, if he is recommended and the circumstances are favorable.

5. **Question:** If the branch decides that a former child abuser could not serve, could he be given some privileges in the congregation whether or not a period of 20 years has passed? If so, what might these privileges include? (Some have equated a former child abuser with being in the same position with regard to privileges as one who entered into an adulterous marriage. Is such appropriate? Might a former abuser at some point in time qualify to carry the microphones, conduct a meeting for field service, or offer a prayer? If not normally assigned, might he conduct a meeting for service when it is only attended by sisters?)

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Answer: If he has the respect of the congregation and there are no complaints against him, then he may be extended certain privileges if he has been endeavoring to make himself available.

6. **Question:** The March 14, 1997, letter to "Bodies of Elders," a copy of which was sent to all branches, requires that the elders of the former congregation send information about a former child abuser to the new congregation. Is it possible to qualify what is stated there if the sin took place 20 or more years ago and the branch has judged that he can remain in a position of trust? Must the elders of the new congregation be informed of his background in these situations? Or would it be better for the elders of the old congregation to follow the direction in the March 14, 1997 letter, to send this information to the new congregation, regardless of how long ago the sin occurred and regardless of the fact that the Society views him as qualified by appointing or retaining him as a servant?

   Answer: If the branch has judged that he remains in a position of trust, there is no need to pass on information regarding his past wrongdoing or reveal details. The branch office generally knows the details anyway. So if he is viewed as one qualified and is retained as a servant, then the elders in the new congregation would likely be getting a favorable letter of recommendation, but without any reference to what occurred twenty or more years ago.

It is hoped that this information will be helpful to you in dealing with questions that may occasionally arise in your branch territory. This is to be used by those on the service desk as guidelines for answering correspondence. However, when writing, you should not mention this 20 year period. These guidelines are given simply to assist the branch to make decisions in these matters. Thank you very much.

Your brothers,

Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society
of Pennsylvania

For the Service Committee

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UNITED STATES BRANCH
EXECUTIVE OFFICES

GSC/AS July 24, 1998 No. 256S

Via CompuServe

Watch Tower Society
AUSTRALIA

Dear Brothers:

Your letter AB April 28, 1998, No. 212 made a suggestion for a possible Question Box in your edition of *Our Kingdom Ministry* on the need under some circumstances for elders to inform the secular authorities when they learn of a brother or sister being involved in a serious crime.

After carefully considering the matter it has been concluded that if the Branch Committee in Australia continues to recommend publishing the suggested material, then it would be appropriate for the branch to feature the suggested question and answer as outlined in your letter 212. It will not be necessary to schedule the information to be considered on a service meeting program, nor to have an elder just read the question and answer. We will leave it to the brothers to read the information presented and suggest you proceed no further on the matter than that at this time.

Please be assured of our warm Christian love and best wishes.

Your brothers,

Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society
of Pennsylvania

For the Service Committee

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

■ Literature offer for **April and May:** Subscriptions to *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* for $10.00 each for one year or $5.00 each for six months. Have the *Require* brochure available for interested people for a contribution of 50c, and endeavour to start home Bible studies. **June:** *Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life* for $1.50.

■ The question has been asked whether elders should supply information to secular authorities when they learn that a brother or sister has been involved in a serious crime. Information provided to elders is treated as confidential and is not discussed with others who are not involved. (*w71* 4/1, pp. 222-4) All Christians are counselled by God's Word to be law-abiding, and they are to pay to Caesar what is Caesar's where there is no conflict with God's laws. (Matt. 22:21; *w90* 11/1 pp. 10-15, 18-28) When Christians obey Caesar's laws that are not in conflict with God's laws, they have no need to "fear" being punished by the authorities as law-breakers, and can maintain a good conscience. (Rom. 13:3, 4) If an elder learns of some serious crime on the part of a member of the congregation, they may, in some circumstances, be obliged to report the matter, or provide information to secular authorities. It is not the responsibility of the elders to enforce Caesar's laws, but the very nature of some crimes demand that they be reported, or that they be handled by Caesar, for this is the "arrangement of God." (Rom. 13:2) Even in such cases, it is important that the elders maintain confidentiality to the extent possible, and elders should *always* contact the Society *before* providing any information on confidential matters to secular authorities. Elders prove to be a "hiding place from the wind" to all in the congregation who are truly repentant. (Isa. 32:2) They try to readjust such a person, no matter how serious the sin committed. (Gal. 6:1) However, while Jehovah forgives repentant sinners, there may be consequences of the sinner's actions that cannot be avoided. Depending on the law of the land, the sinner may have to serve a prison term or face other sanctions. The congregation will not protect him from this.—*w97* 1/1, p. 29.

■ The *Question Box* in the March, 1998 issue of *Our Kingdom Ministry* emphasized the need to maintain appropriate dress and grooming when visiting Bethel. Therein it stated, "Remember the name Bethel means 'House of God,' so our dress, grooming, and conduct should be similar to what is expected of us when attending meetings for worship at the Kingdom Hall." Publishers are reminded that when inviting their Bible students or other visitors to Bethel they should ensure that they too are appropriately dressed, especially if associating with the Bethel family in the dining room. It is important that this standard be adhered to, thus avoiding embarrassment for all those concerned. We want your visit to Bethel to be upbuilding for you and any interested ones you invite.

■ Congregation secretaries should maintain an adequate supply of the following pioneer forms: Application for Regular Pioneer Service (S-205), Application for Auxiliary Pioneer Service (S-205b), and Notification for Discontinuing Regular Pioneer Service (S-206). These can be ordered on the Literature Order Form (S-14). Maintain at least a one-year supply. Review the regular pioneer application form to make sure it is complete. If applicants cannot recall the exact date of their baptism, they should estimate the date and keep a record of it.

■ New Publications Available:

1999 Calendar —Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Portuguese, Turkish

Examining the Scriptures Daily 1999 —Croatian, Czech, German, Greek, Hungarian, Macedonian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Serbian, Turkish

Is There a Creator Who Cares About You? —Albanian, Macedonian

Sing Praises to Jehovah—Large Print (lyrics only) —Greek

T-23 Jehovah—Who Is He? —Indonesian

The Bible—God's Word or Man's? —Amharic

The Secret of Family Happiness —Armenian

Watchtower Publications Index 1996 —Italian

What Happens to Us When We Die? —Hebrew, Persian

When Someone You Love Dies —Amharic

■ New Audiocassettes Available:

Why Respect Theocratic Arrangements? (Drama, single cassette) —Japanese

■ Publications Available Again:

Does God Really Care About Us? —Greek, Italian, New Guinea Pidgin

Good News for All Nations —Greek

Jehovah's Witnesses—Unitedly Doing God's Will Worldwide —Bislama

My Book of Bible Stories —Bulgarian

New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures Reference Bible —Greek

Sing Praises to Jehovah—Large Print (lyrics only) —Croatian

T-21 Enjoy Family Life —Tagalog

Theocratic Ministry School Guidebook —New Guinea Pidgin, Russian

What Does God Require of Us? —Albanian, Romanian

What Is the Purpose of Life? How Can You Find It? —Albanian, Croatian, Greek

■ Audiocassettes Available Again:

Jehovah Delivers Those Calling Upon His Name (Drama) —Croatian

■ Videocassettes Available Again:

Jehovah's Witnesses—The Organization Behind the Name —Macedonian

Do You Have a Standing Order?

[1] Have you ever gone to a meeting for field service and discovered that you had no magazines in your witnessing bag? Well, recall the September 1995 *Our Kingdom Ministry* insert entitled "Make the Best Use of Our Magazines." It told us to "have a definite magazine order," stating: "Place a realistic order with the brother handling magazines for a definite number of copies of each issue. In this way, you and your family will have a regular and adequate supply of magazines." Have you done this?

[2] Why not place a standing order for magazines? You will feel a greater responsibility to distribute the magazines week by week, and you will experience increased joy in doing so. If you already have a standing order, re-evaluate whether you are obtaining the amount that you need for an average month in the ministry. Of course, we want to be faithful in picking up our order every week and should feel an obligation to do so. If you are going to be away from the congregation for an extended time, let the magazine servant know whether you want him to release your magazines to someone else until you return.

[3] The same insert quoted in paragraph 1 also said that we should "schedule a regular magazine day." Can you support the weekly Magazine Day? As shown on the *1999 Calendar of Jehovah's Witnesses*, this is every Saturday of the year! Do not underestimate the importance of distributing *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* When we make an effort to share fully in magazine activity, we are "bringing good news of something better" to our neighbours. —Isa. 52:7.

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AUSTRALIA BRANCH

AB:LLA July 15, 2008 No. 322

Via E-Mail

TIME SENSITIVE

SERVICE COMMITTEE

Re: Privacy Laws and Proposed Revision of S-77 Form

Dear Brothers:

We are writing about recent developments with regard to our obligations under the Privacy laws. It seems that we will need to take steps urgently to reduce the amount of material in our files and in the files of the congregations. We will first outline the situation and then present our proposals.

In earlier correspondence from the year 2001, and in particular our letters LLA August 28, 2001, No. 354, and LLA January 8, 2002, No. 164, we advised the Publishing Committee and Coordinator's Committee of the difficulties in Australia following the introduction of the *Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act, 2000* ("the Act"). Organizations that are affected by the Act must provide an individual with any personal information the organization holds about him if he requests it. The organization can only hold "sensitive" information about a person with his consent. "Sensitive" information is defined to include matters relating to religious, ethnic, and sexual practices.

Initially, we have made use of a provision that exempts a "small business" from complying with the Act. Under the Act, a "small business" is one with an annual turnover for the previous year of $3,000,000 (Australian) or less. It has been our position that turnover does not include contributions or donations. However, the Privacy Commissioner has ruled against us on this question, and we are appealing his decision. It is highly likely that in a few weeks' time we will be directed to comply with the Act. We can appeal this decision, but we doubt that it will succeed. An appeal with resultant publicity may give the impression that we have something to hide

The application of these principles to the branch and the congregations will affect the way we collect and retain information about judicial matters. Our immediate concern is that the Privacy Commissioner's involvement arises out of a request made by a disfellowshipped apostate. We believe that this person will advertise the fact that we have been forced to give him access to documents we hold concerning him, and he will invite others also to request access to documents we may hold about them. While there are other records held by both the branch office and congregations that will need further consideration, we would like to give our first and immediate attention to records relating to judicial matters.

In your letter GAO:AT January 3, 2002 No. 223S, in anticipation of the possibility of our need to comply with the legislation, you wrote that if we felt that there was an exception that needed to be made for us to comply with the law we should write the Service Committee of the Governing Body and express what adjustments we felt would be necessary for our branch and the reasons why they are necessary. "Otherwise," you stated, "we feel that you should follow the policy outlined herein." Your letter included some guidelines provided to our brothers in Europe who are in a similar situation.

On disciplinary matters you stated: "If you are not allowed to keep **records accumulated in the past,** discard the current Disfellowshipped Persons Forms (S-77) and (S-79a/b) that do not comply with the law. Adjustments can be made as outlined in this letter to have your files conform with the law on processing personal data."

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We are enclosing a suggested revision of the S-77 form for use in Australia. It is designed to minimize the information contained on the form, and to avoid the recording of undesirable expressions when completing the form. This particularly applies to item 2 where we have replaced the request for a summation and explanation with a series of check boxes. We have chosen to list the disfellowshipping offences by name rather than citing a scripture text. In some cases, a scripture text, such as 1 Corinthians 6:9, will include more than one offence. For example, a disfellowshipped person who has committed adultery may claim that citing the scripture implies that he is a homosexual. The list of offences is taken from *ks*91 and we understand that the S-77 would need to be amended when ks91 is revised, or when we receive other instructions related to offences.

We have also made some amendments to the instructions, and we propose to put them in a separate document, so that if we have to provide someone with a copy of the S-77 form, the instructions would not be included, since they do not form a part of the record concerning the individual. The revised instruction sheet asks the judicial committee to attach a separate detailed summary. This summary will be discarded when the matter has been considered and finalized by the Service Desk. If there is a need for any information in the attached summary that should be retained, the Service Desk will make a carefully worded and brief comment on the back of the revised S-77. The Service Desk will then send the judicial committee a copy of the form along with the direction that all other documents should be destroyed, retaining only the branch's stamped copy of the S-77 in their confidential files. The Service Desk will also destroy all other unnecessary related records.

The Act does not prevent us from keeping records, as long as they are retained for a primary purpose. We can retain them as long as we believe that we have further use for them. We have therefore listed our proposal to set out our primary purposes for retaining records on the back of the revised S-77 form. We do not need the individual's permission to keep this information, but we must give him access to it if he requests it.

The Service Department and Legal Department in the branch are in agreement with this procedure. The Branch Committee has also considered it, and all present are in agreement with it. We have attached copies of the proposed revised S-77-E Au, and the additional instruction sheet S-77a-E Au.

We believe that this will enable the congregations to retain sufficient information to assist them when applications are made for reinstatement and will minimize the information that will be available to disfellowshipped persons who request access to records relating to them.

We have headed this letter "Time Sensitive" because we hope to be able to minimize the records of persons who may be potential trouble-makers before direction is given by the Privacy Commissioner. Since we expect the Commissioner to do that by the end of the month, we are asking for any suggestions and comments you may have as well as your approval as soon as possible. As stated above, there are other matters that we will need to consider. We hope to do this shortly, and we will write again about them in due course.

Please accept our warm Christian love.

Your brothers,

H. V. Mouritz
For the Australia Branch Committee

c: Coordinators' Committee
Enclosures. WHQ322a.doc
WHQ322b.doc

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INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE S-77 *NOTIFICATION OF DISFELLOWSHIPPING OR DISASSOCIATION*

Reporting

- ☐ Did you review the notes written on page 143 of the Kingdom Ministry School textbook?
- ☐ Did you list one or more of the following judicial offences and Scriptural reference by copying them exactly as they appear in the list below?

Disfellowshipping:

Adultery (Mat. 19:9)
Apostasy (Deut. 13:13, 15; Josh. 22:22; Acts 21:21; 2 Cor. 6:14, 15, 17, 18; 2 John 7, 9, 10, Rev. 18:4)
Drunkenness (1 Cor. 5:11; 6:9, 10)
Fits of anger, violence (Prov. 22:24, 25; Mal. 2:16; Gal. 5:20)
Greed (gambling/extortion) (1 Cor. 5:10, 11; 6:10; 1 Tim. 3:8)
Gross uncleanness (Eph. 4:19, Gal. 5:19)
Loose conduct (Gal. 5:19; 2 Pet. 2:7)
Malicious lying (Prov. 6:16, 19; Col. 3:9; Rev. 22:15)
Manslaughter (Deut. 22:8)
Misuse of tobacco or addictive drugs (2 Cor. 7:1; Mark 15:23; Rev. 21:8; 22:15)
Obscene speech (Eph. 5:3-5; Col. 3:8)
Porneia (Lev. 20:10, 13, 15, 16; Rom. 1:24, 26, 27, 32; 1 Cor. 6:9, 10; Deut. 23:17, 18)
Adamant refusal to provide for family when having the means to provide (1 Tim. 5:8)
Slander or reviling (Lev. 19:16; 1 Cor. 6:10)
Stealing or fraud (Lev. 6:2, 4; 1 Cor. 6:9, 10; Eph. 4:28)

Disassociation:

Non-neutral activity (Isa. 2:4; John 6:15; 17:16)
Joined another religion (1 John 2:19)
Unrepentant failure to abstain from blood (Gen 9:4; Acts 15:20, 28, 29)

- ☐ Did you fill out an original *Notification of Disfellowshipping or Disassociation* (S-77) form and make one copy, retaining the copy for the congregation's confidential file?

Summation

- ☐ Did you provide a detailed *summation* of the case, explaining what took place? Did you include the reasons why you judged the person to be unrepentant?
  - ☐ **In the case of disassociation** Did you explain what led to the person's decision, how he responded to efforts to assist him, and what convinced you that his position was adamant?
  - ☐ **If the matter involved child abuse:** Did you provide complete details, including names and dates of birth of those involved? Did you explain the nature and extent of the abuse and how it was substantiated?
- ☐ Did you send the *original* S-77 form along with the summation in a special blue envelope to the branch office?

Filing

- ☐ When you received the stamped S-77 form, did you place it in a sealed envelope in the congregation's confidential file and *destroy* the congregation's copy?
- ☐ Did the judicial committee chairman *destroy all other correspondence, except* any letter of disassociation or resignation, as directed on page 2 of the S-77 form?
- ☐ Did the chairman sign and date page 2 of the S-77 form?

REINSTATEMENTS AND DEATHS

- ☐ When a disfellowshipped or disassociated individual is reinstated or dies, did the secretary sign, check the appropriate box, and date the bottom of the *stamped* S-77 form?
- ☐ Did the secretary make a photocopy of both sides of the S-77 form for the congregation and mail the *original* to the branch office in a special blue envelope?
- ☐ Has the congregation's copy of the S-77 form been retained in the congregation's confidential file?

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

APPEALS

- When an individual appeals his disfellowshipping, the chairman of the judicial committee should promptly contact the circuit overseer, who will then designate elders to serve on the appeal committee.

- The judicial committee should complete the S-77 forms (except for the date of announcement of disfellowshipping) and give them, along with whatever written records it has from the judicial hearing(s), to the chairman of the appeal committee prior to the appeal hearing.—See *ks91* p. 125.

- The appeal committee's report is to be in the form of a letter addressed to the branch office, using the appeal committee chairman's mailing address for the return address.

- It is to be signed by all the members of the appeal committee, with each one's name and the name of his congregation typed below his signature.

- The letter should provide a detailed *summation* of the appeal hearing and include comments that directly address the following questions: (1) Was there a Scriptural basis for the disfellowshipping? (2) Was there acceptable evidence to establish the wrongdoing? Explain. (3) Was the wrongdoer unrepentant *at the time of the hearing by the original judicial committee?* What convinces the appeal committee of this?

- **If the appeal committee upholds the original committee's decision to disfellowship the individual,** the appeal committee should make certain that the S-77 form is filled out completely, *including the date of announcement of disfellowshipping* and then mail *the original* form along with the appeal committee's letter to the branch office in the same special blue envelope.

- **If the original basis for disfellowshipping was invalid but other valid grounds for disfellowshipping exist,** new S-77 forms should be made out by the original committee, giving the proper information. The *original* form along with the initial S-77 form and the appeal committee's letter should be sent to the branch office.

- **If both committees agree that the person should *not* be disfellowshipped,** the individual *should not be told* this. Rather, the appeal committee should send the branch office the *original* S-77 form along with separate letters from both the original committee and the appeal committee that supply sufficient details to give a clear picture of the reason(s) for their conclusions. Thereafter, the branch office will provide its comments.

- **If the appeal committee and the original committee are in disagreement,** the appeal committee should send the *original* S-77 form to the branch office with a letter giving the reasons for its conclusion and should include a letter from the original committee that expresses that committee's reasons for disagreement.

- **When the matter has been finalized:** All written records from both the original and appeal committees should be destroyed. Only the stamped S-77 form should be retained in the congregation's confidential file. See also the instructions above under the heading "Filing".

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

July 1, 2006

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Re: Letters of introduction

Dear Brothers:

Over the years, guidelines have been given regarding letters of introduction concerning publishers, regular pioneers, elders and ministerial servants, child molesters, and those in a disfellowshipped or disassociated state who move into another congregation's territory. So that these guidelines may be more easily followed, we are listing below some key elements that should be included in all letters of introduction as well as some situations in which additional information should be provided. This letter should be retained in the congregation's permanent file of policy letters.

Format: A letter of introduction should always contain the following information: (1) the date of the letter, (2) the previous congregation's full name and complete mailing address, (3) the new congregation's full name and complete mailing address, and (4) signatures of the Congregation Service Committee, with their names typed or printed underneath their signatures. (*be* p. 71-3) Some also find it helpful to use a regarding line (as shown above) so that the recipient may easily identify the purpose of the letter.

Congregation publisher: When a publisher (active or inactive) moves to another congregation, a letter of introduction and the *Congregation's Publisher Record* (S-21) cards should be promptly sent to the congregation where the publisher moved. (The last record card of an inactive publisher should be retained indefinitely by the congregation where the publisher moved.) If the previous service committee knows where the publisher moved, they may take the initiative and send these items without waiting for a formal request from the new congregation. What information should be conveyed in the letter of introduction? Ask yourself: What information would we want to receive if this person were moving into our congregation? (Matt. 7:12) Clearly state the publisher's full name, the names of any immediate family members, and any privileges the publisher or his family members have enjoyed, such as assignments on the Theocratic Ministry School, working with the Regional Building Committee, auxiliary or regular pioneer service, and so forth. These elements should be included in all letters of introduction.

If the person has recently been judicially reproved and is still under restrictions, list the restrictions that are still in effect so that the new congregation's elders may monitor the publisher's progress and gradually restore his privileges as appropriate. On the other hand, if the person was reproved in the distant past but is not presently under restrictions, there may be no need to mention past judicial action unless the offense involved child molestation, adulterous marriage, or some other notorious wrongdoing.

Regular pioneer: In addition to the above guidelines, the regular pioneer appointment (S-202) letter should be forwarded to the congregation where the pioneer is moving, along with a letter of introduction and the *Congregation's Publisher Record* (S-21) cards. The secretary of the

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

new congregation will make the needed adjustments to the form and send it to the branch office. A revised appointment letter will then be sent to the new congregation. If a regular pioneer moves out of the branch territory, the pioneer appointment letter should be mailed to *your* branch office with a cover letter providing the date of the move and the name, city, state, and country of the congregation where the pioneer will be associating.

Elder or ministerial servant: If the elders recommend to the new congregation that a brother be reappointed to serve in the same capacity as that which he had been serving, this should be clearly stated in the letter of introduction. It should also state the total length of time he has served in an appointed capacity as well as list the assignments in which he has experience. If the elders do not recommend that he be reappointed, two elders from his current congregation should meet with the brother before he moves to explain to him why he is not being recommended.

Child molester: It is imperative that a letter of introduction be promptly sent when an individual who is known to have molested a minor and whose privileges are still restricted moves to another congregation. This should be done even if the abuse took place many years ago—even before baptism or when the person was in a disfellowshipped state. The letter to the elders in the new congregation should outline the individual's background, what the elders have been doing to protect minors and to assist him, and their present experience with him. In all such cases, a copy of the letter of introduction must be sent to the branch office in a special blue envelope.

If there are restrictions imposed on his theocratic activity, these must be clearly communicated to the new congregation's body of elders. Rather than merely forwarding copies of past letters of introduction, the elders should prepare their own letter of introduction with both the background and the current information regarding the person. If the elders have received a letter from the branch office regarding the individual, they should not send that letter, or a copy of it, to the new congregation. However, the elders should quote pertinent direction received from the branch office in their own letter of introduction for the benefit of the elders in the new congregation and for the protection of minors. The letter of introduction should be retained in the congregation's confidential file where it can be available for review by any elder.

Disfellowshipped or disassociated person: Although a formal letter of introduction and the *Congregation's Publisher Record* (S-21) cards are not sent when a disfellowshipped individual moves into a territory held by another congregation, a letter may be sent to inform those elders of the presence of the disfellowshipped individual, and to provide information that may be helpful to those elders. This will assist those elders to contact the individual annually to offer spiritual assistance.

Carefully following these guidelines will help you to protect the flock and to render needed spiritual assistance to Jehovah's precious sheep. We pray that Jehovah will continue to "give you peace constantly in every way" as you faithfully serve him in these last days.—2 Thess. 3:16.

Your brothers,
Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses

cc: Traveling overseers

CONFIDENTIAL (RS)

COPIES.
TO. REDACTED
ST GEORGE (EX P.S.)
SOLY. ENTIRE LTR.
OUR FILE ENTIRE LTR.

BEENLEIGH EAST
COPY.

Beenleigh East Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses
C/- M.J.Baker
REDACTED
Loganholme Qld. 4129

14-3-92

To: Body of Elders Mareeba Congregation
Judicial Committee,
C/- Ron De Rooy
P.O.Box 387 Mareeba,
Qld. 4880

Dear Brothers

We as members of the committee who were hearing the appeal for reinstatement by BCH would like to give you an up to date picture. as we see matters thus far. We find it necessary to do this due to the fact that BCH has now moved to St.George congregation, Queensland West.

In our last meeting with BCH before he left for St. George, we were right at the point of recommending to you Brothers that we felt he was now ready for reinstatement, due to his showing, outwardly, all the correct manifestations of repentance, along with a very strong desire to be part of Jehovah's people again.

We did however, have just one matter that we wanted to follow up with you brothers, before we would make the recommendation to you for his reinstatement. The matter we wanted to clarify, you replied to in your letter dated 3rd February 1992. Thank you.

From your reply it appears that BCH is still continuing to be untruthful in that he is still withholding information, and he still appears to be understating wherever possible the gravity of the wrongs for which he was disfellowshipped. Therefore, we have still got reservations about recommending his reinstatement.

The society has advised that it is not our responsibility to extract a point by point confession from BCH Our reservations are not based solely on his witholding information to us alone. A call from an elder in St.George reveals he is still not letting them know all the all they need to know. It appears he denies the porneia by saying he has never actually had intercourse outside of his marriage. We were under the impression after our last meeting with BCH that he was facing up to his wrongdoings and was able to display genuine repentance for them. However by his denial or witholding information from the brothers in St. George we can't help but feel his repentance is not genuine. How can a person be truly repentant for a sin they claimed never happened ie. Porneia.

We feel he is still holding to a pattern of deceit in the amount of information he has revealed to the brothers in St. George.

We know you brothers in Mareeba are fully aware of the pattern of deceit that we speak of, but for the benefit of the brothers in St. George, who will also receive a copy of this letter we would like to give a synopsis of this pattern as follows:

1. Upon his arrival, in his first appeal he stated the grounds for his disfellowshipping were 'Going against theocratic order' only.
As a result of discussions with Brother Jim Bennett, who made a special point of seeing us whilst he was in Brisbane, and as you know served on the committe that heard BCH appeal against his disfellowshipping, we discovered there were more grounds for his disfellowshipping that he did not disclose to us. As follows:

1. Loose conduct --- With Sis REDACTED of which to us he subsequently denied until we were able to substantiate.

2. Lying --- To original committee and Appeal committee of which he feels he was cajoled into in order to appease the committees so they would be more lenient. i.e. 'tell them what they want to hear so they will be happy.'

3. Porniea --- With his daughters, to which he has vehemently denied, until recently when he conceded he interferred with one of them on a couple of occasions. Nevertheless he still claims that he has only interferred with one of them, whereas your recent letter states clearly that both of his daughters were sexually molested and that BCH admitted it in your hearings with him.

With all of the above information, while we are not trying to 'rake over old coals' as it were but we are concerned about the way he still seems to be holding to a pattern of lying.

To add to this, throughout the duration of his stay in our area, we have had to counsel him several times regarding his communication with brothers and sisters in the congregations in the Brisbane area. Especially with Sister REDACTED the person with whom he originally schemed to remarry after they had both dismissed their existing partners. On each occasion we counseled him for communicating with her, he would deny the allegation until we had to substantiate it with evidence or witnesses.

We were hoping just recently that his pattern of deceit had ceased and that he was coming to terms with the need to speak the truth at all times. But sadly, we now have reservations. There are a few other reasons for our reservations also, and if you so desire, we can forward these on to you. Our grave concern is reproach that would come upon Jehovah's name in your area if immediately upon his reinstatement he were to marry [redacted]. As you are no doubt aware, they have both subsequently obtained divorces from their respective marriage mates, both it appears on very tenuous or technical grounds, thus making a mockery of Jehovah's arrangement for marriage.

If you are able to inform the Brothers in St George on any further matters in this regard, I'm sure they would be most grateful, as they hear further requests from BCH for reinstatement. We do have a file that has been compiled on the whole matter as far as we are concerned that we can hand over to either yourselves or the brothers in St. George if you so require.

As we hand the matter over to You Brothers, our prayer is that Jehovah's spirit be ever present to guide you through difficult matters such as these. We pray that the final result will be a shout of praise to Jehovah's name in your area and a suitable answer will be provided to the one taunting him.

Christian Love
Your Brothers,

Committee Members M.J. Baker .....

M.Clarkson .....

J.Beck .....

P.S. We would like to inform you brothers in Mareeba a little further background into BCH going to St. George.

He informed us his main reason for going there was to follow our suggestion, which was to keep his distance from sister REDACTE REDACTED A rather extreme move we thought, but if it was a sign of his repentance, well so be it. But as it turns out, he and his wife were actually helped into the truth in St George. The brother who is part of the committee that is handling his appeal (Brother Bernard Kloos) is the brother who actually studied with him in the first place.

Our concern is that brother Kloos, who rightly has a sympathetic ear, may lose the objective behind our making BCH wait until he shows evidence of genuine repentance by being truthful. A further reason for concern is that brother Kloos has stated in a phone call that he felt we were taking too long to reinstate BCH

We hope this background information will assist your communications with St. George.

PPS. A copy of this entire letter will be going to branch office.

Your Brothers,

Beenleigh East.

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PPS. A copy of this entire letter will be going to branch office.

Your Brothers,

Beenleigh East.

WATCHTOWER
BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

BOX 280, INGLEBURN, N.S.W. 2565 AUSTRALIA A.C.N. 002 861 225

PHONE: (02) 605 1099

FAX: (02) 829 3616

SD:SSA April 2, 1992

The Body of Elders
Beenleigh East Congregation
of Jehovah's Witnesses — Qld

Dear Brothers:

We wish to thank you for taking the time to clearly set out your observations regarding the plea for reinstatement by Mr. BCH BCH You have handled this matter very thoroughly and the brothers in the Mareeba and St. George congregations will now need to follow through in handling any further pleas for reinstatement.

Thank you for your fine cooperation and we send our warm Christian love and greetings.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B.&T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

The Body of Elders
Beenleigh East Congregation
of Jehovah's Witnesses - Qld

COPY

16th August 1991

To Watchtower Bible and
Tract Society of Australia.
P.O.Box 280, Ingleburn
N.S.W. 2565

Your Ref. SD:SSA July 12, 1991

Dear Brothers:

In reply to your letter, with the above reference, regarding correspondence you received from BCH we are happy to make this reply.

It is true some time has passed by since BCH disfellowshipping from the congregation, on the grounds of "Loose Conduct and Lying". A further two grounds were added by an appeal committee, namely, Porneia and Malicious Slander".

Of the above grounds for which he was disfellowshipped, at this point in time, he still refuses to acknowledge the porneia he committed with his daughters, and still feels the lying charges are not valid. He says they are not valid on the basis, that he was forced into telling lies to the committee under pressure. He has maintained this stance all through the reinstatement hearings we have had with him.

Earlier pleas for reinstatement have been declined by the original committee in Mareeba, for the following reasons:
1. The first plea was too soon, and the case had some widespread notoriety.

2. The second plea was declined by the original committee on the basis that Mr BCH was still having communications with the sister with which he committed the loose conduct. (This was very serious because both the original committee and the appeal committee, were convinced that this couple were conspiring to divorce their mates and marry each other.)

3. The last plea made in September last year was also declined for the above reasons.
Also, to add to the situation, both he and the sister involved have obtained their legal divorces from their mates. Both, it appears, on very tenuous scriptural grounds.
He: In her case, her husband committed a number of acts of adultery of which she knew, (This prior to their coming into the truth) but, there was one occasion, during that time, that she did know of which subsequently came to light, and this is the basis for the divorce.

Coincidentally, BCH has obtained a divorce on the same tenuous grounds. For multiple acts of adultery performed some 16 years prior, and before coming into the truth.
In both cases their mates did not want to be divorced.

At this meeting (Late Jan, early Feb '91) he was also counseled for failing to inform the brothers that he is in a disfellowshipped state, especially when attending a strange congregation, as he was seen shaking the brothers hands, greeting them.

COPY

You may be interested to know BCH has since acknowledged to us the mistake he made in writing to you brothers, in stating he had not received an answer to his September reinstatement plea. The emotional turmoil he is going through definitely seems to affect his memory.

Toward the end of April we had another meeting with him, at his request. Once again we discussed his situation. On this occasion we were aware that the Sister with whom he committed the loose conduct, who is in a neighbouring congregation to us, was being met by a judicial committee, for an allegation of lying.
(Information came to light via BCH son in Mareeba, that BCH his son and this sister spent the night together in a tent, with he and the sister sleeping beside each other, whereas, they told the original committee that they spent the night in different lodgings.)
At this meeting, in April this year, she admitted lying to the original committee.
For this she received private reproof, alas, from a committee, who really, may have not been fully aware of the overall events that have taken place. Being aware of this we decided not to make a decision at this April Meeting.

Since our letter from you brothers, we have met with BCH again, and when questioned about this incident in the tent, he denied to us that he had slept alongside the sister. The very next morning he rang Bro. Bakers home and confessed to sleeping alongside her, although no immorality took place.

It appears, from where we stand now, that we have a person who is desperately trying to get back into Jehovah's organization, but who fails to accept some of the reasons for which he was disfellowshipped.

We hope that this information is enough for you Brothers to go on, but should you require any further information from us on this matter please don't hesitate to ask.

It heartens us to know that you brothers are working so diligently on our behalf, to the point that every person, disfellowshipped or not, you take the time to consider their situation. May Jehovah contine to bless your efforts.

Please be assured of our warm christian love,

Your Brothers
Beenliegh East Congregation.

P.S. As a reinstatement committee we are keen to establish his attitude toward the sins for which he was disfellowshipped. BCH is determined to maintain his innocence of the charge of paranoia. Insisting that the charge was well established, and not a fabrication as BCH suggests, then his attitude is not that of a repentant person, hence we have decided to decline his reinstatement appeal. A LG will BE DUE INFORMED.

BEELEIGH EAST CONGREGATION

Monty Baker
REDACTED
Queensland 4129

14th August 1991

Judicial Committee,
C/-Ron DeRooy
REDACTED Mareeba,
Qld. 4880

Dear Brother Ron,

As mentioned in my phone call, I have enclosed some of the latest information on the BCH case.

He has written to the Branch Office. (A copy of his letter is enclosed.)

He has mistakenly informed the Bros. at the branch that the elders in Beenleigh East congregation have not answered his plea for reinstatement made in September last year. To the contrary, we have had quite a few meetings with him, of which two related to his plea for reinstatement. On each occasion he was declined.

The first time his reinstatement plea was declined on the recommendation of you Brothers after we informed you of his indirect contact and his high profile in the presence of REDACTED The second meeting (April 1991) also resulted in our feeling there was a need for more time due to some information that was coming to light via BCH older son REDACTED

That information led to a meeting between the Elders of the Loganholme West congregation and REDACTED with the result that she received private reproof for lying to your original committee.

Subsequently we have had another meeting with BCH on the 7th August 1991. Since one of the reasons for which BCH was disfellowshipped was lying, we thought we would question him on the information that recently came to light via his son, namely, it is alledged that he slept alongside REDACTE in a tent for the duration of one night. When questioned about this he denied any inference whatsoever of his being in close proximity to REDACT on the said occasion. But the following morning he rang me to acknowledge that it was true he had slept alongside her.

BCH seems to be going to great lengths to justify his divorcing his wife on scriptural grounds.... also he is hotly denying even the remotest possibility that he and REDACT schemed to divorce their mates and take up with each other later on. (Enclosed is a mildly scathing letter he sent me after one meeting we had with him, where I alluded to his possibly conspiring with REDACTED

Sadly, BCH still denies the charge of "Pornea" with his daughter, as established by the appeal committee.
Also, with regard to his lying charge, he still feels he felt compelled to lie under pressure of the brothers.

BCH has been faithfully attending all the meetings that he is able to.

So we need to answer the question: Is he truly repentent of the wrongs for which he was disfellowshipped.

We would very much value your prayerful consideration of this matter again as we would like to be able to send a constructive reply to the branch office, and we would like to see Jehovah's will done in relation to this matter.

Enclosed for your information is copy of a tape that BCH wishes to send to the society. Your comments on this would be much appreciated.

We thank you again Brothers for taking time out of your busy lives to care for these matters pertaining to the caring of the congregation.

Your fellow workers in the lord.

M.Baker p.p.
Beenleigh East Judicial Committee.

WATCHTOWER
BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

BOX 280, INGLEBURN, N.S.W. 2565 AUSTRALIA
A.C.N. 002 861 225
PHONE: (02) 605 1099
FAX: (02) 829 3616

SD:SSA July 12, 1991

The Body of Elders
Beenleigh East Congregation
of Jehovah's Witnesses — Qld

Dear Brothers:

We are enclosing a copy of a letter from BCH. You many already have a copy of this correspondence.

He feels that his life course is in harmony with Jehovah's requirements and believes that sufficient time may have passed for him to be considered for reinstatement. He says he has been attending meetings in your congregation for the past 19 months. It seems he submitted "another plea begging for reinstatement at the beginning of September last year, 11 months ago" but has not received an answer. This does seem a little unusual and perhaps you did not receive his request for reinstatement?

Perhaps the brothers assigned to consider his standing could meet with him and give some direction. If you feel that he needs to make some adjustment so as to qualify to be accepted back into the Christian congregation, this should be clearly outlined to him. We would appreciate a brief reply to our letter in case we receive further correspondence on this matter.

Thank you for your good help as we endeavour to act in line with Jehovah's decisions. (Matt. 18:18-20) Kindly accept our very warm Christian love and best wishes.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B. & T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

Encl.

SD

BCH

REDACTED

Copy to :The Body of Elders
Beenleigh East Cong
Pine Street
Beenleigh 4207

7/7/91

Attention;
Service Desk Watchtower Society
BOX 280 Ingleburn
N.S.W. 2565

Dear Brother/s,

I would like to apologize for not taking this up with the circuit overseer when he was here, but I just did not know which way to go.

I was disfellowshipped 26 months ago by the Mareeba congregation, Far North Queensland. In this situation the severe discipline of being in the process of being disfellowshipped, shocked me to my senses and instilled in me a fear of the true God and severe remorse at having disappointed Jehovah. I immediately stopped the wrongdoing.

Also, I was living with my son at the time in Mackay and I sent him back to Mareeba to finish his baptism preparations which up until the time I was disfellowshipped, I was helping him with. This was in obedience to the instruction from the Society that you should not discuss spiritual things with a disfellowshipped person. He was very upset at having to go, but he could see that was the right thing to do. That is the way I had taught him.

For 7 months I attended the Mackay congregation and never missed a meeting and lived a clean life by myself, read all the magazines and the Bible and tried to find work. Dearly desiring to be back in Jehovah's organisation, I also sat in the car outside the Kingdom Hall construction site every saturday in support of the brothers working hard out in the hot sun. No elders ever visited me or gave any hope or any direction as to what else I could do to be reinstated.

Of course none of my children wrote to me or tried to contact me.(In line with the society's direction and what I myself had taught the children.) Nevertheless I was interested in their welfare and inquired often from their mother about them, and sent the family money, paid many family bills, and wrote them letters and spoke often to the younger, unbaptized ones on the telephone to encourage them. I have done this up until today. I submitted a plea for reinstatement and was told eventually that it was too early, by Bro. Bethel from Mackay.

Because I divorced the childrens mother, for her adultery, she was very bitter towards me and stopped the letters I wrote to the younger children and has told the elders in Mareeba that I have not been bothered with the family, and generally did her best to put me in a bad light. I sent certified mail, hoping that the kids would now feel better, knowing that I care about them, but the signature cards came back with HER signatures on them.
I had forgiven her for one act of adultery already. It took me ten years to

get over that. I did not have the capacity to forgive any more adulteries. The brothers thought I had left her for another woman, because she lied, and would not admit to them what she said to me - that she "did it no more than what you can count on the fingers of one hand". The brothers felt that I should have forgiven her because it happened a long time ago, before she was baptised. I had been faithful to her, always.

It's true I have sinned, (I was not disfellowshipped for nothing) and I am truly sorry for what I have done wrong and I do repent and have repented in "dust and ashes" and with many tears and supplications I have petitioned Jehovah for forgiveness and mercy.

I realize we must wait on Jehovahs patience, but I have been faithfully attending meetings at Beenleigh East congregation for 19 months now, (I moved here because my mother was dying of heart trouble and my dad could not look after her because his back was injured.)
+ plus 7 months in Mackay, and I am at my wits end, as to what else I can do. I am trying to get back into Jehovahs organization, because I know it is the only place to be. It is my deepest wish. Please tell me what else do I need to do?

I submitted another plea begging for reinstatement at the beginning of September last year, 11 months ago, to this congregation, but I have had no answer. Maybe the brothers will tell me, if they decide to visit me one day. I realize the brothers have been very busy building Kingdom Halls and the new Brisbane assembly hall, but I would have thought 11 months was ample time to visit me and give an answer.

Please understand this is in no way criticism of the brothers, but a genuine zeal to be back in Jehovah's organization, and very great sadness. In support of my further pleas for reinstatement .....

I have been faithfully attending meetings for the last 26 months, read the Bible regularly and the magazines. I am ahead in the bible reading for the theocratic school, by two books, up to the middle of Leviticus. I study and meditate on the days text. I pray to Jehovah many times daily for strength, mercy and thankfulness for the unmistakable support he has given me to endure this - very, very sad time.

Also I witness informally and lead a clean life. I dont drink, gamble smoke or fornicate. I spend a lot of time writing job applications and looking for work. I would really like to know what else I can do to be reinstated.

Is there something about my life course now, that you know, that I don't know? If there is something that you know that you may have not expressed to me, that I can work on, please tell me what it is so that I can work on it. Maybe stories got back to Mareeba that are not true. Please tell me where I stand.

I have done every thing in my power, in my circumstances to be reinstated.

Please tell me, what else can I do ? ....Service Desk Please answer this letter

BCH

JUDICIAL COMMITTEE
BOX 387, MAREEBA
4880. PH. 923487

TO: JUDICIAL COMMITTEE
BEENLEIGH EAST CONG.

APRIL 6, 1991

DEAR BROTHERS,

RE :REPLY TO LETTER INCLUDING ALSO PHONE CONVERSATION WITH BR. MONTY

BY MEANS OF THIS LETTER WE WOULD LIKE TO CONVEY SOME OF OUR THOUGHTS AS A COMMITTEE WITH REGARDS TO BCH AND HIS REINSTATEMENT PLEA.

SINCE WE RECIEVED YOUR LETTER WE HAVE ALLOWED TIME TO ELAPSE AND IN THAT TIME WE HAVE ALSO HAD A DISCUSION WITH BCI (EX. WIFE)

FROM THAT DISCUSSION WE LEARNT THAT FROM BCI S POINT OF VIEW HE DOES NOT SHOW A REAL CONCERN FOR THE WELFARE OF HIS CHILDREN AS A FATHER SHOULD CONSIDERING THE REAL HURT CAUSED TO THE FAMILY. BCI DOES NOT STOP BCH FROM TALKING TO THE CHILDREN , SHE HAS ENCOURAGED THEM TO WRITE WHEN BCH REQUESTED THIS.HE HAS BROUGHT UP IN SOME OF HIS TELEPHONE CONVERSATIONS WITH BCI THAT HE BAMES HER FOR NOT BEING REINSTATED YET. HE BRINGS UP THE POINT THAT BCI COMMITTED SEVERAL ACTS OF ADULTERY IN THE PAST THAT HE DID NOT KNOW ABOUT. FROM THE BEGINNING WHEN THIS CAME UP TO THE COMMITTEE HE STUCK TO THAT STORY. FROM OUR DISCUSSION WITH BCI ON THIS IT SEEMS THAT WHEN BCI COMMITTED THE ADULTRY IT WAS ABOUT 3 TIMES WITH THE SAME PERSON WHICH SHE CLASSED AS ONE ACT OF ADULTRY. BCH FEELS THAT SHE ONLY TOLD HIM ABOUT ONE ACT . PERHAPS, PERHAPSTHERE MAY BE SOME MISUNDERSTANDING THERE BUT WE MUST REMEMBER THAT SINCE THEN BCI HAD BEEN A FAITHFUL WIFE , AND WAS BAPTISED THEN AFTER THIS. (Approx 16 years)

IF BCH FEELS HE HAS PROOF OF MORE ACTS OF ADULTERY HE NEEDS TO PRESENT THAT PROOF. THE ORIGINAL COMMITTEE PLUS THE APPEALS COMMITTEE SAID THAT AT THAT TIME THERE WAS NO REASON FOR HIM NOR GROUNDS FOR HIM TO OBTAIN A SCRIPTURAL DIVORCE BUT HE WENT AHEAD WITH THIS COURSE AND THAT DIVORCE HAS BEEN LEGALLY TERMINATED IN ABOUT OCTOBER, 1990. IF WHAT BCH SAYS OR FEELS THAT BCI ONLY OWNED UP TO ONE ACT OR ONE TIME SLEEPING WITH THE OTHER PERSON BUT NOW BCI SAYING THAT IT WAS PERHAPS 3 TIMES THEN PERHAPS THERE WAS A TECHNICALITY THERE. YET WE REMEMBER THAT BCI AS MENTIONED BEFORE HAD BEEN FAITHFUL AND HAD SINCE BEEN BAPTISED.

IT ONLY SEEMS THAT WHEN BCH AND REDAC WERE GETTING TOGETHER THAT EACH STARTED TO LOOK AT DIVORCING EACH ONES MATE. (BOTH NOW HAVE)

FROM THE COMMITTEES POINT OF VIEW BCI HAD GROUNDS TO DIVORCE BCH FOR THE GROSS WRONGS THAT HE COMMITTED. SHE STILL WANTED HIM BACK WHEN THESE MATTERS OCCURED.

A QUESTION THAT COULD BE POSED TO BCH IS WHY DID HE GO AHEAD WITH DIVORCE PROCEEDINGS AGAINST WHAT THE COMMITTEES HAD SAID ? AT THE BEGINNING BCH SHOWED AN UTTER DISREGARD FOR THEOCRATIC DIRECTION DOES THIS PERHAPS SHOW THAT HE STILL WANTS THINGS TO GO HIS WAY .

(2)

WHEN WE THINK OF WORKS THAT BEFIT REPENTANCE AS FAR AS BCH IS CONCERNED HE MAY HAVE STOPPED WHAT HE DID IN THE PAST AND HE MAY BE DOING ALL THE RIGHT THINGS AS FAR AS OUTWA RD APPEARENCES ARE CONCERNED AND HE MIGHT SAY ALL THE RIGHT THINGS BUT WE ARE VERY SCEPTICAL ABOUT WETHER HE IS MAKING THINGS RIGHT WITH HIS FAMILY FOR WHAT HE DID FOR A PERSON WHO SAYS HE IS CUT TO THE HEART FOR THE WRONG DONE IS HE GOING TO THE EXTE NT THAT HE SHOULD TO MAKE THINGS RIGHT THERE . AT THIS PARTICULAR TIME WE ON WHAT BCI HAS SAID DON'T THINK SO.

YOUR POINT NO. 1 YOU DO NOT HAVE EVIDENCE THAT BCH REDACTED ARE PURPOSE FULLY MAKING CONTACT.

YOU MENTIONED A FEW TIMES THAT THEY MAY STILL BE KEEPING EYE CONTACT. TALKING TO BR. BERT HATTON HE MENTIONED THAT BCH MAY BE WORKING VERY CLOSE BY.

BECAUSE THEY ARE IN THE LIMELIGHT EVERY MOVE THEY MAKE IS WATCHED AND WE MAY CONSTRUE IT TO MEAN THAT THEY ARE KEEPING THAT CONTACT. NEVER THE LESS BECAUSE OF THE WAY THINGS HAVE GONE OVER THE TIME SINCE THE COMMITTEE MEETINGS WE FEEL CAUTION IS THE WISE COURSE IT WOULD BE GOOD IF WE COULD FIND OUT IF THEY REALLY HAVE INTENTIONS OF STILL GETTING TOGETHER. WHAT IS OF GRAVE CONCERN TO US IS THAT THEY MAY STILL BE SCHEMING TO GET MARRI? AND BE IN THE TRUTH. SO FAR BOTH ARE DIVORCED , BOTH WANTED EACHOTHER , ONLY WAITING FOR BCH TO BE REINSTATED. COULD THIS BE THE CASE?, THIS IS IN OUR MINDS.

PHONE CONVERSATION BR.MONTY BAKER (THIS HAS ALSO BEEN CONVEYED TO BODY OF ELDERS LOGAN HOME WEST C/- BR. BERT HATTON)

JUST RECENTLY THE SON OF BCH WHO HAS SINCE BEEN BAPTISED CAME UP TO THE ELDERS BECAUSE THERS WAS A MATTER THAT WAS TROUBLING HIS CONSCIENCE. HE FELT THERE WAS SOMETHING THAT WE NEEDED TO KNOW THAT HE WAS NOT ABLE TO SAY WHEN THE MATTER WAS BEING HANDLED BECAUSE HIS FATHER WAS ALWAYS THERE LISTENING TO WHAT WAS BEING SAID . THE SITUATION WAS STRAINED.

THIS IS WHAT HE RELATED:- WHEN THE TWO PARTIES LEFT FROM HERE TO MACKAY THEY WERE CAMPED IN A TENT . BCH REDACTED SLEPT IN THE TENT FOR THE NIGHT.

BCH AND REDACTED WERE TOGETHER ON ONE SIDE AND REDACTED SEPARATED BY BAGGAGE WAS ON THE OTHER REDACTED SAYS THAT AS FAR AS HE KNOWS NO IMMORALITY TOOK PLACE.

WE ONLY HAVE REDACTED WORD ON THIS , BUT WE HAVE NO REASON TO DISBELIEVE HIM.

DURING THE COMMITTEE MEETINGS WE WERE ALL LED TO BELIEVE THAT THEY WERE IN SEPARATE ACC- OMODATION NOT TOGETHER AS REDACTED NOW SAYS.

IT WOULD BE INTERESTING WHAT BCH HAS TO SAY ABOUT THIS

DURING OUR COMMITTEE MEETINGS DETAILS HAD TO BE DRAGED OUT OF REDACTED AND BCH NOTHING CAME EASY, WE FELT THAT THERE WAS A LOT OF DECIET . THE REASON FOR OUR CAUTION.

(3)

AS OUR MAG. ON MERCY BROUGHT OUT WE WANT TO SEE ONES COME BACK, AND SPECIAL PROVISIONS ARE MADE TO CONTACT THESE ONES. THE POINT THOUGH WAS STILL, ARE THEY REPENTANT? BRS WITH BCH HE SEEMS TO BE WANTING AS THE MAIN POINT OF HIS REINSTATEMENT TO BE THE FACT THAT HE WANTS HIS DIVORCE TO BE RECOGNIZED AS A SCRIPTURAL DIVORCE BCH TALKS ABOUT REPEATED ACTS OF ADULTRY. TO CLARIFY EXACTLY WHAT HE MEANS DOES HE MEAN REPEATED ACTS WITH DIFFERENT PARTNERS OR DOES HE MEAN REPEATED ACTS WITH ONE PARTNER?(BCI ADMITS THOSE 3 TIMES WITH ONE PERSON AS MENTIONED BEFORE)

THE MAIN AREA THAT WE LOOK AT ARE HIS WORKS THAT BEFIT REPENTANCE. AS ONE WHO CLAIMS TO BE LIKE THE TAX COLLECTOR IN JESUS ILLUSTRATIONIS HE CONCERNED WITH THE WELFARE OF HIS FAMILY . THIS SHOULD BE HIS CONCERN YET HE DISTANCES HIMSELF SO FAR AWAY., BOTH IN ACTUAL DISTANCE AND IN PHYISICAL AND EMOTIONAL CONCERN FOR THE CHILDREN . HE SEEMS NOT TO WANT TO HAVE THAT RESPONSIBILITY. IS THAT THE WAY THAT HE FEELS ? AS YET WE DON'T SEE EVIDENCE OTHERWISE. EVEN WITH CHILD MAINTENANCE NOT MUCH HAS BEEN FORTH COMING AS FAR AS BCI IS CONCERNED.

BRS WE HOPE THAT THE INFORMATION WITHIN THIS LETTER WILL GIVE YOU BRS A LITTLE MORE TO CLARIFY AND A BIT MORE OF A BASIS TO LOOK AT BCH REINSTATEMENT PLEA

MAY JEHOVAH CONTINUE TO BLESS YOU IN YOUR CARING FOR THE BROTHERS. AND MAY HE CONTINUE TO GIVE YOU THE WISDOM TO DISCERN THE REAL SITUATION WITH BCH WE LIVE IN EXCITING TIMES, AND WE ARE PART OF A WONDER FULL ORGANIZATION WHERE THE MAJORITY OF JEHOVAHS PEOPLE ARE REMAINING FAITHFUL TO HIS PRINCIPLES.

YOUR FELLOW WORKERS IN THE TRUTH

RenDE ROOY(CHAIRMAN)	DINO ALI	ZINI ALI
R. de Rooy	Dino Ali	Zini Ali

P.S. If there is anything else you would like to know we are happy to help.

Monty Baker
Beenleigh East Cong.
Jehovah's Witnesses

Copy to:
10/04/91

Dear Bro. Monty

I am writing to clear up some inaccuracies and misconceptions that were expressed when we last spoke, though I do appreciate your telling me.

1. You stated "you have been following her around"

This is incorrect. After April 89 my eldest son and I lived in Cairns - Sis. REDA was in Mareeba. In June she shifted to Cairns, after her husband had left her. She shifted in with a sister.I lived in Mackay on my own for the next 6 months. Sis REDACTED was in Cairns. After visiting my sick mum in Brisbane, I shifted to Brisbane in Jan.90. She had her heart attack a few months later, from which she has not recovered.

I was told by Vic Kohl an elder in Cairns to always check with the elders before I do any thing. This I did, because it could be interpreted the wrong way, and asked Bro Ron if it would be O.k. to shift to Brisbane. He said "YES"

I don't think you should hold against me what an Elder gave me permission to do.

2. You also said "in cases like this" meaning cases when people committed adultery to divorce their mates and remarry their new partner, "it can be many years before a person is reinstated."

I am thoroughly amazed that you have made such assumptions. You are ASSUME.. ing, that this case is the same as others you may have heard about or dealt with. YOU ARE WRONG!
Not only are you wrong, but you are also putting yourself and me in a potentially very damaging situation.... Because you have repeated it only to me in Bro. Becks presence, and it won't go any further, I am not offended, though I am hurt that you said it. That is why I'm mentioning it, and supplying you with.....

More accurate information. There was NEVER any adultery on MY part. But there was, on the part of my ex wife, which is the reason I have divorced her.I FORGAVE her for one act of adultery already, which was all I knew about, until she admitted to me end of April 89, that there had been multiple acts "but no more than what you can count on the fingers of one hand" she said. ANY more, was too much for me to handle. It took me nearly ten years to get over the first ONE. By leading me to believe there had been only one act, she certainly compounded the problem, greatly.
SO... this is NOT a case "LIKE" that is it ??

I'm sorry if this sounds a bit harsh, but it's MY LIFE YOU ARE HANGING IN THE BALANCE, So please do not make inaccurate and potentially very damaging assumptions.

3. You said "It counts against you that you spoke to the girls" meaning sis. REDACT kids when they first saw me after I came down. I did not have the heart to turn my back on two little girls aged six and seven, running up to me with their arms outstretched to give me a hug. If it "counts against" me ....I'm sorry, I am too soft and kind. Besides, I told them they could NOT talk to me and to go back to their mother.

4. You also raised the point that I should be "out of the country" preferably, if I "wanted to get reinstated", and that I should not go down the street where sis REDA lives. While I do appreciate the love behind the advice, I cannot understand your reasoning on this point. Does that mean she should avoid going down City road where I live?

What am I supposed to be getting/running away from? What am I doing wrong? I can't run away from what I did do wrong, two or three years ago, no matter where I go.

You said you were worried about sis. REDACT ED feelings. That is commendable. It is true to say though, that once I am reinstated ALL my true christian brothers and sisters will be my friends again. That is normal in the true christian congregation. Of course there will probably be some people who will not want me around.

Also I have a scriptural responsibility to my aging parents especially with my mum being sick, they both need my support now. I know it means being self-sacrificing, and I am prepared to put their interests ahead of my own and stay here, in view of the fact that they did the same for me many times while bringing me up. If that counts against me.....

In addition I feel it would be grossly unfair, to make me spend another year or so with another congregation building up a reputation of good meeting attendance etc. and being kept in LIMBO like I have been here, about what I have to do to be reinstated or why I'm not being reinstated, even though I do repent and have repented a long time ago. (besides being told to go away).

However I really do appreciate the work you have done on my behalf, in particular your and bro. Beck's merciful attitude, up to this point, in speaking and listening to me. I especially would like to thank you for the commendation you gave me for "excellent" meeting attendance it was to me "like the shadow of a heavy crag in an exhausted land, like streams of water in a waterless country." May Jehovah, my God and the Great Shepherd, continue to be blessed for his undeserved kindness and mercy.

Thank you for your efforts,

BCH

REDACTED

Judicial Committee
Mareeba Congregation
C/- Ron deRooy
Box REDACTED
Mareeba. 4880.

Judicial Committee
Beenleigh Congregation

April 23 , 1990.

Dear Brothers,

Re: BCH

In reply to your letter concerning BCH application for reinstatement, the following information should prove most helpful. In June, July 1989, a Judicial Committee was formed to consider BCH situation. In time facts showed he had become unscripturally involved with a married sister, Sis REDACTED REDACTED to the extent of spending intimate time and involvement with her, much to the detriment of his family. BCH separated from his wife and family on the pretext of supposed threatened physical violence and while we believe a problem exists in this regard, he certainly did not have any scripturally based grounds to do so. In time, this demonstrated an initial move to an ulterior motive, ie; further involvement with REDACTED with marriage in view while she, in turn, intended to divorce her husband REDACTED who in turn, had intentions of marrying BCH eldest daughter, BCK with the approval of BCH himself !

BCH involvement with REDACTED also continued into another congregation, North Cairns, and the elders there too counselled BCH relationship with REDACTED Despite our efforts and counsel along with North Cairns, he chose to ignore Jehovah's standards feeling justified that driving alone with REDACTED at all hours of the night on the pretext of business, to towns hours away etc, did not constitute any wrong. He attempted to twist related information from the publications each time we met with him. They continued meeting alone, even to 2a.m. and indeed 4.30a.m. During tis time, both admitted to discussing the possibility of marriage and intimate details of a sexual nature. when married.

By the series of events, BCH motives became apparent, i.e. of deliberate scheming to exclude his wife BCI and marry REDACT Too, his absolute disregard of Jehovah's standards and his total rejection of counsel from this Committee and the Cairns body of Elders emphasized his TOTAL DISRESPECT of theocratic authority BCH deliberately withheld information and willfully lied throughout our meetings with him.

The Judicial Committee then took the decision to disfellowship Gabe on the serious charges of 1) LOOSE CONDUCT

2) LYING

Brothers, we stress again deliberate scheming and his unrepentant attitude. BCH appealed the decision. Through our Circuit Overseer, Brother M. Fernam, an Appeals Committee was formed of elders

not of this congregation. After extensive deliberation they supported the original decision to disfellowship BCH on the same grounds. Furthermore, additional charges were brought i.e. sexually molesting his 2 eldest daughters the most recent ocassion being in September 1988 of his 2nd daughter BCG It was found BCH had developed a warped sexual appetite and mentality that led to the degrading and abominable practice of sexually abusing his own children.

The Appeals Committee on thes grounds, added the following gross sins : PORNEIA

: MALICIOUS SLANDER

to the original charges. It should be noted that BCI when told of the findings and her scriptural grounds for divorce due to Porneia, did not wish to do so but desired BCH to return to consolidate their marriage, and assume his responsibilities. He has not done so. Instead, he has expressed his plans for divorce regardless. He had raised certain allegations about his wife's fidelity, that she has commited adultery, thus providing him scriptural grounds to divorce her.He has absolutely NO GROUNDS to proceed. It was on this that the Appeals Committee brought MALICIOUS SLANDER. He has been advised that if he proceeds to remarry, he faces the consequences as an adulterer. It would appear that both BCH and REDACTE being in close proximity again, may have that intention.REDACTE on the other hand, does have grounds to divorce REDACT her husband, on a technical point.

Therefore, brothers, we firmly believe his application for reinstatement be rejected and extreme caution exercised to any claims of repentance at this stage. With Jehovah's interests at heart and the spiritual condition of his congregation to protect, we feel his deviousness in the past and his actions to date to not right the wrongs committed and continue his divorce action has not shown works befitting repentance! He is conducting himself unscripturally still in that both he and REDACTE appear to be 'confused' or 'vague' as to the circumstances- apparently he and perhaps she, still intend to gain approval to their purpose. This certainly fits the original pattern with us.

We apologize for the delay to your inquires about BCH . We pray these details will assist you in your decision on the matter.

Your Brothers

R. deROOY (chairman)

D. ALI

REPORT ON REINSTATEMENT PLEA BY BCH

First contacted us Feb. 21, 1990 at Kingdom Hall.
Spoke to Rod Spinks. Given contact in Mareeba Cong as Bro Ron DeRooy REDACTED Mareeba 4880.
Rod Spinks contacted Ron Derooy to determin nature of problem and informed case very complex and that BCH had recently applied elsewhere for reinstatement.

Committee [R.Spinks (chairman), M.Baker and A.Johnson] met with BCH March 6, 1990.
Outline of statements by BCH
"His wife committed adultery prior to baptism and failed to confess one case to him. [She denies]
Wife violent with family. BCH left to go to Cairns with his son. Wife accused BCH of wife swapping/ adultery.
BCH left wife because of her adultery. BCH claims scriptural basis for divorce although wife denies. BCH said Elders questioned his 'basis' for claim.
At Appeal hearing original decision upheld. BCH claims he had no chance to speak.
BCH wife BCI , accused BCH of adultery with wife of Brother who he worked with. BCH says no relationship exists/ed.
Sister concerned REDACTED was reproved but BCH says doesnt know why.
BCH reasons for disfellowshipping: Lying and disregarding theocratic order. "

Committee felt BCH statements vague and evasive. There appears to be scheming between BCH and REDACTE He admits to having some feelings for REDACTE He says by chance he now lives near her and has had some contact with her. BCH claims committee and appeal committee handled badly and that two of the brothers involved have since been removed as elders.
Committee sent letter to REDACTED to seek some information.[Enclosed]

Feb 9, 1990 committee and Bro Warren Martin met with REDACTED and she supported most of BCH claims but was quite evasive.
Admitted to "some feelings for BCH but played it down.

Bro Jim Bennett from Cairns who was in Brisbane , asked by original committee to pass on letter and explain some of details to us.
He was on appeal committee.
Bro Jim met with Rod and Monty to discuss case. [May 13]

BCH notified of decision as per attached letter Sun May 13.
[ie: not to be reinstated.]

Original committees defined sins: 1. Loose conduct, 2. Lying, 3. Pornea , 4. Malicious slander [last 2 by appeal comm.]

Differed substantially from BCH account. He denied any incest and claimed firstly that it was alie and that he never confessed then after a while stated that he had confessed under pressure.

We felt that he has constantly lied and been evasive.
We stated that he is not scripturally free to remarry and that to be considered again for reinstatement, he must first accept discipline of original committee which he at present resists.
BCH then stated that we had " changed and had been affected by original committee". We clarified that it is original comm. that makes decision to reinstate.

Due to concern by original committee with regard to the extent of the lying involved in the case and after comments from REDACTED that BCH and REDACTED were seeing each other, a meeting was arranged again between us and Bro Jim Bennett with REDACTED

REDACTED said that REDACTED was claiming divorce on technicality as he had confessed to adultery with the exception of one case which he later told her of. Took place prior to baptism.
[BCH claim on similar grounds.]
REDACTED had also confessed to adultery which REDACTED forgave her for.

REDACTED only knows of 3 times BCH and REDACTED had some contact in recent times 1. BCH rode bike past her house on claim it was a short cut which it isnt. 2. Met in Perrys shop where REDACTED sent children to say hello and hug BCH 3. Said hello in K.Hall carpark.

[We are aware of additional meeting recently in a shopping centre carpark to apparently pickup some things of REDACTED

With regard to REDACTED 1. REDACTED requested that REDACTED not be in attendance at her hearing which brothers agreed to. This concerns us as she appears to manipulate things to suit her own ends.

2. REDACTED requested that restrictions be lifted prior to leaving Nth Qld which they were.

3. REDACTED has full support of Loganholme West cong. which is a credit to the brothers there but also a concern that they may not see the true picture.

M.Baker to contact Warren Martin again to outline situation.

At this point we have told BCH that we wish to have no further contact with him as he has continued to approach us with little or no indication that he has changed his view of the discipline.

June 15, 1990.

Rod Spinks [Chairman] Arthur Johnson Monty Baker

Judicial Committee
Beenleigh East Cong.
C/- Rod Spinks
REDACTED

Judicial Committee
Mareeba Cong.
C/- Ron DeRooy
Box 387
Mareeba 4880

March 19, 1990

Dear Brothers,

Re: Reinstatement request, BCH.

Following a phone conversation between Bro. DeRooy and Bro. Spinks a few weeks ago, we met with BCH to consider his plea for reinsta--tement. In addition to hearing his plea we also felt the need to meet with REDACTED who is in our area though not our congregation.

As Bro. DeRooy mentioned briefly on the phone the situation appears very complex in view of the two families involved and due to the fact that both BCH and REDAC are living so closely now. They both deny any collusion in this regard although they both expressed some "feelings" for each other.

We would appreciate some assistance from you brothers as we feel un--able to make any recommendation on what we now know.

Firstly, BCH says that the reasons for his disfellowshipping were "Lying and Disregarding theocratic order" although the latter appears a little vague. Could you please clarify this for us.

Secondly, there appears to be some variance between what BCH says took place between he and REDACT physically, and what REDAC says took place. This concerned us in view of the 'lying' aspect of his case.

Finally, as BCH is in the process of filing for divorce and both he and REDAC claim scriptural grounds for divorce, he indicated he would "not rule out the possibility of their getting together." Do you brothers have any comment on this situation

We would appreciate any additional suggestions you may have in our handling this situation.

Thankyou for your consideration of our requests and we look forward to hearing from you soon.

May Jehovahs spirit continue to guide your thoughts and deeds as you serve the brothers in your area.

Your Brothers

Rod Spinks [chairman] Monty Baker Arthur Johnson

Australian Government | Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission

ACNC Charity Register Summary

Watchtower Bible & Tract Society Of Australia

Charity Details

Name	Watchtower Bible & Tract Society Of Australia
Other Name	Jehovah's Witnesses
Charity ABN	42002861225
Charity Address for Service	InboxLGL.AU@jw.org
Charity Street Address	12-14 Zouch Road INGLEBURN NSW 2565 AUSTRALIA
Website	
E-Mail	InboxLGL.AU@jw.org
Phone	

About the Charity

Date Established	01/01/1904
Who the Charity Benefits	General community in Australia
Size of Charity	Large
Financial Year End	31/08

Where the Charity Operates

Operating State(s)	ACT NSW NT QLD SA TAS VIC WA
Operates in (Countries)	TIMOR-LESTE

Using the information on the Register
Information on this Register has been provided to the ACNC by the charity or transferred from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) and the Australian Business Register (ABR). If information is not shown, this may be because the charity has not yet provided the information or because the ACNC is progressively confirming and uploading information received. The ACNC may also approve information be withheld from the Register in certain circumstances. The Register will be updated over time as we work through the information received and any applications for information to be withheld. Read more about information on the Register.

Australian Government | Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission

ACNC Charity Register Summary

Watchtower Bible & Tract Society Of Australia

Registration Details

Entity Type	Charity
Sub-Entity Type	Advancing religion (01/01/2014)
Registration Status	Registered
Basic Religious Charity	N

Responsible Persons

Position	Name
Director	Alan Wood
Secretary	Terrence O'Brien
Director	Winston Payne
Director	Harold Mouritz
Director	Gregory Frank

Registration Status History

Effective Date	Status
03/12/2012	Registered

SubType History

Start Date	End Date	Entity Subtypes
1/01/2014		Advancing religion
3/12/2012	31/12/2013	Advancement of religion

Annual Reporting

Due Date	Document	Status	Date Received
31/03/2014	AIS 2013	Received	30/06/2014
28/02/2015	AIS 2014	Received	27/02/2015
29/02/2016	AIS 2015		

Using the information on the Register
Information on this Register has been provided to the ACNC by the charity or transferred from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) and the Australian Business Register (ABR). If information is not shown, this may be because the charity has not yet provided the information or because the ACNC is progressively confirming and uploading information received. The ACNC may also approve information be withheld from the Register in certain circumstances. The Register will be updated over time as we work through the information received and any applications for information to be withheld. Read more about information on the Register.

Australian Government | Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission

ACNC Charity Register Summary

Watchtower Bible & Tract Society Of Australia

Charity's Documents

Date	Document Type	Description
27/02/2015	Financial Report	2014 Watchtower Bible and Tract Society.pdf
27/02/2015	Governing document	Watchtower (Australia) Memorandum and Articles of Association.pdf

Using the information on the Register
Information on this Register has been provided to the ACNC by the charity or transferred from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) and the Australian Business Register (ABR). If information is not shown, this may be because the charity has not yet provided the information or because the ACNC is progressively confirming and uploading information received. The ACNC may also approve information be withheld from the Register in certain circumstances. The Register will be updated over time as we work through the information received and any applications for information to be withheld. Read more about information on the Register.

LODGED BY:
WATCHTOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA
12-14 ZOUCH ROAD, DENHAM COURT, N.S.W., AUSTRALIA 2565
TEL. No. (02) 9829 5600
FAX No.: (02) 9829 3616

INCORPORATED AS A PUBLIC COMPANY,
BEING A COMPANY LIMITED BY
GUARANTEE—JULY 29, 1985

ENDORSED AS AN INCOME TAX EXEMPT
CHARITABLE ENTITY UNDER
SUBDIVISION 50-B OF THE ITAA 1997—
JULY 1, 2000

WATCHTOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA 2014

A.B.N. 42 002 861 225

12-14 ZOUCH ROAD
DENHAM COURT
NEW SOUTH WALES 2565
AUSTRALIA

ANNUAL REPORT & FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDING AUGUST 31, 2014

WATCHTOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

A.B.N. 42 002 861 225

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WATCHTOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

A.B.N. 42 002 861 225

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE
AUGUST 31, 2014

CONSTITUTION

THE COMPANY IS INCORPORATED IN NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA, AS A PUBLIC COMPANY, BEING A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE—
JULY 29, 1985.

DIRECTORS

HAROLD VIVIAN MOURITZ
TERRENCE JOHN O'BRIEN
WINSTON REGINALD PAYNE
GREGORY JOHN FRANK
ALAN JOHN WOOD

SECRETARY

TERRENCE JOHN O'BRIEN

REGISTERED OFFICE

WATCHTOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA
12-14 ZOUCH ROAD
DENHAM COURT
NEW SOUTH WALES 2565
AUSTRALIA

PRINCIPAL BANKERS

AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND BANKING GROUP LIMITED (ANZ)
SHOP 32 INGLEBURN FAIR
MACQUARIE ROAD
INGLEBURN
NEW SOUTH WALES 2565
AUSTRALIA

AUDITOR

PETER J MITCHELL FIPA
FIPA REGISTRATION IN AUSTRALIA: 173627
AUDITOR'S REGISTRATION IN AUSTRALIA: 214
ADDRESS:
114 POPLAR PARADE
YOUNGTOWN TAS 7249
AUSTRALIA

WATCHTOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA
A.B.N. 42 002 861 225

DIRECTORS' REPORT
For the year ended August 31, 2014

The Directors present their report, together with the financial statements of Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia, for the year ending August 31st, 2014, along with the Notes to the Financial Statements, Directors' Declaration and the Audit Report.

DIRECTORS

The following persons were Directors of Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia during the year and at the date of this Report:

Name	Appointed	Resigned
Mr. Gordon Douglas King	29/07/1985	28/12/2013
Mr. Donald Howard MacLean	29/07/1985	28/12/2013
Mr. Harold Vivian Mouritz	29/07/1985	
Mr. Winston Reginald Payne	17/10/2002	
Mr. Terrence John O'Brien	19/12/2009	
Mr. Alan John Wood	28/12/2013	
Mr. Gregory John Frank	28/12/2013	

The Directors have been in office since the start of the financial year, with the exception of Mr Alan John Wood and Mr. Gregory John Frank.

COMPANY SECRETARY

The following person held the position of entity secretary at the end of the financial year:

Mr. Terrence John O'Brien (date of appointment 3/12/11)

PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES

The principal activities of the entity in the course of the financial year were to promote the Christian religion and study of the Bible, in accordance with the beliefs of Jehovah's Witnesses by the dissemination of Bible truths, both orally and by printed word, by charitable work for the relief of poverty, by establishing and maintaining private Bible schools and classes for instruction and by Christian missionary work and support facilities, both in Australia and overseas. No significant changes in the nature of these activities occurred during the year.

OPERATING RESULT

The net amount of the deficit of the entity for the financial year ending August 31st, 2014 amounted to $1,703,164. This is due to extraordinary donations to the charitable work of Jehovah's Witnesses.

DIVIDENDS

As a not-for-profit entity no dividends are permitted to members.

WATCHTOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA
A.B.N. 42 002 861 225

DIRECTORS' REPORT
For the year ended August 31, 2014

REVIEW OF OPERATIONS

A review of the operation of the entity during the financial year and the results of those operations are as follows:

The entity continues to provide literature and Bible educational programs to the members of the public at no cost.

The entity is still committed to further overseas aid, including building projects, which will result in continuing cash outflows.

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN STATE OF AFFAIRS

No significant changes in the entity's state of affairs occurred during the financial year other than disclosed in the operating result.

AFTER BALANCE DATE EVENTS

No matters or circumstances have arisen since the end of the financial year which significantly affected or may significantly affect the operations of the entity, the results of those operations, or the state of affairs of the entity in subsequent financial years.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

The entity expects to maintain the present status and level of operations and hence there are no likely developments in the operations in future financial years.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

The entity's operations are not regulated by any significant environmental regulation under a law of the Commonwealth or of a State or Territory. However, the entity is in compliance with major environmental legislation.

OPTIONS

Nil.

WATCHTOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA
A.B.N. 42 002 861 225

DIRECTORS' REPORT
For the year ended August 31, 2014

INFORMATION ON DIRECTORS

Particulars of Directors' liability:

DIRECTORS' LIMITED LIABILITY	2014	2013
Mr. Harold Vivian Mouritz	$100	$100
Mr. Terrence John O'Brien	$100	$100
Mr. Winston Reginald Payne	$100	$100
Mr. Alan John Wood	$100	$100
Mr. Gregory John Frank	$100	$100

There are no shares issued to Directors. The particulars of Directors' interest and liability are at the date of this *Report.*

Qualifications & experience. All directors are ordained ministers in the Jehovah's Witnesses religion.

MEETINGS OF DIRECTORS

During the financial year there were four meetings of directors. Attendance by each director was as follows:

Name	Number eligible to attend	Number attended
Mr. Gordon Douglas King	3	3
Mr. Donald Howard MacLean	3	3
Mr. Harold Vivian Mouritz	4	2
Mr. Winston Reginald Payne	4	4
Mr. Terrence John O'Brien	4	4
Mr. Alan John Wood	1	1
Mr. Gregory John Frank	1	0

DIRECTORS' INTERESTS AND BENEFITS

Since the end of the previous financial year, no Director of the entity has received or become entitled to receive any benefit because of a contract made by the entity with a firm of which the Director is a member or with an entity in which the Director has a substantial interest.

DIRECTORS' REMUNERATION

The Directors serve in a voluntary capacity and receive no remuneration.

WATCHTOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA
A.B.N. 42 002 861 225

DIRECTORS' REPORT
For the year ended August 31, 2014

INDEMNITIES AND INSURANCE

Under the entity's *Articles of Association, Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia* (the "Company") is required to indemnify, to the extent permitted by Law, each Officer of the entity against

- liability to third parties arising out of conduct undertaken in his capacity as an Officer of the entity, unless the liability arises out of conduct involving a lack of good faith, willful misconduct or reckless behavior; and
- the costs and expenses of successfully defending legal proceedings arising out of conduct undertaken in his capacity as an Officer of the Company.

The Company has not, during or since the end of the financial year, in respect of any person who is or has been an officer or auditor of the Company:

- indemnified, or made any relevant agreement for indemnifying, against a liability that was incurred by an officer of the Company, including costs and expenses in defending legal proceedings; or
- paid, or agreed to pay, a premium in respect of a contract insuring against a liability incurred by an officer of the Company, for the costs and expenses in defending legal proceedings.

PROCEEDINGS ON BEHALF OF COMPANY

No person has applied for leave of Court to bring proceedings on behalf of the company or intervene in any proceedings to which the company is a party for the purpose of taking responsibility on behalf of the company for all or any part of those proceedings.

The company was not party to any proceedings during the year.

CONTRIBUTION IN WINDING UP

If the Company is wound up, each member is required to contribute a maximum of $100 each towards meeting any outstanding obligations of the Company. At August 31, 2014, the total amount that the 26 members are liable to contribute is $2,600.

AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION

A copy of the Auditor's Independence Declaration as required under the *Australian Charities and Non-for-profits Commission Act 2012* for the year ending 31st August 2014 can be found on page 6 of this financial report and forms part of the Directors' report.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Directors:

Winston Reginald Payne
Director

Gregory John Frank
Director

Dated at Denham Court, NSW this nineteenth day of September 2014.

AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION TO THE DIRECTORS OF WATCHTOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

In accordance with the requirements of the *Australian Charities and Non-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, as auditor of *Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia* for the year ending 31 August 2014, I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, there have been:

(a) no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements of the *Australian Charities and Non-for-profits Commission Act 2012* in relation to the audit; and

(b) no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

Peter J. Mitchell



19th September 2014

114 Poplar Parade
Youngtown TAS 7249

Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia

A.B.N. 42 002 861 225

Not-for-Profit Entity

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

For the year ended August 31, 2014

	Notes	2014	2013
INCOME			
Revenue			
Interest		53,574	93,032
Other		275,601	405,490
Watchtower Travel Revenue		750	1,740
Total Revenue		329,925	500,262
Gains/(Losses)			
Disposal of Assets		(15,623)	7,597
Currency Translation		33	7,072
Donations		19,611,866	17,510,964
Total Gains/(Losses)		19,596,276	17,525,633
TOTAL INCOME		19,926,202	18,025,895
EXPENSES			
Evangelizing		2,180,046	2,013,947
Teaching		3,446,162	3,024,916
Bethel Services		2,882,424	2,745,417
Information Services		289,921	338,263
Facilities		1,770,088	1,290,607
Fleet Management		110,241	117,584
Donations and Overseas Aid	2	10,236,291	8,210,907
Administrative Services		714,193	830,522
TOTAL EXPENSES		21,629,366	18,572,163
Surplus/(Deficit)		(1,703,164)	(546,268)

Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia

A.B.N. 42 002 861 225

Not-for-Profit Entity

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As at August 31, 2014

	Notes	2014	2013
ASSETS			
Current Assets			
Cash, Deposits & Receivables	3	3,803,840	3,979,007
Inventory	4	1,147,059	1,216,313
Related Entity Loans	6	8,000	68,000
Total Current Assets		4,958,899	5,263,320
Non-Current Assets			
Plant, Equipment & Motor Vehicles (Cost Less Depreciation)	5	3,553,982	3,957,759
Land and Buildings	5	2,520,000	2,980,000
Related Entity Loans	6	15,679,767	15,812,397
Total Non-Current Assets		21,753,749	22,750,156
Total Assets		**26,712,647**	**28,013,476**
LIABILITIES			
Current Liabilities			
Payables		1,255,184	1,146,776
Related Entity Loans	6	2,738,000	879,000
Total Current Liabilities		3,993,184	2,025,776
Non-Current Liabilities			
Building and Charitable Loans		-	38,150
Related Entity Loans	6	13,572,503	15,099,426
Total Non-Current Liabilities		13,572,503	15,137,576
Total Liabilities		**17,565,687**	**17,163,351**
Net Assets		**9,146,960**	**10,850,125**
EQUITY			
Unrestricted		9,146,960	10,850,125
Total Equity	7	**9,146,960**	**10,850,125**

Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia

A.B.N. 42 002 861 225

Not-for-Profit Entity

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

For the year ended August 31, 2014

	Notes	2014	2013
Unrestricted Equity			
Opening Balance	7	10,850,125	11,396,392
Surplus/(Deficit) for the period		(1,703,164)	(546,268)
Closing Balance		9,146,960	10,850,125
Restricted Equity			
Closing Balance		-	-
TOTAL EQUITY		9,146,960	10,850,125

Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia

A.B.N. 42 002 861 225

Not-for-Profit Entity

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

For the year ended August 31, 2014

	Notes	2014	2013
Cash Flows from Operating Activities			
Donations		18,186,147	15,574,074
Interest received		53,574	93,032
Other receipts		589,929	4,701,299
Cash paid to suppliers and volunteers		(12,028,389)	(10,653,614)
Cash donated to related entities		(7,204,552)	(10,405,947)
Net Cash Provided/Used by Operating Activities (Note 2)	2	(403,292)	(691,155)
Cash Flows from Investing			
Assistance for Kingdom Hall construction		393,052	(149,253)
Purchase & fabrication of property, plant and equipment		(1,008,426)	(3,382,344)
Proceeds from sale of property, plant & equipment		1,040,859	4,588,030
Net Cash Provided/Used by Investing Activities		425,485	1,056,433
Cash Flows from Financing Activities			
Loans to Watchtower Building fund & Worldwide Work		(38,150)	(33,422)
Net Cash Provided/Used by Financing Activities		(38,150)	(33,422)
Net increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		(15,957)	331,855
Cash and Cash Equivalents at beginnning of period (Note 1)	1	2,952,107	2,613,180
Effect of exchange rate changes		33	7,072
Cash and cash Equivalents at end of period (Note 1)	1	2,936,183	2,952,107
Notes to Accounts			
1. Cash and Cash Equivalents			
Cash on hand and balances with banks		2,860,576	2,862,261
Short-term investments (Maturing within 100 days)		75,607	89,846
Cash and cash equivalents		2,936,183	2,952,107
2. Reconciliation of Net Cash provided/used by Operating Activities to Profit or Loss			
Surplus/(Deficit)		(1,703,164)	(546,268)
Adjustments for:			
Depreciation		858,164	826,642
Foreign Exchange loss (gain)		(33)	(7,072)
Gain/loss on sale of assets		15,623	(7,597)
Total		(829,410)	265,706
(Increase)/decrease in accounts receivable		42,478	(11,975)
(Increase)/decrease in prepaid expenses		(5,300)	(203,871)
Increase/(decrease) in accounts payable		455,502	1,710,593
(Increase)/decrease in inventories		100,514	1,823,285
(Increase)/decrease in related entities		(135,918)	(4,182,926)
(Increase)/decrease in work in progress		(31,157)	(91,967)
Net Cash Flows from Operating Activities		(403,292)	(691,155)

WATCHTOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA
A.B.N. 42 002 861 225

Notes to the Financial Statements

FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED AUGUST 31, 2014

Note 1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies

The financial report is a general purpose financial report that has been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board and requirements of the *Australian Charities and Non-for-profits Commission Act 2012*.

Basis of Preparation

Reporting Basis and Conventions

The functional aspects of the Statement of Comprehensive Income are disclosed in accordance with the Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society of Pennsylvania's worldwide classifications.

The financial report has been prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historical costs and does not take into account changing money values or, except where stated, current valuations of non-current assets. Cost is based on the fair values of the consideration given in exchange for assets.

(a) Income

Revenue. Revenue from the sale of goods is recognised upon delivery of goods to customers.

Interest revenue is recognised on a proportional basis taking into account the interest rates applicable to the financial assets.

Other revenue including that from the rendering of a service is recognised upon the delivery of the service.

All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST).

Gains. Donations and bequests are recognised in accordance with AASB 1004 (Contributions) at the time of receipt or when in receipt of property at fair market value. (AASB116 Aus15.1)

(b) Income Tax. The entity is exempt as a charitable entity from income tax under Subdivision 50-B of the ITAA 1997.

(c) Inventories. Inventories are measured at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Costs are assigned on a weighted-average basis.

(d) Property, Plant, Equipment and Motor Vehicles. Each class of asset is carried at cost or fair value less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation. (AASB116.30)

Property. Freehold land and buildings are measured on the fair value basis being the amount by which an asset could be exchanged between knowledgeable willing parties in an arm's length transaction.

Plant, Equipment and Motor Vehicles. These are measured on the cost basis. The depreciable amount of all fixed assets are depreciated on a straight line basis over their estimated useful lives to the entity commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.

(e) Depreciation. The depreciable amount of all fixed assets but excluding freehold land, is depreciated on a straight line basis over their useful lives to the entity commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.

The depreciation rates used for each class of depreciable assets are:

Asset Class	Depreciation Rate (%)
Plant & Equipment	5 – 20
Computer equipment & software	20 – 33
Vehicles	10 – 20

Gains and losses on disposals are determined by comparing proceeds with the carrying amount. These gains or losses are included in the Statement of Comprehensive Income.

(f) Foreign Currency Transactions and Balances

Foreign currency transactions are translated into Australian currency using the exchange rates prevailing at the date of the transaction. Foreign currency monetary items are translated at the year-end exchange rate. Non-monetary items measured at fair value are reported at the exchange rate at the date when fair values were determined.

Exchange differences arising on the translation of monetary items are recognised in the Statement of Changes of Equity.

(g) Cash and Cash Equivalents

For the purposes of the Cash Flow Statement, Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of 100 days or less.

(h) Goods & Services Tax (GST)

Income, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office. In these circumstances the GST is recognised as part of the cost of the acquisition of the asset or as part of the item of the expense. Where applicable receivables and payables in the Statement of Financial Position are shown as inclusive of GST.

Notes to the Financial Statements

Note 2. Donations and Overseas Aid

	2014	2013
For use in Australia	772,371	-
For use outside Australia	9,463,920	8,210,907

Note 3. Cash, Deposits and Receivables

Included in the total of Cash, Deposits and Receivables are Cash of and Receivables of:

	2014	2013
Cash	2,936,183	2,952,107
Receivables	867,657	1,026,900

Note 4. Inventories

	2014	2013
Production	353,044	460,908
Supplies – Services/Work in progress	794,015	755,405

Note 5. Property, Plant, Equipment & Motor Vehicles

Asset Class	Land & Buildings	Plant & Equipment	Computers & Software	Motor Vehicles
At Cost	2,520,000	8,114,438	648,692	2,093,541
Accumulated depreciation	-	(5,892,478)	(457,035)	(953,176)
Carrying amount	2,520,000	2,221,960	191,657	1,140,365
Reconciliation				
Carrying amount 1 Sep 13	2,980,000	2,501,861	180,716	1,275,181
Additions	-	251,446	82,020	200,437
Disposals (at carrying amount)	(460,000)	(6,270)	-	(73,246)
Depreciation	-	(525,077)	(71,079)	(262,007)
Carrying amount 31 Aug 14	2,520,000	2,221,960	191,657	1,140,365

Note 6. Related Entity Loans

These amounts are loans due to and due from domestic and overseas entities of Jehovah's Witnesses with respect to promoting the worldwide religion and beliefs of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Note 7. Equity

Equity relates to various activities undertaken in the promotion of the Christian religion and study of the Bible, in accordance with the beliefs of Jehovah's Witnesses.

WATCHTOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA
A.B.N. 42 002 861 225

DIRECTORS' DECLARATION

In the opinion of the Directors of *Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia*:

1. the financial statements and notes satisfy the requirements of the *Australian Charities and Non-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, and:

   (a) are in compliance with Australian Accounting Standards, including the Australian Accounting Interpretations and *Australian Charities and Non-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013*; and

   (b) give a true and fair view of its financial position as at August 31, 2014 and of its performance for the financial year ended on that date;

2. there are reasonable grounds to believe that the entity will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

This declaration is signed in accordance with subsection 60.15(2) of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission Regulation 2013*.

Winston Reginald Payne
Director

Gregory John Frank
Director

Dated at Denham Court, NSW this nineteenth day of September 2014.

INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT
To The Members Of
Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia
A.B.N. 42 002 861 225
Not-for-Profit Entity

Report on the Financial Statements I have audited the financial statements of Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia for the year ended August 31, 2014 as set out in pages 1 to 14. The financial statements include the Directors' Report, Statement of Comprehensive Income, Statement of Financial Position, Statement of Changes in Equity, Statement of Cash Flows, Notes to the Financial Statements and Directors' Declaration.

Director's responsibility for the financial report The directors of the company are responsible for preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that give a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, including the Australian Accounting Interpretations and the *Australian Charities and Non-for-profits Commission Act 2012* (the "Act"). This responsibility includes designing, implementing and maintaining internal controls relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

Auditor's responsibility My responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on my audit. My audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Those auditing standards require that I comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal controls. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting polices used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the directors, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

Independence In conducting my audit, I have complied with the independence requirements of the Act. I confirm that the independence declaration required by the Act provided to the directors of Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia on 19 September 2014 would be in the same terms if provided to the directors at the date of this auditor's report.

Auditor's Opinion In my opinion, the financial report is in accordance with the Act including:

1. Giving a true and fair view of the Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia's position on 31 August 2014 and its performance for the year ended on that date.
2. Complying with Australian Accounting Standards and the *Australian Charities and Non-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013.*

Date: 19 September 2014 Signed: PJMitchell

Peter J. Mitchell—Registered Company Auditor

NEW SOUTH WALES
COMPANIES (NEW SOUTH WALES) CODE
A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

Memorandum and Articles of Association of WATCHTOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

Incorporated July 29, 1985
Registered No. 346577-17

NEW SOUTH WALES
COMPANIES (NEW SOUTH WALES) CODE
A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

MEMORANDUM OF ASSOCIATION
of
WATCHTOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

1. The name of the company is "Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia" (hereinafter called "the Society").
2. The registered office of the Society shall be at such place in New South Wales as the directors may from time to time determine.
3. The object of the Society is to promote the Christian religion and study of the Bible in accordance with the beliefs of the Jehovah's Witnesses, and to improve men, women and children spiritually, mentally and morally by any or all of the means set out in paragraphs (a) to (g) following and with the aid of the powers set out in paragraphs (h) to (p) following so far as the same may lawfully be adopted or exercised by a body of persons established for charitable purposes only, namely:

MEANS

(a) By the dissemination of Bible truths, orally and by the printed word, and by means of the printing and/or distribution of Bibles and the printing and publication of Bible study helps, tracts, pamphlets, film, slides, tapes, papers, and other literature and information whether in written, graphic or electronic form, containing information and comment explaining Bible truths and prophecy, and by the use of all other lawful means which may seem to the Board of Directors to be directly or indirectly conducive to the furtherance of the above objects.

(b) By authorizing and appointing agents, servants, employees, teachers, instructors, evangelists, missionaries and ministers to go forth publicly and from house to house to preach and teach Bible truths to persons willing to listen by leaving with such persons such literature and information or any of the same and by conducting Bible studies with them.

(c) By purchasing or otherwise acquiring sketches, photographs, drawings, publications, manuscripts, notes, data and memoranda bearing upon the above objects of the Society and by printing, publishing, displaying and distributing the same.

(d) By Christian missionary work and by education of the people on the Bible and incidental scientific, historical and literary subjects.

(e) By charitable work for the relief of poverty.

(f) By establishing and maintaining private Bible schools and classes for instruction of men and women in the Bible, Bible literature and Bible history; by teaching, training, preparing and equipping men and women as ministers, missionaries, evangelists, preachers, teachers and lecturers; by providing and maintaining homes, places and buildings to furnish lodging and meals for such persons and others who may be needed to carry on the purposes of the Society, and providing living allowances for such persons aforesaid.

(g) By arranging for and holding Christian conventions and assemblies for public and private Christian worship and ceremonies, and by the use of any other lawful means which are directly or indirectly conducive to the furtherance of the objects of the Society.

POWERS

Solely for the promotion of the aforesaid objects and not otherwise:

(h) To subscribe to, become a member of and co-operate with or amalgamate with any other association or organisation, whether incorporated or not, whose objects are similar to those of the Society.

Provided that the Society shall not subscribe to or support with its funds or amalgamate with any association or organisation which does not prohibit the distribution of its income and property among its members to an extent at least as great as that imposed on the Society under or by virtue of Clause 4 of this memorandum.

(i) Of entering into any arrangement with any Government or authority, supreme, municipal, local or otherwise, and of obtaining from such Government or authority all rights, concessions and privileges that are conducive to the objects of the Society.

(j) Of purchasing, taking on lease or in exchange, hiring or otherwise acquiring (including, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, by gifts, bequests and devises), and of selling, exchanging, surrendering, leasing, mortgaging, charging, converting, turning to account, disposing of and dealing with any estate or interest in any lands, buildings, easements, rights, privileges, mortgages, debentures, options, contracts, licences or other rights, and any real or personal property of any kind necessary or convenient for the attainment of the objects of the Society, and, in pursuance of such objects, of erecting, constructing, enlarging, altering, furnishing, maintaining and improving buildings of all kinds.

(k) Of making donations to wholetime and part-time workers and in such cases, and either of cash or other assets, as are directly or indirectly conducive to the objects of the Society and of subscribing or guaranteeing money for religious or charitable objects.

(l) Of borrowing or raising or securing the payment of money for the objects of

the Society in such manner as the Board of Directors of the Society shall think fit.

(m) Of paying out of the funds of the Society all expenses of or incidental to the formation, registration and management of the Society.

(n) Of investing any moneys of the Society not for the time being required for its objects in such investments, authorized by law for the investment of trust funds, as may be thought proper and of varying such investments.

(o) Of granting pensions and gratuities to any officers, employees, ex-officers and ex-employees of the Society (including directors, and ex-directors) or their relatives or dependents and of establishing and supporting any trust or scheme for securing the payment of pensions to or otherwise for the benefit of such persons.

(p) Of doing and suffering all such other things as bodies corporate may by law do and suffer as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the objects of the Society.

Provided that the Society shall not support with its funds any activity or endeavour to impose on or procure to be observed by its members or others any regulations or restrictions, which if an object of the Society would make it a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union Act.

The powers set forth in Sub-Section 67 (1) of the Companies (New South Wales) Code shall not apply to the Society except insofar as they are included in this Clause 3.

4. The income and property of the Society, whencesoever derived, shall be applied solely towards the promotion of the objects of the Society, and no portion thereof shall be paid or transferred, directly or indirectly by way of dividend, bonus or otherwise howsoever by way of profit to the members of the Society.

   Provided that nothing herein shall prevent the payment, in good faith, of reasonable and proper remuneration to any officer or servant of the Society, in return for any services actually rendered to the Society, nor prevent the payment of interest at a rate not exceeding interest at the lowest rate for the time being paid by trading bankers in Sydney for term deposits, or reasonable and proper rent for premises demised or let by any member to the Society; but so that no director or member of the governing body of the Society shall be appointed to any salaried office of the Society or to any office of the Society paid by fees, and that no remuneration or other benefit in money or money's worth shall be given by the Society to any director or member of such governing body except reasonable and proper remuneration for services actually rendered to the Society, and for out-of-pocket expenses and interest at the rate aforesaid on money lent or reasonable and proper rent for premises demised or let to the Society.

5. No addition, alteration or amendment shall be made to or in the memorandum or articles of association for the time being in force, unless the same shall have been previously submitted to and approved by the Commission.

6. The fourth, fifth and tenth paragraphs of this Memorandum of Association contain conditions upon which a licence is granted by the Commission to the Society in pursuance of the provisions of section 66 of the Companies (New South Wales) Code (hereinafter called the "Code"). For the purpose of preventing any evasion of the provisions of the said paragraphs the Commission may from time to time on the application of any member of the Society and on giving notice to the Society of its intention to do so and after affording the Society an opportunity of being heard in opposition thereto, within such time as may be specified in such notice, impose further conditions which shall be duly observed by the Society.

7. The liability of members is limited.

8. Every member of the Society undertakes to contribute to the property of the Society in the event of its being wound up while he is a member, or within one year after he ceases to be a member, for payment of the debts and liabilities of the Society contracted before he ceased to be a member, and of the costs, charges and expenses of winding up and for the adjustment of the rights of the contributories among themselves, such amount as may be required, not exceeding one hundred dollars ($100).

9. If upon the winding up or dissolution of the Society there remains, after satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities, any property whatsoever, the same shall not be paid to or distributed among the members of the Society, but shall be given or transferred to some other institution or institutions having objects similar to the objects of the Society and whose memorandum of association or constitution shall prohibit the distribution of its or their income and property among its or their members to an extent at least as great as is imposed on the Society under or by virtue of clause 4 hereof, such institution or institutions to be determined by the members of the Society at or before the time of the dissolution and in default thereof by application to the Supreme Court of New South Wales for determination.

10. True accounts shall be kept of all moneys received and expended by the Society, and the manner in which such receipt and expenditure takes place, and of the property, credits and liabilities of the Society; and, subject to any reasonable restrictions as to the time and manner of inspecting the same that may be imposed in accordance with the articles of association of the Society for the time being in force, shall be open to the inspection of the members. Once at least in every year the accounts of the Society shall be examined by one or more properly qualified Auditor or Auditors who shall report to the members in accordance with the provisions of the Code.

11. The names and addresses and occupations of the subscribers are as follows:

Harold Vivian Mouritz	2-4 Zouch Road Ingleburn, 2565 Minister of Religion
Walter Maxwell Lloyd	2-4 Zouch Road Ingleburn, 2565 Minister of Religion

Gordon Douglas King	2-4 Zouch Road Ingleburn, 2565 Minister of Religion
Wallace Hendrie Baxter	2-4 Zouch Road Ingleburn, 2565 Minister of Religion
Donald Howard MacLean	2-4 Zouch Road Ingleburn, 2565 Minister of Religion

WE, the several persons whose names and addresses are subscribed, are desirous of being formed into a Company in pursuance of this Memorandum of Association.

Signatures of Subscribers	Witness to Signatures and address of witness
H. V. Mouritz W. H. Baxter W. M. Lloyd D. H. MacLean G. D. King	L. Whyte, J.P. 2-4 Zouch Road Denham Court

DATED this twelfth day of February, 1985.

NEW SOUTH WALES
COMPANIES (NEW SOUTH WALES) CODE
A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION
of
WATCHTOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

INTERPRETATION

1. In these articles
"the Code" means the Companies (New South Wales) Code;
"the Society" means the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia;
"the seal" means the common seal of the Society;
"Secretary" means any person appointed to perform the duties of a secretary of the Society and includes an honorary secretary;
"State" means the state of New South Wales;

expressions referring to writing shall, unless the contrary intention appears, be construed as including references to printing, lithography, photography and other modes of representing or reproducing words in visible form;

words or expressions contained in these articles shall be interpreted in accordance with the provisions of the Companies and Securities (Interpretation and Miscellaneous Provisions) (New South Wales) Code and of the Code as in force at the date on which these articles become binding on the Society.

2. The Society is established for the purposes set out in the Memorandum of Association.

MEMBERSHIP

3. The subscribers to the Memorandum of Association and such other persons as the Board of Directors shall admit to membership in accordance with these articles shall be members of the Society.

4. The number of members at any one time shall be not more than thirty, unless the Society in general meeting otherwise resolves, and the Board of Directors may from time to time register an increase or decrease in members pursuant to any such resolution.

5. Every applicant for membership of the Society (other than the subscribers to the

Memorandum of Assocation) shall be proposed by one and seconded by another member of the Society to both of whom the applicant shall be personally known. The application for membership shall be made in writing, signed by the applicant and his proposer and seconder and shall be in such form as the Board of Directors from time to time prescribes. Only

(a) persons who hold a current appointment as elders in a congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses and
(b) the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania are eligible to be members.

6. At the next meeting of the Board of Directors after the receipt of any application for membership, such application shall be considered by the directors, who shall thereupon determine upon the admission or rejection of the applicant. In no case shall the Board of Directors be required to give any reason for the rejection of an applicant.

7. When an applicant has been accepted for membership, the Secretary of the Society shall forthwith send to the applicant written notice of his admission and a certificate of membership together with a copy of the Society's Memorandum and Articles of Association. Members shall not be required to pay any entrance fee, membership dues or annual subscription.

CESSATION OF MEMBERSHIP

8. A member may at any time by giving notice in writing to the Secretary resign his membership of the Society but shall continue liable for any sum for which he may be liable as a member or former member of the Society under clause 8 of the Memorandum of Association of the Society.

9. If any member shall wilfully refuse or neglect to comply with the provisions of the Memorandum or Articles of Association of the Society or shall be guilty of any conduct which in the opinion of the Board of Directors is unbecoming of a member or prejudicial to the interest of the Society, the Board of Directors shall have power to expel the member from the Society and erase his name from the register of members provided that at least one week before the meeting of the Board of Directors at which a resolution for his expulsion is passed, the member shall have had notice of such meeting and of what is alleged against him and of the intended resolution for his expulsion and that he shall at such meeting and before the passing of such resolution have had an opportunity of giving orally or in writing any explanation or defence he may think fit. Provided further that any such member may by notice in writing lodged with the Secretary at least twenty-four hours before the time for holding the meeting at which the resolution is to be considered by the directors, elect to have the question dealt with by the Society in general meeting, and in that event an extraordinary general meeting of the Society shall be called for the purpose; and if at the meeting such a resolution be passed by a majority of two-thirds of those present and voting (such a vote to be taken by ballot) the member concerned shall be expelled. Expulsion of a member forfeits any interest he has or had in and to the Society or any office therein, and cancels the right to participate in any meeting as a member and the right to vote, provided he shall have the right to be heard before expulsion.

GENERAL MEETINGS

10. An annual general meeting (hereinafter called the "annual meeting") of the Society shall be held in accordance with the provisions of the Code. Other general meetings may be convened as provided for in these articles. All general meetings, other than annual general meetings, shall be called extraordinary general meetings.

11. Any director may whenever he thinks fit convene an extraordinary general meeting. The directors shall convene an extraordinary general meeting of members whenever such meeting is requisitioned in accordance with the provisions of the Code.

12. Subject to the provisions of the Code relating to special resolutions and agreements for shorter notice, notice of a general meeting shall be sent to all persons entitled to receive such notice in accordance with article 53 at least fourteen (14) days prior to the date of the meeting, and shall specify the place, the day and the hour of the meeting, and shall in the case of special business state the general nature of the business to be transacted at the meeting.

13. For the purposes of article 12 all business shall be special that is transacted at an extraordinary general meeting and also all that is transacted at an annual general meeting, with the exception of the consideration of the accounts, balance sheets, and the report of the Board of Directors and Auditors, the election of directors and the appointment of the Auditors if necessary.

PROCEEDINGS AT GENERAL MEETINGS

14. No business shall be transacted at any general meeting unless a quorum of members is present at the time when the meeting proceeds to business. A majority of members shall constitute a quorum. For the purpose of determining whether a quorum is present, a person attending as a proxy, or as representing a corporation that is a member, shall be deemed to be a member.

15. If a quorum is not present within half an hour from the time appointed for the meeting, the meeting, if convened upon the requisition of members, shall be dissolved; in any other case, it shall stand adjourned to such day, and at such time and place, as the directors determine, or, if no determination is made by the directors, to the same day in the next week at the same time and place; and, if at the adjourned meeting a quorum is not present within half an hour from the time appointed for the meeting, the members present, being not less than five, shall be a quorum. Where five members are not present, the meeting shall be dissolved.

16. The President shall preside at every general meeting of the Society, or if there is no President, or if he is not present within 15 minutes after the time appointed for the holding of the meeting, or if he is unwilling to act, the Vice-President shall be the chairman; or if the Vice-President is not present or is unwilling to act, then the members present shall elect one of their members to be chairman of the meeting.

17. The chairman may with the consent of any meeting at which a quorum is present, and shall if so directed by the meeting, adjourn the meeting from time to time and from place to place, but no business shall be transacted at any adjourned meeting other than the business left unfinished at the meeting from which the adjournment took place. When a

meeting is adjourned for thirty days or more, notice of the adjourned meeting shall be given as in the case of an original meeting; except for the aforesaid, it is not necessary to give any notice of an adjournment or of the business to be transacted at an adjourned meeting.

18. At any general meeting a resolution put to the vote of a meeting shall be decided on a show of hands unless a poll is (before or on the declaration of the result of the show of hands) demanded

    (a) by the chairman; or

    (b) by at least three members present in person or by proxy.

    Unless a poll is so demanded a declaration by the chairman that a resolution has on a show of hands been carried or carried unanimously, or by a particular majority, or lost, and an entry to that effect in the book containing the minutes of the proceedings of the Society, is conclusive evidence of the fact without proof of the number or proportion of the votes recorded in favour of or against the resolution. The demand for a poll may be withdrawn.

19. If a poll is duly demanded, it shall be taken in such manner and either at once or after an interval or adjournment or otherwise as the chairman directs, and the result of the poll shall be the determination of the meeting at which the poll was demanded; provided that a poll demanded on the election of a chairman or on a question of adjournment shall be taken forthwith.

20. In the case of an equality of votes, whether on a show of hands or on a poll, the chairman of the meeting at which the show of hands takes place or at which the poll is demanded shall be entitled to a second or casting vote.

21. A member may vote in person or by proxy or by attorney; and on a show of hands every person present who is a member or a representative of a member shall have one vote, and on a poll every person present in person or by proxy or by attorney or other duly authorized representative has one vote.

22. If a member is of unsound mind or is a person whose person or estate is liable to be dealt with in any way under the law relating to mental health, his committee or trustee or such other person who properly has the management of his estate may exercise any rights of the member in relation to a general meeting as if the committee, trustee or other person were the member.

23. An instrument appointing a proxy shall be in writing under the hand of the appointor or of his attorney duly authorized in writing or if the appointor is a corporation, either under seal or under the hand of an officer or attorney duly authorized. An instrument appointing a proxy shall be deemed to confer authority to demand or join in demanding a poll. A member shall be entitled to instruct his proxy to vote in favour of or against any proposed resolutions. Unless otherwise instructed, a proxy may vote as he thinks fit.

24. The instrument appointing a proxy shall be in the following form or in a common or usual form:

WATCHTOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

I,.....of.....
being a member of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia, hereby appoint .....
of.....or failing him
.....of.....
as my proxy to vote for me and on my behalf at the(annual*) general meeting of the Society to be held on the.....day
of..... 19 .....and at any adjournment thereof.
My proxy is hereby authorized to vote *in favour of/against the following resolutions:

Signed this .....day of .....19 .....

.....

Note 1. In the event of any member desiring to vote for or against any resolution he shall instruct his proxy accordingly. Unless otherwise instructed, the proxy may vote as he thinks fit.

* Strike out whichever is not desired.

25. An instrument appointing a proxy shall not be treated as valid unless the instrument, and the power of attorney or other authority (if any) under which the instrument is signed or a notarially certified copy of that power or authority, is or are deposited, not less than 24 hours before the time for holding the meeting or adjourned meeting at which the person named in the instrument proposes to vote, and in default the instrument of proxy shall not be treated as valid.

26. A vote given in accordance with the terms of an instrument of proxy or of a power of attorney is valid notwithstanding the previous death or unsoundness of mind of the principal, the revocation of the instrument (or of the authority under which the instrument was executed) or of the power, if no intimation in writing of the death, unsoundness of mind or revocation has been received by the Society at the registered office before the commencement of the meeting or adjourned meeting at which the instrument is used or the power exercised.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS

27. Directors shall be elected by the members from among their own number at an annual meeting and hold office until successors qualify. The subscribers to the Memorandum of Association shall constitute the first Board of Directors, and they shall all retire at the first annual meeting of members. At the first annual meeting of the Society there shall be an election by ballot of five directors of the Society, one of whom shall be elected for a term of one year, two for two years and two for three years. At each annual meeting thereafter a number of directors equal to that of those whose terms have expired shall be elected for a term of three years. A retiring director is eligible for re-election.

28. Officers of the Society, chosen from among the members of the Board of Directors, shall be a President, who shall preside at the meetings of the Board of Directors, a Vice-President,

who shall preside in the absence of the President, and a Treasurer. The Board of Directors shall elect officers, who shall hold office for a term of one year, or until successors qualify. Meetings for the election of officers shall be held annually within 30 days after the holding of the annual general meeting. The following named persons who have subscribed to the Memorandum of Association shall constitute the first officers:

President:	Harold Vivian Mouritz
Vice-President:	Walter Maxwell Lloyd
Treasurer:	Wallace Hendrie Baxter

They shall all retire at the first annual general meeting but shall be eligible for re-election.

29. The Society may from time to time by ordinary resolution passed at a general meeting increase or reduce the number of officers or directors.

30. Vacancies in any office or the Board of Directors occasioned by death, resignation, disqualification as a member or removal shall be filled by vote of a majority of the remaining members of the Board, who shall meet for that purpose within thirty days from the time when such vacancy or vacancies shall occur. If the Board fails to fill such vacancy or vacancies in the time and manner above provided, then the President, or if the office of the President be vacant, then the Vice-President, performing the duties of the President, shall fill such vacancy or vacancies by appointing such duly qualified person or persons as he shall think fit who shall hold office until the next annual meeting when such vacancy or vacancies shall be filled by election. A person so appointed is subject to retirement at the same time as if he had become a director on the day on which the director in whose place he is appointed was last elected a director.

31. Officers may be removed from office (but not from being directors) upon a vote of the majority of all the directors. Directors may be removed from the Board by ordinary resolution of the Society in general meeting, subject to any special notice requirements of the Code.

32. The office of an officer or a director shall become vacant if the director

    (a) ceases to qualify as a director by operation of section 226 of the Code;

    (b) becomes prohibited from being a director of a company by reason of any order made under the Code;

    (c) becomes a bankrupt or assigns or suffers an assignment of his property for the benefit of his creditors generally or otherwise takes the benefit of any statute for the relief of insolvent debtors;

    (d) becomes of unsound mind or a person whose person or estate is liable to be dealt with in any way under the law relating to mental health;

    (e) resigns his office by notice in writing to the Society;

    (f) is absent for more than six months without permission of the Board of Directors from meetings of the Board held during that period;

(g) is directly or indirectly interested in any contract or proposed contract with the Society and fails to declare the nature of his interest as required by the Code;

(h) ceases to qualify as a member of the Society or ceases to be a member;

(i) ceases to be an elder of a congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses as to which the certificate of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania shall be good prima facie evidence; or

(j) holds any office of profit under the Society.

Provided always that nothing in this article shall affect the operation of clause 4 of the Memorandum of Association of the Society.

POWERS AND DUTIES OF DIRECTORS

33. Subject to the Code and to any other provision of these articles and the Memorandum, the business of the Society shall be managed by the directors, who may pay all expenses incurred in promoting and registering the Society, and may exercise all such powers of the Society as are not, by the Code or by these articles, required to be exercised by the Society in general meeting, subject nevertheless, to any of these articles, to the provisions of the Code, and to such regulations being not inconsistent with the aforesaid articles or provisions, as may be prescribed by the Society in general meeting; provided that any rule, regulation or by-law of the Society made by the Board of Directors may be disallowed by the Society in general meeting and provided further that no resolution or regulation made by the Society in general meeting shall invalidate any prior act of the Board of Directors which would have been valid if that resolution or regulation had not been passed or made.

34. Without limiting the generality of article 33, the directors may exercise all the powers of the Society to borrow money, to mortgage or charge any property of the Society and to give any security whether outright or as security for any debt, liability or obligation of the Society or of any other person, firm, Society or company.

35. The directors may, by power of attorney, appoint any person or persons to be the attorney or attorneys of the Society for such purposes, with such powers, authorities and discretions (being powers, authorities and discretions vested in or exercisable by the directors), for such period and subject to such conditions as they think fit. Any such power of attorney may contain such provisions for the protection and convenience of persons dealing with the attorney as the directors think fit and may also authorize the attorney to delegate all or any of the powers, authorities and discretions vested in him.

36. All cheques, promissory notes, bankers drafts, bills of exchange and other negotiable instruments, and all receipts for money paid to the Society, shall be signed, drawn, accepted, endorsed or otherwise executed, as the case may be, by any two directors or in such other manner as the Board of Directors from time to time determines.

37. The directors shall cause minutes to be made

(a) of all appointments of officers and servants;

(b) of the names of directors present at any meeting of directors and at general meetings of the Society;

(c) of all proceedings at all meetings of the Society and its directors.

Such minutes shall be signed by the chairman of the meeting at which the proceedings were held or by the chairman of the next succeeding meeting.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

38. The directors may meet together for the despatch of business and adjourn and otherwise regulate their meetings as they think fit. A director may at any time, and the Secretary shall on the requisition of a director, convene a meeting of the directors.

39. Subject to these articles, questions arising at a meeting of directors shall be decided by a majority of votes of directors present and voting and any such decision shall for all purposes be deemed a decision of the Board of Directors. In the case of an equality of votes, the chairman of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.

40. A director shall not vote in respect of any contract or proposed contract with the Society in which he is financially interested, or any matter arising therefrom, and if he does so vote, his vote shall not be counted.

41. The quorum necessary for the transaction of business at a meeting of directors shall be a majority of directors or such number, not less than two, as may be fixed by the directors from time to time.

42. In the event of a vacancy or vacancies in the office of a director or in the offices of directors, the remaining directors may act, but, if the number of remaining directors is not sufficient to constitute a quorum at a meeting of directors, they may act only for the purpose of increasing the number of directors to a number sufficient to constitute such a quorum or of convening a general meeting of the Society.

43. The President shall preside as chairman at every meeting of the directors, or if there is no President, or if at any meeting he is not present within 15 minutes after the time appointed for the holding of the meeting or if he is unwilling to act, the Vice-President shall be the chairman, or if the Vice-President is not present at the meeting then the remaining directors may choose one of their number to be chairman of the meeting.

44. The Board of Directors may delegate any of its powers and/or functions (not being duties imposed on the directors as the directors of a company by the Code or the general law) to a committee or committee consisting of such member or members of the Society as the directors think fit; any committee so formed shall exercise the powers delegated in accordance with any directions of the Board of Directors and a power so exercised shall be deemed to have been exercised by the directors.

45. A committee may meet and adjourn as it thinks proper. Each member of a committee shall have one vote. Questions arising at any meeting shall be determined by a majority of votes of the members present, and in the case of an equality of votes the chairman shall have a second or casting vote.

46. All acts done by any meeting of the directors or of a committee or by any person acting as a director or member of a committee shall, notwithstanding that it is afterwards

discovered that there was some defect in the appointment of any such director or person acting as aforesaid, or that the director or any of them were disqualified, be as valid as if every person had been duly appointed and was qualified to be a director or member of such committee.

47. A resolution in writing signed by all the directors in Australia for the time being entitled to receive notice of a meeting of the Board of Directors, shall be as valid and effectual as if it had been passed at a meeting of the Board of Directors duly convened and held. Any such resolution may consist of several documents in like form, each signed by one or more directors.

SECRETARY

48. The Secretary shall in accordance with the Code be appointed by the Board of Directors for such term and upon such conditions as it thinks fit, and any secretary so appointed may be removed by it. Nothing shall prevent the Board of Directors from appointing a member of the Society as Honorary Secretary and any member so appointed shall forthwith become an officer of the Society and, if not already a director, ex officio a director and he shall be subject to the provisions of clause 4 of the Memorandum of Association.

SEAL

49. The directors shall provide for the safe custody of the seal. The seal shall be used only by the authority of the directors or of a committee of the directors authorized by the Board of Directors in that behalf, and every instrument to which the seal is affixed shall be signed by a director and countersigned by another director, a secretary or another person appointed by the directors for that purpose.

ACCOUNTS

50. The Board of Directors shall cause proper accounting and other records to be kept and shall distribute copies of every profit and loss account and balance sheet (including every document required by law to be attached thereto) accompanied by a copy of the Auditors report thereon as required by the Code, provided however that the Board of Directors shall cause to be made out and laid before each annual general meeting a balance sheet and profit and loss account made up to date not more than five months before the date of the meeting.

51. The Board of Directors shall from time to time determine in accordance with clause 10 of the Memorandum of Association of the Society at what times and places and under what conditions or regulations the accounting and other records of the Society will be open to the inspection of members.

AUDIT

52. A properly qualified Auditor or Auditors shall be appointed and his or their duties regulated in accordance with the Code.

NOTICES

53. Any notice required by law or under these articles to be given by the Society to any member may be given either by serving it on him personally or by sending it by post to him at his address as shown in the register of members or the address supplied by him to the Society

for the giving of notices to him. Where a notice is sent by post, service of the notice shall be deemed to be effected by properly addressing, prepaying, and posting a letter containing the notice, and to have been effected, in the case of a notice of a meeting, on the day after the date of its posting and in any other case at the time at which the letter would be delivered in the ordinary course of post.

54. Notice of every general meeting shall be given in the manner authorized by article 53 to

(a) every member except those members who (having no registered address within the State) have not supplied to the Society an address within the State for the giving of notices to them; and

(b) to the auditor or auditors for the time being of the Society.

WINDING UP

55. The provisions of clause 9 of the Memorandum of Association relating to the winding up and dissolution of the Society shall have effect and be observed as if the same were repeated in these articles.

INDEMNITY

56. Every director, auditor, secretary and other officer, or agent for the time being of the Society shall be indemnified out of the assets of the Society against any liability incurred by him in his capacity as officer, director, auditor or agent in defending any proceedings, whether civil or criminal, in which judgment is given in his favour or in which he is acquitted or in connection with any application in relation to any such proceedings in which relief is under the Code granted to him by the Court in respect of any negligence, default, breach of duty or breach of trust.

WE, the several persons whose names are subscribed being the subscribers to the Memorandum of Association hereby agree to the foregoing Articles of Association.

Signatures of Subscribers	Witness to Signatures and address of witness
H. V. Mouritz W. H. Baxter W. M. Lloyd D. H. MacLean G. D. King	L. Whyte, J.P. 2-4 Zouch Road Denham Court

DATED this twelfth day of February, 1985.

KALAMUNDA CONGREGATION OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

REDACTED

April 24, 2010

Re: BCH

Dear Brothers

We received a letter of introduction from the Loganholme congregation for BCH REDAC and his wife REDACTED

The elders from Loganholme referred to the issue of child abuse with BCH and the reasons for his disfellowshipped state. He met with two elders when first moving to the congregation and expressed he was unsure of the reasons for the Brothers reluctance to reinstate him.

It is likely he will make a request for re-instatement in the near future. We would welcome any guidance you can provide for us in this matter.

We have enclosed a copy of the letter from the elders at Loganholme.

Yours Brothers

Ormonde Blakeney	He-Wun Kim	Steve Johnson
Coordinator	Service Overseer	Secretary

CONFIDENTIAL (FOI)

KALAMUNDA CONGREGATION OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

REDACTED

October 30, 2010

Re: BCH – Request for reinstatement

Dear Brothers

We have received a written request from BCH for reinstatement. Three brothers met with him to discuss this request. We met with him on another occasion in an attempt to clarify the situation. We pass on the following comments after these conversations and phone contact with brother Neil Harrop from Loganholme.

BCH admits to one occasion in which he molested one of his daughters, for which he was convicted. He believes the other occasions did not constitute abuse, i.e. bathing his children. During discussions BCH mentioned that under advice from a solicitor (a brother) he should enter a guilty plea. He considered this but decided not to. He felt this would be an admission to the other events he was accused of. So his denial is of these other accusations. He also alleges that the prosecution exaggerated his conduct to "build a case" against him. We also note the discrepancy between letters. The correspondence from you mentions abuse of all four daughters, whereas the letter from Loganholme mentions only three.

BCH agreed that he has a tendency to stretch the truth at times. This has been a long standing problem and he recognizes that this has impacted on his discussions with bodies of elders of over the years. He has repented of this sin and has made efforts to correct this weakness. BCH admitted that he had the wrong attitude with the elders in Loganholme. During meetings with them he was trying to justify himself and had an arrogant manner with the brothers. We have enclosed a copy of BCH's letter.

The picture we have tried to put together is:

1. BCG 's boyfriend reported to the elders the abuse by BCH who is disfellowshipped 1988.
2. BCH is reinstated in 1992.
3. Maintenance payments stop when his youngest child is 16 years old. His former wife now goes to court with the charges against him. After 3 court cases he is convicted of indecent assault and attempted rape and is jailed for over 2 years.
4. In 2003 BCH is disfellowshipped for malicious lying. This relates to the denial of the accusation of child abuse.

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

5. A restraining order is placed on BCH on contact with his daughters. However he places advertisements in local papers in Northern Queensland to contact them. He does have written contact with his oldest daughter BCK. This contact stops when he is again disfellowshipped.
6. 2010 BCH applies for reinstatement in Kalamunda.

We have the following observations over the last 6 months.

- He is very regular in meeting attendance and is not disruptive.
- He expressed his sincere regret for past sins and wants to set things right.
- He does not communicate well and his answers are convoluted and confusing.
- He seems to have the complete trust and support of his wife. She is a sister and is in good standing in the congregation.

It has been difficult to understand how to assist BCH. Brothers we would like to ask for further direction in this situation.

Yours Brothers

Ormonde Blakeney
Coordinator

Steve Johnson
Secretary

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

KALAMUNDA CONGREGATION OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

REDACTED

August 27, 2011

Service Desk
Australia Branch
PO Box 280
Ingleburn NSW 1890

Re: BCH – Request for Reinstatement

Dear Brothers

We received a fourth letter from BCH which we have enclosed. When we received the letter we met with him and asked what he meant when he said he confessed to all his sins. Did he also mean he confessed to the charges that he had abused his other daughters besides BCG. His answer was that he did not abuse them and that this was not what he intended to convey. In fact he again made the point that he has never ever been told what the specific charges are.

As we are concerned for his situation and the stress it is causing his wife we would like to help him get out of the hole he is in if that were possible. We would like to ask for a little more information regarding those charges. With this in mind we suggested to him that there must be some evidence in the letter his daughter wrote to your office. (We had heard of this letter from him previously) We asked could we see a copy of the letter and he gave us one.

The letter certainly paints him in a very poor light as a father. However what still concerns us is that there apparently is no evidence at all it seems, of any proof of his abusing his other daughters except BCG 's wild claims and BCG certainly seems to exaggerate things somewhat in the letter. For example she says he was disfellowshipped for a measly 2 years. Actually it was for close to 4 years. She says she would never leave the truth. She has not only left the truth but is disfellowshipped. She admits herself that some see her as a bit of a 'fruit cake'. The original wrong with BCG that can be proved and that he now makes a full confession of was over 20 years ago.

Although BCG has left the truth, he has maintained constant contact. Still attends meetings on a regular basis. Continued to witness while in goal and apparently still does.
On the evidence available to us we feel he could be considered for reinstatement.
Below are some of the reasons we have considered.

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1. Why would he continue to deny abuse of other daughters if they were true? It would be so easy for him to admit and confess and finish the matter.
2. None of the charges of other daughters were ever presented and tested in court. None of those daughters gave such testimony in court.
3. His present wife (who is an active sister) says she asked BCK if her father had ever touched her and BCK said she didn't remember and would ask her mother. She later came back to say her mother said he had when she was 2 – 3 years old. Her mother of course was the one who instigated the trial.
4. His present wife who has been married to him for 18 years and knows the man better than any of us says he has never in all those years shown any inclination toward young girls or other women or pornography or other wrongs.
5. We asked him if he has ever admitted to the charges about his other daughters. His answer was that only once did he say something that could be construed that way. After a long interrogation by the elders he, out of frustration said something like. I admit to whatever you say. He says it was wrong. He should not have said it. Incidentally the elders at Longholme have commented to us per phone that he never admitted anything to them.
6. If there are some other sins that he is accused of that have not yet been settle, is it possible to know what they are? If they are accusations again just from BCG or do they have the required two or more witnesses to sustain the.
7. At this stage we feel he would be willing to do whatever is requested of him to set matters straight.

We appreciated the need to take a very serious view of child abuse and can understand your strong views about the matter. However if there is further proof of the allegations that we do not have, we would be in a better position to handle the matter if that could be available to us.

Other points could be mentioned

1. BCG claims that she has a loving husband and is blessed with 2 children. We understand that she has been separated and had at least one child out of wedlock.
2. She claims he violated Jehovah's laws and brought great reproach on his name and how terrible that is. She would never do that but she has left the truth and left Jehovah and broken his laws.
3. The prison authorities were apparently satisfied he was not an ongoing threat. He was released early from prison and was never required to undergo counseling.

We pray Jehovah direction on this matter and thank you for your kind assistance.

Yours Brothers

Ormonde Blakeney Nigel Hubbard Steve Johnson

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AUSTRALIA BRANCH

(Via CompuServe)

AB April 28, 1998 No. 212

Governing Body
Service Committee

Re: Child Abuse Cases

Dear Brothers:

We are replying now to your letter GSC:AT February 12, 1998, No. 174S concerning the possibility of putting something in writing on the subject of confidentiality and the law in relation to child abuse matters. We appreciate the opinion of the Writing and Service Committees, and we thank you for the opportunity to comment further. We are sorry to be so long in replying, but we held it up due to the absence of some of the brothers who deal with these matters.

Up till now the brothers generally expect that the elders will keep all matters confidential, since this has been stressed a number of times. In Australia, it has happened that some elders have been prepared to accept punishment for contempt of court rather than disclose confidential information. However, we are now saying that elders should comply with the law where mandatory reporting is required if there is no exemption available to them. The situation will no doubt arise at some time where elders will have to disclose some information concerning child abuse, either to the secular authorities or even in open court if they are called upon to answer. Our feeling is that it may seem to publishers that the elders are treating confidential matters lightly. Also, it may be that some who have sinned would hesitate to talk to the elders if they thought that elders would not respect confidentiality. You asked us to set out what we believe would help in *Our Kingdom Ministry* if we feel it is really needed.

It has been suggested that the following be printed in a Question Box in *Our Kingdom Ministry*. It would not be necessary to schedule it as part of the service meeting program, unless we simply ask the Presiding Overseer or another elder simply to read the question and answer in the Announcements part of the meeting.

> **Question:** Should elders supply information to secular authorities when they learn that a brother or sister has been involved in a serious crime?
>
> **Answer:** Information given to elders is treated as confidential and is not discussed with others who are not involved. (*w*71 4/1, pp. 222-4) All Christians are counseled by God's Word to be law-abiding, and they are to pay to Caesar what is Caesar's where there is no conflict with God's laws. (Matthew 22:21; *w*90 11/1 pp. 10-15, 18-28) When Christians obey Caesar's laws that are not in conflict with God's laws, they have no need to "fear" punishment from the authorities as law-breakers, and they can maintain a good conscience.—Romans 13:3, 4.
>
> If an elder learns of some serious crime on the part of a member of the congregation, he may, in some circumstances, be obliged by law to report the matter or to provide some information to secular authorities. It is not the responsibility of the elders to enforce Caesar's laws, but the very nature of some crimes demands that they be reported, or that they be dealt with by Caesar, for this is the "arrangement of God." (Romans 13:2) Even in such cases, it is important that the elders maintain confidentiality to the

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extent possible, and elders should *always* contact the Society *before* providing any information on confidential matters to secular authorities.

Elders prove to be a "hiding place from the wind" to all in the congregation who are truly repentant, and they try to "readjust such a person," no matter how serious the sin committed. (Isaiah 32:2; Galatians 6:1) However, while Jehovah forgives repentant sinners, there may be consequences of the actions of the sinner that cannot be avoided. Depending on the law of the land, the sinner may have to face sanctions from the state, or even serve a prison term. The congregation will not protect him from that.—See *The Watchtower*, January 1, 1997, page 29.

While in Brooklyn I turned in to the Service Committee a summary dated November 21, 1997 of what the Australia branch was saying. A copy is enclosed. The branch here will be happy if the Service and Writing Committees agree basically with what has been said, and we look forward to any comments or directions you may have.

We will look forward to your further comments on any of these matters. We realize that this is a complicated subject with many ramifications, and we appreciate the careful consideration given to the matter by the Governing Body. We have a current case under way which we are handling according to our past policies, so we would appreciate your comments as soon as convenient.

We take this opportunity of sending our warm love.

Your brother,
H. V. Mouritz
For the Branch Committee
AUSTRALIA BRANCH

Encl.

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COMMENTS ON HANDLING CASES OF CHILD ABUSE IN AUSTRALIA

To: Service Committee
From: H. V. Mouritz
Date: November 21, 1997

Dear Brothers:

Only one state in Australia (Northern Territory) requires **mandatory reporting** of child abuse cases. One other state, New South Wales, has mandatory reporting, but the legal department believes that ministers of religion are exempted from this requirement.

Only one state in Australia has **ecclesiastical privilege,** but it is only in case of a confession handled "according to the ritual of the church." Other states do not have any kind of ecclesiastical privilege, although courts are very reluctant to force ministers to testify.

The memorandum from Brooklyn dated LLJ:LSD October 7, 1997 states that when an accusation is made to an elder, he and another elder (preferably the presiding overseer) will determine whether there is any substance to the accusation. They then call the Society's legal department to see whether they are obligated to report the matter to the authorities. If they are required to report, the memo says they should do so.

The branch agrees with this part of the memo, but they propose that, if reporting is mandatory, the elders should inform the person that he should report the matter himself, and if he does not do so, they will be obliged by law to make a report. If reporting is not mandatory, they should inform the individual that they will keep the matter confidential, but that, if it does come to the attention of the authorities and they are called upon to disclose what they know, they will have to do so.

Following this, the two elders will follow the normal procedures to have a judicial committee look into the matter. Points 3 and 4 in the memorandum of October 7 cover this point. According to normal procedure, the body of elders will become aware of the accusation when called upon to for a judicial committee, but, even if this knowledge legally obliges them to make a report to the authorities, they will not have to take any action, since they will know that the matter has already been reported.

If a person with a history of child abuse moves to another congregation, the elders will follow the instructions in the Society's letter of March 15, 1997. There does not seem to be any need to simply state, as the October 7 memo says: "[abuser] is a known child molester." If there is mandatory reporting in that state, that statement would give them reasonable grounds for believing it, since it came from a reliable source, and so in theory they may still be required to disclose it. So the branch does not see any reason why a complete report should not be given, as outlined in the Society's instructions, and this would certainly be of more value to the elders in the new congregation.

If a person whose offense has been dealt with moves to a state where reporting is mandatory, the elders may have to inform the person of the situation, and that the elders may have to make a report if he does not do so. The branch is asking, however, about possible situations where the offense was committed many years ago, it has been dealt with, and the individual appears to have made a recovery. Is it

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necessary to bring an old matter up again by reporting it? What if the offense was committed before the person learnt the truth? He has now repented, "turned around," and been baptized. There is no record of his offending again. It would seem to me that elders should use good judgment in such cases. If the offense is an old one, and especially if the offender was not then in the truth, the elders could conceivably conscientiously feel that the matter is in the past and not something current. Surely the law would not punish them if they did not report an old offense of that nature. They could always say that, as far as they know, the person has reformed, but that they are monitoring the situation, and, if there should be any reason in the future to believe that this is not the case, they will then follow the law and make a report. Of course, if because of what some other party does, the law enforcement agencies do find out about it, and the elders are required to tell what they know, they may have to do so if they cannot obtain ecclesiastical privilege. But in most cases they would not have any first-hand knowledge of the case, and if they say that, they would not likely be asked to testify.

The point was made about the possible obligation on brothers in the Society's office to report a case when notification is sent in. If the elders follow the procedures, and they have made any necessary report, it would seem that there would be no legal obligation on those in the office to make another report. If we are in agreement that such matters may be disclosed on demand by a court if ecclesiastical privilege cannot be obtained, there would seem no reason why a full report could not be sent to the Society. The congregation elders would have such a report in their files, and if they are going to produce it if required, then there should be no need to call on the Society for further information. Brothers in the office will not have any first-hand knowledge to tell, in any case. As to whether reporting the facts to the Society would negate ecclesiastical privilege, we could always claim that it is part of the "ritual of the church." If we are not granted privilege, we are going to disclose it anyway, so it will hardly be a major problem.

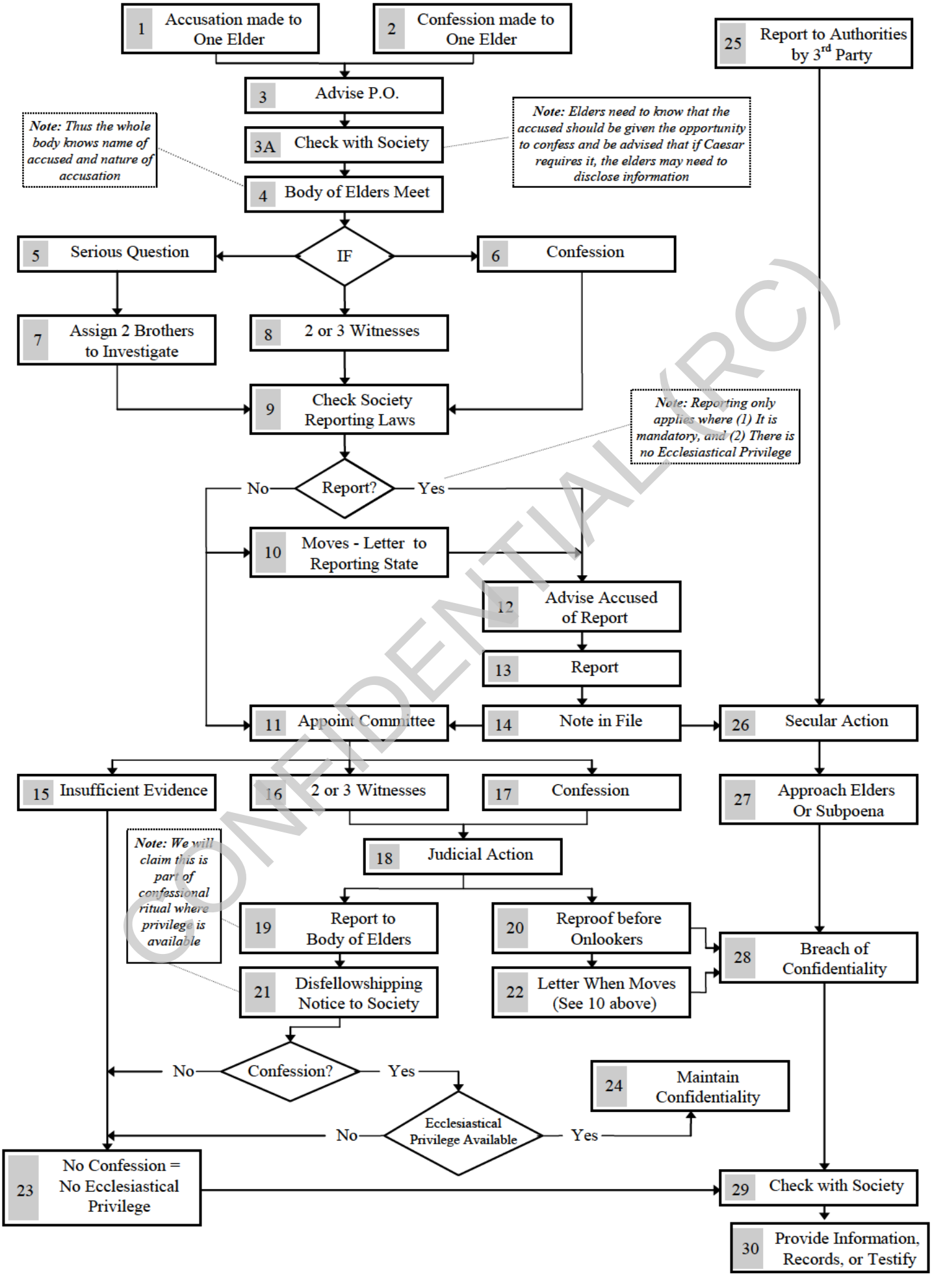
I do not think we can cover every possible situation that might arise. These general guidelines should be sufficient. If unusual situations arise, the special circumstances can be considered and the branch can write about it then.

I hope these remarks will be of assistance. The branch will look forward to any comments you may have.

Your brother,

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HANDLING CHILD ABUSE MATTERS (*ks*91 p. 109)



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Comments on Flow Chart - Handling Child Abuse Matters

The flow chart endeavours to follow the steps as outlined in *ks 91* at page 109. It incorporates additional steps to enable the elders to maintain confidentiality where Caesar's laws make provision for privilege or exemption from reporting laws.

Elders receive information about child abuse matters in either of two ways; (1) When an accusation is made against the alleged molester, or (2) when the molester approaches an elder and confesses. Following the outline on page 109 of *ks 91* the elder who receives this information from either source approaches the Presiding Overseer (3) and a meeting of elders is held (4).

We have inserted an additional step (3a) that has already been instituted with Child abuse matters, that is, for the elders to contact the Society before taking any action at all. The Legal Department, and or Service Department can advise the elders on how they should approach the accused, if it is not a confession. They may also be able to give some general advice in handling these cases at that time.

At the meeting of the body of elders, the elder hearing the accusation or confession will give sufficient information to the body of elders present (having in mind the principle of confidentiality referred to in *ks 91* in the last paragraph on page 79) so that they can determine whether a disfellowshipping offence has been committed and whether there is a confession (6), or the matter can likely be established at the mouth of two or three witnesses (8) or if there are serious questions raised (5).

If there are serious questions but no indication that the matter can be established at the mouth of two or three witnesses, the body of elders present at the time assign two brothers to investigate the allegations.(7) These elders will report back to the body of elders.

If the allegations can now be established by two or three witnesses, by confession, or by sufficient circumstantial evidence, one of the elders, preferably the Presiding Overseer will contact the Society's Legal Department (or Service in some cases) to see if there are any reporting laws applicable.

The Society will determine if there are reporting laws applicable in that state or territory, and whether or not there are exemptions for ministers of religion and/or protection by way of ecclesiastical privilege which might. The Society will need to know whether or not there was a confession to determine this question, but they will not need to know the name of the person. In this way, the officers of the Society, at this point of the procedures, do not need to be practicing lawyers and could, therefore, be the brothers on the Service desk, providing the Legal Department can give them clear guidelines to enable them to apply the various state laws. This would not be difficult in Australia.

If the Society advises the elders to report the matter to the secular authorities, the elders assigned to investigate the matter, or the person who received the confession, should advise the

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accused that they are under obligation to make the report (12). They should then do so (13), making a full written report for the files (14).

At this stage, all the have knowledge of the bare details of the case, but the matter may not have been full investigated in detail by a committee. In this way, what the elders have is hearsay, except in the case of confession where the hearer has first hand knowledge. This may be of some benefit in claiming confidentiality under privilege where privilege is based on confession only. The secular authorities are now aware of the matter, either from the report made by the elders (13), or by a report from a third party (25).

A committee is then appointed to handle the matter (11), either after the report is made, or if there is no legal obligation to report.

If the information came by way of confession, either initially (2), or during the investigation (7), or even at a later stage, the Judicial Committee (and in fact all the elders) will keep strict confidentiality where ecclesiastical privilege is available. They will do this unless privilege has been breached by reproof before all onlookers (20), that is, where, for example, the molester is repentant and apologises before the family of the victim and receives counsel or reproof in their presence, or where a letter is written to another body of elders in the congregation to which the molester moved (22). In many cases, but perhaps not all, if the molester moves from a state without reporting laws to one that has reporting laws, the new body of elders could now need to check with the Society (9) as to their liability.

If privilege has been waived by a breach of confidentiality (28), as, for example in (20) and (22), then the Chairman of the Committee will again check with the Society to ascertain their legal obligations before disclosing information to the authorities.

Where the elders make the appropriate brief report to the body of elders (19), announce a disfellowshipping without stating the cause, or send a disfellowshipping notice to the Society (21), it would be appropriate to try, where ecclesiastical privilege is available, and claim that these actions are part of our confessional ritual.

Thus, in Australia, where there is no confession, there is no ecclesiastical privilege (24), and the only circumstances under which privilege can be claimed is where there is legislation making that provision and there is a confession, is when privilege has not been waived by such disclosures as reproof before onlookers (20), and the letter according to the instructions given in the March 14, 1997 (May 1, 1997 in Australia) letter to all elders (22).

The final step before giving information, handing over records, or testifying in court should be to check with the Society, preferably with the legal department, if the branch has one.

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WORLD HEADQUARTERS OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES
25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483 • Tel. 718 560-5000

GAO:AT January 3, 2002 No. 223S

Via CompuServe

Branch Committee
AUSTRALIA

Dear Brothers:

Your letter dated LLA August 28, 2001, has been given consideration. You provided information concerning a new law that was recently enacted entitled the "Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000." As you may know, our brothers in Europe have had to adjust the way they handle information since laws have been passed there that govern the way personal information is handled by organizations. As a result, the Service Committee has provided these branches with some general guidelines that we feel would be applicable to your situation. Therefore, we are setting out herein information that we feel will be helpful to you.

There may be some exceptions. If your branch feels there is an exception that needs to be made for you to comply with the law in your country, please feel free to write the Service Committee of the Governing Body and express what adjustment you feel is necessary for your branch and the reasons why this is necessary. Otherwise, we feel that you should follow the policy outlined herein.

FORMS AND APPLICATIONS

Since it seems clear that in most of the branches in the affected area, we can process personal data only if consent is given by the person(s) involved, then we should only maintain that data for which we have consent. This would mean that the signature be obtained of each person who is or becomes a publisher, to indicate consent is given to our keeping these records. Adjust the **Congregation's Publisher Record Card (5-21)** to include a statement that states the publisher consents to our keeping field service records. There should be a **place for signature** on the Congregation Publisher's Record Card (S-21). Nothing of an objectionable, confidential nature should be kept in the remarks column. You should mark "DO NOT DESTROY" on the original card that has this signature. This signed Congregation Publisher's Record Card (S-21) should be kept permanently in the Congregation's Publisher Record card file. If this is done, it would not be necessary for publishers to sign their cards each time a new one is issued every two years. There will be no need to keep a Congregation's Publisher's Record Card (S-21) for unbaptized minors whose parents are not Jehovah's Witnesses.

We will continue to use the **Bible Study Report (S-3)** to keep record of meeting attendance. However, it will not be necessary to have publishers fill out this form for their Bible Study(ies). The use of the **House-to-House Record (S-8)** must be discontinued. Publishers who find people of interest who desire them to return can make note of this in a personal notebook.

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When the names of interested persons speaking a foreign language should be passed on to a foreign language congregation in the area, branches use the **Foreign Language Follow-Up Slip (S-70a).** If the person to be called upon welcomes a visit from a publisher who speaks their language, obtain their consent. **A statement to this effect can be added to the Foreign Language Follow-Up Slip (S-70a). Have a place for them to sign.** If the Foreign Language Follow-Up Slip (S-70a) cannot be used in your branch, appropriate information could possibly be passed on to congregations needing such by means of a personal note or even a telephone communication.

In the future we will continue to use **Subscription form M(d) 1 and M(d) 101.** However, we need to include a **line for the subscriber to sign as written consent.** It is best not to use the gift subscription arrangement unless the one receiving the subscription signs the Subscription form M(d) 1 or M(d) 101.

It would seem that all **applications for Bethel, Gilead, Ministerial Training School, traveling overseers,** etc. are already being signed and so should satisfy the Supervisory Authority's requirement of consent. We can add a statement to these applications that gives us consent to process personal data on all who have to fill out applications for schools or some form of special service. This will enable us to acquire and keep Personal Qualification's Reports (S-326) and evaluation reports on traveling overseers, Special pioneers, Gilead students, Ministerial Training School students, etc. If this is not adequate for any branch in the European Union, please let the Service Committee know along with your recommendations for maintaining personal data needed for the branch in connection with such applicants. Information on their activity as well as personal data needs to be filed.

DISCIPLINARY MATTERS

Apparently certain personal data kept by congregations or the branch must be accessible to the person(s) involved. Since detailed information of a confidential nature should not be kept in congregation or branch files, use of the regular **Disfellowshipped Person's Form (S-77)** may be discontinued. The details of judicial committee cases reported to the Branch can be reported in a typewritten letter. After the Branch has reviewed it, such correspondence may be discarded. There is no need for the congregation judicial committee to keep a copy of this letter. The **Disfellowshipped Person's Forms (S-79a/b),** can still be used but needs to be modified. These forms may contain: Person's name; date of action; service position (if any); Scriptural text, related to reason for judicial action.

If you are not allowed to keep **records accumulated in the past,** discard the current Disfellowshipped Persons Forms (S-77) and (S-79a/b) that do not comply with the law. Adjustments can be made as outlined in this letter to have your files conform with the law on processing personal data.

We will send electronic copies of the above-mentioned forms to you.

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Letters Of Introduction sent when publishers and appointed brothers move may be viewed as 'minister to minister communications. Third parties are not involved, so it does not appear that these violate the spirit of this law. However, after a secretary receives such letters, and the body of elders becomes familiar with the content, such letters do not need to be kept. The same can be said for letters that the branch sends when a Bethel Family Member is dismissed. After such letters are read, there is no need to keep them on file.

OTHER MATTERS OF CONCERN

Those working on the **Hospital Information Desk (HID)** or on a **Hospital Liaison Committee (HLC)** should only keep on file data for doctors who have given consent. Likewise if data must be kept on medical matters involving some publishers as reference, we should have written consent to file that information and we should not share that data unless we have the written consent of the publisher(s) involved.

If there is a need to have a **Director Processing Personal Data,** you can officially appoint someone on the Branch Committee or someone in the Service Department. If there is a need for each department at the branch that deals with personal data to have someone appointed as an assistant to the Director Processing Personal Data, this can be arranged by the Branch Committee. If it is also necessary to appoint someone in the local congregation, it would be good to appoint the congregation secretary. If the body of elders feels it would be best for another elder to serve, they should send his name to the branch and the reason for not using the secretary.

Your branch should make sure that **all confidential files kept are kept in a secure** place that is locked. Only those who are authorized should have access to confidential files, whether these are hard copy or electronic. If confidential files have served their purpose, they need not be kept any longer.

We hope these observations and guidelines will be helpful to your branches and will enable us to carry out our commission to preach the good news as a clean Organization who exerts itself to please Jehovah and to give to Caesar what is due Caesar.—Matt 22:17; 24:14; 28:19.

Please be assured of our warm Christian love and best wishes.

Your brothers,

Service Committee

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

15-OCT-02 09:28

REDACTED

ATTENTION:- VIN TOOLE
PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

BCK

REDACTED

October 13 2002

Dear Brothers,

I am writing about some concerns that I have about my father - BCH I am concerned that he may still have contact with young children in his congregation and they may be in danger of being abused by him. I am sure not many in his congregation are aware of his attitude toward pedophilia and may unknowingly expose their children to risk. As you are most probably aware, he has had a long history of abusing children - starting with myself when I was very young (1972), and even though, after learning the truth from the bible, and bringing his life into harmony with it for a time, he later allowed himself to other incidents. Again, some time after in 1978, at a convention, he behaved indecently toward me. Then, in 1988, he abused my sister BCG and at around that time, also my sister BCL.

It has become very obvious to me that he does not think he has done anything wrong and on several occasions has expressed that he was wrongly disfellowshipped. He has in the past been very misleading spiritually with myself, misquoting scriptures to suit his own ends giving no concern to the effect on others (even though, it's because of him that I have come to know and love Jehovah) - including myself. I feel no animosity toward him and have searched for signs of humility and true sorrow and regret over what he has done - but I have not found any. In the years since he left my mother with all of the children, he has been under obligation to pay maintenance for the children, but he hardly paid what was owed to my mother. (It was never on time or the correct amount and only sent after my mother phoned to ask for it) This issue over paying the maintenance for his children disgusted me and it made me ask the question "is this evidence of someone who is truly sorry for all the heartache he has caused his children. Is he really repentant?" I felt it difficult to see any repentance especially when I saw he had bought himself a new car.) I would love to have a proper father/daughter relationship with him, but after writing to him for about a year, and

having some telephone conversations, I felt compelled to cut my contact with him, for my own spiritual health. This was because he continued to express the same attitude that he was spiritually strong, was enjoying privileges, (like having a book study group at his home, having the circuit overseer and his wife as a guest, that he was studying the bible with others etc) and he was known and loved in the congregation and he was innocent of the charges that he was disfellowshipped for.

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I feel very concerned that if something were to happen again to another child, besides the hurt and pain they would go through personally, Jehovah's name and his reputation and that of his organization would be damaged because my father had been reinstated. (Even though he has stood by the statement that he has done nothing wrong.) Saying that on many occasions "it's all in her head" about BCG 's abuse - My brother REDACT will support this statement, because I recently had the opportunity to speak to him about this matter. I know that Jehovah hates child abuse and that Jehovah's organization does not tolerate it in any fashion, but that there is room for mercy for someone who is truly repentant.

Please do not hesitate to contact me about this matter if you need clarification of anything I have mentioned in this letter.

Yours sincerely,

BCK

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WATCHTOWER
BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

BOX 280, INGLEBURN, NSW 1890 AUSTRALIA ABN 42 002 861 225 PHONE: (02) 9829 5600 FAX: (02) 9829 3616

LLC July 6, 2001

Vincent Toole
Solicitor
PO Box 5950
MINTO NSW 2566

Dear Mr Toole:

In response to your recent inquiry about whether we had an original letter from REDACTED BCG dated 19 February 1995, we advise that a member of our staff, Mr Alan Wood, has located the requested letter which we have enclosed.

In addition to this letter, Mr Wood also located a report from the original committee that handled the case involving BCH 's (received 7 August 1989) as well as a report from the appeal committee concerning BCH dated 23 July 1989. These reports are also enclosed with this letter.

We understand that criminal charges have been laid against BCH and we confirm our agreement that these documents be sent to Constable Natalie Bennett of the police department in Brisbane in connection with that matter. We would like to mention, however, that these documents deal with correspondence that we would normally treat as strictly confidential as well as discussions that were held in circumstances of confidentiality. Because of this, we ask you to do whatever you can to see that these documents are dealt with as discreetly and sensitively as possible.

Please arrange to have the enclosed materials returned to us as soon as the case against BCH has been concluded.

Yours faithfully,
WATCHTOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

D.H. Maclean
Director

Encls.

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AUSTRALIA BRANCH

(Via CompuServe)

LLA January 8, 2002 No. 164

Governing Body
Service Committee

Re: Privacy Laws in Australia

Dear Brothers:

Thank you for your letter GAO:AT January 3, 2002, No. 223S, and the general guidelines that have been used to determine how personal information is to be handled under European privacy legislation. You refer to our letter LLA August 28, 2001, No. 354, in which we notified the Publishing Committee of the introduction of the *Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000* in Australia.

At present, the application of the law has been restricted to entities having a turnover of more than AUD 3,000,000 (about USD 1,500,000), as explained in the third paragraph of our letter No. 354. The turnover of the Australia branch is well below that figure, and we are unlikely to exceed the threshold unless we treat large transfers of funds or materials to other branches as receivables, actually billing the charges to the other branch. The Publishing Committee, in their letter LLJ:LPX December 19, 2001, No. 280P, approved our request to handle remittances and transfers to other branches as outright donations. We are, therefore, not subject to the provisions of the *Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000.*

On this basis, we had not planned at this time to implement any of the guidelines outlined in your letter No. 223S, and will not do so unless you advise otherwise.

Please accept our warm Christian love.

Your brother,
H. V. Mouritz
For the Branch Committee
AUSTRALIA BRANCH

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AUSTRALIA BRANCH

(Via CompuServe)

LLA August 28, 2001 No. 354

Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses
Publishing Committee

Re: Interbranch Indebtedness

Dear Brothers:

The Australian government has recently passed the *Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000*. The object of this legislation, which will come into effect in December, 2001, is to provide a code to control the collection, holding, use, correction, disclosure, and transfer of personal information by private sector organisations to meet international concerns and Australia's international obligations relating to privacy. Organisations caught by the Act must provide to an individual with access to any personal information the organisation may hold about that individual, and it can only hold "sensitive" information with the individual's consent. "Sensitive" information includes matters relating to religious, ethnic, and sexual practices.

The application of these principles to the Society would seriously affect the way we collect and collate information about ethnic witnessing territory, some congregation records, and the way we handle judicial matters, especially those relating to child abuse.

The legislation applies to non-profit organisations such as charities and religious organisations. However, "small businesses" are exempt from the operation of the Act. A business is a "small business" if its annual turnover for the previous year is AUD 3,000,000 (USD 1,500,000) or less. Turnover does not include contributions or donations, but does include amounts charged to other branches for items supplied by the Australia Branch. Where funds are transferred without consideration, that is, they are donations or cash transfers, then those amounts would not be included in the turnover figure.

We believe that it is important for the Australia branch to discontinue the practice of treating transfers to other branches as receivables, in a general sense, and should enter these transactions in the records as outright donations. If a branch, such as India or New Zealand, has some unusual situation that affects the transferring of funds, and for that reason a charge must be made for literature and other items supplied, we do not see these few instances as causing a difficulty. However, we would need to monitor the situation so that we did not at any time exceed the threshold.

In your letters AF:AG February 19, 1999 No. 142, AF:AG November 8, 1999 No. 139, AOK:ACB August 16, 2000 No. 301, and others the principle of holding sufficient debt between branches to enable a claim to be made in the event that adverse circumstances endanger the property of the branch, is clearly made. At present our records show substantial indebtedness between Australia branch and branches to which we are currently sending literature, funds, and other items. We do not see any need to write off these amounts already shown on the records.

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We now seek your permission to write off all future branch transfers, treating them as outright donations. In this way we will keep our "turnover" below the threshold and so avoid the difficulties and obligations that will otherwise apply if we come within the jurisdiction of this Privacy Act.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Please accept our warm Christian love.

Your brother,
G. D. King
For the Branch Committee
AUSTRALIA BRANCH

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I N T E R B R A N C H M E M O

(Via CompuServe)

LLJ:LSD October 7, 1997

AUSTRALIA

Re: Child Abuse Memorandum

Dear Brothers:

We have now had an opportunity to consider to your memorandum dated AB:AB July 22, 1997, No. 231 (Memo) together with comments from the United States Legal Department. Your Memo relates to child abuse matters and subpoenas for confidential records. We have the following comments and recommendations.

If the law requires that a report of child abuse be made under the circumstances presented to the elder in a specific case, the elders should report the matter to the authorities in the manner prescribed by local laws. (Romans 13:1-7)

We therefore recommend that the following procedure be implemented when handling child abuse accusations in Australia:

1. When an accusation is made to an elder, he and another elder (preferably the presiding overseer) together will determine whether there is any substance to the accusation. (*ks* 91, page 97, 109)

2. The two elders should immediately call the branch's legal department for assistance in determining whether or not the matter should be reported to the governmental authorities. Such assistance should be deemed legal advice. If it is determined that the matter must be reported to the authorities, then the two elders together should make the report as soon as possible even if other people are required to report the matter. When the matter has been reported, the reporting elders should place in the confidential file a memo stating only that "a report involving [victim] and [accused] was reported to [governmental agency] by [elder] and [elder] on [date]."

3. When the circumstances warrant it, a judicial committee will be appointed. The judicial committee eventually must make a decision on the merits of the matter before it. In light of the evidentiary requirements of *ks*91, there will be instances in which the evidence is insufficient for the committee to determine that the accused is guilty of wrongdoing because there will be no confession and only one eyewitness (the child victim) against the accused. (*ks* 91, page 111) For this reason, the judicial committee must keep in mind that it may not have enough evidence to decide that a serious sin has been committed for purposes of judicial reproof or disfellowshipping even though the matter has been reported to the governmental authorities.

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4. If any elder is contacted by a police officer or other investigating agent requesting information and/or documents relating to a child abuse case, before providing any information or documents the elder should first contact the branch's legal department for advice. If subpoenaed to testify in a court of law or to produce documents relating to a child abuse case, testimony should be given and documents produced only when there is no available privilege under local law. If the availability of such privilege is uncertain in the particular case, testimony should not be given and documents should not be produced unless a judge rules that the privilege is not available.

Your Memo raised concerns that the ecclesiastical privilege may be lost when one body of elders advises another body of elders that an individual is a former child molester. Therefore, we recommend that when such information must be conveyed by one body of elders to another as outlined in the March 15, 1997, letter to all bodies of elders, it be done in general terms. For example, the elders could simply state that "[abuser] is a known child molester." We understand that in Australia the ecclesiastical privilege only applies to confessions. By not referring to any confession or specific information that would identify the victim or specific type of sexual abuse involved, it would seem that the ecclesiastical privilege would be preserved.

Further, your Memo raised concerns that brothers at Bethel could be required to report child abuse matters or possibly be subpoenaed to testify based on information received from congregation elders who call the Society for direction on these matters. By following the procedure outlined in point #2 above, would not the attorney-client privilege apply so that brothers in your Legal Department would not have to report or give testimony? We are informed that such would be the case in the United States.

Thank you for presenting this matter to us. We hope that implementing our recommendations will help you to handle these difficult cases in a Scriptural manner for the benefit of the congregations while complying with the constraints of Caesar's law.

Please accept our Christian love and greetings.

Your brother,

For the Publishing Committee

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NOTIFICATION OF DISFELLOWSHIPPING OR DISASSOCIATION

(Please type or print neatly in ink)

PERSON'S DETAILS

☐ Male
☐ Female

_____ (First name) _____ (Middle name) _____ (Surname)

_____ (Birth date) _____ (Date of announcement of disfellowshipping or disassociation)

Office use only

Congregation: _____ (Name) _____ (City) _____ (State)

Appointment: ☐ Elder ☐ Ministerial servant ☐ Special pioneer ☐ Regular pioneer (Include S-202 form with this form)
☐ Listed as a person to receive literature / magazine shipments for congregation (Send S-36 or M-206 form)

DISFELLOWSHIPPING (Specify offence/s by ticking appropriate box/boxes)

☐ Apostasy ☐ Drunkenness ☐ Fits of anger, violence ☐ Greed (gambling/extortion)
☐ Gross uncleanness ☐ Loose conduct ☐ Lying ☐ Manslaughter
☐ Misuse of Tobacco or addictive drugs ☐ Obscene speech ☐ Porneia
☐ Refusal to provide for family ☐ Slander or reviling ☐ Stealing or fraud

PROOF OF WRONGDOING

☐ The person confessed ☐ Two or more witnesses
☐ Other (please explain): _____

_____

APPEAL

☐ Decision was not appealed ☐ Decision was appealed

DISASSOCIATION (Tick appropriate box/boxes)

☐ Non-neutral activity ☐ Joined another religion ☐ Oral resignation before two witnesses
☐ Signed letter of resignation ☐ Unrepentant failure to abstain from blood

PREVIOUSLY DISFELLOWSHIPED OR DISASSOCIATED

_____ (Full name at that time) _____ (Name of congregation that took the action)

_____ (Date of previous action) _____ (Date of previous reinstatement)

THE JUDICIAL COMMITTEE

Type or print name of committee members _____ (Chairman) _____ _____

Signatures _____ _____ _____

NOTIFICATION OF REINSTATEMENT OR DEATH

(If the individual is reinstated or dies, the secretary should sign and date the *stamped copy* of this form and return it to the branch office in a special blue envelope)

☐ Reinstated
☐ Deceased

_____ (Date) _____ (Signature of Secretary)

Office use only

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DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY

The primary purpose for recording and retaining this information is to enable Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia ("the Society"), which is responsible for the religion of Jehovah's Witnesses in Australia, to supervise the religious activities of Jehovah's Witnesses throughout the country, individually and collectively. This includes:

(1) Being aware of anyone who is no longer a member of the Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses;

(2) Knowing what spiritual help and assistance has been given to the individual concerned;

(3) Providing whatever direction is needed to ensure that the Scriptural standards, as set out in God's Holy Word, the Bible, are maintained in the Congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses; and

(4) Ensuring that the individual concerned is given whatever spiritual help and assistance is needed if he or she wishes to again become a member of the Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses in the future.

OFFICE USE

Additional comments:

All other records held by the Society pertaining to this matter, both electronic and hard copy, were destroyed as required by the Document Retention Policy of the Society.

CONGREGATION USE

(The chairman of the judicial committee will complete this section when the date-stamped copy of this form is returned by the Society)

This is the only record retained by the _____ Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses regarding this matter. All other records were destroyed.

Date: _____

Name: _____ Signature: _____

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DISFELLOWSHIPPINGS OR DISASSOCIATIONS

Reporting

- ☐ Did you review the notes written on page 143 of the Kingdom Ministry School textbook?
- ☐ Did you fill out an original *Notification of Disfellowshipping or Disassociation* (S-77) form and make one copy, retaining the copy for the congregation's confidential file?
- ☐ Did you provide a detailed summation of the case, explaining what took place? Did you include the reasons why you judged the person not to be repentant?
  - ☐ In case of disassociation, did you explain what led to the person's decision, how he responded to efforts to assist him, and what convinced you that his position was adamant?
  - ☐ If the matter involved child abuse, did you provide complete details, including names and dates of birth of those involved? Did you explain the nature and extent of the abuse and how it was substantiated?
- ☐ Did you send the *original* S-77 form along with the summation in a special blue envelope to the branch office?

Filing

- ☐ When you received the stamped S-77 form, did you place it in a sealed envelope in the congregation's confidential file and *destroy* the congregation's copy.
- ☐ Did the chairman of the judicial committee destroy all other correspondence as directed on page 2 of the S-77 form? Did the chairman sign and date page 2 of the S-77 form?

REINSTATEMENTS AND DEATHS

- ☐ When a disfellowshipped or disassociated individual is reinstated or dies, did the secretary sign, check the appropriate box, and date the bottom of the *stamped* S-77 form?
- ☐ Did he make a photocopy of both sides of the S-77 form for the congregation and mail the *original* to the branch office in a special blue envelope.
- ☐ Has the congregation's copy of the S-77 form been retained in the congregation's confidential file?

APPEALS

- ☐ When an individual appeals his disfellowshipping, the chairman of the judicial committee should promptly contact the circuit overseer, who will then designate elders to serve on the appeal committee.
- ☐ The judicial committee should complete the S-77 forms (except for the date of announcement of disfellowshipping) and give them, along with whatever written records it has from the judicial hearing(s), to the chairman of the appeal committee prior to the appeal hearing.—See *ks91* p. 125.
- ☐ The appeal committee's report is to be in the form of a letter addressed to the branch office, using the appeal committee chairman's mailing address for the return address.
- ☐ It is to be signed by all the members of the appeal committee, with each one's name and the name of his congregation typed below his signature.
- ☐ The letter should provide a detailed summation of the appeal hearing and include comments that directly address the following questions: (1) Was there a Scriptural basis for the disfellowshipping? (2) Was there acceptable evidence to establish the wrongdoing? Explain. (3) Was the wrongdoer unrepentant *at the time of the hearing by the original judicial committee?* What convinces the appeal committee of this?
- ☐ **If the appeal committee upholds the original committee's decision to disfellowship the individual,** the appeal committee should make certain that the S-77 form is filled out completely, *including the date of announcement of disfellowshipping,* and then mail *the original* form along with the appeal committee's letter to the branch office in the same special blue envelope.
- ☐ **If the original basis for disfellowshipping was invalid but other valid grounds for disfellowshipping exist,** new S-77 forms should be made out by the original committee, giving the proper information. The *original* form along with the initial S-77 form and the appeal committee's letter should be sent to the branch office.
- ☐ **If both committees agree that the person should *not* be disfellowshipped,** the individual *should not be told* this. Rather, the appeal committee should send the branch office the *original* S-77 form along with separate letters from both the original committee and the appeal committee that supply sufficient details to give a clear picture of the reason(s) for their conclusions. Thereafter, the branch office will provide its comments.
- ☐ **If the appeal committee and the original committee are in disagreement,** the appeal committee should send the *original* S-77 form to the branch office with a letter giving the reasons for its conclusion and should include a letter from the original committee that expresses that committee's reasons for disagreement.
- ☐ **When the matter has been finalized:** All written records from both the original and appeal committees should be destroyed. Only the stamped S-77 form should be retained in the congregation's confidential file. See also the instructions above under the heading "Filing".

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ORGANIZED TO DO JEHOVAH'S WILL

"To do your will,
O my God, I have delighted."
—Ps. 40:8.

This Book Issued To _____

Date _____

Place of Baptism _____

Date _____

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—With References

Organized to Do Jehovah's Will
English (*od*-E)

Made in the United States of America

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Dear Fellow Ministers:

Organized to Do Jehovah's Will is published for Jehovah's Witnesses. This book makes clear what is involved in pleasing God and finding delight in doing his will. It provides an overall view of how the Christian congregation is organized for getting God's work done. The book offers counsel and direction to help us maintain unity with our brothers worldwide. (1 Pet. 2:17; 5:9) It highlights how we can have a share in declaring the good news of the Kingdom in recognition of God's will that "all sorts of men . . . come to an accurate knowledge of truth."—1 Tim. 2:4; Matt. 24:14.

In addition to preaching the good news of the Kingdom, we desire to render needed spiritual assistance to all those who are being drawn to Jehovah in response to the invitation to praise him in association with his people. (Ps. 145:21; Rev. 22:17) New ones need to become familiar with the operation of Jehovah's organization and learn how they can have a share in the modern-day preaching work. They are encouraged to continue in their endeavors to meet the Scriptural requirements for becoming dedicated and baptized Witnesses of Jehovah.

General information is here published concerning the duties of elders and ministerial servants, judicial procedures, and various other features of congregation organization. Details regarding these matters are reviewed from time to time in *The Watchtower, Our Kingdom Ministry,* and other publications of Jehovah's Witnesses.

It is our prayer that the application of what is contained in this publication will help you to progress spiritually. May you continue to find delight in doing Jehovah's will in harmony with his organized people!

Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses

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loved by the slave class for their loyal, zealous support.

THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNING BODY

"The faithful and discreet slave" seeks to preserve unity and makes it possible organizationally for 'all things to take place decently and by arrangement.' (1 Cor. 14:40) To accomplish this in the first century, a group of anointed Christians from among the faithful and discreet slave class were chosen as its representatives. As such, they did not consult with all anointed elders in the world before making decisions. From their position in the Jerusalem congregation, they served as a governing body for the entire anointed Christian congregation.

From Pentecost 33 C.E. onward, the faithful apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ took the lead in providing direction for the newly founded Christian congregation. (Acts 4:33, 35, 37; 5:18, 29) By about the year 49 C.E., this governing body had been enlarged to include more than Jesus' apostles. When the circumcision issue was decided, that body included "the apostles and older men in Jerusalem." (Acts 15:1, 2) It was their responsibility to consider matters affecting Christians everywhere. They sent out letters and decrees, all of which strengthened the congregations and made it possible for the disciples to remain united in thought and action. The congregations followed the direction of the governing body, and as a result, they received Jehovah's blessing and prospered.—Acts 8:1, 14, 15; 15:22-31; 16:4, 5.

The value of such an arrangement is evident today. The anointed ones making up the present-day Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses have decades of faithful service and theocratic experience

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behind them. They offer spiritual direction to Jehovah's people, as did the first-century governing body. The Governing Body also continues to carry the responsibility of overseeing the preaching work, producing Bible study material, and arranging for the appointment of overseers to serve in various capacities in the organization. These are some of the Kingdom interests of Christ that are being cared for today. Like the early Christians, we gladly look to spiritually mature men for Bible-based direction and guidance in matters of worship.

As was true in the first century, the Governing Body today is made up of imperfect men. However, Jehovah has used imperfect humans in the past to accomplish his will. He instructed Noah to build an ark and to preach about the coming destruction of his day. (Gen. 6:13, 14, 22; 2 Pet. 2:5) Moses was appointed to lead Jehovah's people out of Egypt. (Ex. 3:10) Imperfect men were inspired to write the Bible. (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21) Jehovah's use of imperfect men today to direct the preaching and disciple-making work does not weaken our confidence in God's organization. Rather, we are strengthened because we know that without Jehovah's backing, the Governing Body could never accomplish all that they do.

WHY TRUST "THE FAITHFUL AND DISCREET SLAVE"

There are many reasons to have complete trust in the slave class. First and foremost, Jesus has appointed them over *all* his precious "belongings." This is a clear indication that he has complete trust in them.

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Yes, we have every reason to trust "the faithful and discreet slave" fully. Satan, the god of this system of things, is making an all-out effort to disgrace Jehovah's name and organization. (2 Cor. 4:4) Do not fall prey to Satan's wicked tactics. (2 Cor. 2:11) He knows that only a short period of time remains before his abyssing, and he is trying to take down with him as many of Jehovah's people as possible. (Rev. 12:12) However, as Satan intensifies his efforts, may we draw ever closer to Jehovah by manifesting complete trust in the channel that He is using to direct His people today. Satan is waging war against "the remaining ones" of the slave class, who have been entrusted with directing "the work of bearing witness to Jesus." (Rev. 12:17) Our full confidence in Jehovah and his arrangements results in a united brotherhood.

CHAPTER 4

HOW THE CONGREGATION IS ORGANIZED AND GOVERNED

THE apostle Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians expressed an important truth about God when he wrote: "God is a God, not of disorder, but of peace." Then commenting further with regard to congregation meetings, he said: "Let all things take place decently and by arrangement."—1 Cor. 14: 33, 40.

At the very beginning of the same letter, the apostle gave admonition concerning reported dissensions within the Corinthian congregation. Paul exhorted the brothers there to "speak in agreement" and to be "fitly united in the same mind and in the same line of

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thought." (1 Cor. 1:10, 11) He then gave counsel with regard to various matters that were affecting the unity of the congregation. Using the illustration of a human body, he showed clearly the need for unity and cooperation. Hence, he urged all in the Christian congregation, regardless of their role, to care for one another in a loving way. (1 Cor. 12:12-26) Such harmonious cooperation among the members of the congregation implies an orderly arrangement—organization.

But how was the Christian congregation to be organized? Who would organize it? What kind of structure would it have, and who would serve in appointed positions? By letting the Bible be our guide, we get clear answers to these questions.—1 Cor. 4:6.

ORGANIZED THEOCRATICALLY

The Christian congregation was established in 33 C.E. on the Jewish festival day of Pentecost. What can we learn about the congregation at that time? It was organized and governed theocratically, that is, under God (Greek, *the·os'*) rule (*kra'tos*). The inspired account of what took place there in Jerusalem nearly 2,000 years ago leaves no doubt that the congregation of anointed Christians was established by God. (Acts 2:1-47) It was his building, his household. (1 Cor. 3:9; Eph. 2:19) The same pattern of organization and operation that was established during the first century is adhered to by the Christian congregation of God today, which has now been enlarged by the addition of the "great crowd."—Rev. 7:9, 10.

The early congregation began with about 120 members. Holy spirit was poured out first upon these in fulfillment of Joel 2:28, 29. (Acts 2:16-18) But that same day, about 3,000 others were baptized in water

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and brought into the spirit-begotten congregation. They had embraced the word about the Christ and "continued devoting themselves to the teaching of the apostles." After that, "Jehovah continued to join to them daily those being saved."—Acts 2:41, 42, 47.

The growth of the anointed congregation in Jerusalem became such that the Jewish high priest complained that the disciples had filled Jerusalem with their teaching. The new disciples in Jerusalem included many Jewish priests, who became part of the congregation.—Acts 5:28; 6:7.

Jesus had said: "You will be witnesses of me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the most distant part of the earth." (Acts 1:8) And so it was that when great persecution arose in Jerusalem following the death of Stephen, the disciples living there were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. But wherever they went, they continued declaring the good news and making more disciples, including some from among the Samaritans. (Acts 8:1-13) Still later, the good news began to be preached with good success among the uncircumcised, non-Jewish nations. (Acts 10:1-48) All this preaching activity and the making of many disciples resulted in new Christian congregations being formed outside Jerusalem. —Acts 11:19-21; 14:21-23.

What arrangements were made to ensure that each newly established congregation was organized and governed God's way, theocratically? Through the operation of God's spirit, provision was made for undershepherds to care for the flock. In congregations that Paul and Barnabas visited during their first missionary journey, they made appointments of older men. (Acts 14:23) Acts chapter 20 relates information about the apostle Paul's meeting with

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the older men of the congregation in Ephesus. Paul said to them: "Pay attention to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the holy spirit has appointed you overseers, to shepherd the congregation of God, which he purchased with the blood of his own Son." (Acts 20:28) These were older men in a spiritual sense. They qualified for appointment because of meeting Scriptural requirements. (1 Tim. 3:1-7) Paul's fellow worker Titus was authorized to make appointments of older men in the congregations of Crete.—Titus 1:5.

As more congregations were formed, the apostles and older men in Jerusalem continued to serve as the principal overseers of the expanded international congregation of the first century. They served as a governing body for the entire Christian congregation.

Writing to the congregation in Ephesus, the apostle Paul explained that by working in accord with God's spirit, the Christian congregation could maintain unity through adherence to the headship of Jesus Christ. The apostle urged Christians there to cultivate humility and to observe the oneness of the spirit in peaceful association with all members of the congregation. (Eph. 4:1-6) Then he quoted Psalm 68:18 and applied it to Jehovah's provision for spiritually qualified men to serve the needs of the congregation as apostles, prophets, evangelizers, shepherds, and teachers. Such men, as gifts from Jehovah, would build up the entire congregation to a spiritual fullness that would be pleasing to God.—Eph. 4:7-16.

CONGREGATION TODAY FOLLOWS APOSTOLIC PATTERN

Today a similar pattern of organization is followed in all congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses. These

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collectively form a united worldwide congregation built around the nucleus of spirit-anointed ones. (Zech. 8:23) This is possible because Jesus Christ, true to his promise, has loyally remained with his anointed disciples "all the days until the conclusion of the system of things." Those brought into the growing congregation today embrace the good news of God, dedicate their life unreservedly to Jehovah God to do his will, and are baptized as disciples of Jesus Christ. (Matt. 28:19, 20; Mark 1:14; Acts 2:41) They recognize "the fine shepherd," Jesus Christ, as Head not only over the anointed members of the congregation but also over the entire flock, which includes the "other sheep." (John 10:14, 16; Eph. 1:22, 23) That "one flock" maintain their unity by loyally recognizing the headship of Christ and also by submitting to the organizational channel, "the faithful and discreet slave," whom Christ appointed. May we continue to manifest full confidence and trust in this faithful slave class today.—Matt. 24:45.

USE OF RELIGIOUS CORPORATIONS

During these last days of this wicked system of things, the belongings of the Master have increased abundantly throughout all the earth. This has placed a heavy responsibility on 'the faithful slave.' In discharging the responsibility to provide spiritual food at the proper time and in order to get the good news of the Kingdom preached before the end comes, the slave class has formed certain agencies, or legal entities. It has proved to be the course of wisdom to organize certain corporations that are recognized by the laws of various countries. These religious corporations own and operate printing facilities that produce and distribute Bibles and Bible literature worldwide for use in the Kingdom ministry.

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These corporations are exclusively devoted to advancing the interests of true worship in the earth. All these legal instrumentalities cooperate with one another. Such legal corporations are used to facilitate the preaching of the good news worldwide and to care for the spiritual needs of the entire congregation of God in all parts of the earth.

STRUCTURE OF BRANCH ORGANIZATION

Whenever a branch office is established, a Branch Committee of three or more elders is appointed to care for the various responsibilities involved in looking after the work in the country or countries under the jurisdiction of that particular branch. One member of the committee serves as the Branch Committee coordinator.

Local congregations under each branch are organized into circuits, and a number of circuits make up a district. Circuits and districts may be of various sizes, depending on geographic and language considerations as well as the number of congregations within the area assigned to the branch. A circuit overseer is appointed to serve the congregations in each circuit. A district overseer visits the different circuits, serves at circuit assemblies, and spends some time serving congregations, usually with the circuit overseer present. The duties of traveling overseers are set out from time to time in *Our Kingdom Ministry* as well as in correspondence directed to them by the branch office.

All in the organization recognize God's administration. The congregations acknowledge and conform to organizational arrangements that are outlined for the benefit of all. They accept the appointment of older men who oversee the work in branches, dis-

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tricts, circuits, and congregations. They look to "the faithful and discreet slave" for spiritual food at the proper time. 'The faithful slave' today, in turn, adheres strictly to the headship of Christ, holds to Bible principles, and submits to the direction of the holy spirit. As all work together in unity, they experience results similar to those experienced by the congregations in the first century. We are told at Acts 16:5: "Indeed, the congregations continued to be made firm in the faith and to increase in number from day to day."

CHAPTER 5

OVERSEERS TO SHEPHERD THE FLOCK

DURING his earthly ministry, Jesus proved himself to be "the fine shepherd." (John 10:11) Upon viewing the crowds that eagerly followed him, "he felt pity for them, because they were skinned and thrown about like sheep without a shepherd." (Matt. 9:36) Peter and the other apostles took note of his loving concern. How different Jesus was from the false shepherds of Israel, who neglected the flock to such an extent that the sheep were scattered and spiritually starved! (Ezek. 34:7, 8) By paying attention to Jesus' fine example of teaching and to the way he cared for the sheep even to the point of laying down his life for them, the apostles learned how to help those with faith return to Jehovah, 'the shepherd and overseer of their souls.'—1 Pet. 2:25.

By precept and example, Jesus emphasized the serious responsibility that he laid upon the apostles to care for the sheep. When speaking to Peter on one occasion, Jesus impressed very strongly upon the

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minds and hearts of the apostles the importance of feeding and shepherding the sheep. (John 21:15-17) Peter was deeply moved by this, as indicated later in his exhortation to older men. In his first inspired letter, he admonished overseers: "Shepherd the flock of God in your care, not under compulsion, but willingly; neither for love of dishonest gain, but eagerly; neither as lording it over those who are God's inheritance, but becoming examples to the flock."—1 Pet. 5:1-3.

Peter's words apply with equal force to overseers in the congregation today. The responsibility of overseers today is the same as it was in the first century, namely, to shepherd the flock of God. In his letter, Peter emphasized the proper attitude that overseers should have in caring for such responsibility. Imitating Jesus, they should serve willingly and eagerly as examples to the flock, taking the lead in Jehovah's service.

We can be grateful for the spirit-appointed overseers in the congregation. The benefits we receive are many. For example, overseers give spiritual encouragement and personal attention to the needs of individual members of the congregation. Each week they preside with earnestness at congregation meetings, where all are nourished in the faith. (Rom. 12:8) Their efforts to protect the flock from harmful elements, such as wicked men, contribute to our spiritual security. (Isa. 32:2; Titus 1:9-11) Their fine example and lead in the field ministry encourage us to keep active in preaching the good news regularly each month. (Phil. 3:16, 17; Heb. 13:15-17) Through these "gifts in men," Jehovah has provided well for the building up of the congregation.—Eph. 4:8, 11, 12.

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QUALIFICATIONS FOR OVERSEERS

To ensure proper care of the congregation, men appointed to serve as overseers must meet the requirements set out in God's Word. Only if they qualify can it be said that they are appointed by holy spirit. (Acts 20:28) Admittedly, the Scriptural standards for Christian overseers are high, since these men have the serious responsibilities of taking the lead in Jehovah's worship and of being exemplary in Christian conduct. (1 Cor. 11:1; Heb. 13:7) But the standards are not so high that they cannot be met by Christian men who have real love for Jehovah and are willing to be used by him. The high standards call for those appointed as elders to be good examples in the congregation. It should be obvious to all that the overseers are individuals who apply Bible counsel in the affairs of life.

The apostle Paul set out in his first letter to Timothy and his letter to Titus the basic Scriptural requirements for overseers. At 1 Timothy 3:1-7, we read: "If any man is reaching out for an office of overseer, he is desirous of a fine work. The overseer should therefore be irreprehensible, a husband of one wife, moderate in habits, sound in mind, orderly, hospitable, qualified to teach, not a drunken brawler, not a smiter, but reasonable, not belligerent, not a lover of money, a man presiding over his own household in a fine manner, having children in subjection with all seriousness; (if indeed any man does not know how to preside over his own household, how will he take care of God's congregation?) not a newly converted man, for fear that he might get puffed up with pride and fall into the judgment passed upon the Devil. Moreover, he should also have a fine testimony from people on the outside, in order

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that he might not fall into reproach and a snare of the Devil."

Paul wrote to Titus: "For this reason I left you in Crete, that you might correct the things that were defective and might make appointments of older men in city after city, as I gave you orders; if there is any man free from accusation, a husband of one wife, having believing children that were not under a charge of debauchery nor unruly. For an overseer must be free from accusation as God's steward, not self-willed, not prone to wrath, not a drunken brawler, not a smiter, not greedy of dishonest gain, but hospitable, a lover of goodness, sound in mind, righteous, loyal, self-controlled, holding firmly to the faithful word as respects his art of teaching, that he may be able both to exhort by the teaching that is healthful and to reprove those who contradict." (Titus 1:5-9) Paul's counsel concerning overseers emphasizes what is involved in carrying out their responsibilities. Other Bible writers discuss additional Christian qualities required of men appointed as overseers, or shepherds, of the congregation. —Jas. 3:13, 17, 18.

Although the Scriptural requirements may at first seem to be somewhat overwhelming, there should be no reason for Christian men to shy away from desiring the fine work associated with the office of overseer. By taking the lead in manifesting fine Christian qualities, overseers encourage other members of the congregation to do the same. This is indicated by what the apostle Paul wrote in describing how "gifts in men" are provided "with a view to the readjustment of the holy ones, for ministerial work, for the building up of the body of the Christ, *until we all attain to the oneness in the faith and in the accurate*

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knowledge of the Son of God, to a full-grown man, to the measure of stature that belongs to the fullness of the Christ." (Eph. 4:8, 12, 13) Since all Christians are to strive to attain spiritual maturity, those standing before the congregation as appointed overseers are required to be taking the lead.

Paul instructed Timothy and Titus to appoint qualified men in the congregation to serve as overseers. They would *not* be mere boys or *newly converted* men, but they would be individuals with experience in Christian living, reflecting a broad knowledge of the Bible, a deep understanding of it, and a genuine love for the congregation. The overseers would be individuals who have the courage to speak up when wrongdoing exists and to take the needed action to correct it, thus protecting the flock from any who would selfishly exploit them. (Isa. 32:2) The overseers would be men readily recognized by all in the congregation as spiritually mature, having genuine concern for the flock of God. Their overall way of life would show this.

Those qualifying for appointment as overseers of the flock of God would be demonstrating a measure of practical wisdom in their daily lives. If married, they would be adhering to the Christian standard for marriage, namely, *husband of one wife,* and would be *presiding over their own household in a fine manner.* If the overseer has *believing children* who are *in subjection with all seriousness* and are *not under a charge of debauchery nor unruly,* other members of the congregation could confidently approach the overseer for counsel and advice on a wide range of personal matters having to do with family life and Christian living. Having conducted themselves properly within the family arrangement as well as within the community

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in general, these men would also be *irreprehensible,* be *free from accusation,* and *have a fine testimony* even *from people on the outside.* No valid charge of improper conduct could be brought against them to mar the reputation of the congregation. They would not have been reproved recently for serious wrongdoing. Others in the congregation would be moved to imitate this fine example and entrust their spiritual life to the shepherds' care.—1 Cor. 11:1; 16:15, 16; Phil. 2:25, 29; Heb. 13:7, 17.

Such qualified men would be able to serve the Christian congregation in a role similar to that of the older men of Israel who were described as "wise and discreet and experienced." (Deut. 1:13) They would not be without sin. (Rom. 3:23) But they would be known in the congregation and in the community as upright and God-fearing men who have demonstrated over a period of time that they conduct their entire life on the basis of God's principles. Their blamelessness would give them freeness of speech before the congregation.

Men qualifying for appointment as overseers would display *moderation in personal habits* and in their dealings with others. They would not be fanatics, but their way of life would be characterized by balance, *orderliness,* and *self-control.* Moderation would be demonstrated in such things as eating, drinking, recreation, hobbies, and entertainment. They would be moderate in the use of alcoholic beverages so as *not* to leave themselves open to charges of drunkenness or of being a *drunken brawler.* One whose senses have been dulled by intoxicating drink easily loses self-control and is not in a position to watch over the spiritual interests of the congregation.

Exercising oversight of the affairs of the congregation requires a man to demonstrate a measure of *or-*

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derliness, being systematic in life, habits, and work. This includes his personal appearance, his home, and his personal activities. Such a man avoids procrastination, and he is able to see what is required and to plan accordingly. He adheres to theocratic order.

An overseer must be *reasonable*. He must be able to work in unity with and cooperate with others within the body of older men, who are charged with the oversight of the congregation. He should have a proper view of himself in relation to others, both inside and outside the congregation. As a reasonable person, the overseer would not be opinionated, always considering his views as superior to those of his fellow elders. Others may excel in qualities or abilities that he may lack. Reasonableness comes as a result of basing one's conclusions solidly on the Scriptures and of striving to imitate the example of Jesus Christ. (Phil. 2:2-8) By showing proper respect for others and considering others as superior to himself, an elder would *not become belligerent or be a smiter* of others, either physically or verbally. He would *not be self-willed,* always insisting that his way or his point of view must be accepted as best. He would *not be prone to wrath* but would be peaceable in his dealings with others.

Similarly, one qualifying to serve as an overseer in the congregation should be *sound in mind*. This means that he should have a good comprehension of Jehovah's principles and their application. He should be levelheaded, not hasty in judgment. He should be receptive to counsel and direction. He should not be double-minded, hypocritical, or fanatic.

Paul reminded Titus that an overseer should also be *a lover of goodness*. He should be *righteous* and *loyal*. These qualities would be reflected in his dealings

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with others and in his firm stand for what is right and good. He would be unwavering in his devotion to Jehovah and consistent in upholding righteous principles when making judgments. He would be able to keep a confidence.

As one who is sound in mind, of course, he would not be overly demanding in what he expects of others. Nor would the overseer be unduly concerned about material advantages for himself, *not greedy of dishonest gain, not a lover of money*. He would not use his office to take material advantage of the brothers under his care, nor would he hold back because of the reasonable material sacrifices he may be required to make in order to give generously of his time in caring for the needs of the congregation. His love for the brothers, as well as for strangers, and his self-sacrificing endeavors in their behalf would mean that he is genuinely *hospitable,* freely giving of himself and his belongings for the benefit of others. —Acts 20:33-35.

In order to carry out his assignment effectively, an overseer, or shepherd, of the congregation would need to be *qualified to teach.* According to Paul's words to Titus, the overseer would be *"holding firmly to the faithful word as respects his art of teaching, that he may be able both to exhort by the teaching that is healthful and to reprove those who contradict."* (Titus 1:9) In employing his art of teaching, the overseer would be able to reason with others, produce evidence, overcome objections, and apply the Scriptures in such a way that others would be convinced and have their faith strengthened. The overseer would be able to exercise such teaching ability under circumstances both favorable and unfavorable. (2 Tim. 4:2) He would have the patience needed to reprove with

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mildness one who is in error or to convince a doubter and move him to profitable works on the basis of faith. Being qualified to teach either before an audience or on a one-on-one basis would give evidence that the overseer meets this important requirement.

The apostle Peter wrote that the older men of the congregation should serve *willingly* and *eagerly,* neither under compulsion nor begrudgingly. They should be enthusiastic in their endeavors. They should be *taking the lead, becoming examples to the flock.*—Heb. 13:17.

All of this may seem like a great deal to expect of one who serves as an overseer. Certainly no overseer could measure up perfectly to the high standard set forth in the Bible, as outlined here, but none of the appointed elders in the congregation should be so significantly deficient in any one of these qualities that the deficiency could be considered a serious flaw. Some elders may have certain outstanding qualities, whereas others of the body may excel in a number of different qualities. The effect is that the body as a whole will have within itself all the fine qualities that are necessary for exercising proper oversight of the congregation of God.

When recommending men for appointment as overseers, the body of elders will want to keep in mind their own standing before Jehovah and their relationship with fellow Christians. Romans 12:3 counsels that each one should in no way "think more of himself than it is necessary to think; but to think so as to have a sound mind, each one as God has distributed to him a measure of faith." Each should consider himself a lesser one. None should prove to be "righteous overmuch" when examining the qualifications of another. (Eccl. 7:16) Having clearly in mind

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the Scriptural requirements for elders, the body would want to determine whether a brother being considered measures up to those standards to a reasonable degree or he is so seriously deficient in one or more of the Scriptural requirements that he does not qualify to serve. Allowing for human imperfections and being free of biased leanings and hypocrisy, appointed elders will make their recommendations in a manner showing due respect for Jehovah's righteous standards and for the good of the congregation. Like Timothy and Titus, elders today need to give prayerful consideration to each recommendation and follow the direction of God's holy spirit. This is one of the serious responsibilities they shoulder, and they must do so in accord with Paul's admonition 'never to lay their hands hastily upon any man.'—1 Tim. 5: 21, 22.

Men meeting the Christian standards for overseers are able to protect the congregation from spiritual dangers, and they serve as fine examples of Christian conduct for all to imitate. They have freeness of speech, enabling them to be bold in giving needed counsel to those within the congregation and to be zealous in proclaiming the good news in the field ministry.—Acts 4:29; 1 Tim. 3:13; Heb. 10:19-23, 35.

FRUITAGE OF THE SPIRIT

Spiritually qualified men would give evidence in their life that they are directed by holy spirit. They would be producing the fruitage of the spirit, described at Galatians 5:22, 23 as "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, mildness, self-control." Their oversight of the congregation would be refreshing to the brothers and would serve to unite the congregation in rendering sacred ser-

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vice. Their course of conduct and the fruits of their labors would give evidence that they are appointed by holy spirit. (Acts 20:28) Having the spiritual requirements for overseers and shepherds stated so precisely in the inspired Scriptures has made it possible to have qualified men appointed to shepherd the flock today.

MEN WHO PROMOTE UNITY

It is vital that elders work together to promote unity in the congregation. While having personalities that vary widely, they preserve their unity by listening respectfully to one another even though they may not agree on every matter they discuss. As long as no Bible principle is being violated, each should be willing to yield and to support the final decision of the body of elders. A yielding spirit shows that one is guided by "the wisdom from above," which is "peaceable, reasonable." (Jas. 3:17, 18) No elder should think that he is above the others in the body, and no elder should try to dominate the others. Elders are really cooperating with Jehovah when they cooperate as a body for the good of the congregation. —1 Cor., chap. 12; Col. 2:19.

REACHING OUT

The office of overseer is to be desired by mature Christian men. (1 Tim. 3:1) However, the appointment means work and self-sacrifice. It means making oneself available to serve the needs of the brothers, caring for their spiritual interests. Reaching out for the office means striving to meet the qualifications set out in the Scriptures. The overseers of the congregation have both responsibility and accountability in caring for those entrusted to them.

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Overseers take very seriously what is stated at Hebrews 13:17, where they are referred to as "those who are taking the lead," those who are "keeping watch over" the souls of the brothers, and "those who will render an account." Overseers must exercise special care not to 'lord it over' the flock of God, not to use their position of responsibility for selfish advantage, and not to serve because they feel that they are compelled to do so. The overseers must prove themselves to be loving shepherds of the flock of God.—1 Pet. 5:2, 3; Prov. 27:23.

Hebrews 13:17 gives direction also to members of the congregation when it says: "Be obedient to those who are taking the lead among you and be submissive, for they are keeping watch over your souls as those who will render an account; that they may do this with joy and not with sighing, for this would be damaging to you." Although the overseers are imperfect men, there is no need for anyone in the congregation to hold back from being submissive, since it is Jehovah's arrangement and He will hold the overseers accountable for their actions. They are representing him and his theocratic rule. Just as Jehovah uses holy spirit to appoint a man, by means of that same holy spirit, Jehovah will remove from office those overseers who fail to manifest the fruitage of the spirit and whose pattern of life falls short of the Scriptural requirements.

Do we not truly appreciate the hard work and fine example of the congregation overseers? In writing to the congregation at Thessalonica, Paul admonished the brothers: "We request you, brothers, to have regard for those who are working hard among you and presiding over you in the Lord and admonishing you; and to give them more than extraordinary consider-

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ation in love because of their work." (1 Thess. 5:12, 13) Much of the hard work of the congregation overseers makes our service to God easier and more enjoyable. Also, in his first letter to Timothy, Paul makes mention of the attitude that members of the congregation should cultivate toward the overseers, saying: "Let the older men who preside in a fine way be reckoned worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard in speaking and teaching."—1 Tim. 5:17.

PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES MAY CHANGE

Of course, a brother who has served faithfully for a period of time may become physically ill or otherwise incapacitated, perhaps because of advancing age, and may no longer be able to care for the responsibilities of an overseer as he once did or in the way that other overseers do. Even so, he should still be viewed and respected as an older man as long as he is appointed. There would be no need for him to step aside on account of his limitations. He is still worthy of the double honor given to all hardworking older men who are serving to the best of their respective abilities in shepherding the flock.

But if a brother should feel that it would be best for him to step aside because of changed personal circumstances that limit his ability to serve, he may choose to do so. (1 Pet. 5:2) He should still be viewed with respect and be able to do much good in the congregation, even though no longer having assignments and duties given to elders.

POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY IN THE CONGREGATION

The Governing Body may arrange for men who qualify to serve as overseers in any locality at any

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time. The Governing Body is not bound by the recommendations of any local body of elders. Such recommendations serve merely as a guide and may even be rejected for reasons well-known to the Governing Body. Also, the Governing Body may authorize certain representatives to make appointments of overseers.—1 Tim. 1:3; Titus 1:5.

Whenever there are appointments or deletions of overseers, appropriate announcements are made to the congregation. This enables all concerned to know who are currently serving within the local congregation, and they can thus cooperate with the arrangement that is in effect.

Elders care for a variety of responsibilities in the congregation. There is a presiding overseer, a secretary, a service overseer, a *Watchtower* Study conductor, and a Theocratic Ministry School overseer. Some elders, if not all, serve as Congregation Book Study overseers. The elders serve in these positions for an indefinite period of time. Of course, if a brother holding any of these positions moves, is unable to care for his responsibilities because of health reasons, or becomes disqualified for failure to measure up to the Scriptural requirements, another elder is selected to handle the assignment. In congregations where the number of overseers is limited, it may be necessary for an elder to handle more than one assignment until other brothers qualify to be appointed as elders.

The presiding overseer serves as chairman at meetings of the body of elders. He should be a good organizer and able to preside in real earnest. (Rom. 12:8) He is responsible for overseeing the Service Meeting. He also arranges for public talks, at times using another elder or a well-qualified ministerial servant to assist him if needed.

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The secretary handles congregation records and keeps the elders informed about important communications. If necessary, another elder or a capable ministerial servant may be assigned to assist in caring for some routine matters.

Arrangements for field activity and other service-related matters come under the direction of the service overseer. He schedules regular visits to all Congregation Book Study groups so that once each month he visits a different group and gives a service talk. On the weekend of his visit, he will work with the group in the field ministry and help publishers with their return visits and Bible studies. In smaller congregations where there are only one or two book studies, he may arrange to visit each one twice during the year.

The specific duties of these brothers, along with the *Watchtower* Study conductor, the Theocratic Ministry School overseer, Congregation Book Study overseers, and others who make up the body of elders, are set out from time to time in *Our Kingdom Ministry* and letters from the branch office.

Depending on the number available and their individual abilities, various elders handle assignments in connection with the other congregation meetings each week. These meetings are planned and prepared so that they will be informative and spiritually upbuilding. The elders are responsible for presenting instructive public talks. Besides teaching in the congregation, the elders take the lead in the field ministry, working along with the publishers.

It is suggested that the body of elders in each congregation meets periodically to discuss matters related to the spiritual progress of the congregation.

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Two such meetings are held each year in conjunction with the regular visits of the circuit overseer. About three months after each visit of the circuit overseer, a meeting should be scheduled. These four meetings during the year are most likely sufficient for resolving any matters requiring the attention of the entire body of elders. Of course, the elders may convene at any time circumstances make it advisable. But if each one gives proper attention to his assigned duties and if the work of the elders is being adequately supervised and coordinated through the presiding overseer, meetings involving the entire body of elders can be kept to a minimum.

CONGREGATION SERVICE COMMITTEE

There are certain duties that are cared for by the Congregation Service Committee, made up of the presiding overseer, the secretary, and the service overseer. Members of this committee are involved in handling and signing various forms, such as those used in connection with literature inventories and requests, field service reports, and recommendations for appointment or removal of overseers, ministerial servants, and regular pioneers. In addition, the service committee approves the use of the Kingdom Hall for weddings and funerals and is responsible for assigning publishers to book study groups. It also approves applications for auxiliary pioneer service and other avenues of service. From time to time, the branch office calls upon the Congregation Service Committee to perform other duties. While elders on the service committee have been given certain authority to care for matters, these brothers work under the direction of the body of elders.

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CONGREGATION BOOK STUDY OVERSEER

One of the outstanding privileges in the congregation is to serve as a Congregation Book Study overseer. Such overseers have the opportunity to help others in a number of areas. Because this responsibility is a serious one, elders should be used if available. If not, then one elder might care for more than one group, doing so at different times during the week. This, however, would depend on his circumstances. Or a capable ministerial servant can be used until such time as an elder can take over. A ministerial servant working in this capacity is called a Congregation Book Study servant, as he does not function as an overseer in the congregation. Rather, he works under the direction of the elders in caring for his responsibility. How a ministerial servant is used is something for the elders to decide. They also decide to which group the elder or ministerial servant is assigned.

One of the chief responsibilities of the Congregation Book Study overseer is to conduct the Congregation Book Study. In order to do so adequately, he must prepare thoroughly. He should know not only the answers to the study questions but also the reasons behind those answers and the value of the material. It should be his goal to help the group get a clear understanding of what is being considered so that they can apply the truths learned to their own life as well as explain them to others. This requires a conscientious effort on his part, even as emphasized by Paul as found at Romans 12:7: "He that teaches, let him be at his teaching."

Another important feature of the book study overseer's work is that of taking the lead in the field

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ministry. The regularity, zeal, and enthusiasm that he shows in the field activity will be reflected in the publishers. Because the brothers appreciate the encouragement and help that come through being together, a group witnessing schedule convenient for the majority should be worked out and maintained. (Luke 10:1-16) The overseer needs to plan so that there is always enough territory to work. He will conduct the meeting for field service and organize the publishers for that day's work. When he cannot be there, he should arrange for another elder, a ministerial servant or, if neither is available, a qualified publisher to care for these responsibilities so that the publishers have the good leadership they need.

The service overseer is a real help to the book study overseer and the entire group. A wise book study overseer will plan ahead for the visit of the service overseer, informing his group of the visit and building anticipation for its benefits. When all in the group are kept fully aware of the arrangement, they can enthusiastically support it. There will be a corresponding improvement in their field activity.

Each book study group is purposely kept small. This allows the book study overseer to become well acquainted with all assigned to it. As a loving shepherd, he is keenly interested in each one. He tries to give personal help and encouragement for the field ministry, for support of congregation meetings, and for whatever else is appropriate to help each person keep spiritually strong. Those who become ill or depressed will benefit from a personal visit. An encouraging suggestion or a word of counsel might prompt some to reach out for additional privileges in the congregation and thus become of greater use to their brothers. While most of the book study overseer's ef-

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forts will logically be directed toward helping those in his own group, as an elder and a shepherd, he will have the entire congregation in mind. He is lovingly concerned for all and is ready to help any who are in need.—Acts 20:17, 28.

A responsibility of the Congregation Book Study overseer is to assist in collecting field service reports from the publishers and pioneers in his book study group. These reports are then given, along with the book study attendance figures, to the secretary for compiling. Individual publishers can assist the book study overseer by turning in their field service reports promptly. This can be done by submitting their reports directly to the book study overseer at the end of each month or by placing them in the box designated for service reports at the Kingdom Hall.

POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY IN THE ORGANIZATION

At times, selected elders are appointed to serve on Hospital Liaison Committees and as members of Patient Visitation Groups. These men visit hospitals and doctors to encourage continued and expanded treatment of Jehovah's Witnesses without using blood. Other overseers are able to advance Kingdom interests by serving as members of Regional Building Committees, Assembly Hall Committees, or district convention committees. The hard work of these brothers and their willingness to expend themselves in this way are very much appreciated by all in the organization. Indeed, we 'hold men of that sort dear.' —Phil. 2:29.

CITY OVERSEER

The branch office will appoint a city overseer in cities where there is more than one congregation.

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Usually, this appointment is made on the recommendation of the circuit overseer or circuit overseers if more than one serves congregations in that city. The city overseer does not exercise jurisdiction in any congregation other than the one in which he serves as an elder. The branch office may wish to communicate with him on various matters, such as arrangements for assemblies and schools that may be held in his city. However, the branch deals directly with each congregation in regard to literature supplies, monthly field service reports, and other matters.

CIRCUIT OVERSEER

The Governing Body arranges for the appointment of qualified elders to serve as circuit overseers. These are assigned by the branch office to visit the congregations that make up their circuits on a regular basis, usually twice a year. They also periodically visit pioneers, special pioneers, or missionaries serving in isolated territory. They plan their routing and notify each congregation sufficiently in advance so that the visit will result in the most benefit.

The presiding overseer takes the lead in organizing matters so that the visit will prove spiritually refreshing to all. (Rom. 1:11, 12) After he receives notification of the visit and information about the needs of the circuit overseer and (if married) his wife, the presiding overseer makes arrangements through various brothers to get literature supplies, accommodations, and other necessary things. He makes sure that all, including the circuit overseer, are informed of these arrangements.

The circuit overseer will contact the presiding overseer regarding the scheduling of meetings, including meetings for field service. These will be arranged in

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accord with local circumstances and the circuit overseer's suggestions as well as what is directed in *Our Kingdom Ministry* and in letters from the branch office. All need to be informed in advance concerning the times of the meetings with the congregation, with the pioneers, and with the elders and ministerial servants, as well as the places and times of meetings for field service. This will enable all to adjust their affairs so that they can benefit from the entire week's activities.

Since the circuit overseer will check the congregation records on Tuesday afternoon, such records should be in good order and available before he arrives. The presiding overseer will be sure to have them at the location where they will be checked. It is helpful if a member of the Congregation Service Committee can be present to render any assistance needed. The circuit overseer will examine the *Congregation's Publisher Record* cards, meeting attendance records, territory records, and the accounts. This will give him some insight into possible needs of the congregation and how he may be of assistance to those responsible for keeping these records.

During his visit, the circuit overseer takes time to speak with the brothers individually as he is able—at meetings, out in the field service, at mealtimes, and otherwise. Additionally, he meets with the elders and ministerial servants, sharing appropriate Scriptural counsel, suggestions, and encouragement that will help them shoulder their responsibilities in serving and shepherding the flock in their care. (Prov. 27:23; Acts 20:26-32; 1 Tim. 4:11-16) He also meets with the pioneers to encourage them in their work and to give personal assistance regarding any problems they may be encountering in their ministry.

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If there are other matters that need attention, the circuit overseer will either handle these or assist the elders to the extent possible while he is visiting the congregation. He will strive to help the elders or individuals involved to locate the Scriptural direction that applies. If there has been some serious wrongdoing and the elders need his assistance in handling such, he will set aside time for this purpose. If there is anything that the branch office needs to do in following through, he and the elders will provide the branch with a detailed report on the matter.

While visiting the congregation, the circuit overseer attends the regular congregation meetings. These may be adjusted from time to time in harmony with directions in *Our Kingdom Ministry* or letters from the branch office. He will give several talks designed to encourage, motivate, instruct, and fortify the congregation. He will strive to foster love and appreciation for Jehovah, Jesus Christ, and the organization. The circuit overseer will also encourage zealous participation in field service, providing practical suggestions on how to do the work effectively.

One of the primary objectives of the circuit overseer's visit is to provide leadership in field service. Many in the congregation may be able to adjust their schedule so that they can have a fuller share in field service that week. Some may be able to arrange to auxiliary pioneer the month of his visit. Those desirous of working with him or his wife can make an appointment through the presiding overseer. Much good can be accomplished by taking the circuit overseer or his wife on Bible studies and return visits. At times, adjustments in your schedule may have to be made, but the benefits are worth it. The circuit over-

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seer is encouraged to arrange for an early start in field service each day, taking local circumstances into consideration. Your extra effort to give full support to this aspect of the week's visit is deeply appreciated.—Prov. 27:17.

Every year a circuit assembly and a special assembly day are arranged for each circuit. The circuit overseer is responsible for the operation of the assembly organization on these occasions. On the circuit overseer's recommendation, the branch office appoints permanent assembly personnel: an assembly overseer and an assistant assembly overseer. They are to work closely with the circuit overseer in caring for the assembly organization. This will enable the circuit overseer to give his primary attention to the assembly program. The circuit overseer designates other capable men to care for various departments. He also arranges for an audit of the circuit accounts after each assembly.

The circuit overseer reports his field service directly to the branch office at the end of each month. He is also reimbursed for certain modest expenses incurred, such as travel, food, lodging, and other necessary items required to carry out his work if the congregations do not cover these. Traveling representatives have confidence that as Jesus promised, material needs will be provided if they seek continually the interests of Jehovah's Kingdom. (Luke 12:31) The congregations will want to be conscious of their privilege to display hospitality to these devoted elders who serve them.—3 John 5-8.

DISTRICT OVERSEER

The district overseer is also an appointed traveling elder. He is assigned by the branch office to serve a

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number of circuits that make up a district. He serves as chairman of the circuit assembly programs in his district and gives the public discourse on such programs. The first part of each week in which a circuit assembly is held, he works with the host congregation in the circuit being served. He takes the lead in group witnessing and gives an upbuilding Scriptural talk to the host congregation.

The branch office assigns each circuit the dates for its circuit assembly and special assembly day and notifies the district overseer of this schedule, which he then follows as his assigned routing. Because of distances involved for the publishers or the small size of assembly facilities, some circuits are divided into sections with a circuit assembly or a special assembly day held for each section. The district overseer is informed of this and plans to spend a week in the circuit for each circuit assembly to be held. In advance, he works out with the circuit overseer which congregation can appropriately be the host congregation for each circuit assembly.

On Tuesday afternoon of his visit, the district overseer gives encouragement to the circuit overseer and (if married) his wife and offers helpful suggestions to assist them with their work. From time to time, the branch office will outline points to be discussed at this meeting. The circuit overseer and his wife may have matters with which they desire assistance. (Prov. 20:5) The district overseer may have points to share based on things he has learned through experience and observation. Privately, the circuit overseer will discuss the needs of the circuit with the district overseer, who may decide to work

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some of these points into his talks on the circuit assembly program.

During the first part of the week with the host congregation, usually on Tuesday evening, the district overseer will attend an abbreviated Congregation Book Study and give a talk to the congregation. If the elders need advice or assistance with some congregation matters, they will let him know this in advance, and he will meet with them. Primarily, he will take the lead in group witnessing during the week. He and his wife will have a full schedule of field service. The circuit overseer and his wife will also give full support to the field service activity that week. The presiding overseer will make sure that all are informed of the arrangements for meetings for service. He will also see that adequate territory is available and make appointments on behalf of any who have requested to work with the traveling overseers.

At the conclusion of the circuit assembly (or assemblies), the district overseer will send the branch office a report on how the program was presented and received in that circuit. He will report on the spiritual condition and the needs of the circuit. Once a month, he also reports his field service and expenses. His accommodations and expenses are cared for in the same way as for the circuit overseer.

BRANCH COMMITTEE

In each branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses throughout the world, three or more spiritually qualified and mature brothers serve as a Branch Committee to oversee the preaching work in the country or countries under their jurisdiction. One of the committee members serves as the Branch Committee coordinator.

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Those serving on the Branch Committee handle matters pertaining to all the congregations in their territory. They arrange for the distribution of publications furnished by "the faithful and discreet slave" to strengthen all associated with the congregations. (Matt. 24:45) Their primary objective is to see to it that the good news of the Kingdom is preached throughout the territory assigned and that congregations, circuits, and districts are set up to give proper oversight to the needs of the field. The Branch Committee also gives attention to the missionary field and to special, regular, and auxiliary pioneer activity. When there are assemblies and conventions, these brothers make arrangements and assignments to ensure that "all things take place decently and by arrangement."—1 Cor. 14:40.

A Country Committee is appointed in some lands that come under the oversight of a Branch Committee in another land. This allows for closer supervision of the work where the Country Committee serves. It cares for matters in the Bethel Home and office, handles correspondence and reports, and generally cares for the activities in the field. The Country Committee cooperates with the Branch Committee for the advancement of the Kingdom.

The Governing Body makes all appointments of those selected to serve as members of Branch Committees and Country Committees.

ZONE OVERSEER

Periodically, arrangements are made by the Governing Body to have qualified brothers visit each of the branches throughout the earth. Brothers serving in this capacity are known as zone overseers.

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Their primary work is to help the Branch Committee with problems or questions they may have in carrying on the preaching and disciple-making work. Wherever practical, the zone overseer also meets with the missionaries who work under the branches he visits. He talks with them about their problems and needs, giving necessary encouragement regarding their most important activity, Kingdom preaching and disciple making.

The zone overseer also examines the various records that are kept for operating a branch office. He is especially interested in what is being accomplished in the field as far as the Kingdom preaching and other congregation activities are concerned. If there is a printery, farm, or other facility, he inspects each of these operations. When the zone overseer visits branches, he also shares to the extent possible in the Kingdom-preaching work.

LOVING OVERSIGHT

Visits by traveling overseers provide an interchange of encouragement, and the congregations are thus made firm in the faith. (Rom. 1:12; Eph. 4:3) The publishers are made aware of their interdependency. They work for the common good of all and cooperate in spreading the Kingdom good news. (1 Cor. 12:12-31) Certainly we have benefited greatly from the hard work and loving care of mature Christian men. We will benefit even further as we continue submitting ourselves to congregation elders and other appointed overseers charged with shepherding the flock and overseeing the work. (1 Cor. 16:15-18; Phil. 2:25, 29) As we do this, we are drawn into unity with the Head of the congregation, Christ Jesus,

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our Lord, the one appointed by Jehovah as the Fine Shepherd. (Eph. 1:22, 23) As a result, God's spirit permeates the congregations worldwide, and God's Word serves to guide the work throughout the earth. —Ps. 119:105.

CHAPTER 6

MINISTERIAL SERVANTS RENDER VALUABLE SERVICE

TO THE congregation at Philippi, the apostle Paul wrote: "Paul and Timothy, slaves of Christ Jesus, to all the holy ones in union with Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, along with overseers and ministerial servants." (Phil. 1:1) Note that in his salutation, he made mention of the ministerial servants. These men evidently fulfilled an important role in assisting the elders in the congregation back then. The same is true in our time. Ministerial servants render a number of services that help the overseers and that contribute to the good order of the congregation.

Have you become acquainted with the ministerial servants in your congregation? Are you aware of the many fine services they perform for your benefit and for the benefit of the entire congregation? The apostle specifically mentions them and states: "The men who minister in a fine manner are acquiring for themselves a fine standing and great freeness of speech in the faith in connection with Christ Jesus." —1 Tim. 3:13.

SCRIPTURAL REQUIREMENTS FOR MINISTERIAL SERVANTS

Ministerial servants are expected to lead a wholesome Christian life, be responsible men, and give

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proof that they are able to care for assignments properly. This becomes obvious when we consider what Paul had to say in his letter to Timothy about the qualifications of ministerial servants: "Ministerial servants should likewise be serious, not double-tongued, not giving themselves to a lot of wine, not greedy of dishonest gain, holding the sacred secret of the faith with a clean conscience. Also, let these be tested as to fitness first, then let them serve as ministers, as they are free from accusation. Let ministerial servants be husbands of one wife, presiding in a fine manner over children and their own households. For the men who minister in a fine manner are acquiring for themselves a fine standing and great freeness of speech in the faith in connection with Christ Jesus."—1 Tim. 3:8-10, 12, 13.

The work of ministerial servants generally involves nonteaching responsibilities. By their hard work and exemplary Christian life, they not only perform vital services for the congregation but also set an example to be imitated by others.—1 Tim. 4:11, 12.

The specific Scriptural requirements for ministerial servants mentioned by Paul in his first letter to Timothy indicate that a high standard is set for men who are used in this capacity. Holding to such a standard serves to protect the congregation from any legitimate accusation as to the kind of men to whom it entrusts special responsibilities. Whether younger or older in years, ministerial servants are expected to be active in the ministry each month, setting a fine example. They should be exemplary in their dress, grooming, speech, attitude, and conduct. Such a pattern of living with soundness of mind gains the respect of others and reflects the seriousness with which ministerial servants view their relationship

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with Jehovah and their privileges of service in the congregation.—Titus 2:2, 6-8.

These are men who have been "tested as to fitness." Even before receiving their appointment, they proved to be truly dedicated men, whose faith has been made manifest in carrying on zealous Kingdom service and in helping others to be made firm in the faith. In their response to the good news, they have demonstrated that they put Kingdom interests first in their life and are reaching out for whatever service privileges may be open to them. They are indeed examples for others in the congregation to imitate. —1 Tim. 3:10.

HOW THEY SERVE

Ministerial servants render a variety of practical services in behalf of their brothers and sisters. In doing so, they are helpful to the overseers, relieving them of detailed work, thus leaving them free to care for teaching and shepherding responsibilities. In making the service assignments, the elders take into account the number of appointed ministerial servants in the congregation as well as their individual abilities.

Just consider some of the services they perform. One ministerial servant may be assigned to take care of the congregation literature, making it convenient for us to obtain the literature we need for our personal use and for the field ministry. Another may care for the magazines. Others are assigned to keep records, such as for congregation accounts or for territory, or they are assigned to handle microphones, to operate sound equipment, to look after the platform, or perhaps to help the elders in other ways. There is much work to be done in maintaining the Kingdom

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Hall and keeping it clean, so ministerial servants are often called upon to assist in caring for these responsibilities. Ministerial servants are also assigned to serve as attendants, to welcome new ones, and to help maintain order at congregation meetings.

In some congregations, there may be enough ministerial servants for a different one to be assigned to each of these duties. Elsewhere, a ministerial servant may care for several assignments. In some instances, it is beneficial to have more than one person assigned to do certain work. If there are not enough ministerial servants to care for some of these responsibilities, the body of elders may arrange for other exemplary baptized brothers to care for some of this necessary work. Thus they would gain experience that would be useful later when they, in turn, become qualified to be appointed as ministerial servants. Or if brothers are not available, certain sisters who show godly humility and devotion to Jehovah could be asked to assist with some things even though, of course, they would not be appointed as ministerial servants.

Periodically, if there is good reason, elders may find it beneficial to change some assignments from one ministerial servant to another. However, there is great advantage in having brothers continue to handle the same assignments in order to become more proficient and to gain experience. How the elders work out these assignments handled by ministerial servants would be according to the congregation's needs.

Depending on local circumstances, there may be other services that can be assigned to ministerial servants who are doing as the apostle Paul encouraged young Timothy, 'making their spiritual

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advancement manifest.' (1 Tim. 4:15) If there are not enough elders to conduct the Congregation Book Studies, some of the more qualified ministerial servants may be used as Congregation Book Study servants to care for assigned groups. They may be assigned to handle parts in the Service Meeting and on the Theocratic Ministry School and to deliver public talks in the local congregation. Other privileges may be extended to some of the ministerial servants when there is a particular need and if they meet the requirements for the assignment.—1 Pet. 4:10.

In assisting the elders, ministerial servants should give of themselves willingly, demonstrating that they have a sense of responsibility and are working for the advancement of Kingdom interests and for the benefit of everyone in the congregation. By taking the lead in the field service, ministerial servants can set a good example for others and reap great satisfaction themselves in a work well-done.

Though their work differs from that of the elders, it is no less a part of sacred service to God and is important to the smooth functioning of the congregation. In time, if ministerial servants discharge their obligations well and also become qualified to serve as shepherds and teachers, they may be recommended to serve as elders.

If you have not done so already, why not make a special effort to get acquainted with the ministerial servants in your congregation? You can show your appreciation for their hard work by cooperating with them as they care for their assigned duties. In this way, you will also be showing appreciation for Jehovah's provision for maintaining an orderly household. (Gal. 6:10) The ministerial servants are appointed by holy spirit for your good.

CHAPTER 7

MEETINGS THAT "INCITE TO LOVE AND FINE WORKS"

HOW fitting that arrangements are made for Christians to meet regularly for worship and to be fed spiritually! It is important for all of us to gather together to hear God's Word so as to learn his requirements and how we may serve him. This applies to both younger and older ones, just as it did in the case of God's ancient covenant people, the nation of Israel. Regarding every seventh Festival of Booths, Jehovah commanded the nation through Moses: "Congregate the people, the men and the women and the little ones and your alien resident who is within your gates, in order that they may listen and in order that they may learn, as they must fear Jehovah your God and take care to carry out all the words of this law."—Deut. 31:12.

Clearly, the purpose for meeting together now, even as it was then, is to listen and to learn and to be "taught by Jehovah." (Isa. 54:13) Assembling for worship in ancient Israel was always a joyous occasion, as reflected in the words of David, who wrote: "I rejoiced when they were saying to me: 'To the house of Jehovah let us go.'" (Ps. 122:1) The apostle Paul referred to an additional cause for joy when meeting with fellow worshipers. He wrote: "Let us consider one another to incite to love and fine works." (Heb. 10:24) Congregation meetings provided early Christians with the opportunity to get to know one another, to impart encouragement, and to gain strength through association. This is also true of Jehovah's Witnesses today as they meet together to worship Jehovah.

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CONGREGATION MEETINGS

The Bible emphasizes the value of coming together to worship and praise Jehovah. (Ps. 26:8, 12; Matt. 18:20) Those who embraced the truth at Pentecost 33 C.E. did not treat this matter lightly. They continued devoting themselves to the teaching of the apostles, and "day after day they were in constant attendance at the temple with one accord." (Acts 2:42, 46) Later when Christians came together for worship, they read from inspired writings, including letters written by the apostles and other Christian disciples. (1 Cor. 1:1, 2; Col. 4:16; 1 Thess. 1:1; Jas. 1:1) There was congregation prayer. (Acts 4:24-29; 20:36) At times, experiences from the missionary field were related. (Acts 11:5-18; 14:27, 28) Bible doctrines and the fulfillment of inspired prophecies were considered. Instruction was given in matters of approved Christian conduct and godly devotion. All were encouraged to be zealous proclaimers of the good news.—Rom. 10:9, 10; 1 Cor. 11:23-26; 15:58; Eph. 5:1-33.

In our day Christian meetings in many respects follow the pattern set in apostolic days. We heed the inspired exhortation found at Hebrews 10:25 by "not forsaking the gathering of ourselves together, as some have the custom, but encouraging one another, and all the more so as [we] behold the day drawing near." During the difficult last days of this wicked system of things, we need the added encouragement that comes from regularly meeting together in order to maintain spiritual strength and Christian integrity. (Rom. 1:11, 12) As in Paul's day, Christians today live among a crooked and twisted generation. We have repudiated the ungodliness and worldly spirit of this system of things. (Phil. 2:

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15, 16; Titus 2:12-14) Really, where would we rather be than in association with Jehovah's people? (Ps. 84:10) And what could be more beneficial than hearing the Word of God discussed?

Jehovah is the Source of an abundance of satisfying spiritual food. (Ps. 145:14, 15) Through his Son and "the faithful and discreet slave," food at the proper time is being dispensed. (Matt. 24:45) How is such provision served to the individual members of the organization? One means is through the various meetings held each week in the congregation. Consider these meetings and the benefits derived as we regularly 'incite one another to love and fine works.'

THE *WATCHTOWER* STUDY

The Watchtower Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom is the principal means to keep Jehovah's people well supplied with timely spiritual food. Certain articles published in *The Watchtower* are specifically prepared for weekly congregation study, with special instruction based on the written Word of God. Information carefully examined in the *Watchtower* Study stirs the hearts and minds of members of the congregation and builds up their spiritual strength.

The study articles are varied as to subject matter. The material frequently deals with the application of Bible principles in daily living and fortifies Christians against "the spirit of the world" and unclean conduct. (1 Cor. 2:12) Through the columns of *The Watchtower* come increased light on Bible doctrine and the discussion of fulfillment of prophecy as Jehovah makes this known, thus enabling all to keep abreast of the truth and stay on the path of the righteous ones. (Ps. 97:11; Prov. 4:18) Attending the *Watchtower* Study and participating in it can help us

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to rejoice in the hope of Jehovah's righteous new system of things. (Rom. 12:12; 2 Pet. 3:13) It helps us to manifest the fruitage of the spirit in our life and to keep strong our desire to serve Jehovah zealously. (Gal. 5:22, 23) It helps to strengthen our faith to endure trials and to build "a fine foundation for the future" so that we "may get a firm hold on the real life."—1 Tim. 6:19; 1 Pet. 1:6, 7.

It is evident that the material considered week by week at the *Watchtower* Study is vital. It helps us to grow spiritually, to make the truth of God's Word our own, to bring our life into harmony with the teachings of the Bible, and to be united spiritually with our brothers worldwide. What can each one do to take full advantage of this provision for spiritual feeding? Prepare the lesson in advance, looking up all cited scriptures, and have a share in commenting during the meeting. Such participation will cause the points under discussion to make a deeper impression, sounding down the truth into our heart. At the same time, others benefit as they hear our expressions of faith and hope. Carefully listening to their comments will ensure that we get the most benefit from the lesson each week.

The *Watchtower* Study helps us to maintain spiritual strength and firmness in the faith. It should not be looked upon as just routine. None should miss this important provision that Jehovah has made for strengthening all associated with the household of faith.

PUBLIC MEETING

The Public Meeting is usually held in conjunction with the weekly *Watchtower* Study, but it differs as to the method used in presenting information.

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Whereas the *Watchtower* Study is developed as a question-and-answer discussion with audience participation, the Public Meeting features a discourse on a Bible subject. Such meetings play an important part in filling the spiritual needs of both new ones and members of the congregation.—Acts 18:4; 19: 9, 10.

By inviting interested ones as well as the public in general, we may accomplish much in acquainting people with basic Bible information. The Public Meeting helps one and all to remain alert to Christian teachings and encourages steadfastness in Kingdom service.

The subjects considered at the Public Meeting are varied. Talks cover Bible doctrine and prophecy as well as Scriptural principles and counsel regarding family life, marital matters, situations confronting youths, and Christian morals. Some talks center on Jehovah's marvelous works of creation. Others highlight the exemplary faith, courage, and integrity of different Bible characters, focusing on lessons for our day. The Public Meeting is truly an occasion for taking in informative and refreshing spiritual food.

If we are to get the full benefit of the Public Meeting arrangement, it is essential that we attend regularly, pay close attention, look up the scriptures referred to by the speaker, and follow along as he reads and explains them. (Luke 8:18) This will help us to become more familiar with the location of Bible books and will increase our knowledge of the Scriptures. As we thus make sure of the things discussed, we should be determined to hold fast to what we learn and to apply it personally.—1 Thess. 5:21.

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If there are a sufficient number of speakers available, the congregation will no doubt have a public talk every week. Frequently, this is made possible by having speakers visit from nearby congregations. If there is a shortage of speakers in an area, arrangements are made to have these talks as often as possible.

Christ Jesus, his apostles, and their associates conducted public meetings similar to those enjoyed today by congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses. Without question, Jesus was the greatest public speaker ever on earth. It was said concerning him: "Never has another man spoken like this." (John 7:46) Jesus spoke with authority, astounding his audiences. (Matt. 7:28, 29) Many were the benefits received by those who took his message to heart. (Matt. 13:16, 17) The apostles followed his example. At Acts 2:22-36, we read of Peter's powerful discourse on the day of Pentecost 33 C.E. Many were motivated to act as a result of what they heard. Later, individuals benefited from Paul's discourse in Athens. (Acts 17:22-34) Similarly, in our day millions have received benefits through the weekly Public Meetings held in congregations as well as public talks presented at circuit assemblies and at district, national, and international conventions. We should give full support to the arrangement for Public Meetings.

SERVICE MEETING

The Service Meeting focuses on our field ministry. It equips us to have a full share in preaching the Kingdom good news, making disciples, and declaring the approaching execution of divine judgment. (Matt. 28:20; Mark 13:10; 2 Pet. 3:7) To a large extent, this work is done by speaking to people indi-

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vidually and providing them with Bible literature. But the application of Jehovah's righteous principles in our life has a direct bearing on the effectiveness of our field ministry and the fruitage that we produce. (Matt. 13:23; John 15:8) We thereby demonstrate the good results that come from applying the Scriptures. Appropriately, the Service Meeting gives attention to all these facets of our service to God.

Each month *Our Kingdom Ministry* outlines the weekly Service Meetings. You will receive a copy through the congregation. When a new issue of *Our Kingdom Ministry* is received, the presiding overseer carefully analyzes what it contains and assigns the various meeting parts to qualified brothers. He may arrange for such assignments to be made through one of the other elders.

Elders and well-qualified ministerial servants are assigned to handle the various parts on the Service Meeting program. They should be careful, not to introduce additional material, but to develop the program parts as outlined in *Our Kingdom Ministry*. This means that they need to study the assigned material carefully to determine what the principal points of instruction are and how to handle them so that the brothers will understand and remember them. Careful thought is also given to application of the material to the situation of the local congregation.

While there are various ways that material can effectively be presented, in no case should the method of presentation overshadow the material presented. Demonstrations should not be dramatic productions with a lot of stage props. Use natural settings, such

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as a scene at one's secular work, a door-to-door call, a home Bible study, or a family discussion. Settings should fit what is encountered locally so that the publishers can relate to them.

Exemplary baptized publishers and their well-trained minor children may be asked to participate in certain parts, such as demonstrations. They may be interviewed or invited to relate their experiences. If you have an opportunity to participate, cooperate joyfully and conscientiously, recognizing that this is part of your service to Jehovah.

It should be the heartfelt desire of each Christian to live in a way that encourages others to follow Jesus Christ as dedicated Witnesses of Jehovah. To that end, Service Meeting programs are designed to reach the following objectives: (1) to encourage us to participate in the public ministry to the fullest extent possible—whether witnessing from house to house, on the street, or wherever people may be found—and to improve in our presentation of the good news; (2) to teach us how to make return visits on individuals who show interest or accept Bible literature; (3) to motivate us to set aside time for regularly conducting home Bible studies and directing students to the organization; (4) to give us ideas on how to witness informally; (5) to show us how to improve in our efforts to help new ones, our children, and other young people to become dedicated disciples.

You will benefit if before the meeting, you go over the program outlined in *Our Kingdom Ministry*. At times, articles in various publications of Jehovah's Witnesses are considered. Not only will advance re-

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search be informative but such research will also equip you to have a share when parts on the program call for audience participation. The more you absorb from the Service Meeting, the more effective you will be in your ministry.

When all in the congregation attend the Service Meeting regularly, unified activity is the result. Since every baptized Witness is a minister, attending this meeting is essential to help us carry out our commission. It is also very beneficial for anyone who desires to become a dedicated servant of God. Make attendance at this meeting part of your weekly schedule of activity.

Meetings of this sort are nothing new. They are based on sound Scriptural precedent. Before sending his disciples out to preach, Jesus gave them detailed instructions on what to say and do. (Matt. 10:5–11:1; Luke 10:1-16) Later his disciples continued to have such meetings at which they discussed their experiences in the ministry, and this strengthened them for zealous Kingdom activity. (Acts 4:23-31) We continue that same practice today.

THEOCRATIC MINISTRY SCHOOL

The Theocratic Ministry School is an ongoing provision for the education of all in the congregation. The curriculum includes Bible readings, Bible talks, student presentations, and other training for the field ministry. Counsel is given to students to help them progressively improve in their presentations. While offering a variety of information that is of interest and benefit to the entire congregation, the Theocratic Ministry School also gives participants as well as those in the audience opportunity to improve various aspects of their personal

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ministry. Occasional reviews provide a means of self-examination regarding individual progress in ministerial training.

Each year Jehovah's organization provides a Theocratic Ministry School Schedule setting out the program to be followed. This schedule outlines the material to be used and how the assignments are to be handled. For many years the Theocratic Ministry School has proved its worth in training Jehovah's Witnesses to be effective proclaimers of the Kingdom. All who are actively associated with the congregation, including people newly attending the meetings, may enroll as long as they agree with the teachings of the Bible and their life is in harmony with Christian principles.

By enrolling in the Theocratic Ministry School, we show that we are interested in spiritual advancement. The instruction there can help us to demonstrate "fine works" as public praisers of Jehovah. (Matt. 5:16) It can equip us to accomplish more in the time we have available for the field service and to incite others to action by our fine comments at the congregation meetings. In the case of brothers, this instruction will greatly assist them in qualifying as ministerial servants or elders and eventually in handling major Service Meeting parts and in giving public talks.

Those enrolled will be notified well in advance concerning their student assignments so that they can prepare thoroughly. When we have a part in the school, it is particularly important to be on hand before the meeting starts. We should make every effort to be present to fulfill our assignment. However, if on occasion an emergency arises and it is impossible for us to care for our part, we should im-

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mediately notify the school overseer or the brother assigned to assist him so that arrangements can be made for a substitute.

As a regular part of our spiritual feeding program, the Theocratic Ministry School provides many benefits. The prophet Isaiah said: "The Sovereign Lord Jehovah himself has given me the tongue of the taught ones, that I may know how to answer the tired one with a word." (Isa. 50:4) Unquestionably, the school has played an important part in training millions to develop the tongue of one taught by Jehovah. Over the years, this program has helped those enrolled to make spiritual advancement and to learn how better to express themselves in presenting the good news of the Kingdom. Under the direction of holy spirit, such training has enabled God's people to give an answer to everyone demanding a reason for their hope. Being taught to use God's Word in this way is a blessing.

Those enrolled in the Theocratic Ministry School can benefit greatly from the use of the Kingdom Hall library. The library should contain the available publications of Jehovah's Witnesses, *Watch Tower Publications Indexes*, perhaps a number of Bible translations, a concordance, and other helpful reference works. We should feel free to use any of these publications at the Kingdom Hall before or after the meetings.

CONGREGATION BOOK STUDY

Members of the congregation and others who are associated derive great personal benefit from the Congregation Book Study, a meeting generally conducted with a smaller group than at the other meetings. A few families and a small number

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of other individuals gather at each of these studies. Study groups meet in convenient locations scattered throughout the congregation territory, usually private homes. The Kingdom Hall may also be used for this purpose.

In some respects, these group studies provide benefits that do not directly come through other provisions of the congregation. Why is this so? It is because the Congregation Book Study arrangement provides not only for making a careful and detailed study of Bible subjects but also for giving more personal attention to the spiritual growth of each individual in these small groups. Such personal assistance may include appropriate Scriptural counsel, encouragement and direction for carrying out the ministry, as well as other vital spiritual help to fit the needs of the individual. This assistance is a reflection of Jehovah's loving-kindness and his tender care for his people.—Isa. 40:11.

The Congregation Book Study overseer is a student of God's Word and is qualified to help others to increase in Bible knowledge and to apply this knowledge in practical ways. Besides conducting the lesson, he shows personal interest in the physical and spiritual well-being of all in the group, assists them in the preaching work, and makes shepherding calls on them and on others in the congregation as the need arises. A capable ministerial servant may conduct the book study if an elder is not available.

This meeting is a group study using the Bible and a textbook provided by Jehovah's Witnesses. Basically, it is conducted in the same manner as the *Watchtower* Study. The book study is opened and closed with prayer, paragraphs are read, questions are asked on the paragraphs, comments are given,

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and scriptures are read as time permits. To impress principal thoughts on the mind of each one, the conductor may include a brief oral review at the end of the study. As we attend week by week, we will gain both knowledge and understanding. We will learn the reasons for statements that are made in the publication and how to support them from the Bible as well as how to conduct discussions of the same material with others whom we are able to help in our field ministry. (2 Tim. 2:15) This meeting will do much to equip us to become better teachers of God's Word.

In a small group such as this, there are more opportunities for us to offer comments. Thus, all of us, including new ones, have the opportunity to get accustomed to making a public declaration of our faith before others. (Heb. 13:15) It is good to learn to comment in our own words instead of reading out of the book.

Whereas anyone present may share in the reading of the scriptures, just one person is assigned to read the paragraphs. The Congregation Book Study overseer will arrange in advance for a baptized brother who is a good reader to read the paragraphs. Each week, a different qualified brother may be assigned to read the paragraphs. If no capable brother is available, the overseer himself may read or a capable sister may read.

Having the study groups scattered throughout the congregation territory makes it convenient both for us and for newly interested people in the neighborhood to attend. We should make every effort to bring others with us to the meeting so that they can get a taste of the spiritually upbuilding discussions and the warm association that we enjoy.

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In addition to being a place for group study, the Congregation Book Study location may be a meeting place for field service. Here the group may meet at convenient times before going out into the field. By cooperating in all these arrangements, book study groups work together for the twofold purpose of study and service.

MEETINGS FOR FIELD SERVICE

At various times during the week, groups of Jehovah's Witnesses may briefly assemble in preparation for going out in the field ministry. Discussion of a Bible text—preferably the daily text if it is field service related—suggestions for dealing with situations likely to be encountered in the field, or points from *Our Kingdom Ministry* are usually considered at these meetings. Field service arrangements are made, and one of the group leads in prayer. The group is then ready to go into the field. Such meetings provide practical instruction and real encouragement for those going out in the witness work. Arrangements can be made at this meeting to help newer ones or others who may need assistance in the preaching work. Such meetings last from 10 to 15 minutes.

MEETING ARRANGEMENTS AT NEW OR SMALL CONGREGATIONS

As more become disciples, the number of congregations also increases. Whether a new congregation is formed from an already existing congregation or is made up of publishers in an isolated area, it must consist of baptized publishers and others who recognize the faithful and discreet slave class and desire to work under its direction. The circuit overseer usually submits the application for a new congrega-

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tion. In some cases, small groups may find it more advantageous to be associated with the nearest congregation.

At times, small congregations may be composed entirely of sisters. When such is the case, a sister who prays in the congregation or conducts meetings does so with her head properly covered, in harmony with the Scriptural arrangement. (1 Cor. 11:3-16) In most cases, they remain seated, facing the group. None of the sisters give actual discourses at meetings. They read and comment on the material provided by Jehovah's Witnesses, or for variety, they may cover it in discussions or demonstrations.

In a newly formed congregation, brothers who qualify for appointment as elders or ministerial servants will be recommended to the branch office. If no one qualifies, as in the case of a group made up entirely of sisters, the branch office will designate one of the sisters to care for correspondence with the office and to carry on meetings. In time, when brothers qualify for appointment, they will care for these responsibilities.

SPECIAL ASSEMBLY DAYS AND CIRCUIT ASSEMBLIES

Meetings of Jehovah's servants may range in size from small gatherings of just two or three individuals to large assemblies of many thousands. Each year arrangements are made for congregations assigned to the same circuit to assemble together for a one-day special assembly day and a two-day circuit assembly. These joyous occasions afford everyone opportunities to "widen out" in Christian association. (2 Cor. 6:11-13) With a special need in mind, "the faithful and discreet slave" prepares the Scriptural themes and various parts of these programs.

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The information is presented by means of a variety of methods, such as discourses, discussions, demonstrations, reenactments, and interviews. The programs usually feature parts that deal with local situations or counsel that specifically applies to the particular circuit. Such timely instruction builds up all who attend.

At special assembly days and circuit assemblies, opportunity is provided for new disciples to get baptized in symbol of their dedication to Jehovah. All are encouraged by the reports and experiences related concerning the work of preaching the good news.

DISTRICT CONVENTIONS

Once each year, larger gatherings are held by Jehovah's Witnesses. These are usually organized as three-day district conventions, combining congregations from a number of circuits. However, smaller branches may find it more practical and convenient for all congregations under the branch to assemble in one place. Arrangements for these gatherings in some lands may vary according to circumstances or on the basis of direction from the Governing Body. National conventions are also organized. Periodically, international conventions around the world may be attended by tens of thousands of Witnesses from a number of different lands. Over the years, many people have learned about the good news because of the publicity given to these large gatherings of Jehovah's Witnesses.

District, national, and international conventions are joyous occasions of united worship for Jehovah's dedicated people. Such conventions have provided the setting for revealing increased light on the

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truth, for releasing new publications for personal and congregational study and use in the field ministry, and for having baptisms. Jehovah's Witnesses consider district conventions to be of particular importance in promoting spiritual growth and in reviewing progress in fulfilling the Christian commission to preach the good news. In some smaller branches, the district convention may actually be a national convention. The larger conventions give evidence that Jehovah's people indeed form an international brotherhood of dedicated Christians bearing the identifying mark of disciples of Jesus Christ.—John 13:35.

By attending local congregation meetings as well as the larger assemblies and conventions of Jehovah's people, we are strengthened to do Jehovah's will and are protected against worldly influences that could undermine our Christian faith. We can all be thankful that Jehovah has provided these periods of spiritual refreshment for his dedicated people in this time of the end.

THE LORD'S EVENING MEAL

Once each year on the anniversary of the death of Jesus Christ, all congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses observe the Memorial of Christ's death, or the Lord's Evening Meal. (1 Cor. 11:20, 23, 24) This is the most important meeting of the year for Jehovah's people. We are specifically commanded to observe this Memorial.—Luke 22:19.

The date of the Memorial corresponds with the date of the Passover, which is clearly marked in the Bible. (Ex. 12:2, 6; Matt. 26:17, 20, 26) The Passover was the annual commemoration of the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt in the year 1513 B.C.E. At

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that time Jehovah marked the 14th day of their first lunar month as the date for them to eat the Passover lamb and to leave their captivity in Egypt. (Ex. 12:1-51) The date is determined by counting 14 days from the new moon nearest the spring equinox as visible in Jerusalem. Generally, the Memorial observance each year falls on the date of the first full moon following the spring equinox.

Matthew 26:26-28 outlines in Jesus' own words the way the Memorial is observed. It is, not a ritual with mystical overtones, but a symbolic meal that is shared by those who have been called to be joint heirs with Jesus Christ in his heavenly Kingdom. (Luke 22:28-30) All other dedicated Christians and interested people are encouraged to attend the Lord's Evening Meal as observers. By their attendance they show their appreciation for the provision Jehovah God has made for the benefit of all mankind through his Son, Jesus Christ. Jehovah's Witnesses view the Memorial as a special event and make every effort to be in attendance each year.

In the first part of the year, usually near Memorial time, a special public talk is given in the congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses. They endeavor to invite all interested ones to attend. The talk provides a timely message for those who want to be pleasing to God and is designed to stimulate further interest in Bible study.

Jehovah's Witnesses joyfully anticipate occasions for assembling together at meetings, where we "consider one another to incite to love and fine works." (Heb. 10:24) "The faithful and discreet slave" is alert to provide such meetings according to our spiritual needs. All of Jehovah's servants as well as interested people are urged to take full ad-

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vantage of the arrangements for regularly assembling together. By showing due appreciation for Jehovah's provisions through his organization, God's servants are bound together in unity.

CHAPTER 8

MINISTERS OF THE GOOD NEWS

IN SENDING forth his Son, Jehovah gave us a perfect model to follow. (1 Pet. 2:21) When anyone becomes his follower, Jesus helps that person to preach the good news as one of God's ministers. Indicating that this would be spiritually refreshing, Jesus said: "Come to me, all you who are toiling and loaded down, and I will refresh you. Take my yoke upon you and *learn from me* ["become my disciples," ftn.], for I am mild-tempered and lowly in heart, and you will find refreshment for your souls." (Matt. 11:28, 29) His promise has not failed any who have responded to that invitation!

As God's Chief Minister, Jesus called certain individuals to come and be his followers. (Matt. 9:9; John 1:43) He trained them in the ministry and sent them forth to do the same work he was doing. (Matt. 10:1–11:1; 20:28; Luke 4:43) Later he sent forth 70 others to share in declaring the good news concerning God's Kingdom. (Luke 10:1, 8-11) When Jesus sent his disciples forth, he said to them: "He that listens to you listens to me too. And he that disregards you disregards me too. Moreover, he that disregards me disregards also him that sent me forth." (Luke 10:16) In this way Jesus stressed the serious responsibility that was laid upon the disciples. They were to represent the Most High God! It would be the same with all

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others who respond to Jesus' invitation to "come be [his] follower," even down to this day. (Luke 18:22) All who respond have a divine commission to preach the good news of the Kingdom and to make disciples. —Matt. 24:14; 28:19, 20.

Having come to Jesus, therefore, in response to his invitation to follow him, we have been blessed with knowledge of Jehovah God and of Jesus Christ. (John 17:3) We have been taught Jehovah's ways. With his help we have been able to make our mind over, change our personality, and harmonize our daily conduct with Jehovah's righteous standards. (Rom. 12:1, 2; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:9, 10) Our heartfelt appreciation has moved us to dedicate ourselves to Jehovah and to symbolize that by baptism in water. Baptism constitutes our ordination as ministers.

Always keep in mind that service to God must be rendered with clean hands and out of a pure heart. (Ps. 24:3, 4; Isa. 52:11; 2 Cor. 6:14–7:1) Through faith in Jesus Christ, we have gained a clean conscience and freeness of speech. (Heb. 10:19-23, 35, 36; Rev. 7: 9, 10, 14) The apostle Paul admonished Christians to do all things for God's glory, so as not to be stumbling others. Also, the apostle Peter pointed out the value of exemplary godly conduct in winning unbelievers over to the truth. (1 Cor. 10:31, 33; 1 Pet. 3:1) How can you help someone qualify to become a minister of the good news?

NEW PUBLISHERS

From the time you begin conducting a home Bible study with an interested person, encourage him to speak to others about what he is learning from the Bible. He could be urged to speak with relatives, friends, work associates, and others on an informal

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basis. This is an important step in teaching new ones to be followers of Jesus Christ as ministers of the good news. (Matt. 9:9; Luke 6:40) As the new one grows spiritually and becomes adept at informal witnessing, he will no doubt express a desire to have a share in the public ministry with the congregation.

MEETING THE REQUIREMENTS

Before inviting a person to accompany you in the field ministry for the first time and before you suggest that he report any field service to the congregation, there are certain qualifications he should meet. When a person accompanies us in the field ministry, he identifies himself publicly with the congregation of Jehovah's people, so it is understood that he has already brought his life into harmony with Jehovah's righteous standards and can be an unbaptized publisher in the congregation.

Very likely, as you study with a person and discuss Bible principles with him, you will become aware of his circumstances. You may observe that he is living in harmony with the information he has learned from studying the Bible. But there are some aspects of the student's life that the elders will want to discuss with him and you together before you invite him to accompany you in the field service and to share in publicly witnessing to others.

The presiding overseer will arrange to have two elders (one being a member of the Congregation Service Committee) discuss this matter with you and the Bible student. They will consider the following points:

- Do the person's expressions show that he believes that the Bible is the inspired Word of God? (2 Tim. 3:16)

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- Does he know and believe the basic teachings of the Scriptures so that when asked questions, he will answer in harmony with the Bible and not according to false religious teachings or his own ideas? (Matt. 7:21-23; 2 Tim. 2:15)
- Is he heeding the Bible's command to associate with Jehovah's people at congregation meetings if he physically and circumstantially can? (Ps. 122:1; Heb. 10:24, 25)
- Does he know what the Bible teaches about fornication, adultery, polygamy, and homosexuality, and is he living in harmony with such teachings? If the person is living with one of the opposite sex, are they properly married? (Matt. 19:9; 1 Cor. 6:9, 10; 1 Tim. 3:2, 12; Heb. 13:4)
- Does he heed the Bible's prohibition of drunkenness? (Eph. 5:18; 1 Pet. 4:3, 4) Is he free from all nonmedical use of addictive or mind-altering natural or synthetic substances? (2 Cor. 7:1)
- Does he see the value of avoiding unwholesome association? (1 Cor. 15:33)
- Has he definitely broken off membership in all false religious organizations with which he may have been affiliated, and has he ceased attending their meetings and supporting or sharing in their activities? (2 Cor. 6:14-18; Rev. 18:4)
- Is he free from all involvement in the political affairs of the world? (John 6:15; 15:19; Jas. 1:27)
- Does he believe and live in harmony with what the Bible says at Isaiah 2:4 about the affairs of the nations?
- Does he really want to be one of Jehovah's Witnesses? (Ps. 110:3)

If the elders are not sure how the student feels about some of these matters, they should invite him to look up the scriptures here cited and comment on

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them in order to see the significance of what they say. It is important that he understand that those who share with Jehovah's Witnesses in their preaching activity must be leading a life that harmonizes with these Scriptural requirements. His expressions will help the elders determine whether he knows what is expected of him and whether he is qualified to a reasonable degree to begin participating in the field ministry.

If he is qualified, the elders can warmly welcome the individual as one who desires to become an active associate of Jehovah's Witnesses. (Rom. 15:7) He should be encouraged to begin sharing in the field ministry as soon as possible and to turn in a field service report at the end of the month. The elders can explain that when a Bible student qualifies as an unbaptized publisher and reports field service for the first time, a *Congregation's Publisher Record* card is made out in his name and included in the congregation file. They can assure him that all the elders take an interest in the field service reports that are turned in each month.

Getting better acquainted with the new publisher and showing a personal interest in what he has accomplished can have a fine influence on the individual. It may move him to make even greater efforts to serve Jehovah and to turn in field service reports regularly each month.—Phil. 2:4; Heb. 13:2.

Once the elders determine that the Bible student qualifies to engage in the field ministry, he is eligible to receive his own copy of *Organized to Do Jehovah's Will*. After he reports field service for the first time, a brief announcement should be made to the congregation that he is a new unbaptized publisher.

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HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE

Young children may also qualify as publishers of the good news. Jesus received young children to himself and blessed them. (Matt. 19:13-15; 21:15, 16) Although primarily parents are responsible for their own children, others in the congregation may wish to help young ones who are motivated from the heart to share in the Kingdom-preaching work. If you are a parent, your fine example in the field ministry will do much to encourage your children to be zealous in their service to God. When a child is exemplary in his conduct and is moved from the heart to make a personal expression of his faith by speaking to others about the good news, what further help can be given?

It would be appropriate for the parent to approach one of the elders on the Congregation Service Committee to discuss whether the child is qualified to become a publisher. The presiding overseer will arrange to have two elders (one being a member of the Congregation Service Committee) meet with the child and his parent(s). If the child has a basic knowledge of Bible truth and gives evidence of *wanting* to share in Kingdom service, this would indicate good progress has been made. After considering these and other factors similar to those that apply to adults, the two elders can determine whether the child may be recognized as an unbaptized publisher.—Luke 6: 45; Rom. 10:10.

DEDICATION AND BAPTISM

If you have taken in accurate knowledge and have shown love for God by conforming your life to divine requirements and by sharing in the field ministry, you need to solidify your personal relationship with Jehovah. How? By making a dedication to him in

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whole strength." (Mark 12:30) All of us are required to be whole-souled in our service to God. This means that we can individually demonstrate the depth of our devotion and the genuineness of our dedication by doing our utmost in the ministry. (2 Tim. 2:15) There are many opportunities open to each of us, according to our individual circumstances and abilities. Just consider what some of these opportunities are, and decide what theocratic goals you will pursue in fulfilling your ministry.

SERVING AS A CONGREGATION PUBLISHER

All who embrace the truth have the privilege of publishing the good news. This is the basic work that Jesus gave his disciples to do. (Matt. 24:14; 28:19, 20) A disciple of Jesus Christ usually begins speaking to others about the good news just as soon as he recognizes its value. This is what Andrew, Philip, Cornelius, and others did. (John 1:40, 41, 43-45; Acts 10:1, 2, 24; 16:14, 15, 25-34) Does this mean that a person may participate in telling others about the good news even before he gets baptized? Yes. As soon as an individual qualifies as an unbaptized publisher in the congregation, the opportunity to participate in the house-to-house preaching is open to him. Also, according to his ability and circumstances, he may regularly share in other features of the Christian ministry.

As a baptized member of the congregation, you are no doubt interested in doing all you can to help others learn the good news. Men and women alike have the privilege of sharing in the God-ordained preaching work. All should set a fine example in fulfilling their respective roles within the congregation. (1 Tim. 2:9-15; Titus 2:1-10; 1 Pet. 5:5) Male members of the congregation who make spiritual advance-

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ment and qualify may be appointed as ministerial servants. (1 Tim. 3:8-10, 12, 13) Such ones who reach out for the responsibilities of an overseer and who meet the Scriptural requirements are appointed to this office. They teach in the congregation and serve as shepherds of the flock. (1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9) It is certainly a privilege to have even a small part in advancing the interests of God's Kingdom. Anyone who can expand his ministry to attain additional privileges of service is happy indeed.

SERVING WHERE THE NEED IS GREATER

It may be that you serve in a congregation where the territory is frequently worked and a fine witness is being given. If such is the case, you may feel that you could expand your ministry by moving to an area where there is a greater need in the field. (Acts 16:9) Your circuit overseer may have suggestions on how you can assist another congregation within the circuit. If you wish to serve in another area of your own country, you may write to the branch office for information. If you presently serve as an elder or a ministerial servant, there may be another congregation in your country that would appreciate having your assistance in caring for congregation needs.

Would you like to advance Kingdom interests in a foreign country? If so, you need to consider such a move carefully. It will certainly have an impact on you and any who accompany you. (Luke 14:28) If you are not planning to stay a long time, it may be best to consider serving in areas within your home country.

Before the branch office in your country or in another land can provide you with names of congregations that could benefit from your assistance, your Congregation Service Committee will need to

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provide a letter of recommendation. This letter is required whether you are serving as an elder, a ministerial servant, a pioneer, or a publisher. The service committee will send a letter of recommendation along with your inquiry directly to the branch office of the country where you desire to serve.

If serving where the need is greater is something that you would like to do, why not discuss the matter with the elders in your congregation? They may be able to help you determine how to go about making such a move or how to qualify for such service sometime in the future.

WORKING WITH A FOREIGN-LANGUAGE CONGREGATION

In order to expand your ministry, you may wish to consider learning another language, including a sign language. In some bilingual families, both parents and youths are serving in foreign-language congregations to care more fully for Kingdom interests. If you have the goal of learning to preach in another language, why not speak with the elders and the circuit overseer? They may be able to offer suggestions and needed encouragement. In some cases, under the direction of the branch office, circuits have organized language classes to help reach the local immigrant population.

AUXILIARY, REGULAR, AND SPECIAL PIONEER SERVICE

All publishers should be acquainted with the general requirements for auxiliary, regular, and special pioneer service as well as other branches of full-time service. From time to time, *Our Kingdom Ministry* sets out additional specific information. A pioneer publisher must be an exemplary baptized Christian

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whose personal circumstances allow him or her to spend the specified number of hours each month in publicly preaching the good news. The Congregation Service Committee approves applications for auxiliary pioneer service, whereas regular and special pioneers are appointed by the branch office.

Auxiliary pioneers may be appointed for a minimum of one month, for any number of consecutive months, or on a continuous basis, according to their circumstances. Many Kingdom publishers enjoy serving as auxiliary pioneers on special occasions, such as during the Memorial season or the month of the circuit overseer's visit. Some choose vacation months. Baptized, school-age publishers may wish to enroll as auxiliary pioneers during months they have time off from school. Whatever your personal circumstances, if you are maintaining a clean moral standing, can arrange to meet the specified hour requirement in the field ministry, and believe that you could serve one or more months as an auxiliary pioneer, the congregation elders will be pleased to consider your application for this privilege of service.

To qualify for appointment as a *regular pioneer,* you must currently be in a position to reach the yearly field service requirement. *Our Kingdom Ministry* suggests a monthly goal of hours that will assist you in fulfilling this responsibility. As a regular pioneer, you must always work in close cooperation with the congregation where you are serving. Zealous pioneers are a real blessing to a congregation, generating enthusiasm for the field ministry and even encouraging others to take up the pioneer service. Before the elders recommend that you be appointed as a regular pioneer, however, you must be baptized for at least

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six months, have good morals, and show yourself to be an exemplary publisher. You must be able to follow a practical schedule that will enable you to spend the required number of hours in field service.

Special pioneers are usually selected from among regular pioneers who have demonstrated their effectiveness in the ministry and who are able to serve wherever the branch office chooses to assign them. Often this is an isolated area where they can find interest and form new congregations. At times, special pioneers are assigned to congregations that need help in covering their territory regularly. Some special pioneers who are also elders have been assigned to help small congregations, even where there is not a particular need for more workers in the field. Special pioneers receive a modest reimbursement for necessary living expenses.

MINISTERIAL TRAINING SCHOOL

The steady increase in new congregations being formed each year gives evidence of Jehovah's blessing upon the efforts of his people to preach the good news of the Kingdom. (Acts 16:5) With the increase in congregations, the need for additional elders and ministerial servants also grows. Single brothers who qualify are encouraged to fill this need by saying to Jehovah: "Here I am! Send me." (Isa. 6:8) Many have responded in this way by applying to attend the Ministerial Training School, which is reserved for single ministerial servants and elders who are willing and able to serve where the need is greater. Such ones can learn more about the requirements by attending the meetings for brothers interested in the Ministerial Training School when these are held at circuit assemblies.

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This school gives instruction in Bible teachings and in organizational matters so as to equip qualified men to handle congregational shepherding and other responsibilities. (Jer. 23:4) As a result of such training, some are assigned to serve where the need is greater in their own countries, whereas others receive assignments in foreign countries. Some are asked to return to their home congregations to help and encourage the local brothers and sisters. Those trained are better equipped to render spiritual and organizational help to God's people.—2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

MISSIONARY SERVICE

In order for the Kingdom good news to be preached "to the most distant part of the earth" before the end comes, it has been necessary to send missionaries forth into many lands. (Acts 1:8; Matt. 24:14) This has opened up opportunities for expanded service privileges for thousands of Jehovah's Witnesses, especially those who have already proved themselves to be zealous, whole-souled in their devotion, and effective in Kingdom service. Those invited to share in missionary work are usually given specialized training at the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead.

A person must have good physical health and stamina to qualify for missionary work, since many missionaries are assigned to countries where living conditions are difficult. Besides being exposed to diseases, a missionary may be required to adjust to a different standard of living and an entirely new culture.

If you are already in full-time service and would like to reach out for additional privileges as a missionary, you can learn more about the requirements by attending the meetings for those interested in

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missionary service when these are held at district conventions. Your circuit overseer may also be able to give you good advice. If you qualify, you may be privileged to take up this avenue of service that has contributed so much to the worldwide expansion of true worship.

BETHEL SERVICE

Serving at one of the many Bethel homes around the world is a special privilege. The name Bethel means "House of God," and that designation is certainly appropriate for these centers of theocratic activity. Brothers and sisters in Bethel service do a vital work in connection with producing and distributing literature used by Jehovah's Witnesses worldwide. From Brooklyn Bethel, the Governing Body provides oversight and direction for congregations throughout the earth.

Much of the service performed at Bethel is hard physical work. For this reason, those called into Bethel service are mainly dedicated, baptized brothers who are young in years, in good health, and physically strong. If there is a need in your country and you would like to serve at Bethel, you can learn more about the requirements by attending the special meetings for those interested in Bethel service when these are held at district conventions. Your circuit overseer can also be of assistance in this regard.

CONSTRUCTION VOLUNTEER

The construction of Kingdom Halls and Assembly Halls is a form of sacred service, similar to the work of constructing Solomon's temple. (1 Ki. 8:13-18) Many brothers and sisters show outstanding zeal for Jehovah's organization by volunteering their time and assets to support and have a part in this work.

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Are you in a position to assist in this aspect of sacred service? If you are a baptized publisher and are willing to share in such activity, the Regional Building Committee would very much appreciate your offering to assist. If you are unskilled in building trades or are an unbaptized publisher in good standing in the congregation, you may be able to assist with the building of a Kingdom Hall in your area. Why not let the local elders and circuit overseer know of your availability to help? Some baptized publishers who qualify have even been in a position to volunteer for international construction work on Kingdom Hall and Assembly Hall projects in other countries.

WHAT ARE YOUR SPIRITUAL GOALS?

If you have dedicated your life to Jehovah, your expressed desire is to serve Jehovah forever. But what are your spiritual goals along the way? Having spiritual goals will help you to direct your energies and other resources wisely. (1 Cor. 9:26) You will be able to aim for something worthwhile. Such goals are conducive to spiritual growth and will help you to concentrate on the more important things as you reach out for additional service privileges.—Phil. 1: 10; 1 Tim. 4:15, 16.

In his illustration of the sower, Jesus emphasized that good soil produces varying amounts of fruitage. He said: "As for the one sown upon the fine soil, this is the one hearing the word and getting the sense of it, who really does bear fruit and produces, this one a hundredfold, that one sixty, the other thirty." (Matt. 13:23) If we have got the sense of the word in our heart, should we not exert ourselves so as to produce abundant fruitage to Jehovah's praise? Do we not want to bear much Kingdom fruitage as we zealously

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to assemble in public places. (Acts 19:8, 9) Private homes were also used to teach the Scriptures and to enjoy association with true believers. (Rom. 16:3, 5; Col. 4:15; Philem. 2) Sometimes it was necessary for the early Christians to meet in isolated or secluded places to avoid detection by persecutors. Indeed, faithful servants of God in the past had a sincere desire to assemble in places of worship in order to be "taught by Jehovah."—Isa. 54:13.

Today, too, private homes and public places are used as Christian meeting places. Private homes often serve as locations of Congregation Book Studies or meetings for field service. Those who offer their home for such meetings, as circumstances require, view this as a privilege. Many report that they have benefited spiritually by opening their home in this way.

KINGDOM HALL

The principal meeting place of Jehovah's Witnesses is the Kingdom Hall. In some localities, it is more convenient to rent a hall than to buy or to build one. However, many congregations have chosen to purchase property and build their own Kingdom Hall suited to their needs. Or they have bought and renovated an existing building. In such cases, it is appropriate to have a dedication program. If only minor changes or renovations are made to an existing Kingdom Hall, there is no need to have a dedication program again.

The Kingdom Hall should not be an elaborate building made to impress others. While its design may vary from place to place, its purpose is functional. (Acts 17:24) In accord with local circumstances, it should be a comfortable and convenient place for holding Christian meetings.

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Each Kingdom Hall is financed by the local congregation(s) of Jehovah's Witnesses. No collection plate is passed, nor is solicitation for funds made. A contribution box is provided, and those attending meetings have the privilege of caring for necessary expenses in connection with the use of the hall. They do so willingly, from the heart. (2 Cor. 9:7) Elders are generally familiar with information regarding ownership and operation of the Kingdom Hall as set out in *Our Kingdom Ministry,* memorandums, and letters provided by the branch office.

Those in the congregation should consider it a privilege to support the Kingdom Hall financially and to volunteer their services in keeping it clean, presentable, and in good repair. Both inside and out, the Kingdom Hall should properly represent Jehovah's organization. An elder or a ministerial servant is usually assigned to see that necessary work is cared for in accord with a list of things to be done each week. Generally, cleaning is arranged according to Congregation Book Study groups, with the book study overseer or his assistant taking the lead.

Where more than one congregation meets in a hall, the elders of the congregations involved will set up a Kingdom Hall Operating Committee to see that necessary maintenance is done on the building and property. The bodies of elders will designate a chairman. Working under the direction of the bodies of elders, the operating committee monitors the hall cleaning, making sure that the hall is kept in good repair and that sufficient supplies are on hand. Basically, the committee does the work that would be done by just one elder or ministerial servant if only one congregation met in the hall. Close cooperation among all involved is required.

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When several congregations meet in one Kingdom Hall, any schedule of meeting times that involves rotation is worked out through the elders in a spirit of mutual concern and brotherly love. (Phil. 2:2-4; 1 Pet. 3:8) Whether the rotation is done once a year or once every few years is left up to the local congregations to decide. No one congregation should take it upon itself to make such decisions on behalf of other congregations. The rotation of meeting times should take place during the first week of the calendar year. When the circuit overseer visits one of the congregations in the Kingdom Hall, the other congregation(s) will adjust their meeting times as needed for that week.

The Kingdom Hall may be used for weddings and funerals with the permission of the Congregation Service Committee. These elders carefully consider what is requested and base their decision on direction provided by the branch office.

Those who are granted use of the Kingdom Hall for such purposes are expected to conduct themselves in a way that befits a place of true worship. All involved should be sure that nothing is done that would offend the congregation or bring reproach upon Jehovah and the good name of the congregation. (Phil. 2:14, 15) At times, use of the Kingdom Hall may be granted for other spiritual functions under the direction of the branch office, such as the Kingdom Ministry School and the Pioneer Service School.

The congregation should always treat their meeting places with respect. Dress, grooming, and decorum should bespeak the dignity associated with worshiping Jehovah. (Eccl. 5:1; 1 Tim. 2:9, 10) Applying counsel in this regard is a way of showing appreciation for our Christian meetings.

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At meetings in the Kingdom Hall, qualified brothers are assigned to serve as attendants. They should be alert, have friendly personalities, and use good judgment. Their responsibilities include greeting newcomers and making them feel welcome, helping latecomers to find seats, recording attendance figures, and giving necessary attention to proper heating and ventilation of the hall. Maintaining order during the meetings is essential. It is recommended that children sit with their parents. When a child becomes unruly, an attendant might ask the parent in a kind and tactful way to take the child out, so that the audience will not be unduly distracted. Parents with young children can be encouraged to sit where they will cause the least distraction if it becomes necessary to take the children out to discipline them or to care for other needs.

Since the conduct of children inside the Kingdom Hall as well as outside can reflect favorably or unfavorably on the congregation, attendants should, where necessary, remind parents to give proper supervision, so that children do not run in the building or around the property before and after the meetings. The service performed by attendants obviously contributes much to everyone's enjoyment of the meetings. It is preferable that ministerial servants be used as attendants, particularly those who have had experience handling situations that arise in family life.—1 Tim. 3:12.

KINGDOM HALL CONSTRUCTION

At Kingdom Halls in many lands, there is a contribution box for the Kingdom Hall Fund. This fund is used to help finance the building of new Kingdom Halls and the renovation of those in need of repair.

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gatherings, not with a troubled conscience, but with the satisfaction of having been spiritually refreshed.

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Children of Jehovah's Witnesses benefit from getting a basic secular education. While attending school, they are interested in learning how to read and write well. Other subjects taught in primary school as well as in high school can be of value to young people as they pursue spiritual goals. During their school years, they want to make a diligent effort to 'remember their Creator' by putting spiritual things first.—Eccl. 12:1.

If you are a Christian youth attending school, you need to exercise special care. When worldly youths go unrestrained in their rebellious conduct, you must not side with them. (2 Tim. 3:1, 2) Under these circumstances, there is much you can do to ward off worldly influences. Jehovah has not left any of us exposed to dangers without providing the necessary protection. (Ps. 23:4; 91:1, 2) So take advantage of Jehovah's provisions; this will serve to safeguard you.—Ps. 23:5.

To keep separate from the world while in school, young Witnesses should consider the danger of becoming involved in extracurricular activities. Classmates and teachers may not always understand your decision not to participate. However, pleasing God is what counts. This requires that you exercise your Bible-trained conscience and stand firm in the resolve not to become involved in worldly competition or nationalistic practices, which violate Bible principles. (Gal. 5:19, 26) By listening to the Scriptural counsel of godly parents and benefiting from the good association and instruction of the congregation,

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you young ones will be aided in holding to Jehovah's righteous standards.

SECULAR WORK AND ASSOCIATES

Family heads have a Scriptural obligation to provide for the needs of their own household. (1 Tim. 5:8) Even so, as ministers they recognize that their secular work is secondary to the pursuit of vital Kingdom interests. (Matt. 6:33; Rom. 11:13) By practicing godly devotion and being content with sustenance and covering, they avoid the anxieties and snares of the materialistic way of life so common in the world.—1 Tim. 6:6-10.

Not only family heads but all dedicated Christians who find it necessary to be secularly employed should have Scriptural principles in mind. Making honest provision for ourselves means that we refuse to engage in activities that violate God's law or that are against the law of the land. (Rom. 13: 1, 2; 1 Cor. 6:9, 10) Also, there is a need to be constantly aware of the dangers of bad association. As soldiers of Christ, we refrain from engaging in commercial endeavors that violate Christian standards or jeopardize our spirituality. (2 Tim. 2:4) Neither do we have connections with God's religious enemy, "Babylon the Great."—Rev. 18:2, 4; 2 Cor. 6:14-17.

Observing God's righteous standards will prevent us from taking advantage of our theocratic association in order to promote personal or other business interests. The purpose of our association with others at Christian meetings in the local congregation and when attending circuit assemblies and conventions is exclusively to worship Jehovah, feeding at his spiritual table and enjoying an interchange of encouragement. (Rom. 1:11, 12; Heb. 10:24, 25) Such association should be kept on a spiritual level.

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can usually dispose of minor offenses by forgiving and forgetting.—Matt. 7:12.

But if something has disturbed your relationship with someone in the congregation so much that you feel that another approach is needed, wisdom dictates that you do not delay in resolving the matter, knowing that your relationship with Jehovah is also involved. Jesus counseled his disciples: "If, then, you are bringing your gift to the altar and you there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar, and go away; first make your peace with your brother, and then, when you have come back, offer up your gift." (Matt. 5:23, 24) There may have been a misunderstanding. If so, it should be cleared up by giving priority to Christian unity and keeping the lines of communication open. Good communication among all in the congregation goes a long way toward preventing misunderstandings and resolving problems that arise because of human imperfection.

PROVIDING NEEDED SCRIPTURAL COUNSEL

At times, overseers may find it necessary to counsel someone, trying to readjust his thinking. This is not always easy. To the Christians in Galatia, the apostle Paul wrote: "Brothers, even though a man takes some false step before he is aware of it, you who have spiritual qualifications try to readjust such a man in a spirit of mildness."—Gal. 6:1.

By lovingly caring for the flock, overseers protect the congregation from many spiritual dangers and prevent serious problems from developing. Shepherds of the flock should strive to make their service to the congregation measure up to Jehovah's promise through Isaiah: "Each one must prove to be like

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a hiding place from the wind and a place of concealment from the rainstorm, like streams of water in a waterless country, like the shadow of a heavy crag in an exhausted land."—Isa. 32:2.

RESOLVING CERTAIN SERIOUS WRONGS

Willingness to overlook offenses and to forgive does not mean that we are unconcerned about wrongdoing or that we approve of it. Not all wrongs can be charged to inherited imperfection; nor is it for our brother's good or for the good of the congregation to overlook wrongs that go beyond minor offenses. (Lev. 19:17; Ps. 141:5) The Law covenant recognized degrees of seriousness of sins and transgressions. This is also true in the Christian arrangement.—1 John 5:16, 17.

Jesus outlined some specific procedures for resolving problems involving serious wrongdoing that may arise between fellow Christians. Note the steps that he set out: "If your brother commits a sin, [1] go lay bare his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, [2] take along with you one or two more, in order that at the mouth of two or three witnesses every matter may be established. If he does not listen to them, [3] speak to the congregation. If he does not listen even to the congregation, let him be to you just as a man of the nations and as a tax collector."—Matt. 18:15-17.

The illustration that Jesus subsequently gave, recorded at Matthew 18:23-35, shows that the sins considered at Matthew 18:15-17 are evidently such sins as those involving financial or property matters —failure to make proper payment for something or

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some action involving a measure of fraud—or the damaging of someone's reputation by actual slander.

If you have solid evidence that someone in the congregation has committed such a serious sin against you personally, do not be hasty to turn to the overseers or others, asking them to intervene on your behalf. As Jesus counseled, speak first with the one against whom you have a complaint. Try to resolve the matter between just the two of you without involving anyone else. If he does not respond favorably to your efforts, you may let a little time pass before taking the matter further. Keep in mind that Jesus did not say *'go only once,* and lay bare his fault.' Therefore, if the person does not initially admit the wrong and ask forgiveness, it may be good to consider approaching him again later. If the matter can be straightened out in this way, the one who sinned will certainly appreciate that you have not told others about his sin or marred his good reputation in the congregation. You will have achieved your objective of 'gaining your brother.'

If the one who committed the offense accepts responsibility, seeks forgiveness, and straightens the matter out, there is no need to carry the matter further. This shows that although serious, the offenses here discussed are limited to those that can be settled between the individuals involved. This does not include such offenses as fornication, adultery, homosexuality, blasphemy, apostasy, idolatry, and similar gross sins. (1 Cor. 6:9, 10; Gal. 5:19-21) These sins require more than forgiveness from an offended individual. Since the spiritual and moral cleanness of the congregation may be threatened, such matters should be reported to the elders and handled by them.—1 Cor. 5:6; Jas. 5:14, 15.

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If you are not able to gain your brother by 'laying bare his fault between you and him alone,' then you may do as Jesus said—take along one or two others and speak with your brother again. Those you take with you should also have the objective of gaining your brother. Preferably, they would be witnesses of the alleged wrongdoing, but if there are no eyewitnesses, you may choose to take along brothers to be witnesses to the discussion. They may have experience in the matter at issue and may be able to establish whether what occurred was truly a wrong. Elders chosen as witnesses do not represent the congregation, since the body of elders has not specifically assigned them in the matter.

If you are convinced that your brother has committed a serious sin against you and you have evidence to prove it and the matter has not been resolved after repeated efforts—when you spoke with him alone and when you went to him with one or two others—and you feel that you cannot let it pass, then you should report the matter to the overseers of the congregation. Remember that their goal too is to maintain the peace and cleanness of the congregation. Having approached the elders, you will have taken the matter as far as you can. Leave the problem in their hands, and trust in Jehovah that it will be resolved. Never should you allow the conduct of someone else to stumble you or to rob you of your joy in Jehovah's service.—Ps. 119:165.

If upon investigation it becomes evident to the shepherds of the flock that the brother has indeed committed a serious sin against you and yet has been unwilling to repent and try to make reasonable and appropriate amends, it may become necessary for the overseers to expel the unrepentant wrongdoer.

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In that way they protect the flock and safeguard the cleanness of the congregation.—Matt. 18:17.

MARKING DISORDERLY ONES

In his second letter to the Thessalonians, Paul warned of certain ones who were walking disorderly and who if accorded good standing in the congregation could exert an unhealthy influence. Paul admonished the Thessalonian Christians "to withdraw from every brother walking disorderly and not according to the tradition you received from us." He further clarified that statement by writing: "If anyone is not obedient to our word through this letter, keep this one marked, stop associating with him, that he may become ashamed. And yet do not be considering him as an enemy, but continue admonishing him as a brother."—2 Thess. 3:6, 14, 15.

Occasionally, someone not known to be guilty of practicing a grave sin for which he could be expelled nevertheless displays flagrant disregard for theocratic order. This could include such things as being grossly lazy or critical, being a profitless talker who is a constant 'meddler with what does not concern him.' (2 Thess. 3:11) Or this could include one who is scheming to take material advantage of others or indulging in entertainment that is clearly improper. The disorderly conduct is not so minor that it can be handled by applying Bible counsel and manifesting love; rather, it is serious enough to reflect badly on the congregation and potentially to spread to other Christians.

After giving repeated admonition to such an individual and finding that he persists in disregarding well-established Bible principles, the elders may decide that a talk should be given to the congregation

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providing appropriate counsel concerning such disorderly conduct. Elders will use reasonableness and discernment in determining whether a particular situation is sufficiently serious and disturbing to require a warning talk. This talk will not name the disorderly one. However, those who are aware of the situation described in the talk will take heed and limit their social contacts with such individuals.

The loving concern and firm stand of faithful members of the congregation could indeed move the disorderly one to shame and repentance. When it is clearly evident that the individual has abandoned his disorderly course, it would no longer be necessary to treat him as a marked individual.

HANDLING CASES OF SERIOUS WRONGDOING

After taking the steps outlined at Matthew 18:15, 16, some individual brothers or sisters may report to the elders cases of unresolved serious wrongdoing. (Matt. 18:17) On the other hand, individuals may also approach the elders either to confess their own sin or to report what they know regarding the wrongdoing of others. (Lev. 5:1; Jas. 5:16) Regardless of the manner in which the elders first hear reports of serious wrongdoing on the part of a baptized member of the congregation, an initial investigation will be made by two elders. If it is established that there is substance to the report and that evidence is available showing that a serious sin actually has been committed, the body of elders will assign a judicial committee of at least three elders to handle the matter. Regarding serious wrongdoing by one who is unbaptized, see pages 157-8.

While exercising watchful care of the flock, seeking to protect it from any elements that would be

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spiritually damaging, the elders will also endeavor to use God's Word skillfully to reprove any who have erred and will try to restore them. (Jude 21-23) This is in harmony with instructions given to Timothy by the apostle Paul, who wrote: "I solemnly charge you before God and Christ Jesus, who is destined to judge the living and the dead, . . . reprove, reprimand, exhort, with all long-suffering and art of teaching." (2 Tim. 4:1, 2) Doing so may take much time and effort, but this is part of the hard work of the elders. The congregation appreciates their endeavors and gives them double honor.—1 Tim. 5:17.

In every situation where guilt is established, the primary endeavor of the overseers is to restore the wrongdoer if he is genuinely repentant as indicated, for example, by his producing "works that befit repentance." (Acts 26:20) If he is repentant and they are able to help him, their administering reproof either in private or before onlookers with knowledge of the case serves to discipline him and instill a wholesome fear in any such onlookers. (2 Sam. 12: 13; 1 Tim. 5:20) In all cases of judicial reproof, restrictions are imposed. Thus the wrongdoer may be helped to 'make straight paths for his feet' thereafter. (Heb. 12:13) In due course these restrictions are removed as the individual's spiritual recovery becomes manifest.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF REPROOF

If a judicial committee determines that an individual is repentant but that the matter is likely to become known in the congregation or in the community or if for other reasons the elders believe that the congregation needs to be advised, a simple announcement will be made during the Service Meeting. It should read: "[Name of person] has been re-

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proved." The presiding overseer should approve this announcement.

IF THE DECISION IS TO DISFELLOWSHIP

In some cases the wrongdoer may become hardened in his course of sinful conduct and thus fail to respond to efforts to help him. Fruitage, or works, befitting repentance may not be in evidence, nor may genuine repentance be apparent at the time of the judicial hearing. What then? In such cases, it is necessary to expel the unrepentant wrongdoer from the congregation, thus denying him fellowship with Jehovah's clean congregation. This is done to remove the bad influence of the wrongdoer from the congregation, thereby safeguarding the moral and spiritual cleanness of the congregation and protecting its good name. (Deut. 21:20, 21; 22:23, 24) When the apostle Paul became aware of the shameful conduct of a member of the congregation in Corinth, he admonished the elders to "hand such a man over to Satan . . . in order that the spirit [of the congregation] may be saved." (1 Cor. 5:5, 11-13) Paul also reported the disfellowshipping of others who had rebelled against the truth in the first century.—1 Tim. 1:20.

When a judicial committee concludes that an unrepentant wrongdoer should be disfellowshipped, it should let him know of the decision, clearly stating the Scriptural reason(s) for the disfellowshipping. When informing the wrongdoer of their decision, the judicial committee should tell him that if he believes that a serious error in judgment has been made and he wishes to appeal the decision, he may do so by writing a letter clearly stating the reasons for his appeal. He will be allowed seven days for this, from the time he was notified of the committee's decision. If

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such written appeal is received, the body of elders should contact the circuit overseer, who will designate elders to serve on an appeal committee to rehear the case. The elders selected to care for this weighty responsibility should be men who are experienced and qualified. Every effort should be made to conduct the appeal hearing within one week after the written appeal is received. If there is an appeal, announcement of the disfellowshipping will be held in abeyance. In the meantime, the accused person will be restricted from commenting and praying at meetings or from special privileges of service.

An appeal is granted as a kindness to the accused and allows him a further hearing of his concerns. Thus, if he deliberately fails to appear at the appeal hearing, the disfellowshipping should be announced after reasonable efforts have been made to contact him.

If the wrongdoer does not wish to appeal, the judicial committee should explain to him the need for repentance and what steps he can take toward being reinstated in due time. This would be both helpful and kind and should be done in the hope that he will change his ways and in time qualify to return to Jehovah's organization.—2 Cor. 2:6, 7.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF DISFELLOWSHIPPING

When it is necessary to disfellowship an unrepentant wrongdoer from the congregation, a brief announcement is made, simply stating: "[Name of person] is no longer one of Jehovah's Witnesses." There is no need to elaborate. This will alert faithful members of the congregation to stop associating with that person. (1 Cor. 5:11) The presiding overseer should approve this announcement.

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DISASSOCIATION

The term "disassociation" applies to the action taken by a person who, although a baptized member of the congregation, deliberately repudiates his Christian standing, rejecting the congregation by his actions or by stating that he no longer wants to be recognized as or known as one of Jehovah's Witnesses. Because he is disassociated, his situation before Jehovah is far different from that of an inactive Christian, one who no longer shares in the field ministry. An inactive person may have failed to study God's Word regularly, or because of experiencing personal problems or persecution, he may have lost his zeal for serving Jehovah. The elders as well as other concerned members of the congregation will continue rendering appropriate spiritual assistance to an inactive brother. (Rom. 15:1; 1 Thess. 5:14; Heb. 12:12) However, the person who disassociates himself by repudiating the faith and deliberately abandoning Jehovah's worship is viewed in the same way as one who is disfellowshipped. A brief announcement is made to inform the congregation, stating: "[Name of person] is no longer one of Jehovah's Witnesses."

Concerning those who renounced their Christian faith in his day, the apostle John wrote: "They went out from us, but they were not of our sort; for if they had been of our sort, they would have remained with us." (1 John 2:19) For example, a person might renounce his place in the Christian congregation by his actions, such as by becoming part of a secular organization that has objectives contrary to the Bible and, hence, is under judgment by Jehovah God. (Isa. 2:4; Rev. 19:17-21) If a person who is a Christian chooses to join those who are disapproved by God, a

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brief announcement is made to the congregation, stating: "[Name of person] is no longer one of Jehovah's Witnesses." Such a person is treated in the same way as a disfellowshipped person. The presiding overseer should approve this announcement.

REINSTATEMENT

A disfellowshipped person may be reinstated when he gives clear evidence of repentance, demonstrating over a reasonable period of time that he has abandoned his sinful course and is desirous of having a good relationship with Jehovah and His organization. The elders are careful to allow sufficient time, perhaps many months, a year, or even longer, for the disfellowshipped person to prove that his repentance is genuine. When the body of elders receives a written plea for reinstatement, the judicial committee that disfellowshipped the person should, if possible, be the committee that speaks with the individual. The committee will evaluate the evidence of works of godly repentance on his part and decide whether to reinstate him at that time or not.

If the person requesting reinstatement was disfellowshipped by another congregation, a local judicial committee may meet with the person and consider the plea. Thereafter, the local judicial committee will communicate with the body of elders of the congregation that disfellowshipped the individual, giving them its recommendation. The involved committees will work together in unity to ensure that all the facts are gathered and a just decision is made. However, the decision to reinstate is made by the original judicial committee of the congregation that took the disfellowshipping action. If some members of the original committee are no longer in the congregation

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or qualified to serve, other elders from the original congregation can be chosen to replace them.

When the judicial committee is convinced that the disfellowshipped person is genuinely repentant and should be reinstated, an announcement of the reinstatement is made in the congregation where the individual was disfellowshipped. If the person is now in another congregation, the announcement will be made there as well. It should simply state: "[Name of person] is reinstated as one of Jehovah's Witnesses."

WHEN UNBAPTIZED PUBLISHERS ARE WRONGDOERS

What of unbaptized publishers who become involved in serious wrongdoing? Since they are not baptized members of the congregation, they cannot be formally disfellowshipped. However, they may not fully understand the Bible's standards, and kind counsel may help them to make straight paths for their feet.

If an unbaptized wrongdoer is unrepentant after two elders have met with him and have tried to help him, then it is necessary to inform the congregation. A brief announcement is made, stating: "[Name of person] is no longer recognized as an unbaptized publisher." The congregation will then view the wrongdoer as a person of the world. Although the offender is not disfellowshipped, Christians exercise caution with regard to any association with him. (1 Cor. 15:33) No field service reports would be accepted from him.

In time, an unbaptized person (adult or minor) who was removed as a publisher may wish to renew his association with the congregation and become a publisher again. In that situation, two elders would meet with him and ascertain his spiritual progress. If he

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has a good attitude, a Bible study may be held with him. If he progresses spiritually and eventually qualifies, a brief announcement can be made, stating: "[Name of person] is again recognized as an unbaptized publisher."

CASES INVOLVING MINOR BAPTIZED CHILDREN

Serious wrongdoing on the part of minor children who are baptized should be reported to the elders. When the elders handle cases of serious sins involving a minor, it is preferable that the baptized parents of the young person be present and cooperate with the judicial committee, not attempting to shield the erring child from necessary disciplinary action. Just as in dealing with adult offenders, the judicial committee endeavors to reprove and restore the wrongdoer. However, if the young person is unrepentant, disfellowshipping action is taken.

JEHOVAH BLESSES UNITED, CLEAN WORSHIP

All who are associated with the congregation of God today can certainly rejoice in the rich spiritual estate that Jehovah has given to his people. Our spiritual pastures have indeed been made lush, and we have been provided with an abundance of refreshing waters of truth. We have experienced Jehovah's protective care through his theocratic arrangement under the headship of Christ. (Ps., 23; Isa. 32:1, 2) Being in the spiritual paradise in these troublesome last days has given us a feeling of security.

By maintaining fine conduct and Christian unity as ministers of God's good news, we will continue to let the light of Kingdom truth shine forth. (Matt. 5:16) With Jehovah's blessing, we will have the joy of seeing many more people come to know Jehovah and serve with us in doing God's will.

CHAPTER 15

BENEFITING FROM THEOCRATIC SUBJECTION

BEING in subjection to God, the Universal Sovereign, is essential if we are to be organized to do Jehovah's will. Our recognizing his Son's headship over the Christian congregation is also necessary. And it is important that we observe the headship principle in other areas of life. Such theocratic subjection benefits everyone concerned.

The idea of subjection to constituted authority was introduced to mankind in the garden of Eden. It is embodied in God's commands found at Genesis 1:28 and 2:16, 17. Lower creatures were to be in subjection to humans, and Adam and Eve were to submit to God's will and authority. Obedience to this divine authority would result in peace and good order. The headship principle is later highlighted at 1 Corinthians 11:3. The apostle Paul wrote: "I want you to know that the head of every man is the Christ; in turn the head of a woman is the man; in turn the head of the Christ is God." So this indicates that other than Jehovah, everyone is subject to headship in this overall arrangement.

Most people today do not recognize or observe the headship principle. Why? The trouble started in Eden when mankind's parents deliberately chose to take themselves out from under God's sovereign headship. (Gen. 3:4, 5) However, they did not attain to greater freedom. Instead, they became subject to a wicked spirit creature, Satan the Devil. The first rebellion alienated mankind from God. (Col. 1:21) As a result, today the majority of mankind remain in the power of the wicked one.—1 John 5:19.

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By learning the truth of God's Word and acting upon it, we have come out from under Satan's influence. As dedicated, baptized Witnesses, do we not accept Jehovah as the Sovereign of our life? Do we not agree with loyal King David, who acknowledged Jehovah as "head over all"? (1 Chron. 29:11) Certainly we do! We humbly confess: "Jehovah is God. It is he that has made us, and not we ourselves. We are his people and the sheep of his pasturage." (Ps. 100:3) We recognize Jehovah's greatness and his worthiness of total submission, since he created all things. (Rev. 4:11) As ministers of the true God, we follow Jesus Christ, who set the perfect example of subjection to God.

What did Jesus learn by the things he suffered while on earth? Hebrews 5:8 answers: "Although he was a Son, he learned obedience from the things he suffered." Yes, Jesus remained in loyal subjection to his heavenly Father even under adversity. Furthermore, Jesus did not do a single thing of his own initiative; he did not speak of his own originality, nor did he seek his own glory. (John 5:19, 30; 6:38; 7:16-18) During his ministry, he found delight in doing his Father's will, even though this course brought opposition and persecution. (John 15:20) Nonetheless, Jesus showed subjection to God by 'humbling himself' even to the point of "death on a torture stake." The outcome of his complete subjection to Jehovah was rewarding in many ways, resulting in everlasting salvation for mankind, exaltation for himself, and glory to his Father.—Phil. 2:5-11; Heb. 5:9.

AREAS OF THEOCRATIC SUBJECTION

Because Jehovah is the Universal Sovereign, we owe him our total subjection. (Isa. 33:22) Briefly re-

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flecting on our everyday life as Jehovah's dedicated worshipers should make this evident. By putting God first in our life, doing his will, we are directed in the right way. (Ps. 16:8) We escape many of the anxieties and frustrations that overtake those who refuse to submit to Jehovah's sovereignty. Our Adversary, the Devil, constantly seeks to ensnare and devour us. We will experience deliverance from that wicked one provided we take a stand against him and humble ourselves before Jehovah in willing subjection. —Matt. 6:10, 13; 1 Pet. 5:6-9.

The benefits of subjecting ourselves to God extend to our relationships with others, which are measurably improved. We are spared problems that beset those who reflect this world's spirit of independence. Thanks to Jehovah God, we enjoy a happy marriage and family life as well as better relationships with fellow workers and employers. We conduct ourselves lawfully and with a good conscience toward governmental authorities. We also have the best associates, our Christian brothers.

Within the Christian congregation, we recognize Christ's headship and the authority he has given to the faithful and discreet slave class. This affects our attitude and conduct toward one another. Godly subjection in the congregation will move us to be obedient to God's Word in all aspects of our worship. This includes our ministry, meeting attendance and participation, relationship with the elders, and cooperation with organizational arrangements.—Matt. 24:45-47; 28:19, 20; Heb. 10:24, 25; 13:7, 17.

Our subjection to God allows us to enjoy the peaceful security of theocratic order. Such theocratic order is not oppressive. (1 John 5:3) Jehovah's divine

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qualities are reflected in the harmonious society of his godly subjects. (1 Cor. 14:33, 40) Our own observations and our experience with Jehovah's organization have led us to express sentiments similar to those of God's servant David. After noting the contrast between Jehovah's servants and the wicked, who boast in their own power and riches, David joyfully exclaimed: "Happy is the people whose God is Jehovah!" —Ps. 144:15.

Within marriage and the family structure, "the head of a woman is the man." At the same time, men are to be in subjection to Christ, while the Head of Christ is God. (1 Cor. 11:3) Wives are to be in subjection to their husbands, and children, to their parents. (Eph. 5:22-24; 6:1) Peace results when each family member follows the headship principle.

This requires that husbands exercise headship in a loving way, imitating Christ. (Eph. 5:25-29) When they do not abuse or abdicate their headship, it is a delight for the wife and the children to be in subjection. The wife's role is that of a helper, or complement. (Gen. 2:18) By patiently supporting and respecting her husband, she gains his favor and brings praise to God. (1 Pet. 3:1-4) When husbands and wives follow the Bible's counsel on headship, they set an example for their children in showing subjection to God.

Our being in subjection to God also affects how we view "the superior authorities," which have been "placed in their relative positions by God." (Rom. 13:1-7) As law-abiding citizens, Christians pay taxes; they pay back "Caesar's things to Caesar, but God's things to God." (Matt. 22:21) Being submissive and obedient to the duly constituted authorities in every-

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thing that is not in conflict with Jehovah's righteous law, we are able to direct our efforts, applying our energies to the important work of preaching the good news of God's established Kingdom.—Mark 13:10; Acts 5:29.

By adhering to Bible principles, Christians seek to improve their employer-employee relationships. Even though at times this may be difficult, servants of God strive to be at peace with all men. They serve honestly and reliably at their secular jobs. (Rom. 12: 18; 1 Pet. 2:18) Thus, they do not become involved in controversies or violate their Bible-trained conscience.

Theocratic subjection affects all aspects of life. With eyes of faith, we see the day when all mankind will be subject to Jehovah God. (1 Cor. 15:27, 28) How blessed and favored those who joyfully acknowledge Jehovah's sovereignty will be, as they remain in subjection to him for all eternity!

CHAPTER 16

A UNITED BROTHERHOOD

AFTER dealing with one man, Abraham, and his descendants the Israelites exclusively for some 2,000 years, Jehovah God "turned his attention to the nations to take out of them a people for his name." (Acts 15:14) People for Jehovah's name would be his witnesses, gathered in unity of thought and action regardless of their physical location on earth. This uniting of a people for God's name would result from the fulfillment of the commission that Jesus gave to his followers. He said: "Go therefore and make

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feel free to ask for assistance from the one who is studying the Bible with you or from the elders.

In your discussions with the elders, do not feel that you have to give lengthy or complicated answers to the questions. A simple, direct answer in your own words will usually suffice. For many of the questions, it is also beneficial to refer to one or two Bible texts that show the Scriptural basis for your answer.

If you have not yet gained sufficient knowledge of basic Bible teachings, the elders will arrange for you to receive assistance so that you will be able to express in your own words a proper understanding of the Scriptures and qualify to be baptized at a later time.

[Note to congregation elders: Instructions for handling discussions with baptism candidates appear on pages 217-18.]

QUESTIONS FOR THOSE DESIRING TO BE BAPTIZED

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PART I
ELEMENTARY BIBLE TEACHINGS

Unless you were raised by Christian parents, your study of the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses has acquainted you with the pattern of truth, and very likely, you find that it is quite different from what you formerly believed. (2 Tim. 1:13) What you have learned has brought you great spiritual refreshment and has no doubt given you the hope of future life and blessings on a paradise earth under God's Kingdom. Your faith in God's Word has been strengthened, and through association with the Christian congregation, you have already experienced many blessings. You have come to appreciate how Jehovah is dealing with his people today.—Zech. 8:23.

Whether you were raised in a Christian household or not, as you prepare for water baptism in symbol of your personal dedication to Jehovah God, you will benefit from a review of elementary Bible teachings, conducted by the congregation elders. (Heb. 6:1-3) May Jehovah continue to bless all your endeavors to take in knowledge of him, and may he grant you the promised reward.—John 17:3.

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12. What Christian quality should outstandingly characterize our relationship with our spiritual brothers and sisters?

I am giving you a new commandment, that you love one another; just as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves.—John 13:34, 35.

Clothe yourselves with love, for it is a perfect bond of union.—Col. 3:14.

Additional reference: 1 Cor. 13:4-7.

13. How should Christians view the shortcomings of fellow believers?

Continue putting up with one another and forgiving one another freely if anyone has a cause for complaint against another. Even as Jehovah freely forgave you, so do you also.—Col. 3:13.

Above all things, have intense love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.—1 Pet. 4:8.

Additional references: Prov. 17:9; 19:11; Matt. 7:1-5.

14. If your brother's sin against you is of a serious nature, what should you do?

If your brother commits a sin, go lay bare his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take along with you one or two more, in order that at the mouth of two or three witnesses every matter may be established. If he does not listen to them, speak to the congregation. If he does not listen even to the congregation, let him be to you just as a man of the nations and as a tax collector.—Matt. 18:15-17.

15. What is the fruitage of the spirit, and how will cultivating it help us to maintain a fine relationship with others?

The fruitage of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, mildness, self-control.—Gal. 5:22, 23.

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37. What birthday celebrations are mentioned in the Bible? How does this affect your view of birthday celebrations?

When Herod's birthday was being celebrated the daughter of Herodias danced at it and pleased Herod so much that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she asked. Then she, under her mother's coaching, said: "Give me here upon a platter the head of John the Baptist." Grieved though he was, the king out of regard for his oaths and for those reclining with him commanded it to be given; and he sent and had John beheaded in the prison. And his head was brought on a platter and given to the maiden, and she brought it to her mother.—Matt. 14:6-11.

Additional references: Gen. 40:20-22; Eccl. 7:1, 8.

PART III
JEHOVAH'S ARRANGEMENT OF THINGS

Through your study of the Bible, you have learned that Jehovah has a purpose to bring all things back into subjection to himself, just as they were in the beginning. (1 Cor. 15:24-28; Eph. 1:8-10) Having reached this point in your study, you are no doubt eager to find your place in Jehovah's arrangement and to be submissive to his rule. The following questions and Scripture references will help you examine your own understanding of submission to Jehovah's arrangements regarding congregation organization, Christian family life, and the political elements of this system of things. You will be able to examine your appreciation for Jehovah's arrangement for educating and building up his people spiritually. That includes your attending and participating in congregation meetings to the extent of your circumstances and ability.

Additionally, this section will focus on the importance of having a regular share in the Kingdom-preaching work, helping others to come to know Jehovah and what he is doing for mankind. (Matt. 24:14; 28:19, 20) Finally, it will impress upon your mind the seriousness of dedicating yourself to Jehovah God before submitting to water baptism. You can be certain that Jehovah appreciates your sincere response to his undeserved kindness expressed in your behalf.

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1. In God's arrangement of things, who is the head of the married woman?

You wives, be in subjection to your husbands, as it is becoming in the Lord.—Col. 3:18.

Let wives be in subjection to their husbands as to the Lord, because a husband is head of his wife as the Christ also is head of the congregation, he being a savior of this body.—Eph. 5:22, 23.

2. How should a husband exercise headship over his wife?

Husbands ought to be loving their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself, for no man ever hated his own flesh; but he feeds and cherishes it, as the Christ also does the congregation.—Eph. 5:28, 29.

You husbands, keep on loving your wives and do not be bitterly angry with them.—Col. 3:19.

3. Is the wife whose husband is not a believer freed from his headship?

You wives, be in subjection to your own husbands, in order that, if any are not obedient to the word, they may be won without a word through the conduct of their wives, because of having been eyewitnesses of your chaste conduct together with deep respect.—1 Pet. 3:1, 2.

4. Who is primarily responsible before God for the training and disciplining of children?

Fathers, do not be irritating your children, but go on bringing them up in the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah.—Eph. 6:4.

5. What responsibility do children have in the family arrangement?

Children, be obedient to your parents in union with the Lord, for this is righteous: "Honor your father and your mother"; which is the first command with a promise: "That it may go well with you and you may endure a long time on the earth."—Eph. 6:1-3.

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You children, be obedient to your parents in everything, for this is well-pleasing in the Lord.—Col. 3:20.

6. What is the proper attitude for Christians to maintain toward worldly rulers?

Let every soul be in subjection to the superior authorities, for there is no authority except by God; the existing authorities stand placed in their relative positions by God. —Rom. 13:1.

Continue reminding them to be in subjection and be obedient to governments and authorities as rulers.—Titus 3:1.

7. Must a Christian pay all taxes and assessments demanded by law?

Render to all their dues, to him who calls for the tax, the tax; to him who calls for the tribute, the tribute; to him who calls for fear, such fear; to him who calls for honor, such honor.—Rom. 13:7.

Additional reference: Luke 20:21-25.

8. Are there any circumstances under which a Christian would refuse to obey worldly rulers?

With that they called them and charged them, nowhere to make any utterance or to teach upon the basis of the name of Jesus. But in reply Peter and John said to them: "Whether it is righteous in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, judge for yourselves. But as for us, we cannot stop speaking about the things we have seen and heard."—Acts 4:18-20.

In answer Peter and the other apostles said: "We must obey God as ruler rather than men."—Acts 5:29.

9. Should Christians comply with legal requirements that do not conflict with God's laws, such as registering marriages and births, responding to census inquiries, or obtaining required licenses and permits?

In those days a decree went forth . . . for all the inhabited earth to be registered . . . Of course, Joseph also went up

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from Galilee . . . to get registered with Mary, who had been given him in marriage.—Luke 2:1-5.

Continue reminding them to be in subjection and be obedient to governments and authorities as rulers.—Titus 3:1.

10. What is the headship arrangement in the Christian congregation?

I want you to know that the head of every man is the Christ; in turn the head of a woman is the man; in turn the head of the Christ is God.—1 Cor. 11:3.

11. Who is the Head of the Christian congregation?

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; because by means of him all other things were created in the heavens and upon the earth, the things visible and the things invisible, no matter whether they are thrones or lordships or governments or authorities. All other things have been created through him and for him. Also, he is before all other things and by means of him all other things were made to exist, and he is the head of the body, the congregation.—Col. 1:15-18.

12. How can you identify "the faithful and discreet slave" today?

Who really is the faithful and discreet slave whom his master appointed over his domestics, to give them their food at the proper time? Happy is that slave if his master on arriving finds him doing so. Truly I say to you, He will appoint him over all his belongings.—Matt. 24:45-47.

13. What is the Governing Body of the Christian congregation?

Certain men came down from Judea and began to teach the brothers: "Unless you get circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved." But when there had occurred no little dissension and disputing by Paul and Barnabas with them, they arranged for Paul and Barnabas and some others of them to go up to the apostles and older men in Jerusalem regarding this dispute.—Acts 15:1, 2.

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As they traveled on through the cities they would deliver to those there for observance the decrees that had been decided upon by the apostles and older men who were in Jerusalem. Therefore, indeed, the congregations continued to be made firm in the faith and to increase in number from day to day.—Acts 16:4, 5.

14. By what visible means is Christ's headship represented in the congregation?

Pay attention to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the holy spirit has appointed you overseers, to shepherd the congregation of God, which he purchased with the blood of his own Son.—Acts 20:28.

To the older men among you I give this exhortation . . . Shepherd the flock of God in your care, not under compulsion, but willingly; neither for love of dishonest gain, but eagerly; neither as lording it over those who are God's inheritance, but becoming examples to the flock.—1 Pet. 5:1-3.

15. How do members of the congregation demonstrate submission to the headship of Christ in the congregation?

Remember those who are taking the lead among you, who have spoken the word of God to you, and as you contemplate how their conduct turns out imitate their faith. —Heb. 13:7.

Be obedient to those who are taking the lead among you and be submissive, for they are keeping watch over your souls as those who will render an account; that they may do this with joy and not with sighing, for this would be damaging to you.—Heb. 13:17.

16. Whose ideas are recorded in the Bible? Why should you regularly study God's Word?

All Scripture is inspired of God and beneficial for teaching, for reproving, for setting things straight, for disciplining in righteousness, that the man of God may be fully competent, completely equipped for every good work. —2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

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"PAY ATTENTION TO YOURSELVES AND TO ALL THE FLOCK"

"PAY ATTENTION TO YOURSELVES AND TO ALL THE FLOCK"

ACTS 20:28

Kingdom Ministry School Textbook

A copy of this textbook is issued to each appointed elder, and he may retain it as long as he continues to serve as an elder in any congregation. At such time as he should cease to serve in that capacity, his copy of the book must be handed over to the Congregation Service Committee, since this publication is congregation property. No copies are to be made of any part of this publication.

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The Purpose of the Textbook

The revised edition of *"Pay Attention to Yourselves and to All the Flock"* is presented as a practical and convenient handbook for congregation elders and traveling overseers to use in caring for responsibilities as shepherds of the flock of God.—Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:2.

As appointed elders and Christian overseers, you have been given the responsibility to ensure that the flock is well fed. (Compare John 21:15-17.) Among other things, this calls for teaching the congregation as a whole through instructive meetings. It also involves appropriate teaching on a personal basis to enlighten, give counsel, exhort, and reprove. Improving your ability as teachers is given special consideration in this publication.

Another important part of an overseer's work involves taking the lead in field service. Therefore, emphasis is placed on your regular participation in the public ministry and on how you can help others to have a meaningful share.

With so many outside pressures bearing on the brothers, you are often faced with matters involving counsel and judgment. How can you be sure that you are viewing matters from Jehovah's standpoint? When judging cases that come to your attention, how can you be balanced in showing loving concern for the brothers involved while making sure that Jehovah's righteousness is upheld? This publication gives these matters careful consideration.

Material from the three original segments of *"Pay Attention to Yourselves and to All the Flock,"* published in 1977, 1979, and 1981, has been combined and updated. The outline presentation of the information has been retained. This facilitates locating particular points that you may need to find quickly. Thus the book will continue to serve as a handbook to be used in connection with elders' meetings, judicial matters, and the periodically conducted Kingdom Ministry School.

The wide margins and other blank spaces and pages have been provided so that you can make appropriate notes for your personal use and can add references as related information is published or otherwise brought to your attention. If it should become necessary to make substantial revisions at a future date, the Society will issue revised information on individual pages that can be conveniently inserted, thus keeping the information in the book up-to-date.

We are confident that you greatly appreciate your privilege of serving Jehovah's people as undershepherds of God's flock. Your life is filled with many responsibilities; you are also subject to many pressures. On the other hand, you receive many blessings and much joy. May you find the information in this handbook to be helpful in caring for your assigned duties. And may your faithful service continue to bring refreshment and strength to the flock of God, your brothers.—Isa. 32:2.

Train all the brothers and sisters to take the initiative in approaching new ones and getting acquainted with them.

So that you may encourage and help others, be sure to arrive at the meetings early and stay for a while after the program.

You can associate with new ones at other times also, perhaps visiting with them in their home or yours.

Such personal interest lets them see that genuine love exists among Jehovah's people. (John 13:35)

It also fills the void created when they cut off former associations and worldly entertainment.

Young members of the congregation need to be strengthened to resist "the desires incidental to youth." (2 Tim. 2:22)

Parents have the primary responsibility to care for the needs of their children. (Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21)

However, the young ones are a part of the congregation, and elders have a responsibility toward them also and should show genuine interest in them.

Why is knowing the full names of all the youth in your congregation helpful?

Many youths do not have a father or a mother in the truth, and some have no relatives in the truth.

They deserve the consideration that is to be shown to "the fatherless boy." (Job 29:12; Jas. 1:27)

EXPERIENCE: One teenager was given attention by an elder. He would pick the boy up every time he was going to help with the building of the Kingdom Hall. Each day after they finished their work on the hall, they would go to get some refreshments and take time to converse. The boy grew up and became a circuit overseer. He remembered this elder's concern as a major factor in his spiritual development.

Take note of ways that you and others can assist and encourage young ones in the congregation, and continually assure them of your interest.

Seek them out to engage them in conversation at the Kingdom Hall and elsewhere.

Encourage them to express themselves.

Eagerly listen to their viewpoints and their problems; be slow to criticize, quick to commend.

Help young ones build confidence in Jehovah, and help them to esteem highly the privilege of being Jehovah's Witnesses. (*w*85 8/15 pp. 11-21)

Develop helpful interest in their schooling.

Show a keen concern for youth who have difficulty adjusting to adulthood.

Make them feel wanted and needed in the congregation.

Help them to see how they can be helpful and encouraging to others by their presence and participation at the meetings and in the field service.

Use ingenuity in devising assignments for exemplary ones, such as using them to assist with roving microphones, tidy up the restrooms after each meeting, and straighten up the chairs.

List some responsibilities appropriate to your congregation.

Suggest attainable goals for them, such as weekly participation in field service or commenting at every meeting.

Talk with them about pioneer work, Bethel and missionary service, auxiliary pioneering, and so forth.

Work with them in the field service.

Help them to make progress in various features of this activity, such as in filling out house-to-house record slips, organizing their book bags, and learning how to make return visits and start Bible studies.

Examine what is being done to encourage and assist young ones in your congregation.

***Pioneers* need encouragement and help in many ways.**

Make a periodic check to see what encouragement pioneers need, and assist them in practical ways.

Are meetings for field service begun and ended on time?

How the Elders Work Together as a Body

"In the multitude of counselors there is accomplishment," states Proverbs 15:22. A congregation having a body of older men who work closely together is indeed blessed. But what is the key to their being able to work in unity? Primarily, it is their recognizing Jesus Christ as Head of the Christian congregation.

When elders meet together, Christ's headship should dominate. (1 Cor. 11:3) Their meetings should be well arranged. (1 Cor. 14:40) They should try to reach decisions on matters discussed. Definite arrangements should be made for someone to follow through on the decisions that are made. How can the presiding overseer conduct meaningful elders' meetings? What must each individual elder do to make a positive contribution to these meetings? But first, what is involved in recognizing Christ's headship, and how does this unite a body of elders?

Recognizing the Headship of Christ Unites the Body

Although Jehovah God is the Shepherd and Overseer of our souls, he has appointed Jesus Christ as Head of the Christian congregation. (Eph. 1:22, 23; 1 Pet. 2:25)

By genuinely accepting Jesus Christ as Head of the Christian congregation, elders will be motivated to do the following:

Let the Bible be the guide in making decisions. (John 7:16, 17)

Respect information and direction coming from agencies used by "the faithful and discreet slave." (Matt. 24:45-47)

Treat the congregation as God's inheritance, not lording it over them. (1 Pet. 5:1-3)

Avoid imposing personal viewpoints, opinions, or arbitrary rules on the congregation or the body of elders.

Deal in a kind and loving manner regarding each individual in the congregation. (Matt. 11:28-30; John 21: 15-17)

Listen carefully to the expressions of fellow elders. (Matt. 18:20; Rom. 12:10b)

Pray when a discussion among elders seems to falter.

(For additional information, see *The Watchtower,* December 1, 1986, pages 10-20.)

Jesus Christ controls all bodies of elders. At Revelation 1:20 they are likened to seven stars upon his right hand. (*re* pp. 28-9)

Jesus, by means of God's holy spirit, can influence *any* elder on the body to provide the Bible-based suggestions needed for any given situation. (Matt. 18:20; Acts 15: 13-17)

By accepting this fact, elders will be helped to work together as a body.

Each elder should listen carefully to the Scriptural suggestions of the other elders.

We should not make an independent decision for the congregation if a matter is one on which we should consult other elders.

What Enables Elders to Display the Spirit of Cooperation

Jehovah, through his Son, unifies the congregation for harmonious cooperation. (Eph. 4:16; compare Romans 8:28.)

Elders are really cooperating with Jehovah when they cooperate as a body for the good of the congregation. (Col. 2:19; 1 Cor. 12)

Cooperation is a result of displaying the fruitage of the spirit, which every elder should cultivate in his personal life, both publicly and privately. (Gal. 5:22, 23)

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In the following ways, elders show that they are cooperating together and striving to maintain the unity referred to at Psalm 133:1:

Keeping communication among elders open and free, especially if there are differences in background.

Sharing pertinent information with fellow elders.

Not shielding elders or their relatives from needed counsel.

Seeking assistance and suggestions from elders who have much experience.

Not campaigning among fellow elders to undermine decisions of the body that do not meet personal preference.

Accepting fellow elders' excelling qualities, as well as their limited abilities.

Not finding fault with fellow elders as they are learning new duties.

Making sure that reports and records that other elders need to refer to are available and up-to-date.

Promptly following through to completion on assignments given by the body.

It should be possible for bodies of elders to be *unanimous* in most of their decisions. (Acts 15:25)

If *Bible principles* are involved, the elders should make their decision in harmony with these.

When there is counsel from the faithful and discreet slave on the matter, either by letter or from the Society's publications, the elders will want to take that counsel to heart. (Matt. 24:45)

Other matters may generally be decided by the majority of the elders on the basis of their sound judgment and of their concern for providing the best guidance and direction for the congregation.

Even the majority should not insist on a personal viewpoint if such does not take into consideration

Scriptural principles and the peace, unity, and spiritual welfare of all members of the congregation.

At Romans 12:10, Paul exhorts: "In showing honor to one another take the lead."

If elders honor one another, they will not insist that their personal viewpoints be adopted when matters are discussed.

Individual elders will cooperate closely with what the *body of elders as a whole* determines is in the best interests of the congregation.

If the majority decide that a matter should be handled in a certain way, then the minority should give willing support to such a decision.

However, if those in the minority have a Bible reference and comments in print on the matter from the faithful and discreet slave, the majority should recognize such corrective information so that a Bible-based decision can be reached.

If in the opinion of the minority a Bible-based decision is still not reached, the minority should continue to cooperate with the rest of the body and bring the matter to the attention of the circuit overseer during his regular visit.

The congregation will cooperate if they sense that all the elders base their decisions on God's Word. (2 Tim. 3: 16, 17)

Working Together as a Body of Elders

Working together as a body does not mean that all share in performing each task or making each decision.

Individual members of the human body carry out certain functions without direct participation by other body members. (1 Cor. 12:12-31)

Honoring one another, elders will allow the presiding overseer and other assigned elders the initiative to make decisions that will enable them to carry out their respective responsibilities.

Consider the following examples of decisions that individual elders may make without always consulting with other elders.

Weekly announcements made to the congregation. Items posted on the information board. Service Meeting assignments. (presiding overseer)

Organization of congregation files. General letters of introduction and transfer of records when publishers move. (secretary)

Magazine order changes. (service overseer)

Good communication **and** ***close cooperation*** **are necessary among the elders themselves as well as in their relationship with the ministerial servants.**

Be ready to offer helpful suggestions and to listen to thoughtful recommendations.

Genuinely honoring one another sets a fine example and serves as a good influence on the congregation.

It promotes peace and encourages all to work with greater enthusiasm and happiness.

Discouragement will be diminished. (Prov. 24:10)

When Elders' Meetings May Be Held

Meetings are held each year in conjunction with visits of the circuit overseer.

Three months after each visit of the circuit overseer, a meeting can be scheduled. (*om* p. 42)

Other meetings should be arranged at any time that circumstances necessitate.

Keep additional meetings limited to their purposed objectives.

If elders do not become bogged down with unnecessary meetings, they will have more time for their family, for field service activities, and for shepherding the congregation. (Matt. 24:14; 1 Tim. 3:4; 1 Pet. 5:2)

How the Presiding Overseer Can Prepare for Elders' Meetings

Romans 12:8 says, "He that presides, let him do it in real earnest."

The presiding overseer *compiles an agenda* of matters that need discussion by the whole body of elders.

He contacts the other elders individually beforehand to determine what matters they feel need to be added to the agenda and discussed.

If practical, in harmony with Proverbs 21:5, he gives a copy of the agenda to each elder far enough in advance of the meeting to allow him to give the points due thought. (1 Cor. 14:40)

In some cases the elder who recommended an item for the agenda may be asked to take the lead in presenting it for discussion.

Letting the brother know ahead of time will give him opportunity to prepare a clear presentation of the facts.

Diligent preparation will keep the length of elders' meetings to a minimum, allowing more time for other essentials.

How You Can Prepare for Elders' Meetings

When you receive the agenda prepared by the presiding overseer, you should give careful and prayerful thought to each point itemized.

Listed below are some questions that each elder may want to ponder in connection with major items on the agenda:

How did this situation come about?

What Scriptural principles should guide us in deciding what to do?

What direction has been provided by the faithful and discreet slave?

There is need to do research in the Society's publications. (Where available, use the *Watch Tower Publications Indexes.*)

Is there more that I can do to deal effectively with this matter?

In what way can the entire body of elders improve its handling of this matter?

Should this suggestion be put into operation? Why?

What Matters Might Be Included on the Agenda for Elders' Meetings

Spiritual matters should be of principal concern. (Phil. 1:9-11)

Appropriate ideas can be obtained by thinking on the shepherding counsel found in the letters to Timothy and Titus and in such passages as Acts 20:17-35 and 1 Peter 5:1-11.

Time may be allowed on the agenda for matters of a mechanical, nonspiritual nature also.

These should be discussed only when they involve problems that an individual elder, the building committee, or the maintenance committee cannot care for on their own initiative.

Make Meaningful Expressions During Your Elders' Meetings

The presiding overseer should set the pace of the discussion by keeping the main points to the fore; keep to the agenda.

Conclude each matter before another is opened for discussion so that the meeting does not bog down or ramble.

Make sure that either you or another elder takes notes as to decisions made and who will carry them out.

Applying the Scriptural principles embodied in the following will result in more productive elders' meetings:

Speak on the points under discussion only when you have something meaningful to add. (Prov. 10:19)

There should be no wrath or debates evident in elders' meetings. (1 Tim. 2:8)

Speak up, use "freeness of speech." Much time can be wasted if there are long pauses due to a hesitancy to speak. (1 Tim. 3:13)

See the listing at the end of this unit. In it are some items that you may wish to include on an agenda for consideration by the elders in your congregation.

(For more information, see *The Watchtower,* October 1, 1988, pages 15-20, and August 1, 1975, pages 471-4.)

Presiding Overseer

The presiding overseer is appointed by the Society for an indefinite period of time. He serves as chairman of the body of elders. He should be a kindly, loyal man with experience in handling congregation matters. He must be orderly and diligent, not a procrastinator in caring for responsibilities. (1 Tim. 3:2)

His duties include the following:

Serves as chairman of the body of elders at their meetings.

Receives congregation mail and passes it along to the secretary for circulation and filing.

Signs most correspondence sent to the Society.

Compiles Scriptural and practical agendas outlining points for discussion at regular elders' meetings throughout the year. May suggest points for elders' meetings during the visit of the circuit overseer.

Seeks to distinguish between items that can be handled by individual elders and those needing attention by the

entire body of elders, so as to avoid unnecessarily taking the time of the entire body.

Makes sure that there is appropriate follow-through on decisions made by elders.

Modestly seeks and accepts suggestions from other elders.

Arranges for monthly Service Meeting schedule, and makes sure of appropriate rehearsals of demonstrations, interviews, and so forth.

May ask other elders to assist.

Arranges for public talks.

Might be assisted by another elder or a well-qualified ministerial servant, if needed.

Approves all announcements made to the congregation, especially those of a judicial nature.

Takes the lead in caring for details in preparation for the circuit overseer's visit.

Serves as chairman of the service committee when considering regular or auxiliary pioneer applications, unassigned territory applications, or similar matters as required by the Society.

Calls a meeting of the body of elders when judicial matters arise. (See Unit 5 (b), pages 108-10.)

Arranges for two elders to meet with each person desiring to become a new publisher. The publisher conducting the study is included in the meeting. (*w*88 11/15 p. 17)

Arranges for elders to consider questions with baptismal candidates.

Arranges for quarterly audit of congregation accounts.

Makes certain there is a written record of such and that an appropriate announcement regarding the audit is made to the congregation.

Authorizes payment of all normal operating expenses of the congregation.

Recommendation for appointment of the presiding overseer is submitted in conjunction with the regular visit of the circuit overseer.

If a temporary adjustment is made apart from the circuit overseer's visit, the Society should be notified immediately by letter signed by the service committee on behalf of the body of elders.

The Presiding Overseer Change of Address form (S-29) should accompany the letter.

Congregation Secretary

Sees to it that correspondence received by the congregation and the body of elders from the Society and others is attended to promptly and proper response is made when necessary.

The secretary's duties include the following:

Maintains the vital congregation records in an orderly way.

Circulates among the elders all letters from the Society and traveling overseers and then files them for reference.

Keeps records concerning Kingdom Hall ownership, legal corporation, loans, insurance, deeds, and other documents.

Files records on disciplinary cases, including reports made up by the judicial committees. (See Unit 5 (c), page 122.)

Keeps a diary of business items that elders or congregation must handle in the future, such as utility bills and tax and government items.

Sends orders to the branch office; sends reports promptly; sends communications prepared by other brothers.

Keeps Congregation's Publisher Record cards; compiles field service reports.

Gives report to Congregation Book Study conductors as to who is irregular in field service.

Sends Congregation's Publisher Record card to congregation to which a publisher moves or initiates correspondence if a publisher moves into his congregation. (*km* 2/91 p. 7)

Secretary will personally care for these duties.

If necessary, an elder or a capable ministerial servant may be assigned to assist in caring for some routine matters.

Service Overseer

As evangelizer and teacher, the service overseer is keenly interested in his fellow servants. He is one who loves the field ministry and is capable and alert to train others. He is respected in the congregation as one who takes the lead in the field and who has demonstrated his effectiveness in various aspects of the field ministry.

The service overseer's duties include the following:

Schedules regular visits to all Congregation Book Study groups, so that once each month he visits a different group. (In smaller congregations with perhaps only one or two book studies, he may arrange to visit each one twice during the year.)

Following a 45-minute book study, he will give a 15-minute service talk.

On that weekend he will work with the group in the field ministry from house to house and help publishers with their return visits and Bible studies.

Other weeks of the month are spent with the group where he is assigned along with his family. (*km* 6/90 p. 7)

Takes the lead in arranging meetings for field service at convenient times during weekdays; he is alert to organize witnessing on holidays.

Shows genuine interest in Bible Study activity, making sure that effective studies are being conducted and that students are being directed to the organization.

Takes keen interest in irregular and inactive publishers living in the congregation territory and works along with the body of elders in providing spiritual assistance toward recovery. (*km* 4/82 p. 3)

Directly oversees the work of ministerial servants assigned to handle literature, magazines, and territory.

Congregation Service Committee

Comprises the presiding overseer, the secretary, and the service overseer. (*om* p. 43)

The duties of the Congregation Service Committee involve the following:

Signing correspondence regarding appointment or deletion of elders, ministerial servants, and pioneers.

They process applications for auxiliary and regular pioneer work, for Bethel service, and for other special service privileges.

If one member is absent, another elder may be asked to substitute in order to expedite matters.

May be called on by the Society for other designated work as needed.

One member of the service committee is included in the meeting with each Bible student desirous of becoming an unbaptized publisher. (*w*88 11/15 p. 17)

The *Watchtower* Study Conductor and the Theocratic Ministry School Overseer

The *Watchtower* Study conductor and the Theocratic Ministry School overseer conduct their respective meetings in harmony with counsel from the organization as outlined in *Organized to Accomplish Our Ministry, Our Kingdom Ministry,* other special instructions, and this textbook.

It is important that these brothers prepare diligently and use effective teaching methods, since these meetings are primary provisions of the faithful slave to give vital instruction to the congregation.

The *Watchtower* Study conductor and the Theocratic Ministry School overseer should set an outstanding example as zealous ministers of the good news, working regularly with the publishers in the field service.

In the absence of either of these brothers, a qualified elder may be asked to conduct the meeting.

Circuit Overseer's Visit

The schedule of the circuit overseer has been arranged to be beneficial to the congregation. There may be a need to adjust this schedule when several congregations use the same Kingdom Hall or when other local circumstances would make an adjustment advisable.

Tuesday evening at the Kingdom Hall.

The Theocratic Ministry School will be 30 minutes in length, followed by a Service Meeting of 30 minutes.

The circuit overseer will then present a 30-minute closing service talk.

Thursday (or Friday) evening at the Kingdom Hall.

One combined Congregation Book Study.

A designated elder will conduct the study and endeavor to cover the assigned portion for that week in 45 minutes.

This will be followed by "Continue in the Things That You Learned," a 30-minute feature with audience participation, conducted by the circuit overseer.

The circuit overseer will then give a concluding 30-minute service talk. (*km* 5/90 p. 2)

Sunday at the Kingdom Hall.

The circuit overseer will give the public talk, usually 45 minutes in length.

This will be followed by a 30-minute *Watchtower* Study, without the reading of paragraphs.

Finally, the circuit overseer will present his concluding remarks for 30 minutes.

Elders should exhibit an enthusiastic spirit before and during the circuit overseer's visit.

Elders should allow the circuit overseer's visit to infuse them with renewed vigor to carry out their responsibilities and should help stimulate the congregation to greater activity and faithfulness.

Suggestions for Agendas Used for Elders' Meetings

Overall spirit of the congregation.

Is love manifest by warmth among the brothers?

Is there a joyful spirit?

Are hospitality and friendliness being exhibited?

Do the friends get together for mutual encouragement at times other than at meetings?

Is there freedom from class distinctions?

Do the teenagers and young adults feel accepted?

Do the elderly display cheerfulness because of receiving kindly attention?

Are the elders helpful in cases of need?

Do the publishers show a readiness to help one another in cases of illness or accident, or under other circumstances?

Are the brothers taking the truth seriously as a way of life?

Is there a healthy pioneer spirit?

Do the publishers show a spirit of willingness to work together in field service?

Being well acquainted with the flock.

What individuals or families need encouragement?

Have there been any deaths in the families of publishers?

Who are the new ones, and how are they progressing?

Overseers 'Ruling for Justice Itself'

Jehovah, as a loving Shepherd, has directed overseers to "rule as princes for justice itself." (Isa. 32:1, 2) Since Jehovah God is holy, he requires that all those who worship him be spiritually and morally clean. (1 Pet. 1:14-16) As appointed overseers, you have a large part in safeguarding the cleanness of the congregation.

Protective care is a basic idea embraced in the word "overseer" (*e·pi'sko·pos*), which carries also the thought of one who watches over, a guardian, a shepherd of the flock. You have the responsibility to cultivate in the hearts of the brothers a love for what is good and a hatred for what is bad, wicked. (Rom. 12:9) By holding to God's Word and by effectively using the art of teaching, you will be able to help your brothers not only to understand what is right and what is wrong but also to have an active part in keeping the congregation clean and chaste for public service to Jehovah.

How Elders Promote Justice

All elders are responsible to shepherd the flock, to teach, reprove, reprimand, and exhort as necessary. (Titus 1: 9-14)

When teaching, state clearly what God requires, and encourage faithful adherence to his righteous principles.

Help fellow believers to appreciate their responsibility to keep the congregation clean.

Assist them to understand that this involves:

Keeping their own personal conduct chaste.

Listening to their Bible-trained conscience.

Relentlessly resisting temptations.

Refusing to feed their minds on immoral ideas; perceiving how wrong thoughts lead to wrong actions.

Parents' instilling moral character in their children.

Younger ones' obeying their parents.

Refusing to imitate the world and its unscriptural ways.

Teaching interested persons the Bible's high moral standards.

Set a fine example yourself in attitude, conduct, and speech so that the congregation can imitate your faith. (Heb. 13:7)

Display the traits of a spiritual man; do not give way to unclean practices of a physical man. (1 Cor. 2:14, 15)

Your example will help your brothers to have "the mind of Christ." (1 Cor. 2:16)

Take the initiative to help anyone in the congregation who has taken some false step; do your best to readjust him. (Gal. 6:1)

Encourage good associations; warn the brothers to guard against bad associations both inside and outside the congregation. (1 Cor. 15:33)

Yet, do not create ill will toward a weak one in the congregation who is being helped.

Some may not yet have their perceptive powers trained to distinguish right and wrong. (Heb. 5:14)

Keep watch over their souls, since you will render an account for them too. (Heb. 13:17)

Discern the difference between a weak person and a wicked person.

Deal with your brothers as Jehovah would deal with them. (Eph. 5:1)

Always give them direction from God's Word; avoid giving your own opinions. (2 Tim. 4:2)

Be just yet kind in all your dealings. (Mic. 6:8)

Manifest humility by showing empathy, since you are also a mere human made of dust. (Ps. 103:13, 14)

Act as qualified judges.

Keep the spirit of the world out of the congregation. (1 Cor. 2:12; Eph. 2:1, 2)

Reprove and readjust wrongdoers. (Titus 1:9)

Remove unrepentant wrongdoers. (1 Cor. 5:7, 13)

Uphold Jehovah's Righteousness

Wrongdoing is increasing in frequency and in depravity; such can infiltrate and affect the Christian congregation. (2 Tim. 3:1-5, 13; Jude 3, 4, 11-13)

The Scriptures clearly show that Jehovah forbids certain conduct among his clean people; brothers need to uphold Jehovah's righteous standards regarding the following:

Manslaughter.

A degree of guilt could result from careless driving, careless maintenance of one's automobile, or other careless or thoughtless action that causes injury or death. (Compare Deuteronomy 22:8.)

Being a professional boxer may be viewed in a similar way. (*w*81 7/1 pp. 30-1)

Attempted suicide may be the result of deep despair or major depression; deal carefully and compassionately with such a person. In most cases a judicial hearing is not required. (Ps. 88:3, 17, 18; Prov. 15:13; Eccl. 7:7; *g*90 9/8 pp. 22-3; *w*90 3/15 pp. 26-30; *w*90 3/1 pp. 5-9; *w*83 8/1 pp. 3-11)

Sexual misconduct, including adultery, fornication, and other forms of "por·nei'a."

Uncleanness includes an intentional momentary touching of sexual parts or caressing of breasts. (1 Thess. 4:7, 8; 1 Tim. 5:1, 2)

Such minor uncleanness can be handled at the discretion of an elder or two; it does not require a judicial hearing.

There is a need for strong counsel, admonition, and assistance to help the individual to maintain chaste conduct in the future.

If not corrected, such conduct may escalate in gravity and by frequent repetition become loose conduct.

Loose conduct is a shocking, flagrant disregard for Jehovah's moral standards. (Gal. 5:19; *w*83 3/15 p. 31; *w*73 9/15 pp. 574-6)

It may include the willful practice of heavy petting or the fondling of breasts.

The nature, circumstances, and actual extent of what has occurred may indicate loose conduct, which would require judicial action.

Such practices can easily lead to *por·nei'a.*

"Por·nei'a" involves immoral use of the genitals of at least one human (whether in a natural or a perverted way), and there must have been another party to the immorality—a human of either sex or a beast; willing participation incurs guilt and requires judicial action. It is not a casual touching of the sex organs between persons but involves the manipulation of the genitals. (*w*83 6/1 pp. 23-6; *w*83 3/15 pp. 30-1)

It includes oral and anal sex or mutual masturbation between persons not married to each other, homosexuality, lesbianism, fornication, adultery, incest, and bestiality. (Lev. 20:10, 13, 15, 16; Rom. 1:24, 26, 27, 32; 1 Cor. 6:9, 10)

Also included are sexual abuse of children, including practices involving a catamite (a boy kept for purposes of sexual perversion). (Deut. 23:17, 18, *Ref. Bi.,* ftns.)

Victims of sexual abuse need to be treated with extreme thoughtfulness and kindness. Elders should always do what they reasonably can to protect children from further abuse; follow the Society's directives on such matters. (*g*85 1/22 p. 8)

Self-abuse, or masturbation, is *not "por·nei'a,"* nor would one who was raped be guilty of *por·nei'a.* (*w*83 3/15 p. 30; *w*74 3/1 p. 160; *it*-1 pp. 862-4; *tp* p. 144)

The term *por·nei'a* lays emphasis on both the lewd nature and the intent of the person's conduct, and it embraces all illicit sexual activity characteristic of that found in a house of prostitution.

Copulation (as in penetration) is not necessary to constitute *por·nei'a,* and neither is sexual climax.

In borderline cases, it is the responsibility of the judicial committee to weigh carefully the Scriptures and the particular facts in the case to determine whether *por·nei'a* was involved.

This responsibility should not be taken lightly, especially when Scriptural freedom to remarry is involved. (Mal. 2:16a)

Apostasy.

Apostasy is a standing away from, a falling away, defection, rebellion, abandonment; it involves teaching false doctrines, supporting or promoting false religion and its holidays or interfaith activities. (Deut. 13:13, 15; Josh. 22:22, ftn.; Acts 21:21, ftn.; 2 Cor. 6:14, 15, 17, 18; 2 John 7, 9, 10; Rev. 18:4)

Those with sincere doubts should be helped, dealt with mercifully. (Jude 22, 23; *w*82 9/1 pp. 20-1; *w*80 8/1 pp. 21-2)

Apostasy includes action taken against true worship of Jehovah or his established order among his dedicated people. (Jer. 17:13; 23:15; 28:15, 16; 2 Thess. 2:9, 10)

Persons who deliberately spread (stubbornly hold to and speak about) teachings contrary to Bible truth as taught by Jehovah's Witnesses are apostates.

If it is learned that a person has taken up association with another religious organization, the matter should be investigated, and if verified, a committee should be formed.

If it is clearly established that the person has joined another religion and intends to remain with it, the

elders would make a brief announcement to the congregation that such one has disassociated himself. (*w*86 10/15 p. 31)

Working secularly for a false religious organization could put one in a position similar to that of one preaching false doctrine. (2 Cor. 6:14-16)

Celebrating a false religious holiday would be similar to performing any other act of false worship. (Jer. 7:16-19)

The Bible condemns the following:

Causing divisions and promoting sects.

This would be deliberate action disrupting the unity of the congregation or undermining the confidence of the brothers in Jehovah's arrangement.

It may involve or lead to apostasy. (Rom. 16: 17, 18; Titus 3:10, 11)

The practice of spiritism. (Deut. 18:9-13; 1 Cor. 10: 21, 22; Gal. 5:20)

Idolatry. (1 Cor. 6:9, 10; 10:14)

Idolatry includes the possession and use of images and pictures that are employed in false religion.

Drunkenness. **(1 Cor. 5:11; 6:9, 10; *it*-1 p. 656)**

Stealing, thievery, fraud. **(Lev. 6:2, 4; 1 Cor. 6:9, 10; Eph. 4:28; *it*-1 p. 870)**

Deliberate, malicious lying; bearing false witness. **(Prov. 6: 16, 19; Col. 3:9; Rev. 22:15; *it*-2 pp. 244-5)**

Reviling, slander. **(Lev. 19:16; 1 Cor. 6:10; *it*-1 pp. 989-91; *it*-2 pp. 801-2)**

Obscene speech. **(Eph. 5:3-5; Col. 3:8)**

Failure to abstain from blood. **(Gen. 9:4; Acts 15:20, 28, 29)**

Greed—gambling, extortion. **(1 Cor. 5:10, 11; 6:10; 1 Tim. 3:8; *it*-1 pp. 1005-6)**

Adamant refusal to provide materially for one's own family—leaving wife and children destitute when having the

means to provide. (1 Tim. 5:8; *w*88 11/1 pp. 22-3; *km* 9/73 p. 8)

Nonneutral activities. (Isa. 2:4; John 6:15; 17:16)

Fits of anger, violence. (Prov. 22:24, 25; Mal. 2:16; Gal. 5:20)

Misuse of tobacco or addictive drugs. (2 Cor. 7:1; Mark 15:23; Rev. 21:8, *Int.;* 22:15, *Int.*)

Loose conduct. Term not restricted to sexual immorality. (Gal. 5:19, *Ref. Bi.,* ftn.; 2 Pet. 2:7, *Ref. Bi.,* ftn.; *w*83 3/15 p. 31; *w*73 9/15 pp. 574-6; *it*-2 p. 264)

SUMMARY: There are varying degrees of wrongdoing. At times there may have been an overlapping of sins, and this must be discerned in order to determine the proper Scriptural view of a person's conduct. In all cases, elders should carefully weigh each situation or circumstance. They need to find out what actually occurred, the extent and nature of misconduct, intent and motive, frequency or practice, and so forth. Good judgment, reasonableness, and balance are necessary as elders assess conduct in the light of the Scriptures.

Your Aim Should Be to Help the Person

We want to help individuals to stay within Jehovah's spiritual paradise.

When elders are approachable and display a genuine interest in the spiritual welfare of the congregation, they will keep themselves informed and alert to any special needs within the congregation.

In some cases an erring individual will come to the elders voluntarily, seeking aid and confessing his wrongdoing. (Prov. 28:13)

If the person is guilty of serious wrongdoing, it is wise for him to speak to one or more of the elders about the matter. (Jas. 5:16)

For gross sins committed, a judicial committee should be formed.

In other cases an accusation may be brought against a member of the congregation. (1 Cor. 1:11)

If a person has definite knowledge of wrongdoing that could contaminate the congregation, he is obligated to report the matter in order to keep the congregation clean. (Lev. 5:1; Num. 15:32-34; Prov. 29:24)

A judicial committee is not automatically formed even when a person is accused of serious sin.

Some matters may be handled by the elder who hears of the wrongdoing. (Gal. 6:1)

Although you may feel that your counsel will suffice to restore the individual, it is advisable to inform the presiding overseer of the matter; there may be other factors involved.

The matter may have come up before, or there may have been other acts of wrongdoing concerning which he has knowledge.

Some matters may be investigated and handled by two elders assigned by the body of elders.

There are certain cases that the body of elders is responsible to investigate and, when necessary, appoint a judicial committee to handle:

Gross sins—either those that have brought the congregation into public disrepute or those of a more private nature. (Rom. 2:21-24; 1 Cor. 5:1; 2 Cor. 7:11)

Any serious sin that constitutes a clear threat of contaminating the congregation. (1 Cor. 5:6, 9-11; Gal. 5:19-21; 1 Tim. 1:9, 10)

When an elder or a ministerial servant commits a gross wrong, he is morally obligated to inform the body of elders of his being reprehensible.

He would not qualify to continue in his appointed position of service.

The same would be true concerning a pioneer who becomes involved in serious sin.

Elders, ministerial servants, and pioneers should be irreprehensible and serve with a clean conscience. (1 Tim. 3:2, 8, 9; Titus 1:6)

Baptized minors.

When a baptized minor becomes involved in wrongdoing that threatens the cleanness of the congregation, the assigned committee should meet with such individual just as they would with any other member of the congregation.

It would be best to meet with the youth and his or her Christian parents; the parents have the responsibility to raise him and train him.

Try to restore the individual, if this is possible. (Gal. 6:1, ftn.)

If efforts to restore bring no response, disfellowshipping is in order.

When minors are disfellowshipped, parents are still responsible for raising, training, and teaching them, even studying with them if the minors are in their home. (*w*88 11/15 p. 20)

Married people.

If the wrongdoer is a married woman, it would be best to meet with her and her believing husband.

He is her head, and his efforts to restore her and direct her can be very helpful.

If there is no response to efforts to bring about repentance, the wrongdoer should be disfellowshipped. (*w*81 9/1 pp. 22-7)

The disfellowshipping of a mate does not end marriage responsibilities.

Unbaptized publishers.

Unbaptized publishers who engage in serious wrongdoing may be readjusted.

Two elders will talk with the wrongdoer and determine what action should be taken. (*w*88 11/15 pp. 18-20)

They may instruct him not to share in the public ministry or comment at meetings, and they may restrict him from being in the Theocratic Ministry School until he has made more spiritual progress.

If the wrongdoing is widely known but the person is repentant, the Congregation Service Committee may arrange for an announcement to the congregation as follows: "A matter involving [name of person] has been handled, and he [she] continues to serve as an unbaptized publisher with the congregation." (*w*88 11/15 p. 18)

When the unbaptized publisher who is a wrongdoer is a minor, his or her Christian parents should be consulted to determine what they are doing to correct the wrongdoer. It may also be necessary to meet with the youth together with his parents.

In the case of unbaptized publishers who unrepentantly continue in wrongdoing despite all efforts to help them, an announcement can be made saying: "[Name of person] is no longer a publisher of the good news." (*w*88 11/15 p. 19)

Your goal in dealing with unbaptized publishers, whether youths or adults, is to help them. (1 Thess. 5:14)

Baptized persons who have not associated for some time.

If you learn of serious wrongdoing on the part of such a person, the matter should be investigated if it poses a threat to the congregation's cleanness and welfare or causes a public scandal.

Consider the following:

Does he still profess to be a Witness?

Is he generally recognized as such in the congregation and/or the community?

Does the person have a measure of contact or association with the congregation so that a leavening, or corrupting, influence exists?

How did the matter become known to the elders?

Is the person willing to meet with a committee, thus admitting accountability to the Christian congregation?

Depending upon length of inactivity and other factors suggested above, elders may determine to hold the matter in abeyance.

In such a case, a record of the person's questionable conduct should be made for the congregation file so that everything noted might be clarified when the person shows interest in becoming active again.

If the sinful conduct is known only to believing family members and no congregation action is taken because of the factors outlined above, believing relatives will likely determine to curtail family association severely, viewing the relative as bad association. (1 Cor. 15:33)

If the individual still professes to be a Witness and is willing to meet with the judicial committee, the matter should be handled in the normal way. However, when factors such as possible legal action exist, it is best to consult the Society before proceeding. (*w*87 9/1 p. 14)

If individuals persist in *"walking disorderly"* in serious violation of well-established Bible principles, but not yet to a degree warranting judicial action, they may be *"marked"* by members of the congregation. (2 Thess. 3: 6, 14, 15; *w*85 4/15 pp. 30-1; *om* pp. 152-3)

However, this would occur only after *repeated efforts* to provide authoritative Scriptural counsel and admonition have been ignored and in many cases after a warning talk has been given to the congregation. (*w*85 4/15 pp. 30-1; *w*81 9/1 pp. 19-21)

If a person who has been marked continues his wrongful course in brazen defiance of Christian standards, *adamantly rejecting loving Scriptural counsel,* judicial action may be taken if the situation becomes scandalous loose conduct.

Propriety of Disfellowshipping

When making decisions or answering questions about judicial reproof, disfellowshipping, disassociation, or

reinstatement, elders should be certain that their decisions and answers are based solidly on the Bible and are in harmony with the most recent statements by the Society. (Compare 1 Corinthians 4:6.)

Before initiating a judicial hearing, elders assigned to serve on the judicial committee should *review* guidelines set out in *Units 5 (a), 5 (b), and 5 (c)* as well as examine pertinent scriptures and references in the Society's publications.

They should also be sure to proceed in harmony with *current information* published in *The Watchtower* and in letters from the Society.

Purposes served by disfellowshipping:

Upholds Jehovah's name and standard of righteousness. (Acts 15:14; 1 Pet. 1:14-16; compare Isaiah 52:5.)

Protects the purity of the congregation. (1 Cor. 5:1-13; 2 Cor. 7:11)

May correct the unrepentant wrongdoer, bringing him to his senses. (2 Cor. 2:6-8)

Implications of Disassociation

Whereas disfellowshipping is an action taken by a judicial committee against unrepentant wrongdoers, disassociation is an action taken by an individual who has decided that he no longer desires to be one of Jehovah's Witnesses. (1 John 2:19)

God's Word speaks of those who renounce the way of the truth; they may do this either by written notice or by action. (*w*81 9/15 p. 23)

If an individual takes a course contrary to the neutral position of the Christian congregation, the congregation is compelled to view him as one who has chosen to separate from us. (Isa. 2:4; John 15:17-19)

A brief announcement should be made to notify the congregation that this individual, by his chosen course, no longer desires to be one of Jehovah's Witnesses. (The Society should be notified using the S-77 and S-79 forms.)

If a baptized person insists that he does not want to be part of the congregation and requests that his name be removed from all our records, we should comply with his request.

Since he takes such an adamant position, encourage him to put his request in writing.

If he refuses to do this but states resolutely before witnesses his decision to disassociate himself and not be known as one of Jehovah's Witnesses, the witnesses to his statement would be asked to put this in writing and sign it.

In all cases of disassociation, a committee would consider the evidence regarding the matter.

If the person has definitely terminated his status as a member of the congregation, the elders will make a brief announcement of his disassociation. (*w*86 10/15 p. 31)

The Society should be notified using the S-77 and S-79 forms.

He would be viewed as one who has disassociated himself.

It will not be necessary for a committee to continue the investigation into alleged wrongdoing if the accused person makes known his decision to disassociate himself. (*w*84 7/1 p. 31)

However, the committee would prepare a summary of the alleged offense(s) and the evidence of such.

This would be kept along with information regarding the disassociation.

If the person later requests reinstatement, these matters would need to be considered with him at that time.

Those who disassociate themselves should be viewed and treated the same as disfellowshipped persons. (*w*85 7/15 pp. 30-1)

If one disassociates himself and later wants to return to the congregation, he must request a hearing for reinstatement, the same as one who has been disfellowshipped.

Proper View of Disfellowshipped and Disassociated Persons

If an individual is trying to influence others to take an unscriptural course or is trying to deceive others, all should avoid him; he is described at 2 John 9-11.

Disfellowshipped and disassociated ones are shunned by those who wish to have a good relationship with Jehovah.

Basic Scriptural counsel on the proper view of those who have been expelled from the congregation is set out in the apostle Paul's words at 1 Corinthians 5:11-13.

John counsels against speaking to or associating with a disfellowshipped or disassociated person so as not to be "a sharer in his wicked works." (2 John 11)

Scriptural and historical guidelines on how to view disfellowshipped and disassociated persons are found in *The Watchtower,* September 15, 1981, pages 20-31.

We need to be especially cautious about contact with disfellowshipped persons who have apostatized and those who continue in their immoral conduct. (Titus 3: 10, 11; 1 John 2:19)

These can contaminate the congregation like gangrene. (2 Tim. 2:16-18)

The principle set forth in Jesus' words at Matthew 10: 34-38 has a bearing on situations involving disfellowshipped or disassociated relatives.

Special and difficult problems may arise in relation to social gatherings.

Loyal worshipers of Jehovah will want to adhere to the inspired counsel at 1 Corinthians 5:11.

Normally, a close relative would not be disfellowshipped for associating with a disfellowshipped person unless there is spiritual association or an effort made to justify or excuse the wrongful course.

How funeral arrangements for a disfellowshipped person may be handled:

If the disfellowshipped person had been giving evidence of repentance, some brother's conscience might allow him to give a Bible talk at the funeral home or grave site. However, the Kingdom Hall should not be used. (*w*81 9/15 p. 31; *w*77 6/1 pp. 347-8)

If the deceased still advocated false teachings or ungodly conduct, it would not be appropriate to give a funeral talk for him. (2 John 9-11)

Keep in mind that all the related hardships and tests generated in this regard are an outgrowth of the wrong conduct of the disfellowshipped person.

Cooperation Between Congregations

When a case being considered requires the cooperation of two or more congregations, do not hesitate to provide the assistance needed.

If a person has moved from one congregation to another, do not make the matter of jurisdiction an issue.

Do you have the facts? Can you handle the case most effectively?

Then it may be appropriate for you to follow through without delay.

If the wrongdoing involves persons who attend different congregations, seek assistance from elders in the other congregation(s) and benefit from their observations.

The judicial committees can interview individuals separately and/or jointly to ascertain the facts and clarify discrepancies. (Prov. 18:13, 17)

If a joint meeting is held, thereafter the judicial committee of each congregation will withdraw and handle the case(s) of the person(s) from its own congregation.

Good communication and cooperation will minimize inconsistencies in the judgments rendered.

Do not let a matter remain unhandled.

Confidentiality

Do not discuss private or judicial matters with members of your family, including your wife, or with others who are not involved. (*w*71 4/1 pp. 222-4)

Think before you speak.

Be extremely careful that you do not inadvertently disclose private information when speaking on the telephone while others are listening in or when people are nearby where they could possibly hear the conversation.

At times, complicated judicial cases may necessitate consultation with an experienced mature elder in another congregation or with the circuit overseer.

Generally, the pertinent details should be discussed, but names should not be used.

However, when the circuit overseer is the elder consulted or when circumstances require that you contact the Society, use of names may be necessary. (*w*87 9/1 pp. 12-15; *km* 9/77 p. 6)

Be careful to *maintain confidentiality*. (Prov. 11:13; 15:22)

Be "Imitators of God"

Jehovah is a God of justice; he is merciful, kind, loving, and patient. (Ex. 34:6, 7; Ps. 37:28)

As you deal with your brothers, imitate Jehovah in displaying these qualities, and you will bring honor to him and be a blessing to your brothers. (Eph. 5:1)

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UNIT 5 (b)

Sharing on a Judicial Committee

"When having a hearing between your brothers, you must judge with righteousness." (Deut. 1:16) It is a serious responsibility to judge matters that affect people's lives and relationships with others. Elders must have a reasonably complete picture when judging a matter so that their decisions will not be based on partial knowledge or on personal feelings. They also need heavenly wisdom in order to make proper application of God's Word and to determine how far their showing mercy should extend. (Prov. 28:13; Jas. 2:13) They must treat every person with impartiality at all times and desire that the spiritually ill become well again, since a failure in this regard is unjust and violates the law of love.—1 Tim. 5:21; Jas. 2:1-9; 5:14, 15; *w77* 3/1 pp. 146-52.

Elders Are Teachers and Judges

As "Judge of all the earth," Jehovah provides fatherly correction and discipline whenever needed. (Gen. 18: 25; Heb. 12:5, 6)

He has raised up elders to serve as counselors and judges. (Isa. 1:26)

By judging in righteousness, you may turn others back from a sinful course. (Prov. 14:12; Jer. 10:23, 24)

God's Word is the basis for needed correction. (2 Tim. 3:14-17)

The responsibility of elders involves more than handling judicial matters.

You must also teach, making clear what God requires.

Encourage the rendering of whole-souled service to God and faithful obedience to his righteous principles.

Applying Jesus' Counsel on Handling Certain Wrongs

Some accusations involve minor misunderstandings that should be handled on a personal basis. (Matt. 5:23, 24; 6:12, 14; Eph. 4:25-27)

At Matthew 18:15-17 Jesus gave counsel on handling serious wrongs that might be settled on a personal basis. (*w*81 9/15 pp. 17-20; *om* pp. 142-5)

Jesus' counsel concerns serious sins committed against one personally, such as fraud or slander—sins serious enough to lead to a person's being expelled from the congregation.

The person who believes he has been wronged takes the first step toward resolving the matter; elders may encourage him to do this. (Matt. 18:15)

The second step involves taking one or two persons with him to speak with the individual. (Matt. 18:16)

These should preferably be witnesses of the alleged wrongdoing or respected brothers, usually elders, who can examine the evidence and offer counsel for resolving the matter.

They also become witnesses to the evidence presented in the discussion.

The person who believes he has been wronged takes the third step, bringing the matter to the congregation, as a last resort. (Matt. 18:17)

If the congregation elders are unable to bring a wrongdoer to his senses, he is to be treated "as a man of the nations and as a tax collector."

The unrepentant wrongdoer would be expelled (disfellowshipped) from the congregation.

The Judicial Committee

Other cases of serious wrongdoing require special attention by the elders in order to determine what is needed

to help the repentant wrongdoer and to preserve the spiritual health of all in the congregation.

These include such sins as adultery, fornication, apostasy, and drunkenness. (See Unit 5 (a), pages 92-6.)

Before forming a committee, elders determine if the accusation has substance.

It must Scripturally be an offense serious enough to result in disfellowshipping.

There must be either two witnesses or a confession of wrongdoing.

If there is not enough evidence to form a committee but serious questions have been raised, two elders may be assigned to investigate the matter.

If a judicial committee is needed, elders who are present at the Kingdom Hall should determine which elders will serve on the committee and which one will be chairman.

The elders will take into consideration which elders are best qualified to handle the particular type of case that has arisen. (*km* 9/77 pp. 5-6)

It is usually best for newer elders to serve first with more experienced ones.

In a complex case, a judicial committee need not be limited to three members; it may warrant having four or even five experienced elders serve.

More than one judicial committee may be operating at the same time in a congregation, depending on cases that arise.

Elders called upon to care for this responsibility must exercise heavenly wisdom, have good judgment, and be impartial. (Deut. 1:13, 16-18)

A sound knowledge of Jehovah's righteous laws and principles is necessary. (Ps. 19:7-11)

They must weigh matters carefully, realizing that certain factors make situations differ from one another.

Instead of looking for rigid rules for guidance, elders should think in terms of principles; judge each case on its own merits.

Before handling a judicial case, elders should carefully review Units 5 (a), 5 (b), and 5 (c).

They may also need to do research in the Society's publications and recent correspondence from the Society to find information that may apply or be helpful.

Elders can be confident that with accurate knowledge, with experience and discernment, and with the help of God's spirit, they can judge in righteousness, wisdom, and mercy.

Handling Judicial Cases

Do not send an individual any kind of correspondence that directly accuses him of specific wrongdoing.

It is best for two elders to speak with the individual and invite him to meet with the judicial committee.

Suitable arrangements should be made as to the time and place of the hearing.

State what the person's course of action is supposed to have been.

If it is necessary to send a written invitation, you should simply state what the individual's course is *alleged* to have been, the time and place of the hearing, and how the person can contact the chairman if the arrangements are inconvenient for him.

If the accused wishes to bring witnesses who can speak in his defense regarding the matter, he may do so.

However, observers are not permitted.

No tape-recording devices are allowed.

If the accused repeatedly fails to come to the hearing, the committee will proceed with the hearing but will not

make a decision until evidence and any testimony by witnesses are considered.

The committee should not take action against a person unless the evidence clearly proves this necessary.

Failure to appear before the committee is not in itself proof of guilt.

What kind of evidence is acceptable?

There must be two or three eyewitnesses, not just persons repeating what they have heard; no action can be taken if there is only one witness. (Deut. 19:15; John 8:17)

Confession (admission of wrongdoing), either written or oral, may be accepted as conclusive proof without other corroborating evidence. (Josh. 7:19)

Strong circumstantial evidence, such as pregnancy or evidence (testified to by at least two witnesses) that the accused stayed *all night* in the same house with a person of the opposite sex (or in the same house with a known homosexual) under *improper circumstances,* is acceptable.

The testimony of youths may be considered; it is up to the elders to determine if the testimony has the ring of truth.

The testimony of unbelievers may also be considered, but it must be carefully weighed.

If there are two or three witnesses to the same kind of wrongdoing but each one is witness to a separate incident, their testimony can be considered.

Such evidence may be used to establish guilt, but it is preferable to have two witnesses to the same occurrence of wrongdoing.

Judging With Righteousness, Wisdom, and Mercy

Elders must exercise wisdom in their questioning and godly qualities in their judging.

In giving counsel or rendering decisions, avoid expressing

opinions; be sure to judge in righteousness. (Deut. 1: 16, 17)

You must ask pertinent, discreet questions to isolate main issues and determine how or why a problem developed.

Probing questions should not go into needless details, especially in regard to sexual misconduct, unless this is *absolutely* necessary, such as in determining whether *por·nei'a* had been committed.

Elders need to treat the accused kindly and respectfully, never harshly. (*w*89 9/15 p. 19)

Seek divine wisdom to help you relate Bible laws to the issues raised or the charges being considered. (Jas. 1:5; 3: 17, 18)

You must exercise mercy in matters of judgment, not only by showing compassion in the judgment rendered but also by expressing kind consideration and pity in your efforts both to bring wrongdoers to repentance and to heal and restore those who are repentant. (Rom. 2:4; Jas. 5:14-16; Jude 22, 23)

In cases where it is established that a serious sin was actually committed, the judicial committee should consider such factors as these:

Is there evidence of the person's craving wrongful things or courting trouble? Or did the person momentarily succumb to weakness? (Jas. 4:1)

Was he aware of the gravity of his sin? (Gal. 6:1)

Had he been admonished that his course was leading toward danger? (1 Thess. 5:14)

What were the circumstances leading up to the wrongdoing?

Are there extenuating factors, such as emotional or mental disorders or having been a victim of some type of abuse in the past, that should be considered?

Was it a single offense, or was it committed more than once?

Was his confession voluntary, or did he have to be accused by others before confessing?

Was his reluctance to speak more a result of deep shame than of lack of repentance?

Above all, does he show true repentance and manifest a heartfelt desire to avoid repetition of the wrong?

Even though the wrongdoer is guilty of a serious offense, elders on the judicial committee realize that their aim is to recover the one who has fallen into a wrong course, whenever this is possible. (Jude 23)

If he listens to them, showing true repentance, it may be that he can be retained as a brother and thus be spared being disfellowshipped. (Prov. 19:20; compare Matthew 18:15-17.)

Neither the gravity of the wrong nor bad publicity finally determines whether the person should be disfellowshipped; rather, the determining factor is the individual's sincere repentance or the lack of it.

Some manifest repentance right after their sin by taking steps immediately to confess; others manifest repentance later, even during the meeting with the judicial committee. (*w*83 1/1 pp. 30-1)

It is in the person's favor if he voluntarily confesses, but the determining factor is: Is he repentant?

There is good reason for you to weigh carefully claims of repentance when the individual has shown himself to be guilty of hypocrisy, lying, or making deliberate efforts to deceive.

Also be cautious when it is apparent that the wrong act was preceded by deliberate scheming, perhaps in a cold, calculating way.

This is quite different from when an individual, under the unexpected pressure of certain tempting circumstances, gives in because of human weakness.

Judgment Related to Repentance

Elders must be able to discern genuine repentance on the part of the wrongdoer. (*w*81 9/1 pp. 24-6; *it*-2 pp. 770-4)

Genuine repentance is vital for wrongdoers because it is the first step leading back to God. (Rom. 2:4)

It is particularly important to be sure genuine repentance exists in cases of repeated sin, a practice of sin.

If gross sin extended over a long period of time, particular care should be exercised in determining the genuineness of the repentance. (*w*81 9/1 p. 26)

Is the person cooperative? When questioned, are his answers forthright?

Was fear and weakness the reason he did not come forward and confess, or is he wicked, trying to fool the congregation?

Has he been counseled before for this sin?

Repentance is generally manifested by works that befit repentance either before or during the committee hearing. (Compare Acts 26:20.)

How true repentance can be recognized:

Has the individual contritely prayed to Jehovah and sought His forgiveness and mercy?

Caution: Some wrongdoers, though repentant, find it difficult to pray. (Jas. 5:14)

Has he admitted his wrongdoing, either voluntarily to some of the elders before the hearing or when confronted by his accusers?

Caution: Some people are so deeply ashamed that they are reluctant to speak. Or they have difficulty expressing themselves.

Has he made restitution, expressed willingness to do so, or apologized to offended persons, those damaged by his sinful course?

What seems to motivate the sadness, remorse, and regret he shows? Is it worldly sadness (sorrow over being caught) or heartfelt godly sadness? (2 Cor. 7: 8-11)

Does he have deep regret over a damaged relationship with Jehovah, remorse over the reproach he has brought upon Jehovah's name and people, and sincere longing to come back into God's favor?

Does his attitude include a heart-motivated rejection of the bad course as something repugnant, hated? (Rom. 12:9)

On occasion it may take *more than one meeting* for reproof to reach the wrongdoer's heart and move him to repentance.

However, the judicial committee is not obliged to meet repeatedly with the wrongdoer or put words in his mouth, trying to force him to repent, if it is obvious that he lacks godly sorrow.

In all cases, the elders on the judicial committee must weigh such factors as the following:

The seriousness of the wrong committed.

The time that has passed since it occurred.

The circumstances that led up to it.

The measure of willfulness shown.

Whether there was *deliberate* failure to heed earlier warning counsel.

If all reasonable efforts have been made to readjust the one who has committed serious sins and yet he remains unrepentant, he must be disfellowshipped. (1 Cor. 5:1, 9-13)

You must show respect for Jehovah's standard of righteousness and holiness.

You must also protect the congregation from willful sinners.

The same principles will govern the judgment on the part of a judicial committee in cases of reinstatement.

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The Responsibility of Judgment Is a Weighty One

Judging matters that affect people's lives and relationships is a serious responsibility; it calls for balance, discernment, and understanding. Rely on Jehovah's guiding spirit.

Elders on a judicial committee must weigh carefully both the interests of the individual and those of the congregation as a whole. (Jude 3, 4, 22, 23)

You must feel keenly your obligation before God to prevent wrongdoing from infiltrating the congregation.

At the same time, your manner of dealing with your brothers must always reflect Jehovah's wise and merciful ways.

UNIT 5 (c)

Handling Cases of Wrongdoing With Wisdom and Mercy

When man rebelled in Eden, Jehovah took prompt action. (Gen. 3:8-19, 23, 24) Today, elders must handle cases of wrongdoing and thus safeguard the spiritual environment of the congregation. Hence, they should be well-informed with regard to the application of Bible laws and principles.

When you as elders are assigned to care for a judicial problem, it is beneficial to take the necessary time to do research in the Bible, the Society's publications, and any special letters from the Society that may contain information applicable to the particular case. Prayerful consideration of such information would be appropriate before the committee initiates the hearing itself.

Before Forming a Judicial Committee

A person who becomes a witness to a serious sin should encourage the wrongdoer to report the matter to the elders.

He may encourage the wrongdoer to seek help from the elders and confess; and if the wrongdoer does not do so, the witness will then inform the elders. (*w*85 11/15 pp. 19-21)

If there is no response from the accused, two elders should attempt to discuss the matter with him. If he denies wrongdoing, so that it is only one brother's word against another's, leave the matter in Jehovah's hands. (1 Tim. 5:19, 24, 25)

However, having the witness confront the accused alone may not be advisable in all cases.

For example:

When the witness is party to wrongdoing, such as in cases of fornication or adultery.

When the witness is a victim of the wrongdoer as in cases of incest or rape.

When the witness is extremely timid.

In such cases, or when other extenuating circumstances exist, two elders may discuss the matter with the accused, or an elder may accompany the witness to discuss the matter with the accused.

Of course, if it is determined that a judicial committee should be formed, the witness may need to testify at the hearing if the accused denies wrongdoing.

If there is another witness to the same type of sin on the part of the accused, this would be basis for forming a judicial committee. (See Unit 5 (b), page 111.)

Judicial Committee Hearing Procedure

After opening with prayer, the chairman states the reason for the meeting.

He may offer a Scriptural point at the outset, such as from Proverbs 28:13 or James 5:14, 15.

Elders, by expressing the desire to be helpful, can do much to put the accused at ease. (*w*89 9/15 pp. 19-20)

The chairman invites the accused to make a personal statement.

Present the witnesses one at a time unless the wrongdoer confesses.

If the accused does not admit guilt, he should be informed as to the source of the charge(s) made against him.

Accusers should be willing to assume their responsibility, as was required in Israel. (Deut. 17:6, 7; 19:16-21)

The accused may also present witnesses whose testimony would have a bearing on the case.

The witnesses should not be present for the entire hearing, since they do not need to hear details and testimony that do not affect them.

However, witnesses to the wrongdoing should be present if it becomes necessary to continue the reproof of the accused "before all onlookers." (1 Tim. 5:20)

The committee probes with pertinent questions in an effort to establish facts and ascertain the attitude of the accused.

Is there sufficient evidence to establish by two witnesses or otherwise that the person is clearly guilty of serious wrongdoing? (Unit 5 (b) p. 111) Isolate specific offenses and available evidence.

While it is not appropriate to make extraordinary efforts or to prolong the case unnecessarily, skillful use of God's Word may reach the person's heart and bring him to repentance.

Elders should be quick to listen but slow to indicate a preference or a leaning one way or the other.

Wait until you have heard all the facts before reaching conclusions and making decisions. (Prov. 18:13)

If guilt is established, use God's Word to reprove the wrongdoer, showing the wrongness of the sin and of the steps that may have led to it.

You may need to do so in front of the witnesses of the sin ("onlookers") who have testified.

After Scriptural discussion and after all evidence has been presented, dismiss the accused and any witnesses, and carefully review evidence and the attitude of the accused.

If the accusation, or charge, has been proved true, is the wrongdoer repentant? If repentance is manifest, how was it demonstrated? (Unit 5 (b) pp. 112-15)

Depending on whether guilt is established and repentance shown, determine what action, if any, needs to be taken.

In complex cases, defer making a decision if you are not sure of the Bible's direction and the Society's counsel.

However, do not unduly prolong making a decision, as this can have a detrimental effect on the accused and the congregation.

Seek Jehovah's wisdom through prayer.

If the wrongdoer is guilty of gross sin but gives evidence of godly repentance, even as recently as at the hearing, the judicial reproof given by the committee may suffice; disfellowshipping may not be necessary. (2 Tim. 4:1, 2; Titus 1:9; *w*83 1/1 pp. 30-1)

Some wrongdoers have gone so far into a practice of sin or have been so persistently deceptive that it may be difficult to accept a claim of repentance. (1 Cor. 5: 3-5, 13)

If the person is guilty of a serious sin such as those listed in Unit 5 (a), pages 92-6, and is unrepentant, having a truly bad heart, and/or is determined to pursue a God-dishonoring course, he must be disfellowshipped, expelled.

When the decision is made, inform the individual of it orally.

If disfellowshipping is necessary, proceed as outlined under the next heading.

If disfellowshipping is not necessary, yet the accused is guilty of gross sin, see "Matters Regarding Judicial Reproof," pages 123-4.

If the Decision Is to Disfellowship

Tell the guilty person the Scriptural reason(s) for the action.

Inform the wrongdoer that he may appeal in writing within seven days if he feels a serious error in judgment has occurred. (*om* p. 147; *km* 1/80 p. 4)

Outline steps necessary for future reinstatement.

Be positive, assuring him that forgiveness is possible if he truly repents; the person may be in a distressed state of mind.

If an appeal is lodged within the allotted time, no announcement is made pending the outcome of the appeal.

In the meantime the accused person will be restricted

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from commenting and praying at meetings or enjoying special privileges of service. (*om* pp. 147-8)

If the accused lodges an appeal but then deliberately fails to appear for the appeal hearing, the disfellowshipping action should be announced after reasonable efforts to contact the individual have been made either in person or by telephone.

If an appeal is not made within seven days, announce the disfellowshipping.

Allow the seven-day appeal period to elapse even if the person states he does not wish to appeal.

The presiding overseer should check the announcement to make sure that it conforms to the guidelines outlined by the Society.

An elder, perhaps the chairman of the judicial committee, should read the announcement.

Disfellowshipping *takes effect when the announcement is made* to the congregation.

Using the forms provided by the Society, the branch office should be notified of the person's name, the Scriptural reason for the disfellowshipping, and the date of the action. (S-77 and S-79 forms)

A brief review of the evidence that was presented should also be given.

A similar report is made when a person disassociates himself from the organization. (S-77 and S-79 forms)

A written summary of the case should be prepared by the committee and put in a sealed envelope to be placed in the congregation file.

If a disfellowshipped individual moves to a different area, no announcement of his disfellowshipped status should be made from the platform of the new congregation.

Publishers can be advised individually if they are inadvertently having association with such a one.

Matters Regarding Judicial Reproof

Reproof involves establishing wrongdoing and convincing the wrongdoer of the error.

Thus, administering judicial reproof includes more than just making a decision or announcing it. (*w*77 11/15 pp. 691-2)

The aim is to help the person stop doing what is bad and establish himself as a practicer of what is good.

Help him to understand how there may have been related sins, which were less serious, that led to his serious deflection from Jehovah's law.

Some wrongdoers may need to be judicially reproved with severity to bring them to repentance. (Titus 1:13)

At times it is appropriate to administer judicial reproof "before all onlookers." (1 Tim. 5:20)

Be sure to adhere to Scriptural and organizational guidelines when this is done. (*w*81 9/1 pp. 24, 26)

The "onlookers" may be those present as witnesses at the committee hearing or those who know of the sin.

If there are *good reasons* for it, an announcement of judicial reproof may be made to the congregation. (*w*88 11/15 p. 18; *w*81 9/1 pp. 26-7)

The degree or seriousness of the sin *is not* the determining factor for an announcement regarding judicial reproof.

In cases where sin is widely known or will no doubt become known, an announcement may be needed to safeguard the reputation of the congregation.

The committee may have *specific reasons* why the congregation needs to be somewhat on guard concerning the repentant wrongdoer. Perhaps he had been counseled several times concerning steps leading to the same wrongdoing.

In some cases the elders may feel it is necessary to warn the congregation about the type of conduct practiced.

If so and if no announcement is made, a talk may be

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given at any time outlining clearly what the Scriptures have to say on the subject.

If an announcement regarding judicial reproof is made, a few weeks after the announcement such a talk may be given.

Nothing should be said that would connect anyone with the type of sin being discussed. Rather, cover Scriptural principles outlining the seriousness of such sinful conduct and how to avoid it.

In all cases of judicial reproof, restrictions will be imposed.

If the wrongdoer is an elder, a ministerial servant, or a pioneer, he should be removed. (*w*77 11/15 pp. 697-8)

It is important that the judicial committee monitor the spiritual progress of a person who has been judicially restricted; appropriate counsel and spiritual encouragement should be given periodically. (*w*81 9/1 p. 27; *km* 3/75 p. 4)

Restrictions should be removed in due course as warranted by the individual's observed spiritual recovery.

If a brother who has recently been judicially reproved moves to another congregation, it is necessary to inform the elders of that congregation about any restrictions that may be in effect.

This will enable the elders in his new congregation to continue supervising the restoration of his privileges and help him toward full spiritual recovery.

No announcement of such previous judicial reproof is made in the new congregation. (*km* 3/75 p. 4)

Appealing Judicial Decisions

If the accused believes that an error in judgment was committed, he should make known in writing his reason for requesting an appeal, doing so within seven days from the time he was notified of the decision of the committee.

His written statement should be addressed to the judicial committee that decided the matter.

The judicial committee chairman will promptly contact the circuit overseer, who will then designate elders to serve on the appeal committee.

If possible, elders selected by the circuit overseer for hearing the appeal should not be from the same congregation as the original committee.

If the basis for the appeal is not clear in the written statement, try to determine which of the following is claimed:

He contends that a disfellowshipping offense was not committed.

He denies committing the alleged wrong.

He admits to wrongdoing but believes he was repentant.

The appeal should be heard even if the basis for it may not appear sound. (*km* 1/80 p. 4)

If the person should appeal after seven days, immediately contact the Society for direction.

The hearing is conducted in a manner similar to the first judicial committee hearing.

It may be necessary to rehear all the evidence relevant to the case, including that which was presented originally and any new evidence now available.

The judicial committee that heard the original case should be present at the appeal hearing(s).

Prior to the appeal hearing, the original committee should furnish the appeal committee with the completed S-77 and S-79 forms along with whatever written records it has from the first hearing(s).

If either the original committee or the accused believes that earlier testimony or evidence is being changed, this can be so stated following the presentation of the alleged altered evidence.

Following the presentation of the evidence, the appeal committee should deliberate in private.

The appeal committee may need to question either the original committee or the accused separately.

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The appeal committee is to determine whether there was an error in judgment or the decision was basically sound according to information available; it should also determine the attitude of the accused at the original committee hearing(s).

The appeal committee is to ascertain whether there was a Scriptural basis for the original action taken and whether the individual was repentant *at the time of the hearing by the original judicial committee.*

There may be mitigating circumstances the committee overlooked, such as a history of some type of abuse when a child, emotional or mental disorders, or other.

While these do not justify wrongdoing, understanding the underlying reason or causes of emotional or mental problems can help the committee to reach a balanced and compassionate judgment. (*w*90 2/15 pp. 21-3; *w*83 10/1 pp. 27-31)

The wrongdoer may admit guilt on a disfellowshipping charge but claim that at the time of the original judicial committee hearing, he was repentant. (*w*83 1/1 pp. 30-1)

The appeal committee will examine evidence to see if he had genuinely repented. (Unit 5 (b) pp. 112-15; *w*81 9/1 pp. 25-6)

The appeal committee may find that while the original basis for disfellowshipping was invalid, other valid grounds for disfellowshipping exist.

If this happens, the individual should be given sufficient time, even several days if needed, to present any evidence or witnesses that he feels will disprove the new allegations.

If the new allegations are nonetheless established and if the person does not demonstrate genuine repentance, the appeal committee may decide to disfellowship on these new grounds.

The appeal committee should then inform the accused of its decision to uphold the disfellowshipping and

should also inform him of the steps he needs to take to gain reinstatement.

New S-77 and S-79 forms should be made out giving the proper information, and these along with the original forms and correspondence related to the case should be sent to the branch office.

When the disfellowshipping is upheld by the appeal committee, there is no further right to appeal. However, if an individual persists in believing a serious error in judgment has occurred, the appeal committee should inform him that he may submit his allegations in writing to the appeal committee within seven days for transmittal to the branch office.

The appeal committee will include this statement along with the information being sent to the branch office.

No announcement of disfellowshipping should be made until observations are received from the branch office.

If no written claim of a serious error in judgment has been provided to the appeal committee within seven days (as outlined above), the appeal committee should send in the S-77 and S-79 forms and tell the original committee to announce the disfellowshipping.

If the appeal committee disagrees with the decision to disfellowship, the decision should be discussed with the original judicial committee privately.

If both committees agree that the person should not be disfellowshipped, the individual should be so advised.

The appeal committee will send the branch office a brief explanation of the mutual conclusion not to disfellowship reached by both committees, which should clearly state that the original judicial committee agrees with the decision.

The original committee will receive a copy of the letter, which will be kept in a sealed envelope in the congregation's confidential file.

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Where there is evidence of *conspiracy* between individuals to put away their mates and marry each other, considerable time should elapse before a hearing for reinstatement may be held. (*w*79 11/15 pp. 31-2)

If it is determined that the wrongdoer is sincerely repentant, has discontinued his former wrong conduct, and is doing works that befit repentance, he can be reinstated. (Compare Acts 26:20.)

The decision to reinstate is made by a judicial committee of the congregation that took the disfellowshipping action. The secretary should sign and return the S-79b card to the Society immediately. (*om* pp. 149-50)

If the disfellowshipped person has moved, his request for reinstatement may be heard by a local judicial committee where he is now attending meetings. Thereafter, that committee will give the body of elders of the congregation that disfellowshipped the individual its recommendation.

If the two congregations are reasonably close to each other, the judicial committee of the congregation that took the disfellowshipping action should meet with the disfellowshipped individual after receiving the recommendation of the committee of the congregation where he made his plea for reinstatement.

Reinstatement is announced in the congregation where the person was disfellowshipped as well as in the congregation where he now attends.

When an individual is reinstated, he will still need much spiritual assistance.

The elders should see that definite arrangements are made to help the person regain spiritual health and strength. (Col. 2:7; Titus 2:1, 2)

They may arrange for a Bible study to be conducted, which would be reported as field service.

Restrictions should be imposed to help the person see the need of continuing to make 'straight paths for his feet' and also out of consideration for the congregation's conscience. (Heb. 12:13)

The privilege of sharing in the field service is restored when the individual is reinstated.

Other privileges, such as commenting at meetings, handling parts on the program, and offering prayer at meetings, can be restored progressively when it is determined that the individual has progressed spiritually to the point that he is qualified and when it is judged by the elders that the extending of such privileges will not be offensive to the congregation.

It will be up to the elders of the congregation where he now is located to decide when certain privileges may be restored.

Circumstances of each case govern the length of time that should elapse before *recommending a reinstated brother* for additional privileges and responsibility.

Carefully consider possible effects if the individual were to be appointed. Would it be a *cause for stumbling* among the brothers?

The privilege of serving as ministerial servant or elder can be recommended only after he has had ample time to *prove* himself to be irreprehensible and is again "free from accusation" and has "freeness of speech." (1 Tim. 3:2, 9, 10, 13)

He must live down the reproach and build up a convincing record of righteousness, which may take a number of years.

If wrongdoing occurred in another congregation, the feelings of members of that congregation should be considered.

In cases of scandal, he might not be able to live down his wrongdoing sufficiently to qualify for an appointment to serve as a ministerial servant or an elder for a very long time.

An individual continuing employment directly involved with gambling or employment making him a *clear accomplice* or *promoter* of a wrong practice would be subject to disfellowshipping after being allowed time, usually 90 days, to make the needed adjustment. (*km* 9/76 pp. 3-6)

God's Word counsels all Christians to be *law-abiding*. (Rom. 13:1; Titus 3:1)

Christians are to pay to Caesar what is Caesar's and should obey the laws of the land in all matters where there is no conflict with God's law. (Matt. 22:21; Rom. 13:1; *w*90 11/1 pp. 10-15, 18-28)

By doing this, they have no need to fear being punished by the authorities as lawbreakers, and each one can maintain a good conscience. (Rom. 13:3-5; 1 Pet. 3:16)

When human laws conflict with God's law, true Christians follow the example of the apostles of Jesus Christ. (Acts 4:19, 20; 5:29-32)

In all business matters, Christians should endeavor to maintain a fine reputation.

They should not be a part of any business that is forbidden by Caesar's law or engage in business practices that are illegal.

It is wise to avoid making purchases from or employing the services of individuals or businesses known to be illegal in their operation.

A person's employment should also be honorable so that it will not become a cause for reproach or stumbling.

Following Scriptural counsel protects a Christian from consequences of lawbreaking and protects his conscience. (Rom. 13:3, 5)

If the elders learn of illegal activity or of some serious crime on the part of a member of the congregation, they may not be obliged by law to report the offender or the offense to secular authorities.

Though it is not the responsibility of the Christian congregation to enforce Caesar's laws, yet the very nature of some crimes demands that they be reported to secular authorities.

It may be necessary to encourage the wrongdoer to turn himself in to secular authorities. Before any steps are taken in this regard, contact the branch office. Of course, review the latest Society directives on such matters before proceeding.

Although not enforcers of Caesar's laws, in cases that also involve the breaking of God's law, elders must give consideration to what has taken place.

Depending on the wrongdoing committed, a judicial committee hearing may be needed.

As suggested by the apostle Paul's comments regarding Onesimus, a person who was guilty of illegal activities before coming to a knowledge of the truth is not required to settle these things with the authorities prior to baptism. (Philem. 10-18; *w*78 9/15 pp. 30-1)

A former thief would not be required to make restitution to all from whom he stole before baptism, although in some cases his conscience may move him to do so. (Luke 19:8)

The blood of Jesus Christ covers the sins of such new ones. They may get baptized. However, it is best to be judicious as to extending additional privileges. (Isa. 1:18; 1 Tim. 2:5, 6; 1 John 1:7)

If a person approaching baptism is an *illegal alien,* he should be urged to do what he can to rectify his status with regard to the law of the land. (*w*77 3/15 pp. 191-2)

The Christian congregation today follows a course harmonious with the Biblical pattern of the apostle's dealing with the case of Onesimus. (Philem. 8-22)

Overseers are not to police the lives of the brothers, nor are they obligated to become acquainted with all the details of civil and criminal law so as to enforce these. Just as they do not check to see if someone's home meets every detail of the building

code, they do not investigate in order to determine whether a person has satisfied every detail as to his legal situation in the country before allowing him to get baptized or to continue in the congregation.

Baptism would not be denied such a person, but he would not be viewed as exemplary and would not be used in any responsible position in the congregation. The same would apply to a person who uses fraudulent or illegal identification.

A brother who has notified the authorities of his illegal status and filed papers to resolve his situation would not be restricted as to representing the congregation in prayer, sharing in teaching, or being appointed as a pioneer, a ministerial servant, or an elder if otherwise qualified.

Such privileges may be extended even though the authorities do not act promptly on his request for permission to remain in the country. He is no longer a fugitive.

Certain disputes between brothers should not be taken to *secular courts* but should be resolved in harmony with Jesus' counsel at Matthew 18:15-17. (Unit 5 (b) p. 108)

At 1 Corinthians 6:1-8, the apostle Paul gave strong counsel that Christians should not take other Christians before secular courts to settle personal disputes that should be settled with the help of the congregation elders. (*g*83 2/8 pp. 13-15; *w*77 3/1 p. 147; *w*73 11/15 pp. 703-4)

For some disputes, a neutral brother, or elders, may act as arbitrator.

If an individual ignores God's Word on this matter, it *may* affect his congregation privileges.

However, there are legal matters over which the congregation does not have authority and which may therefore be taken to a secular court for judgment without violating the principle or the spirit of 1 Corinthians 6:1-8. These include:

Getting a divorce decree, child custody and support, alimony.

Obtaining insurance compensation.

If a person suffers loss or is injured in or by an automobile owned by a spiritual brother, it might be necessary legally to sue the brother in order to obtain compensation from the brother's insurer.

Being listed among creditors in bankruptcy procedures.

Probating wills.

Certain countersuits. For example:

If a *worldly creditor* sues a brother, it might be necessary for the brother, for his own protection, to file a countersuit even though spiritual brothers are included in the action.

If a brother takes legal action against another baptized Witness, it would not be a violation of 1 Corinthians 6:1-8 for the one being sued to defend himself or to countersue. (This is true whether the matter was first taken before the elders or not.)

Jehovah's Witnesses *maintain neutrality* with regard to the political and military affairs of the nations. (John 17:16; *rs* pp. 269-76)

They do not interfere with what others do as to voting in political elections, running for or campaigning for political offices, joining nonneutral organizations, shouting political slogans, and so forth. (*w*86 9/1 pp. 19-20; *w*68 6/1 pp. 351-2)

Since true dedicated Christians are "no part of the world," if a member of the congregation unrepentantly pursues a course in violation of his Christian neutrality, he thereby disassociates himself from the neutral Christian congregation. (John 15:19; 17:14-16; *w*82 1/15 p. 31)

Elders should talk to one known to be contemplating taking such a course, since he may be doing so in ignorance. (Ps. 119:67; Gal. 6:1; 1 Tim. 1:13)

If he disregards the help proffered and pursues a course in violation of Christian neutrality, a committee should send the facts substantiating the disassociation to the branch office on the S-77 and S-79 forms.

Illustration: A plumb line must be carefully used if a building is to be erected properly. (Amos 7:7, 8; compare Zechariah 4:10.)

If any of Jehovah's people do not meet the test of uprightness in a spiritual way, Jehovah will mete out discipline with justice.

Decisions of elders must reflect justice in imitation of Jehovah's ways. (Isa. 32:1)

Jehovah tempers justice with mercy when this is warranted. (Ezek. 33:14-16)

Mercy is not limited to the withholding of measured punishment when justly due; it also expresses kind consideration or pity that brings relief to those who are disadvantaged and in need of help. (*it*-2 p. 376)

Mercy lightens judgment, or punishment, and brings relief when circumstances allow for it. (Ps. 103:8-10; Jas. 2:13)

Mercy also involves the way in which needed correction and discipline are given.

Mercy takes into consideration such matters as motive, provocation, willingness to confess, temptation, mental and emotional condition, degree of spiritual progress made, past conduct, and present attitude of the offender.

Elders must guard against automatic or letter-of-the-law application of punishment for breaking God's laws.

Administering Christian law in justice and with mercy requires:

Decisions that are fair and appropriate to the need. (Isa. 28:24-28; *w*76 12/1 p. 719; *w*75 9/1 pp. 517-18)

Applying punishment to fit the violation.

Allowance for mercy when there are extenuating circumstances.

Enforcing with impartiality the laws that carry sanctions. (Deut. 1:16, 17)

Getting all the facts before making a decision. (Prov. 18: 13, 17)

Avoiding becoming unnecessarily involved in personal disputes. (Prov. 26:17; see Unit 5 (b), page 108.)

Expelling (by disfellowshipping) those who flout God's household law and unrepentantly contaminate the congregation. (1 Cor. 5:9, 13; Titus 3:10)

Making clear to disfellowshipped ones that upon displaying works befitting repentance and turning around, they may apply for reinstatement. (2 Cor. 2:6-8)

Each judicial case is different and must be judged on its own merits.

Some people have inherited or acquired stronger faulty inclinations than others have and may therefore need more than the usual direction or counsel to correct their course. (Jonah 4:11; Mark 6:34)

Need for a Righteous Judiciary

Elders should make serious efforts to expand their ability to be righteous judges.

Use direction provided by the Society.

Be sure all decisions are solidly based on the Scriptures.

Before handling any judicial matter, wisely make a practice of carefully reviewing Units 5 (a), 5 (b), and 5 (c), taking special note of the cited scriptures.

When elders rely primarily on past experience or fail to review this material before handling a judicial matter, they frequently overlook important points.

Since the lives of all Christians are precious to Jehovah, the elders cannot afford to be careless or indifferent. You must "render an account." (Heb. 13:17)

Elders selected to serve on judicial or appeal committees should be outstandingly discerning and trustworthy men.

If the wrongdoer or one accused is known to have strong feelings respecting an elder being considered to serve, it would be better that the elder not serve.

An elder who is related to the accused person, has been in business with him, or has had a special friendship with him should not normally serve on the committee. (*km* 9/77 p. 6)

The judicial committee needs to be consistent, firm, and loving in its dealings and decisions.

Work interdependently as a committee. (1 Cor. 12: 21-25)

Listen to fellow members on the judicial committee; benefit from one another's observations.

God's spirit can direct any one of the elders to make a valuable contribution to the thinking of the judicial committee. (Prov. 27:17; Eccl. 4:9)

When questions arise, do not be hasty in deciding the matter. Do research in the Society's publications. If answers cannot be found and further direction is really needed, write to the Society; if the matter is urgent, telephone during business hours.

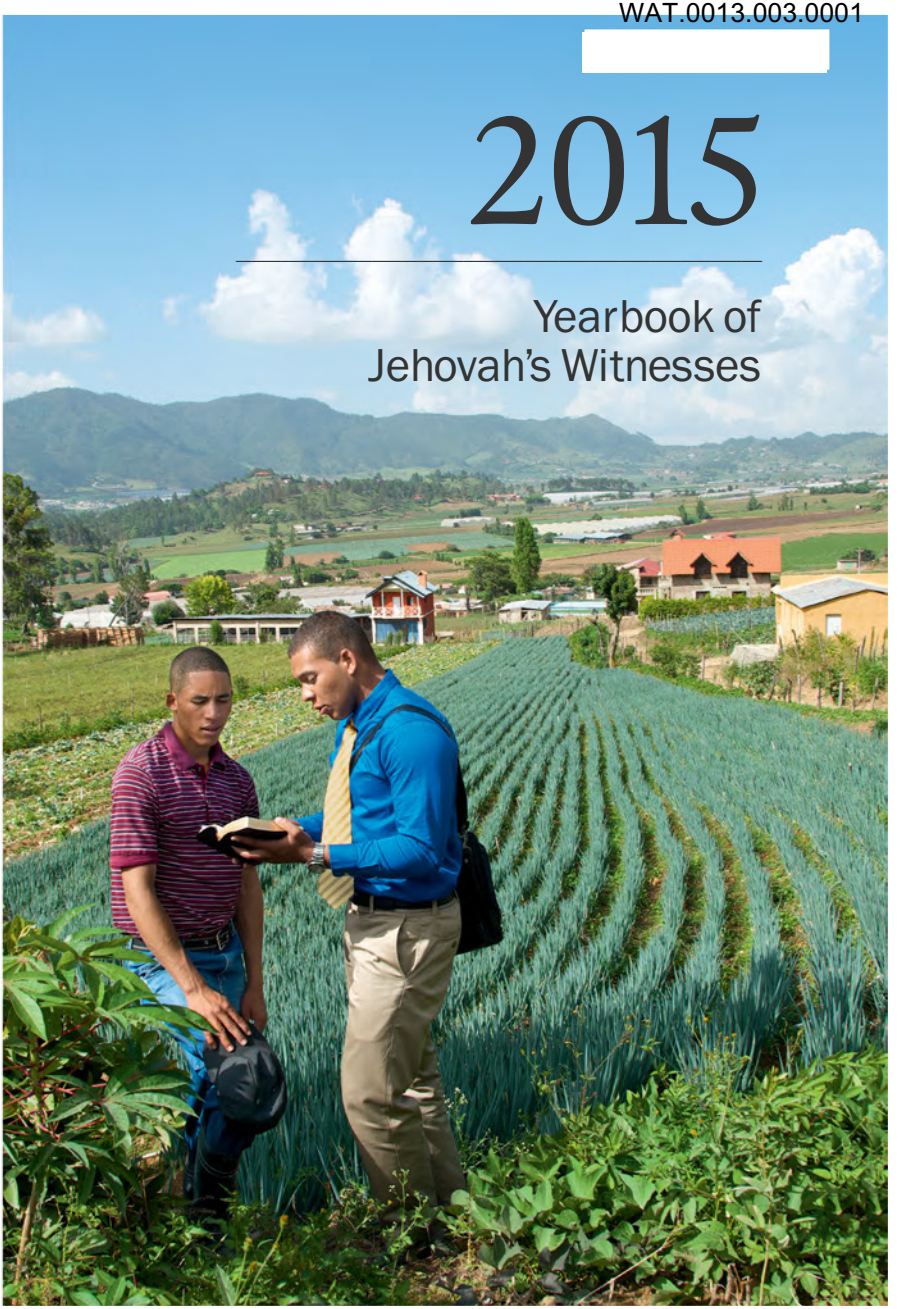
Elders serving as a committee of judges should imitate the example of Jehovah and Jesus, dealing impartially and justly with all persons. (Lev. 19:15; John 5:30; 8:28)

By your conscientiously exercising justice tempered by mercy, you give evidence that Jehovah's organization is governed by him. His theocratically organized people will therefore continue to grow in righteousness. (1 Sam. 12:22)

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2015

Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses



2015 YEARBOOK OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES / DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

yb15-E

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After serving a prison term for his Christian neutrality, a brother in Armenia reunites with his parents



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Our colorfully dressed Dominican brothers and sisters

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2015 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses
English (*yb15*-E)

Made in the United States of America

2014 Grand Totals

Branches of Jehovah's Witnesses:	90
Number of Lands Reporting:	239
Total Congregations:	115,416
Worldwide Memorial Attendance:	19,950,019
Memorial Partakers Worldwide:	14,121
Peak of Publishers in Kingdom Service:	8,201,545
Average Publishers Preaching Each Month:	7,867,958
Percentage of Increase Over 2013:	2.2
Total Number Baptized:	275,581
Average Auxiliary Pioneer Publishers Each Month:	635,298
Average Pioneer Publishers Each Month:	1,089,446
Total Hours Spent in Field:	1,945,487,604
Average Home Bible Studies Each Month:	9,499,933

During the 2014 service year, Jehovah's Witnesses spent over $224 million in caring for special pioneers, missionaries, and traveling overseers in their field service assignments. ■ Worldwide, a total of 24,711 ordained ministers staff the branch facilities. All are members of the Worldwide Order of Special Full-Time Servants of Jehovah's Witnesses.

2014 Service Year Report
of Jehovah's Witnesses Worldwide

Letter and number following each country's name indicates the country's location on maps following this chart.

Country or Territory	Population	2014 Peak Pubs.	Ratio, 1 Publisher to	2014 Av. Pubs.	% Inc. Over 2013	2013 Av. Pubs.	2014 No. Bptzd.	Av. Aux. Pio. Pubs.	Av. Pio. Pubs.	No. of Congs.	Total Hours	Av. Bible Studies	Memorial Attendance
Albania (D-11)	3,204,000	5,351	599	5,190	5	4,923	267	766	1,175	82	1,976,622	6,349	13,151
American Samoa (N-26)	56,608	233	243	218	2	213	6	12	31	3	59,659	331	832
Andorra (F-4)	78,000	175	446	169	4	163		16	18	3	36,336	101	328
Angola (N-6)	19,813,180	108,607	182	102,753	9	94,182	7,025	6,788	12,329	1,432	28,709,394	449,984	414,639
Anguilla (O-32)	13,400	80	168	64	-6	68		3	3	2	12,353	90	315
Antigua (P-32)	81,000	490	165	478	-1	481	15	37	42	7	101,558	512	1,308
Argentina (N-36)	42,670,000	150,171	284	145,277	1	143,620	4,764	14,596	18,859	1,984	35,508,416	126,661	307,654
Armenia (G-9)	3,026,900	11,143	272	10,978		10,965	389	1,339	2,205	135	3,522,853	7,570	23,844
Aruba (Q-29)	107,397	965	111	931	2	915	29	65	67	12	176,443	999	2,772
Australia (O-19)	23,595,521	68,635	344	66,484	1	65,596	1,275	5,364	5,472	788	12,541,068	29,431	117,122
Austria (F-5)	8,504,850	21,319	399	20,990	1	20,873	416	1,588	1,372	298	3,852,446	11,668	34,521
Azerbaijan (G-9)	9,477,100	1,282	7,392	1,220	6	1,149	42	183	296	12	481,152	1,864	2,616
Azores (G-1)	247,599	762	325	748		748	27	64	86	15	184,920	861	1,761
Bahamas (G-35)	382,600	1,875	204	1,630	2	1,594	42	132	209	27	395,533	2,106	4,604
Bangladesh (J-14)	151,125,475	233	648,607	211	17	181	14	16	71	5	85,860	464	764
Barbados (Q-33)	285,916	2,606	110	2,524	1	2,492	51	232	209	30	492,637	2,371	6,608
Belarus (E-7)	9,468,000	5,767	1,642	5,579	5	5,300	212	651	1,245	72	1,964,128	5,008	10,247
Belgium (E-4)	11,132,269	25,839	431	24,531	1	24,243	516	1,855	1,579	374	4,266,059	10,598	44,635
Belize (H-33)	340,400	2,552	133	2,425	3	2,352	105	193	451	59	722,694	4,176	8,599
Benin (L-4)	10,703,000	12,167	880	11,352	4	10,872	635	1,028	1,492	175	3,325,248	27,927	43,619
Bermuda (F-36)	65,500	544	120	463	1	457	20	31	81	5	120,886	334	1,036
Bolivia (M-36)	10,027,254	24,850	404	23,976	4	23,014	1,185	2,966	4,298	305	7,776,518	41,357	76,283
Bonaire (Q-30)	18,779	132	142	116	5	110		8	12	2	27,457	162	347
Bosnia and Herzegovina (C-10)	3,871,643	1,212	3,194	1,180		1,182	68	132	189	16	352,300	593	2,123
Botswana (O-6)	2,039,000	2,216	920	2,122	3	2,070	94	195	256	48	563,690	4,404	6,531
Brazil (L-37)	203,067,835	794,766	256	767,449	2	748,940	29,870	60,096	84,550	11,562	170,475,134	841,136	1,728,208
Britain (E-3)	62,300,000	138,515	450	134,308	1	132,515	2,928	10,143	12,187	1,571	25,243,619	58,890	230,577
Bulgaria (F-7)	7,284,500	2,241	3,251	2,149	6	2,026	67	191	559	50	816,510	3,019	5,954
Burkina Faso (K-3)	17,581,000	1,767	9,950	1,598	2	1,563	77	146	257	44	500,157	3,235	5,425
Burundi (M-7)	9,069,000	12,773	710	11,852	7	11,082	870	1,293	1,702	256	3,991,209	34,599	55,203
Cambodia (K-16)	14,364,931	852	16,860	802	17	684	43	47	449	14	423,768	2,147	2,012
Cameroon (L-5)	20,653,254	39,121	528	37,319	3	36,288	1,228	2,720	3,802	329	9,375,553	72,194	97,497
Canada (C-31)	35,427,524	116,312	305	113,617		113,111	2,049	10,304	11,849	1,390	23,680,391	53,048	188,202
Cape Verde (K-1)	538,535	2,086	258	2,042	2	1,995	77	162	408	35	641,421	4,410	8,119
Cayman Islands (H-34)	59,200	237	250	228	2	223	5	18	34	3	58,728	236	703
Central African Republic (L-6)	4,616,417	2,585	1,786	2,471	-1	2,491	123	170	303	53	651,614	6,778	12,736
Chad (K-6)	12,825,314	749	17,123	646	3	628	39	38	73	17	168,213	1,178	4,328
Chile (M-35)	17,556,815	78,472	224	74,498	1	73,658	2,491	8,094	11,074	933	19,940,484	65,537	178,353
Chuuk (L-21)	48,651	58	839	48	9	44	4	6	11	1	20,129	154	233
Colombia (J-35)	48,771,000	166,049	294	161,876	3	157,395	7,614	12,168	22,337	2,477	40,758,876	229,723	510,217

INDEX TO LETTERS FOR BODIES OF ELDERS



May 26, 2015

CONFIDENTIAL (RC)

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Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia
Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses

Index to Letters for Bodies of Elders
English (S-22-E Au)

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WATCHTOWER
BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA
PO BOX 280, INGLEBURN, NSW 1890 AUSTRALIA ABN 42 002 861 225
PHONE: (02) 9829 5600
FAX: (02) 9829 3616

November 6, 2014

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Re: Procedures when legal issues are involved

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Dear Brothers:

1. This letter replaces the letter dated October 1, 2014, to all bodies of elders on the same subject. That letter should be removed from the congregation permanent file of policy letters and be destroyed. The only significant adjustment is found in paragraph 7 with regard to broadcasting confidential meetings.

2. Elders carry a heavy responsibility in these "critical times." (2 Tim. 3:1) You must teach and shepherd the flock, set a good example in field service, maintain good spiritual habits, and care for your families' spiritual, emotional, and physical needs. We very much appreciate and commend you for your sincere efforts to care for each of these responsibilities.

3. Your task is made more challenging by the fact that we live in a complex society in which people have become increasingly proud, greedy, and litigious. (2 Tim. 3:2-4) Further, in response to growing social problems, governments at times enact laws that impose additional responsibilities on the ministers of all religions. As Christians, we recognize Jehovah's supreme authority and obey laws of the land that do not conflict with God's law. (Matt. 22:21; Rom. 13:1, 2) It is therefore important that as elders you act wisely and with discernment and always follow the organization's procedures and directions for handling congregation matters that involve legal issues.—Prov. 2:6-9.

4. Direction on handling child abuse matters can be found in separate correspondence. However, we are pleased to provide consolidated direction on handling other congregation matters involving legal issues. Please give this information your prayerful consideration.

CONFIDENTIALITY

5. As overseers, you are often entrusted with knowledge of sensitive and confidential information. Elders must be careful **never to divulge confidential information to persons who are not authorized to receive it.** There is "a time to be silent" and a time when "your words should be few." (Eccl. 3:7; 5:2) Proverbs 10:19 warns: "When words are many, transgression cannot be avoided, but whoever controls his lips acts discreetly." Unnecessary spiritual and legal problems result when elders unwisely reveal matters that should be kept confidential. You must therefore give special heed to the counsel: "Do not reveal what you were told confidentially." (Prov. 25:9) When

elders disregard this counsel, trust in the elder body is threatened.—*w96* 3/15 p. 18 par. 12; *w91* 11/15 p. 23 par. 19; *w87* 9/1 pp. 12-15.

6. If an elder were to breach confidentiality, he could subject himself and the organization to civil liability. In addition, an elder's breach of confidentiality could result in a legal waiver of the minister-communicant privilege or the solicitor-client privilege. The minister-communicant privilege generally prevents an elder, under specific circumstances, from having to disclose confidential communications between the elder and a member of the congregation, and the solicitor-client privilege generally protects an elder from having to disclose confidential communications between the elder and his solicitor.

7. **Wireless communication:** It is also important to avoid *inadvertently* revealing confidential information. While what is presented at our meetings and assemblies is generally not confidential, on occasion meetings are held that are of a confidential nature. For example, the branch office may sponsor schools for congregation elders and ministerial servants held at a Kingdom Hall. On such occasions, we have no objection to the use of wireless microphones as long as the broadcast range does not go beyond the classrooms and/or the intended audience. If the Kingdom Hall uses an FM transmitter, be sure this is turned off during confidential meetings.

8. When calling the branch office or when otherwise discussing confidential matters by phone with persons entitled to such information, make sure that no one—including family members—can overhear the conversation. For such conversations, it is permissible to use a cordless *digital* telephone. Cordless *analog* telephones do not provide adequate privacy and should not be used. If you are not certain whether you have a *digital* cordless telephone, it may be best to use a landline telephone. Therefore, please make sure that your telephone is not a cordless *analog* telephone.

9. Most cellular telephone providers today have replaced older analog networks with more secure digital networks. These signals are encrypted and considered to be secure from people seeking to monitor conversations. Therefore, cellular telephones may be used when calling the branch office or when discussing confidential matters with fellow elders.

10. **When someone seeks confidential information:** You should never reveal confidential information to anyone unless theocratic procedure requires it or the branch office has instructed you to do so. (Persons seeking confidential information may include an investigator, a solicitor, a policeman, a detective, other law enforcement officers or government officials, school personnel, parties to a lawsuit, family members [whether they are Jehovah's Witnesses or not], and even other elders or other persons who may not be entitled to the information.) This applies to written materials and unwritten knowledge possessed by the elders. It applies to records pertaining to a particular case and general materials, such as letters from the organization, the *Shepherding* textbook, and the *Organized* book. Even when secular authorities request confidential information, you are not obligated to answer questions before consulting the branch office. (*ks10* chap. 6 par. 19) You should then ask to speak to the Legal Department. Oftentimes secular authorities request confidential information to which they are not legally entitled. Thus, you could subject yourself and the organization to civil liability if you reveal such confidential information.

11. If any unauthorized person seeks confidential information from you, simply state: "As a minister I have a duty to keep certain matters confidential and need to obtain legal advice concerning my position before answering any questions." There is no need to state that you will be contacting the Legal Department. If the inquiring party presses for more information about a confidential matter or for the identity of your solicitor, do not be intimidated by threats and do not make any

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other statements. Simply ask for the person's name, telephone number, title, and the office he represents, and tell him that you will need to talk to your solicitor before you respond to his request. Then, call the Legal Department immediately for legal direction.

12. **Subpoenas:** A subpoena is an official written demand for oral testimony or records. If you receive a subpoena, or if you hear that one may be issued seeking oral or written information from someone concerning a congregation matter, call the Legal Department immediately. If possible, have the subpoena that has been served on hand when you make the call, and be prepared to fax a copy of it. **Never turn over records, notes, or other documents or reveal any confidential matter** sought by subpoena without first receiving legal direction from the Legal Department. Many documents and records in congregation files may be protected from disclosure based on the minister-communicant privilege or the solicitor-client privilege. If you receive a subpoena intended for someone else, call the Legal Department immediately, even before you contact the party for whom the subpoena was intended. If someone threatens to get a subpoena for congregation-related records or testimony, call the Legal Department immediately, even if no actual subpoena has yet been served.

CRIMES AND CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

13. **Handling reports of the abuse of elderly and disabled persons:** At times, the law may require ministers to report the abuse of elderly and disabled persons to the authorities. Elders should therefore call the Legal Department for legal advice whenever they receive an allegation that an elderly or disabled person has been abused. Adult abuse can be physical, sexual, or emotional and can include neglect or abandonment by a caretaker, self-neglect, forced labor, and financial or other types of exploitation. We want to do all we can to protect elderly and disabled persons from harm, in harmony with the principles of God's Word that direct us to have tender compassion for disadvantaged ones.—Ps. 72:13, 14.

14. **Handling reports of crimes:** When the elders learn of alleged criminal activity on the part of one of Jehovah's Witnesses or someone associated with the congregation as the accused or the victim, they should immediately call the Legal Department. In some cases, the elders will form a judicial committee to handle alleged wrongdoing that may also constitute a violation of criminal law (e.g., murder, rape, child abuse, fraud, theft, assault). Generally, the elders should not delay the judicial committee process, but the branch office should be contacted for direction before doing so. Strict confidentiality must be maintained to avoid unnecessary entanglement with secular authorities who may be conducting a criminal investigation of the matter. For example, even the fact that a judicial committee has been formed should not be disclosed to persons not entitled to know. (*ks10* chap. 6 par. 18) In addition, the Legal Department should be contacted for legal advice on how to protect confidentiality that is specific to the circumstances of the case.

15. **Search warrants:** Elders should never give consent for anyone to search a Kingdom Hall or any other place where confidential records are stored. Conscientious elders do all they reasonably and peaceably can to preserve the confidentiality of the congregation in harmony with the principle set out in Acts 5:29. However, law enforcement officers do not need your consent if they have a search warrant. A search warrant is a court order authorizing the authorities to search certain premises to locate evidence that may be used in a criminal prosecution.

16. If a law enforcement officer claims to have a search warrant, ask to see and read it. If your request is denied, tell the officer that you do not consent to the search, but do not try to physically stop him. Then, whether you have been allowed to read the search warrant or not, call the Legal Department immediately for legal advice. If for some reason you are not allowed to call or you

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are unable to contact the Legal Department at that moment, call as soon as possible. If the authorities threaten to get a search warrant to look for congregation records or other confidential information, call the Legal Department immediately, even if the warrant has not yet been issued.—*ks10* chap. 6 par. 19.

17. **Restraining orders or orders of protection:** At times an individual will obtain a restraining order or apprehended violence order. The elders should not try to read, understand, or enforce a restraining order between private parties, and neither should an elder try to provide legal advice. If anyone asks the elders any questions about the restraining order, politely tell the person that a restraining order is a personal legal matter that does not involve the congregation. Thereafter, the elders should call the Legal Department immediately for direction.

DISRUPTIVE INDIVIDUALS AT CONGREGATION MEETINGS

18. It is best to ignore trivial or minor disturbances created by individuals at congregation meetings. But if an individual persists in this course of action and is distracting others, two elders should ask him to leave. If a second elder is not readily available, a mature ministerial servant can be asked by an elder to join him. If the disruptive individual refuses to leave, you should inform him that if he does not leave and continues to distract others, you will contact the police to have them deal with him. If the individual does not cooperate, you should telephone the police. When the police arrive, you may inform them that the individual is causing a disturbance and that his implied invitation to attend the meeting has been revoked. You may also inform the police that you are willing to file trespassing charges if it seems prudent and necessary under the circumstances. If you feel the need for further direction, please contact the Service Department.

19. Elders wisely avoid being provoked into physically removing a disruptive person from the premises, as the individual may be attempting to create a basis for legal action. Thus, the elders should generally not try to forcibly remove a disruptive individual from the Kingdom Hall. If an individual is violent from the outset, the police can be called immediately. There is no need to warn him. In the event that a person is physically attacked, that person has the right to defend himself from harm, and the elders should do what they reasonably can to help protect the individual. If those who are being physically attacked are unable to flee from an assailant who appears determined to cause injury, a Christian may try to ward off such attacks and even strike out in defense if necessary. Of course, any such defensive action would be solely to protect oneself or others from the attacker until the police arrive.—*g91* 7/8 p. 13; *g87* 11/22 p. 28.

SUICIDES AND ATTEMPTED OR THREATENED SUICIDES

20. At times, judicial committees may deal with someone who is so distraught that he attempts or threatens to commit suicide. In such cases it may be best for the committee to suspend the hearing and focus on helping the person to regain his balance. In any event, the elders should treat the person with extreme thoughtfulness and kindness. (*ks10* chap. 5 par. 4; chap. 6 par. 16) Whether a family member or close friend with knowledge of the suicide threat or suicide attempt reports it to authorities is a personal decision for him to make. (Gal. 6:5) Elders should not discourage anyone from reporting the matter. Family members who are aware of the suicide threat or attempt should be encouraged to take positive steps to prevent the person from harming himself.

WHEN LAWSUITS ARE THREATENED

21. Elders should call the Legal Department immediately when they learn of any threatened legal action or actual lawsuit against the organization, congregation, or elders. If you are contacted by a solicitor or the media regarding a threatened or actual lawsuit before you have had an oppor-

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tunity to call the Legal Department, get the caller's name, law office name, telephone numbers, deadline, and cause of action, and let the caller know you will try to call them back before that deadline. Then call the Legal Department immediately for assistance. No elder should make any statement about the merits or validity of an actual or threatened lawsuit before calling the Legal Department.—*ks10* chap. 6 par. 18.

CHILD CUSTODY

22. The Legal Department may be in a position to provide some assistance to publishers who are involved in lawsuits over child custody and access matters where our religious beliefs are under attack. For those facing secular issues on child custody or visitation, helpful information can be found in the October 2009 *Awake!,* pages 21 and 27; the December 8, 1997, *Awake!,* pages 3-12; the chart found in the April 22, 1991, *Awake!,* page 9; and the October 22, 1988, *Awake!,* pages 2-14.

23. Elders should not make any promises to publishers about the organization's involvement, but should initially contact the Legal Department and explain the details involved with the matter. Once this has been done, a decision can be made whether or not assistance is appropriate and, if so, how best to provide it.

WHEN A PUBLISHER HAS A PERSONAL LEGAL QUESTION

24. At times, publishers may approach elders with personal legal questions. Elders should not give legal advice to publishers. Kindly tell the publisher that you are not qualified to give legal advice and suggest that he consult his own legal counsel. Of course, if an elder happens to be a lawyer, he may have clients who are Jehovah's Witnesses. In such cases, it is the elder's professional qualifications, and not his position as an elder in the congregation, that enable him to provide legal advice in his professional capacity to a fellow Witness. Any professional services that he renders would not be sponsored by the congregation but would be a private arrangement between a legal professional and his client. *Additionally, elders should never direct or suggest that publishers call or write the Legal Department to receive legal advice and direction regarding personal matters.*

NONNEUTRAL ACTIVITY

25. When reporting to the branch office that an individual has disassociated himself by engaging in nonneutral activity, the wording on the report should be in harmony with Scriptural guidelines. Please use such expressions as "violated neutrality" or "took a nonneutral course." Isaiah 2:4 and John 15:17-19 support these descriptions. Other expressions should not be used. The same caution is to be exercised in all correspondence with the branch office or with other congregations.—Each elder should adjust the notation next to the last bullet in paragraph 3 of chapter 9 in the *Shepherding* textbook to read as follows: "See letter dated November 6, 2014, regarding procedures when legal issues are involved."

DO NOT CALLS

26. If a householder insists that no further visits be made by Jehovah's Witnesses, a dated note should be placed in the territory envelope so that publishers working the territory in the future do not call at that address. Such direction would apply whether or not the householder has posted a sign indicating his wishes. Under the direction of the service overseer, elders should be assigned to visit these homes every two years. It could be explained that we are calling to inquire if the same householder still lives there. If there is a reasonable response, future calls can be made in the usual way. If the householder continues to insist that no further visits be made by Jehovah's Witnesses, no further visits should be made until two years pass. The local body of elders can decide if the circumstances in a particular case make it advisable to handle things differently.

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27. Elders bear a heavy responsibility in ministering to the needs of the Christian congregation while observing confidentiality and complying with Caesar's laws. (Rom. 13:1-4) We trust that the information in this letter will help you carry out this responsibility. Please be assured of our love and prayers, and may Jehovah continue to bless you as you shepherd his flock.—1 Pet. 5:1-3.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B.&T. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

c: Circuit overseers

PS to secretary:

This letter should be retained in the congregation permanent file of policy letters. You may wish to update the congregation copy of *Index to Letters for Bodies of Elders* (S-22) at this time as well.

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MILTON BRAY
& ASSOCIATES
Your Legal Solutions

20 July 2015

Mr Tony Guigni
Solicitor Assisting
Royal Commission into Institutional Responses
to Child Sexual Abuse
GPO Box 5283
SYDNEY NSW 2001

BY EMAIL

Dear Mr Guigni

Re: Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse ("Commission") – Analysis Summary – Comments and Verification

---

Thank you for your letter dated 16 July 2015, attaching your Analysis Summary of the Case Files.

In your letter, you asked my client to consider whether the Analysis Summary you attached "is inaccurate or incomplete" and asked my client to provide you with its assessment by 9.00 am today. As you will no doubt appreciate, although you provided us with the electronic database, the task that you asked my client to undertake was complex and required considerable work over the weekend.

While my client's response is set out under the heading "Verification of Analysis Summary" below, we make the following preliminary comments as to how Counsel Assisting intends to use the data.

Preliminary Comments

From paragraph 3 of your letter, it appears that the purpose of the exercise is to allow Counsel Assisting to "put some of the figures recorded in the Analysis Summary to witnesses from [our] client". It is not clear from your letter which figures you wish to use and for what purpose. Your letter is silent as to these aspects.

It will, however, greatly assist my client's witnesses' ability to answer such questions if you could indicate which of the 29 areas referred to in the Analysis Summary ("**Analysis**") will be the subject of questioning. We say this for the following two reasons.

First, if the purpose is to assist the Commission in its deliberations regarding Case Study 29, then that assistance will be enhanced if proper preparation is able to be given to the questions in order to ensure that considered, fact-based answers are provided. Otherwise, there is every chance my client's witnesses will be taken by surprise with the likely result that incomplete answers will be given.

The second, and more significant issue, is that my client is concerned that part of the Analysis steps outside the Terms of Reference which, of course, is into "institutional responses to child sexual abuse".

Familial Cases

It is apparent, for instance, from paragraph 3 of your Analysis, that the summary deals also with familial child abuse. It would appear to us that, on any view, the 564 cases falling into this category are matters unrelated to my client, in the sense that they are not related to the "institution" of my client's faith.

Further, this fact possibly distorts the analysis and presents an incomplete picture. For example, in relation to paragraph 2, no attempt is made to distinguish between the familial and non-familial cases (and thus possibly involving the Jehovah's Witnesses as a faith) in the 270 New South Wales cases set out or in the 306 Queensland cases etc. The same point may be made in relation to each of the paragraphs. Even with the paragraphs that deal specifically with positions held within my client's faith, the distinction is not drawn: for instance, paragraph 6 states "135 alleged perpetrators were elders or ministerial servants ….". Yet, it is entirely silent as to whether the alleged abuse was of a family member.

As is apparent from the Case Files, my client has taken complaints of child abuse very seriously for a number of decades (even prior to the requirements for mandatory reporting) and has kept careful records of such cases including familial abuse where the alleged abuser was a Jehovah's Witness. To elaborate on this point: as you will have seen from the extensive material provided by my client that forms the basis of your Analysis, my client's definition of abuse is very wide (and includes such behaviour as "sexting"). Moreover, every allegation of abuse is investigated.

As you will appreciate, however, and as indicated above, intra-family abuse has nothing to do with a person's religion and everything to do with the family. All Jehovah's Witnesses are free and, indeed, encouraged to report to the elders any child sexual abuse. The elders are then obliged to report matters to the Branch Office and, where required under mandatory reporting legislation, to the secular authorities. This includes familial abuse cases.

My client is concerned that unless the factors referred to above are incorporated into the Analysis, an incomplete picture will be provided to the Commission.

Verification of Analysis Summary

As indicated above, it has not been possible for my client to provide comprehensive assurances as to the accuracy or completeness of the Analysis in the time stipulated for such a response. As a result, it has concentrated on those areas it assumes are of most importance to the Commission, namely the non-familial cases and allegations against those who were elders and ministerial servants at the time of the abuse. It has therefore concentrated on the data summarised in paragraphs 6 - 7 and 25 - 29 of your letter.

My client is happy to provide further analysis but we will need further time to do so, if requested. In the meantime, my client does wish to make the following comments using your paragraph numbering:

1. *Paragraph 1* – You have determined that, since 1950, Watchtower Australia has recorded in the Case Files allegations, reports or complaints of child sexual abuse against 1006 members of Jehovah's Witnesses in Australia ("alleged perpetrators"). It is important to note that the total

number of case files include details of allegations received over the past 65 years, whether or not they could be established.

For decades, as you are aware, my client has retained all records where it has come to my client's attention that a person may have at some time in their past had an allegation of child sexual abuse levied against them, even where that allegation had no connection with the activities of the institution.

2. *Paragraphs 2-5* – Given the limited time within which to respond to your letter, my client is unable to provide any assurances as to the accuracy or completeness of information contained in paragraphs 2-5.

3. *Paragraph 6* – In the time my client has been able to consider your Analysis, it has undertaken a comprehensive review of all of the 135 Case Files that you identify in your electronic spreadsheet under the heading '*Role in church at time of first abuse'* (Column G) as being elders or ministerial servants at the time of the first alleged incident of abuse.

   As a result of that review, my client has identified the following alleged perpetrators who were incorrectly classified as to their role in the congregation at the time of the first alleged incident of abuse. We list those records below in Table 1 for your reference:

Table 1

Corrections required to 'Role of Alleged Perpetrator' (Column G)					
#	Name	Role at time of first abuse	#	Name	Role at time of first abuse
7	[redacted]	Parishioner	467	[redacted]	Elder
82		Pioneer	468		Not a JW member
91		Parishioner	486		Not a JW member
115		Ministerial Servant	540		Parishioner
121		Unclear	608		Unbaptised
141		Parishioner	615		Parishioner
177		Elder	653		Parishioner
197		Elder	669		Unclear
206		Parishioner	688		Parishioner
208		Parishioner	694		Parishioner
216		Not a JW member	771		Unclear
222		Unclear	799		Elder
232		Not a JW member	821		Parishioner
312		Unclear	867		Parishioner
345		Parishioner	868		Elder
378		Parishioner	877		Parishioner
415		Parishioner	927		Unclear
430		Ministerial Servant	929		Parishioner
452		Unclear	974		Ministerial Servant
464		Parishioner			

This review identified 31 persons who were not elders or ministerial servants at the time of the alleged abuse and clarified the role of a further 8 alleged perpetrators. As a result of these changes, my client was able to determine that an adjusted number of 104 alleged perpetrators held the position of either elder or ministerial servant at the time an allegation was made.

After adjusting the spreadsheet for accuracy in light of the above changes, and filtering the data at Columns G & H in order to differentiate the 104 alleged perpetrators between familial, elders and ministerial servants at the time of alleged abuse, my client notes the following further information:

Table 2

Alleged Incidents of Abuse (Elders and Ministerial Servants) (1950-2015)		
Status	**Comment** (Inc Case Analysis #)	**#**
Familial		**54**
Elders	#163,#197, #239, #321, #385, #395, #505, #575, #580, #606, #673, #752, #868, #889, #928, #934, #938, #942	**18**
Ministerial Servants	#9, #38, #89, #93, #98, #115, #129, #149, #158, #159, #192, #202, #308, #364, #410, #454, #477, #479, #494, #524, #534, #556, #602, #623, #754, #789, #832, #836, #969, #971, #974, #1004	**32**
	Total	**104**

When applying a further filter using Column K (headed 'Year of first abuse'), my client was able to identify the following cases relevant to a period covering the last 10 years. This information, along with supplementary information is summarised below:

Table 3

Alleged Incidents of Abuse (Elders and Ministerial Servants) (2005-2015)				
	Number of Alleged Incidents over past 10 years	Familial	Number of Alleged Perpetrators handled by secular authorities	Number of those Serving as an Elder or Ministerial Servant over the past 10 years
Elders	**2** (#239,#934)	0	2	8,507
Ministerial Servants	**3** (#98,#202,#1004)	1 (#834)	3	7,438

4. *Paragraph 7* – From the adjusted case data analysis my client has also been able to ascertain the following from filtering the electronic spreadsheet at Columns G & H:

Table 4

Alleged Perpetrators 'Role in Church at time of first abuse' (1950-2015)		
Status	**Comment**	**#**
Not Jehovah's Witness, Unbaptised or Status Unclear at the time of alleged abuse	No discernible link to the institution	**199**
Familial	Non Institutional	**470**
Parishioners	Only connection with the institution is that they were members of the same faith	**287**
Elders		**18**
Ministerial Servants		**32**
	Total	**1006**

Therefore, over a period of 65 years, the data shows that only 50 alleged perpetrators fall within the Commission's Terms of Reference.

5. *Paragraphs 8-24* – Unfortunately, given the time available, my client is accordingly unable to provide any assurances as to the accuracy or completeness of information contained in paragraphs 8-24.

My client wishes to comment, however, on paragraphs 20 and 22, as follows:

(a) As will be clear from your Analysis, where an alleged perpetrator does not fully disclose the nature or extent of their abuse during the original judicial hearing, and subsequent to that hearing further information is uncovered,[1] the alleged perpetrator will again be dealt with judicially, either for the same instance or for an additional allegation of child sexual abuse that may pre-date the event previously dealt with.

(b) My client was unable to determine whether some of the instances mentioned in paragraphs 20 or 22 fall into this category.

It may be inaccurate to present these numbers as a reference of further sexual abuse by an alleged perpetrator.

6. My client also wishes to make a correction to a comment made in Column Y of the supplied electronic spreadsheet (at #477 REDACTED - *"reproved and continued to abuse"*). This is

[1] This further information could include where another victim of historical child abuse makes an allegation or the extent of the abuse was not originally disclosed to the judicial committee.

incorrect according to my client's records. The Case File indicates that any dealings with the alleged perpetrator after he was reproved were for allegations of prior historical abuse.

7. *Paragraph 25 – Appointment as Elder or Ministerial Servant* – My client notes from your Analysis that you have identified 29 alleged perpetrators who were appointed as elders or ministerial servants after having been the subject of an allegation of child sexual abuse. After reviewing each of the relevant Case Files, my client is able to provide the following additional information:

Table 5

Analysis of 29 Alleged Perpetrators - later appointed as an Elder or Ministerial Servant (1950-2015)		
Status	**Comment** (Inc Case Analysis #)	**#**
No Longer Serving as an Elder or Ministerial Servant	(#12, #28, #94, #166, #177, #371, #509, #548, #550, #609, #720, #771, #781, #886)	**14**
Never Served as Elder or Ministerial Servant in Australia	Incorrect data in Case File Analysis (#528, #854)	**2**
Currently Serving as Elder	An average 32 years has elapsed since the last alleged incident of abuse (#239, #339, #467, #608)	**4**
Currently Serving as a Ministerial Servant	An average 32 years has elapsed since the last alleged incident of abuse (#73, #393, #531, #715)	**5**
No Longer a Jehovah's Witness	Since 2005 (#710)	**1**
Appointed in Error	Arrived from overseas congregation, served for a period of 12 months. Immediately deleted once notification of his past was received. No allegation of abuse received in the 15 years he has been in Australia. (#926)	**1**
Deceased	(#580, #938)	**2**
	Total	**29**
Of the 29 listed as appointed, there has been no report of any further allegations of child sexual abuse with the exception of one person (#938) who was subsequently re-removed as an elder and is now deceased.		

8. *Paragraph 26 – Deletion as Elder or Ministerial Servant* - In applying the relevant filters on Columns G, H and R in the electronic format you supplied, my client is able to make the following observations:

Table 6

Deletions of Elders and Ministerial Servants for an Allegation of Child Sexual Abuse (1950-2015)		
Status	**Comment**	**#**
Familial	No discernible link to the institution	**61**
Not a Jehovah's Witness, Unbaptised or Parishioner at time of Alleged Abuse	Deletions were made upon hearing of an allegation of child sexual abuse committed prior to the individual serving as an elder or ministerial servant (i.e. report of historical abuse)	**27**
Elders at time of Alleged Abuse		**13**
Ministerial Servants at time of Alleged Abuse		**27**
	Total	**128**

9. *Paragraph 27 – Reappointment* - My client is able to provide the following additional information that explains the context of the 17 alleged perpetrators you identify who were later reappointed as either an elder or ministerial servant:

Table 7

Analysis of 17 Alleged Perpetrators who were Deleted and later reappointed as an Elder or Ministerial Servant (1950-2015)		
Status	**Comment** (Inc Case Analysis #)	**#**
No Longer Serving as an Elder or Ministerial Servant	(#28, #94, #166, #177, #371, #550, #609, #720, #771)	**9**
Never Served as Elder or Ministerial Servant in Australia	Incorrect data in Case File Analysis (#854)	**1**
Currently Serving as Elder	An average 34 years has elapsed since the last alleged incident of abuse (#239, #339, #608)	**3**
Currently Serving as a Ministerial Servant	An average 52 years has elapsed since the last alleged incident of abuse. (#531)	**1**
Appointed in Error	Arrived from overseas congregation, served for a period of 12 months. Immediately deleted once notification of his past was received. No allegation of abuse received in the 15 years he has been in Australia. (#926)	**1**
Deceased	(#580, #938)	**2**
	Total	**17**
Of the 17 listed as reappointed, there has been no report of any further allegations of child sexual abuse with the exception of one person (#938) who was subsequently re-removed as an elder and is now deceased.		

10. *Paragraph 28 – Convictions* - My client is unable to provide any assurances as to the accuracy or completeness of the number (161) that you indicate have been convicted of a child sexual abuse offence. Nevertheless, by searching key words (ie. police, child services, authorities, charge, court, welfare etc) in the Case Files and upon careful review of the information contained therein, my client was able to establish that 383 alleged perpetrators have been dealt with by either the police or secular authorities in the respective States or Territories in which they reside.

11. *Paragraph 29 – Mandatory Reporting* - My client makes the following clarifications:

    (a) In many instances when elders become aware of an allegation of child abuse, the police or other secular authorities are already involved. This would include many of the 383 instances where the Case Files indicate that the police or other secular authorities have become involved in matters involving allegations of child sexual abuse.

    (b) Where elders are not subject to mandatory reporting obligations, they are directed to support the victim and/or the parent/guardian's right to decide whether or not to report the matter to the police or secular authorities.

    (c) My client understands that from 1984 until December 2006, the Northern Territory was the only jurisdiction that imposed a mandatory reporting obligation that applied to

ministers of religion. The duty to report sexual abuse in the Northern Territory was limited to cases where a person not only believed on reasonable grounds that a child had been sexually abused, but also that the child's parents, guardians or custodians are unable or unwilling to protect the child.

(d) In South Australia, mandatory reporting was extended to include ministers of religion (as well as employees and volunteers in organisations formed for religious or spiritual purposes) in December 2006. In Victoria, mandatory reporting obligation was extended to all adults, including ministers of religions in June 2014.

(e) It has also been my client's understanding that in both the Northern Territory and South Australia, mandatory reporting obligations only apply where the victim is under 18 years of age at the time elders hear the allegation or learn of the sexual abuse. When the victim becomes an adult, any mandatory reporting obligation ceases and it is up to the adult to decide whether or not to report any sexual abuse he or she suffered as a child.

(f) In comparing Columns K and L in the Case File data that you provided in electronic format, namely the elapsed time between the alleged incident of child sexual abuse and the date at which it was reported, it would indicate that a large percentage of the reports are received by local congregation elders when victims are adults.

(g) The mandatory reporting legislation recently extended in Victoria specifies that the obligation to report does not apply if the victim of child sexual abuse was over 16 years of age on 3 June 2014 and he or she requests that the offence not be reported.

(h) In the last six months in South Australia, elders have been directed to report three separate instances of alleged child sexual abuse (two of which concerned sexting) to the secular authorities using the Child Abuse Report line.

(i) In Victoria, the elders were directed to report a matter to the police involving a sexual offence committed against a 15 year old. Additionally, last year in Victoria, the elders were directed to report a matter involving child sexual abuse unless they could satisfy themselves that the matter had already been reported to the police. [WAT.0001.002.6356 - WAT.0001.002.6358]

(j) In checking the Case Files in preparation for the upcoming Public Hearing, my client has identified three cases which it is presently reviewing to determine whether reporting should have occurred at the relevant time [#539 - WAT.0001.002.3578 - WAT.0001.002.3579; #549 -WAT.0001.002.6026; #908 - WAT.0001.002.6189 - WAT.0001.002.6191].

(k) With regard to the REDACTED case (which also involved sexting [WAT.0001.002.6189 - WAT.0001.002.6191]), it appears likely that a misunderstanding may have occurred when the elders in Victoria, where the accused resided, contacted the Legal Department about the matter. In 2012, ministers of religion did not have a mandatory reporting obligation in Victoria and the advice provided about their mandatory reporting obligations likely related to the law in that State even though the victim was in South Australia.

(l) Regarding each of these matters, my client is taking advice from Senior Counsel to determine the obligation that the elders presently have to report the matters given that the victims are now adults. If, unfortunately, there was an obligation to report the matter at the time, this was an omission on my client's part for which it accepts full responsibility.

Please let me know if you require any further information.

Yours sincerely
Milton Bray & Associates

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WAT.0019.001.0001

"Pay Attention to Yourselves and to All the Flock."—Acts 20:28.

Kingdom Ministry School
Textbook (*ks*81)

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KINGDOM MINISTRY SCHOOL COURSE

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Explanation of School Course

(Introduction)

The material in this Kingdom Ministry School Textbook (*ks*81) has been prepared for use in training and benefiting Christian overseers. In keeping with our objective it retains the title of the previous two textbooks, "Pay Attention to Yourselves and to All the Flock." —Acts 20:28.

The 1981-1982 Kingdom Ministry School Course for overseers will include a lecture at the beginning of each day. As was true with the two previous courses, the program covers 15 hours of training and instruction. Following is the 1981-1982 schedule.

		Conducted by Instructor
Opening Comments	¼ hour	A
Lecture	½ hour	B
Unit 8(a) (*ks*81)	3 hours	A
Unit 8(b) (*ks*81)	3 hours	B
Unit 8(c) (*ks*81)	1¼ hours	A
Lecture	½ hour	A
Unit 9(a) (*ks*81)	3 hours	B
Unit 9(b) (*ks*81)	3 hours	A
Concluding Talks by Instructors	½ hour	B & A
TOTAL	15 hours	

WAT.0019.001.0005

TO THE STUDENT: The information that is found in this textbook has been prepared under the direction of the Governing Body. The course provides a basis for Scriptural discussion of material that deals with features of God's law and its administration, judicial matters and a review of the ministry, with special emphasis on the role of overseers who are expected to take the lead. It is strongly recommended that each overseer carefully read over the assigned portion for each day and be prepared to share in classroom discussions. The instructors will analyze with the class the examples provided for them by the Society and which are called for on specific points. Where it is possible, instructors will see that the textbooks are made available ahead of time. While some of the material in this course is of a serious nature and may seem weighty, do not be unduly anxious or apprehensive. Remember, we are all interested in helping one another, to the end that we may 'hold firmly to the faithful word' and show genuine concern for the flock by setting a good example.—Titus 1:9; 1 Pet. 5:2, 3.

TO THE INSTRUCTORS: It has been found practical for two instructors to conduct each school for elders. Wherever possible, arrangements should be made for this to be done. Both instructors will be present during each of the class sessions. As a rule, instructors will alternate as classroom chairman, each conducting the classroom sessions as indicated on page 132. They will share in giving the concluding talks for the final half-hour of the special school. When the school is conducted on the weekend, fifteen-minute recesses are suggested during the mid-morning and mid-afternoon sessions of each day.

WAT.0019.001.0006

There are a few portions in Unit 8(c) that will allow for some in the class to appear before the group to explain, discuss or demonstrate certain points that are called for in this unit of instruction. Advance notice of such assignments will be given out by the instructor to some of the students so that they can be properly prepared and have something practical and meaningful to present.

The scheduling of the school sessions can be somewhat flexible where this appears necessary. In most cases where a weekend is set aside for the school program, eight hours of instruction will be featured on Saturday and seven hours on Sunday. The Saturday-morning session would run from 8 to 12, and following a one-hour break for the noon meal, the afternoon session will resume at 1 and run until 5:30 p.m. On Sunday the morning session could begin at 8:15 and run to 12 noon. After a one-hour noon break the afternoon session would resume at 1 and conclude at 4:45 p.m. Where the school is conducted during the five evenings of a week, the course could be divided so that there would be about three hours of classroom training and instruction each evening. It will be up to the branch office in each country to schedule school sessions in harmony with what may be the most convenient and best for the brothers according to local circumstances.

NOTE

This Kingdom Ministry School Textbook (*ks*81), together with previous issues (*ks*77 and *ks*79), are provided SOLELY for the use of traveling overseers and congregation elders, and are not to be given or loaned out to other persons, including family members. New elders will receive a copy of this latest textbook from the circuit overseer. Elders who are deleted for any reason should turn in their copies of these textbooks to the current chairman of the local body of elders, who will, in turn, pass them on to the circuit overseer.

Jehovah's People Theocratically Organized for His Name (Acts 15:14)

Jehovah has an earthly organization to accomplish his work, an organization that appreciates the importance of his name and in every way seeks to honor it. Some have said, all that is necessary is for each Christian to enter a personal relationship with God and then seek to maintain such in faithfulness. Such view is contrary to Biblical historical facts. Jehovah brings together his chosen ones as an organized people, as in the case of natural Israel, directed by an appointed leadership to administer God's will. (Ex. 19:5, 6) Ancient Israel served as a pattern indicating that the worldwide brotherhood of Jehovah's Christian witnesses in these last days would also be an organized, God-governed people. (Heb. 10:1) It requires an orderly arrangement to gather the "great crowd" from the four corners of the earth, so that they may declare unitedly: "Salvation we owe to our God, who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb."—Rev. 7:9, 10; Isa. 11:10.

WORLDWIDE ASSOCIATION, GOD-GOVERNED

Today Jehovah's Witnesses are a distinct people.

Gathered from all nations, yet unified as one flock.

Form an international association of brothers. (1 Pet. 2:17; 5:9)

WAT.0019.001.0008

Have learned to speak in one language of truth, calling on the name of Jehovah, recognizing his authority and way of doing things. (Zeph. 3:9, 13)

Christian congregation of anointed ones on earth operate as "God's household" with a "great crowd" of helpers. (1 Tim. 3:15)

Members of a household serve together as an organization.

Over past 100 years a global association of more than 43,000 congregations has developed.

Local congregations not under democratic control but God-governed, theocratic.

All congregations under one *administration* directed by Christ Jesus. (Heb. 3:6)

"Administration" translates Greek word *oikonomia* (Eph. 1:10), which basically means "household (organizational) management" of affairs. (See *The Watchtower,* October 15, 1974, pages 616, 617.)

Congregations receive guidance from Jehovah through Christ Jesus, his appointed Administrator. (Heb. 1:1, 2)

As Jehovah's Chief Servant, he brings about justice. (Matt. 12:18)

AS A HOLY PEOPLE, MUST BE GUIDED BY GOD-GIVEN STANDARDS

Those of the household, as well as all those who work closely with it, must be "holy." (Eph. 2:19; 1 Pet. 1:14-16)

WAT.0019.001.0009

"Holiness" includes cleanness, purity, separateness.

Involves also love of justice and mercy. (Ps. 33:5; Jas. 2:13; 3:17)

As Statute-Giver, Jehovah sets righteous standards and delegates authority to enforce them. (Isa. 33:22)

His laws are stated in our guidebook, the Bible. (2 Tim. 3:16)

Why must we recognize this form of theocratic governance? (Isa. 2:3)

Administration of laws entrusted to His anointed king. (Isa. 32:1)

Enthroned since 1914, ruling 'in midst of enemies.' (Ps. 110:2; Dan. 7:14)

Invisible control exercised from heaven.

Uses earthly visible agency.

Evidenced by over two million subjects submitting to Christ's kingship. (Phil. 2:9-11)

Such invisible administration requires visible representatives.

Visible anointed remnant entrusted with all Master's belongings. (Luke 12:42-44)

"Steward" class faithful in dispensing "food."

Overseers serve as earthly representatives, under direction of the "steward" class. (Isa. 32:1, 2)

Theocratic control requires recognition of this orderly arrangement. (Zech. 8:23)

Are we assured guidance until the 'conclusion of the system of things'? (Matt. 28:20)

GOVERNING IN RIGHTEOUSNESS REQUIRES OBSERVANCE OF JEHOVAH'S LAWS AND PRINCIPLES

Laws are defined as *rules* of conduct. Necessary for order. (Gal. 6:16)

A God of order. (1 Cor. 14:33) God's laws are perfect. (Ps. 19:7)

Laws are based on *principles* that are made *enforceable* by an organization.

Principles are settled guidelines for conduct based on fundamental truths. (See *The Watchtower,* September 1, 1952, page 407; September 1, 1957, page 524.)

Example of *principles* based on fundamental truth:

Fundamental truth: Jehovah God is the Sovereign Lord of heaven and earth. (Acts 4:24)

Principles based on the above fact, truth:

We owe Jehovah full obedience in everything. (Jer. 7:23; 1 Sam. 15:22)

Where there is a conflict, we must obey God as Ruler rather than men. (Acts 5:29)

Observation: *Principles* are eternal, while *rules* may apply to limited times or conditions.

Need laws, judicial decisions and instructions from Jehovah through various levels of household (organizational) management. (Gen. 9:1-7)

WAT.0019.001.0011

1. Jesus Christ, the King and High Priest. (Matt. 28:19, 20)

2. "Faithful and discreet slave" and its governing body. (Matt. 24:45-47; Acts 15:23, 28, 29; 16:4)

3. Congregation elders. (Heb. 13:17)

4. Husbands and parents. (Eph. 5:22, 23; 6:1, 4)

Human overseers must be careful that their instructions do not violate God's Word.

Should imitate Jesus. (John 5:30; 12:49)

Otherwise, lawlessness prevails. (Matt. 24:12)

ADMINISTERING ORGANIZATIONAL LAW WITH JUSTICE AND MERCY

Justice is the administration of what is right in a fair and impartial way. (Lev. 19:15)

Jehovah manifests *justice* in all his dealings. (Deut. 32:4; Heb. 2:2-4)

Justice is illustrated by a plummet line, which must be fully adhered to, without variation. (Amos 7:7, 8; Zech. 4:10)

Justice involves more than deciding right or wrong; it is balanced with mercy where warranted. (Ezek. 33:14-16)

Decisions of elders must reflect *justice*. (Isa. 32:1)

WAT.0019.001.0012

Mercy is not only the withholding of punishment when justly due, but also an expression of kind consideration or pity that brings relief to those who are disadvantaged, in need of help. (*ad* p. 1139)

Mercy needed to temper *justice.*

Mercy brings relief when circumstances allow for it.

Mercy also involves giving needed correction and discipline.

Mercy takes into consideration motives, provocation, willingness to confess, temptation, mental and emotional condition, past conduct, present attitude, etc., of the offender. Must guard against automatic or "letter of the law" application; there are some areas not specifically defined.

Applying Christian law in *justice* and with *mercy* requires:

1. Decisions that are fair, equal to the need.
2. Allowance for mercy when circumstances are extenuating.
3. Enforcing with impartiality laws that carry sanctions. (Deut. 1:16, 17) Punishment applied should fit the violations.
4. Getting all the facts before making a decision. (Prov. 18:13)
5. Avoiding becoming involved in personal disputes. (Prov. 26:17)
6. Expelling (by disfellowshipment) those who flout God's household law and contaminate the congregation. (1 Cor. 5:9, 10; Titus 3:10)

WAT.0019.001.0013

7. Making clear to disfellowshipped ones that, upon displaying works befitting repentance, turning around, reinstatement can be applied for. (2 Cor. 2:6-8)

Every case is different and must be judged on its own merits.

Some persons have wrong tendencies and may just need direction as to the right way to go or how they should correct their course. (Mark 6:34)

FOREGOING EMPHASIZES NEED FOR A RIGHTEOUS JUDICIARY

Elders need to be trained to become righteous judges.

How is this accomplished?

Use directions provided by the Society. (See *Kingdom Ministry School Textbook*, 1977, Unit 4.)

Be sure all decisions are solidly based on the Scriptures.

[Example: Elders wisely make a practice of carefully reviewing Units 4 (a) and (b) in the *ks*77 and Units 9 (a) and (b) in *ks*81 and the scriptures cited before handling any judicial matter. They have found that when they rely on their memory of the past review of this material, they overlook important points. They know that the lives of their brothers are precious, so they cannot afford to be careless.]

Elders serving on a judicial committee should be discerning and trustworthy men.

The body of judges need to be consistent, firm, loving.

Work interdependently as a body. (1 Cor. 12:21-25)

WAT.0019.001.0014

They should listen to fellow members on judicial committee, benefit from one another's mature thinking.

God's spirit can direct any one of the elders to make a valuable contribution to the thinking of the judicial body. (Eccl. 4:9; Prov. 27:17)

When questions arise, they should not be hasty in deciding. Do research in the Society's publications. Then, only if necessary, write the Society.

Jehovah and Jesus deal impartially and justly with all.

Elders serving as a body of judges should imitate their example. (John 5:30; 8:28; Lev. 19:15)

May Jehovah's people as a theocratic organization continue to grow in righteousness, exercising justice with mercy. (1 Sam. 12:22)

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(Page for additional student notes)

Under "the Law of the Christ" (Gal. 6:2)

Jehovah's people today are not under the control of the body of law known as the Mosaic law of ancient Israel. (Col. 2:13, 14) Paul showed that since there has been a change in the priesthood from Aaron to that of Jesus Christ in the manner of Melchizedek, Christians are under a new legal arrangement of control. (Heb. 5:4-6; 7:12) Some rules of conduct found in the old law of Moses have been restated under the law of the Christ and are enforceable upon Christians. (Acts 15:19-21) Other rules of conduct from the law of Moses with their underlying principles, though not enforceable in the Christian congregation, are nevertheless useful to Christians as they walk in the way of holiness. (Jas. 2:8, 9) It is well for elders to consider some of these guidelines that are intended to protect the Christian congregation and keep it clean in Jehovah's sight.—Eph. 5:25-27.

LAW OF THE CHRISTIAN CONGREGATION

Christians are not under the Mosaic law, but under "the law of the Christ." (Gal. 6:2; 1 Cor. 9:21)

Consists of a body of rules for Christian conduct. (Gal. 6:16)

This "law of the Christ" embraces the whole scope of a Christian's life and work and focuses attention on:

1. Our relationship to Jehovah. (Matt. 4:10; 22:37; 1 John 5:3)

2. Faith in Jesus Christ and submission to him. (Col. 1:18; 1 John 3:23)

3. Our relationship with fellow Christians. (John 13:34, 35; 1 John 3:16-18)

4. Our obligations toward unbelievers. (Matt. 24:14; Gal. 6:10; 1 Pet. 2:13, 14)

Law of the Christian system of things involves the heart. (Jer. 31:33; Heb. 10:16)

GUIDELINES FOR PROPER CHRISTIAN ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE WITH MERCY

(1) *Gambling*

Why should Christians avoid gambling in all of its various forms? (See Isaiah 65:11.)

What view do Christians take of such traits as greediness and covetousness, generally manifested by gamblers? (See Romans 13:9, 10; 1 Corinthians 6:9, 10; Colossians 3:5.)

Such persons who do not respond to counsel and help could be disfellowshipped from the Christian congregation.

Additional bad results from gambling and association with gamblers give true Christians further reasons for avoiding it. (1 Cor. 15:33; w72 pp. 593, 594; w80 9/1 pp. 29, 30)

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Why must one guard against the view that petty gambling solely for entertainment is harmless? (See Galatians 6:7, 8.)

If a business concern gives out prizes to customers by drawing out names from their customer list, it may not be wrong to receive such prize, if no money has to be paid for participation. But other factors need to be considered.

The language used in advertising the contest, or the kind of sponsors, may involve elements with which a Christian would not want to be identified, for personal reasons, or for fear of stumbling others. (Rom. 14:21; 1 Cor. 10:31-33; g75 7/8 p. 28)

Consider example.

(2) *Activities Illegal According to Caesar's Law*

God's Word counsels all Christians to be law-abiding. (Matt. 22:21)

What must one do when human laws conflict with or prohibit what God commands or when they require things that God forbids? (See Acts 4:19, 20; 5:29-32.)

Why be careful when making purchases from someone engaged in an illegal business, or if such a person seeks to employ your services, or if you personally see opportunities to engage in business or practices prohibited by Caesar's law? (See Romans 13:1-7; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13, 14.)

How does the above Scriptural counsel protect a Christian and serve as a guide for his conscience?

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If the elders learn of illegal activity or of some serious crime on the part of a congregation member, the law on ecclesiastical privilege in many countries does not require elders to report the offender or the offense to the secular authorities.

In cases involving the breaking of God's law, elders must give consideration to the case.

Would one approaching baptism who was guilty of illegal activities *before* coming to a knowledge of the truth be required to settle these things with the authorities prior to baptism? Why not? (See Philemon 15-18.)

Neither would a thief be required to make restitution to all from whom he stole *before* baptism, although, in some cases, his conscience may move him to do so. (See Luke 19:8.)

The blood of Jesus Christ covers the sins of such new ones. They may get baptized. (Isa. 1:18; 1 Tim. 2:5, 6; 1 John 1:7)

(3) *Legal Matters Involving Secular Courts*

While all legal cases between brothers should be brought to the attention of the elders (1 Cor. 6:1-8), there are legal matters over which the congregation does not have authority. These can be taken to secular court for judgment, such as:

a. Issuing a divorce decree when Scriptural basis exists.

b. Obtaining insurance compensation.

c. Being listed among creditors in bankruptcy procedures.

d. Foreclosing liens.

e. Probating wills.

However, 1 Corinthians 6:1-8 covers a wide range of domestic and personal disputes that should be settled by the congregation elders.

Here note some examples:

a. If a *worldly creditor* sues a brother who is not guilty of wrongdoing, it might be necessary for the brother, for his own protection, to file a counter-suit even if it might include other spiritual brothers in the action.

b. If a dedicated person takes legal action against another dedicated person, it would not be a violation of 1 Corinthians 6:1-8 for the one being sued to defend himself, or to counter-sue. (This is true whether the matter was first taken before the elders or not.)

c. If a person is injured in an automobile owned by a spiritual brother, it might be necessary to sue the brother in order to obtain insurance compensation.

If the brother is not insured, the injured brother may share responsibility for his own injuries. To sue under such circumstances could possibly violate the spirit of what is counseled at 1 Corinthians 6:1-8.

In exceptional cases each individual must make his own decisions.

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There may be other circumstances where the congregation would need to take action. (See w73 11/15 pp. 703, 704; w77 3/1 pp. 146-148.)

(4) *Neutrality* (John 17:16)

Jehovah's Witnesses are neutral with regard to the political and military affairs of the nations. (*ms* "Neutrality")

They do not interfere with what others do as to voting in political elections, running for or campaigning for political offices, joining the military, etc.

Since true dedicated Christians are "no part of the world," if one pursues a course in violation of his Christian neutrality, he disassociates himself from the neutral Christian congregation. (John 15:19; 17:14-16)

It would be a kindness for the elders to talk to one who they know is thinking about taking such a course, since his plans may have been made in ignorance.

If the individual pursues this course regardless of the proffered help, he thereby disassociates himself, and his card would be removed from the file of active associates.

An announcement is usually made that the individual has withdrawn from the congregation, and the person can be told orally about his position. Persons in the congregation that might be visited by the disassociated person can be informed orally, and the individual treated as one disfellowshipped.

If a government requests temporary use of Kingdom Halls or equipment, in times of emergency, it would not be a violation of neutrality to comply. In some lands, all individuals are required to build roads or work in the field. Where this is not a form of military service, but is viewed as a tax, there would be no objection, as long as the work itself is not in violation of Bible principles. (Matt. 5:41; 22:21)

(5) *Self-Defense*

By following balanced Bible counsel, Christians can usually avoid getting into situations that might involve physical acts of self-defense. (Prov. 15:1; 17:14; 26:17)

If assaulted, a Christian could ward off blows, or even escape from the attacker by temporarily incapacitating him.

A Christian woman threatened with rape should resist by screaming and physically resisting. (Deut. 22:23-27; 1 Cor. 6:18) Other details are given in w68 6/1 pp. 345-350; g73 4/22 pp. 16, 17.

It is not in harmony with the spirit of John 13:35 or Isaiah 2:4 for a Christian to learn karate, judo or other martial arts. (g75 12/8 pp. 28, 29)

A brother would be disqualified as an elder or ministerial servant, if he took up the study of and practiced these violent measures. One publicly advocating such could be handled in line with 2 Thessalonians 3:13-15, or in accord with the judgment of the local elders. (See w81 7/1 pp. 30, 31 on professional boxing where it is shown that if one continues in such course he would be excluded from the congregation.)

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(6) *Sexual Conduct*

While the Christian congregation is not in a position to direct individuals as to all sexual matters concerning the marriage bed, individuals can, however, be advised that in their intimate relations, as in all other aspects of Christian life, they need to display kindness, love and concern for each other.

Each one should have a hatred for all perverted practices, including homosexuality, bestiality, oral sex and the like. (Lev. 18:22, 23; Ps. 97:10; Amos 5:15; Rom. 12:9; Eph. 5:3, 10-12; Col. 3:5, 6)

Persons should be urged to act in such a way as to leave them with a clean conscience, and the marriage bed undefiled. (Heb. 13:4)

Consider example.

Summary

For our protection and spiritual security it is essential to be obedient to "the law of the Christ." Only in this manner can those who desire to be guided by Jehovah's word of truth walk unitedly and harmoniously in the path of righteousness.

This makes it incumbent upon us to lay aside personal or preconceived ideas of what is right and wrong, and wholeheartedly accept Jehovah's directions.

In this way we are kept separate from the world and can prove ourselves loyal to the Sovereign Lord Jehovah and his king Christ Jesus.

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(Page for additional student notes)

Fulfilling and Glorifying Our Ministry (Rom. 11:13)

Serving as a minister (*diákonos*) of God is an honorable and dignified assignment. In the Christian Greek Scriptures the noun *diákonos* is used in three different ways or senses: (1) Serving in a secular sense such as a household servant; (2) in a congregational sense such as a ministerial servant; and (3) in a broad sense referring to anyone who performs sacred service to God. *Diákonos* is translated "minister" in several languages. All active, dedicated servants of God, whether of the anointed or of the "other sheep," male or female, may lay claim to being ministers. As such they serve as ambassadors or envoys of the Kingdom government. Paul was speaking of this lofty service when he wrote: "I glorify my ministry [*diakonía*]." (Rom. 11:13) The word "glorify" includes such meanings as *"honor," "make much of," "take pride in," "magnify," "lay great stress on"* and *"prize."* This helps us to have the right evaluation of our assignments as God's dedicated ministers.—See w81 3/15, pp. 14-29.

ORDAINED MINISTERS WORKING WITH GOD

(See English *Watchtower* of March 15, 1981.)

How does one become an ordained minister? (See pages 15, 16.)

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Can one who works at a secular job be an ordained minister? (See pages 26, 27.) Scriptural examples. (See page 29.)

How can such one glorify and fulfill the ministry?

Does fulfilling one's ministry reduce anxiety and personal problems? (1 Cor. 15:58)

Can one glorify his ministry in unproductive territory?

Whose responsibility is it to bring the increase, and how does this knowledge keep us content when results are few? (1 Cor. 3:6)

OVERSEERS TAKE LEAD IN FULLY ACCOMPLISHING MINISTRY

Overseers charged to "pay attention . . . to all the flock." Subject under discussion was Paul's house-to-house ministry, how he bore "thorough witness" and was thus "clean from the blood of all men." It was within this context that he spoke at Acts 20:28. (Note Acts 20:20, 24, 26.)

Christ set example for elders in fully accomplishing ministry.

Preaching was his principal work. (Matt. 4:17) This is what he trained his followers to do. (Luke 8:1; 9:1, 2; 10:1, 8, 9) Undershepherds, yoked to Jesus, should have same goal. (Matt. 11:29, 30; John 18:37) (See English *Watchtower* of July 1, 1976, pages 410, 411.)

What other responsibilities make this a problem for some elders?

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Have two elders, assigned in advance, explain how taking the lead in the field ministry and still spending time with their families sets a good example.

Name some advantages of making shepherding calls after field service.

Give examples of how shepherding calls can be made while caring for other responsibilities.

Have a group of elders relate before the class the good results of their being observed working consistently with the publishers in the field.

How is the congregation affected when elders and/or their wives are able to pioneer or occasionally auxiliary pioneer? (2 Cor. 9:2b)

Second Timothy 4:2 includes counsel to elders on handling problems in a congregation; even under such circumstances, what is not to be neglected according to verse 5?

According to Hebrews 13:7, whose is the faith to be imitated? (Phil. 3:17)

For whose blood do overseers show concern when they take the lead in the field ministry?

How is the overall ministry of the congregation to be viewed as we draw closer to the end of the system of things? (1 Pet. 4:7-11)

HELPING ALL TO KEEP ACTIVE IN GLORIFYING JEHOVAH AND THE MINISTRY

Discussion between two elders on the need to help others keep active in glorifying Jehovah and in the ministry. (4 min.)

Include the following points: (1) Good personal example in field ministry (1 Tim. 4:12b); (2) should meet requirements outlined by Jesus at Luke 12:48b; (3) should remember faith dead without works (Jas. 2:14-26; *cj*, p. 82, par. 1); (4) in association with brothers and sisters, speak positively, not negatively, about the field ministry and its value.

KEEPING PROPER PERSPECTIVE OF WORK TO BE DONE

Elders need proper attitude toward the work and the results obtained, if they are to help others keep active.

Jesus gave us proper view regarding our attitude. (Matt. 10:12-14)

Apostle Paul also outlined the need to do what we are commissioned to do, namely, planting and watering, or, stated another way, preaching and teaching. (1 Cor. 3:6, 7)

Evident, when it comes to results, it is *God* that *brings growth.*

This attitude vital if we are to be successful. Otherwise, tend to become downhearted, equating success with number who accept the "good news."

How do we know this is right attitude? Consider results in Noah's day, in Sodom and Gomorrah, from Jeremiah's preaching. Faithfulness in doing as commanded meant success, though tangible results few. (Matt. 7:13, 14)

Consider this modern-day example and whether those a part of it are successful: In one Moslem country after 32 years of preaching and teaching, growth has been from 23 Kingdom proclaimers to 188, an average of five new ones each year. Some missionaries there for 20 and more years helped perhaps 10 or so; others there seven to nine years helped no one take a stand for truth. Successful? Yes! The *growth lies with Jehovah,* who reads hearts. Does not ask us to do the impossible, only to sound warning, preach and teach.

Apostle Paul spoke of himself as a *'public servant* of Christ Jesus, engaging in the *holy work of the good news of God.'* (Rom. 15:16)

That is our work. We are public servants, engaging in holy work of the good news of God. To be successful we need to carry on this work and encourage others to do so also.

By recommending ourselves as God's ministers we reap benefits and blessings now and in trying times ahead. (2 Cor. 6:3, 4; 1 Pet. 3:15)

WHAT LIES AHEAD

Generally, our field activity performed in face of mounting problems. (Rev. 12:12) Will continue to need holy spirit to keep on.

Difficult days ahead. Some of the generation of 1914 will see the *"year of goodwill* on the part of Jehovah" *end;* then the *"day of vengeance* on the part of our God" *will be upon us.* (Isa. 61:1, 2; Matt. 24:34; Rom. 9:28; *kc* p. 140)

> What does this mean? *Even after the despoiling of Babylon the Great,* Jehovah's servants must *steadfastly carry on* with proclamation, not of "goodwill" but of "vengeance." (w81 3/15 p. 23, par. 15)

Now is the time for elders to "carry on as men." (1 Cor. 16:13, 14)

Let us fulfill and glorify our ministry!

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Handling Cases of Wrongdoing

Wrongdoing dates from man's rebellion in Eden. We have Jehovah's example of prompt action in handling the case. (Gen. 3:8-19) How are cases of wrongdoing handled today? Appointed elders serve as qualified judges:

(a) To keep out spirit of the world. (1 Cor. 2:12; Eph. 2:1, 2)

(b) To readjust or reprove wrongdoers. (Titus 1:9)

(c) To preserve the cleanness of the congregation by removing unrepentant wrongdoers. (1 Cor. 5:7, 13)

What qualifications must elders have to care for this responsibility? (Deut. 1:13, 16-18) Heavenly wisdom, good judgment, impartiality; must be acquainted with Jehovah's righteous laws and principles.—Ps. 19:7-11.

PROCEDURE IN HANDLING CASES

Individual elder, or elders, who may be informed of wrongdoing approaches presiding overseer, who in turn arranges for meeting with body of elders.

Body of elders now determines whether accusation gives evidence of having substance. Is judicial committee necessary? (*ks*77, p. 68, par. 1)

If committee is needed, body determines which elders should serve and also designates chairman. (*km* 9/77, pp. 5, 6)

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Chairman of judicial committee invites accused to meet with them. (*ks*77, pp. 68, 69)

If he repeatedly fails to appear, action should be taken if there is sufficient evidence. (*ks*77, p. 69)

Conducting the Hearing:

Open with prayer.

Chairman states reason for meeting and invites accused to make personal statement.

Present witnesses, unless wrongdoer confesses.

Committee probes in effort to establish facts and ascertain attitude of accused. Is there evidence to establish serious wrongdoing? Isolate specific offenses and evidence available.

When it is appropriate, dismiss wrongdoer and carefully review evidence and attitude of accused.

Has accusation or charge been established?

If so, is wrongdoer repentant? There must be works befitting repentance. If repentance is manifest, how was it demonstrated?

Depending on whether guilt established and repentance shown, determine whether reproof or disfellowshipping necessary. If in doubt, convene at later date. Seek Jehovah's guidance and wisdom through prayer.

When decision is finalized, inform individual orally. Inform of his or her right to appeal and steps necessary for future reinstatement. (*km* 1/80 p. 4) If appeal not made within 7 days, inform congregation. If appeal is lodged within the alloted time, no announcement is made.

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When disfellowshipping action is taken, notify Branch Office, supplying the necessary details as outlined in *ks*77, page 62.

Where appointed servants or pioneers commit serious wrongs, the Branch Office should also be notified, even if no disfellowshipping ensues. (*or*, p. 170, par. 3)

Prepare written summary of case that can be put in an envelope and placed in congregation file. (See letter dated April 12, 1978, addressed to "All Bodies of Elders.")

PROBLEMS THAT ARISE IN HANDLING CASES OF WRONGDOING

What is Scriptural view on reporting serious wrongdoing? (Lev. 5:1; Prov. 28:13; 29:24; compare 1 Corinthians 1:11.)

Consider example.

Not every case of wrongdoing requires a judicial committee.

[Example: A highly respected elder and a sister in the congregation failed to put in writing a business transaction. Each later charged the other with lying, slander and fraud. The body of elders wanted to convoke a judicial committee to act against the sister, siding with their fellow elder. The matter was handled in line with Matthew 18:15, 16 with the help of a traveling overseer who provided counsel not to get involved prematurely. Judicial committee never had to come into picture.]

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Judicial committee not automatically formed even when one is accused of serious sin.

What should be done if there is only one witness to a serious sin?

Witness should confront the accused to encourage him to confess.

If there is no response, one or two elders can discuss the matter with the individual. If he denies it, leave matter in Jehovah's hands. (1 Tim. 5:19, 24, 25)

If there is another witness to the same type of sin on the part of the accused person, this would be basis to convoke a judicial committee.

Why is it important to let the accused FACE his accusers?

Reasonable for accused to know source of charge.

Accusers should be willing to assume their responsibility, as was the case in Israel. (Deut. 17:6, 7; 19:16-21)

Why would witnesses not need to be present for the entire hearing?

No need for them to hear details and testimony that does not affect them. However, witnesses to the wrongdoing should be present later if it becomes necessary to reprove the accused "before all onlookers." (1 Tim. 5:20)

Elders should be quick to listen, but slow to commit themselves.

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Wait until you have heard all the facts before reaching conclusions and making decisions. (Prov. 18:13)

Defer making a decision if not sure of Bible's direction and the Society's counsel.

[Example: Elders directed brother who had been legally divorced before baptism that he was free to remarry even though he had not committed adultery, nor had proof of his former wife's committing adultery. Do you see any problem here? (Matt. 19:9)]

CLARIFICATIONS IN HANDLING CASES OF WRONGDOING

If there is question about the mental state of a baptized individual who commits some deed for which he might be disfellowshipped, a judicial committee should consider the facts of the case. Weigh the evidence and extent of mental incompetence and then decide whether some announcement should be made or whether disfellowshipping should occur.

Though there may be a basis for showing more than ordinary consideration and patience, the elders must protect the cleanness and spiritual well-being of the congregation. (1 Thess. 5:14)

In the case of unbaptized persons, regularly associating with congregation, who unrepentantly continue in wrongdoing despite all efforts to help them, an announcement can be made that the congregation should avoid associating with such persons. (1 Cor. 15:33) They would be treated as disfellowshipped persons.

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When an appeal committee reverses the decision of the original judicial committee, the matter should be referred to the Branch Office for review. Both the original committee's letter regarding its decision to disfellowship and the appeal committee's reasons for reversing that decision should be submitted.

The appeal committee should not inform the disfellowshipped person of its decision.

The final decision, as approved by the Branch Office, will be transmitted to the parties involved by the original judicial committee.

However, when the decision of the appeal committee is to uphold the disfellowshipping, the letter from the original committee telling of its decision to disfellowship as well as the appeal committee's letter upholding the decision should come to the Branch Office together, so that the records of the Branch Office will be complete. In such a case there is no need to wait to hear from the Branch Office before the decision of the two committees is revealed to the wrongdoer.

While there should be no hasty action in reinstating individuals, consideration should be given to a plea for reinstatement when repentance is definitely shown.

When could a reinstated brother be recommended for responsibility?

Circumstances of each case govern length of time that should elapse before a recommendation could be made.

WAT.0019.001.0038

Good judgment required on the part of the elders. Determine the standing of the individual with the congregation after he has had ample time to prove himself. (Compare Acts 16:1, 2.)

Carefully consider possible effect if individual were to be appointed.

Would it be a cause for stumbling among the brothers? (2 Cor. 6:3)

In cases of scandal, he might never be able to live down his wrongdoing sufficiently so as to qualify.

PROGRESSING IN UPHOLDING JEHOVAH'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

We are surrounded with increasing wrongdoing. Such can infiltrate and have bad effect on Christian congregation. (2 Tim. 3:1-5, 13; Jude 3, 4, 11-13)

Brothers need to tighten up in holding to Jehovah's righteous standards regarding the following:

Causing Division: Deliberate action disturbing unity of congregation or undermining confidence of brothers in Jehovah's arrangement. May involve or lead to apostasy. (Rom. 16:17, 18)

Apostasy: A "standing away from," "a falling away, defection," "rebellion, abandonment."

Action taken against true worship of Jehovah or his established order among his dedicated people. (Jer. 17:13; 23:15; 28:15, 16; compare 2 Thessalonians 2:9, 10.)

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Apostates: Persons stubbornly holding to and speaking about or *deliberately spreading* teachings contrary to Bible truth as taught by Jehovah's Witnesses, or who join another religious organization.

Outcome of such a course could be very serious. (2 Pet. 2:1-3)

How should apostates be viewed? (See Titus 3:10, 11; 1 John 2:19.)

Those with sincere doubts should be helped, dealt with mercifully. (Jude 22, 23; see *Watchtower,* August 1, 1980, pages 21, 22.)

Conduct with Opposite Sex: Should never bring reproach upon Jehovah or the Christian congregation. (1 Pet. 2:11, 12)

Sexual misconduct would include: (1) Touching sexual parts or caressing breasts. Calls for strong counsel, warning and needed help. (2) *Porneia,* involving misuse of another's genitals. Requires judicial action. (w73, pp. 574-576)

Courting or dating when one party is not Scripturally free to marry is wrong.

Strong counsel should be given, and, if ignored, individuals should be marked.

Could lead to denial of special privileges in the congregation if repeated warnings and reproofs not heeded by those involved. (2 Thess. 3:14, 15; w68, pp. 255, 256; w80 8/1, pp. 30, 31; w81 9/1, pp. 19-21)

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Divorce and Related Matters: The Scriptures urge married persons to remain together as "one flesh." (Gen. 2:22-24; Matt. 19:4-6; 1 Cor. 7:10-16)

Many marital problems can be resolved by following principle of Matthew 18:15.

What divorce concession did the law of Moses allow?

The husband, not the wife, had power to divorce on broad grounds of "something indecent." (Deut. 24:1)

What about divorce for Christians?

Only for "fornication," or *porneia.* (Matt. 5:32; 19:9)

So Jesus tightened up marriage for Christians.

Equal power of divorce for wife. (Mark 10:11, 12)

Sex relations outside marriage union: Marriage bond not automatically broken in God's eyes.

Innocent mate can forgive. (1 Cor. 13:4-8; Hos. 3:1-3)

While elders should be informed one way or the other, it is up to innocent mate to decide on whether to divorce or not.

The innocent mate should be informed that resuming sexual relations would indicate forgiveness and cancel Scriptural ground for divorce.

Forgiven adultery could not later be used as a basis for divorce, but unrevealed instances of adultery, if later brought to light, could be so used.

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A divorce freeing a Christian for remarriage should be obtained by innocent mate if possible, or by guilty mate with innocent mate's consent; both now free to remarry.

If the guilty one unilaterally obtains a divorce, does this of itself free that one to remarry?

No; if he does, it is an *adulterous marriage.* (Luke 16:18)

Calls for congregation action in addition to any already taken.

However, this frees the innocent mate to remarry.

In all cases of adulterous marriages in the future, even after reinstatement, it will be a rare case if one is recommended to serve in an official position in the congregation—at least until the death or remarriage of the first mate.

In any event, a considerable number of years should have passed. (1 Tim. 3:2, 12; w80 9/15, p. 31)

Where there is evidence of conspiracy between individuals to put away their mates and marry each other, considerable time should elapse before any request for reinstatement is even entertained. (w79 11/15, pp. 31, 32)

A divorced couple having sex relations with each other commit fornication. (Heb. 13:4)

Marriage: Of divine origin.

Engagement is a serious commitment and normally a personal matter. (Matt. 5:37)

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However, breaking an engagement may require inquiry if the one concerned has an organizational position of responsibility. (See *The Watchtower,* June 15, 1975, pages 382-384.)

Marrying an unbeliever: This would result in disqualification from all special privileges for the time being. If the parent is an elder, ministerial servant or pioneer and allows the marriage, this raises questions regarding his qualifications. (1 Tim. 3:2, 4, 5, 12, 13)

Use of Kingdom Halls: Would not be used for marriages of unbelievers, non-baptized Christians or the reenactment of marriages such as on occasions of anniversaries. (w74, p. 276; *km* 1/77, p. 4)

In each case, the body of elders will decide when the Kingdom Hall can be used for a wedding.

Wedding vows: See May 1, 1974, issue of *The Watchtower,* page 275.

These vows, or a modification of them according to the local law, should be used, and not privately chosen and worded vows.

TREATMENT OF DISFELLOWSHIPPED AND DISASSOCIATED PERSONS

Members of the Christian congregation should avoid contact and have no spiritual association with disfellowshipped and disassociated persons. (1 Cor. 5:11)

We need to be especially cautious about contact with disfellowshipped persons who have apostatized and those who continue practicing their immoral conduct.

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These can affect the congregation like gangrene. (2 Tim. 2:16-18)

Whereas disfellowshipping is an action taken by a judicial committee against unrepentant wrongdoers, disassociation is an action taken by an individual who has decided that he no longer desires to be one of Jehovah's Witnesses. (1 John 2:19)

A person would be viewed as one who has disassociated himself when he advises the congregation, usually in writing, that he no longer desires to be recognized as one of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Or, if the individual takes a course contrary to the neutral position of the Christian congregation, then the congregation is compelled to view him as one who has chosen to separate from us. (Isa. 2:4; John 15:17-19; see *Kingdom Ministry School Textbook,* 1977, pp. 61, 62.)

Those who disassociate themselves should be viewed and treated the same as disfellowshipped persons.

A brief announcement should be made to the congregation that this individual is, by his chosen course, no longer desirous of being one of Jehovah's Witnesses, and the Branch Office should be notified.

If one who disassociates himself wants to return to the congregation, he must request a hearing for reinstatement just like one who has been disfellowshipped.

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(Page for additional student notes)

Judging with Righteous Judgment

It is important to judge impartially and with righteous judgment. (1 Pet. 1:17; John 7:24) Individual overseers and elders making up judicial committees are called upon to counsel, correct, reprove and take disfellowshipping action where necessary. By following principles and laws set out in God's Word they judge for Jehovah and he is with them in the matter of judgment.—2 Chron. 19:6.

JEHOVAH MAKES PROVISION TO CORRECT HIS PEOPLE

Why is correction needed? (Prov. 14:12; Jer. 10:23, 24)

As a loving heavenly Father, He provides correction and discipline whenever needed. (Heb. 12:4-6)

Human instrumentalities among the various agencies used to correct.

In Israel, prophets and kings spoke in name of Jehovah and in accord with his Word. (1 Sam. 15:22, 23; 2 Sam. 23:2; Jer. 2:1, 20, 29-31)

Overseers used in early Christian congregation and modern-day visible organization. (Titus 1:5; Heb. 13:17)

God's Word is basis for giving needed correction. (2 Tim. 3:14-17)

If authoritative Scriptural counsel and admonition are ignored and individuals persist in walking disorderly or in course not yet serious enough for judicial action, such may be "marked." (2 Thess. 3:14, 15)

What are some situations where such 'marking' would be appropriate? (See *The Watchtower,* September 1, 1981, pages 19-21, pars. 12-21.)

JUDGMENT RELATED TO REPENTANCE

What is genuine repentance in situations where dedicated Christians are concerned? (See *ad,* p. 1385, pars. 12-14; *ks*77, p. 72.)

Consider example.

Why is it so vital for wrongdoers?

First step leading back to God. (Rom. 2:4)

In handling cases of wrongdoing, why should elders be careful in deciding whether someone is repentant? (See *The Watchtower,* September 1, 1981, pages 24-26, paragraphs 13-19 and 24.)

Distinguish between genuine and seeming repentance. (See *The Watchtower,* September 1, 1981, pages 24, 25, paragraphs 16, 17.)

Seeming repentance in relation to repeated sin.

Does one's pattern of life really give evidence of 'producing fruit that befits repentance'? (Matt. 3:8) If gross sin extended over period of time, would be questionable whether wrongdoer belongs in God's congregation. (See *The Watchtower,* September 1, 1981, page 26, paragraphs 23, 25.)

Consider example.

What is involved in "works that befit repentance"? (Acts 26:20) (See *The Watchtower,* September 1, 1981, pages 25, 26, pars. 20-22.)

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QUESTIONS REGARDING REPROOF

Who has the responsibility to reprove wrongdoers in the congregation? (2 Tim. 4:1, 2; Titus 1:9)

How is reproof administered "before all onlookers"? Under what circumstances? (1 Tim. 5:20; see *The Watchtower,* September 1, 1981, pages 24, 26, paragraphs 11, 12, 26.)

In cases where sin is widely known or will no doubt become known, what steps are taken to safeguard entire congregation from corrupting influence? (See *The Watchtower,* September 1, 1981, pages 26, 27, paragraphs 27-30.)

APPLYING JESUS' COUNSEL ON HANDLING CERTAIN WRONGS

Consider steps outlined in Matthew 18:15-17.

These could be serious sins that might be settled initially on personal basis.

Under what circumstances would first step be taken? (Matt. 18:15)

Petty, personal offenses or differences not meant here.

What cases of sinning are handled directly by judicial committee? (See *The Watchtower,* September 15, 1981, page 17, footnote on paragraph 9.)

What is involved in second step, if necessary? (Matt. 18:16)

Who qualify as witnesses in such procedure?

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When would third step be taken, and how? (Matt. 18:17)

What is meant if one is to be treated "as a man of the nations and as a tax collector"? (See *The Watchtower,* September 15, 1981, pages 18-20, paragraphs 15-21.)

PROPRIETY OF DISFELLOWSHIPPING

Purposes served by such action:

1. Upholds Jehovah's name and standard of righteousness. (Acts 15:14; 1 Pet. 1:14-16; compare Isaiah 52:5.)
2. Protects purity of congregation. (1 Cor. 5:1-5; 2 Cor. 7:11)
3. Can affect wrongdoer, jolting him to his senses.

Implications of disassociation.

What does God's Word say about those who renounce way of truth, either by written notice or by actions? (1 John 2:19; Rev. 19:17-21; Isa. 2:4; see *The Watchtower,* September 15, 1981, page 23, paragraphs 14-16.)

How should disfellowshipped and disassociated ones be treated?

What Scriptural and historical guidelines do we have? (See *The Watchtower,* September 15, 1981, pages 22, 23, paragraphs 9-12.)

Explain the full import of Paul's words at 1 Corinthians 5:11-13. (See *The Watchtower,* September 15, 1981, page 24, paragraphs 18-20.)

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What about speaking to or associating with disfellowshipped or disassociated person? (2 John 9-11; see *The Watchtower,* September 15, 1981, pages 24, 25, paragraphs 21-24.)

Why should we adhere to John's counsel about not being a 'sharer in their wicked works'? (See *The Watchtower,* September 15, 1981, pages 25, 26, paragraphs 26-28.)

Consider example.

If someone asks about being restored to God's favor or gives evidence of repentance and desires to be reinstated, who initiates action? (See *The Watchtower,* September 15, 1981, page 25, paragraph 24.)

How might problems result where relatives are concerned?

Name some situations. (See *The Watchtower,* September 15, 1981, page 27, paragraphs 5-7.)

How do Jesus' words at Matthew 10:34-38 have a bearing on this matter?

What special problems may arise in relation to family and social gatherings? (See *The Watchtower,* September 15, 1981, page 30, paragraphs 22-24.)

How are funerals involved, and what governs arrangements that might be made? (See *The Watchtower,* September 15, 1981, page 31, paragraph 26.)

What tests do these matters bring on all involved? (See *The Watchtower,* September 15, 1981, page 31, paragraphs 27, 28.)

The Bible speaks of reproving "with severity, that they may be healthy in the faith." (Titus 1:13) When? How?

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Remember, administering reproof is not just making a decision or even announcing it; rather, it requires convicting, convincing the wrongdoer of the error of his way, so that he stops doing all that is bad and establishes himself as a practicer of good. This includes helping him to see how lesser sins led to serious deflection from Jehovah's law.

Some wrongdoers have gone so far into a practice of sin that it may be difficult for them to show sufficient fruitage of repentance to justify allowing them to remain in the congregation. (Consider Paul's command concerning the man at Corinth, 1 Corinthians 5:3-5, 13.)

Deciding the case.

If the person is guilty of gross, serious sins, such as those listed in *ks*77, pages 57-59, and he is unrepentant, he must be disfellowshipped.

If, although guilty of such a sin, he has truly repented and is producing fruitage of repentance, thus no longer posing a threat to the cleanness of the congregation or bringing it into public disrepute, then he should be reproved rather than disfellowshipped.

In the case of reproof, there may be good reasons why an announcement of the reproof should be made to the congregation. (See *The Watchtower,* December 1, 1976, page 734; September 1, 1981, pages 26, 27, paragraphs 27-29.)

In almost all cases of reproof, restrictions should be imposed. (See *Organization,* page 167; *Our Kingdom Service,* March 1975, page 4; *The Watchtower,* September 1, 1981, page 27, paragraph 29.)

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APPEAL HEARINGS

Consider reasons for appeal. (*km* 1/80 p. 4)

If the disfellowshipped person believes a serious error in judgment was committed:

He should make known in writing his reason for requesting an appeal, doing so within one week from the time he was notified of the committee's decision and addressing it to the body of elders of the congregation which took the action.

Does he deny that he is guilty of committing a disfellowshipping offense?

If he admits guilt on a disfellowshipping charge, does he claim that at the time of the hearing he was repentant? If he does, had he produced "works that befit repentance" to a sufficient degree so as to offset the sin(s) committed, thus establishing that he was no longer a threat to the cleanness of the congregation? (Acts 26:20)

When an appeal is heard, it is necessary to rehear all the evidence relevant to the case, including that which was presented originally and any new evidence now available.

Wherever possible, the judicial committee that heard the original case should be present at the appeal hearing(s) and should furnish the appeal committee whatever written records they have on the first hearing(s).

If they believe that earlier testimony is being changed, they can so state.

The appeal committee may also wish to question them *privately* as to their reasons for reaching the conclusion they did.

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Was there an error in judgment or was decision of original committee basically sound according to evidence, factors available and attitude of accused at their hearing(s)?

Major goals are to ascertain whether there was a Scriptural basis for the original action taken and whether the individual was repentant at the time the action was taken.

If the appeal committee determines that really it was a "matter of judgment" and there was a basis for the action taken, although it might have been decided another way, they would likely decide to leave the decision as it is, trusting the judgment of the committee that was on the scene when the case was first heard.

It may be found that there is no valid basis for the disfellowshipping on the ground the initial committee used, but there is another ground for taking action to disfellowship, so that there is no reason to rescind the disfellowshipping.

Consider example.

If the appeal committee decides to reverse the disfellowshipping, they should first refer their decision to the Branch Office for review, supplying reasons for their decision and giving a copy to the original judicial committee. If, for some reason, the original committee does not concur with the appeal committee, they should submit their observations as well as their original letter outlining their disfellowshipping decision along with the letter from the appeal committee.

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The disfellowshipped party should not be given, at this time, any intimation of the decision to rescind the disfellowshipping.

After the Branch Office has approved which decision applies, the original judicial committee will be advised and will inform the parties involved accordingly.

Examples and problems:

1. A youth disfellowshipped for drug abuse appeals because he has 'the right to do so' and desires another committee to hear the case. (See *km* 1/80, p. 4.)

2. A sister, appealing her disfellowshipping, admitted she celebrated a religious holiday with her relatives but claims to have been reached by the counsel given during the hearings. She states that she will never again become involved in the sin and has informed her relatives of her decision.

3. This man lied about his sins and tried to cover them over by bringing accusations against others, until finally the necessary witnesses were found. After being informed of the decision to disfellowship, he came to his senses, corrected the problems (sins), producing fruitage of repentance, and on this basis appealed.

REINSTATEMENT

(See *Kingdom Ministry School Textbook,* 1977, pp. 63, 64; *Organization,* pp. 176-178; *The Watchtower,* March 1, 1977, page 152.)

In hearing pleas for reinstatement, elders need to be balanced.

It is not just a matter of accepting a person back simply because of his request and the passing of some time.

Before making a decision the elders must determine whether the wrongdoer is truly repentant.

Consider the overall pattern, whether the person is repentant over wrongdoing of which he really was guilty and for which clear evidence existed.

Generally, the elders of the congregation that originally disfellowshipped the person will consider the plea and decide whether there are grounds for reinstatement.

Consider example.

Much is involved in judging with righteous judgment.

By following Scriptural principles and procedures outlined, elders will be able to discharge their responsibility to Jehovah and toward the flock. (2 Tim. 4:1, 2)

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(Page for additional student notes)

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"Pay Attention to Yourselves
and to
All the Flock."—Acts 20:28.

Kingdom Ministry School
Textbook (last)

WAT.0019.001.0064

WAT.0020.001.0001

ORGANIZED TO ACCOMPLISH OUR MINISTRY

"You, though, keep your senses in all things, suffer evil, do the work of an evangelizer, fully accomplish your ministry."—2 Tim. 4:5.

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NOTE: Bible quotations in this book are from the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures,* 1981 edition, unless otherwise indicated.

Dear Fellow Ministers:

Organized to Accomplish Our Ministry is published for Jehovah's Witnesses. It draws attention to our basic Scriptural responsibilities. By reading it you will get an overall view of how the Christian congregation operates today. Its counsel and direction will help us to remain at unity with our brothers everywhere, who are busily 'engaged in the holy work of the good news of God.'—Rom. 15:16.

In addition to preaching the good news of the Kingdom worldwide, our aim is to help those thousands of people newly associating with us. Many of them desire to meet the Scriptural requirements for becoming dedicated and baptized witnesses of Jehovah. They, too, need to become familiar with Jehovah's organization and how to share the Kingdom good news with others. To that end, information has been included in this book that is especially beneficial to such persons.

General information is here published concerning the duties of elders and ministerial servants, judicial procedures and various features of congregation organization. Details regarding these matters are reviewed from time to time in *The Watchtower, Our Kingdom Ministry* and other publications of the Society.

It is our prayer that the reading and application of what is contained in this publication will bring Jehovah's blessing and will play a vital role in helping all of us to be theocratically organized to 'fully accomplish our ministry.'—2 Tim. 4:5.

—The Publishers

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proved himself to be like his heavenly Father, Jehovah God.—Isa. 40:11.

World events fulfilling Bible prophecy prove beyond doubt that since 1914 Jesus Christ has been entrusted with Kingdom power. He is now ruling in the midst of his enemies. (Ps. 110:1, 2; 2:1-12) What does this portend for those now living on earth? As to his enemies, his role as King of kings and Lord of lords will be powerfully demonstrated when he executes divine judgment against them. (Rev. 11:15; 12:10; 19:16) Jehovah's promise of deliverance expressed at the beginning of man's rebellion will soon be fulfilled toward those on his right hand of favor. (Rom. 16:20) How happy we are to have recognized Christ's role in God's arrangement and to be organized to accomplish a worldwide ministry under his leadership during these last days!

CHAPTER 4

HOW THE CONGREGATION IS ORGANIZED AND GOVERNED

AN IMPORTANT basic truth about God was expressed by the apostle Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians when he wrote: "For God is a God, not of disorder, but of peace." Then, commenting further with regard to congregation meetings he said: "But let all things take place decently and by arrangement."—1 Cor. 14:33, 40.

At the very beginning of this same letter the apostle gave admonition concerning reported dissensions within the Corinthian congregation. Paul exhorted the brothers there to "speak in agreement" and to be "fitly united in the same mind and in the same line of thought." (1 Cor. 1:

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10, 11) He then proceeded to give counsel with regard to various matters that were affecting the unity of the congregation. Using the illustration of a perfect human body, he showed clearly the need for unity and cooperation. Hence all those making up the Christian congregation, regardless of their position, are urged to care for one another in a loving way. (1 Cor. 12:12-26) Such harmonious cooperation among the various members of the congregation implies an orderly arrangement—organization.

But how was the Christian congregation to be organized? Who would organize it? What kind of organization would it have and who would be in charge? A key thought for our protection today, as it was for the first-century Christians in Corinth, is what the apostle stated at 1 Corinthians 4:6. There he gave the rule: "Do not go beyond the things that are written." By letting the Bible be our guide, we can get clear answers to our questions.

ORGANIZED THEOCRATICALLY

The Christian congregation was established in 33 C.E. on the Jewish festival day of Pentecost. It was organized and governed theocratically, that is, under God (*theos*) rule (*kratos*). The inspired account of what took place there in Jerusalem nearly 2,000 years ago leaves no doubt that the congregation of anointed ones was established by God. (Acts 2:1-47) It was his building, his household. (1 Cor. 3:9; Eph. 2:19) It is important for us to learn what we can about the congregation back there because the same pattern of organization and operation that was established during the first century is adhered to by the Christian congregation of God today, which has now been

enlarged by the addition of the "great crowd." —Rev. 7:9, 10.

The early congregation began with about 120 members. Holy spirit was poured out first upon these in fulfillment of Joel 2:28, 29. (Acts 2: 16-18) But that same day 3,000 others were baptized in water and brought into the spirit-begotten congregation. They had embraced the word about the Christ and "continued devoting themselves to the teaching of the apostles." After that, "Jehovah continued to join to them daily those being saved."—Acts 2:41, 42, 47.

The growth of the anointed congregation in Jerusalem became such that the Jewish high priest accused the disciples of having filled Jerusalem with their teaching. The new disciples in Jerusalem included many Jewish priests who became part of the congregation.—Acts 5:28; 6:7.

Jesus had said: "You will be witnesses of me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the most distant part of the earth." (Acts 1:8) And so it was that when a great persecution arose in Jerusalem following the death of Stephen, the disciples living there were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. But wherever they went they continued declaring the good news and making more disciples, including some from among the Samaritans. (Acts 8:1-13) Still later the good news began to be preached with good success among the uncircumcised non-Jewish nations. (Acts 10:1-48) All this preaching activity and the making of many disciples resulted in new Christian congregations being formed outside Jerusalem.—Acts 11:19-21; 14:21-23.

Arrangements were made for each newly established congregation to be organized and governed God's way, hence theocratically. This in-

[redacted]

volved the appointment of older men to care for the flock. Paul and Barnabas made such appointments in the congregations that were organized during their first missionary journey. (Acts 14: 23) Acts chapter 20 relates information about the apostle Paul's meeting with the older men of the congregation in Ephesus. Paul said to them: "Pay attention to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the holy spirit has appointed you overseers, to shepherd the congregation of God, which he purchased with the blood of his own Son." (Acts 20:28) These were older men in a spiritual sense who qualified for appointment because of their spiritual qualifications. (1 Tim. 3: 1-7) Paul's fellow worker Titus was authorized to make appointments of older men in the congregations of Crete.—Titus 1:5.

As more congregations were formed, the apostles and the older men in the Jerusalem congregation continued to serve as the principal overseers of the expanded international congregation of the first century. From their position in the Jerusalem congregation they served as a governing body for the entire Christian congregation. It was their responsibility to consider matters affecting Christians everywhere. They sent out letters and decrees, all of which strengthened the congregations and made it possible for the disciples to remain united in thought and action. The congregations followed the direction of the governing body and, as a result, they received Jehovah's blessing and prospered.—Acts 8:1, 14, 15; 15:1, 2, 22-31; 16:4, 5.

The apostle Paul, in writing to the congregation in Ephesus, explained that the unity of the Christian congregation would be maintained through adherence to the headship of Jesus Christ and by

the operation of holy spirit. He urged Christians there to cultivate humility and to observe a oneness of the spirit in peaceful association among all members of the congregation. (Eph. 4:1-6) Then he quoted Psalm 68:18 and applied it to Jehovah's provision for spiritually qualified men to serve the needs of the congregation as apostles, prophets, evangelizers, shepherds and teachers. Such men, as gifts from Jehovah, would build up the entire congregation to a spiritual fullness that would be pleasing to God.—Eph. 4:7-16.

CONGREGATION TODAY FOLLOWS APOSTOLIC PATTERN

Today a similar pattern of organization is followed in all the congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses. These collectively form a united worldwide congregation built around the nucleus of spirit-anointed ones. (Zech. 8:23) This is possible because Jesus Christ, true to his promise, has loyally remained with his anointed disciples "all the days until the conclusion of the system of things." (Matt. 28:20) They dedicate their life unreservedly to Jehovah God and faithfully do his will. Those brought into the growing congregation today embrace the good news of God and are baptized as disciples of Jesus Christ. (Mark 1:14; Acts 2:41) They recognize the headship of Jesus Christ not only over the anointed members of the congregation but also over the entire flock which includes the "other sheep."—John 10:16; Eph. 1:22, 23.

Unity is maintained by loyally recognizing the headship of Christ and also by submitting to an organizational channel, "the faithful and discreet slave." What has the Master appointed this "slave" to do? Jesus answered that the "slave" was to provide spiritual food at the proper time



and to care for all His "belongings," or Kingdom interests on earth. (Matt. 24:45-47; Luke 12:42-44) Rather than being an individual Christian, the 'faithful slave' today is the remnant, still living on earth, of the composite body of Christ's anointed footstep followers. Such remaining ones are a part of spiritual Israel, the anointed congregation of God. (Gal. 6:16; compare Isaiah 43:10.) This remnant is faithfully discharging the responsibilities of the "slave" during this time of the end by taking the lead in the preaching of "this good news of the kingdom" throughout all the earth and by providing spiritual food at the proper time for the household of faith.—Matt. 24:14.

USE OF RELIGIOUS CORPORATIONS

During these last days of the present wicked system of things, the "belongings" of the Master have increased abundantly throughout all the earth. This has placed a heavy responsibility on the 'faithful slave.' In discharging its responsibility to provide spiritual food at the proper time and in order to get the good news of the Kingdom preached before the end comes, the remnant on earth, as "the faithful and discreet slave" class, has formed certain agencies, or legal entities. It has proved to be the course of wisdom for the 'faithful slave' to organize certain corporations that are recognized by the laws of various countries. These religious corporations own and operate printing facilities that produce and distribute Bibles and Bible literature on a worldwide basis for use in the Kingdom ministry.

The first in time and the principal corporation used in this way is the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. This nonprofit religious society was incorporated in 1884, is made

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up of dedicated, baptized Christians and is exclusively devoted to advancing the interests of true worship in the earth. The Watch Tower Society has extended its works worldwide, establishing branch offices in various countries. Also, in compliance with local governmental regulations, a number of other religious societies have been legally formed, such as the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc. (1909) and the International Bible Students Association in London, England (1914). All these legal instrumentalities cooperate with one another. These and other legal corporations are used by the modern-day Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses to facilitate the preaching of the good news worldwide and to care for the spiritual needs of the entire congregation of God in all parts of the earth.

STRUCTURE UNDER BRANCH ORGANIZATION

Whenever a branch office is established, a Branch Committee of three or more elders is appointed to care for the various responsibilities involved in looking after the work in the country or countries under the jurisdiction of that particular branch. One member of the committee serves as the coordinator of the Branch Committee.

Local congregations under each branch organization are arranged into circuits and a number of circuits make up a district. Circuits and districts may be of various sizes depending on geographical and language considerations, as well as the number of congregations within the area assigned to a branch. A circuit overseer is appointed to serve the congregations in each circuit. District overseers visit the different circuits, serve at circuit assemblies and spend some time serving

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congregations, usually with the circuit overseer present. The duties of traveling overseers are set out from time to time in *Our Kingdom Ministry* as well as in correspondence addressed to them by the Society.

All in the organization recognize God's way of theocratic control. The congregations acknowledge and conform to the guidance of the Governing Body as it outlines organizational arrangements for the benefit of all. They accept the appointments made of older men to oversee the branches, districts, circuits and congregations. They look to "the faithful and discreet slave" for spiritual food at the proper time. (Matt. 24:45-47) The 'faithful slave' remnant and its Governing Body, in turn, adhere strictly to the headship of Christ, hold to Bible principles and submit to the direction of holy spirit. As all work together in unity, the results are the same as those experienced by the congregations in the first century. We are told at Acts 16:5: "Therefore, indeed, the congregations continued to be made firm in the faith and to increase in number from day to day."

CHAPTER 5

OVERSEERS TO SHEPHERD THE FLOCK

DURING his earthly ministry Jesus proved himself to be the Fine Shepherd. (John 10:11) We are told that once, upon viewing the crowds following him, "he felt pity for them, because they were skinned and thrown about like sheep without a shepherd." (Matt. 9:36) Peter and the other apostles observed closely his loving concern. How different he was from the false

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shepherds of Israel who neglected the flock to such an extent that the sheep were scattered and spiritually starved! (Ezek. 34:7, 8) By observing Jesus' fine example of teaching and caring for the sheep, even to the point of laying down his life for them, the apostles learned how to help those with faith return to Jehovah, the Shepherd and Overseer of their souls.—1 Pet. 2:25.

By precept and example Jesus reinforced the serious responsibility he had laid upon the apostles to care for the sheep. They never lost sight of it. On one occasion Jesus impressed very strongly upon Peter's mind and heart the importance of feeding and shepherding the sheep. (John 21: 15-17) Peter was deeply moved by this as indicated later in his exhortation to older men. In his first inspired letter he wrote: "Therefore, . . . shepherd the flock of God in your care, not under compulsion, but willingly; neither for love of dishonest gain, but eagerly; neither as lording it over those who are God's inheritance, but becoming examples to the flock."—1 Pet. 5:1-3.

Peter's words apply with equal force to overseers in the congregation today. The need for having overseers in the congregations today is the same as it was back there in the first century, namely, to shepherd the flock of God. In his letter Peter emphasized the proper attitude that overseers should have in caring for such responsibility. Imitating Jesus, they should serve willingly, eagerly and as examples to the flock, taking the lead in Jehovah's service.

We can indeed be grateful for having spirit-appointed overseers in the congregation today. The benefits we receive are many. For example, overseers give spiritual encouragement and personal attention to the needs of individual mem-

bers of the congregation. Each week with earnestness they preside at congregation meetings where all are nourished in the faith. (Rom. 12:8) Their efforts to protect the flock from harmful elements and wicked men contribute to our spiritual security. (Isa. 32:2; Titus 1:9-11) Moreover, by their example and lead in the field ministry we are encouraged to keep active in preaching the good news regularly each month. (Phil. 3:16, 17; Heb. 13:15-17) Through these "gifts in men" Jehovah has provided well for the building up of the congregation.—Eph. 4:8, 11, 12.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR OVERSEERS

To ensure proper care of the congregation, men appointed to serve as overseers must meet the requirements set out in God's Word. Only if they do qualify could it be said that they have been appointed by holy spirit. (Acts 20:28) The Scriptural standards for Christian overseers are admittedly high, since these men have the serious responsibility of taking the lead in Jehovah's worship and being exemplary in Christian conduct. (1 Cor. 11:1; Heb. 13:7; 1 Pet. 5:3) But the standards are not so high that they cannot be met by Christian men who have a real love for Jehovah and a willingness to be used by him. The high standards provide a guarantee that those appointed as elders will be good examples in the congregation. It should be obvious to all that the overseers are individuals who apply the counsel from the Bible in all affairs of life.

The apostle Paul wrote down the basic Scriptural requirements for overseers in his first letter to Timothy and in his letter to Titus. At 1 Timothy 3:1-7 he wrote: "If any man is reaching out for an office of overseer, he is desirous of a fine work. The overseer should therefore be irrepre-

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hensible, a husband of one wife, moderate in habits, sound in mind, orderly, hospitable, qualified to teach, not a drunken brawler, not a smiter, but reasonable, not belligerent, not a lover of money, a man presiding over his own household in a fine manner, having children in subjection with all seriousness; (if indeed any man does not know how to preside over his own household, how will he take care of God's congregation?) not a newly converted man, for fear that he might get puffed up with pride and fall into the judgment passed upon the Devil. Moreover, he should also have a fine testimony from people on the outside, in order that he might not fall into reproach and a snare of the Devil."

Paul's words to Titus state: "For this reason I left you in Crete, that you might correct the things that were defective and might make appointments of older men in city after city, as I gave you orders; if there is any man free from accusation, a husband of one wife, having believing children that were not under a charge of debauchery nor unruly. For an overseer must be free from accusation as God's steward, not self-willed, not prone to wrath, not a drunken brawler, not a smiter, not greedy of dishonest gain, but hospitable, a lover of goodness, sound in mind, righteous, loyal, self-controlled, holding firmly to the faithful word as respects his art of teaching, that he may be able both to exhort by the teaching that is healthful and to reprove those who contradict." (Titus 1:5-9) Paul's counsel quoted above emphasizes the need for overseers to maintain a proper attitude toward carrying out their responsibilities, being willing and eager, taking the lead. Other Bible writers more indirectly or by implication set out what would be required of

Christian men in order for them to qualify for appointment as overseers, or shepherds, of the congregation.—Jas. 3:13, 17, 18.

Although a first consideration of the Scriptural requirements may prove to be somewhat overwhelming, there should be no reason for Christian men to shy away from desiring the fine work associated with the office of overseer. The fact is that all dedicated Christians should strive to measure up to these high standards. By taking the lead in exhibiting fine Christian qualities, overseers encourage other members of the congregation to do the same. This is indicated by what the apostle Paul wrote in describing how "gifts in men" are provided "with a view to the readjustment of the holy ones, for ministerial work, for the building up of the body of the Christ, *until we all attain to the oneness in the faith and in the accurate knowledge of the Son of God, to a full-grown man, to the measure of stature that belongs to the fullness of the Christ.*" (Eph. 4:8, 12, 13) Since all Christians are to strive to attain spiritual maturity, those standing before the congregation as appointed overseers are required to be exemplary in taking the lead.

As indicated by what Paul wrote to Timothy and Titus, overseers would be selected from among the *older men* of the congregation. They would *not* be mere boys or *newly converted* men, but they would be individuals with experience in Christian living, having a broad knowledge of the Bible, a deep understanding of it and a genuine love for the congregation. They would be individuals who have the courage to speak up when wrongdoing exists and to take the needed action to correct it and thus protect the flock from

any who would selfishly exploit them. (Isa. 32:2) They would be men readily recognized by all in the congregation as spiritually mature men with a genuine concern for the flock of God. Their overall way of life would show this.

Those qualifying for appointment as overseers of the flock of God would be men experienced in life who had demonstrated a measure of practical wisdom in carrying on their own affairs. If married, they would be adhering to the Christian standard for marriage, namely, *husband of one wife,* and would have demonstrated their ability to *preside over their own household in a fine manner.* Because of their *having believing children who are not under a charge of debauchery nor unruly* but who are *in subjection with all seriousness,* other members of the congregation could confidently approach overseers for counsel and advice on a wide range of personal matters having to do with Christian living. Having conducted themselves properly within the family arrangement as well as within the community in general, these men would also be *irreprehensible, free from accusation* and *have a fine testimony* even *from people on the outside.* No valid charge of improper conduct could be brought against them to mar the reputation of the congregation. They would not have been reproved recently for serious wrongdoing. Others in the congregation would be moved to imitate their fine example and entrust their spiritual life to their care.—1 Cor. 11:1; 16:15, 16; Phil. 2:25, 29; Heb. 13:7.

Such qualified men would be able to serve the Christian congregation in a role similar to that of the older men of Israel who were described as "wise and discreet and experienced." (Deut. 1:13) They would not be without sin. (Rom. 3:23) But

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they would be known in the congregation and in the community as being upright and God-fearing, men who had demonstrated over a period of time that they conduct their life entirely on the basis of God's principles. Their blamelessness would give them freeness of speech before others in the congregation.

Men qualifying for appointment as overseers would display *moderation in personal habits* and in their dealing with others. They would not be fanatics, but their way of life would be characterized by balance, *orderliness* and *self-control.* Moderation would be demonstrated in such things as eating, drinking, recreation, hobbies and entertainment. They would *not be given to a lot of wine* but would be moderate in the use of alcoholic beverages so as *not* to leave themselves open to charges of drunkenness or of being a *drunken brawler.* One whose senses have been dulled by intoxicating drink easily loses self-control and so is not in a position to watch over the spiritual interests of the congregation.

Exercising oversight of the affairs of the congregation requires one to demonstrate a measure of *orderliness,* being systematic in life, habits and work. This includes his personal appearance, his home and his activities. Such one avoids procrastination, is able to see what is required and plans accordingly. He adheres to theocratic order. All of this is what is meant by being *moderate in habits* and *self-controlled.*

An overseer must be *reasonable.* He must be able to work in unity and cooperate with others within the body of older men who are charged with the oversight of the congregation. He should have a proper view of himself in relation to others both within the congregation and outside. As

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a reasonable person, the overseer would not be opinionated, considering his views and opinions as always superior to those of his fellow elders. Others may excel in qualities or abilities that he may lack. Reasonableness comes as a result of basing one's conclusions solidly on the Scriptures and striving to imitate the example of Jesus Christ. (Phil. 2:2-8) By showing proper respect for others and considering others as superior to himself, an elder would *not become belligerent or be a smiter* of others with either physical or verbal abuse. He would *not be self-willed,* always insisting on his own way or that his point of view must be accepted as best. He would *not be prone to wrath* but would be peaceable in his dealings with others.

Similarly, one qualifying to serve as an overseer in the congregation should be *sound in mind.* This means that he should have a good comprehension of Jehovah's principles and their application. He should be levelheaded, not hasty in judgment. He should be receptive to counsel and direction. He should not be double-minded or hypocritical, not fanatical.

The apostle reminded Titus that an overseer should also be *a lover of goodness.* He should be *righteous and loyal.* These qualities would be reflected in his dealings with others and in his firm stand for what is right and good. He would be known as one who is unwavering in his devotion to Jehovah and consistent in upholding righteous principles when making judgments. He would be one who is able to keep a confidence.

As one who is sound in mind, of course, he would not be overly demanding in what he expects of others. Neither would the overseer be unduly concerned about material advantages for



himself, *not greedy of dishonest gain, not a lover of money*. He would not use his office to take material advantage of the brothers under his care nor would he hold back because of the reasonable material sacrifices he may be required to make in order to give generously of his time in caring for the needs of the congregation. His love for the brothers, as well as for strangers, and his self-sacrificing endeavors in their behalf would make him as one who is genuinely *hospitable,* freely giving of himself and his belongings for the benefit of others.—Acts 20:33-35.

In order to carry out his assignment effectively, one appointed as an overseer, or shepherd, of the congregation would need to be *qualified to teach*. Paul's words to Titus were that the overseer would be one *"holding firmly to the faithful word as respects his art of teaching, that he may be able both to exhort by the teaching that is healthful and to reprove those who contradict."* (Titus 1:9) In exhibiting his art of teaching the overseer should have the ability to reason with others, produce evidence, overcome objections and set out with clearness the teaching of the Scriptures in such a way that others would be convinced and have their faith strengthened. The overseer would need to exercise such teaching ability under circumstances both favorable and unfavorable. (2 Tim. 4:2) He would need to have the patience to reprove with mildness one who is in error or convince a doubter and move him to profitable works on the basis of faith. His being qualified to teach either before an audience or on a person-to-person basis would give evidence of his meeting this important requirement.

The apostle Peter wrote that the older men of the congregation who serve in a representative

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capacity should do so *willingly* and with *eagerness,* not under compulsion nor begrudgingly. They should be enthusiastic in their endeavors. They should be *taking the lead, becoming examples to the flock.*—Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 5:3.

All of this may look like a great deal to expect from one who would serve as an overseer. Certainly none would measure up perfectly to the high standard that has been set forth in the Bible, as outlined here, but none of the appointed elders in the congregation should be so significantly deficient in any one of these qualities that the deficiency could be considered a serious flaw. Some elders will be more outstanding in one quality than in another, whereas others of the body will excel in those qualities in which some may be weak. The effect then is that, generally speaking, as a whole, the body will have within itself all the fine qualities that are necessary for exercising proper oversight of the congregation of God.

When recommending men for appointment as overseers, the body of elders will want to keep in mind their own standing before Jehovah and their relationship with fellow Christians. Romans 12:3 counsels that each one should in no way "think more of himself than it is necessary to think; but to think so as to have a sound mind, each one as God has distributed to him a measure of faith." Each should consider himself as a lesser one. None should prove to be "righteous overmuch" when examining the qualifications of another. (Eccl. 7:16) Having clearly in mind the Scriptural requirements for elders, they would want to determine whether or not one being considered measures up to those standards to a reasonable degree or whether he is so seriously

deficient in one or more of the Scriptural requirements that he would not qualify to serve. Allowing for human imperfections and being free from biased leanings and hypocrisy, appointed elders will make their recommendations in a manner showing due respect for Jehovah's righteous standards and for the good of the congregation. Just as with Timothy and Titus, elders today need to give prayerful consideration to each recommendation and follow the direction of holy spirit. This is one of the serious responsibilities they shoulder, and they must do so in accord with Paul's admonition 'never to lay your hands hastily upon any man.'—1 Tim. 5:21, 22.

Men meeting these high Christian standards are able to protect the congregation from spiritual dangers, and they serve as fine examples of Christian conduct for all to imitate. They have freeness of speech enabling them to be bold in giving needed counsel to those within the congregation as well as being zealous to proclaim the good news in the field ministry.—Heb. 10: 19-23, 35; Acts 4:29; 1 Tim. 3:13.

FRUITAGE OF THE SPIRIT

Such spiritually qualified men would give evidence in their life that they were directed by holy spirit. They would be producing the fruitage of the spirit, described at Galatians 5:22, 23 as "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, mildness, self-control." Their oversight of the congregation would be refreshing to the brothers and would serve to unite the congregation in rendering sacred service. Their course of conduct and the fruitage of their labors would give evidence that they are appointed by holy spirit. (Acts 20:28) Having the spiritual requirements for overseers and shepherds stated

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so precisely in the inspired Scriptures has made it possible for us to have qualified appointed overseers to shepherd the flock today.

REACHING OUT

The office of overseer is to be desired by mature Christian men. (1 Tim. 3:1) However, the appointment means work, self-sacrifice and making oneself available to serve the needs of the brothers, caring for their spiritual interests. Reaching out for the office means striving to meet the qualifications set out in the Scriptures. The overseers of the congregation have a great responsibility as well as an accountability in caring for the souls of those entrusted to their care. Members of the congregation are told: "Be obedient to those who are taking the lead among you and be submissive, for they are keeping watch over your souls as those who will render an account; that they may do this with joy and not with sighing, for this would be damaging to you." (Heb. 13:17) Although the overseers are imperfect men, there is no need for anyone in the congregation to hold back from being submissive since it is Jehovah's arrangement and he will hold the overseers responsible for their actions. They are representing him and his theocratic rule. He will remove from office those overseers who fail to manifest the fruitage of the spirit and whose pattern of life falls short of the Scriptural requirements.

Overseers themselves must also take very seriously what is stated at Hebrews 13:17. They are referred to as "those who are taking the lead," "keeping watch over" the souls of the brothers and as "those who will render an account." Overseers must exercise special care not to 'lord it over' the flock of God, not to use their position

of responsibility for selfish advantage or even serve because they feel that they are compelled to do so. The overseers must prove themselves to be loving shepherds of the flock of God.—1 Pet. 5:2, 3; Prov. 27:23.

Do we not truly appreciate the hard work and fine example of the congregation overseers? In writing to the congregation in Thessalonica Paul admonished the brothers: "Now we request you, brothers, to have regard for those who are working hard among you and presiding over you in the Lord and admonishing you; and to give them more than extraordinary consideration in love because of their work." (1 Thess. 5:12, 13) Much of the hard work of the congregation overseers serves to make our service to God easier and more enjoyable. Also, in his first letter to Timothy, Paul makes mention of the attitude that members of the congregation should cultivate toward the overseers, saying: "Let the older men who preside in a fine way be reckoned worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard in speaking and teaching."—1 Tim. 5:17.

PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES MAY CHANGE

Of course, a brother who has served faithfully for a period of time may become physically ill or otherwise incapacitated, perhaps due to advancing age, and may no longer be able to care for all the responsibilities of an overseer as he once did or in the way that other overseers do. Even so, he should still be viewed and respected as an older man as long as he is appointed. There would be no need for him to step aside due to his limitations. He is still due the double honor paid to all hardworking older men who are serving to the best of their respective abilities in shepherding the flock.

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But if a brother should feel that it would be best for him to step aside due to changed personal circumstances that limit his ability to serve, he may choose to do so. He should still be held in respect and be able to do much good in the congregation, even though no longer having assignments and duties given to elders.

POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY

Generally, men appointed as overseers are recommended for appointment by the local body of elders. This is done during regular visits of the circuit overseer. However, the Governing Body may appoint men who qualify to serve as overseers in any locality at any time. The Governing Body is not bound by the recommendations of any local group. Such recommendations serve merely as a guide and may even be rejected for reasons well known to the Governing Body. Also, at times, the Governing Body may authorize certain representatives to make appointments of overseers.—1 Tim. 1:3; Titus 1:5.

In each congregation there is a presiding overseer who serves for an indefinite period of time. The same is true of the secretary, service overseer, *Watchtower* Study conductor and Theocratic Ministry School overseer. The elders do not serve in these positions on a rotational basis. Of course, if a brother holding any of these positions moves, is unable to care for his responsibilities due to health reasons or becomes disqualified for failure to measure up to Scriptural requirements, another elder is selected to handle the assignment. In congregations where the number of overseers is limited, it may be necessary for an elder to handle more than one assignment until such time as other brothers qualify to be appointed as elders.



The presiding overseer serves as chairman at meetings of the body of elders. Communications and important records of the congregation are handled by the secretary who keeps the elders informed about important communications. Arrangements for field activity and other service-related matters come under the direction of the service overseer. The specific duties of these brothers, along with the *Watchtower* Study conductor, Theocratic Ministry School overseer and others who make up the body of elders, are set out from time to time in *Our Kingdom Ministry* and letters from the Society. Whenever appointments, deletions or removals of overseers and ministerial servants take place, appropriate announcements are made to the congregation. This enables all concerned to know who are currently serving within the local congregation and they can thus cooperate with the arrangement that is in effect.

It is suggested that the body of elders in each congregation meet periodically to discuss matters related to the spiritual progress of the congregation. Two such meetings are held each year in conjunction with the regular visits of the circuit overseer. About three months after each visit of the circuit overseer, a meeting can be scheduled. These four meetings during the year would most likely be sufficient for resolving any matters requiring the attention of the entire body of elders. Of course, the elders may convene at any time circumstances make it advisable. But if each one gives proper attention to his assigned duties and if the work of the elders is being adequately supervised and coordinated through the presiding overseer, meetings involving the entire body of elders can be kept to a minimum. Additionally,

all the elders in the circuit meet with the circuit and district overseers during the week of the semiannual circuit assembly.

CONGREGATION SERVICE COMMITTEE

There are certain duties that are cared for by the Congregation Service Committee, made up of the presiding overseer, secretary and service overseer. Members of this committee are involved in handling and signing various forms, such as those used in connection with literature inventories, orders, field reports and recommendations for appointment or removal of overseers, ministerial servants or regular pioneers. From time to time the Society calls upon the Congregation Service Committee to perform other duties.

OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES OF ELDERS

The presiding overseer is responsible for overseeing the Service Meeting. Periodically, however, he may invite another elder to look after this assignment for a certain month. Depending on the number available and their individual abilities, various elders handle assignments in connection with the other congregation meetings each week. These meetings are planned, outlined and prepared in advance so that they will be instructive and spiritually upbuilding. The elders are responsible for presenting instructive public talks. These also take much time in preparation. Besides teaching in the congregation, the elders also take the lead in the field ministry. They work along with the publishers, setting the example.—Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 5:3.

CONGREGATION BOOK STUDY CONDUCTOR

One of the outstanding privileges in the congregation is to serve as a Congregation Book Study



conductor. Such conductor has the opportunity to help others in a number of areas. Because this responsibility is a serious one, elders should be used, if available. If not, then one elder might care for more than one group, doing so at different times during the week. This, however, would depend on his circumstances. Or, capable ministerial servants could be used until such time as an elder can take over. This is something for the elders to decide. They would also decide to which group the conductor would be assigned.

One of the chief responsibilities of the Congregation Book Study conductor is teaching. In order to do so adequately, thorough preparation is necessary. He should know not only the answers to the study questions but also the reasons behind those answers and the value of the material. It should be his goal to help the group get a true understanding of what is being considered, so that they can apply the truths learned to their life and explain them to others. This would require a genuinely conscientious effort on his part, even as emphasized by Paul at Romans 12:7, where he wrote: "He that teaches, let him be at his teaching."

Another important feature of the book study conductor's work is that of taking the lead in the field ministry. The regularity, zeal and enthusiasm that he shows for the field activity will be reflected in the publishers. Because the brothers appreciate the encouragement and help that come through being together, a group witnessing schedule convenient for the majority should be worked out and maintained. (Luke 10:1-16) The conductor needs to plan so there is always enough territory to work. He will conduct the meeting for field service and organize the publishers for



that day's work. When he cannot be there, he can arrange for another elder, ministerial servant or, if neither is available, another publisher in good standing to care for these responsibilities so that the publishers enjoy the good leadership they need.

A real help to the study conductor and the entire group is the service overseer. It is a wise conductor who plans ahead for the visit of the service overseer, keeping his group informed of the time of the visit and anticipating its benefits. As all in the group are kept fully aware of the arrangements and enthusiastically support them, there is a corresponding improvement in the field activity.

Each study group is purposely kept small. This allows for the study conductor to become well acquainted with all assigned to it. As a loving shepherd he is warmly interested in each one and will try to give personal help and encouragement for the field ministry, support of congregation meetings and whatever else is appropriate to assist in keeping each person spiritually strong. Some will benefit from a personal visit when ill or depressed. An encouraging suggestion or a word of counsel might prompt some to reach out for additional privileges in the congregation, thus becoming of greater use to their brothers. While most of his efforts logically will be directed toward helping those in his own group, as an elder and shepherd he will have the entire congregation in mind. He is lovingly concerned for all in the congregation and will be ready to help others who are in need.—Acts 20:17, 28.

BENEFITING INDIVIDUALLY

The hard work of the overseers includes many things that contribute to the spiritual well-being



of the congregation as a whole and of its members individually. Much time is also used by these mature men in making visits to the homes of the brothers for the purpose of giving spiritual encouragement. While visiting the brothers privately in their home, or talking with them personally at the Kingdom Hall when home visits are not convenient or possible, the elders are able to give attention to the special needs of each one, just as a loving shepherd looks to the individual needs of each one of the many sheep in his flock.

At times it may appear that the overseers are so very busy that they really do not have time to give you the personal attention that is needed. Or you may hesitate to approach one of the overseers because you do not want to add to his burden. Although overseers do have many responsibilities and are kept busy not only with congregational matters but also with their own families and personal matters, members of the congregation should always feel free to approach them whenever they need help. It is unwise to allow a problem to remain unattended until it becomes serious. Also, it is not wise to reason that the overseers will learn of the problem by themselves if you do not bring it to their attention. Some matters causing disturbance may be more easily handled at an early stage before they grow into problems of major proportions.

CITY OVERSEER

A city overseer is appointed in cities where there is more than one congregation. Usually this appointment is made on the recommendation of the circuit overseer or circuit overseers, if more than one serves congregations in that city. This is not an appointment that changes



each year. The city overseer does not exercise jurisdiction in any congregation other than the one in which he serves as an elder. The Society's branch office may wish to communicate with him on various matters, such as expired subscriptions or arrangements for assemblies and schools that may be held in his city. However, the branch deals directly with each congregation in regard to literature supplies, monthly field service reports and other matters.

CIRCUIT OVERSEER

The Governing Body appoints qualified elders to serve as circuit overseers. These are assigned by the branch office to visit, on a regular basis, the congregations that make up their circuits, usually twice a year. They also periodically visit pioneers, special pioneers or missionaries serving in isolated territory. They plan their routing and notify each congregation sufficiently in advance so the visit will result in the most benefit.

The presiding overseer takes the lead in organizing matters so the visit will prove spiritually refreshing to all. (Rom. 1:11, 12) After he receives notification of the visit and information about the needs of the circuit overseer and his wife, if married, he makes arrangements through various brothers to get the needed literature supplies, accommodations and other necessary things. He makes sure all, including the circuit overseer, are informed of these arrangements.

The circuit overseer will contact the presiding overseer regarding the scheduling of meetings, including meetings for field service. These will be arranged in accord with what is directed in *Our Kingdom Ministry,* letters from the branch, local circumstances and the circuit overseer's suggestions. All need to be informed in advance

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concerning the time of the meetings with the congregation, with the pioneers and with the elders and ministerial servants, as well as the places and times of meetings for field service. This will enable all to adjust their affairs so they can benefit from the entire week's activities.

Since the circuit overseer will check the congregation's records on Tuesday afternoon, such records should be in good order and available before he arrives. The presiding overseer will be sure to have them at the location where they will be checked. It is helpful if the presiding overseer or the secretary is available to render any assistance needed. The circuit overseer checks the Congregation's Publisher Record cards, monthly field service reports, meeting attendance records, territory records and the accounts. This will give him some insight as to possible needs of the congregation and how he may be of assistance to those responsible for keeping these records.

During his visit the circuit overseer takes time to speak with the brothers individually as he is able—at meetings, out in the field service, while enjoying their hospitality at mealtimes and otherwise. Additionally, he meets with the elders and ministerial servants, sharing appropriate Scriptural counsel, suggestions and encouragement that will help them shoulder their responsibilities in serving and shepherding the flock in their care. (Prov. 27:23; Acts 20:26-32; 1 Tim. 4:11-16) He also meets with the pioneers to encourage them in their work and give personal assistance with any problems they may be encountering in their ministry.

If there are problems that need attention, the circuit overseer will either handle these or assist the elders to the extent possible while he is with



the congregation. He will strive to help the elders or individuals involved to locate the Scriptural direction that applies. If there has been some serious wrongdoing and the elders need his assistance in handling such, he will set aside time for this purpose. If there is anything that the branch office needs to do in following through, he and the elders will provide the office with a detailed report on the matter.

While with the congregation the circuit overseer attends the regular congregation meetings. These may be adjusted from time to time in harmony with directions in *Our Kingdom Ministry,* letters from the branch office or other directives from the Society. He will give several talks to the congregation. His objective will be to encourage, fortify and motivate the congregation. He will strive to build in each one love and appreciation for Jehovah, Jesus Christ and the organization. He will encourage zealous participation in field service, providing practical suggestions on how to do the work effectively.

One of the primary objectives of the circuit overseer's visit is to provide leadership in field service. Many in the congregations have been able to adjust their schedule so that they could have a fuller share in field service that week. Some have been able to arrange to be auxiliary pioneers the month of his visit. Could you do so? Those desirous of working with him or his wife can make an appointment to do so through the presiding overseer. Much good has been accomplished by taking the circuit overseer or his wife on Bible studies and return visits. At times adjustments have to be made to do this during his visit, but the benefits are worth it. The circuit overseer is encouraged to arrange for an early



start in field service each day and to spend full days in service, taking into consideration local circumstances. Your extra effort to give full support to this aspect of the week's visit is deeply appreciated.—Prov. 27:17.

Circuit assemblies are arranged twice a year for each circuit. The circuit overseer is responsible for the operation of the assembly organization on these occasions. On the circuit overseer's recommendation the Society appoints permanent assembly personnel: an assembly overseer, an assistant assembly overseer and a news representative. They are to work closely with the circuit overseer in caring for the assembly organization. This will enable the circuit overseer to give his primary attention to the assembly program. The circuit overseer designates other capable men to care for various departments. He also arranges for an audit of the circuit accounts after each circuit assembly.

The circuit overseer reports his field service directly to the Society at the end of each month. He also submits a report on certain necessary expenses incurred, such as for travel, food and lodging, if these are not covered by the congregations. Additionally, the Society provides him with a small allowance for personal things and he receives literature and magazines at pioneer rates. These traveling representatives have confidence that, as Jesus promised, material needs will be provided if they seek continually the interests of Jehovah's Kingdom. (Luke 12:31) The congregations will want to be conscious of their privilege to display hospitality to these devoted elders who serve them.—3 John 5-8.



DISTRICT OVERSEER

The district overseer is a traveling elder who is also appointed by the Governing Body and assigned by the branch office to serve a number of circuits that comprise a district. He serves as chairman of the circuit assembly programs in his district and gives the public discourse on such programs. He works the first part of each week with a host congregation in the circuit being served. He takes the lead in group witnessing and gives an upbuilding Scriptural talk to the host congregation.

The branch office assigns each circuit the dates for its circuit assembly, and when the circuit overseer has secured assembly facilities for these dates he notifies the branch office. The branch office notifies the district overseer of this schedule, which he now follows as his assigned routing. Due to travel distances for the publishers and the small size of assembly facilities, some circuits have to be divided into sections with a circuit assembly held for each section. The district overseer is informed of this and spends a week in the circuit for each circuit assembly to be held. In advance he works out with the circuit overseer which congregation can appropriately be the host congregation for each circuit assembly.

The district overseer gives encouragement to the circuit overseer and his wife (if married) and offers helpful suggestions to assist them with their work. This he does on Tuesday afternoon of his visit. From time to time the branch office will outline points that they can beneficially discuss in this meeting. The circuit overseer and his wife may have questions on which they desire assistance. (Prov. 20:5) The district overseer, too, may have points to share due to things he



has learned through experience and observation. Privately, the circuit overseer may want to discuss the needs of the circuit and points that the district overseer may be able to work into his talks on the circuit assembly program or at his meeting with the elders of the circuit.

While working with the host congregation during the first part of the week, the district overseer will give a talk to the congregation and attend an abbreviated Congregation Book Study on Tuesday evening. If the elders need advice or assistance with some congregation matters, they will let him know this in advance and he will meet with them. Primarily, during the week he will take the lead in group witnessing. He and his wife will have a full schedule for field service. The circuit overseer and his wife will also give full support to the field service activity that week. The presiding overseer will make sure all are informed of the arrangements for meetings for service. He will also see that adequate territory is available and make appointments in behalf of any who have requested to work with the traveling overseers.

At the conclusion of the circuit assembly (or assemblies) the district overseer will send the branch a report on how the program was presented and received in that circuit. Also, he will report on the spiritual condition and the needs of the circuit. Once a month he also reports his field service and expenses. His accommodations and expenses are cared for in the same way as those for the circuit overseer.

BRANCH COMMITTEE

In each of the branch offices of the Watch Tower Society throughout the world, three or more spiritually qualified and mature brothers



serve as a Branch Committee to oversee the preaching work in the country or countries under their jurisdiction as assigned by the Society. One of the committee members serves as the Branch Committee coordinator.

Those serving on the Branch Committee handle matters pertaining to all the congregations in their territory. They arrange for the providing of publications furnished by "the faithful and discreet slave" to strengthen all associated with the congregations. Their primary objective is to see to it that the good news of the Kingdom is preached throughout the territory assigned, and that congregations, circuits and districts are set up to give proper oversight to the needs of the field. The Branch Committee also gives attention to missionaries and to special, regular and auxiliary pioneer activity. When there are assemblies and conventions, these brothers see to it that arrangements and assignments are made so as to ensure that everything takes "place decently and by arrangement."—1 Cor. 14:40.

The Governing Body makes all appointments of those selected to serve as members of Branch Committees throughout the world.

ZONE OVERSEER

Periodically, arrangements are made by the Governing Body to have qualified brothers serve each of the branches throughout the earth. Brothers used in this capacity are known as zone overseers. Their primary work is helping the Branch Committee with problems or questions they have to face in carrying on the preaching and disciple-making work. Wherever practical, the zone overseer also serves the missionaries who work under the many branches of the organization worldwide. He talks with them about their problems and

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needs, giving necessary encouragement in their most important Kingdom-preaching activity.

The zone overseer also examines the various records that are kept for operating a branch office. He is especially interested in what is being accomplished in the field as far as the Kingdom preaching and other congregational activities are concerned. If there is a printery, farm or other facility, he inspects each of these operations. When the zone overseer visits branches he also shares to the extent possible in the Kingdom-preaching work.

LOVING OVERSIGHT

Visits by traveling overseers provide an interchange of encouragement, and the congregations are thus strengthened and made firm in the faith. (Rom. 1:12; Eph. 4:3) All are made aware of their interdependency. Each one serving in the organization works for the common good of all and in spreading the Kingdom good news. (1 Cor. 12:12-31) Certainly we have all benefited greatly from the hard work and loving care of these mature Christian men. We will benefit even further as we continue submitting ourselves to congregation elders and other appointed overseers charged with shepherding the flock and with oversight of the work. (1 Cor. 16:15-18; Phil. 2:25, 29) As we all cooperate together we are drawn into unity with the head of the congregation, Christ Jesus, our Lord, the one appointed by Jehovah as the Fine Shepherd of the sheep. (Eph 1:22, 23) So it is that God's spirit permeates the congregations worldwide and his Word serves to guide the operation of the work throughout the earth. —Ps. 119:105.



CHAPTER 6

MINISTERIAL SERVANTS RENDER VALUABLE SERVICE

IN WRITING to the congregation at Philippi the apostle Paul said: "Paul and Timothy, slaves of Christ Jesus, to all the holy ones in union with Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, along with overseers and ministerial servants." (Phil. 1:1) Note, he made particular mention of the ministerial servants in his salutation. These men evidently fulfilled an important role in assisting the elders in the congregation back there. The same is true in our time. Ministerial servants render a number of services that are most helpful to overseers and contribute to the good order of the congregation.

Have you become acquainted with the ministerial servants in your congregation? Are you aware of the many fine services they perform for your benefit and for the benefit of the entire congregation? Perhaps you have not thought of their assigned duties as being of great consequence. But the apostle specifically mentions them and states that "the men who minister in a fine manner are acquiring for themselves a fine standing and great freeness of speech in the faith in connection with Christ Jesus."—1 Tim. 3:13.

SCRIPTURAL REQUIREMENTS FOR MINISTERIAL SERVANTS

Ministerial servants are expected to lead a wholesome Christian life, be responsible men and give proof that they are able to care for assignments properly. This becomes obvious when we consider what Paul had to say in his letter to



Timothy about the qualifications of ministerial servants: "Ministerial servants should likewise be serious, not double-tongued, not giving themselves to a lot of wine, not greedy of dishonest gain, holding the sacred secret of the faith with a clean conscience. Also, let these be tested as to fitness first, then let them serve as ministers, as they are free from accusation. Let ministerial servants be husbands of one wife, presiding in a fine manner over children and their own households. For the men who minister in a fine manner are acquiring for themselves a fine standing and great freeness of speech in the faith in connection with Christ Jesus."—1 Tim. 3:8-10, 12, 13.

So whereas their work within the congregation generally involves nonteaching responsibilities, ministerial servants are nonetheless spiritual men who by their hard work and exemplary Christian life not only perform vital services for the congregation but also set an example to be imitated by others.—Compare 1 Timothy 4:11, 12.

The specific Scriptural requirements for ministerial servants mentioned by Paul in his first letter to Timothy indicate that a high standard is set for men who are used in this capacity. Holding to such a standard serves to protect the congregation from any legitimate accusation as to the kind of men to whom it entrusts special responsibilities. Whether young or older in years, ministerial servants are expected to be active in the ministry each month, setting a fine example. They should be exemplary in their dress, grooming, speech, attitude and conduct. Such a pattern of living with soundness of mind gains the respect of others and reflects the seriousness with which ministerial servants view their relationship with Jehovah and their privileges of service in the congregation.—Compare Titus 2:2, 6-8.

These are men who have been "tested as to fitness." Even before receiving their appointment they have demonstrated themselves to be truly dedicated men whose faith has been made manifest in zealous Kingdom service and in helping others to be made firm in the faith. In their response to the good news they have demonstrated that they put Kingdom interests first in their life and are reaching out for whatever service privileges may be opened to them. They are indeed examples for others in the congregation to imitate.—1 Tim. 3:10.

HOW THEY ARE USED

Ministerial servants render a great variety of practical services in behalf of their brothers and sisters. In doing so they are very helpful to the overseers, relieving them of much detailed work, thus leaving them free to care for important teaching and shepherding responsibilities. In making such service assignments the elders take into account the number of appointed ministerial servants in the congregation as well as their individual abilities.

Just consider some of the services they handle. One ministerial servant may be assigned to take care of the congregation literature, making it convenient for all of us to obtain the literature we need for our personal use and for field service. Another may care for the magazines in the congregation. Others are assigned duties to keep records such as for the congregation accounts or for the assigning of territory, or they are used to handle microphones, operate sound equipment, look after the platform or perhaps help the elders in other ways. There is much work to be done in maintaining the Kingdom Hall and keeping it clean, so ministerial servants are often called

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upon to assist in caring for such responsibilities. Ministerial servants are also assigned to serve as attendants, welcome new ones and help maintain order at congregation meetings.

In some congregations there may be enough ministerial servants so that a different one can be assigned to each of these duties. Elsewhere, a ministerial servant may care for several assignments. In some instances it is beneficial to have more than one person assigned to share in certain work. (If there are not enough ministerial servants to care for some of these responsibilities, the body of elders may, in these cases, arrange for other dedicated exemplary brothers to help take care of some of this necessary work. Thus, they would gain experience that would be useful later when they, in turn, become qualified to serve as ministerial servants. Or, if brothers are not available, certain sisters who show godly humility and devotion to Jehovah could be asked to assist with some things, though, of course, they would not be appointed as ministerial servants.)

Periodically, if there is good reason, elders may find it beneficial to shift some ministerial servants from one assignment to another. However, there is great advantage in having brothers continue to handle the same assignments so as to become more proficient and gain experience. Much depends on local needs as to how elders work out these assignments handled by ministerial servants.

Depending on local circumstances in each congregation, there may be other services that can be assigned to ministerial servants who are doing as the apostle Paul encouraged young Timothy, 'making their spiritual advancement manifest.' (1 Tim. 4:15) If there are not enough elders to

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conduct the Congregation Book Studies, some of the more qualified ministerial servants are used as study conductors to care for assigned groups. They may be assigned to handle parts in the Service Meeting and the Theocratic Ministry School and to deliver public talks in the local congregation. Other privileges may be extended to some of the ministerial servants where there is particular need and they meet the requirements for the assignment.—Compare 1 Peter 4:10.

In assisting the elders they should give of themselves willingly, demonstrating that they have a sense of responsibility and are working for the advancement of Kingdom interests and the benefit of everyone in the congregation. By taking the lead in the field service, ministerial servants can set a good example for others and reap great satisfaction themselves in a work well done.

Though their work differs from that of the elders, it is no less a part of their sacred service to God and is important to the smooth functioning of the congregation. In time, if ministerial servants discharge their obligations well and also become qualified to serve as shepherds and teachers, they may be recommended as elders in the congregation.

If you have not done so already, why not make special effort to get acquainted with the ministerial servants in your congregation? You can show your appreciation for their hard work by cooperating with them as they care for their assigned duties. In this way you will also be showing appreciation for Jehovah's provision for maintaining an orderly household. (Gal. 6:10) The ministerial servants are appointed by holy spirit for your good.

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CHAPTER 7

ARRANGEMENTS FOR REGULARLY ASSEMBLING TOGETHER

THE congregation of God is referred to in the Bible as his household. (1 Tim. 3:15) How fitting that arrangements are made for its members and their companions to assemble regularly for worship and to be fed spiritually! It is important for each one of us to gather together to hear God's Word, so as to learn his requirements and how we may serve him. This applies to both young persons and those of older years, just as it did in the case of God's ancient covenant people, the nation of Israel. His command to them through Moses was to "congregate the people, the men and the women and the little ones and your alien resident who is within your gates, in order that they may listen and in order that they may learn, as they must fear Jehovah your God and take care to carry out all the words of this law." (Deut. 31:12) A command exhorting all Christians to assemble together regularly is expressed in similar terms.—Heb. 10:23-25.

Clearly, the purpose for assembling together now, even as then, is to listen and learn and to be "taught by Jehovah." (Isa. 54:13) Assembling for worship in ancient Israel was always a joyous occasion, as reflected in the words of David who wrote, "I rejoiced when they were saying to me: 'To the house of Jehovah let us go.' " (Ps. 122:1) This is also true of Jehovah's Witnesses today as they assemble together to worship Jehovah.

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KINGDOM HALL

The Bible account and secular history tell us that the first-century Christians assembled together in private homes as well as in public places. (Rom. 16:3, 5; Col. 4:15; Acts 19:8, 9) At times it was necessary for them to meet in isolated, or secluded, places to avoid detection by persecutors. Today, also, private homes and public places are used for Christian meetings, but the principal meeting place used by congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses is the Kingdom Hall.

In some localities it is more convenient to rent a hall than it is to buy or to build one. However, large numbers of congregations have chosen to purchase property and build their own Kingdom Halls, suited to their needs. Or they have bought and renovated existing buildings. In such instances it is appropriate to have a dedication program. Elders are generally familiar with information regarding ownership and operation of Kingdom Halls as set out in *Our Kingdom Ministry,* memorandums and letters provided by the Society. The Kingdom Hall, as a place of worship, should not be a pretentious building designed to impress others. While its architecture may vary from place to place, its purpose is functional. (Compare Acts 17:24.) It should be a comfortable and convenient place for conducting Christian meetings that help us to grow spiritually and to learn about Jehovah, and that encourage us to share in his Kingdom service.

Each Kingdom Hall is arranged for, financed and maintained by the local congregation(s) of Jehovah's Witnesses. The brothers should consider it a privilege not only to support the Kingdom Hall financially but also to volunteer their

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services in keeping it clean, presentable and in good repair. Both inside and out, the Kingdom Hall should be a proper representation of Jehovah's organization. An elder or a ministerial servant is usually assigned to see that necessary work is cared for according to an equitable, convenient schedule. Book study groups may take turns in cleaning the Hall, following the list of things to be done each week. At times several congregations may share the use of a Kingdom Hall. This requires close cooperation among all the brothers with regard to financing and maintaining the Kingdom Hall. When it is necessary for two or more congregations to use the same Kingdom Hall, the elders of all the congregations involved set up a committee of brothers to care for the responsibility of working out convenient and practical arrangements for the proper care of the building and the property.

Meeting times are arranged for each congregation, having in mind what is convenient for the majority of publishers. Consideration should also be given to interested persons in the territory since we want them to attend. This may be worked out through the elders in a spirit of mutual concern and brotherly love.—Phil. 2:2-4; 1 Pet. 3:8.

In addition to its use for regular congregational meetings and as a meeting place for field service, the Kingdom Hall may be used for wedding ceremonies and funerals with the permission of those members of the body of elders who are present at the time the decision is made. They carefully consider what is desired and whether the individuals involved are in good standing with the congregation and otherwise qualified. Those who are granted the use of the Kingdom Hall for such purposes are expected to conduct



themselves in a way that befits such a place of worship. All involved should be sure that nothing is done that would offend the brothers or bring reproach upon Jehovah and the good name of the congregation. (Phil. 2:14, 15) At times use of the Kingdom Hall may be granted for other spiritual functions under the Society's direction, such as conducting the Kingdom Ministry School for elders and the Pioneer Service School.

Private homes of the brothers may also serve as meeting places. Those who are able to offer their home as a convenient place for some of or all the congregation meetings, as circumstances require, should view this as a privilege.

Meeting places of the congregation should always be viewed with respect by members of the congregation. Our dress, grooming and decorum should bespeak the dignity associated with worshiping Jehovah at his house. (Eccl. 5:1; 1 Tim. 2:9, 10) Ignoring such counsel would be showing a lack of appreciation for our Christian meetings.

At meetings in the Kingdom Hall qualified brothers should be assigned to serve as attendants. They should be alert, have friendly personalities and use good judgment. Their responsibilities include greeting newcomers and making them feel welcome, helping any latecomers to find seats and giving necessary attention to proper heating and ventilation of the Hall. Maintaining order during the meetings is essential. It is recommended that children sit with their parents. When a child becomes unruly, an attendant might ask the parent in a kind and tactful way to take the child out so the audience will not be unduly distracted. Even before the meeting, parents with young children can be encouraged to sit where they will cause the least distraction if it is necessary to take

the children out to discipline them or care for other needs.

Since the conduct of children inside the Kingdom Hall as well as outside can reflect favorably or unfavorably on the congregation, attendants can, where necessary, remind parents to give proper supervision so that the children will not be running in the building or around the property, especially when those in attendance are visiting with one another after the meeting is concluded. The service performed by attendants obviously contributes much to everyone's enjoyment of the meetings. It is desirable for ministerial servants to be used as attendants, particularly those who themselves have had experience in handling situations that arise in family life.—1 Tim. 3:12.

CONGREGATION MEETINGS

The Bible emphasizes the need and the value of coming together to worship and praise Jehovah. (Ps. 26:8, 12; Matt. 18:20) Faithful Nehemiah recognized this and so he urged his fellow Israelites: "We should not neglect the house of our God." (Neh. 10:39b) Those who embraced the truth at the time of Pentecost, 33 C.E., did not treat this matter lightly. They continued devoting themselves to the teachings of the apostles, "and day after day they were in constant attendance at the temple with one accord." (Acts 2:42, 46) Later, we know, when Christians came together for worship they read from the Scriptures, including inspired letters written by the apostles and other Christian disciples. (Col. 4:16; 1 Cor. 1:1, 2; 1 Thess. 1:1; Jas. 1:1) There was congregation prayer. (Acts 4:24-29; 20:36) They also related experiences from the missionary field. (Acts 11:5-18; 14:27, 28) They considered Bible doctrines and the fulfillment of inspired prophe-

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cy. Instruction was given in matters of approved Christian conduct and godly devotion. They were encouraged to be zealous proclaimers of the good news.—1 Cor. 11:23-26; Eph. 5:1-33; Rom. 10:9, 10; 1 Cor. 15:58.

In our day Christian meetings in many respects follow the pattern set in apostolic days. We give heed to the inspired exhortation at Hebrews 10: 25 by 'not forsaking the gathering of ourselves together, as some have the custom, but encouraging one another, and all the more so now as we behold the day drawing near.' During these difficult last days of the wicked system of things, we need added encouragement that comes from regularly assembling together in order to maintain spiritual strength and Christian integrity. (Rom. 1:11, 12) As in Paul's day, we live among a crooked and twisted generation, a system of things whose ungodliness and worldly spirit we have repudiated. (Phil. 2:15, 16; Titus 2:12-14) Really, where would we rather be than in association with Jehovah's people? (Compare Psalm 84:10.) And what could be more beneficial than hearing the Word of God discussed?

Jehovah is the source of an abundance of satisfying spiritual food. (Ps. 145:14, 15) Through his Son and the earthly channel, "the faithful and discreet slave," food at the proper time is being dispensed. How is such provision served to the individual members of the organization? One means is through the various meetings arranged each week in the congregation. Consider each of these occasions and the benefits derived as our brothers regularly assemble together.

THE *WATCHTOWER* STUDY

For over 100 years now *The Watchtower Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom* has been the prin-

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cipal journal to keep Jehovah's people well supplied with timely spiritual food. Certain articles published in *The Watchtower* are specifically prepared for weekly congregational study where instruction based upon the written Word of God is featured. Information carefully examined in the *Watchtower* Study stirs the heart and the mind of the members of the congregation and builds up their spiritual strength.

The study articles are varied as to subject matter. They deal with Bible prophecy, godly conduct, Christian morals, Bible doctrine, encouragement in the Christian ministry, admonition to cope with spiritual dangers, and Scriptural counsel on many other matters. Also, a variety of general Biblical information vital for continued spiritual growth is considered.

How do all associated with the congregation benefit from such a variety of timely spiritual food? Study material frequently deals with the application of Bible principles in daily living and fortifies against "the spirit of the world" and unclean conduct. (1 Cor. 2:12) Through the columns of *The Watchtower* comes increased light on Bible doctrine and the discussion of fulfillment of prophecy as Jehovah makes this known, thus enabling all to keep abreast of the truth and stay on the path of the righteous. (Ps. 97: 11; Prov. 4:18) Attending and sharing in the *Watchtower* Study helps us always to rejoice in the hope of Jehovah's righteous new system of things. (Rom. 12:12; 2 Pet. 3:13) It helps us to manifest the fruitage of the spirit in our life and to keep strong our desire to serve Jehovah zealously. (Gal. 5:22, 23) It strengthens our faith to endure the trials ahead and to 'build a fine foundation for the future so that we may get a firm

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hold on the real life.'—1 Tim. 6:19; 1 Pet. 1:6, 7.

It is evident that the material considered at the *Watchtower* Study week by week is vital. It helps us to grow spiritually, to make the truth of God's Word our own, to bring our life into conformity with the teachings of the Bible and to be united spiritually with our brothers worldwide. What can each one do to take fuller advantage of this provision for spiritual feeding? Prepare the lesson in advance, looking up all the cited scriptures. Have a share in commenting during the meeting. Such participation will make a deeper impression of the points under discussion, sounding down the truth into our heart and our mind. At the same time others benefit as they hear our expressions of faith and hope. Carefully listening to their comments, and especially the points emphasized by the *Watchtower* Study conductor, will ensure our getting the most benefit from the lesson each week.

The *Watchtower* Study should not be looked upon as just a routine meeting. If we are to maintain spiritual strength and firmness in the faith it is necessary to be present each week. None should miss this important provision for strengthening all associated with the household of faith.

PUBLIC MEETING

Usually the Public Meeting is held in conjunction with the weekly *Watchtower* Study. Regular public talks in the congregation are 45 minutes in length. The *Watchtower* Study takes one hour. These two meetings together with the songs and the opening and closing prayers should cover no more than two hours. Public Meetings complement the *Watchtower* Study, differing as to the method used in presenting information. Whereas

the *Watchtower* Study is developed as a discussion with audience participation in answering prepared questions, the Public Meeting features a discourse on a Bible subject. Such meetings featuring the spoken word play an important part in filling a spiritual need for new ones and members of the congregation.—See Acts 18:4; 19:9, 10.

By inviting interested persons and even the public in general, we may accomplish much in acquainting people with basic Bible information. The Public Meetings should help one and all to remain alert to Christian teachings and encourage steadfastness in Kingdom service.

The subjects that may be considered at Public Meetings are varied. Talks may cover Bible doctrines and prophecy, Scriptural principles and counsel regarding family life, marital problems, the difficult situations that confront youths in this wicked world, requirements regarding Christian morals, as well as Jehovah's marvelous works of creation and the way in which science confirms Biblical facts and statements. Other talks may enhance our appreciation of accounts and activities of different Bible characters, commenting on their significance for our day. Truly the Public Meeting is an occasion for taking in informative and refreshing spiritual food.

If we are to get the full benefit of the Public Meeting arrangement it is essential for us to attend regularly, pay close attention, look up the scriptures referred to by the speaker and follow along as he reads and explains them. (Luke 8: 18) This will help us to become more familiar with the location of Bible books and increase our knowledge of the Scriptures. As we thus make sure of the things discussed, we should be



determined to hold fast to what we learn and personally apply it.—1 Thess. 5:21.

If there are sufficient speakers available, the congregation will no doubt have a public talk every week. Frequently this is made possible by arranging for visiting speakers from nearby congregations. But even if there is a shortage of speakers in an area, arrangements are usually made to have these talks as often as possible.

Christ Jesus, his apostles and their associates conducted public meetings similar to those enjoyed today by congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses. Without question, Jesus was the greatest public speaker ever on earth. Officers said concerning him: "Never has another man spoken like this." (John 7:46) Jesus spoke with authority, astounding his audiences. (Matt. 7:28, 29) Many were the benefits received by those who took his message to heart. (Matt. 13:16, 17) The apostles followed his example. At Acts 2:22-36 we read of Peter's powerful discourse on the day of Pentecost, 33 C.E. Many were motivated to act as a result of what they heard. Later, individuals benefited from Paul's discourse in Athens. (Acts 17:22-34) Similarly, in our day millions have received benefits through the Public Meetings held in congregations, at circuit assemblies and at district, national and international conventions. We should give full support to the arrangement for Public Meetings.

THE SERVICE MEETING

This meeting stresses service, which is what our ministry is all about. It equips us to have a full share in preaching the Kingdom good news, making disciples and declaring the approaching execution of divine judgment. (Mark 13:10; Matt. 28:20; 2 Pet. 3:7) To a large extent this work is



done by speaking to other people and providing them with Bible literature. But the application of Jehovah's righteous principles in our life has a great bearing on the effectiveness of our field ministry and the fruitage that we produce. (Matt. 13:23; John 15:8) Thereby we demonstrate the good results that come from applying the Scriptures. Appropriately, the Service Meeting gives attention to all these facets of our service to God.

Each month the Society publishes *Our Kingdom Ministry,* which outlines the weekly Service Meetings. You will receive a copy through the congregation. When a new issue of *Our Kingdom Ministry* is received, the presiding overseer can carefully analyze what it contains and he either personally assigns the various meeting parts to qualified brothers or arranges for such assignments through one of the other elders.

Elders and the more qualified ministerial servants are assigned to handle the various parts on the Service Meeting program. They need to study the assigned material carefully to determine what the principal points of instruction are and how to handle them so that the brothers will understand and remember them. Careful thought is also given to application of the material to the situation of the local congregation.

While there are a variety of ways in which material can effectively be presented, in no case should the method of presentation be allowed to overshadow the material presented. The objective of demonstrations is not to have a great dramatic production with a lot of stage props. Use natural settings such as a scene at one's secular work, the door-to-door work, a home Bible study or a family discussion. Settings should fit what



is encountered locally so that publishers can relate to them.

If each one on the program sticks to the allotted time the Service Meeting will conclude in 45 minutes, not including the songs and closing prayer. Everyone who shares in the program should cooperate to that end.

Exemplary dedicated publishers, and their well-trained children, may be asked to participate in certain parts, such as demonstrations. They may be interviewed or invited to relate their experiences under the direction of responsible brothers. If you have an opportunity to participate, cooperate joyfully and conscientiously, recognizing that this is part of your service to Jehovah.

It should be the heartfelt desire of each Christian to live and accomplish things in his life in a way that influences others to follow Jesus Christ as dedicated witnesses of Jehovah. To that end, the Service Meeting programs are designed to help us in a number of ways, such as by (1) encouraging us to engage to the fullest extent possible in the house-to-house work or in street work and to improve in our presentation of the good news; (2) helping us to see the need of making return visits on individuals who display interest or accept Bible literature (this involves keeping good records and improving our ability to teach such persons); (3) moving us to set aside time for regularly conducting home Bible studies and directing students to the organization; (4) providing us with ideas on how to give an informal witness and alerting us to speak about the truth whenever we have opportunity; (5) improving our efforts to help new ones, our children and other young people to become dedicated disciples.

To get the fullest benefit from the Service

Meeting, why not prepare beforehand? You will benefit more if, prior to the meeting, you go over the program outlined in *Our Kingdom Ministry*. At times articles in various publications of the Society are considered. Not only will advance research be informative but such research will equip you to share when parts on the program call for audience participation. The more you absorb from the Service Meeting the more effective you will be in your ministry.

Regularity in attending the Service Meeting results in unified activity on the part of the entire congregation. Since every baptized Witness is a minister, this meeting is essential in helping us to carry out our commission. It is also very beneficial for anyone else who desires to become a dedicated servant of God. Make attendance at this meeting a part of your weekly schedule of activity.

Meetings of this sort are nothing new. They are based on sound Scriptural precedent. Before sending his disciples out to preach, Jesus gave them detailed instructions on what to say and do. (Matt. 10:5–11:1; Luke 10:1-16) Later his disciples continued to have such meetings where they discussed experiences in their ministry and this strengthened them for zealous Kingdom activity. (Acts 4:23-31) We continue that same practice today.

THEOCRATIC MINISTRY SCHOOL

The Theocratic Ministry School, held also at the Kingdom Hall, is an ongoing provision for the education of the entire congregation. Its curriculum includes Bible talks, student presentations and other training useful for the field ministry. Counsel is given to students to help them progressively improve in their presentations. While



presenting a great variety of information that is of interest and benefit to the entire congregation, the Theocratic Ministry School also gives opportunity for participants as well as the audience to improve various aspects of their personal ministry. Occasional written reviews provide a means of self-examination as to one's own progress in ministerial training.

Each year the Society provides a Theocratic Ministry School Schedule setting out the program to be followed. It outlines the material to be used and how the assignments are to be handled. The Theocratic Ministry School for many years has proved its worth in training Jehovah's Witnesses to be effective proclaimers of the Kingdom. All who are actively associated with the congregation may enroll, including people newly attending the meetings, as long as they are not leading a life that is out of line with Christian principles.

By enrolling in the Theocratic Ministry School we show that we are interested in advancement. Such instruction can help us to be finer public praisers of Jehovah. It can equip us to accomplish more in the time we have available for the field service, as well as to give fine comments in the congregation meetings. In the case of brothers, this instruction will assist them greatly toward qualifying as ministerial servants or elders and eventually handling major Service Meeting parts and giving public talks.

Those enrolled will be notified well in advance concerning their student assignments so that they can prepare thoroughly. When we have an assigned part in the school it is particularly important to be on hand before the meeting starts. If an emergency situation arises and it is impossible to be present to fulfill an assignment we



should be sure to notify the school overseer, just as early as possible, so that he can arrange for a replacement.

As a regular part of our spiritual feeding program, the Theocratic Ministry School provides many benefits. It was Isaiah who said: "The Sovereign Lord Jehovah himself has given me the tongue of the taught ones, that I may know how to answer the tired one with a word." (Isa. 50:4) Unquestionably the school has played an important part in training literally tens of thousands to develop the tongue of one taught by Jehovah. Over the years the program has been designed to help those enrolled to make spiritual advancement and to learn how better to express themselves in presenting the good news of the Kingdom. Under the direction of holy spirit such training has enabled God's people to give an answer to everyone demanding a reason for their hope. Being taught to use God's Word in this way is a blessing.

The congregation usually provides a Theocratic Ministry School library at the Kingdom Hall. This may contain the available publications of the Society, perhaps a number of Bible translations, a concordance and other helpful reference works. We should feel free to use any of these publications at the Kingdom Hall before or after meetings.

CONGREGATION BOOK STUDY

Members of the congregation, and others who are associated, derive great personal benefit from the Congregation Book Study, which is generally conducted with a group smaller than at the other meetings. There are just a few families, or a comparatively small number of individuals, who gather at each of these studies. Instead



of having the entire congregation come together at one place, arrangements are made for the study groups to meet in convenient locations scattered throughout the congregation's territory. One group may meet at the Kingdom Hall. Others assemble in private homes.

In some respects these group studies provide benefits that do not directly come through other provisions of the congregation. Why is this so? It is because the Congregation Book Study arrangement not only provides for a careful and detailed study of Bible subjects but, in these small groups, makes it possible for more personal attention to be given to the spiritual growth of each individual. Such personal assistance may include appropriate Scriptural counsel, encouragement and direction for carrying out our ministry, as well as other vital spiritual help to fit the needs of the individual. Here is a reflection of Jehovah's loving-kindness and his tender care for his people.—Isa. 40:11.

This meeting is a one-hour group study using the Bible and a textbook provided by the Watch Tower Society. The brother assigned as conductor is usually an elder. He is himself a student of God's Word and qualified to help each one not only to increase in Bible knowledge but also to apply this knowledge in practical ways. Basically, the meeting is conducted in the same manner as the *Watchtower* Study. It is opened and closed with prayer. Paragraphs are read. Questions are asked on the paragraphs. Comments are invited. Scriptures are read. To impress principal thoughts on the mind of each one, a brief oral review may be conducted at the end of the study. As we attend week by week we will gain not only knowledge but understanding. We will learn the reasons for



statements that are made and how to support them from the Bible, as well as how to conduct discussions of the same material with others that we are able to help in our field ministry. (2 Tim. 2:15) So this meeting will do much to equip us to become better teachers of God's Word.

With a small group such as this there is more opportunity for all of us to offer comments. It is not at all difficult to participate freely at this meeting, and thus we have the opportunity to get accustomed to making a public declaration of our faith before others. (Heb. 13:15) It is good to learn to make our comments in our own words instead of reading them out of the book.

Although anyone present may be encouraged to share in the reading of the scriptures, just one person reads the paragraphs at any one study. If possible, arrangements are made a week in advance for a baptized brother who is a good reader to read the paragraphs.

Having the study groups scattered throughout the congregation territory makes it convenient for both ourselves and newly interested people in the neighborhood to attend. We should make every effort to bring others with us to the meeting so that they can get a taste of the spiritually upbuilding discussions and the warm association that we enjoy.

In addition to providing a place for group study, the location of the Congregation Book Study may be a meeting place for field service. Here the group can meet at convenient times prior to going out into the field. Cooperating in all these arrangements results in groups that are closely knit together for the twofold purpose of study and service.

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MEETINGS FOR FIELD SERVICE

At various times during the week, groups of Jehovah's Witnesses may briefly assemble together in preparation for going out in the field ministry. Discussion of a Bible text, suggestions for dealing with situations likely to be encountered in the field or other points from *Our Kingdom Ministry* are usually considered at these meetings. Field service arrangements are made and one of the group leads in prayer. Then they are ready to go into the field. Such meetings provide not only the practical instruction but also real encouragement for those going out in the witness work. Arrangements can be made at this meeting to help newer ones or others that may need assistance in the preaching work. Such meetings last from 10 to 15 minutes.

NEW OR SMALL CONGREGATIONS

As more disciples are made, the number of congregations also increases. Whether a new congregation is formed from an already existing congregation or it is made up of publishers in an isolated area, it must be a group of baptized publishers and others who recognize "the faithful and discreet slave" class and desire to work under its direction. The application for a new congregation is usually submitted by the circuit overseer. In some cases small groups may find it more advantageous to be associated with the nearest congregation.

At times small congregations may be composed entirely of sisters. When such is the case, a sister who prays or conducts meetings does so with head properly covered, in harmony with the Scriptural arrangement. (1 Cor. 11:3-16) In most cases they remain seated, facing the group. None of the sisters give actual discourses at



meetings, but they read and comment on the material provided by the Watch Tower Society or, for variety, they may cover it in discussions or demonstrations.

Those brothers in a newly formed congregation who qualify for appointment as elders or ministerial servants will be recommended to the Society's branch office. If none qualify, as in the case of a group made up entirely of sisters, the branch office will designate one of them to care for correspondence with the office and to carry on meetings. In time, when brothers qualify for appointment, they will care for these responsibilities.

CIRCUIT ASSEMBLIES

Meetings of Jehovah's servants may range in size from just two or three individuals to large assemblies of many thousands. From time to time arrangements are made for congregations assigned to the same circuit to assemble together at a circuit assembly. The Scriptural theme and various parts of the program are prepared by "the faithful and discreet slave" with a special need in mind. A variety of methods are used to present the information, such as discourses, discussions, demonstrations and interviews. Also, a part of the program usually deals with local situations or counsel that specifically applies to the particular circuit. Such timely instruction builds up all who attend.

At the circuit assembly, opportunity is provided for new disciples to get baptized in symbol of their dedication to Jehovah. Circuit assemblies are always joyous occasions that afford opportunity for the brothers to "widen out" in their Christian association. (2 Cor. 6:11-13) All are encouraged by the reports and experiences related

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concerning the work of preaching the good news.

DISTRICT CONVENTIONS

Once each year larger assemblies are held by Jehovah's Witnesses. Usually these are organized as district conventions combining congregations from a number of circuits. However, in smaller branches it may be more practical and convenient for all the Witnesses to assemble together in one place. These arrangements may vary due to circumstances in some lands or on the basis of direction from the Governing Body. National and international conventions are also organized periodically around the world. These conventions may be attended by tens of thousands of Witnesses from many different lands. Over the years many people have come to learn about the good news because of the publicity given to these large gatherings of Jehovah's Witnesses.

District, national and international conventions are joyous occasions of united worship for Jehovah's dedicated people. Such conventions have provided the setting for revealing increased light on the truth, releasing new publications for personal and congregational study and for use in the field ministry, and for mass baptisms. Jehovah's Witnesses consider district conventions to be of particular importance in promoting their spiritual growth and in reviewing progress in fulfilling their Christian commission. The larger conventions give evidence that Jehovah's people indeed form an international brotherhood of dedicated Christians bearing the identifying mark of disciples of Jesus Christ.—John 13:35.

By becoming involved in local congregation meetings, as well as in the larger assemblies and conventions of Jehovah's people, we are strengthened to do Jehovah's will and are protected against

outside worldly influences that would undermine our Christian faith. We can all be thankful that Jehovah has provided these periods of spiritual refreshment for his dedicated people in this time of the end.

THE LORD'S EVENING MEAL

Once each year on the anniversary date of the death of Jesus Christ, all congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses celebrate the Memorial of Christ's death, or the Lord's Evening Meal. (1 Cor. 11: 20, 23, 24) This is the most important meeting of the year for Jehovah's people. We are specifically commanded to keep this Memorial celebration. —Luke 22:19.

The Memorial date is clearly marked in the Bible as the anniversary of the Biblical Passover. (Matt. 26:17, 20, 26) The Passover was the annual celebration of the exodus of the Israelites from captivity in Egypt in the year 1513 B.C.E. At that time Jehovah marked the 14th day of their first lunar month as the date for them to eat the Passover lamb and leave their captivity in Egypt. (Ex. 12:1-51) The date is determined by counting 14 days from the new moon nearest the spring equinox, March 21-22, as it would be visible at Jerusalem in the land of Palestine. Generally, this would make the Memorial celebration each year fall on the date of the first full moon following the spring equinox.

Matthew 26:26-28 outlines in Jesus' own words the way the Memorial is celebrated. It is not a ritual with mystical overtones, but it is a symbolic meal that is shared by those who have been called to be fellow heirs with Jesus Christ in his heavenly Kingdom. (Luke 22:28-30) All other dedicated Christians and interested people are invited and encouraged to attend the Lord's Evening Meal as observers and in this way show

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their appreciation for the provision Jehovah God has made for the benefit of all mankind through his Son, Jesus Christ. Jehovah's Witnesses today endeavor to make the Memorial a special event in their life each year.

Usually in the spring of the year, near Memorial time, a special public talk is given in all the congregations. Jehovah's Witnesses endeavor to invite all interested persons to attend. The talk provides a timely message for those who want to be pleasing to God and it is designed to stimulate further interest in Bible study.

Jehovah's Witnesses joyfully anticipate occasions for meeting together to be built up and encouraged spiritually. The Governing Body is alert to provide occasions for assembling together according to our spiritual needs. All of Jehovah's servants and other interested people are urged to take full advantage of all arrangements for regularly assembling together and show due appreciation for Jehovah's provisions through his earthly organization.

CHAPTER 8

MINISTERS OF THE GOOD NEWS

IN SENDING forth his Son, Jehovah gave us a perfect model to follow. (1 Pet. 2:21) When anyone becomes his follower, Jesus helps that one to preach the good news as one of God's ministers. Indicating that this would be spiritually refreshing, he said: "Come to me, all you who are toiling and loaded down, and I will refresh you. Take my yoke upon you and *learn from me* [become my disciples, 1971 edition], for I am mild-tempered and lowly in heart, and you will find refreshment for your souls." (Matt. 11:28,

29) His promise has not failed any who have responded to that invitation!

As God's Chief Minister, Jesus called certain individuals to come and be his followers. (Matt. 9:9; John 1:43) He trained them in the ministry and sent them forth to do the same work he was doing. (Matt. 10:1–11:1; 20:28; Luke 4:43) Later he sent forth 70 others to share in declaring the good news concerning God's Kingdom. (Luke 10: 1, 8-11) When Jesus sent his disciples forth he said to them: "He that listens to you listens to me too. And he that disregards you disregards me too. Moreover, he that disregards me disregards also him that sent me forth." (Luke 10:16) In this way he stressed the serious responsibility that was laid upon the disciples. They were to represent the Most High God! So it would be with all others who respond to Jesus' invitation to "come be my follower," even down to this day. (Luke 18:22) All who respond have a divine commission to preach the good news of the Kingdom and to make disciples.—Matt. 24:14; 28:19, 20.

Having come to Jesus, therefore, in response to his invitation to follow him, we have been blessed with knowledge of Jehovah God and of Jesus Christ. (John 17:3) We have been taught Jehovah's ways. With his help we have been able to make over our mind, change our personality and harmonize our daily conduct with Jehovah's righteous standards. (Rom. 12:1, 2; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:9, 10) Out of heartfelt appreciation, we have also been moved to follow our Exemplar and to present ourselves to God just as was expressed by the psalmist: "Here I have come . . . To do your will, O my God, I have delighted." (Ps. 40:7, 8; Heb. 10:7-9) Our baptism in water

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is a symbol of our dedication to Jehovah and constitutes our ordination as ministers.

Always keep in mind the fact that service to God must be rendered with clean hands and out of a pure heart. (2 Cor. 6:14–7:1; Isa. 52:11; Ps. 24:3, 4) Through faith in Jesus Christ we have gained a clean conscience and freeness of speech. (Heb. 10:19-23, 35, 36; Rev. 7:9, 10, 14) The apostle Paul admonished Christians to do all things for God's glory so as not to be stumbling others. Also, the apostle Peter pointed out the value of exemplary godly conduct in winning unbelievers over to the truth.—1 Cor. 10:31, 33; 1 Pet. 3:1.

Jesus Christ took very seriously his commission as Jehovah's sent-forth One, and as a vigorous proclaimer of the good news of God's Kingdom he set the example for all his followers. He took the initiative and went out among the people, speaking and teaching in their homes and in public places. (Matt. 9:35; Luke 8:1) He spoke intimately with individuals, taught his disciples privately and addressed groups numbering into the thousands. (John 3:2-21; Matt. 13:36; Mark 4:10-13; 6:35-44) He took advantage of every appropriate occasion to speak words of encouragement and hope. (Luke 4:16-19) He did not pass up opportunities to witness even when he himself was in need of rest and refreshment. (Mark 6:30-34; John 4:4-34) When we read the inspired accounts of his ministry, are we not impelled to follow in his footsteps and to imitate closely his example? Certainly we are, just as the apostles were.—Matt. 4:19, 20; Luke 5:27, 28; John 1:43-45.

Consider the opportunities that are open to



Christians today to share in the work initiated by Jesus Christ nearly 2,000 years ago.

PREACHING FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE

Jehovah's modern-day witnesses recognize the value of preaching the good news systematically from house to house. This method of reaching people with the Kingdom message has been used so extensively by Jehovah's Witnesses that it has virtually become their trademark in many lands. The good results obtained give proof of Jehovah's approval and blessing. Also, the wisdom of using this method to reach millions of people effectively with the good news during a short period of time has been confirmed by most gratifying results. (Matt. 11:19; 24:14) Our field ministry has proved to be a most practical way for us to demonstrate love for Jehovah and love for our neighbors.—Matt. 22:34-40.

House-to-house preaching is not a modern innovation of Jehovah's Witnesses. It was firmly established in theocratic history long ago in the days of the apostles. Outstandingly, the apostle Paul refers to his teaching in the homes of people. Defending his ministry before the overseers in Ephesus, he said: "From the first day that I stepped into the district of Asia I . . . did not hold back from telling you any of the things that were profitable nor from teaching you publicly and from house to house." In this and other ways he "thoroughly bore witness both to Jews and to Greeks about repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus." (Acts 20:18, 20, 21) At that time there was an urgent need to reach all the people with the good news, since the Roman emperors were encouraging idolatry and many peoples were "given to the fear of the deities." There was a pressing need to seek "the God that

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made the world and all the things in it," the one who was then "telling mankind that they should all everywhere repent."—Acts 17:22-31.

Today the need for reaching people with the good news is even more urgent. The end of the present wicked system of things is approaching at a rapid pace. Life itself is in the balance for all mankind. So there is need for intensive effort on our part, now, before the great tribulation strikes. Seeing the great need, we are moved to increase our efforts in the house-to-house ministry, realizing that no better way has been found to replace this time-tested method of finding those who are hungering for the truth. It is as effective today as it was in the days of Jesus and the apostles. It is a most satisfying way for all of us to have a share in the ministry.—Mark 13:10.

According to your personal circumstances, are you having a full share in the house-to-house ministry? If you are taking advantage of every opportunity to do so we know that you are also reaping a rich reward of great joy and personal satisfaction in your service to God. (Acts 20:35; compare Ezekiel 9:11.) The house-to-house ministry may not be easy for you. You may be hindered by physical limitations or you may be assigned to work in territory where many people are not inclined to listen. There may even be governmental restrictions with which to cope. Because of your personality makeup you may also find it very difficult to initiate conversations with total strangers and therefore you must overcome a measure of nervous anxiety each time you engage in the house-to-house ministry. Do not be discouraged. (Compare Exodus 4:10-12.) Your circumstances are not unlike those of your brothers in many other places.



Do you remember Jesus' promise that he would be with those whom he sent forth to preach and make disciples? And do you remember that Jehovah has given his spirit to those carrying his message to the people? (Matt. 28:20; Isa. 61:1, 2) Take courage and have the same confidence as expressed by Paul at Philippians 4:13. He said: "For all things I have the strength by virtue of him who imparts power to me." Take full advantage of congregation arrangements made each week for engaging in house-to-house witnessing. By working with others in field service you will receive needed encouragement and personal assistance to talk more effectively with people and present Bible literature. Pray for greater faith to overcome whatever obstacles or discouragement you may face and exert yourself vigorously as a preacher of the good news.—Luke 17:5.

There are many benefits you will personally receive from being zealous in the house-to-house ministry. As you speak to others about the good news there will be many opportunities to give a reason for your hope, and your own hope will be made more firm. (1 Pet. 3:15) You will constantly remain aware of the sharp contrast between those who are firmly established in the Kingdom hope and those who are without hope in the world. Finding those deserving of the Kingdom message and noting the reactions of those who are not will enable you personally to experience what Jesus told his disciples at Matthew 10: 11-14. You will have the joyful satisfaction of knowing that you have been obedient to Jesus' command to "let your light shine," and you may even be privileged to help someone else to come to a knowledge of the truth that leads to everlasting life.—Matt. 5:16; John 17:3; 1 Tim. 4:16.

To make it convenient for publishers to share in the house-to-house activity, arrangements are made for witnessing on weekends as well as for during the week. In some areas it has become very difficult to find people in their homes during the daytime. When faced with this situation, some congregations have met with good success by arranging for evening witnessing in their territories. Some people are more inclined to receive visitors in the late afternoon or early evening rather than in the morning hours. Also, there are the following features of the ministry that may prove to be particularly effective in your area.

STORE-TO-STORE AND STREET WITNESSING

Concerning Paul's ministry in Athens, Acts 17: 17 tells us: "Consequently he began to reason in the synagogue with the Jews and the other people who worshiped God and every day in the marketplace with those who happened to be on hand." Yes, in addition to teaching from house to house, Paul taught the people he found in public places, where they went to shop or to carry on business.

In modern times Jehovah's Witnesses have met with good success in calling on people at their places of business or employment. In this way it has been possible to witness to individuals for the first time even though regular visits had been made to their homes. Presenting the latest issues of *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* has proved to be an effective way of witnessing to business people, but it is also appropriate to make other literature offers from time to time, using Topics for Conversation or discussions as suggested and outlined in *Our Kingdom Ministry*.

Street witnessing is done in many countries and usually entails offering the latest copies of

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The Watchtower and *Awake!* to passersby in business areas. This can be done in a kind and tactful manner by approaching people with brief comments on a timely subject featured in one of the magazines. Other literature may also be offered to interested people, and arrangements can then be made to call on these people at their homes. Periodically, *Our Kingdom Ministry* offers suggestions and encouragement for us to share in this effective feature of the ministry. You may find store-to-store and street witnessing effective and enjoyable ways for you to be fulfilling your ministry.

However, just sounding a warning and proclaiming the good news is not all that is involved in the work assigned to Christians today. If you are to succeed in helping others embrace the truth that leads to life, there is a need for you to make repeated calls to help interested ones progress toward becoming mature Christians.

MAKING RETURN VISITS

Jesus said to his followers: "You will be witnesses of me . . . to the most distant part of the earth." (Acts 1:8) But he also told them to "go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations, . . . teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you." (Matt. 28:19, 20) Once the seeds of truth have been planted, there is a need to make return visits. Those people who manifest interest in the Kingdom message need further help if they are to grow to Christian maturity.—Heb. 6:1, 2.

Making return visits can also be a source of much joy for you in Jehovah's service. Those people who expressed interest in the good news when you first called on them will very likely be happy to receive you again. By sharing additional

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Bible information with them, you may be able to strengthen their faith in God and help them to become more fully aware of their spiritual need. (Matt. 5:3) If you plan ahead, prepare well and arrange to make the return visit at a convenient time, you may be able to start a regular home Bible study. Usually this will be your objective in making return visits.

Making return visits may present a challenge for some. Perhaps you have become quite efficient in making a brief presentation of the good news from house to house and you enjoy that particular feature of the ministry. But then when you think of going back for the purpose of engaging the householder in a more detailed discussion of a Bible subject, the challenge seems to be overwhelming. You need not feel that way. Very likely on your first call you placed some Bible literature with the interested person. Why not discuss information contained in that publication? You can prepare ahead of time for that. Also, if you do not feel entirely qualified, arrange to take a more experienced publisher along to help you make the return visit.

Jehovah's organization provides the personal assistance you need to help you become effective in making return visits. Be sure that you are taking full advantage of opportunities to improve your own knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures. Trust in Jehovah and accept the assistance of your more experienced brothers and sisters. If you do, you too will improve your ability to make effective return visits and your joy in service will increase accordingly.

HOME BIBLE STUDIES

When the evangelizer Philip spoke to a man who was interested in the message of God's Word,



Philip asked: "Do you actually know what you are reading?" The man's response was: "Really, how could I ever do so, unless someone guided me?" The Bible account in Acts chapter 8 then tells us that, starting with the scripture the man was reading, Philip "declared to him the good news about Jesus." (Acts 8:26-36) We do not know how much time Philip spent with the man, but he explained the good news thoroughly so that the man believed and requested water baptism. He became a disciple of Jesus Christ.

An interested person we find today may not be at all familiar with the Bible at first, and so it may require a number of return visits and a detailed study of the Bible over a period of time (weeks, months or even a year or more) before he is able to manifest faith to the extent of requesting baptism. But your patient and loving assistance in helping honest-hearted ones become disciples has its own reward, even as Jesus said: "There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving."—Acts 20:35.

You will no doubt find it most convenient to conduct a home Bible study by using one of the Society's publications that is especially designed for that purpose. By following the example of the one who studied with you, or by receiving the help of other capable teachers in the congregation, you can learn to conduct productive studies and contribute to the work of making disciples of Jesus Christ.

If you need personal assistance in starting and conducting a home Bible study, you should feel free to speak about your need with one of the overseers or with a fellow Witness who is known to be effective in the Bible study work. You can get personal assistance to help you put



into practice the suggestions appearing in *Our Kingdom Ministry* and demonstrated at the Service Meeting from time to time. Again, reliance on Jehovah and making your desire a matter of prayer will bring results. (1 John 3:22) So share in making disciples and, if at all possible, make it your aim to conduct at least one home Bible study regularly in addition to any study you may conduct with children in your family. By conducting Bible studies, you will again increase your joy in the ministry.

DIRECT INTERESTED ONES TO JEHOVAH'S ORGANIZATION

When we conduct Bible studies and help people become disciples of Jesus Christ, they have the prospect of coming to know Jehovah God and of being brought into his household. That household, God's congregation, is organized theocratically to accomplish Jehovah's will. Our Bible students will make better spiritual progress and grow to maturity more rapidly if we help them to recognize and cooperate with Jehovah's organization. It is important to teach them how they can do that.

To accomplish this you can use material recommended in *Our Kingdom Ministry*. Also, some of the information found in chapter 4 of this publication may be helpful. From the very beginning of your Bible discussions with interested people you can help them to see that Jehovah is using an organization to get his work done on the earth today. Point out the value of the Bible study aids used by Jehovah's Witnesses and explain how they are produced and distributed worldwide by volunteer workers who are dedicated to Jehovah God. Invite your Bible students to accompany you to the Congregation Book Study.

Introduce them to the brothers there and explain how meetings at the Kingdom Hall are conducted. Encourage them to attend. Help them to get acquainted with more of Jehovah's Witnesses at circuit assemblies and district conventions. On these and other occasions let new ones observe for themselves how Jehovah's servants display the identifying mark of true Christians, love among themselves.—John 13:35.

If your own deep appreciation for Jehovah's organization is reflected in your conversations with interested people, it will be easier for them to grow in appreciation and will move them to make greater advancement in getting to know Jehovah.

USING BIBLE LITERATURE

The early Christians became zealous publishers of the Word of God. They made copies of the Scriptures for their own personal use and for congregational study. They recommended the word of truth to others. Their handwritten copies were few in number and highly treasured. (Col. 4:16; 2 Tim. 2:15; 3:14-17; 4:13; 1 Pet. 1:1) Today, with the aid of modern printing methods, Jehovah's Witnesses have been able to publish millions of Bibles and hundreds of millions of Bible study aids such as bound books and magazines in scores of languages, making them available to people worldwide.

As you share the good news with others be sure to make good use of the numerous Bible study aids provided by "the faithful and discreet slave" and published by the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. Service campaigns are outlined for each month in *Our Kingdom Ministry,* suggesting publications to be featured in public witnessing. You also have opportunity to share

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regularly in distributing magazines at different times each month including magazine days, especially those Saturdays designated for making a special effort.

Although the primary concern of the 'faithful slave' has been to provide spiritual food at the proper time for the household of God, that "slave" has reflected the generosity of Jehovah God himself in providing an abundance of spiritual food for all mankind that hunger for knowledge of God. Knowing how much you personally have benefited from reading and studying the Society's publications, you will no doubt want to share with others the things you have learned. (Heb. 13:15, 16) With the use of the Society's publications, even new ones can accomplish much good in preaching the good news from house to house.

INFORMAL WITNESSING

Jesus told those who were paying attention to his word: "You are the light of the world. . . . Let your light shine before men, that they may see your fine works and give glory to your Father who is in the heavens." (Matt. 5:14-16) The very life of these disciples should reflect God's ways by imitating Jesus Christ, who also said: "I am the light of the world." Jesus set the example for all Christians in letting the "light of life" shine forth for the benefit of all who came in contact with him.—John 8:12.

The apostle Paul likewise became an example for us to follow. (1 Cor. 4:16; 11:1) The Christians in Philippi had followed his example and he addressed them as 'illuminators in the world, shining among a crooked and twisted generation.' (Phil. 2:15) We today can also let the Kingdom truth shine forth by our words and actions whenever there is opportunity for us to tell oth-

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ers about the good news. True, our good example as honest and upright people may in itself draw attention to the fact that we are different from the majority of mankind today. However, if we do not open our mouth to speak the good news to those who see our good example, they may never get to know *why* we are different from the rest.—Matt. 5:15, 16.

Many of Jehovah's Witnesses have fine opportunities to present the good news to people they meet daily in their secular work, at school or otherwise while going about their normal affairs. At times we have the opportunity to talk with fellow travelers when on a journey. There are many opportunities that present themselves, but individually we must be alert to turn ordinary conversation into a witness and be prepared to speak with others on every appropriate occasion.

We will be encouraged to take advantage of every opportunity to share the good news with others if we keep in mind that whenever we do so we are praising our Creator and bringing honor to his name. At the same time we may be able to help honest-hearted ones come to know Jehovah so that they too can serve him and gain the hope of life that comes through faith in Jesus Christ. All of this is sacred service and it is pleasing to God.—Heb. 12:28; Rev. 7:9, 10.

TERRITORY ASSIGNED FOR EFFECTIVE WITNESSING

It is Jehovah's purpose to have the Kingdom message preached worldwide in an orderly manner. To this end congregations, as well as individuals who witness in isolated areas, receive assignments of territory, in both city and rural areas, from the branch office directing the work in their respective lands. (1 Cor. 14:40)



This is consistent with the God-directed arrangement existing in the first century among some of the apostles. (2 Cor. 10:13; Gal. 2:9) With the rapid expansion of the Kingdom work in these last days, much overlapping of effort is avoided by having well-organized territory assignments. This affords opportunity for more people to hear the good news.

The overall arrangement for working congregation territory comes under the service overseer's supervision. A ministerial servant may do the actual assigning of territory and keep a record concerning it up-to-date. Where the territory is limited, the Congregation Book Study conductors usually hold territory in which publishers in their group may share in field service.

If you are in a congregation where territory is plentiful, however, you may wish to have a territory of your own, perhaps one near where you live. Having such a conveniently located personal territory would enable you to make the most of the time you can devote to field service. Also, you may wish to invite other publishers to work with you in your personal territory.

When such personal territory is available, you may approach the one who assigns territory in your congregation and request any portion of territory that has not already been assigned to someone else. He should be kept informed as to the coverage of that territory. As you work your personal territory you will get acquainted with many people and, with patience, you may have the joy of helping some of them to come to appreciate God's provision for salvation.

Of course, if you have a personal territory it will be your responsibility to get in touch with as many people in that territory as you can. This



will entail calling back where no one was at home and rendering continued spiritual assistance to those who show interest in the good news of the Kingdom. From time to time *Our Kingdom Ministry* makes specific suggestions as to how territory can be worked thoroughly with the use of Bibles and books, magazines, tracts, handbills and other similar provisions of the Society. It may be that some of the people in your territory, such as those living in apartments, will have to be reached by letter, telephone or other means, such as street witnessing. The service overseer and your Congregation Book Study conductor can offer appropriate suggestions in accord with local conditions and individual circumstances.

When all of those associated with the congregation cooperate, the territory can be worked in a thorough and effective manner. We also avoid confusion as well as irritation on the part of householders due to simultaneous coverage of the same area by two or more Witnesses. In this way consideration is shown both for our brothers and for the people in the territory.

GROUP WITNESSING

Dedicated Christians have a personal responsibility to share the good news with others. There are many ways in which this can be done, but most of us appreciate being able to go out in field service accompanied by others. (Luke 10:1) For this reason congregations have meetings for field service on weekends as well as during the week. Worldly holidays also provide fine opportunities for group witnessing arrangements, since many brothers are free from secular employment on such days. Meetings for field service are scheduled for the convenience of the publishers. These may be held at the Kingdom Hall, at homes

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where Congregation Book Studies are conducted or at other convenient places.

At meetings for field service, arrangements can be made to give assistance to newer or less experienced ones. Also, in some areas it may be advisable to assign two or more publishers to work together for other reasons. Those working together can always be helpful and encouraging to one another. Even if you are planning to work separately in the territory, meeting with the group can prove to be encouraging to all concerned. Just knowing that others are out in service working in the same general area gives one confidence.

NEW PUBLISHERS

From the time you begin conducting a home Bible study with an interested person, encourage him to speak with others about what he is learning from the Bible. He could be urged to speak with relatives, friends, work associates and others on an informal basis. Then, at the appropriate time and in keeping with his advancement, invite him to share in the organized field service of the congregation if he qualifies to do so. This is an important step in teaching new ones to be followers of Jesus Christ.—Matt. 9:9; Luke 6:40.

MEETING THE REQUIREMENTS

Before inviting a person to accompany you in the field service for the first time, or before you suggest that he report any field service to the congregation, there are certain qualifications he should meet. When such a person accompanies us in the field service he identifies himself publicly with the congregation of Jehovah's people, so it is understood that he has already brought his life in harmony with Jehovah's righteous stan-

dards and can be an approved associate of the congregation. The same would be true regarding his reporting time spent in informal witnessing. So whereas you will certainly want to help your Bible students to become publishers of the good news, and to report field service to the congregation even before baptism, caution must be exercised when inviting them out in field service for the first time. We will want to know that this will not bring reproach on the congregation and thus be displeasing to Jehovah.

Very likely as you study with a person and discuss Bible principles with him the circumstances of his life will become known to you. Or you may have occasion to observe that he is living in harmony with the information he has learned from studying the Bible. But there are some aspects of the student's life that you will want to observe particularly before inviting him to accompany you in the field service and to share in publicly witnessing to others.

Do the person's expressions show that he believes the Bible is the inspired Word of God? (2 Tim. 3:16) Does he know and believe the basic teachings of the Scriptures so that, when asked questions, he will answer in harmony with the Bible and not according to his own ideas or false religious teachings? (2 Tim. 2:15; Matt. 7:21-23) Is he heeding the Bible's command to associate with Jehovah's people in congregation meetings (if he physically and circumstantially can)? (Heb. 10:24, 25; Ps. 122:1) Does he know what the Bible says about fornication, adultery, polygamy and homosexuality, and is he living in harmony with such teachings? If the person is living with one of the opposite sex, are they properly married? (Matt. 19:9; 1 Cor. 6:9, 10;

1 Tim. 3:2, 12; Heb. 13:4) Does he heed the Bible's prohibition of drunkenness? (Eph. 5:18; 1 Pet. 4:3, 4) Does he keep himself clean from the defilement of tobacco, betel nut and other things that contaminate the body? Is he free from nonmedical use of addictive drugs? (2 Cor. 7:1) Has he definitely broken off membership in all false religious organizations with which he may have been affiliated, and has he ceased attending their meetings and supporting or sharing in their activities? (2 Cor. 6:14-18; Rev. 18:4) Is he free from all involvement in the political affairs of the world? (John 6:15; 15:19; Jas. 1:27) Does he believe and live in harmony with what the Bible says about the affairs of the nations at Isaiah 2:4? Does he really want to be one of Jehovah's Witnesses?—Ps. 110:3.

If you are not sure about some of these matters, it may be helpful to invite him to look up the scriptures here cited and get his expressions on them, making sure that he sees the import of what they say and that he understands that those who share with Jehovah's Witnesses in their activity must be leading a life that harmonizes with these Scriptural requirements. We want to be satisfied that those who begin to participate in the field ministry with us know what is expected of them. We should be reasonably sure that they do qualify. Then, when such a person desires to identify himself with Jehovah's Witnesses by publicly engaging in the field ministry, we can encourage him to turn in a field service report.

HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE

Young children may also qualify as publishers of the good news. Jesus received young children to himself and blessed them. (Matt. 19:13-15; 21:15, 16) Although parents are primarily re-

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sponsible for their own children, others in the congregation may also wish to help young ones who are motivated from the heart to share in the Kingdom-preaching work. If you are a parent, your fine example in the field ministry will do much to encourage your children to be zealous in their service to God. When a child is exemplary in his conduct and is able to make a personal expression of his faith by speaking to others about the good news, being moved from the heart to do so, what further help can be given?

It would be in order for the parent to approach one of the elders on the service committee of the congregation and discuss whether the child is qualified to be counted as a publisher. If the child has a basic knowledge of Bible truth and gives evidence of *wanting* to share in Kingdom service, this would indicate good progress has been made. After that elder has considered these and other factors similar to those that apply to adults, he can determine whether the child's field service reports may be accepted, so that he may be recognized as a publisher with the congregation.—Luke 6:45; Rom. 10:10.

REPORTING ON THE PROGRESS OF THE MINISTRY

Progressive reports on the worldwide expansion of pure worship have been a source of genuine encouragement for Jehovah's people over the years. From the time Jesus first told his disciples that the good news would have to be preached throughout all the earth, true Christians have been vitally concerned with knowing how this would be accomplished.—Matt. 28:19, 20; Mark 13:10; Acts 1:8.

Early followers of Jesus Christ took interest in reports of progress in the preaching work. (Mark 6:30) As the work prospered, statistical

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to share in the ministry at hand? (Ezek. 33:8, 9) Will we put God's Kingdom first in our life and fully accomplish our ministry? What theocratic goals are we pursuing to that end?

What Jehovah requires of each one of his dedicated servants was expressed by Jesus when he said: "You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole mind and with your whole strength." (Mark 12:30) All of us are required to be whole-souled in our service to him. This means that we can individually demonstrate the depth of our devotion and the genuineness of our dedication by doing our utmost in the ministry. (2 Tim. 2:15) There are many opportunities open to each one, according to our individual circumstances and abilities. Just consider what some of these opportunities are and decide what theocratic goals you will pursue in fulfilling your ministry.

SERVING AS A CONGREGATION PUBLISHER

All who embrace the truth have the privilege of publishing the good news. This is the basic work that Jesus gave his disciples to do. (Matt. 24: 14; 28:19, 20) A disciple of Jesus Christ usually begins speaking about the good news to others just as soon as he recognizes its value. This is what Andrew, Philip, Cornelius and others did. (John 1:40, 41, 43-45; Acts 10:1, 2, 24; 16:14, 15, 25-34) Does this mean that a person may participate in telling others about the good news even before he gets baptized? Yes. As soon as an individual qualifies as an approved associate of the congregation, the opportunity to participate in the house-to-house preaching of the good news is opened up to him. Also, according to his abili-



ty and circumstances he may regularly share in other features of the Kingdom ministry.

As a baptized member of the congregation you, of course, are interested in doing all you can to help others learn the good news. Men and women alike have the privilege of sharing in the God-ordained preaching work in the field. All should set a fine example in caring for their respective roles within the congregation. (1 Tim. 2:9-15; Titus 2:1-10; 1 Pet. 5:5) Male members of the congregation who make spiritual advancement and qualify may be appointed as ministerial servants. (1 Tim. 3:8-10, 12, 13) Such ones who reach out for the responsibilities of an overseer and who meet the Scriptural requirements are appointed to this position. They are used in teaching the congregation and serve as shepherds of the flock. (1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9) It is certainly a privilege to have even a small part in advancing the interests of God's Kingdom. Anyone who can expand his ministry to attain special privileges of service is happy indeed.

SERVING WHERE THE NEED IS GREATER

It may be that you have come to a knowledge of the truth in a congregation where the territory is frequently worked and a fine witness is continually being given for the benefit of anyone who should wish to come to know Jehovah. In such circumstances you may feel that you should expand your service privileges by moving to another area or, in some cases, even to another land where there is a greater need in the field. (Acts 16:9) If you are a brother who presently serves as an elder or a ministerial servant in the congregation, there may be another congregation either nearby or elsewhere that would appreciate



having your assistance in caring for congregational responsibilities.

If serving where the need is greater is something you would like to do, why not discuss the matter with the elders of your congregation. They may be able to help you determine how to go about making such a move or how to qualify for such work sometime in the future.

AUXILIARY, REGULAR AND SPECIAL PIONEER SERVICE

All publishers should be acquainted with the general requirements for the auxiliary, regular and special pioneer service as well as other branches of full-time service. From time to time *Our Kingdom Ministry* sets out additional specific information. A pioneer publisher of the good news must be an exemplary baptized Christian, male or female, whose personal circumstances allow the spending of a specified number of hours each month in publicly preaching the good news. Applications for auxiliary pioneer service are approved by the local congregation's service committee, whereas regular and special pioneers are appointed and assigned by the Society.

Auxiliary pioneers may be appointed for a minimum of one month or they may pioneer for any number of consecutive months, according to their individual circumstances and personal qualifications. Many Kingdom publishers enjoy serving as auxiliary pioneers on special occasions, such as during the Memorial season or the month of the circuit overseer's visit to the congregation. Vacation months are chosen by some. Baptized school-age publishers may wish to enroll as auxiliary pioneers during those months they have time off from school because of vacations or worldly



holidays. Whatever your personal circumstances, if you are baptized, are of good moral standing, can arrange to meet the requirement of spending 60 hours a month in the field ministry and believe you could serve one or more months as an auxiliary pioneer, the congregation elders will be pleased to consider your application for this privilege of service.

To qualify for appointment as a *regular pioneer* you must currently be in a position to reach the yearly field service quota of 1,000 hours. This is a requirement. To fulfill this quota you will need to work for a monthly goal of 90 hours. As a regular pioneer, you may choose your own assignment of territory, but you must always work in close cooperation with the congregation where you are assigned. Zealous pioneers can be a real blessing to the congregation, generating enthusiasm for the field ministry and even encouraging others to take up the pioneer service. Before the elders recommend your appointment as a regular pioneer, however, you must be baptized for at least six months, have good morals and have shown yourself to be an exemplary publisher. You must be able to follow a practical schedule that will enable you to spend the required number of hours in field service.

Special pioneers are chosen by the Society from among regular pioneers who have demonstrated their effectiveness in the ministry and who are able to serve wherever the Society chooses to assign them. This is often in unassigned or isolated territory where they can find interest and form new congregations. At times, special pioneers are assigned to congregations that need help in covering their territory regularly with the Kingdom

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message. Some special pioneers who are also elders have been assigned to help small congregations even where there is not a particular need for more workers in the field. The Society gives some financial assistance to special pioneers in view of their high hour requirement.

MISSIONARY SERVICE

Getting the Kingdom good news preached "to the most distant part of the earth" before the end comes has made it necessary for the Society to send forth missionaries into many lands. (Acts 1:8; Matt. 24:14) This has opened up opportunities for greatly expanded service privileges for thousands of Jehovah's Witnesses and especially for those already sharing in the full-time service.

Usually those invited to share in missionary work are given specialized training in Gilead school. Over the years thousands of full-time ministers have received missionary training. They have been chosen from among those who have already proved themselves as zealous workers, as whole-souled in their devotion and as having a great measure of ability in Kingdom service.

To qualify for missionary work a person must be between the ages of 21 and 40 and have good physical health and stamina, since many missionary assignments are in areas of the earth where living conditions are difficult and there is exposure to unaccustomed diseases. Also, a person going into missionary work may be required to adjust to a different standard of living and an entirely new cultural environment.

If you are already in the full-time service and you would like to reach out for additional privileges as a missionary, you can learn more about the requirements by attending the meet-

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ings for people interested in missionary service when these are arranged at district conventions. Your circuit overseer may also be able to help you with good advice. If you qualify, you may be privileged to take up a sacred service that has wonderfully contributed to the worldwide expansion of true worship.

BETHEL SERVICE

Serving at one of the many Bethel homes around the world is a very special privilege. The name Bethel means "House of God," and that designation is certainly appropriate for these centers of theocratic activity. Brothers and sisters who are in Bethel service do a vital work in connection with producing and distributing literature used by Jehovah's Witnesses everywhere. Also, from Brooklyn Bethel the Governing Body provides theocratic oversight and direction for the congregations throughout the earth.

Much of the service being performed at the Bethel homes is hard physical work. For this reason most of those called into Bethel service are dedicated and baptized brothers, young in years, in good health and strong physically. If there is a need in your country and if you would like to serve at Bethel, you can learn more about the requirements by attending the special meetings for people interested in Bethel service when these are arranged at district conventions. Your circuit overseer can also be of assistance in this regard.

WHAT ARE YOUR SPIRITUAL GOALS FOR THE FUTURE?

If you have dedicated your life unreservedly to Jehovah, your ultimate goal is that of attaining to everlasting life in Jehovah's righteous New Order. But what are your service goals along

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the way? By having spiritual goals you are less likely to misdirect your energies and other resources. (1 Cor. 9:26) You will be able to aim for something worth while. Such goals are conducive to spiritual growth and will help you to concentrate on more important things as you use opportunities to reach out for additional service privileges.—Phil. 1:10; 1 Tim. 4:15, 16.

In his illustration of the man that sowed, Jesus emphasized the fact that good symbolic soil produces varying amounts of fruitage. He said: "As for the one sown upon the fine soil, this is the one hearing the word and getting the sense of it, who really does bear fruit and produces, this one a hundredfold, that one sixty, the other thirty." (Matt. 13:23) If we have got the sense of the Word into our heart, should we not exert ourselves to make that Word produce abundant fruitage for Jehovah's praise? Do we not want to bear much Kingdom fruitage as we zealously share in the Kingdom ministry? And do we not want to produce abundantly the fruitage of God's spirit in our life every day? (John 15:2, 3) Having spiritual goals can help us do all of that.

The apostle Paul is an example for us to imitate in our service to God. (1 Cor. 11:1) He exerted himself vigorously in serving Jehovah to the very limit of his ability. He recognized that Jehovah's service provided him with many opportunities. To the brothers in Corinth he wrote: "A large door that leads to activity has been opened to me." Is this not true in our case also? Are there not many opportunities for us to serve Jehovah in association with the congregation, especially in preaching the Kingdom good news? Paul recognized that going through that door would not be easy, for he added, "But there are many op-

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posers." (1 Cor. 16:9) In accepting that service Paul was willing to discipline himself severely, even as would an athlete whose heart desire was to win a mere fading crown in the games. Notice what he said at 1 Corinthians 9:24-27, including the words: "I pummel my body and lead it as a slave." Are we of that same mind?

Many of the missionaries in foreign lands today are there because they, with encouragement from their parents and others, set Gilead training and missionary work as a theocratic goal early in life, even while they were yet children in school. Similarly, many brothers now serving at Bethel set Bethel service as a goal either while they were very young children or when they first became acquainted with the good news and learned about this special privilege of service.

According to their differing personal circumstances in life, each one is encouraged to work toward certain theocratic goals. Some of those goals might be increasing participation in field service each week, starting and conducting a home Bible study, making more time to prepare for congregation meetings, enrolling as an auxiliary or regular pioneer, serving where the need is greater, serving at Bethel or in the missionary field. Of course, at congregation meetings, at conventions and in the Society's publications attention may be drawn to other theocratic goals that you, according to your own personal circumstances, may want to consider and strive to reach. The important thing is that you remain steadfast and fully accomplish your ministry. If you do, you will also attain your ultimate goal of everlasting life in Jehovah's service.—Luke 13:24; 1 Tim. 4:7b, 8.

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a change of pace and recuperate their physical and mental powers. Many have benefited from following the Scriptural counsel and balanced suggestions contained in the Society's publications on this matter.

With so many forms of recreation available, Christians should be selective and exercise godly wisdom in what they do. While it has its place, recreation is not the big thing in life. We are warned that in "the last days," men would become "lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God." (2 Tim. 3:1, 4) Much of what is today termed recreation and entertainment is objectionable to one who desires to hold to Jehovah's righteous standards.

Early Christians had to resist an unwholesome environment in the pleasure-seeking Roman world. At the circus, spectators were entertained by viewing the sufferings of others. Violence, bloodshed and sexual immorality were key elements in the recreation of the populace. Early Christians stayed away from such things. Much of the modern world's entertainment features similar attractions and caters to base human emotions. We need to 'keep strict watch on how we walk' by turning away from demoralizing entertainment. (Eph. 5:15, 16) And even though the entertainment itself may be acceptable, often the presence and influence of worldly people can be harmful.—See 1 Peter 4:1-4.

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Children of Jehovah's Witnesses benefit from getting a basic secular education. While attend-

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ing school, they should be interested in learning how to read and write well. Other subjects taught in primary school as well as in high school can be of value to young people as they pursue spiritual goals. During their school years they should make a diligent effort to remember their Creator by putting spiritual things first.—Eccl. 12:1.

If you are a Christian youth attending school, your parents have no doubt encouraged you to exercise special care. Even though worldly youths go unrestrained in their rebellious course of conduct, you do not need to side with them. (2 Tim. 3:1, 2) Under these circumstances there is much you can do to ward off worldly influences. Jehovah has not left any of us exposed to dangers without providing necessary protection. (Ps. 23:4; 91:1, 2) So take advantage of Jehovah's provisions for the congregation; this will serve to safeguard you.—Ps. 23:5.

To keep separate from the world while in school, young Witnesses should consider the dangers of becoming involved in extracurricular activities. Though classmates and teachers may not always understand your decision of nonparticipation, pleasing God is what counts. This requires exercising a Bible-trained conscience and standing firm in the resolve not to become involved in worldly competition or nationalistic practices that violate Bible principles. (Gal. 5:19, 26; see footnote in 1971 edition.) By listening to the Scriptural counsel of godly parents and benefiting from the good association and instruction of the congregation, the youth in our midst will be aided in holding to Jehovah's righteous standards.



SECULAR WORK AND BUSINESS ASSOCIATIONS

Family heads have a Scriptural obligation to provide for the needs of their own household. (1 Tim. 5:8) Even so, they as ministers recognize that their secular work is secondary to the vital Kingdom interests. (Matt. 6:33; Rom. 11:13) By practicing godly devotion and being content with having sustenance and covering, they avoid the anxieties and snares of the materialistic way of life so common in the world.—1 Tim. 6:6-10.

Not only family heads but also other dedicated Christians who find it necessary to be secularly employed should have such Scriptural principles in mind. Making honest provision for themselves means that they would not want to profit from activities that violate God's law or are illegal from the standpoint of Caesar. (1 Cor. 6:9, 10; Rom. 13:1, 2) Also, there is a need to be constantly aware of the dangers of bad association. As soldiers of Christ, our brothers refrain from engaging in commercial endeavors that violate Christian standards or jeopardize their spirituality. (2 Tim. 2:4) Neither do they become involved in unscriptural connections with God's religious enemy, Babylon the Great.—2 Cor. 6:14-17; Rev. 18:2, 4.

Observing God's righteous standards will prevent us from taking advantage of our theocratic association in order to promote personal or other business interests. The purpose of our association with others at Christian meetings in the local congregation and when attending circuit assemblies and larger conventions is exclusively for worshiping Jehovah, feeding at his spiritual table

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and enjoying an interchange of encouragement. (Rom. 1:11, 12; Heb. 10:24, 25) Such association should always be kept on a high spiritual level.

"DO ALL THINGS FOR GOD'S GLORY"

In addition to the foregoing, other aspects of our daily life should give clear evidence that our profession of Christianity is genuine. (Rom. 2:21-24) Our personal habits, for example, may seem to be of relatively little consequence. But, concerning these very things we are admonished: "Whether you are eating or drinking or doing anything else, do all things for God's glory. Keep from becoming causes for stumbling." (1 Cor. 10: 31-33) Such counsel is applicable at all times—in our private life, when we are among our Christian brothers or when we are being observed by worldly people.

It is a fine thing to be hospitable. (1 Pet. 4:9) When inviting others to our home for a meal, refreshments, a period of study or relaxation and fellowship, we should keep in mind those in the congregation who may be needy or disadvantaged. (Luke 14:12-14) If we are guests on such occasions, our conduct should be in line with the counsel at Mark 12:31. It is always good to show appreciation for the thoughtfulness and kindness of others.

At times, several families may be invited to a home for Christian fellowship. Or, brothers may be invited to attend a wedding reception or a similar social occasion. (John 2:2) Reasonably, those who are hosts in such cases should feel personally responsible for what takes place. With this

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in mind, discerning Christians have seen the wisdom of limiting the size of such groups and the duration of the gatherings. Alcoholic beverages, if served at all, should be used in moderation. (Phil. 4:5) If there is an effort to make such Christian get-togethers spiritually upbuilding and they are planned accordingly, food and drink will not be the most important considerations. There is a need to exercise caution when large groups get together. The relaxed atmosphere at such gatherings has led some to go beyond the limits of proper Christian conduct and become involved in excessive eating and drinking and even serious wrongdoing.

Truly, Christians rejoice in God's bounteous gifts and find that they can 'eat and indeed drink and see good for all their hard work.' (Eccl. 3: 12, 13) Realizing that these and other activities should always be to God's glory, hosts as well as guests will look back on social gatherings, not with troubled consciences, but with the satisfaction of having been spiritually refreshed.

DWELLING IN CHRISTIAN UNITY

Jehovah's righteous standards for his people also require that they "observe the oneness of the spirit in the uniting bond of peace." (Eph. 4: 1-3) Rather than seeking to please themselves, they would each seek to pursue what is good toward others. This is the spirit you have doubtless found in your association with the brothers in your congregation. No matter what a person's racial, national, social, economic or education-

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place from the wind and a place of concealment from the rainstorm, like streams of water in a waterless country, like the shadow of a heavy crag in an exhausted land."—Isa. 32:2.

NOT OVERLOOKING SERIOUS WRONGS

Willingness to overlook offenses and to forgive does not mean that we are not concerned about wrongdoing or that we approve of it. Not all wrongs can simply be charged to inherited imperfection; nor is it for our brother's good or for the good of the congregation to overlook it if he commits wrongs that go beyond minor offenses. (Lev. 19:17; Ps. 141:5) Under the Law covenant given through Moses there was recognition of a difference in degree of seriousness of sins and transgressions. This is also true for Christians under the new covenant.—Compare 1 John 5:16, 17.

When giving counsel, Jesus outlined some specific procedures for resolving problems of serious wrongdoing, such as fraud or slander, that may arise between fellow Christians. Note the steps that he set out: "Moreover, if your brother commits a sin, [1] go lay bare his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, [2] take along with you one or two more, in order that at the mouth of two or three witnesses every matter may be established. If he does not listen to them, [3] speak to the congregation. If he does not listen even to the congregation, let him be to you just as a man of the nations and as a tax collector."—Matt. 18:15-17.

If someone in the congregation has committed such a serious sin against you personally, do not be hasty to turn to the overseers, or someone else, requesting them to intervene in your be-

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half. First of all, as Jesus counsels, speak with the one against whom you have a complaint. Try to resolve the matter between just the two of you without involving anyone else at all. If the matter can be straightened out in this way, the one who has sinned will certainly appreciate the fact that you have not told others about his sin and have not marred his good reputation among others in the congregation. You will have "gained your brother."

Where the sinner accepts reproof, seeks forgiveness and straightens the matter out, Jesus states there is no need to carry the matter further. This fact shows that, although serious, the offenses here discussed were limited in nature to such as could be settled between the individuals involved. This would not include such offenses as fornication, adultery, homosexuality, blasphemy, apostasy, idolatry and similar gross sins that should be reported to the elders and handled by them. When the Law covenant was in force, these sins required more than forgiveness from an offended individual.—1 Cor. 6:9, 10; Gal. 5:19-21.

In view of this and in view of the illustration that Jesus subsequently gave, as recorded at Matthew 18:23-35, the sins considered in Matthew 18:15-17 evidently were sins such as those involving financial or property matters—failure to make proper payment for something or some action involving a measure of fraud. The sin might damage one's reputation by actual slander. In these cases, if the offender recognized his wrong, expressed willingness to right it to the extent possible and sought forgiveness, the matter could be settled by the offended one's granting forgiveness.—Compare Matthew 5:25, 26.

If the one who sinned against you cannot be

convinced by your reasoning with him alone, then do as Jesus said and take one or two others along and speak with him again. The one or two you take with you should have the same objective, that of gaining your brother. Preferably they should be witnesses of the alleged wrongdoing, but if there are no eyewitnesses, you may choose to take along responsible brothers who become witnesses to the evidence presented in the discussion. Also, after listening to what you and the other person have to say, they may help the two of you reason on the matter and seek a solution to the problem. Keep in mind, however, that if you alone were not able to convince your brother that a wrong was committed, there is always the possibility that he has not sinned against you and that the individuals you take along with you may be required to convince you that you have no reason for complaint against your brother. (Prov. 18:17) Remember that the objective is to establish peace between you and your brother, to 'gain your brother.'

But if you are convinced that your brother has sinned against you and it has not been resolved either when you spoke with him alone or when you went to him with one or two others, and if a serious sin is involved so that it would be wrong just to let it pass, then you should report the matter to the overseers of the congregation. Having done this, you have taken it as far as you can. Leave the problem in the hands of the responsible members of the congregation and trust in Jehovah that it will be resolved. Never should you allow the wrong conduct of someone else to become a reason for stumbling or a force to rob you of your joy in Jehovah's service.—Ps. 119: 165.

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If upon investigation it should become evident to the shepherds of the flock that the brother has indeed committed a serious sin against you and yet has been unwilling to repent and make appropriate amends, it may become necessary for the overseers to expel the unrepentant wrongdoer and in that way protect the flock and safeguard the cleanness of the congregation.—Matt. 18:17.

HANDLING OTHER JUDICIAL MATTERS

Some cases of wrongdoing may be brought to the attention of the overseers by individual brothers or sisters who report unresolved personal grievances. (Matt. 18:17) On the other hand, the elders may be approached by individuals who either confess their own sins or report what they know regarding the wrongdoing of others. (Jas. 5:16; Lev. 5:1) But regardless of the exact manner in which the elders first hear reports of serious wrongdoing on the part of a baptized member of the congregation, an initial investigation will be made. If it is established that there is substance to the report and evidence is produced showing that a serious sin actually may have been committed, the congregation's body of elders will assign a judicial committee of at least three brothers to handle the matter. In the case of reported serious wrongdoing on the part of one who is regularly associated but not yet baptized, similar steps will be taken.

While exercising watchful care over the flock, seeking to protect it from any elements that would be spiritually damaging, the elders will also endeavor to use their spiritual qualifications to restore or reprove any who have erred. (Jude 21-23) This would be in harmony with instructions given to Timothy by the apostle Paul. He wrote: "I solemnly charge you before God

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and Christ Jesus, who is destined to judge the living and the dead, and by his manifestation and his kingdom, preach the word, be at it urgently in favorable season, in troublesome season, reprove, reprimand, exhort, with all long-suffering and art of teaching." (2 Tim. 4:1, 2) Doing this may take much time and effort, but it is a part of the hard work of the elders that the congregation appreciates and for which they give the elders double honor.—1 Tim. 5:17.

In every situation where guilt is established, a primary endeavor of the overseers is to restore the wrongdoer if he is genuinely repentant, as indicated, for example, by his producing "works that befit repentance." (Acts 26:20) If they are able to help him and he is repentant, their administering reproof, either privately or before onlookers concerned in the case, serves to discipline him and instill a wholesome fear in any such onlookers. (1 Tim. 5:20; compare 2 Samuel 12:13.) Thus, the wrongdoer may be helped to 'make straight paths for his feet' thereafter. —Heb. 12:13.

However, the wrongdoer may have become hardened in his course of wrong conduct and fail to respond to the efforts of his brothers to help him. Fruits, or works, befitting repentance may not be in evidence, nor may genuine repentance be apparent at the time of the hearing. What then? In such cases it would be necessary for the responsible overseers to expel the unrepentant wrongdoer from the congregation, thus denying him fellowship with Jehovah's clean congregation. This would be done to protect other members of the congregation from the bad influence of the wrongdoer, safeguarding the moral and spiritual cleanness of the congregation and protecting its

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good name. (Compare Deuteronomy 21:20, 21; 22:23, 24.) This is what the apostle Paul did when he became aware of the shameful conduct of a member of the congregation in Corinth. (1 Cor. 5:11-13) Also, this same apostle reports on the disfellowshipping of others who rebelled against the truth in the first century.—1 Tim. 1:20.

IF THE DECISION IS TO DISFELLOWSHIP

When a judicial committee handling a case of wrongdoing reaches the conclusion that the unrepentant person should be disfellowshipped, how should they deal with him?

It is appropriate for the committee to speak with him and let him know of their decision to disfellowship him from the congregation. They clearly state the Scriptural reason(s) for the disfellowshipping action. When informing the wrongdoer of their decision, the judicial committee should tell him that if he believes that a serious error in judgment has been made and he wishes to appeal the decision of the committee, he may do so by writing a letter clearly stating his reasons for the appeal. He will be allowed seven days for doing this. If such written appeal is received, the body of elders should arrange for an appeal committee to rehear the case. They may use local elders or elders from nearby congregations; they should be men who are experienced and qualified. The body of elders should request one of the traveling overseers to suggest who might serve on the appeal committee. Every effort should be made to conduct the appeal within one week after the written appeal is received. If there is an appeal, announcement of the disfellowshipping will be held in abeyance. In the meantime the accused person will be restricted from commenting and

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praying at meetings or enjoying special privileges of service.

If the wrongdoer does not indicate that he wishes to appeal, the judicial committee should explain to him the need for repentance and what steps he can take toward being reinstated in due time. This would be both helpful and kind, with the hope that he will change his ways and in time qualify to return to Jehovah's organization. —2 Cor. 2:6, 7.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF DISFELLOWSHIPPING

When it becomes necessary to remove an unrepentant wrongdoer from the congregation, a brief announcement is made, simply stating that the person has been disfellowshipped. There is no need to say more. This will alert faithful members of the congregation to stop associating with that person.—1 Cor. 5:11.

NONBAPTIZED ASSOCIATES WHO ARE WRONGDOERS

What of nonbaptized individuals who have been recognized as approved associates, have shared in the field service with the congregation and perhaps have enrolled in the Theocratic Ministry School, but who have now become involved in serious wrongdoing? They should be dealt with in a way similar to that of baptized Witnesses with the exception that, not being recognized members of the congregation, they could not be formally expelled therefrom. It may be that they do not fully understand the Bible's standards, and kind counsel may help them to make straight paths for their feet.

If a nonbaptized wrongdoer is still unrepentant after a judicial committee has met with him and tried to help him, then it becomes necessary to

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inform the congregation. A brief announcement is made that the person is no longer recognized as an approved associate. (1 Cor. 15:33) The congregation will then view the wrongdoer as they would view one who has been disfellowshipped. No field service reports would be accepted from such a person.

REINSTATEMENT

A disfellowshipped person may be reinstated in the congregation when he gives clear evidence of repentance, demonstrating that he has abandoned his sinful course of conduct and is desirous of having a good relationship with Jehovah and his organization. The elders are careful to allow sufficient time, perhaps many months, a year or even longer, for the disfellowshipped person to prove that his profession of repentance is genuine. When the body of elders receives a written plea for reinstatement, the original judicial committee that disfellowshipped the person should, if possible, be the committee that speaks with that individual, evaluating the evidence and works of godly repentance on his part, and decides whether to reinstate him at that time or not.

If the person requesting reinstatement was disfellowshipped by another congregation, the local judicial committee may consider the person's plea. Thereafter, the local judicial committee will communicate with the body of elders of the congregation that disfellowshipped the individual, giving them their recommendation. However, the decision to reinstate is made by a judicial committee of the congregation that took the disfellowshipping action.

When the judicial committee is convinced that the disfellowshipped person is genuinely repentant and should be reinstated, an announcement

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of the reinstatement is made, mentioning also any restrictions that apply until the person has regained a measure of spiritual strength.

Elders are acquainted with the procedure to follow in handling pleas for reinstatement by those disfellowshipped from the congregation. Before any decision can be made in such cases, they have to weigh the various factors that apply. A similar procedure is followed in dealing with unbaptized repentant wrongdoers, whether they be adults or minors, who wish to renew their association with the congregation. In such instances a brief announcement could be made that it would be proper to recognize the individuals once more as approved associates of the congregation.

DISASSOCIATION

The term *disassociation* applies to the action taken by a person who, although being a baptized member of the congregation, deliberately repudiates his Christian standing, rejecting the congregation and stating that he no longer wants to be recognized or known as one of Jehovah's Witnesses. As a *disassociated* person, his situation before Jehovah is far different from that of an *inactive* Christian who, having grown weak spiritually, no longer shares in the field ministry. Such an *inactive* person may have failed to study God's Word regularly, or his zeal for serving Jehovah may have cooled off due to his experiencing personal problems or persecution. (1 Cor. 11:30; Rom. 14:1) The elders, as well as other concerned members of the congregation, will continue rendering appropriate spiritual assistance to the *inactive* brother. (1 Thess. 5: 14; Rom. 15:1; Heb. 12:12) However, the person who has *disassociated himself* by repudiating



the faith and deliberately abandoning Jehovah's worship is viewed in the same way as one who has been disfellowshipped. A brief announcement would be made to inform the congregation that the person has voluntarily disassociated himself from the congregation.

Concerning those who renounced their Christian faith in his day, the apostle John wrote: "They went out from us, but they were not of our sort; for if they had been of our sort, they would have remained with us." (1 John 2: 19) Also, a person might renounce his place in the Christian congregation by his actions, such as by becoming part of a secular organization the objective of which is contrary to the Bible and, hence, is under judgment by Jehovah God. (Compare Revelation 19:17-21; Isaiah 2:4.) So if a person who is a Christian chooses to join those who are disapproved by God, it would be fitting for the congregation to acknowledge by a brief announcement that he has *disassociated himself* and is no longer one of Jehovah's Witnesses. Such a person would be viewed in the same way as a disfellowshipped person.

CASES INVOLVING MINOR CHILDREN

Serious wrongdoing on the part of minor children who are baptized members of the congregation should be reported to the elders. When the elders investigate and handle cases of serious sins where a minor is involved, it would be good if the dedicated parents of the young person would be present and cooperate with the elders acting in a judicial capacity, not attempting to shield the erring child from necessary disciplinary action. Just as in dealing with adult offenders, elders serving on the judicial committee where a minor is involved would endeavor to restore the wrong-

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doer. However, if the young person is unrepentant, disfellowshipping action would be taken.

MARKING DISORDERLY ONES

In his second letter to the Thessalonians, Paul expressed a warning concerning certain ones who walk disorderly and who, if accorded full acceptance as being of good standing in the congregation, could be exerting an unhealthy influence upon others. Paul admonished the Thessalonian Christians "to withdraw from every brother walking disorderly and not according to the tradition you received from us." (2 Thess. 3:6) He further clarified that statement by writing: "But if anyone is not obedient to our word through this letter, keep this one marked, stop associating with him, that he may become ashamed. And yet do not be considering him as an enemy, but continue admonishing him as a brother."—2 Thess. 3:14, 15.

Occasionally, in the congregation today, there may be those who, although not known to be guilty of practicing a grave sin for which they could be expelled, nevertheless continue to display flagrant disregard for theocratic order.

After giving repeated admonitions to such individuals and finding that they persist in disregarding well-established Bible principles, the elders may decide to speak to the congregation and give appropriate admonitions concerning such disorderly conduct. Even though no name has been mentioned, individual members of the congregation would then be obliged to 'mark' a person, or persons, of that kind, just as Paul advised the brothers in Thessalonica. If the disorderly one should still persist in his wayward course of conduct, he remains in grave danger of eventually committing a serious sin that could lead

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to his being disfellowshipped. On the other hand, the loving concern and firm stand of faithful members of the congregation could indeed move him to shame and repentance. When it is clearly evident that the individual has abandoned his disorderly course, it would no longer be necessary to treat him as a "marked" individual.

JEHOVAH BLESSES UNITED CLEAN WORSHIP

All who are associated with the congregation of God today can certainly rejoice in the rich spiritual estate Jehovah has given to his people. Our spiritual pastures have indeed been made fruitful and we have been provided with an abundance of refreshing waters of truth. We have experienced Jehovah's protective care through his theocratic arrangement under the headship of Christ. (Ps. 23; Isa. 32:1, 2) The spiritual paradise in which we find ourselves has given us a feeling of security in these troublesome last days.

By our maintaining fine conduct as ministers of God's good news and by our example of Christian unity, the Kingdom truth will continue to shine forth through us. With Jehovah's blessing we will have the joy of seeing many more people come to know Jehovah and join us in fully accomplishing the ministry.

CHAPTER 13

A WORLDWIDE ASSOCIATION OF BROTHERS

AFTER dealing exclusively with one man, Abraham, and his descendants the Israelites for a period of 2,000 years, Jehovah God "turned his attention to the nations to take out of them a

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ity and other circumstances of each baptismal candidate. Our interest is in those whose hearts are turned to Jehovah and who have grasped the sense of fundamental Bible truths. With your loving assistance, those being baptized will be encouraged and helped to enter into the Christian ministry, adequately prepared to accomplish that important assignment.]

QUESTIONS FOR THOSE DESIRING TO BE BAPTIZED

PART I ELEMENTARY BIBLE TEACHINGS—Heb. 5:11–6:3

During your study of the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses you have become acquainted with the pattern of truth and very likely find it is quite different from what you formerly believed. What you have learned has brought you great spiritual refreshment and has no doubt set before you the hope of future life and blessings on a Paradise earth under God's Kingdom. Your faith in his Word has been strengthened, and through association with his organized people you have already experienced many blessings. You have come to appreciate how Jehovah is dealing with his chosen people today. —Zech. 8:23.

Now, as you prepare for water baptism in symbol of your personal dedication to Jehovah God, you will benefit from a review of elementary Bible teachings conducted by the congregation elders. If you do not understand some things so as to be able to give a reasonable answer to those who may ask or to persons you will approach in field service, the elders will kindly help you to improve your understanding.—1 Pet. 3:15.

Your desire should be in harmony with the words of the apostle Paul that we read at Hebrews 6: 1-3: "For this reason, now that we have left the primary doctrine about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying a foundation again, namely, repentance from dead works, and faith toward

Personal Relationships With Others

(1) What Christian quality should outstandingly characterize our relationship with our spiritual brothers and sisters?

I am giving you a new commandment, that you love one another; just as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves.—John 13:34, 35.

Clothe yourselves with love, for it is a perfect bond of union.—Col. 3:14.

Additional references: James 2:8; 1 Corinthians 13:4-7.

(2) What Christian principles should govern our dealings with persons who are not Jehovah's Witnesses?

Just as you want men to do to you, do the same way to them.—Luke 6:31.

As long as we have time favorable for it, let us work what is good toward all.—Gal. 6:10.

Additional references: Matthew 5:43-48; Romans 12:17, 18; Luke 10:29-37.

(3) How should Christians view the shortcomings of fellow believers?

Continue putting up with one another and forgiving one another freely if anyone has a cause for complaint against another. Even as Jehovah freely forgave you, so do you also.—Col. 3:13.

Above all things, have intense love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.—1 Pet. 4:8.

Additional references: Matthew 7:1-5; Proverbs 17:9; 19:11; Matthew 6:12.

(4) If your brother sins against you personally and you find it difficult merely to overlook the transgression, or if his sin against you is of a serious nature and should not be covered over, what should you do?

Moreover, if your brother commits a sin, go lay bare his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take along with you one or two more, in order that at the mouth of two or three witnesses every matter may be established. If he does not listen to them, speak to the congregation. If he does not listen even to the congregation, let him be to you just as a man of the nations and as a tax collector. —Matt. 18:15-17.

Additional references: Matthew 5:23, 24; Ephesians 4:25.

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(4) What mention is made in the Bible of birthday celebrations? How does this affect your view of birthday celebrations?

But when Herod's birthday was being celebrated the daughter of Herodias danced at it and pleased Herod so much that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she asked. Then she, under her mother's coaching, said: "Give me here upon a platter the head of John the Baptist." Grieved though he was, the king out of regard for his oaths and for those reclining with him commanded it to be given; and he sent and had John beheaded in the prison. And his head was brought on a platter and given to the maiden, and she brought it to her mother.—Matt. 14:6-11.

Additional references: Genesis 40:20-22; Ecclesiastes 7: 1, 8.

Optional questions for discussion: (a) What are some of the holidays or celebrations popular in your community that true Christians avoid? (b) What do you need to do to keep from getting involved in worldly holidays or celebrations that run counter to Christian principles? (c) If you have minor children, how can you help them avoid unchristian practices related to worldly holidays?

Baptism

(1) Why do Jehovah's Witnesses baptize in water those who embrace the Christian faith?

Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit.—Matt. 28:19.

He commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.—Acts 10:48.

Additional references: Matthew 3:13-17; 1 Peter 2:21; Acts 8:12, 35-38.

(2) Who should be baptized? When?

Those who embraced his word heartily were baptized. —Acts 2:41.

When they believed Philip, who was declaring the good news of the kingdom of God and of the name of Jesus Christ, they proceeded to be baptized.—Acts 8:12.

Repent, and let each one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.—Acts 2:38.

Additional references: Hebrews 10:5-7; Luke 3:21, 23; 1 Peter 3:21.



(3) What does it mean to be baptized in the name of (a) the Father? (b) the Son? (c) the holy spirit?

You, whose name is Jehovah, you alone are the Most High over all the earth.—Ps. 83:18.

God exalted him to a superior position and kindly gave him the name that is above every other name, so that in the name of Jesus every knee should bend of those in heaven and those on earth and those under the ground, and every tongue should openly acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.—Phil. 2:9-11.

I will request the Father and he will give you another helper to be with you forever, the spirit of the truth.—John 14:16, 17.

Additional references: Revelation 1:5; Joel 2:28, 29.

Optional questions for discussion: (a) Why do you want to be baptized? (b) Have you already brought your life into harmony with Jehovah's righteous requirements according to what you have learned from your study of the Bible? (c) Are you at present sharing the good news of the Kingdom with others, demonstrating that you understand that this is Jehovah's will for you at this time? (d) Have you expressed to Jehovah in prayer your desire to be one of his dedicated Witnesses and to serve him in unity with his organized people?

PART III SUBMISSION TO JEHOVAH'S ARRANGEMENT OF THINGS

While still in Eden the first man and woman joined the rebellion led by "the original serpent," Satan the Devil. (Rev. 12:9) They ceased being submissive to Jehovah's arrangement of things. Having been introduced to a course of independence from God, they set out on their own. From that time forward the course taken by mankind has only served to confirm the truthfulness of Jeremiah's words recorded at Jeremiah 10:23, where we read: "I well know, O Jehovah, that to earthling man his way does not belong. It does not belong to man who is walking even to direct his step."

Through your study of the Bible you have learned about Jehovah's purpose to bring all things back into subjection to himself, just as they were in the beginning. (Eph. 1:8-10; 1 Cor. 15:24-28)

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Having reached this point in your study you are also desirous of finding your place in Jehovah's arrangement of things and of being submissive to his rule. The following questions and related Scripture references will help you to examine your own understanding of submission to Jehovah's arrangements as regards congregation organization, Christian family life and the political rulers of the day.

Submission in the Congregation Arrangement

(1) What is the basic principle underlying Jehovah's arrangement of things within the Christian congregation?

But I want you to know that the head of every man is the Christ; in turn the head of a woman is the man; in turn the head of the Christ is God.—1 Cor. 11:3.

He [Jesus Christ] is the head of the body, the congregation.—Col. 1:18.

Additional references: Ephesians 1:22, 23; Hebrews 12:9; James 4:7.

(2) Why is there a particular need for submitting to Jehovah's arrangement of things in the Christian congregation today?

For God is a God, not of disorder, but of peace. . . . But let all things take place decently and by arrangement. —1 Cor. 14:33, 40.

You, though, keep your senses in all things, . . . do the work of an evangelizer, fully accomplish your ministry. —2 Tim. 4:5.

Additional references: Ephesians 4:16; 1 Corinthians 12: 18, 28.

(3) What are some examples of Jesus' disciples submitting to his instructions in order to carry out their ministry in an orderly way?

Now he summoned the twelve, and he initiated sending them out two by two, and he began to give them authority over the unclean spirits. And the apostles gathered together

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before Jesus and reported to him all the things they had done and taught.—Mark 6:7, 30.

After these things the Lord designated seventy others and sent them forth by twos in advance of him into every city and place to which he himself was going to come.—Luke 10:1.

Additional references: Luke 9:14-17; Matthew 10:1-23.

(4) How does Jesus exercise headship over the Christian congregation today?

Who really is the faithful and discreet slave whom his master appointed over his domestics, to give them their food at the proper time? Happy is that slave if his master on arriving finds him doing so. Truly I say to you, He will appoint him over all his belongings.—Matt. 24:45-47.

But the helper, the holy spirit, which the Father will send in my name, that one will teach you all things and bring back to your minds all the things I told you.—John 14:26.

Additional references: Luke 12:42-44; John 16:12-14.

(5) By what visible means is Christ's headship represented in the congregation?

However, from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the older men of the congregation. When they got to him he said to them: . . . "Pay attention to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the holy spirit has appointed you overseers, to shepherd the congregation of God."—Acts 20:17, 18, 28.

Therefore, to the older men among you I give this exhortation, . . . Shepherd the flock of God in your care, not under compulsion, but willingly; neither for love of dishonest gain, but eagerly; neither as lording it over those who are God's inheritance, but becoming examples to the flock.—1 Pet. 5:1-3.

Additional references: Titus 1:5; Isaiah 32:1, 2.

(6) How do members of the congregation demonstrate submission to the headship of Christ in the congregation?

Remember those who are taking the lead among you, who have spoken the word of God to you, and as you contemplate how their conduct turns out imitate their faith.—Heb. 13:7.

Be obedient to those who are taking the lead among you and be submissive, for they are keeping watch over your souls as those who will render an account; that they may do this

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with joy and not with sighing, for this would be damaging to you.—Heb. 13:17.

Additional references: 1 Timothy 5:17; 1 Thessalonians 5: 12, 13; 1 Corinthians 16:16.

Optional questions for discussion: (a) Are you able to identify "the faithful and discreet slave" today? How? (b) What is the Governing Body of the Christian congregation? What purpose does it serve? (See Acts 6:1-6; 8:14; 15:1-29; 16:4, 5.) (c) What legal agencies are used by the Governing Body today to accomplish the publishing of the good news worldwide? (d) Why would submitting to Jehovah's arrangement in the congregation include giving material support to the work of the congregation to the extent of your ability?

Submission in Christian Family Life

(1) In God's arrangement of things, who is the head of the married woman?

You wives, be in subjection to your husbands, as it is becoming in the Lord.—Col. 3:18.

Let wives be in subjection to their husbands as to the Lord, because a husband is head of his wife as the Christ also is head of the congregation, he being a savior of this body.—Eph. 5:22, 23.

Additional reference: Titus 2:4, 5.

(2) How should a husband exercise headship over his wife? Whose example does he have to follow as a pattern?

In this way husbands ought to be loving their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself, for no man ever hated his own flesh; but he feeds and cherishes it, as the Christ also does the congregation.—Eph. 5:28, 29.

You husbands, keep on loving your wives and do not be bitterly angry with them.—Col. 3:19.

Additional reference: 1 Peter 3:7.

(3) Is the wife whose husband is not a believer freed from his headship?

In like manner, you wives, be in subjection to your own husbands, in order that, if any are not obedient to the word, they may be won without a word through the conduct of their wives, because of having been eyewitnesses of your chaste conduct together with deep respect.—1 Pet. 3:1, 2.

Additional references: Romans 7:2; 1 Corinthians 7:10.



(4) Who is responsible before God for the training and disciplining of children?

And you, fathers, do not be irritating your children, but go on bringing them up in the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah.—Eph. 6:4.

Additional references: Colossians 3:21; Proverbs 13:24; 29:15; Deuteronomy 6:6, 7.

(5) What responsibility do children have in the family arrangement?

Children, be obedient to your parents in union with the Lord, for this is righteous: "Honor your father and your mother"; which is the first command with a promise: "That it may go well with you and you may endure a long time on the earth."—Eph. 6:1-3.

You children, be obedient to your parents in everything, for this is well-pleasing in the Lord.—Col. 3:20.

Additional references: Deuteronomy 5:16; Proverbs 1:8; 4:1; 6:20; 23:22.

Optional questions for discussion: (a) If you are a married woman, in what way can you demonstrate your submission to your husband? (b) Does this seem to be righteous and just to you? (c) If your husband does not appreciate your cooperation in this regard, how do you still benefit? (d) If you are a man with family responsibilities, what worldly attitudes must you avoid if you are to exercise your headship in a Christlike manner? (e) If you are a minor child, what benefits will come to you and to the family as a result of your being submissive to your parents? (f) What factors may make it difficult for you to be submissive at times?

Submission to the Civil Authorities

(1) What is the proper attitude for Christians to maintain toward worldly rulers?

Let every soul be in subjection to the superior authorities, for there is no authority except by God; the existing authorities stand placed in their relative positions by God. —Rom. 13:1.

Continue reminding them to be in subjection and be obedient to governments and authorities as rulers.—Titus 3:1.

Additional references: 1 Peter 2:13, 14; Daniel 6:5; Acts 26:2, 3; 1 Timothy 2:1-3.

(2) Must a Christian pay all taxes and assessments demanded by law?

Render to all their dues, to him who calls for the tax, the tax; to him who calls for the tribute, the tribute; to him who calls for fear, such fear; to him who calls for honor, such honor.—Rom. 13:7.

Additional reference: Luke 20:21-25.

(3) Are there any circumstances under which a Christian would refuse to obey the worldly rulers?

With that they called them and charged them, nowhere to make any utterance or to teach upon the basis of the name of Jesus. But in reply Peter and John said to them: "Whether it is righteous in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, judge for yourselves. But as for us, we cannot stop speaking about the things we have seen and heard." —Acts 4:18-20.

In answer Peter and the other apostles said: "We must obey God as ruler rather than men."—Acts 5:29.

Additional references: Isaiah 2:4; Daniel 3:16-18; 6:4-24; Exodus 1:15-20.

(4) Should Christians comply with legal requirements such as the registering of marriages and births, respond to census inquiries or obtain required licenses and permits that do not conflict with God's laws?

Now in those days a decree went forth . . . for all the inhabited earth to be registered . . . Of course, Joseph also went up from Galilee . . . to get registered with Mary, who had been given him in marriage.—Luke 2:1-5.

Continue reminding them to be in subjection and be obedient to governments and authorities as rulers.—Titus 3:1.

Additional references: 1 Timothy 3:2, 9; compare Acts 18: 1-3; Hebrews 13:4.

Optional questions for discussion: (a) Why is it important for you to be submissive to the civil authorities even when their rule may seem to be oppressive? (b) How can you be submissive to the political rulers without violating Christian neutrality?

PART IV WORKS THAT DEMONSTRATE CHRISTIAN FAITH—Jas. 2:18

You have already observed in your association with Jehovah's Witnesses that they are a busy

Jehovah's Witnesses - Incidence of CSA in Australia																			
#	Perpetrator gender	Total number of alledged victims	Role in church at time of first abuse	Abuse type	Victim(s) gender	Victim(s) age	Year of first abuse (DD/MM/YY)	Year first reported (DD/MM/YY)	State of first report	Did 2-Witness Rule prevent any case from progression to judicial committee?	Did the perp confess in relation to any victim?	Was a judicial committee formed?	Deleted as MS or Elder?	No. times reproved	No. times disfellowshipped	No. times reinstated	No. times reappointed as MS or Elder	Convicted for CSA	Reported to authorities by JW
1	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	1987	1988	WA	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
2	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	Unclear	2004	2004	QLD	Yes	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
3	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	Unclear	1999	ACT	No	No	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Unclear	No
4	Male	3	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	1970	22/10/2002	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
5	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	Unclear	1999	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
6	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1985	Unclear	Unclear	Yes	Yes	No	1	1	1	0	No	No
7	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	0-5	1995	1995	QLD	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
8	Male	8	Not a JW member	Non-Familial	Male	6-10	1998	06/2006	WA	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
9	Male	5	Ministerial Servant	Both	Both	6-10	Unclear	1997	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	2	1	1	0	No	No
10	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	1988	1990	QLD	No	No	Yes	No	0	1	Unclear	0	Unclear	No
11	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1988	24/02/2012	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
12	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	2002	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	0	1	1	No	No
13	Male	1	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1993	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	Yes	No
14	Male	5	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	3/07/1972	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	2	1	0	No	No
15	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1993	1997	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
16	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Male	0-5	1994	2004	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	1	0	0	Unclear	No
17	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	1989	12/2004	ACT	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
18	Male	2	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	0-5	1993	2002	NSW	Unclear	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
19	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1990	2010	NSW	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
20	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	2009	30/03/2013	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
21	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	15-18	Unclear	04/2011	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
22	Male	2	Congregation Elder	Familial	Female	6-10	1999	01/06/07	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	1	0	0	No	No
23	Male	1	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1993	WA	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
24	Male	4	Parishioner	Both	Female	6-10	1993	07/06/04	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
25	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1980	1997	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
26	Male	1	Unbaptised	Non-Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	09/2005	SA	No	Yes	Unclear	No	0	Unclear	0	0	No	No
27	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1996	24/06/06	NSW	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
28	Male	1	Ministerial Servant	Familial	Female	0-5	1981	1985	WA	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	1	1	1	Yes	No
29	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1985	Unclear	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
30	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	Unclear	1990	1997	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
31	Male	3	Parishioner	Both	Female	11-15	01/1996	03/2006	QLD	No	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
32	Male	1	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	2009	QLD	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
33	Male	3	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Both	11-15	1997	1997	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	1	0	0	Unclear	No
34	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1987	2003	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
35	Male	2	Unbaptised	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	1997	04/2006	VIC	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
36	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	1997	29/1/1998	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
37	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	pre-1992	Unclear	WA	No	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
38	Male	1	Ministerial Servant	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	2000	2003	WA	Yes	No	No	Yes	0	0	0	0	No	No
39	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1992	2007	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
40	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	1998	03/2004	QLD	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
41	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	1995	1998	QLD	No	Unclear	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
42	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	2012	28/03/2012	QLD	No	Unclear	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
43	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1989	Unclear	Unclear	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	Unclear	No
44	Male	3	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	0-5	01/01/80	01/01/01	N/a	Unclear	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
45	Male	3	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	0-5	08/2006	21/08/2006	QLD	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
46	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Male	Unclear	Unclear	1996	QLD	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
47	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	11-15	1989	2002	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	0	0	0	No	No
48	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	Unclear	Unclear	NSW	No	No	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Yes	No
49	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	2007	08/2007	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	Unclear	No
50	Male	1	Not a JW member	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	2008	23/02/2012	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	Yes	No
51	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	1970	10/1987	SA	No	Yes	No	Yes	0	0	0	0	No	No
52	Male	3	Unbaptised	Both	Both	0-5	01/01/65	01/01/03	NSW	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
53	Male	1	Parishioner	Unclear	Male	Unclear	Unclear	1972	VIC	No	Unclear	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
54	Male	1	Congregation Elder	Familial	Female	6-10	1976	26/11/2013	QLD	No	No	Yes	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
55	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	05/2004	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
56	Male	2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	1984	1992	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Yes	No
57	Male	4	Parishioner	Both	Female	11-15	1976	1999	WA	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	1	1	0	No	No
58	Male	2	Unbaptised	Both	Male	6-10	1990	12/1996	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
59	Male	2	Parishioner	Both	Female	6-10	01/01/61	01/01/02	QLD	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
60	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	15-18	03/01/2014	01/2014	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
61	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Both	11-15	1982	2002	Unclear	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
62	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Male	0-5	28/12/2009	12/04/2010	QLD	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
63	Male	1	Pioneer	Familial	Male	6-10	1990	2000	QLD	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No

64	Male		2	Parishioner	Both	Female	0-5	1974	07/2008	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	Unclear	No
65	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	Unclear	26/02/2013	QLD	No	No	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
66	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	1972	1997	QLD	Unclear	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
67	Male		5	Parishioner	Both	Both	Unclear	Unclear	1991	WA	Unclear	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
68	Male		2	Ministerial Servant	Familial	Female	6-10	1987	21/11/91	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	0	0	0	Yes	No
69	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	10/07/2000	Qld	No	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
70	Male		4	Parishioner	Familial	Both	6-10	1984	1985	QLD	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	0	0	0	No	No
71	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	01/01/03	01/01/03	TAS	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
72	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	1996	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
73	Male		1	Unclear	Non-Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	2005	QLD	Unclear	No	No	No	0	0	0	1	No	No
74	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	0-5	05/1990	26/07/1990	NSW	Unclear	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
75	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1995	2001	Qld	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
76	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	1999	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
77	Male		3	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	2002	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
78	Male		2	Parishioner	Both	Female	11-15	01/01/98	01/01/02	NSW	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
79	Male		2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	0-5	24/12/1999	06/2005	QLD	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	1	1	1	0	No	No
80	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	1984	NT	No	Unclear	Yes	No	Unclear	1	1	0	Unclear	No
81	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Male	6-10	1985	1988	NSW	No	Yes	No	Yes	0	0	0	0	No	No
82	Male		1	Pioneer	Familial	Female	Unclear	2002	2002	QLD	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
83	Male		4	Ministerial Servant	Familial	Both	6-10	1968	08/08/2006	QLD	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
84	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	21/04/2004	NSW	Yes	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
85	Male		2	Not JW member	Familial	Female	6-10	01/01/1970	01/05/1997	WA	No	Unclear	No	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	No	No
86	Male		1	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1992	SA	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
87	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	01/01/03	01/01/03	NSW	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
88	Male		3	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1985	2004	SA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	2	1	0	No	No
89	Male		2	Ministerial Servant	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	1995	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	0	0	0	Yes	No
90	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	11-15	1997	1999	VIC	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
91	Male		5	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1975	2011	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	1	0	0	Yes	No
92	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1996	Post-2002	VIC	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	Unclear	0	Yes	No
93	Male		2	Ministerial Servant	Non-Familial	Male	0-5	Unclear	03/02/2010	NSW	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
94	Male		1	Not JW member	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	1988	2003	SA	Unclear	Yes	No	Yes	0	0	0	1	No	No
95	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Male	Unclear	Unclear	28/12/2014	QLD	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
96	Male		4	Unbaptised	Non-Familial	Both	0-5	1997	2000	TAS	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
97	Male		2	Not JW member	Non-Familial	Female	Unclear	1967	1996	NSW	No	No	No	Yes	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
98	Male		1	Ministerial Servant	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	2013	2013	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	1	1	0	No	No
99	Male		3	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	6-10	1980	06/2009	QLD	No	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
100	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	22/12/1992	QLD	Unclear	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
101	Male		1	Unbaptised	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	2001	04/2003	NSW	No	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
102	Male		1	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	28/03/1998	SA	Unclear	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
103	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	Unclear	NSW	No	No	Yes	No	0	2	1	0	Yes	No
104	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Male	0-5	Unclear	08/10/2004	NSW	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	Unclear	No
105	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Male	6-10	Unclear	1987	TAS	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	1	1	0	Yes	No
106	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	2002	07/2010	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
107	Male		3	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	1998	TAS	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
108	Male		1	Unclear	Non-Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	2005	QLD	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
109	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Both	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Yes	No
110	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	1/12/1976	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	Unclear	1	0	0	Unclear	Unclear
111	Male		2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	11-15	1985	23/08/1985	QLD	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
112	Male		2	Unbaptised	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	1999	Unclear	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
113	Male		3	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	Unclear	1994	SA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
114	Male		3	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	0-5	23/07/65	23/07/65	SA	No	Yes	Yes	Unclear	0	1	0	0	No	No
115	Male		3	Ministerial Servant	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	11/1974	24/11/1975	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Yes	No
116	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	18/06/1993	VIC	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
117	Male	Unclear		Parishioner	Non-Familial	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	TAS	No	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
118	Male		2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Both	11-15	2004	05/2006	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
119	Male		2	Parishioner	Both	Female	6-10	1962	1992	WA	Yes	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
120	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	1989	10/2003	WA	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
121	Male		1	Unclear	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	2005	NSW	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
122	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	01/01/02	WA	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
123	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	1995	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Yes	No
124	Male		5	Congregation Elder	Non-Familial	Female	0-5	Unclear	1991	NSW	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	0	1	0	0	No	No
125	Male		2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	0-5	1976	1992	SA	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
126	Male		3	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	0-5	1964	1966	ACT	Unclear	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
127	Male		5	Parishioner	Both	Female	0-5	Unclear	1999	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
128	Male		1	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	11-15	1990	2000	QLD	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
129	Male		3	Ministerial Servant	Non-Familial	Female	0-5	02/11/83	1983	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	0	0	0	No	No
130	Male		2	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	11-15	1985	09/2005	VIC	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
131	Male		3	Parishioner	Familial	Male	6-10	1986	1999	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	3	1	0	No	No
132	Male		3	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	01/2005	NSW	Unclear	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
133	Male		2	Unbaptised	Both	Both	0-5	01/12/00	01/01/02	NSW	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
134	Female		2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	11-15	Unclear	04/2008	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No

135	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	2009	07/2009	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	Yes	No
136	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	Unclear	2002	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	2	2	0	Yes	No
137	Male	Unclear		Not a JW member	Both	Male	11-15	Pre-1999	07/2013	NSW	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
138	Male		5	Parishioner	Both	Both	6-10	1999	03/11/2009	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
139	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1993	1997	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	1	1	0	No	No
140	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	1967	3/01/1978	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	Unclear	1	0	0	Unclear	No
141	Male		2	Elder or MS	Non-Familial	Male	Unclear	01/12/00	2001	VIC	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No	No
142	Male		4	Parishioner	Both	Male	6-10	17/01/2008	20/08/2008	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
143	Male		4	Parishioner	Familial	Both	Unclear	1980	1990	TAS	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
144	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	2003	VIC	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
145	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	2	1	0	No	No
146	Male		2	Not JW member	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	1999	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	1	1	0	Yes	No
147	Male		2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	6-10	1993	1999	Qld	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	Unclear	No
148	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	15-18	2003	2004	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
149	Male		2	Ministerial Servant	Non-Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1978	QLD	No	Unclear	Yes	Yes	0	1	1	0	No	No
150	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	2008	2008	QLD	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
151	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1998	QLD	No	Unclear	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	Unclear	No
152	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	6-10	01/01/75	01/01/75	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
153	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	Unclear	27/08/2002	WA	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
154	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	2005	2005	SA	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
155	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	1997	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
156	Male		1	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	2002	WA	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
157	Male	Unclear		Not a JW member	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	1993	29/06/2010	WA	No	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	Unclear	No
158	Male		3	Ministerial Servant	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	2001	2001	SA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	0	0	0	No	No
159	Male		3	Ministerial Servant	Non-Familial	Female	Unclear	1997	1997	VIC	No	No	No	Yes	1	0	0	0	Yes	No
160	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	2003	TAS	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
161	Male		2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	01/01/74	01/01/93	QLD	No	No	Yes	No	0	2	1	0	No	No
162	Male		2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	Unclear	SA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
163	Male		1	Circuit Overseer	Non-Familial	Female	0-5	1967	2006	VIC	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No	No
164	Male		3	Not a JW member	Both	Female	6-10	1982	07/2005	NSW	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
165	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1993	1993	Unclear	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
166	Male		1	Ministerial Servant	Familial	Female	11-15	1976	1988	VIC	No	Unclear	Yes	Yes	1	0	0	1	No	No
167	Male		1	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	1986	NSW	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
168	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	15-18	1977	2010	QLD	Unclear	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
169	Male		1	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	0-5	05/2001	11/2003	NSW	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
170	Male		1	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	6-10	1984	2001	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
171	Male		3	Ministerial Servant	Familial	Female	0-5	1978	2002	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	2	1	0	Yes	No
172	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	18/10/2003	Qld	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
173	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	06/2005	SA	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
174	Male		1	Unbaptised	Familial	Male	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	NSW	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
175	Male		1	Ministerial Servant	Familial	Male	6-10	22/12/2002	23/12/2002	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unclear	0	0	0	No	No
176	Male	Unclear		Not a JW member	Non-Familial	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	27/12/2005	QLD	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	No	0	Unclear	Unclear	0	Yes	No
177	Male		1	Congregation Elder	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1989	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	1	No	No
178	Male		4	Parishioner	Both	Female	0-5	2000	26/02/2004	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
179	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	2002	07/08/2007	QLD	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
180	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1999	11/2004	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
181	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1998	03/2007	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Yes	No
182	Male		4	Parishioner	Both	Both	11-15	1996	1997	SA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Unclear	No
183	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1961	VIC	No	Unclear	Yes	No	Unclear	1	0	0	No	No
184	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	1973	19/03/1994	WA	Yes	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
185	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	15-18	Unclear	1986	NSW	No	Unclear	Yes	No	0	2	2	0	No	No
186	Male		3	Parishioner	Unclear	Female	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	WA	No	Unclear	Yes	Unclear	0	2	2	0	No	No
187	Male		2	Ministerial Servant	Familial	Female	6-10	29/07/1986	06/01/97	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	1	1	0	No	No
188	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1992	Unclear	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
189	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	2000	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	1	1	0	No	No
190	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	1974	1974	NSW	No	No	Yes	No	Unclear	2	1	0	Yes	No
191	Female		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	1962	2000	QLD	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
192	Male		2	Ministerial Servant	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	1981	04/12/1988	WA	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	0	0	0	No	No
193	Male		5	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1990	Qld	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	1	4	3	0	Yes	No
194	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1996	06/2012	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
195	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	2001	2007	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
196	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	2001	30/01/2001	NSW	No	Yes	Unclear	No	Unclear	Unclear	0	0	No	No
197	Male		1	Congregation Elder	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	1990	2009	NSW	Unclear	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
198	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	10/1977	12/1977	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
199	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	08/2011	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
200	Male		3	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1983	24/09/2003	WA	No	Unclear	Unclear	No	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	0	No	No
201	Male		2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	09/2005	VIC	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
202	Male		1	Ministerial Servant	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	2008	2008	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	1	1	0	No	No
203	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Male	0-5	12/1991	12/1991	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
204	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	1977	1988	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	Unclear	3	3	0	No	No
205	Male		1	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	Unclear	1977	1995	VIC	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No

206	Male	4	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	1978	1978	WA	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
207	Male	2	Elder or MS	Familial	Female	Unclear	1971	1991	QLD	No	Unclear	No	Yes	0	0	0	0	No	No
208	Male	1	Unclear	Non-Familial	Unclear	Unclear	1995	1999	TAS	No	Unclear	Yes	Yes	Unclear	1	1	0	No	No
209	Male	2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	12/2008	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	1	1	0	No	No
210	Male	1	Ministerial Servant	Familial	Female	Unclear	1969	1969	QLD	Unclear	Unclear	Yes	Yes	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	0	Unclear	No
211	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	15-18	1996	09/01/2012	SA	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
212	Male	2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	11-15	2005	11/2005	SA	Yes	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
213	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1984	1984	SA	No	No	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
214	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Male	11-15	Unclear	1989	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	2	3	3	0	No	No
215	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	1981	QLD	No	Unclear	Yes	No	0	2	2	0	No	No
216	Male	2	Not a JW member	Non-Familial	Female	Unclear	01/01/87	01/01/02	WA	Unclear	Yes	Unclear	Yes	0	0	0	0	No	No
217	Male	1	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	0-5	Unclear	Unclear	WA	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
218	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Male	6-10	1990	2000	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
219	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	1986	1986	VIC	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
220	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	1988	Unclear	VIC	No	No	Yes	No	0	0	0	0	No	Unclear
221	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	Unclear	QLD	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
222	Male	2	Unclear	Familial	Female	11-15	1950	1950	Unclear	No	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
223	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1988	1996	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
224	Male	1	Unbaptised	Non-Familial	Male	6-10	Unclear	05/2012	N/a	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	Unclear	No
225	Male	3	Parishioner	Both	Both	0-5	1986	1990	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	Yes	No
226	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1988	04/2008	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
227	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	2003	07/04/2008	WA	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
228	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1984	1999	WA	No	No	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Yes	No
229	Male	1	Parishioner	Unclear	Female	6-10	Unclear	1968	NSW	No	Unclear	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
230	Male	1	Unbaptised	Non-Familial	Male	0-5	Unclear	26/03/2007	NSW	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
231	Male	Unclear	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	2003	TAS	No	Unclear	Yes	No	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	0	Unclear	No
232	Male	1	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	01/01/1996	SA	Unclear	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
233	Female	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	1992	VIC	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
234	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear
235	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	1988	2003	QLD	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
236	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1990	Unclear	NSW	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
237	Male	3	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	1975	1978	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	2	Unclear	0	No	No
238	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	15-18	11/2007	12/2007	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
239	Male	3	Congregation Elder	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	2006	2006	NSW	Yes	No	No	Yes	0	0	0	1	Yes	No
240	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	2000	2002	NSW	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
241	Male	3	Parishioner	Both	Female	0-5	1974	Unclear	WA	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
242	Male	4	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	06/2007	01/2008	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
243	Male	1	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	15-18	Unclear	1993	NSW	Unclear	No	Unclear	No	0	Unclear	Unclear	0	No	No
244	Female	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	07/08/2007	2008	ACT	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Yes	No
245	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	01/2005	03/2005	ACT	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
246	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	0-5	Unclear	20/02/1993	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
247	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1980	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	1	0	0	No	No
248	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	1984	12/07/2006	SA	No	No	Yes	No	1	1	1	0	No	No
249	Male	Unclear	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1993	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
250	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1982	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
251	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1974	2000	Unclear	No	Unclear	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	Unclear	No
252	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Both	6-10	10/10/1977	17/10/1977	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
253	Male	7	Parishioner	Both	Female	6-10	1971	Unclear	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Yes	No
254	Male	2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Both	11-15	01/01/93	01/01/03	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
255	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	2012	07/2014	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
256	Male	1	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	6-10	1993	05/2013	NT	No	No	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
257	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	2003	05/2007	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
258	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1984	1990	VIC	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	1	Unclear	No	No
259	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	15-18	1994	pre-05/2005	NSW	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
260	Male	3	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	0-5	Unclear	08/2005	NT	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
261	Male	1	Not JW member	Familial	Female	Unclear	1989	2002	TAS	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
262	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	1991	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
263	Female	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	0-5	2007	04/01/2007	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	Unclear	0	0	No	No
264	Male	1	Unbaptised	Non-Familial	Female	15-18	1999	2000	WA	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
265	Male	9	Unbaptised	Both	Both	6-10	1991	1992	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	1	0	0	Yes	No
266	Male	1	Not JW member	Familial	Female	11-15	01/05/1999	2003	QLD	No	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
267	Male	1	Congregation Elder	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	2003	TAS	Unclear	No	No	Yes	0	0	0	0	No	No
268	Male	1	Not a JW member	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	08/2005	04/11/2010	N/a	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
269	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	2001	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
270	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	1967	1989	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	0	0	0	No	No
271	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	1999	2014	NT	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Unclear	No
272	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	06/08/2004	VIC	Unclear	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
273	Male	1	Congregation Elder	Familial	Female	15-18	1986	2004	VIC	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
274	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1993	30/07/2004	VIC	Unclear	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
275	Male	3	Not a JW member	Familial	Both	0-5	1982	01/2007	NSW	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No

276	Male		1	Congregation Elder	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	2004	VIC	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
277	Male		1	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	11-15	1996	25/09/2007	NSW	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
278	Male		2	Unbaptised	Non-Familial	Female	Unclear	2003	26/05/2005	VIC	No	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
279	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	04/2002	15/09/2003	QLD	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
280	Male		2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	0-5	Unclear	17/04/2010	VIC	Unclear	No	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	Yes	No
281	Male		2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	29/10/2014	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
282	Male		4	Not a JW member	Both	Female	6-10	1978	01/2008	VIC	No	Yes	No	No	Unclear	0	0	0	No	No
283	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1979	2002	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
284	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	08/2003	NSW	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
285	Male		3	Parishioner	Both	Male	Unclear	1970	1994	Qld	Unclear	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
286	Male	Unclear		Parishioner	Both	Both	Unclear	Unclear	1986	NSW	No	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
287	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	03/2013	09/2014	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
288	Male		3	Parishioner	Both	Female	15-18	2003	08/2006	SA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
289	Male		4	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	05/1987	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	3	2	0	Yes	No
290	Male	Unclear		Not a JW member	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	WA	Unclear	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
291	Male	Unclear		Parishioner	Familial	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	1982	QLD	No	Unclear	Yes	Unclear	Unclear	1	1	0	No	No
292	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1987	~09/2007	NSW	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
293	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	2000	2003	QLD	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
294	Male	Unclear		Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	16/05/1963	1963	SA	No	Unclear	Yes	No	Unclear	3	3	0	No	No
295	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	Unclear	Unclear	09/2008	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
296	Male		2	Not a JW member	Non-Familial	Unclear	Unclear	1989	1989	NSW	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
297	Male		1	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	6-10	1977	09/2005	VIC	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
298	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	1980	1997	NSW	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	Unclear	No
299	Male	Unclear		Parishioner	Non-Familial	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	22/06/2004	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	Yes	No
300	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	2003	WA	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
301	Male		1	Not JW member	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	1990	23/02/2004	Vic	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
302	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1986	1995	Unclear	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
303	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	1966	2002	NSW	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
304	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	1994	NSW	Unclear	No	No	No	0	Unclear	Unclear	0	No	No
305	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Male	0-5	2001	2003	VIC	No	Unclear	Yes	No	0	1	Unclear	0	No	No
306	Male		3	Unbaptised	Both	Both	11-15	Unclear	1994	Unclear	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	0	0	0	No	No
307	Male		1	Ministerial Servant	Familial	Female	11-15	1995	2000	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	0	0	Unclear	No	No
308	Male		4	Ministerial Servant	Non-Familial	Both	0-5	2001	12/07/2012	N/a	No	Yes	Yes	Unclear	0	1	0	0	No	No
309	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Both	11-15	Unclear	02/08/2005	NSW	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
310	Male		7	Not a JW member	Both	Female	0-5	1976	09/07/2007	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	2	1	0	No	No
311	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Male	11-15	2012	02/04/2012	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
312	Male		4	Unclear	Both	Female	Unclear	Unclear	31/01/2000	NSW	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
313	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1972	2010	VIC	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
314	Male		4	Ministerial Servant	Familial	Female	0-5	1969	1997	NSW	No	No	Yes	Yes	1	2	1	0	Yes	No
315	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1977	WA	No	Unclear	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
316	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	~05/2013	04/2014	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	2	1	0	No	No
317	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Male	6-10	1986	12/2008	VIC	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
318	Male		1	Elder or MS	Familial	Male	Unclear	Unclear	2008	WA	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	No	No
319	Male		2	Parishioner	Both	Male	Unclear	1995	2000	NT	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
320	Male		2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	01/01/73	01/01/05	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	Yes	No
321	Male		1	Congregation Elder	Both	Both	0-5	1983	205	NSW	Unclear	No	No	Yes	Unclear	0	0	0	No	No
322	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1992	1992	SA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
323	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1997	QLD	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
324	Male	Unclear		Unbaptised	Familial	Both	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	VIC	Unclear	Unclear	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
325	Male		1	Unbaptised	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	09/2002	02/04/2006	SA	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
326	Male		1	Not JW member	Non-Familial	Female	Unclear	1964	1998	WA	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
327	Male	Unclear		Parishioner	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	21/09/2004	21/09/2004	NSW	No	Yes	Unclear	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
328	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1993	18/07/1993	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
329	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1990	2002	QLD	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
330	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	1983	10/10/2012	QLD	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
331	Male	Unclear		Parishioner	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	QLD	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	No
332	Male		2	Congregation Elder	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1996	QLD	No	No	Yes	Yes	0	0	0	0	No	No
333	Male		2	Unbaptised	Familial	Both	6-10	01/02/2001	01/2002	QLD	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
334	Male		3	Unbaptised	Familial	Male	0-5	1960	2002	VIC	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
335	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	0-5	1988	1989	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
336	Male		2	Parishioner	Both	Female	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	Unclear	1	1	0	No	No
337	Male		4	Parishioner	Both	Female	11-15	2003	07/2003	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
338	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	0-5	1993	Unclear	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
339	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Unclear	6-10	Unclear	1957	SA	No	Unclear	Yes	Yes	0	1	1	1	No	No
340	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	0-5	1997	1997	WA	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
341	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	~01/2011	01/2011	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
342	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	1984	21.02.2004	Qld	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
343	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	1992	09/2007	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
344	Male		4	Not a JW member	Both	Female	6-10	Unclear	09/2002	NSW	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
345	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	15-18	1996	1996	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	Yes	No
346	Male		3	Parishioner	Familial	Both	Unclear	Unclear	31/03/1998	SA	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No

347	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	1998	1998	QLD	Unclear	Yes	Unclear	Yes	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	0	No	No
348	Male	1	Not JW member	Non-Familial	Female	15-18	01/03/1990	02/11/2004	NSW	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
349	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	1995	QLD	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
350	Male	2	Not JW member	Both	Female	Unclear	1993	1995	QLD	No	No	Yes	No	0	2	1	0	No	No
351	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1981	Unclear	VIC	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
352	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	11/2004	07/2007	NSW	Unclear	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
353	Male	1	Unbaptised	Non-Familial	Female	15-18	09/2005	19/05/2006	QLD	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
354	Male	8	Parishioner	Both	Male	6-10	~1979	02/08/2008	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
355	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1984	29/12/2010	NSW	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
356	Male	2	Ministerial Servant	Familial	Female	6-10	1989	1997	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
357	Male	2	Parishioner	Both	Female	6-10	Unclear	18/02/2003	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	2	2	0	Unclear	No
358	Male	1	Unbaptised	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	01/12/2012	NT	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
359	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	11/11/1980	WA	No	Unclear	Yes	No	Unclear	1	0	0	No	No
360	Male	2	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	6-10	1965	24/09/2011	NSW	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
361	Male	2	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	Unclear	1982	11/09/2012	VIC	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
362	Male	1	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	03/2008	WA	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
363	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	0-5	1994	26/07/2007	QLD	Unclear	Yes	No	Yes	0	0	0	0	No	No
364	Male	8	Ministerial Servant	Both	Both	6-10	1981	1990	NSW	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	1	1	0	No	No
365	Male	10+	Parishioner	Both	Female	0-5	1978	1978	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	2	1	0	No	No
366	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	2008	02/2011	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
367	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	15-18	2007	May/2010	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
368	Male	1	Not JW member	Familial	Female	6-10	1960s	2003	TAS	Unclear	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
369	Male	3	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	Unclear	1986	02/2011	TAS	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
370	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	2003	QLD	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
371	Male	1	Not JW member	Familial	Female	Unclear	1963	2000	Vic	No	Yes	No	Yes	0	0	0	1	No	No
372	Male	3	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	1988	2001	Qld	No	Unclear	Yes	No	0	2	1	0	Unclear	No
373	Male	Unclear	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	QLD	No	Unclear	Yes	No	1	1	Unclear	0	No	No
374	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	0-5	1993	2000	VIC	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unclear	0	0	0	No	No
375	Male	2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	01/01/01	01/01/01	VIC	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Unclear	1	1	0	No	No
376	Male	4	Parishioner	both	both	Unclear	Unclear	26/06/1993	QLD	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
377	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1970	2002	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
378	Male	1	Unclear	Familial	Female	6-10	1970	1998	VIC	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
379	Male	3	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1970	1992	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	0	0	0	No	No
380	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	2004	2004	QLD	Unclear	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
381	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1994	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
382	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	0-5	Unclear	1973	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
383	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	04/2006	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	1	0	0	No	No
384	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	1987	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
385	Male	3	Congregation Elder	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	1986	1995	VIC	No	No	Yes	Yes	0	1	1	0	Unclear	No
386	Male	3	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	Unclear	1970	1970	NSW	Yes	No	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
387	Male	1	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	6-10	08/10/2009	11/10/2009	NSW	No	No	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
388	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1992	2000	VIC	Unclear	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
389	Male	6	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1988	2003	SA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	Yes	No
390	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	1970	2003	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	2	2	0	Yes	No
391	Male	2	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	Unclear	1968	2003	VIC	No	Unclear	Yes	No	1	1	1	0	No	No
392	Male	3	Unbaptised	Both	Female	0-5	Unclear	Unclear	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
393	Male	1	Unclear	Familial	Female	Unclear	1978	2005	WA	No	Yes	Unclear	Unclear	0	0	0	1	No	No
394	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	1998	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	1	1	0	Yes	No
395	Male	3	Congregation Elder	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	1973	1993	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	2	2	0	Yes	No
396	Male	1	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	09/2004	WA	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
397	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	2003	QLD	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
398	Male	5	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	01/01/87	01/01/02	NSW	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
399	Male	10+	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Both	0-5	1985	1985	Qld	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	3	2	0	Yes	Unclear
400	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Male	0-5	21/08/2002	2002	VIC	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
401	Male	10+	Parishioner	Both	Both	0-5	Unclear	1987	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	3	2	0	Unclear	No
402	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	01/01/02	01/01/02	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	Yes	No
403	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	2000	10/08/2000	Qld	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
404	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	01/2007	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
405	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1985	17/11/1992	QLD	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	Unclear	No
406	Male	2	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	0-5	1996	18/11/1992	Qld	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
407	Male	5	Parishioner	Both	Female	0-5	Unclear	2001	Qld	No	Unclear	Yes	No	0	2	Unclear	0	No	No
408	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1997	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
409	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	06/2006	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
410	Male	7	Ministerial Servant	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	1991	1991	NSW	No	No	Yes	Yes	0	1	1	0	No	No
411	Male	1	Unbaptised	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	1986	NSW	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
412	Male	1	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	11-15	1996	18/01/2002	WA	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
413	Male	4	Parishioner	Familial	Both	Unclear	Unclear	06/1998	VIC	No	Unclear	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
414	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	15-18	1997	2002	WA	No	No	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
415	Male	1	Unclear	Familial	Female	11-15	1982	1996	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	0	0	0	No	No
416	Male	9	Parishioner	Both	Female	6-10	01/01/70	01/01/97	NSW	No	No	Yes	No	2	0	0	0	No	No
417	Male	3	Parishioner	Familial	Both	6-10	1999	11/2006	SA	No	No	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No

418	Male		4	Not a JW member	Familial	Male	0-5	Unclear	1997	NSW	Unclear	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
419	Female		2	Pioneer	Familial	Male	11-15	Unclear	2002	WA	No	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
420	Male		1	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	23/05/2012	NSW	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
421	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1991	2003	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
422	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1984	N/a	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	Yes	No
423	Male		1	Parishioner	Unclear	Female	Unclear	1982	2/1982	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	2	2	0	No	No
424	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	1996	1996	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	2	1	0	Yes	No
425	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	0-5	1986	1986	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
426	Male		2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	15-18	16/05/1999	1999	VIC	Yes	No	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
427	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	1979	01/2005	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
428	Male		1	Parishioner	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	2003	2003	NSW	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
429	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	1969	Unclear	No	Unclear	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
430	Male		1	Ministerial Servant	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1988	SA	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	1	1	0	No	No
431	Male		3	Parishioner	Familial	Both	Unclear	Unclear	early 1990s	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	0	No	No
432	Male		1	Ministerial Servant	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	2000	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	1	Unclear	0	No	No
433	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	7/11/2001	QLD	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
434	Male		1	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	Unclear	1985	2013	WA	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	Unclear	No
435	Male		3	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	Unclear	01/06/2005	NSW	Unclear	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
436	Male		2	Unbaptised	Non-Familial	Both	Unclear	Unclear	24/11/12	QLD	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
437	Male		3	Parishioner	Both	Female	0-5	1981	24/02/2005	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	Unclear	No
438	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	1998	Unclear	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
439	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	1994	Unclear	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
440	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Both	Unclear	Unclear	1998	QLD	No	No	Yes	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
441	Male		1	Unbaptised	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	1990	23/10/2013	NSW	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
442	Male		4	Parishioner	Familial	Both	6-10	1980	1996	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
443	Male		3	Unbaptised	Familial	Male	6-10	1984	2002	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Yes	No
444	Male		1	Parishioner	Unclear	Female	11-15	1966	1966	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Yes	No
445	Male		2	Not JW member	Familial	Female	Unclear	1971	2011	QLD	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
446	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	Unclear	2003	VIC	No	No	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
447	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1993	1993	VIC	No	Unclear	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
448	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1987	23/02/1993	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	Yes	No
449	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Male	Unclear	1996	1996	NSW	Unclear	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	Unclear	No
450	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	1990	1994	QLD	No	Unclear	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
451	Male		2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	04/2008	24/04/2010	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
452	Male		1	Unclear	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1991	SA	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
453	Male		2	Not a JW member	Familial	Both	0-5	2005	2005	VIC	No	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
454	Male		2	Ministerial Servant	Non-Familial	Male	11-15	1995	2003	SA	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	1	1	0	No	No
455	Male		1	Congregation Elder	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1983	SA	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Yes	0	0	0	0	No	No
456	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	1997	QLD	No	Unclear	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
457	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	1990	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	1	1	0	No	No
458	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	16/12/2009	NSW	Unclear	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
459	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	Unclear	1982	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	No	Unclear	1	1	0	No	No
460	Male		1	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	6-10	1990	1993	SA	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
461	Male		6	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	Unclear	Unclear	1997	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	2	1	0	No	No
462	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	1990	1990	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	1	0	0	No	No
463	Male		3	Parishioner	Both	Both	11-15	1977	1990	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
464	Male		5	Parishioner	Both	Female	6-10	1984	1984	SA	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	0	0	0	Yes	No
465	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1984	1998	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
466	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	Unclear	26/02/2012	VIC	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
467	Male		2	Congregation Elder	Familial	Female	Unclear	1989	2000	WA	Unclear	No	Yes	No	0	0	0	1	No	No
468	Male		5	Ministerial Servant	Both	Female	6-10	09/2006	06/09/1994	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	1	0	0	No	No
469	Male		1	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	1990	TAS	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
470	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	2004	25/02/2009	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
471	Male		2	Unbaptised	Familial	Both	6-10	Unclear	07/2005	NSW	Unclear	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
472	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Male	6-10	1991	1991	WA	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
473	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	0-5	02/2005	02/2005	NSW	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
474	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Both	Unclear	Unclear	05/2005	NSW	Unclear	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
475	Male		4	Parishioner	Both	Both	0-5	1970	2002	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
476	Male	10+		Unbaptised	Both	Both	0-5	1969	20/01/2004	NSW	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
477	Male	10+		Ministerial Servant	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	1985	1996	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	3	2	0	Unclear	No
478	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	15-18	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	No
479	Male		1	Ministerial Servant	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	1990	06/03/90	VIC	No	No	No	Yes	0	0	0	0	No	No
480	Male		1	Unbaptised	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	2012	12/2012	NT	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
481	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1984	1995	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	3	2	0	Unclear	No
482	Male		2	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	11-15	2004	02/02/2007	NSW	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
483	Male		3	Not a JW member	Non-Familial	Male	0-5	Unclear	06/10/2011	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
484	Male		1	Unclear	Familial	Female	11-15	1985	2013	QLD	Unclear	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
485	Male		1	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	1999	QLD	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
486	Male		3	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	05/08/1996	QLD	No	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear
487	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Male	0-5	1989	2003	Qld	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No

488	Male		1	Unbaptised	Non-Familial	Male	15-18	27/12/2008	31/12/2008	QLD	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
489	Male		1	Congregation Elder	Familial	Male	Unclear	Unclear	2001	QLD	Yes	No	Yes	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
490	Male		1	Not a JW member	Non-Familial	Male	6-10	1988	11/03/2006	WA	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
491	Male		1	Not JW member	Familial	Unclear	Unclear	1969	2014	NSW	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
492	Male		2	Parishioner	Both	Male	6-10	Unclear	1999	ACT	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
493	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	Unclear	1993	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
494	Male		2	Ministerial Servant	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	1986	1986	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	1	1	0	No	No
495	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	1995	03/05/2005	NSW	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
496	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	9/06/199	QLD	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
497	Male	Unclear		Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	Unclear	10/04/1972	10/05/1972	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	2	1	0	No	No
498	Male		1	Ministerial Servant	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1993	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	0	0	0	No	No
499	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	Unclear	28/03/2003	Vic	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
500	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	15-18	03/2005	12/2005	NSW	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
501	Male		1	Ministerial Servant	Familial	Female	Unclear	2003	2008	NSW	Unclear	No	No	Unclear	0	0	0	0	No	No
502	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1983	VIC	No	No	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Unclear	No
503	Male		1	Congregation Elder	Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	30/09/03	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	0	0	0	No	No
504	Male		1	Parishioner	Unclear	Unclear	15-18	Unclear	1989	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	Yes	No
505	Male		1	Congregation Elder	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	1988	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unclear	1	1	Unclear	No	No
506	Male		1	Parishioner	Both	Both	0-5	Unclear	2005	SA	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
507	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	03/10/2005	05/10/2005	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Unclear	No
508	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	1999	NSW	No	Unclear	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
509	Male		1	Pioneer	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	01/04/92	01/04/92	VIC	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	1	No	No
510	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	2002	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
511	Male		3	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	1984	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	2	1	0	Unclear	No
512	Male		1	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	2001	SA	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
513	Male		1	Pioneer	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	1973	2003	VIC	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
514	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	2005	2003	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	2	Unclear	0	No	No
515	Male		1	Unbaptised	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	01/1999	22/11/2005	NSW	Yes	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
516	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Male	Unclear	Unclear	2002	QLD	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
517	Male		3	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	1992	28/11/1993	QLD	No	No	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
518	Male		1	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	15-18	2007	22/05/2006	NSW	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
519	Male		1	Unclear	Non-Familial	Female	0-5	1964	2005	NSW	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
520	Male		3	Parishioner	Familial	Both	0-5	06/2005	07/2005	NSW	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
521	Male		1	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	15-18	Unclear	01/1998	NSW	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
522	Male		1	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	6-10	1973	1998	WA	No	Yes	Unclear	Yes	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	No	No
523	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1986	1986	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	Unclear	2	1	0	No	No
524	Male		1	Ministerial Servant	Non-Familial	Male	0-5	2002	2002	QLD	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
525	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1998	2007	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
526	Male		1	Not a JW member	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	1990	07/05/2008	VIC	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
527	Male		2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	12/2012	QLD	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
528	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1980	1994	QLD	No	Unclear	Yes	No	1	0	0	1	No	No
529	Male	Unclear		Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	WA	Unclear	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
530	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	10/2009	NSW	Unclear	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
531	Male		2	Unbaptised	Familial	Both	Unclear	Unclear	2002	NSW	No	Yes	Unclear	Yes	0	0	0	1	No	No
532	Male		1	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	0-5	1982	16/02/2003	NSW	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
533	Male		1	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	2003	Unclear	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
534	Male		1	Ministerial Servant	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	1989	18/11/93	WA	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	0	0	0	No	No
535	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Both	Unclear	Unclear	20/10/2007	NSW	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
536	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	11-15	01/101993	22/11/1993	QLD	No	Unclear	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
537	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	11-15	1988	18/07/2007	QLD	No	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
538	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1987	1999	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
539	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Male	11-15	2007	24/08/2007	SA	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
540	Male		6	Parishioner	Both	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1964	QLD	No	Unclear	Yes	Unclear	0	0	0	0	No	No
541	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	1990	1994	Qld	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	1	1	0	No	No
542	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	15-18	1981	1981	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	2	1	0	Yes	Unclear
543	Male		4	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	15-18	Unclear	2005	QLD	No	Unclear	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
544	Male	Unclear		Not a JW member	Familial	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	1997	Qld	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
545	Male		2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	15-18	2002	14/09/2007	ACT	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
546	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Male	11-15	2010	2010	WA	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
547	Male		1	Parishioner	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	1975	NSW	No	Unclear	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
548	Male		1	Pioneer	Familial	Female	Unclear	1967	1967	Unclear	No	Unclear	Yes	No	0	0	0	1	No	No
549	Female		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	11-15	Unclear	09/2008	SA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
550	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	1980	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unclear	0	0	1	No	No
551	Male		2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	1970	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	2	3	3	0	No	No
552	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1997	NSW	No	Unclear	Yes	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
553	Male		3	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	24/12/2009	TAS	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
554	Male		2	Unbaptised	Non-Familial	Both	Unclear	Unclear	2002	VIC	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
555	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	12/2003	08/2004	SA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
556	Male		2	Ministerial Servant	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	2002	2006	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	1	0	0	No	No
557	Male		5	Not JW member	Both	Male	11-15	1987	1993	QLD	No	Unclear	Yes	Yes	1	0	0	0	Yes	No

558	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	2007	2009	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	Unclear	No
559	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	1992	1996	NSW	Unclear	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
560	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	Unclear	9/04/2001	QLD	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
561	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	1997	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	Yes	No
562	Male	2	Unbaptised	Both	Female	6-10	1984	2001	NSW	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
563	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	01/01/01	01/01/02	NSW	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
564	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	01/01/83	01/01/91	VIC	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
565	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	15-18	2004	07/2004	Vic	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	2	2	0	No	No
566	Male	4	Parishioner	Both	Both	6-10	Unclear	1989	VIC	No	Yes	No	No	0	2	1	0	No	No
567	Male	3	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	1995	QLD	Unclear	No	Yes	No	1	1	1	0	No	No
568	Male	5	Ministerial Servant	Familial	Female	11-15	1975	20/11/1993	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	2	2	0	Yes	No
569	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	0-5	01/01/96	01/01/02	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
570	Male	3	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	01/01/03	SA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
571	Male	6	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	0-5	1984	1988	Qld	No	Yes	No	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
572	Female	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	11-15	01/2006	13/08/2006	SA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
573	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	1994	NSW	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
574	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	1972	19/05/2005	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
575	Male	1	Congregation Elder	Non-Familial	Male	11-15	1984	11/11/1999	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	1	0	0	No	No
576	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	Unclear	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	Unclear	0	0	Yes	No
577	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	1992	1992	N/a	No	Yes	Yes	No	2	0	0	0	No	No
578	Male	3	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	1995	05/2005	WA	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
579	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	1972	1973	VIC	No	Unclear	Yes	No	0	2	2	0	No	No
580	Male	1	Congregation Elder	Non-Familial	Female	15-18	1980	1992	WA	Yes	No	No	Yes	0	0	0	1	No	No
581	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	2000	09/2012	WA	No	No	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
582	Male	2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	01/01/03	01/01/12	SA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Yes	No
583	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	6-10	2004	2004	NSW	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
584	Male	2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	1967	2007	WA	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	1	1	0	No	No
585	Male	2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	0-5	2000	06/2005	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	Unclear	No
586	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	08/2007	QLD	No	No	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
587	Male	Unclear	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1994	1998	NSW	No	Unclear	Yes	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
588	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1965	1990	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	2	1	0	No	No
589	Male	2	Parishioner	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	1967	1997	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	2	1	0	No	No
590	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	1994	1997	NSW	No	Unclear	Yes	No	2	0	0	0	No	No
591	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	2003	NSW	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
592	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1982	1992	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
593	Male	3	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	2003	25/08/2004	ACT	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
594	Male	1	Not JW member	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	2000	TAS	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear
595	Male	3	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	Unclear	2005	VIC	No	No	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
596	Male	2	Unbaptised	Both	Female	15-18	Unclear	02/03/2009	QLD	Unclear	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
597	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	1993	1997	Vic	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
598	Male	1	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	11-15	1983	05/2005	NSW	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
599	Male	3	Unbaptised	Familial	Both	Unclear	1983	Unclear	Nsw	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
600	Male	3	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	1973	1986	TAS	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
601	Male	1	Ministerial Servant	Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	1997	NSW	No	No	Yes	Yes	0	1	0	0	Yes	No
602	Male	1	Ministerial Servant	Non-Familial	Male	11-15	Unclear	1995	QLD	Yes	Yes	Unclear	Yes	1	0	0	0	No	No
603	Male	1	Parishioner	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	2008	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	No
604	Male	3	Parishioner	Both	Both	Unclear	Unclear	1982	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	3	2	0	No	No
605	Male	2	Pioneer	Non-Familial	Both	11-15	1970	1970s	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
606	Male	1	Congregation Elder	Non-Familial	Male	Unclear	Unclear	2005	NSW	Unclear	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	1	0	0	No	No
607	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Male	0-5	1970	12/02/2014	QLD	No	Yes	No	No	0	Unclear	Unclear	0	No	No
608	Male	1	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	6-10	1979	2001	QLD	No	No	No	Yes	0	0	0	1	No	No
609	Male	1	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	6-10	1970	2001	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	0	0	1	No	No
610	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Male	6-10	2003	07/2006	QLD	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
611	Male	3	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	Unclear	1999	ACT	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
612	Male	1	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	0-5	1993	2003	VIC	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
613	Female	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	11-15	2012	08/04/2012	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
614	Male	3	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Both	6-10	01/01/79	01/01/01	NSW	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
615	Male	1	Unclear	Familial	Male	6-10	1978	2000	TAS	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	0	0	0	No	No
616	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	07/2001	2005	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Yes	No
617	Male	6	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Both	6-10	2000	09/2002	SA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	2	2	0	No	No
619	Male	2	Not a JW member	Both	Female	11-15	1978	03/06/2007	NSW	Yes	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
618	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	01/01/2000	01/01/2000	SA	Yes	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
620	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1983	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	1	1	0	Unclear	No
621	Female	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	08/2004	11/2006	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
622	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1978	10/2006	VIC	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
623	Male	1	Ministerial Servant	Non-Familial	Female	0-5	2001	2004	QLD	Unclear	No	No	Unclear	0	0	0	0	No	No
624	Male	8	Parishioner	Both	Female	11-15	1984	1997	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	2	1	0	No	No
625	Male	2	Unbaptised	Familial	Male	0-5	1992	2005	NSW	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
626	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	2005	22/06/2011	NSW	Unclear	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
627	Male	1	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	1995	Unclear	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
628	Male	2	Ministerial Servant	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1988	WA	No	Unclear	Yes	Yes	0	1	1	0	No	No

629	Male	5	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	11-15	1993	2000	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	1	0	0	No	No
630	Male	1	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	6-10	11/2007	09/12/2012	WA	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
631	Male	8	Unbaptised	Non-Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	08/12/2004	QLD	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
632	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	2005	25/09/2006	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	Unclear
633	Male	4	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Both	Unclear	1994	11/2007	SA	Yes	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
634	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	6-10	1994	1994	NSW	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
635	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	0-5	Unclear	23/01/1994	QLD	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
636	Male	3	Parishioner	Both	Both	Unclear	Unclear	1996	QLD	No	No	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Yes	No
637	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Both	11-15	1980	21010	QLD	No	No	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
638	Male	3	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	1984	29/10/2010	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	1	0	0	No	No
639	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1975	1980	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
640	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1987	1997	QLD	No	Yes	Unclear	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
641	Male	2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	1975	1993	NSW	No	No	No	Yes	0	0	0	0	No	No
642	Male	5	Parishioner	Both	Female	6-10	1982	1995	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	3	3	0	Yes	No
643	Male	2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	6-10	1989	1997	NT	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
644	Male	2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	2000	Vic	No	No	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
645	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	2000	04/10/2014	QLD	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
646	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	09/06/2011	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Yes	Unclear
647	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	11-15	01/01/01	01/01/01	QLD	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
648	Male	2	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	11-15	1991	11/2009	TAS	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
649	Male	1	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	11-15	1990	1996	VIC	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
650	Male	1	Not JW member	Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	2006	QLD	Unclear	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
651	Male	2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	01/01/83	01/01/03	NSW	Unclear	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
652	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	0-5	2005	13/05/2014	QLD	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
653	Male	1	Ministerial Servant	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	1980	VIC	No	No	Yes	Yes	0	1	0	0	No	No
654	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1985	1998	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	2	2	0	No	No
655	Male	1	Not a JW member	Non-Familial	Male	6-10	Unclear	2000	NSW	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
656	Male	10+	Parishioner	Familial	Male	6-10	1997	1958	Unclear	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	2	1	0	Yes	No
657	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	1998	SA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	Yes	No
658	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1985	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
659	Male	Unclear	Parishioner	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	12/1982	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	1	0	0	No	No
660	Male	1	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	11-15	1972	2002	NSW	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
661	Male	2	Unbaptised	Non-Familial	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	2001	NSW	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
662	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	11-15	01/01/01	01/01/03	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
663	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	08/2003	10/03/2004	NSW	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
664	Male	1	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	0-5	1980	1995	Qld	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
665	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	1984	2002	WA	No	Unclear	Yes	No	0	2	2	0	No	No
666	Male	1	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	2011	WA	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
667	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1976	02/2013	NSW	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
668	Male	Unclear	Parishioner	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	1976	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	Yes	No
669	Male	2	Congregation Elder	Familial	Male	6-10	1994	1997	SA	No	No	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
670	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	Unclear	Unclear	SA	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
671	Male	Unclear	Parishioner	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	09/1996	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
672	Male	2	Congregation Elder	Familial	Female	11-15	1982	14/12/92	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
673	Male	5	Congregation Elder	Non-Familial	Male	Unclear	1996	1997	WA	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	1	1	0	Unclear	No
674	Male	Unclear	Not a JW member	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	27/08/2012	QLD	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
675	Male	2	Congregation Elder	Familial	Female	Unclear	1978	1994	SA	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	0	0	0	No	No
676	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	2000	2000	NSW	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	Unclear	No
677	Male	1	Ministerial Servant	Familial	Female	0-5	2003	2003	VIC	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
678	Male	1	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	6-10	1982	2002	WA	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
679	Male	1	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	11-15	2007	03/12/2007	WA	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
680	Male	2	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	15-18	2000	04/2009	WA	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
681	Male	5	Parishioner	Both	Female	6-10	01/01/91	01/01/92	TAS	Unclear	Yes	Yes	No	2	1	0	0	No	No
682	Male	2	Not JW member	Non-Familial	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	06/2004	QLD	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
683	Male	1	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	11-15	1985	03/2007	QLD	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
684	Male	3	Unbaptised	Non-Familial	Unclear	Unclear	~2001	16/12/2008	NSW	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
685	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Unclear	Unclear	1970	1999	WA	Unclear	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
686	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Male	0-5	2001	2001	SA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
687	Male	Unclear	Parishioner	Familial	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	SA	No	Unclear	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
688	Male	1	Unclear	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	1979	1999	NSW	Unclear	Yes	Unclear	Yes	Unclear	Unclear	0	Unclear	No	No
689	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	25/01/2002	WA	No	No	Yes	No	0	2	1	0	No	No
690	Male	5	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	~1969	~05/1969	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	2	1	0	Yes	No
691	Male	5	Parishioner	Both	Both	15-18	2005	29/08/2013	VIC	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	Yes	No
692	Male	4	Parishioner	Both	Female	6-10	Unclear	1995	Qld	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	1	1	1	0	No	No
693	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	2000	WA	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
694	Male	1	Unclear	Non-Familial	Female	Unclear	1990	2008	VIC	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
695	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	2001	VIC	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
696	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Both	Unclear	Unclear	1994	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
697	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1960	1998	Qld	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No

698	Male		5	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	Unclear	2005	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Yes	No
699	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Male	0-5	1964	1977	QLd	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
700	Male	10+		Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	6-10	1991	1994	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	Unclear	No
701	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	11-15	Unclear	1998	VIC	No	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
702	Female		1	Unbaptised	Familial	Male	0-5	1984	2002	Qld	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
703	Male		2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	2000	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
704	Male		3	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	Unclear	1985	1999	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	1	1	0	No	No
705	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	1994	1996	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	2	Unclear	0	0	No	No
706	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	2002	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	2	Unclear	0	No	No
707	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	02/05/2004	QLD	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
708	Male	Unclear		Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	Unclear	No
709	Male		2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	01/1985	14/01/1985	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	1	0	0	No	No
710	Male		1	Not a JW member	Familial	Male	Unclear	1990	1997	NSW	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	1	No	No
711	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	6-10	1996	30/01/2006	QLD	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
712	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1986	NSW	Unclear	Yes	Yes	No	Unclear	1	0	0	No	No
713	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	1987	2000	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
714	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1994	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
715	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	2004	N/a	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	1	No	No
716	Male		3	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	01/01/95	01/01/01	NSW	Unclear	Unclear	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
717	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	2002	NSW	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
718	Male		2	Parishioner	Both	Female	11-15	Unclear	1990	NSW	No	Yes	No	Yes	0	0	0	0	No	No
719	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	Unclear	01/01/92	01/01/02	WA	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
720	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1980	1997	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	1	1	1	No	No
721	Male		2	Parishioner	Both	Female	11-15	Unclear	1995	TAS	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
722	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	01/1994	QLD	Unclear	No	Unclear	No	0	0	1	0	No	No
723	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1997	SA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
724	Male		2	Not a JW member	Familial	Unclear	Unclear	~1982	Unclear	NSW	Unclear	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
725	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	Unclear	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	Unclear	1	1	0	No	No
726	Male		2	Parishioner	Both	Female	15-18	09/2008	10/2008	QLD	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
727	Male		1	Ministerial Servant	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	2002	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unclear	0	0	0	No	No
728	Male		3	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1990	02/2014	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
729	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Male	6-10	Unclear	Unclear	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
730	Male		1	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	Unclear	Qld	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
731	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	0-5	1990	01/2005	NSW	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
732	Male		2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	0-5	01/03/1995	1995	QLD	Unclear	Yes	Yes	No	1	1	1	0	Yes	No
733	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Male	6-10	2006	~03/2009	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
734	Male		2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Both	6-10	1976	1993	VIC	No	Unclear	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Unclear	No
735	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	Unclear	1999	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
736	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	2001	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Yes	No
737	Male		3	Congregation Elder	Familial	Female	11-15	1992	2005	SA	No	Yes	No	Yes	0	1	1	0	No	No
738	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	1971	5/12/1992	NSW	No	Yes	Unclear	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
739	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	1998	12/10/2011	QLD	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
740	Male		1	Unbaptised	Familial	Male	11-15	Unclear	2/11/2011	Qld	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
741	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1993	2005	VIC	Unclear	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
742	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	15-18	02/2005	~04/2006	QLD	No	No	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
743	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1976	1981	NSW	Unclear	Yes	Yes	No	1	1	1	0	No	No
744	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	1995	2002	QLD	Unclear	No	Unclear	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
745	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1964	1995	QLD	No	No	Yes	No	Unclear	1	1	0	No	No
746	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	~01/2014	~02/2014	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
747	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	25/09/2007	QLD	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
748	Female		3	Parishioner	Familial	Both	Unclear	Unclear	1993	Qld	No	No	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
749	Male		5	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	Unclear	1972	Unclear	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	2	1	0	No	No
750	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1995	1995	QLD	No	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
751	Male		3	Parishioner	Familial	Both	0-5	Unclear	13/11/2002	Unclear	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
752	Male		2	Congregation Elder	Both	Male	0-5	Unclear	2008	QLD	Unclear	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
753	Male		1	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	11-15	1990	1996	VIC	No	Unclear	Yes	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
754	Male		2	Ministerial Servant	Non-Familial	Female	15-18	1986	1996	QLD	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	1	0	0	0	No	No
755	Male		2	Ministerial Servant	Familial	Female	6-10	1967	1982	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unclear	1	0	0	Unclear	No
756	Male		3	Parishioner	both	Female	11-15	Unclear	1993	QLD	No	No	Yes	No	0	2	2	0	Yes	No
757	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	1996	10/08/2006	NSW	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
758	Male	Unclear		Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	2003	NSW	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
759	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	QLD	Unclear	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
760	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1985	2002	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
761	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1999	~12/2008	QLD	No	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
762	Male		4	Parishioner	Both	Both	6-10	Unclear	~2002/2005	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	2	0	0	Unclear	No
763	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	1981	2007	QLD	No	No	Yes	No	Unclear	1	1	0	No	No
764	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	09/2006	~12/2006	QLD	No	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	Unclear	No
765	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1997	20/12/2012	QLD	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
766	Male		3	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	Unclear	1995	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	2	1	0	No	No
767	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Both	6-10	1974	21/02/2005	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
768	Male		2	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	16/10/2013	QLD	No	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	Unclear	No

769	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	1998	QLD	No	Unclear	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	Yes	No
770	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	2008	WA	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
771	Male		2	Unclear	Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	2001	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	1	1	1	No	No
772	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Male	0-5	Unclear	1999	QLD	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	Unclear	No
773	Male		1	parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	1980	2000	VIC	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
774	Male		3	Unbaptised	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	1992	1992	NSW	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
775	Male		3	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1986	12/2003	QLD	No	No	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
776	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	2000	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Unclear	No
777	Male		1	Parishioner	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	1972	WA	Unclear	Yes	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Yes	No
778	Male		3	Not JW member	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	1993	1993	VIC	No	No	Yes	No	0	2	1	0	Yes	No
779	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1994	Unclear	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
780	Male		8	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	11-15	1990	1994	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	1	Unclear	0	Yes	No
781	Male		2	Elder or MS	Familial	Female	Unclear	1964	2002	QLD	No	No	No	Unclear	0	0	0	1	No	No
782	Male		2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	0-5	1993	1997	VIC	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
783	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	11/2004	NSW	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
784	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	Unclear	2000	NSW	Unclear	Unclear	No	No	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Yes	No
785	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1996	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	Unclear	No
786	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1992	2002	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
787	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	1984	1987	SA	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
788	Male		2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Both	0-5	1988	1991	WA	No	Unclear	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	Yes	No
789	Male		1	Ministerial Servant	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	2000	2000	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	1	1	0	Yes	No
790	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	2006	2006	WA	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
791	Male		1	Ministerial Servant	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	2014	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	1	0	0	No	No
792	Male		3	Not a JW member	Both	Both	Unclear	Unclear	10/2004	QLD	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
793	Male		3	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	1954	1984	Unclear	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
794	Male		3	parishioner	Familial	Male	6-10	1995	2004	SA	No	No	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
795	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	15-18	02/2013	03/04/2013	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
796	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	1992	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	Yes	No
797	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1993	1999	Unclear	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
798	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	1979	1981	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	Unclear	1	0	0	No	No
799	Male		1	Congregation Elder	Familial	Female	0-5	Unclear	1996	QLD	Unclear	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
800	Male		4	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Both	6-10	1997	04/08/2005	QLD	No	No	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Unclear	No
801	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	6-10	1993	18/04/2005	QLD	Unclear	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
802	Male		1	Parishioner	Both	Female	11-15	01/01/93	01/01/02	WA	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
803	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	01/01/02	01/01/02	QLD	No	No	No	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
804	Male		3	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	0-5	Unclear	19/10/2008	VIC	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
805	Male		2	Parishioner	Both	Both	Unclear	1973	1973	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	Unclear	2	1	0	No	No
806	Male		1	Unbaptised	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	2006	2006	WA	No	No	Unclear	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
807	Male	10+		Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	Unclear	Unclear	1991	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	2	Unclear	0	Yes	No
808	Male		1	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	15-18	1961	1997	Qld	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
809	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	1991	VIC	Unclear	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
810	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	Unclear	1980	2/2/1980	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	1	0	0	Unclear	No
811	Male		2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	01/1983	1988	VIC	No	No	Unclear	Yes	0	1	0	0	Yes	No
812	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	1992	QLD	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
813	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1986	1990	WA	No	No	Yes	No	0	Unclear	Unclear	0	No	No
814	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	0-5	Unclear	1993	WA	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
815	Male	Unclear		Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear
816	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Male	0-5	Unclear	20/03/2010	VIC	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
817	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	Unclear	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
818	Male		3	Ministerial Servant	Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	23/07/1993	WA	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	1	1	0	No	No
819	Male		4	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	01/01/86	01/01/03	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
820	Male		1	Ministerial Servant	Familial	Female	11-15	1975	1975	NSW	No	Yes	Unclear	Yes	Unclear	Unclear	0	Unclear	No	No
821	Male		4	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	11-15	1980	2004	QLD	Yes	No	No	Yes	0	0	0	0	No	No
822	Female		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	1989	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
823	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	1989	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
824	Male	Unclear		Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1991	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
825	Male		7	Parishioner	Both	Both	0-5	1938	1963	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	No	Unclear	1	1	0	No	No
826	Male		2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	2000	20/08/2003	SA	No	Yes	Unclear	No	0	Unclear	Unclear	0	No	No
827	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1982	1991	SA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	2	2	0	No	No
828	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	1999	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	2	2	0	No	No
829	Male		3	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	03/12008	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	2	0	0	0	No	No
830	Male		1	Congregation Elder	Familial	Female	Unclear	1969	1999	NSW	No	Yes	Unclear	Yes	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	No	No
831	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	15-18	1985	2001	QLD	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
832	Male		1	Ministerial Servant	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	14/12/2002	2002	WA	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	2	1	0	No	No
833	Male		2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	11-15	01/01/01	01/01/02	NSW	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
834	Male		1	Ministerial Servant	Familial	Female	11-15	2005	2009	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	1	0	0	No	No
835	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	15-18	1985	2000	ACT	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
836	Male		4	Ministerial Servant	Non-Familial	Male	6-10	1986	1988	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	1	0	0	Yes	No
837	Male		3	Not JW member	Both	Female	6-10	Unclear	1999	WA	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unclear	0	0	0	No	No
838	Male		1	Ministerial Servant	Familial	Female	11-15	1987	07/06/1994	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	1	0	0	Yes	No
839	Male		4	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	11-15	2013	09/2013	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Yes	No
840	Male		3	Parishioner	Both	Female	0-5	1995	10/2005	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No

841	Male		1	Unclear	Familial	Female	11-15	1975	1995	SA	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
842	Male		8	Parishioner	Both	Female	6-10	1960	1995	N/a	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	2	1	0	Unclear	No
843	Male		2	Parishioner	Both	Female	11-15	20/04/2001	2002	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Yes	No
844	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	2002	2002	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Yes	No
845	Male		2	Ministerial Servant	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	2010	QLD	No	Unclear	Unclear	Yes	1	0	0	0	No	No
846	Male		3	Parishioner	Both	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1973	NSW	Yes	No	No	No	0	1	1	0	Unclear	No
847	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	01/2011	06/05/2011	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
848	Female		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	2006	17/08/2007	QLD	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
849	Male		2	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	0-5	2006	2007	QLD	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
850	Male		2	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	11-15	~1982	16/08/2005	VIC	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
851	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	2002	2009	WA	No	Unclear	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
852	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1987	2000	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
853	Male		5	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	1977	3/05/2001	SA	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	Unclear	No
854	Male																			
855	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	1999	24/07/2005	QLD	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
856	Male		2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	1991	2000	NSW	No	No	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
857	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	1983	1983	Nsw	No	Unclear	Unclear	No	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	No	No
858	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Both	15-18	Unclear	1996	VIC	No	No	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Unclear	No
859	Male		1	Ministerial Servant	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1990	WA	No	Unclear	Yes	Yes	1	0	0	0	No	No
860	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	2007	10/2012	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	2	1	0	No	No
861	Male		5	Parishioner	Familial	Both	6-10	1989	1992	N/a	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
862	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	07/09/2006	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
863	Male		1	Parishioner	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	2012	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Yes	No
864	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1995	02/07/2007	VIC	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
865	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1970	16/02/2000	QLD	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
866	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1983	NSW	No	Unclear	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
867	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	Unclear	1994	VIC	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
868	Male		3	Congregation Elder	Non-Familial	Male	Unclear	01/01/90	01/01/02	VIC	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
869	Male		1	Unbaptised	Non-Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	22/12/2014	QLD	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	Unclear	No
870	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Both	6-10	1982	19/03/2004	Qld	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
871	Male		3	Parishioner	Both	Female	11-15	1987	1994	VIC	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
872	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	12/2008	03/2011	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
873	Male		2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	01/01/01	01/01/02	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	Yes	No
874	Male	Unclear		Parishioner	Non-Familial	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	03/2013	SA	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	No	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	0	No	No
875	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	2004	11/12/2012	WA	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
876	Male		3	Parishioner	Both	Female	11-15	1982	1982	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	2	1	0	No	No
877	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	1982	2002	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	2	2	0	No	No
878	Male		1	Pioneer	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	2011	11/11/2011	VIC	Unclear	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Yes	No
879	Male		2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	09/2007	01/2008	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	1	1	0	Yes	No
880	Male		1	Unbaptised	Non-Familial	Female	0-5	12/08/2004	02/2005	NSW	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
881	Male		2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	06/2003	01/2004	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	Unclear	Unclear	No	No
882	Male		2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	1997	1997	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	1	1	0	Yes	No
883	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	18/01/2012	QLD	Unclear	No	No	No	0	0	1	0	No	No
884	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	11-15	2002	08/2004	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
885	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1980	1986	NSW	No	No	Yes	No	Unclear	1	1	0	Unclear	No
886	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1992	NSW	No	Unclear	Yes	No	0	0	0	1	No	No
887	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	04/2014	WA	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
888	Male		1	Unbaptised	Familial	Male	0-5	1974	18/10/2013	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
889	Male		1	Congregation Elder	Non-Familial	Male	Unclear	1999	1999	QLD	Unclear	No	No	Yes	0	0	0	0	No	No
890	Male		2	Parishioner	Both	Female	11-15	Unclear	1998	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
891	Male		2	Unbaptised	Both	Both	0-5	2003	2012	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	1	0	0	No	No
892	Male	Unclear		Parishioner	Non-Familial	Unclear	Unclear	2002	02/2005	SA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	Yes	No
893	Male		1	Unbaptised	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	01/01/1960	01/10/07	QLD	No	Unclear	Yes	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
894	Male		3	Parishioner	Familial	Both	Unclear	Unclear	2002	QLD	No	Yes	No	No	0	1	0	0	Unclear	No
895	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Both	Unclear	Unclear	2002	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	1	1	0	Yes	No
896	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	1984	SA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
897	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	Unclear	2007	2007	WA	No	Yes	Yes	Unclear	0	2	2	0	No	No
898	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1993	02/2005	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
899	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1999	2000	TAS	No	No	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
900	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	QLD	No	Yes	Unclear	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
901	Male		8	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	01/01/87	01/01/87	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	2	2	0	Yes	No
902	Male		2	Parishioner	Both	Both	11-15	1992	02/1993	QLD	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
903	Male		2	Unbaptised	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	2007	30/12/2008	NSW	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
904	Male		4	Not a JW member	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	1992	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Yes	No
905	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	2003	2003	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
906	Male		2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	1982	04/10/2004	VIC	Unclear	No	Unclear	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
907	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1978	1978	WA	No	Unclear	No	No	1	1	0	0	Unclear	No
908	Male		1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	2011	04/2012	SA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
909	Male		2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	08/2004	QLD	Yes	No	Yes	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
910	Male		1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1975	1995	Qld	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
911	Male		2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	11-15	1999	1999	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Unclear	No

912	Male	3	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	1985	QLD	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Unclear	1	1	0	No	No
913	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1994	01/04/2013	NSW	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
914	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	2000	23/03/2013	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
915	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	2003	VIC	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
916	Male	3	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Both	6-10	1981	1986	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	Yes	No
917	Female	1	Parishioner	Familial	Male	15-18	1986	07/07/2006	VIC	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
918	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	Unclear	QLD	Unclear	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
919	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	01/01/02	01/01/02	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
920	Male	2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Both	Unclear	Unclear	09/2012	QLD	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
921	Male	1	Unbaptised	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	01/01/00	WA	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
922	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	SA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	2	2	0	No	No
923	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	1988	2002	SA	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
924	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	2002	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
925	Male	5	Ministerial Servant	Familial	Female	11-15	1960	1985	NSW	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	2	1	1	0	Yes	No
926	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Both	6-10	1992	1997	N/a	No	Unclear	Yes	Yes	1	0	0	1	No	No
927	Male	1	Unclear	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1986	NT	Unclear	Unclear	Yes	Yes	0	0	0	0	No	No
928	Male	3	Congregation Elder	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	2003	NSW	No	No	Yes	Yes	0	2	1	0	No	No
929	Male	Unclear	Parishioner	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	11/1996	VIC	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
930	Male	2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	1986	28/02/1992	QLD	No	No	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Unclear	No
931	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	01/2007	01/2007	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
932	Male	3	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	Unclear	2007	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	2	1	1	0	No	No
933	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	Unclear	01/01/94	01/01/94	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
934	Male	Unclear	Congregation Elder	Non-Familial	Unclear	Unclear	29/11/2009	03/04/2010	VIC	No	Yes	Unclear	Yes	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
935	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	07/2010	NSW	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
936	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	1969	2003	QLD	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
937	Male	2	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	6-10	1996	Unclear	WA	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
938	Male	7	Congregation Elder	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	1984	1995	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	1	1	1	No	No
939	Male	3	Ministerial Servant	Familial	Female	0-5	1998	2005	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	1	0	0	Yes	No
940	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	Unclear	2000	WA	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
941	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	10/1977	SA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	Unclear	No
942	Male	2	Congregation Elder	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	1982	05/11/2005	WA	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
943	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1987	1989	Qld	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	Unclear	No
944	Male	1	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	2007	QLD	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
945	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1984	2000	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	Yes	No
946	Male	6	Not a JW member	Both	Female	6-10	1960	03/2004	QLD	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
947	Male	1	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	11-15	1998	30/11/2011	NSW	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
948	Male	1	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	6-10	1981	08/2003	VIC	No	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
949	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1982	08/2003	VIC	No	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
950	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	1987	1987	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	Unclear	0	Yes	No
951	Male	3	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	2002	07/2007	QLD	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
952	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1989	SA	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	Unclear	No
953	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	15-18	Unclear	08/2013	QLD	No	No	Yes	No	1	1	0	0	Unclear	No
954	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	2004	06/07/2004	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
955	Male	2	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	6-10	1983	2012	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unclear	0	0	0	No	No
956	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	0-5	1982	2000	SA	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
957	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	2002	WA	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	Yes	No
958	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1990	VIC	No	Yes	Yes	No	Unclear	0	0	0	Yes	No
959	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	0-5	1999	1999	NSW	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
960	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	01/2011	WA	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	Unclear
961	Male	2	Unbaptised	Familial	Both	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	VIC	No	Unclear	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
962	Male	2	Parishioner	Both	Female	6-10	Unclear	6/07/2001	TAS	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
963	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1998	2003	WA	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
964	Male	1	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1998	WA	No	Unclear	Yes	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
965	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	2006	WA	No	No	Yes	No	1	1	1	0	No	No
966	Male	4	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	Unclear	01/01/93	01/01/03	QLD	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
967	Male	2	parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	2000	Unclear	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	Unclear	No
968	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	Unclear	QLD	No	Unclear	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	Yes	No
969	Male	10+	Ministerial Servant	Non-Familial	Male	6-10	1988	1988	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unclear	2	1	0	No	No
970	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	11-15	Unclear	2001	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	1	1	0	Yes	No
971	Male	1	Ministerial Servant	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	1997	2003	VIC	No	Unclear	Yes	Yes	1	0	0	0	No	No
972	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	1990	Unclear	QLD	No	No	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
973	Male	4	Parishioner	Familial	Both	6-10	Unclear	30/05/2004	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
974	Male	1	Ministerial Servant	Non-Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1981	Qld	No	Unclear	No	Yes	0	0	0	0	No	No
975	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Male	0-5	1989	24/01/2002	NSW	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
976	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1970	2008	N/a	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	1	No	No
977	Male	2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Both	6-10	1984	16/12/1987	NT	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Unclear	No
978	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Male	6-10	Unclear	2003	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
979	Male	2	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	1975	1998	NSW	No	Unclear	Yes	No	0	0	0	0	Yes	No
980	Male	3	Parishioner	Familial	Female	6-10	Unclear	26/01/2008	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
981	Male	3	Ministerial Servant	Familial	Both	Unclear	Unclear	18/08/1992	QLD	Unclear	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
982	Male	2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	0-5	1956	1996	WA	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	2	2	0	No	No

983	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	Unclear	1979	1999	WA	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
984	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	2001	Unclear	SA	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	0	0	0	No	No
985	Male	1	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	11-15	2003	27/09/2007	NSW	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
986	Male	2	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Both	11-15	Unclear	Unclear	SA	No	No	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
987	Male	1	Congregation Elder	Familial	Female	15-18	Unclear	1996	TAS	Yes	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
988	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	1986	Vic	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Unclear	No
989	Male	4	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	0-5	1980	1990	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	1	1	1	0	No	No
990	Male	3	Parishioner	Both	Female	15-18	Unclear	1984	QLD	No	Unclear	Yes	No	1	2	2	0	Unclear	No
991	Male	1	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	11/02/2005	Unclear	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
992	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	0-5	Unclear	2005	VIC	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
993	Male	1	Congregation Elder	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	2000	NSW	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	1	0	0	Unclear	No
994	Male	2	Congregation Elder	Familial	Female	0-5	1967	2002	WA	No	Yes	Unclear	Yes	1	0	0	0	No	No
995	Male	1	Unbaptised	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	2008	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	1	0	No	No
996	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	15-18	Unclear	12/2006	NSW	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
997	Male	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear
998	Male	1	Not JW member	Familial	Female	11-15	Unclear	2001	NSW	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
999	Male	2	Not JW member	Non-Familial	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	1994	VIC	No	No	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
1000	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	2000	NSW	No	Unclear	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	Yes	No
1001	Male	1	Not a JW member	Familial	Female	0-5	1999	10/2006	VIC	No	Yes	No	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
1002	Male	3	Parishioner	Familial	Both	6-10	1978	2008	WA	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	0	0	0	No	No
1003	Male	1	Parishioner	Non-Familial	Female	11-15	06/2011	08/2011	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	No	0	1	0	0	No	No
1004	Male	1	Ministerial Servant	Non-Familial	Female	6-10	06/01/2015	27/01/2015	QLD	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0	1	0	0	Unclear	No
1005	Male	Unclear	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	Unclear	1993	QLD	No	Unclear	Yes	No	0	1	Unclear	0	No	No
1006	Male	1	Parishioner	Familial	Female	Unclear	1979	1999	NSW	No	No	Yes	No	0	0	0	0	No	No
		1730																	

WATCHTOWER
BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

PO BOX 280, INGLEBURN, NSW 1890 AUSTRALIA ABN 42 002 861 225 PHONE: (02) 9829 5600 FAX: (02) 9829 3616

17 June 2015

Mr Tony Giugni
Office of the Solicitor Assisting
Royal Commission into Institutional
Responses to Child Sexual Abuse
Level 17, Governor Macquarie Tower
1 Farrer Place
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Mr Giugni

Compliance with Summons No. S-NSW-461 & Summons No. S-NSW-462

We refer to the above matter and now provide you with the following information.

Summons No. S-NSW-461

We confirm that no claim for compensation has ever been made against Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia ("**the Society**") in relation to child sexual abuse. Moreover, the Society 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.

Summons No. S-NSW-462

In complying with Summons No.S-NSW-391, every effort was made to locate the documents sought. On receipt of Summons No.S-NSW-462 and in preparation for the forthcoming public hearing, we conducted a further extensive search and have located a few additional documents, which we are now providing.

Once again, we make application for a non-publication order under sub-section 6D(3)(b)(i) of the *Royal Commissions Act 1902* (Cth) in relation to the documents provided.

Please do not hesitate to let us know if you have any further questions.

Yours faithfully,
WATCHTOWER BIBLE AND TRACT
SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

T. J. O'Brien
Director

From: Milton G. Bray <milton.bray@mbassociates.com.au>
Sent: Thursday, 16 July 2015 3:14 PM
To: Joanna Blair; James Pender
Subject: Royal Commission Case Study 29 Reply to Letter 14 July 2015

Dear Ms Blair and Mr Pender

Complete copy of Document WAT.0006.001.0026_R

Please find attached a copy of the letter dated April 23, 1990, which is now a complete copy of document **WAT.0006.001.0026_R**. The original page was foolscap size and my client did not detect this during the initial scan of the document. My client apologises for the oversight.

Membership Numbers

Further to your request in a letter dated 14 July 2015 concerning membership numbers of Jehovah's Witnesses in Australia for specified years, my client has now provided the following statistics:

Jehovah's Witnesses Membership Statistics			
Year	Active Members Australia	Census Australia	Active Members Worldwide
1990	53,142		4,017,213
1995	61,106		5,199,895
1996	61,580	83,414	5,413,769
2000	60,947		6,035,564
2001	59,963	81,069	6,117,666
2005	61,444		6,613,829
2006	62,435	80,914	6,741,444
2010	65,214		7,508,050
2011	66,107	85,638	7,659,019
2014	68,635		8,201,545

Also, you have asked my client for the contact details for a number of individuals. My client is in the process of attending to this matter and will let you know as the contact details come to hand.

Electronic Access

Thank you for providing electronic access to the material which has already been uploaded for Case Study 29. There are three issues, however, that are set out as follows:

1. Now referring to the Tender Bundle that you have provided – it includes a redacted letter from BCG (with a previous RingTail ID of WAT.0001.002.0122). The reference to that redacted letter apparently appears in the Tender Bundle Index as QLD.0068.001.1410_R, however, it does not have a RingTail ID on the actual document. Please provide the document with an updated RingTail ID on it.

2. I note also that the correspondence (including emails and letters) between the Commission, my client and myself, has not yet been uploaded with RingTail identifiers. Could you please provide us with access to those documents online and all other documents relevant for the Case Study 29 Public Hearing?

3. The Statements provided in the Tender Bundle for Messrs O'Brien, Spinks and Toole do not contain their Annexures. Could you please let me know if you intend to attach the Annexures in the Tender Bundle that are available electronically?

Thank you for your assistance with these matters.

Kind regards

Milton Bray, Solicitor



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Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

16 July 2015

Mr Milton Bray
Milton Bray & Associates
PO Box 3215
Putney NSW 2112

By email: milton.bray@mbassociates.com.au

Dear Mr Bray

Royal Commission Case Study 29

1. We refer to the forthcoming public hearing of Case Study 29, and to documents produced by your client pursuant to summonses S-NSW-391 and S-NSW-462 issued by the Royal Commission on 4 February 2015 and 28 February 2015 respectively. Those documents include, amongst other things, some 1000 files relating to complaints or allegations of child sexual abuse against members of the Jehovah's Witnesses Church in Australia (**Case Files**).

2. We have conducted an analysis of the information contained in the Case Files and have prepared a summary of the outcomes recorded as a result of that analysis (**Analysis Summary**). The Analysis Summary is annexed at Attachment A.

3. Counsel Assisting proposes to put some of the figures recorded in the Analysis Summary to witnesses from your client during the public hearing. We ask that your client consider the enclosed Analysis Summary and advise us of any respect in which the Analysis Summary is inaccurate or incomplete by **5pm** on Monday **20 July 2015**.

4. In order to assist your client in its consideration of the Analysis Summary, we will separately provide you with an electronic spreadsheet recording the data we have extracted from the Case Files. The Analysis Summary is based on that data.

5. Please do not hesitate to contact either me or Joanna Blair on 02 8284 2448 if you would like to discuss any aspect of this matter.

Yours sincerely

Tony Giugni
Solicitor Assisting the Royal Commission
Telephone: 02 8284 2431
Email: tony.giugni@childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au

Attachment A

SUMMARY OF WATCHTOWER AUSTRALIA CASE FILE ANALYSIS

In response to summons S-NSW-391 issued by the Royal Commission on 4 February 2015, the Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia Ltd (**Watchtower Australia**) produced documents that include case files held by Watchtower Australia which relate to complaints or allegations of child sexual abuse against members of the Jehovah's Witnesses Church in Australia (**Case Files**).

The Royal Commission's analysis of documents contained in the Case Files has produced the following outcomes:[1]

Total number of alleged perpetrators

1. Since 1950, Watchtower Australia has recorded in Case Files allegations, reports or complaints of child sexual abuse against 1006 members of the Jehovah's Witnesses Church in Australia (the **alleged perpetrators**).

State/Territory total number of alleged perpetrators

2. By reference to State or Territory of first report or allegation, the Case Files record the following numbers of allegations of child sexual abuse:
   i) Australian Capital Territory – 10 Case Files.
   ii) New South Wales – 270 Case Files.
   iii) Northern Territory – 10 Case Files.
   iv) Queensland – 306 Case Files.
   v) South Australia – 69 Case Files.
   vi) Tasmania – 24 Case Files.
   vii) Victoria – 141 Case Files.
   viii) Western Australia – 137 Case Files.
   ix) Unclear – 39 Case Files.

Familial vs Non-Familial

3. 326 of the Case Files record allegations of non-familial child sexual abuse.
4. 564 of the Case Files record allegations of familial child sexual abuse.
5. 89 of the Case Files record allegations of both non-familial and familial child sexual abuse.

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1 In conducting the analysis of Case Files produced by Watchtower Australia, the Royal Commission has only recorded data where it is positively evidenced by material within a Case File. Where material within a Case File did not provide evidence of the data sought by the Royal Commission, it has been recorded as "unclear", and has not been included in the above analysis.

Role of alleged perpetrator in the Church

6. 135 alleged perpetrators were elders or ministerial servants at the time of the first alleged incident of abuse.
7. 87 alleged perpetrators were not members of the Jehovah's Witnesses Church at the time of the first alleged incident of abuse.

Age of alleged victims

8. 712 alleged perpetrators were the subject of allegations of child sexual abuse of victims under the age of 15.
9. 421 alleged perpetrators were the subject of allegations of child sexual abuse of victims under the age of 10.
10. 170 alleged perpetrators were the subject of allegations of child sexual abuse of victims under the age of 5.

Sex of victim

11. 754 alleged perpetrators were the subject of allegations of child sexual abuse in relation to a female victim.
12. 122 alleged perpetrators were the subject of allegations of child sexual abuse in relation to a male victim.
13. 86 alleged perpetrators were the subject of allegations of child sexual abuse in relation to both female and male victims.

Number of victims

14. 456 alleged perpetrators were the subject of allegations of child sexual abuse in relation to two or more victims.
15. 90 alleged perpetrators were the subject of allegations of child sexual abuse in relation to five or more victims.

Operation of Two-Witness Rule and Confessions

16. Application of the two-witness rule prevented 125 allegations of child sexual abuse from proceeding to a judicial committee.
17. 579 alleged perpetrators confessed to having committed child sexual abuse.

Progress of matter to judicial committee

18. 563 alleged perpetrators were the subject of a judicial committee hearing by congregational elders.

Reproval

19. 190 alleged perpetrators were reproved in relation to an allegation of child sexual abuse.
20. 11 alleged perpetrators were reproved on more than one occasion in relation to allegations of child sexual abuse.

Disfellowshipping

21. 401 alleged perpetrators were disfellowshipped in relation to an allegation of child sexual abuse.
22. 78 alleged perpetrators were disfellowshipped on more than one occasion in relation to allegations of child sexual abuse.

Reinstatement

23. Of 401 alleged perpetrators disfellowshipped in relation to an allegation of child sexual abuse (see [21] above), 230 were later reinstated.
24. 35 alleged perpetrators who were disfellowshipped on more than one occasion in relation to allegations of child sexual abuse were reinstated on more than one occasion.

Appointment as Elder or Ministerial Servant

25. 29 alleged perpetrators were appointed as an elder or ministerial servant after having been the subject of an allegation of child sexual abuse.

Deletion as Elder or Ministerial Servant

26. 128 alleged perpetrators were deleted as an elder or ministerial servant as a result of an allegation of child sexual abuse.
27. Of 128 alleged perpetrators deleted as an elder or ministerial servant as a result of an allegation of child sexual abuse (see [26] above), 17 were later reappointed as an elder or ministerial servant.

Convictions

28. 161 alleged perpetrators have been convicted of a child sexual abuse offence.

Reporting to secular authorities by the Church and/or Watchtower Australia

29. We identified no record in the Case Files of the JW Church or Watchtower Australia having reported any allegation of child sexual abuse in relation to any of the 1006 alleged perpetrators to the police or other secular authority.

Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

29 July 2015

Mr Milton Bray
Milton Bray & Associates
PO Box 3215
Putney NSW 2112

By email: milton.bray@mbassociates.com.au

Dear Mr Bray

Royal Commission Case Study 29 – Verification of the Analysis Summary

1. We refer to your letter dated 20 July 2015 setting out your client's response to our letter dated 16 July 2015, which enclosed a summary of our analysis of the case files provided by your client to the Royal Commission (**Analysis Summary**). The Analysis Summary was prepared on the basis of data collated into a case file analysis spreadsheet.

2. In your letter, your client asserts that various matters in the Analysis Summary are based on inaccurate data contained in the case file analysis spreadsheet.

3. We have reviewed the relevant data identified as inaccurate by your client and address below your client's proposed corrections identified in the following tables:
   - Table 1 – Role of alleged perpetrator in the Church
   - Table 5 – Appointment as Elder or Ministerial Servant
   - Table 7 – Deletion as Elder or Ministerial Servant

Table 1: Role of alleged perpetrator at time of first abuse

4. At Table 1, your client identifies a number of alleged perpetrators whose role in the congregation at the time of the first alleged incident of abuse is incorrectly reflected in the case file analysis spreadsheet. We have conducted a review of the case files relating to the individuals identified in Table 1 and the results of our review are set out below. In the majority of cases, the Royal Commission has accepted your client's identification of the alleged perpetrator's role.

NO.	ROLE AT TIME OF FIRST ABUSE		
	ANALYSIS SUMMARY 16/07/2015	WATCHTOWER REVIEW 20/07/2015	RC REVIEW 27/07/2015
7	Congregation Elder	Parishioner	Parishioner
82	Ministerial Servant	Pioneer	Pioneer

91	Ministerial Servant	Parishioner	Parishioner
115	Elder or MS	Ministerial Servant	Ministerial Servant
121	Elder or MS	Unclear	Unclear
141	Elder or MS	Parishioner	Elder
177	Elder or MS	Elder	Elder
197	Elder or MS	Elder	Elder
206	Ministerial Servant	Parishioner	Ministerial Servant
208	Congregation Elder	Parishioner	Unclear
216	Ministerial Servant	Not a JW Member	Not a JW Member
222	Elder or MS	Unclear	Unclear
232	Ministerial Servant	Not a JW Member	Not a JW Member
312	Ministerial Servant	Unclear	Unclear
345	Elder or MS	Parishioner	Parishioner
378	Ministerial Servant	Parishioner	Unclear
415	Ministerial Servant	Parishioner	Unclear
430	Elder or MS	Ministerial Servant	Ministerial Servant
452	Ministerial Servant	Unclear	Unclear
464	Elder or MS	Parishioner	Parishioner
467	Elder or MS	Elder	Elder
468	Ministerial Servant	Not a JW member	Ministerial Servant
486	Ministerial Servant	Not a JW member	Not a JW member
540	Ministerial Servant	Parishioner	Parishioner
608	Ministerial Servant	Unbaptised	Unbaptised
615	Congregation Elder	Parishioner	Unclear
653	Ministerial Servant	Parishioner	Parishioner
669	Congregation Elder	Unclear	Unclear
688	Elder or MS	Parishioner	Unclear
694	Elder or MS	Parishioner	Unclear

771	Congregation Elder	Unclear	Unclear
799	Elder or MS	Elder	Elder
821	Ministerial Servant	Parishioner	Parishioner
867	Congregation Elder	Parishioner	Parishioner
868	Elder or MS	Elder	Elder
877	Elder or MS	Parishioner	Parishioner
927	Ministerial Servant	Unclear	Unclear
929	Ministerial Servant	Parishioner	Parishioner
974	Elder or MS	Ministerial Servant	Ministerial Servant

Table 5: Appoint as Elder or Ministerial Servant following an allegation of child sexual abuse

5. At Table 5, your client identifies two alleged perpetrators whom it considers are incorrectly classified in the case file analysis spreadsheet as having been appointed to positions of responsibility following an allegation of child sexual abuse. We have conducted a review of the case files relating to these individuals and the results of our review are as follows:

NO	WATCHTOWER REVIEW 20/07/2015	RC REVIEW 27/07/2015
528	Never served as elder or ministerial servant in Australia	Disagree – based on the documents provided, the complaint relates to REDACTED REDACTED
854	Never served as elder or ministerial servant in Australia	Agree - Initial eldership, deletion and reappointment occurred in REDACTED

Table 7: Deletion and reappointment as Elder or Ministerial Servant

6. At Table 7, your client identified one alleged perpetrator who was incorrectly classified as being reappointed as an elder or ministerial servant following deletion for child sexual abuse. We have reviewed the case file relating to this individual and set out the results of our review below:

NO	WATCHTOWER REVIEW 20/07/2015	RC REVIEW 27/07/2015
854	Never served as elder or ministerial servant in Australia	Agree - Initial eldership, deletion and reappointment occurred in REDACTED

7. To the extent that we agree with the inaccuracies claimed by your client (as set out in the above tables), we have incorporated your client's proposed corrections into a revised Analysis Summary

which is annexed at **Attachment A**. Where we do not agree with inaccuracies claimed by your client, we have reflected what your client says is the correct figure. Further, we have removed some of the figures from the original Attachment A so that there is a smaller set of final figures to deal with.

8. The figures cited in senior counsel assisting's opening submissions were drawn from Attachment A in its present form, i.e. after having been corrected in the light of the points raised by you in your letter.

9. It is senior counsel assisting's intention to tender this letter and the correspondence that preceded it (being our letter of 16 July 2015 and your reply of 20 July 2015), duly redacted as appropriate, and to rely on the figures as set out in Attachment A.

10. Please do not hesitate to contact either me or Joanna Blair on 02 8284 2448 if you would like to discuss any aspect of this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Tony Giugni
Solicitor Assisting
Telephone: 02 8284 2431
Email: tony.giugni@childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au

ATTACHMENT A

SUMMARY OF WATCHTOWER AUSTRALIA CASE FILE ANALYSIS

In response to summons S-NSW-391 issued by the Royal Commission on 4 February 2015, the Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia Ltd (**Watchtower Australia**) produced documents that include case files held by Watchtower Australia which relate to complaints or allegations of child sexual abuse against members of the Jehovah's Witnesses Church in Australia (**Case Files**).

The Royal Commission's analysis of documents contained in the Case Files has produced the following outcomes:[1]

Total number of alleged perpetrators

1. Since 1950, Watchtower Australia has recorded in Case Files allegations, reports or complaints of child sexual abuse against 1006 members of the Jehovah's Witnesses Church in Australia (the **alleged perpetrators**).

State/Territory total number of alleged perpetrators

2. By reference to State or Territory of first report or allegation, the Case Files record the following numbers of allegations of child sexual abuse:
   i) Australian Capital Territory – 10 Case Files.
   ii) New South Wales – 270 Case Files.
   iii) Northern Territory – 10 Case Files.
   iv) Queensland – 306 Case Files.
   v) South Australia – 69 Case Files.
   vi) Tasmania – 24 Case Files.
   vii) Victoria – 140 Case Files.
   viii) Western Australia – 137 Case Files.
   ix) Unclear – 39 Case Files.

Familial vs Non-Familial

3. 325 of the Case Files record allegations of non-familial child sexual abuse.
4. 564 of the Case Files record allegations of familial child sexual abuse.
5. 89 of the Case Files record allegations of both non-familial and familial child sexual abuse.

---

1 In conducting the analysis of Case Files produced by Watchtower Australia, the Royal Commission has only recorded data where it is positively evidenced by material within a Case File. Where material within a Case File did not provide evidence of the data sought by the Royal Commission, it has been recorded as "unclear", and has not been included in the above analysis.

Role of alleged perpetrator in the Church

6. 108 alleged perpetrators were elders or ministerial servants at the time of the first alleged incident of abuse. [WTA says 104.]

Operation of Two-Witness Rule and Confessions

7. Application of the two-witness rule prevented 125 allegations of child sexual abuse from proceeding to a judicial committee.
8. 579 alleged perpetrators confessed to having committed child sexual abuse.

Progress of matter to judicial committee

9. 563 alleged perpetrators were the subject of a judicial committee hearing by congregational elders.

Reproval

10. 190 alleged perpetrators were reproved in relation to an allegation of child sexual abuse.
11. 11 alleged perpetrators were reproved on more than one occasion in relation to allegations of child sexual abuse.

Disfellowshipping

12. 401 alleged perpetrators were disfellowshipped in relation to an allegation of child sexual abuse.
13. 78 alleged perpetrators were disfellowshipped on more than one occasion in relation to allegations of child sexual abuse.

Reinstatement

14. Of 401 alleged perpetrators disfellowshipped in relation to an allegation of child sexual abuse (see [12] above), 230 were later reinstated.
15. 35 alleged perpetrators who were disfellowshipped on more than one occasion in relation to allegations of child sexual abuse were reinstated on more than one occasion.

Appointment as Elder or Ministerial Servant

16. 28 alleged perpetrators were appointed as an elder or ministerial servant after having been the subject of an allegation of child sexual abuse.

Deletion as Elder or Ministerial Servant

17. 127 alleged perpetrators were deleted as an elder or ministerial servant as a result of an allegation of child sexual abuse.
18. Of 127 alleged perpetrators deleted as an elder or ministerial servant as a result of an allegation of child sexual abuse (see [17] above), 16 were later reappointed as an elder or ministerial servant.

Convictions

19. 161 alleged perpetrators have been convicted of a child sexual abuse offence.

Reporting to secular authorities by the Church and/or Watchtower Australia

20. We identified no record in the Case Files of the JW Church or Watchtower Australia having reported any allegation of child sexual abuse in relation to any of the 1006 alleged perpetrators to the police or other secular authority.

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Convictions

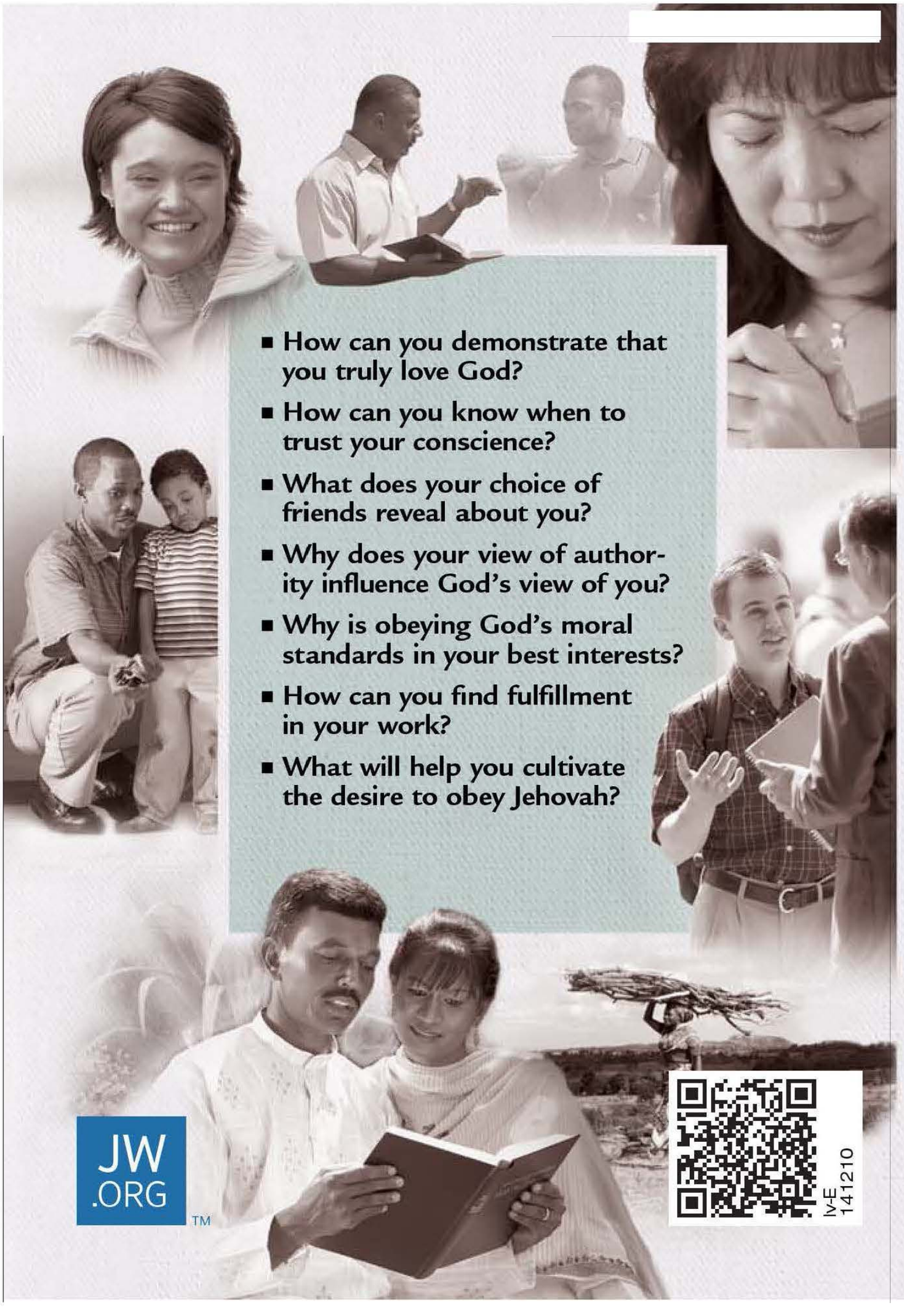
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"KEEP YOURSELVES IN GOD'S LOVE"


GOD'S LOVE
How can you demonstrate that you truly love God?
How can you know when to trust your conscience?
What does your choice of friends reveal about you?
Why does your view of authority influence God's view of you?
Why is obeying God's moral standards in your best interests?
How can you find fulfillment in your work?
What will help you cultivate the desire to obey Jehovah?
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"KEEP YOURSELVES IN GOD'S LOVE"

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"Keep Yourselves in God's Love"
English (*lv*-E)

Made in the United States of America

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Dear Lover of Jehovah:

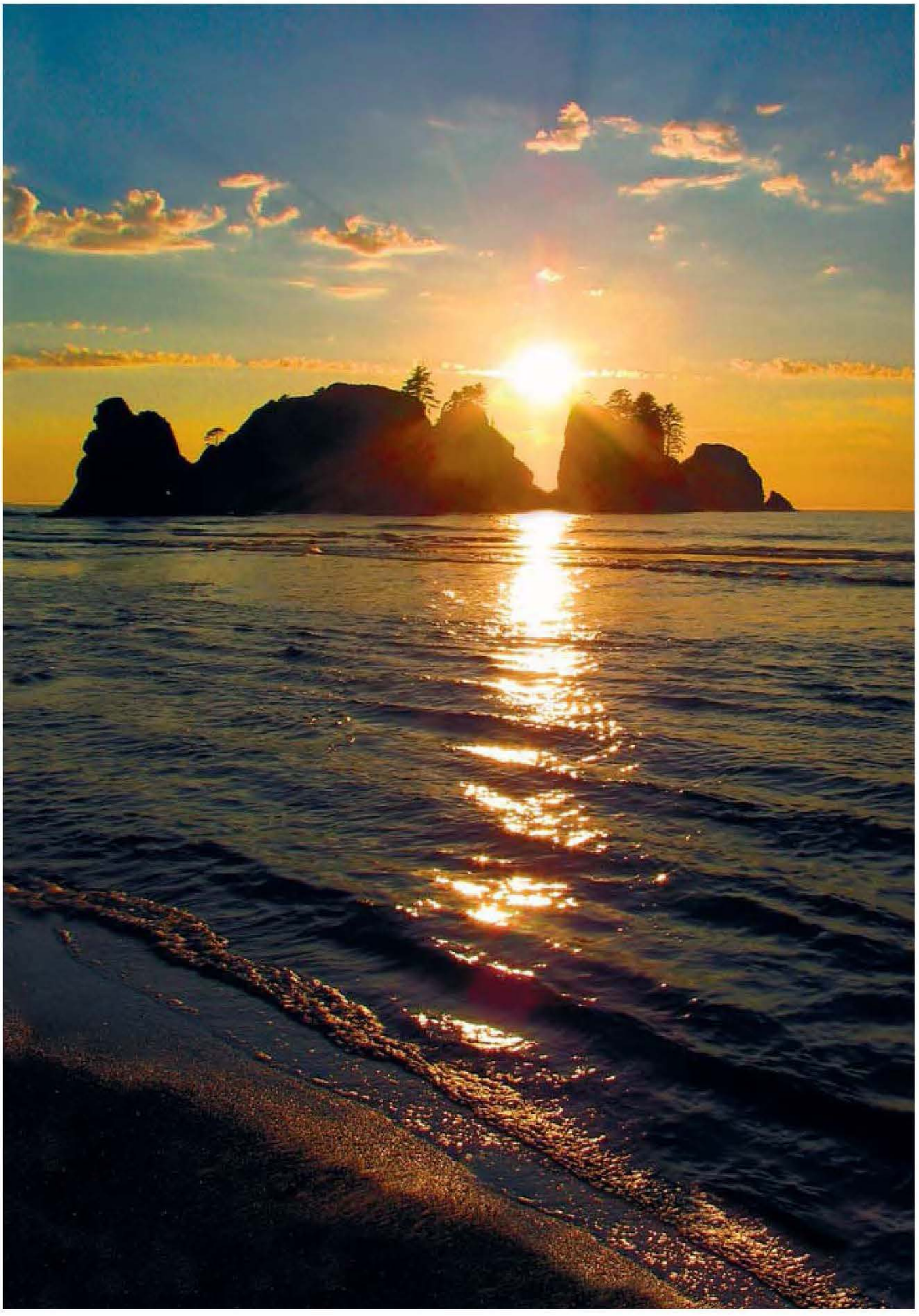
"You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free," said Jesus. (John 8:32) How encouraging those words are! Yes, it is possible to know the truth, even in these critical "last days" when falsehood abounds. (2 Timothy 3:1) Do you remember when you first recognized the truth as explained in God's Word? What a thrilling experience that was!

However, as important as it is to have an accurate knowledge of the truth and to have a regular share in telling others about it, we must also conduct ourselves in harmony with the truth. To do that, we need to keep ourselves in God's love. What does this involve? Jesus' words on the night before his death answer this question. He told his faithful apostles: "If you observe my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have observed the commandments of the Father and remain in his love."—John 15:10.

Notice that Jesus remained in God's love by observing his Father's commandments. The same is true of us today. To remain in God's love, we need to apply the truth in everyday life. That same evening, Jesus said: "If you know these things, happy you are if you do them." —John 13:17.

It is our sincere hope that this publication will help you to continue to apply the truth in your life and thus keep yourself "in God's love . . . with everlasting life in view."—Jude 21.

Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses



CHAPTER 5

How to Keep Separate From the World

"You are no part of the world."
—JOHN 15:19.

DURING his final night on earth as a human, Jesus expressed deep concern for the future welfare of his followers. He even prayed about the matter, saying to his Father: "I do not request that you take them out of the world, but that you watch over them because of the wicked one. They are no part of the world, just as I am no part of the world." (John 17:15, 16) In this heartfelt request, Jesus showed both his deep love for his followers and the importance of his words stated earlier that night to some of them: "You are no part of the world." (John 15:19) Clearly, it was of great importance to Jesus that his followers keep separate from the world!

2 "The world" Jesus mentioned refers to all of mankind who are alienated from God, ruled by Satan, and enslaved to the selfish, prideful spirit that emanates from him. (John 14:30; Ephesians 2:2; 1 John 5:19) Indeed, "friendship with [that] world is enmity with God." (James 4:4) How, though, can all who want to remain in God's love be in the world yet be separate from it? We will consider five ways: by remaining loyal to God's Kingdom under Christ and neutral in worldly politics, by resisting the spirit of the world, by being modest in our

---

1. What did Jesus emphasize during his final night on earth as a human?
2. What is "the world" to which Jesus referred?

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dress and grooming, by keeping our life simple, and by putting on our spiritual suit of armor.

REMAINING LOYAL AND NEUTRAL

3 Instead of participating in the politics of his day, Jesus focused on preaching about God's Kingdom, the future heavenly government of which he was the prospective King. (Daniel 7:13, 14; Luke 4:43; 17:20, 21) Thus, when before Roman Governor Pontius Pilate, Jesus could say: "My Kingdom is no part of this world." (John 18:36) His faithful followers imitate his example by giving their loyalty to Christ and his Kingdom and by announcing that Kingdom to the world. (Matthew 24:14) "We are ambassadors substituting for Christ," wrote the apostle Paul. "As substitutes for Christ, we beg: 'Become reconciled to God.' "*—2 Corinthians 5:20.

4 Because ambassadors represent a foreign sovereign or state, they do not interfere in the internal affairs of the countries where they serve; they remain neutral. Ambassadors do, however, advocate the government of the country they represent. The same is true of Christ's anointed followers, whose "citizenship exists in the heavens." (Philippians 3:20) In fact, thanks to their zealous Kingdom preaching, they have helped millions of Christ's "other sheep" to "become reconciled to God."

---

* Since Pentecost 33 C.E., Christ has served as King over his congregation of anointed followers on earth. (Colossians 1:13) In 1914, Christ received royal authority over "the kingdom of the world." Hence, anointed Christians now also serve as ambassadors of the Messianic Kingdom.—Revelation 11:15.

---

3. (a) How did Jesus view the politics of his day? (b) Why can it be said that Jesus' anointed followers serve as ambassadors? (Include footnote.)

4. How have all true Christians demonstrated loyalty to God's Kingdom? (See the box on page 52.)

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EARLY CHRISTIAN NEUTRALS

Secular history provides ample evidence that the early Christians remained politically neutral and refrained from warfare. Says the book *The Beginnings of Christianity:* "The founders of Christianity guarded with sedulous care against the development of anything like a disposition to interfere directly with the established political order." Similarly, the book *On the Road to Civilization* notes: "Early Christianity was little understood and was regarded with little favor by those who ruled the pagan world. . . . Christians refused to share certain duties of Roman citizens. . . . They would not hold political office."

Regarding the early Christians and military service, German theologian Peter Meinhold said: "Being a Christian and a soldier was considered irreconcilable." In his essay "An Inquiry Into the Accordancy of War With the Principles of Christianity," religion writer Jonathan Dymond wrote that for some time after the death of Jesus, His followers "refused to engage in [war]; whatever were the consequences, whether reproach, or imprisonment, or death." Dymond added: "These facts are indisputable." Only when "Christianity became corrupted," said another writer, did Christians become soldiers.

(John 10:16; Matthew 25:31-40) These latter ones serve as Christ's envoys, as it were, in support of Jesus' anointed brothers. As one united flock advocating the Messianic Kingdom, both groups maintain strict neutrality toward the world's political affairs.—**Read Isaiah 2:2-4.**

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[5] Loyalty to Christ is not the only reason that true Christians are neutral. Unlike ancient Israel, which had a God-given land allocation, we are part of an international brotherhood. (Matthew 28:19; 1 Peter 2:9) Thus, if we were to rally to the side of local political parties, both our freeness of speech in regard to the Kingdom message and our Christian unity would be severely compromised. (1 Corinthians 1:10) Furthermore, during war time, we would be fighting against fellow believers, whom we are commanded to love. (John 13:34, 35; 1 John 3:10-12) With good reason, then, Jesus told his disciples to lay down the sword. And he even told them to love their enemies.—Matthew 5:44; 26:52; see the box "Am I Remaining Neutral?" on page 55.

[6] As true Christians, we have dedicated our life to God, not to any human, human institution, or nation. Says 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20: "You do not belong to yourselves, for you were bought with a price." Thus, while rendering "Caesar" his due in the form of honor, taxes, and relative subjection, Jesus' followers give "God's things to God." (Mark 12:17; Romans 13:1-7) This includes their worship, their whole-souled love, and their loyal obedience. If necessary, they are ready to give up their life for God.—Luke 4:8; 10:27; **read Acts 5:29; Romans 14:8.**

RESISTING "THE SPIRIT OF THE WORLD"

[7] Another way that Christians keep separate from the world is by resisting its evil spirit. "We received, not the

---

5. How is the Christian congregation different from ancient Israel, and how does this difference manifest itself?

6. How does your dedication to God affect your relationship with Caesar?

7, 8. What is "the spirit of the world," and how is that spirit "at work" in disobedient humans?

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spirit of the world, but the spirit that is from God," wrote Paul. (1 Corinthians 2:12) To the Ephesians, he said: "You at one time walked according to . . . this world, according to the ruler of the authority of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience."—Ephesians 2:2, 3.

8 The world's "air," or spirit, is an invisible, impelling force that incites disobedience to God and fosters "the desire of the flesh and the desire of the eyes." (1 John 2:16; 1 Timothy 6:9, 10) "The authority" of this spirit lies in its appeal to the sinful flesh, its subtlety, its relentlessness and, like air, its pervasiveness. Moreover, it is "at work" in disobedient humans by gradually nurturing in them ungodly traits, such as selfishness, haughtiness, greedy ambition, and the spirit of moral independence and rebellion.* Simply put, the spirit of the world progressively causes the traits of the Devil to grow in the hearts of humans.—John 8:44; Acts 13:10; 1 John 3:8, 10.

9 Can the spirit of the world take root in your mind and heart? Yes, but only if you let it do so by lowering your guard. **(Read Proverbs 4:23.)** Its influence often begins subtly, perhaps by way of associates who may appear to be good people but, in fact, have no love for Jehovah. (Proverbs 13:20; 1 Corinthians 15:33) You can also absorb that evil spirit through objectionable literature, pornographic or apostate Internet sites, unwholesome entertainment, and highly competitive sports—really, through anyone or anything that conveys the thinking of Satan or his system.

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* See *Reasoning From the Scriptures,* pages 389-393, published by Jehovah's Witnesses.

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9. In what ways can the world's spirit enter our mind and heart?

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10 How can we resist the insidious spirit of the world and keep ourselves in God's love? Only by taking full advantage of Jehovah's spiritual provisions and by praying constantly for holy spirit. Jehovah is far greater than the Devil or the wicked world under satanic control. (1 John 4:4) How important, then, that we stay close to Jehovah in prayer!

10. How can we resist the spirit of the world?

AM I REMAINING NEUTRAL?

Principle: "My Kingdom is no part of this world."—John 18:36.

Some questions to ask yourself

- How would I explain why saluting the flag is a form of idol worship?*—Exodus 20:4, 5; 1 John 5:21.
- When explaining my nonparticipation in certain national ceremonies, how would I show my deep respect for those who do not share my beliefs?—1 Peter 3:15.
- What are my reasons for not supporting any political parties or performing any type of military service? —John 13:34; 1 John 3:10-12.



* See the Appendix, pages 212-215.

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BEING MODEST IN OUR DRESS AND GROOMING

11 An outward indication of the spirit that impels a person is his dress, grooming, and hygiene. In many lands, standards of dress have fallen so low that one television commentator suggested that soon there will be nothing left for prostitutes to wear. Even girls not yet in their teens have been caught up in this trend—"long on skin, short on modesty," said one newspaper report. Another trend is to dress in a slovenly manner that reflects a spirit of rebellion as well as a lack of dignity and self-respect.

12 As servants of Jehovah, we rightly want to look our best, which means dressing in a way that is neat, clean, in good taste, and appropriate for the occasion. At all times, our appearance ought to reflect "modesty and soundness of mind," which along with "good works" is fitting for anyone—male or female—"professing devotion to God." Of course, our main concern is, not to draw attention to ourselves, but to "keep [ourselves] in God's love." (1 Timothy 2:9, 10; Jude 21) Yes, we want our most beautiful adornment to be "the secret person of the heart . . . , which is of great value in the eyes of God."—1 Peter 3: 3, 4.

13 Keep in mind, too, that our clothing styles and grooming can influence how others view true worship. The Greek word rendered "modesty," when used in a moral sense, expresses the thought of reverence, awe, and respect for the feelings or opinion of others. Our goal, therefore, should be to subordinate our presumed rights to the consciences of others. Above all, we want to bring honor to Jehovah and his people

---

11. How has the world's spirit influenced standards of dress?
12, 13. What principles should govern our dress and grooming?



Does my appearance bring honor to Jehovah?

and to recommend ourselves as God's ministers, doing "all things for God's glory."—1 Corinthians 4:9; 10:31; 2 Corinthians 6:3, 4; 7:1.

14 Our dress, grooming, and cleanliness are even more important when we are engaging in the field ministry or attending a Christian meeting. Ask yourself: 'Do my appearance and personal hygiene draw undue attention to me? Do they embarrass others? Do I consider my rights in these areas to be more important than qualifying for service privileges in the congregation?' —Psalm 68:6; Philippians 4:5; 1 Peter 5:6.

15 The Bible does not set out for Christians a list of rules on dress, grooming, and hygiene. Jehovah has no desire to deny us our freedom of choice or the use of our thinking faculties. Rather, he wants us to become mature people who reason on Bible principles and who "through use have their powers of discernment trained to distinguish both right and wrong." (Hebrews 5:14) Above all, he wants us to be governed by love—love for God and neighbor. **(Read Mark 12:30, 31.)** Within

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14. In regard to our appearance and hygiene, what questions should we ask ourselves?
15. Why does God's Word not set out a list of rules on dress, grooming, and hygiene?



those boundaries, there is the potential for great variety in dress and grooming. Evidence of this can be seen in the colorfully dressed, joyful throngs of Jehovah's people no matter where on earth they are gathered.

KEEPING OUR LIFE SIMPLE

16 The spirit of the world is deceptive and impels millions to look to money and material things for happiness. However, Jesus said: "Even when a person has an abundance, his life does not result from the things he possesses." (Luke 12:15) While not endorsing asceticism, or extreme self-denial, Jesus taught that life and genuine happiness come to those who are "conscious of their spiritual need" and those who maintain a simple life,

16. How does the spirit of the world run contrary to Jesus' teaching, and what questions should we ask ourselves?

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one that is focused on spiritual things. (Matthew 5:3; 6: 22, footnote) Ask yourself: 'Do I truly believe what Jesus taught, or am I being influenced by "the father of the lie"? (John 8:44) What do my words, my goals, my priorities, and my way of life reveal?'—Luke 6:45; 21:34-36; 2 John 6.

17 "Wisdom is proved righteous by its works," said Jesus. (Matthew 11:19) Consider just some of the benefits enjoyed by those who maintain a simple life. They find true refreshment in Kingdom service. (Matthew 11: 29, 30) They avoid undue anxieties and thus spare themselves much mental and emotional pain. **(Read 1 Timothy 6:9, 10.)** Content with having life's necessities, they have more time for their family and Christian companions. They may sleep better as a result. (Ecclesiastes 5: 12) They experience the greater joy of giving, doing so in whatever way they can. (Acts 20:35) And they "abound in hope" and have inner peace and contentment. (Romans 15:13; Matthew 6:31, 32) These blessings are truly priceless!

TAKING UP "THE COMPLETE SUIT OF ARMOR"

18 Those who keep themselves in God's love also enjoy spiritual protection from Satan, who wants to deprive Christians, not just of happiness, but of everlasting life. (1 Peter 5:8) "We have a struggle," said Paul, "not against blood and flesh, but against the governments, against the authorities, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the wicked spirit forces in the heavenly places." (Ephesians 6:12) The word "struggle" suggests that our

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17. Name some benefits enjoyed by those who maintain a simple life.

18. How does the Bible describe our enemy, his methods, and the nature of our "struggle"?

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fight is not long-distance—from the safety of a hidden bunker, so to speak—but hand-to-hand. Furthermore, the terms "governments," "authorities," and "world rulers" indicate that attacks from the spirit realm are highly organized and deliberate.

19 Despite human frailties and limitations, however, we can gain the victory. How? By taking up "the complete suit of armor from God." (Ephesians 6:13) Describing that armor, Ephesians 6:14-18 reads: "Stand firm, therefore, with the belt of truth fastened around your waist, wearing the breastplate of righteousness, and having your feet shod in readiness to declare the good news of peace. Besides all of this, take up the large shield of faith, with which you will be able to extinguish all the wicked one's burning arrows. Also, accept the helmet [or, hope] of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, that is, God's word, while with every form of prayer and supplication you carry on prayer on every occasion in spirit."

20 Since it is a provision of God, that spiritual suit of armor will not fail us, provided that we wear it at all times. Unlike literal soldiers, who may have long breaks from fighting, Christians are in a relentless life-and-death struggle that will not stop until God has destroyed Satan's world and abyssed all wicked spirits. (Revelation 12:17; 20:1-3) So do not give up if you are struggling with weaknesses or wrong desires, for we all have to "pummel" ourselves in order to stay faithful to Jehovah. (1 Corinthians 9:27) Indeed, it is when we are *not* struggling that we should be concerned!

21 Moreover, we cannot win this fight in our own

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19. Describe the Christian's spiritual suit of armor.
20. How does our situation differ from that of a literal soldier?
21. How only can we come off victorious in our spiritual warfare?

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strength. Hence, Paul reminds us of the need to pray to Jehovah "on every occasion in spirit." At the same time, we should listen to Jehovah by studying his Word and associating with fellow "soldiers" at every opportunity, for we are not in this fight alone! (Philemon 2; Hebrews 10: 24, 25) Those who are faithful in all these areas will not only come off victorious but will also be able to make a strong defense for their faith when it is challenged.

BE READY TO DEFEND YOUR FAITH

22 "Because you are no part of the world," said Jesus, "the world hates you." (John 15:19) Christians, therefore, must always be ready to defend their faith and to do so in a respectful, mild manner. **(Read 1 Peter 3:15.)** Ask yourself: 'Do I understand why Jehovah's Witnesses sometimes take a stand that is contrary to popular opinion? When facing the challenge of taking such a stand, am I thoroughly convinced that what the Bible and the faithful slave say is right? (Matthew 24:45; John 17:17) And when it comes to doing what is right in Jehovah's eyes, am I not only prepared to be different but also proud to be different?'—Psalm 34:2; Matthew 10:32, 33.

23 Often, though, our desire to keep separate from the world is put to the test in more subtle ways. For example, as mentioned earlier, the Devil tries to lure Jehovah's servants into the world by means of worldly entertainment. How can we choose wholesome entertainment that will leave us refreshed and with a clean conscience? That subject will be considered in the next chapter.

22, 23. (a) Why must we be ready at all times to defend our faith, and what questions should we ask ourselves? (b) What subject will be considered in the next chapter?

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Jehovah's Witnesses

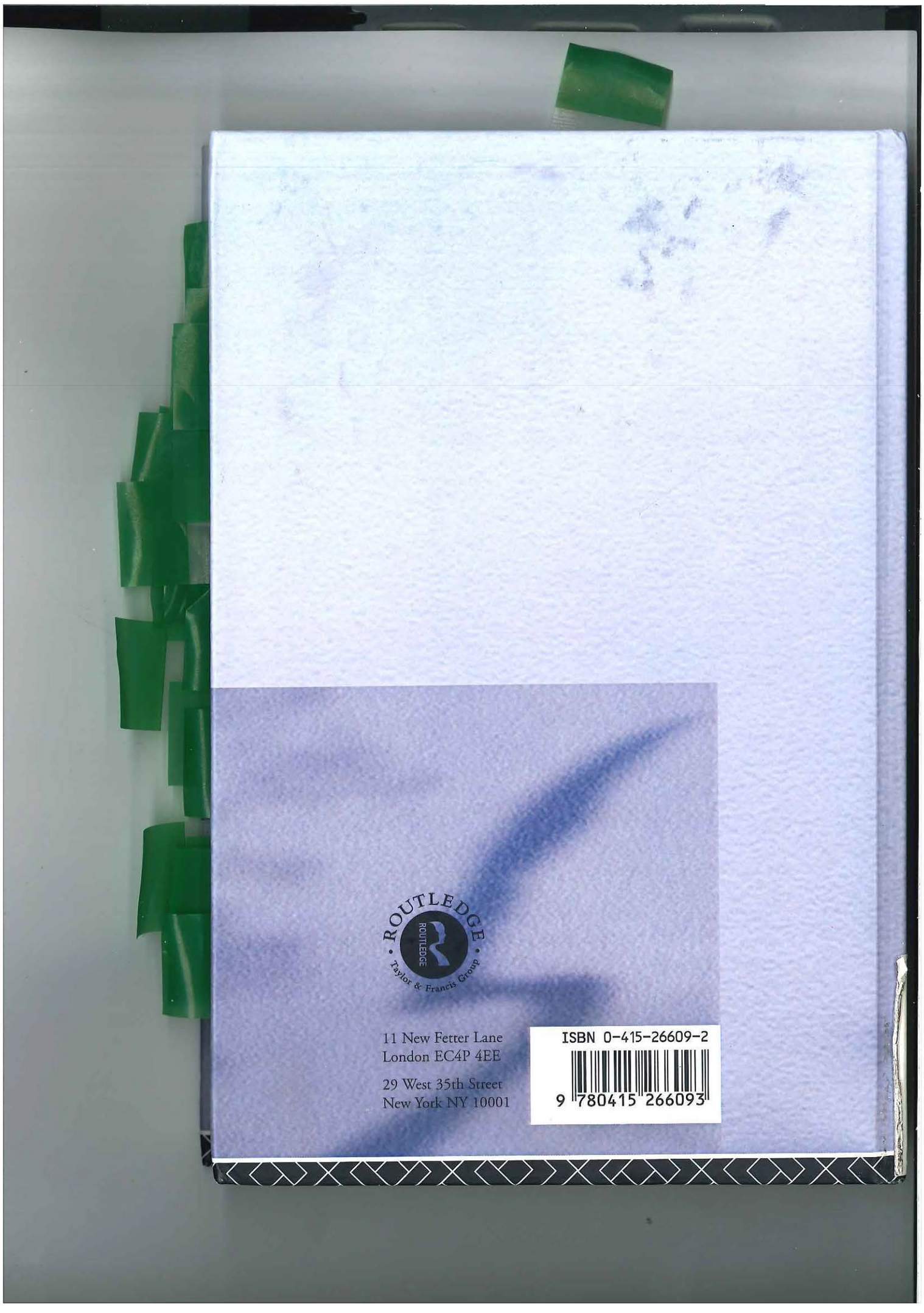
Portrait of a contemporary religious movement

Andrew Holden

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2 The Jehovah's Witnesses in the modern world

Before we can begin to establish the Witnesses' status at the beginning of the twenty-first century, we need to know something about their organisation's evolution and doctrines. These details help us to understand the culture in which the Witnesses operate and allow us to consider the various compatibilities and incompatibilities between the Watch Tower Society and the outside world. Moreover, the hierarchical structure of the movement enables devotees to resist those forces that might threaten their status as bona fide members of a system they call 'the truth'. In short, an enquiry into what the Witnesses believe, how they came to believe it and how they are able to reaffirm these beliefs internally aids our understanding of their relationship with modernity.

History, doctrines and internal structure

From origin to present day

The history of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society spans 130 years and is rich in controversy. From the moment of its foundation by Charles Taze Russell (1852–1916) to the present day, reactions towards the movement include fascination, compassion, anger and hatred. Although the available literature indicates that their world-renouncing theology and adherence to millenarianism have been the sources of great strain in terms of their liaison with secular bodies (particularly the legal system), the Witnesses have managed to gain converts and expand on an international scale.

Surprisingly, there is very little information about Russell's background. Rogerson's sociological research reveals that Russell was educated in state schools and then by private tutors (Rogerson 1969). Russell inherited Presbyterian beliefs from parents of Scottish–Irish descent, but his mother died when he was only nine years of age. In 1867, at the age of fifteen, he entered into partnership with his father, who ran a chain of men's clothing stores in Allegheny, Pennsylvania. Russell was an astute businessman. Before he was thirty years of age, he had expanded his father's clothing store, which he sold for $250,000 – the equivalent of more than a million dollars today.

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He also sold what he called 'miracle wheat' to credulous farmers at $60 a bushel. The fraud was eventually stopped by the federal authorities, who made him refund the money (Ripley 1982: 1–12). During his initial years as a draper, Russell abandoned Presbyterianism in favour of more liberal Congregationalist beliefs, but even these eventually gave way to a firm conviction that an omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient God was incompatible with conventional doctrines of suffering and hell. This left Russell in a state of perplexity and doubt, as his own reflections confirm:

> Brought up a Presbyterian, indoctrinated from the Catechism, and being naturally of an enquiring mind, I fell a ready prey to the logic of infidelity, as soon as I began to think for myself. But that which at first threatened to be the utter shipwreck of faith in God and the Bible was, under God's providence, over-ruled for good, and merely wrecked my confidence in human creeds and systems of Bible misinterpretations.
>
> (*The Watchtower* 1916: 170–2 quoted in Rogerson 1969: 5–6)

At this point, Russell became an avowed sceptic and discarded the Bible altogether; but in 1870 he attended a meeting held by some Seventh-Day Adventists in a basement near his store in Allegheny. It would appear that this meeting was a significant influence in the restoration of Russell's faith, for, although he failed to join the Adventists, they did at least persuade him of an alternative creed to Christendom. He gathered together some like-minded friends and acquaintances and they formed a Bible study group in Pittsburgh where they met on a regular basis. Witnesses today believe that this was the point at which Russell returned to the Bible and discovered real truth. Undoubtedly influenced by the Seventh-Day Adventists, Russell espoused doctrines such as the annihilation of the wicked, the denial of hell, the extinction of the soul at death and a new code for salvation. His interest in the Bible became almost obsessive, and, between 1870 and 1879, he wrote several pamphlets and a new periodical called *Zion's Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence*. This new magazine was to play a crucial role in the expansion of the movement, and by 1880 some thirty congregations had sprung up in several American states. By 1884, 'Zion's Watch Tower Tract Society', managed by Russell, was given legal charter (Hoekema 1984). The Society printed tracts, papers, pamphlets, magazines and other materials in various languages and, in 1886, over six million copies of Russell's first publication, *Millennial Dawn* (later called *Studies in the Scriptures*), came to be sold. By now, Russell saw himself as 'the Servant of the Truth'. Not surprisingly, his opponents accused him of conceit. By the late 1880s, Russell had employed thousands of colporteurs (today called *pioneers*) who worked almost full-time preaching the theology and distributing millenarian literature. Russell devoted all his time to the study of the Bible and the administration of his fast-growing organisation. In 1889, a new building was finished in Pittsburgh to house the printing works

and to act as the Society's central office. In 1900, the first branch office was established in London.

Russell wrote specific instructions for selling his literature and employed virtually every device of modern advertising to disseminate his biblical message. By the early 1900s, he had travelled to Ireland, Scotland, Russia and Turkey to deliver his sermons. By 1917, there was a total of ninety-three *pilgrims* (today known as *circuit overseers*) travelling from congregation to congregation. Russell had laid the foundation of a movement that would inevitably expand. Most of Russell's written work consisted of elaborate biblical chronology that applied to his own time. His books reveal that he was greatly concerned with dates and events. He related social, political and economic issues to biblical prophecy and was fond of debating the exact meaning of the original Greek and Hebrew words in scripture. In a court in Ontario, Canada, in 1913, he declared under oath to be an expert scripture scholar, but when handed a Greek New Testament he was forced to admit that he did not even know the Greek alphabet. Neither did he know Latin or Hebrew. Few, if any, academic theologians in the universities of the world today acknowledge Russell as a scholar in any sense of the word (Ripley 1982: 1–2). Most Jehovah's Witnesses know little or nothing of Russell's prophecies, but they are all convinced that he correctly predicted the heavenly establishment of the Kingdom of God in 1914. When 1914 finally arrived, it was too late to persuade his followers that he might be wrong. Some left the movement in disappointment, but those who remained were confused about what was going to happen. The Witnesses have since claimed that, in some way, Russell predicted the First World War, but, for Russell himself and his successor Joseph Rutherford, the beginning of a war in Europe was of little significance. Russell was still convinced that heavenly glory was soon to come. In 1916, Russell's health deteriorated rapidly and he died on Tuesday 31 October that year.

In January 1917, Joseph Franklin Rutherford was elected President of what was now known as the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. Rutherford called himself 'Judge', although some sources claim that he never held an official appointment as such. At the age of twenty-two, he was admitted to the bar and began to practise law, later serving four years as public prosecutor for Booneville. He had frequently defended Russell in court and had become an ardent supporter of the movement. When he became President, he proceeded to restructure the Society and to encourage devotees to engage in a more active programme of Witnessing. He was dissatisfied with the Board of Directors, over which he adopted total control.[1] This culminated in open rebellion, after which several disaffected leaders were dismissed from their official positions. This led to the formation of small schismatic groups. In July 1917, the seventh volume of the *Studies in the Scriptures* series, *The Finished Mystery*, was published. This book, compiled by Watch Tower editors from the earlier works of Russell, was chiefly a commentary on Ezekiel and Revelation.[2] According

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to this tract, Catholic and Protestant organisations together represented Babylon, which was soon to pass into oblivion. Possession of these publications was forbidden in Canada, where the movement had been declared illegal. On 8 May 1918, together with other Russellites, Rutherford was arrested under the United States Espionage Act for spreading dissent in the army and navy and sentenced to twenty years' imprisonment. He served only nine months, although, like his predecessor, he was frequently accused of fraudulent practices, even by his own followers. Unlike Russell, Rutherford developed a hatred of his avowed enemy, the clergy.[3] It was during this period that Rutherford began to teach that Christ had returned *invisibly* in 1914, and that Armageddon was imminent.[4] Rutherford claimed that this would be the point at which worldly organisations (including of course, Christendom) would perish. In 1931, he devised the new title 'Witnesses of Jehovah' and publicised the slogan 'Millions now living will never die'. He was not one of the millions! He died in 1942 in the palatial villa he had had built at San Diego as an official residence pending the return of Christ. He had been President of the movement for twenty-five years.

During Rutherford's presidency, the Society had moved from a more or less democratic to a theocratic structure, in which the directors of the various local congregations were no longer elected by local assemblies but were appointed by a Governing Body in Brooklyn. Rutherford was succeeded in 1942 by Nathan Homer Knorr, who had worked as a full-time preacher and co-ordinator of all printing activities within the organisation and General Manager of the publishing plant. In 1934, Knorr had been appointed one of the directors of the New York corporation and in 1940, he became Vice President of the Pennsylvania corporation (Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania 1959: 196). Knorr immediately began a face-lifting and public relations programme that has since paid dividends in recruits. Several doctrinal books were published during Knorr's presidency, including *Theocratic Aid to Kingdom Publishers* (1945), *Equipped for Every Good Work* (1946a) and *Qualified to Be Ministers* (1955a). These three books contained information about scripture, door-to-door canvassing and history, but there were other books which were considered authoritative guidelines taking the place of previous publications by Russell and Rutherford, including *The Truth Shall Make You Free* (1943), *Let God Be True* (1946b, revised in 1952) and *Make Sure of All Things* (1953, revised in 1957). The books are summaries of doctrines, and millions of later editions have been printed and sold all over the world. *From Paradise Lost to Paradise Regained* was published in 1958 and is often used along with *Make Sure of All Things* and the more recent *Reasoning from the Scriptures* (1989b) as a handy reference book by the Witnesses in their doorstep ministry.

Another important project carried out under Knorr was the translation of the Bible into modern English. This began in 1950, and in 1961 the entire Bible in *The New World Translation* was published in one volume.

Those members who were responsible for the translating requested that they should remain anonymous. Under Knorr's presidency, door-to-door evangelists no longer carried a portable gramophone and collection of Rutherford's records. Rather, devotees were given a thorough training in speech and non-verbal communication that enabled them to deliver their own sermons. To this day, the Witnesses hold regular meetings, during which training and demonstrations take place to enable them to minister more effectively to the general public. During Knorr's regime as President, there was a huge expansion of the Witnesses' work worldwide. In 1942, evangelism took place in only fifty-four countries, but by 1971 it had spread to 207. The movement grew by 25 per cent during the 1930s and 1940s, with a total of 20,842 active members in Britain by 1950. By 1971, the country in which the Witnesses were most active was West Germany (87,976 members listed), followed by Nigeria with 75,372, and Brazil with 66,460. The British Isles followed with 62,813, then the Philippines with 54,264 and then Zambia with 52,369. Next was Mexico with 51,256 members, then Canada with 48,100. Other countries in which the Witnesses claim to have had more than five thousand active members in 1971 include Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Chile, Colombia, Congo (Kinshara), Denmark, Finland, France, Ghana, Greece, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Korea, Malawi, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Rhodesia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and Venezuela (Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania 1971). Millions of copies of the Society's two magazines *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* are sold throughout the world every year, and Witnessing takes place in over two hundred countries. The 1 January 2001 issue of *The Watchtower* recorded 126,297 Witnesses in Britain alone in 2000 and over ninety thousand congregations worldwide (Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania 2001).[5] All the countries cited above have seen fairly substantial increases in membership over the last three decades, although in recent years the movement has remained static in Australia, Belgium, Britain, Germany, Scandinavia and Spain. The Witnesses are, however, continuing to expand in Eastern Europe, Latin America and many parts of Africa. Albania, Cambodia and Mongolia all claimed at least a 25 per cent increase in their total membership between 1998 and 1999.

James Beckford tells us that Russell founded his movement amidst a certain amount of dissatisfaction with what was regarded as 'modernism' among Protestant thinkers in late nineteenth-century America. Russell opposed this with what he considered to be fundamental religious truths – truths that he feared were being replaced by individual-oriented Arminianism.[6] Beckford writes:

> Russell chose precisely to oppose modernist philosophy, theology and ecclesiology by restating what he understood to be the unchanging principles of Christianity and by organizing a religious movement with

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> the explicit goal of propagating those principles . . . His proposed solution to the twin problems of 'infidelity' and 'modernism' was to restore faith in the 'principle (that) seems to be disappearing in respect to religious matters',[7] and his own set of teachings crystallized in the attempt to oppose error with truth and liberalism with 'principle'.
>
> (Beckford 1975a: 3)

Beckford goes on to describe how a movement which became known as The Social Gospel played a significant role in convincing Russell that churches were becoming tainted with secular influences, and that the clergy had begun to neglect their primary duty of ministry for superficial reform. Although there are few sources that link Russell's way of thinking to the social, cultural and political climate of late nineteenth-century America, it would appear that his disillusionment with modern society in general and orthodox Christianity in particular led him to establish a monosemic, scriptural theology which he argued was rational and irrefutable. To this day, the Witnesses regard the international expansion of their movement as evidence of the gospel of the Kingdom having been preached throughout the whole world predicted in Matthew 24, and have countered what they perceive as the immoral conditions of modern liberal society with puritanical doctrines.

Watch Tower teachings

Watch Tower theology is the Society's most crucial resource, and devotees are expected to adhere to all doctrines established by the Governing Body. These doctrines pervade almost every conceivable sphere of life. The theology plays an important part in uniting devotees into a close-knit community and separating them symbolically from the outside world. It should be borne in mind, however, that Watch Tower theology cannot be summarised without doing gross injustice to its complexity. Were it to be presented in its entirety, the thoughts and questions that will be prompted by this book would undoubtedly receive more attention. In the pages that follow, accounts of the Witnesses' beliefs are intended only to illuminate a social phenomenon. It is the task of the theologian, not the sociologist, to engage in debates concerning scriptural interpretation.

Ever since the organisation was founded, there has been no mechanism for contributing to or criticising the canon of official teachings. The establishment of doctrines has been very carefully restricted to, and controlled by, the Society's Governing Body. This means that Jehovah's Witnesses around the world are recipients of an absolutist message rather than free-thinking agents who are actively involved in the formulation of religious ideas. What is significant about this is the effect of such a uniform set of doctrines on the Witnesses' social relations. Doctrines prescribed by an autocratic administration play a crucial role in the construction of a tightly bonded

community. Where inconsistencies are noticed by devotees, personal questioning is abrogated in favour of the safe conviction that those responsible for the formulation of Watch Tower doctrines must also be able to deal effectively with any criticisms. Witnesses at grass roots level often argue that, if inconsistencies were real, then the organisation would not have gained the widespread popularity that it has. It is possible that this acquiescence has brought about even greater support than any serious attempt to deal with questions of doctrinal consistency would do. This is why an analysis of the symbolic meaning and presentation of doctrines serves a greater purpose for this book than details of the doctrines themselves.

The Witnesses see themselves as members not just of a religious movement but of one that monopolises the word of God. For this reason, they feel they are called upon to proselytise. Nonconformist ideas that were widespread during the period in which the Society was founded provided the basis for some of its teachings. The one imperative belief, however, is that the Bible, from beginning to end, is the inspired word of God. This means that all Watch Tower teachings are scripturally supported and most, but not all, the Bible is interpreted literally. The exceptions are the recorded visions in the Books of Daniel and Revelation. The rest the Witnesses regard as historically accurate, including the stories in the book of Genesis. The following transcript from an interview with a local elder conveys the importance of this biblical literalism. He is worth quoting at length:

> The Bible is the fundamental foundation of doctrine and I would say to someone interested in our faith, 'Are you willing to adjust to it in order to be pleasing to God whom you have faith in?' So we would have a Bible study. For instance, I would say to you, 'Do you believe that God is a single person?', and, depending on how you answered, I would go to references in the Bible that would show you what our beliefs are. Now, when you've heard that clarification it's up to you whether you accept it or not, and then we would go to other angles of fact. I would say, 'When you die, what do you expect will happen to you?', and then I'd say, 'Well, let's see what the Bible has to say about death and why we die, and let's see if there's a different future to the one you envisage'. So, the main fundamentals are, 'Do you believe the Bible is the inspired word of God?' and 'Do you believe in the truth of its doctrines?' and 'What do you think happens when you die?', and then we'd turn to the Bible and give you the biblical answer, and if the Bible is the foundation of doctrine and action and way of life, are you willing to adjust to it in order to be pleasing to God? The Bible can be likened to a rule. The rule is a measurement which is internationally accepted, so the Bible becomes the measure of faith and therefore if you measure your conduct by the Bible's measure, then you're doing what Jesus said, you're in the truth. We're convinced we have the truth because the Bible says it's

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> the truth. Jesus in his speaking said, 'Thy word is truth' – that's from John 17 verse 17. Now when he said that, he was speaking of the Old Testament, because the New Testament hadn't been formulated. So when he said, 'Thy word is truth' or 'Your word is truth' as the modern language would say, we believe that the Bible is an accurate account of facts – historically, scientifically, genealogically and all the other angles of life, and so when Jesus said, 'The first Adam was made flesh', when he talks about 'as it was in the days of Noah' and when he talked about 'the patience of Job', he was making factual references, not allegories. So, when you go therefore to what Jesus referred to as 'the truth', the Old Testament, then you study its narrative, its history, you look at the genealogical lives which are very well recorded in the book of Luke – where Luke said, 'I want to trace things back to the beginning' and he goes back genealogically and ends up with Adam. So therefore, that's why we feel we've got the truth. We try to see things from the biblical viewpoint, which is God's viewpoint.

In contrast with the pick-and-mix philosophy of many of the New Age religions, this elder's comments demonstrate the absolutist nature of the authority to which he defers. Scriptural texts are used by the Witnesses as a constant frame of reference. World catastrophes such as war, famine, murder, environmental pollution, genocide and terrorism provide them with evidence in support of their theology. When ministering on the doorstep, it is not unusual for Watch Tower evangelists to refer to a recent world event and use biblical texts to explain its occurrence. These events are also taken as evidence of signs of the Last Days. It seems that the more the Witnesses hear about social and economic crises when they turn on their television sets, the more their monosemic view of the world is validated.

The Governing Body of the Society teaches its members that God has a personal name – Jehovah (Exodus 9: 16 is used to support this). The Witnesses' God is the God of the Old Testament, and they reject the Trinity doctrine, declaring it unscriptural. Although Jesus is regarded as inferior to Jehovah, it is believed that, together, both Jesus and Jehovah produced perfect spiritual beings that possessed free will. Satan was one such spirit. The Witnesses maintain that, since the deception in the Garden of Eden, Satan has misled the world, and the most important reason for the existence of humankind (as revealed in the Bible) is the vindication of Jehovah over Satan. Instead of destroying Satan, Jehovah decided to test the loyalty of the rest of humankind and to prove to the rest of creation that Satan was a liar. Jehovah has set a time limit of six thousand years for this challenge (the period would have ended in 1975 – the year in which the Society expected Armageddon), after which, the Witnesses will be rewarded for their loyalty to his divine plan.

The Witnesses believe that the Fall (recorded in Genesis) is responsible for death, but they reject the doctrine of the immortal soul. They do not,

however, believe that death is the end for everyone (although the Society does teach that this is so for those who fail to pass future millennial tests). They maintain that the reason we die is that our first parents rejected God's law, and human governments have been controlled by Satan ever since. Human misery is the result of Satan's power in a world in which he will soon be destroyed. The Witnesses claim that some kind of existence after death can be expected for most human beings and this will take the form of resurrection. They also believe that, since Pentecost, Jehovah has been preparing a 'Bride of Christ', a 'Little Flock', a body of 144,000 people (a figure mentioned in Revelation 14: 3) to share heavenly life and leadership. Thus, an anointed class of 144,000 Jehovah's Witnesses will win heavenly reward, while the remainder (along with non-Witnesses whom Jehovah deems worthy) will spend eternity in a different paradise here on earth. The righteous who are asleep in death will be raised from their graves (Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania 1955b).

Like their founding fathers, Witnesses today continue to renounce the conventional Christian doctrine of hellfire on the basis that it is unscriptural and contrary to Jehovah's loving nature (Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania 1989b: 168–75). They claim that hell is nothing more than an insensible state. To support this, they quote Ecclesiastes 9: 10, which describes both Jacob and Job in moments of depression wanting to enter Sheol; and Acts 2: 24–7, 31, and Romans 10: 6, 7, which mention that Jesus himself was in Hades. This, say the Witnesses, would be very difficult to understand if hell were a place of eternal torment. For them, hell is complete annihilation that Jesus will execute upon Satan and his demons at Armageddon, after which there will be no resurrection (Rogerson 1969: 93). Armageddon is the battle in which Christ will purge the earth of Satan's influence – a battle symbolising Jehovah's victory over evil. But Armageddon is not incompatible with the pragmatic nature of building new headquarters for the administration of Watch Tower activities and the continuation of all other features of daily life. Since the Witnesses believe that the just will be saved at Armageddon and that the wicked will be destroyed, the doctrine plays an important role in Watch Tower ministry. The promise of eternal bliss in the post-Armageddon Kingdom informs them that world chaos and life-threatening events are not meaningless but part of a larger system of order.

The Society forbids its members to participate in annual events such as Christmas, Easter, birthdays and national festivals. It teaches that Jehovah does not acknowledge these events since, wherever they are cited in the scriptures, they are always in the context of sin or apostasy. According to the Witnesses, the only two birthday celebrations mentioned in the Bible involve people who were not true believers. These are a pharaoh of Egypt and the Roman ruler Herod Antipas (Genesis 40: 18–22; and Mark 6: 21–8), whose celebrations ended in misery. Though they recognise that the birth of Christ is presented as a joyful occasion by the synoptic writers, devotees refuse to



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partake in the celebration on the grounds that we do not know the precise date of an event that has, in any case, become tainted with secular images such as lights, trees, tinsel and mistletoe. As far as Easter is concerned, the egg is historically a pagan symbol for the celebration of the return of spring and the rabbit was an emblem of fertility, neither of which is connected with the resurrection of Christ (Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania 1989b: 179). Furthermore, the Witnesses associate annual celebrations with immodest behaviour and excessive alcohol consumption – practices that they say are contrary to the counsel of Romans 13: 13, 'As in the daytime let us walk decently, not in revelries and drunken bouts, not in illicit intercourse and loose conduct, not in strife and jealousy.' This explains why, in addition to their eschatological beliefs, devotees adopt a puritanical lifestyle.

Despite their belief that Satan controls the world, the Witnesses do not generally go as far as members of religious organisations such as the Plymouth Brethren in isolating themselves completely from outsiders. None the less, their persistent refusal to engage in political activities such as voting in elections or joining pressure groups shows their disdain for secular society. The Witnesses continue to object to both jury and military service (on the grounds of pacifism and neutrality), and they do not support local or national charities. Although some devotees join social and leisure clubs and progress to post-compulsory education, Watch Tower officials encourage Kingdom interests and frown upon activities that detract from the Society's teachings. The Governing Body officially condemns behaviour that violates these teachings. Devotees are expected not to smoke and to drink alcohol only in moderation. The dualistic nature of Watch Tower theology means that, in principle, Witnesses everywhere are expected to adhere to a strict ascetic code. Sexual purity is high on the agenda of moral regulation. Adultery, fornication, masturbation and homosexuality all flout the organisation's teachings on sexual conduct. Anything other than highly controlled heterosexual activity is regarded as immoral, and sexual intercourse is confined to marriage. Drug abuse, smoking and the excessive consumption of alcohol, although not symbolically polluting, are believed to be physically polluting and offensive to Jehovah. Blood transfusions are both symbolically and physically polluting. These moral boundaries must be understood and accepted by every individual prior to baptism. In its advice to its younger members, the Governing Body has this to say:

> The Bible describes a young man who meets a promiscuous woman. She kisses him and says: 'Do come, . . . let us enjoy each other with love expressions.' Then what happens? 'All of a sudden he is going after her, like a bull that comes even to the slaughter.' (Proverbs 7: 7–22) Obviously, this youth's passions were aroused not simply because his hormones were at work but because of what he saw and heard. Similarly, one young man admits: 'The root of my whole problem with masturbation boiled down to what I put in my mind. I would watch TV programs that included immorality and in some cases watch programs on cable TV that would show nudity. Such scenes are so shocking that they stay with you. They would surface again in my mind, providing the mental fuel needed to engage in masturbation.'
>
> (Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania 1989a: 200)

The tract goes on to explain how marriage is the only legitimate structure in which sexual desires can be satisfied and that masturbation endangers future happiness between a married couple, since the masturbator risks disregarding his or her spouse's needs. Implicit in the Society's rules of sexual purity is the notion that the body is a temple of God and must therefore be freed from moral contamination. Of all these sexual activities, homosexuality is regarded as probably the most vile and unnatural. In a much earlier tract, but one still widely used by devotees, we read:

> masturbation can lead into homosexuality. In such instances the person, not satisfied with his lonely sexual activity, seeks a partner for mutual sex play. This happens much more frequently than you may realize. Contrary to what many persons think, homosexuals are not *born* that way, but their homosexual behaviour is learned. And often a person gets started when very young by playing with anothers' sexual parts, and then engaging in homosexual acts.
>
> (Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania 1976: 39)

The passage continues with an anecdote about a young man who became 'hooked' on homosexual practices and was able to fight them only by realising that God viewed them as unnatural. As usual, the story ends with a biblical injunction against homosexuality: 'God's Word is very clear on this matter, saying: "Make no mistake: no fornicator or idolater, none who are guilty either of adultery or of homosexual perversion . . . will possess the kingdom of God" ' (1 Corinthians 6: 9, 10).

I attended several Kingdom Hall meetings at which homosexuality was referred to as an unnatural perversion. At a *public talk* that was delivered by a highly enthusiastic young man who aspired to become a *pioneer* for the Society,[8] I listened to a forty-five minute sermon about whether homosexuals are 'born that way' or if their sexual behaviour is learned. At this, as at most other Watch Tower sermons, reference was given to the widespread nature of homosexuality, but used only in a way that reinforced the organisation's own teachings – that is, that the world has become unashamedly wicked. There can be little doubt that it would be very difficult for someone with a gay orientation to remain a Witness without experiencing a great deal of injury to his or her personal identity, not least because the Society fails to distinguish between the homosexual condition and homosexual practice.[9]

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Of those Watch Tower doctrines that condemn impurity, however, it is the refusal of blood for which the Witnesses are best renowned. This issue has undoubtedly earned the movement the most attention from the outside world (particularly from the courts), and yet, surprisingly, it is not one that often appears on the agenda at Kingdom Hall meetings. Nor is it discussed regularly by elders or even among devotees themselves. Blood prohibition is rarely selected as a key topic for a doorstep sermon, not only because it has given the Witnesses a negative profile (exacerbated over the years by the popular press) but also because it is unlikely to entice new recruits. The Society teaches that blood transfusions are strictly forbidden since blood is a source of life that is sacred to Jehovah. However, the Witnesses insist that most modern surgery can be performed successfully without the use of blood (the Governing Body has no objection to the use of non-blood plasma expanders). Watch Tower publications also warn against the risks of bacterial infection, transfusion reactions and Rhesus sensitisation in their condemnation of the practice. Genesis 9: 4 and Leviticus 17: 11–12 are among the scriptural references used by the Society in support of the doctrine, but it is Acts 15: 28–9 that is most frequently quoted in Watch Tower literature: 'For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: that you abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what is strangled and from unchastity.'

Blood transfusions are thus considered physically and morally unclean. As in the case of sexual impurity, receiving blood is tantamount to polluting oneself as well as offending the community. This belief demonstrates the strict purity code that characterises so many Watch Tower teachings. The emergence of AIDS during the 1980s also provided the Witnesses with secular if macabre confirmation of the virtue of the doctrine as well as a powerful justification to abstain from blood on health grounds. It is also worth noting that, prior to its prohibition of blood transfusions in 1945, the Society objected to vaccinations and inoculations, although this never became an official Watch Tower teaching in quite the same way. Sociologist Richard Singelenberg (1990) argues that the patriotic period of the Second World War (ideologically anathematised by the movement) provided a breeding ground for the prohibition to crystallise. The American population was regularly incited to donate blood for its injured soldiers and, in this way, blood transfusions became part of nationalistic manifestation such as armies, national anthems and flags, to which the Witnesses were already vehemently opposed (519–20). The Society's condemnation of blood transfusions constitutes a rule of pollution and purity that is instrumental in creating structural boundaries. In a period marked by state opposition to Watch Tower doctrines (particularly in the USA), devotees needed to maintain their exclusivity in order to re-establish their universal collective identity and to detach themselves from orthodox Christianity. The Witnesses' refusal of blood is functionally analogous with Jewish dietary

laws – it confirms that sacrifice is part of the price of membership and reinforces internal cohesion by distinguishing between purity and pollution. Blood is a powerful symbol of allegiance simply because of its lack of meaning for other cultures.

Like most other religious movements, the Watch Tower Society imparts a theology that embraces a large number of highly complex issues and each member usually has at his or her disposal several tracts containing hundreds of biblical references which are used to substantiate beliefs. The doctrines outlined above are those which, in my view, pose the greatest challenge to the Witnesses when they find themselves in the company of non-members and, as such, provide the ethnographer with some important analytical material. I would wish to suggest not that the Witnesses can never circulate in secular environments without experiencing hostility from those who do not share their doctrines, but, rather, that their disillusionment with the world has important implications for how they manage their private beliefs in public. Whatever happens, the Witnesses' loyalty is first and foremost to an organisation that secures their salvation.

Internal organisation and control

As far as the communication of Watch Tower doctrines is concerned, all information is transmitted by central headquarters (that is, the Governing Body) through direct channels to individual members. The result is that Witnesses at all levels are kept aware of the activities of their brethren abroad. The Society's official mission is the key to understanding the relationships that hold devotees together in something that can be called a religious movement. This calls for an examination of the forces of integration and disintegration, the distribution of authority and the internal factors affecting growth and change. Such an exercise involves a description of the activities in which the Witnesses participate. As one might expect, there is a division of labour within the organisation as well as inevitable differences in status and roles.

The Witnesses make use of two corporations – namely, the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania and New York, and the International Bible Students Association. The Pennsylvanian Corporation has voting members who live in all parts of the world. They meet annually and elect or re-elect seven directors of the corporation, who themselves elect officers. The President of the corporation is therefore, elected not by popular vote but by the directors, who choose one of their members for the post. The International Bible Students Association is a London Corporation. It owns property in Britain and is responsible predominantly for British affairs. The President is responsible for the central administration of door-to-door evangelism and travels extensively to check on the progress of the movement worldwide. Doctrinal edicts are the responsibility of a larger body of Jehovah's Witnesses known as the *remnant class* – a spiritual

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committee comprising the President and other devotees. The Society has an extensive printing factory in New York, consisting of four large interconnected buildings in which millions of magazines, tracts and other publications are printed every year. This literature appears in nearly every language as well as in Braille. Factory workers are all fully baptised members of the community. There are also Branch Offices in London, which have a printing factory producing several million magazines each month. For administrative convenience, the country under the Branch Office is divided into *districts* that are further divided into *circuits*. At the time of writing, the Society also has three official internet websites.[10]

The Witnesses have no ordained clergy. They refer to all members as *ministers* or *publishers* (or, more personally, *brothers* and *sisters*). This is based on the belief that hierarchies are contrary to biblical teaching. However, closer examination reveals that there *is* a visible hierarchy, and Witnesses in over fifty thousand congregations throughout the world are assigned responsibilities. The chain of posts and the graduation of authority upwards from *Minister* (or *Publisher*) to *Pioneer*, *Special Pioneer*, *Circuit Overseer*, *District Overseer*, *Branch Official* and *Governing Body* suggest a complicated system of command and promotion. Strange as it may seem to outsiders, all positions are viewed as positions of service with no visible or official exaltation of individuals. At every level of the organisation, those in authority oversee those below them, which means that every Witness is under official surveillance. Nevertheless, it would be wrong to argue that the movement does not contain any informal structures, since kinship relations often facilitate a flow of information outside official channels. Beckford (1975a) argues that kinship links have helped the organisation to expand without threatening the efficient pursuit of goals. Legitimation of official authority is claimed on the grounds that the Society acts as Jehovah's earthly agent and as Christ's instrument for the forthcoming Kingdom.

In sociological terms, the Watch Tower Society is Durkheimian in that there can be no division between God and society. In such a system, the sense of self-discovery or self-exaltation is minimised – often even non-existent, as conveyed in the following passage from a Watch Tower publication:

> There are, of course, many factors involved in being a faithful servant of God. But basic to all of them is reliance on Jehovah and his provisions. How do we show such reliance? One way is by attending congregation meetings. The Scriptures urge us not to neglect them. (Heb. 10: 23–5) Those who have continued to be faithful witnesses of Jehovah, whether in the face of public apathy or of persecution, have exerted themselves to be regular in attending meetings with fellow worshippers. At these meetings our knowledge of the Scriptures is increased, but it is not mere fascination with new things that draws us . . . We are drawn close to our Christian brothers in united worship and we personally are strengthened to continue doing God's will. Jehovah's spirit provides direction through the congregation, and by means of that spirit Jesus is in our midst when we assemble in his name. (Rev. 3: 6; Matt. 18: 20)
>
> (Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania 1983b: 170–1)

This passage is rich in detail about the all-powerful congregation over the subordinated self. Although devotees recognise that each human life comes from Jehovah, individual exaltation is given little space. The individual Witness who attends meetings regularly and ministers truth with passion can never pursue personal interests. Many riches await those who are prepared to sacrifice their metaphysical curiosity and personal innovation for the public symbolic system that has stamped its authority on every member of the congregation. In Durkheimian terms, success in the world is incompatible with the given categories of truth in which the internal consciousness of the private person matches that of the collective whole. Witnesses who spend the most number of hours in ministry work and become pioneers or elders are admired and respected for their loyalty and commitment. Individuals derive satisfaction from the knowledge that the community has benefited spiritually from their efforts, while personal success is considered self-indulgent. The following excerpt from an interview with an elder confirms how difficult it is for the Society to allow individual Witnesses to cherish their own achievements:

> Involvement in business isn't discouraged except if it's going to overrun and remove your time and energy for spiritual things. You see, Jesus did give an illustration about a man who had grown fat and wealthy and he decided to pull down his barns and build some more barns, 'cos he thought it'd be nice to have some more barns. But Jesus said, 'Beware', and, that very night, the man died. Now many of our younger people do begin to enter into business and that's OK provided it doesn't injure their spiritual activities. Now as far as education is concerned, the organisation through its literature tells our young people, 'Get as much education as you can while you're at school'. Now when it comes to college and university, caution is needed because of the philosophies that can be anti-spiritual and association can be as well.

This elder's comments show how devotees are strongly advised to 'seek first the Kingdom', and there seems to be great pride expressed among active members when their children decide to leave school and become full-time evangelists (or *pioneers*). Financial success can never compensate for one's status as a Witness. The separation of oneself from the community could well mark the beginning of breaking away from it. Unquestioning loyalty of this kind has undoubtedly helped to play down doctrinal inconsistency. The failed prophecies of 1914, 1918, 1925 and, most significantly, 1975 could no longer be taught after these years came and went, and yet the movement

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has since managed to expand. At the same time, certain doctrines were introduced long after the Society was founded, only to be phased out years later. Examples of these include the ban on vaccinations and the prohibition of organ transplants between 1967 and 1980 (I have also mentioned that blood transfusions were not prohibited until 1945). The movement has been successful in persuading its members that such change comes from the Almighty who never tires of teaching them new things: 'the path of the righteous ones is like the bright light that is getting lighter and lighter until the day is firmly established' (Proverbs 4: 18).

It could well be that many Witnesses have not yet been in the organisation long enough to realise that 'new lights' have a habit of growing dimmer, while old ones are sometimes switched back on! For example, in its guidelines on sexual conduct within marriage in the early 1970s, the Governing Body prohibited certain forms of stimulation, foreplay and intercourse; but in 1978 it advised that it was inappropriate for congregational elders to attempt to control marital intimacy. In 1983, the pendulum swung back when an article in *The Watchtower* of 15 March issued an 'amplification and adjustment in understanding' of the 1978 guidelines, asserting anew the Society's right to examine sexual relations and to impose sanctions, including *disfellowshipping* (the official term for the expulsion of dissident members), on those whose marital behaviour was considered immodest. For Witnesses who have lived through these inconsistencies, leaving the Watch Tower community poses a more painful option than doubting its version of reality. As I will show in Chapter 8, the part that such inconsistencies might play in causing members of other religious organisations to abandon their beliefs is missing in the case of the Witnesses, many of whose loved ones are also members. Loyalty, emotional dependence and a strong sense of community have enabled the movement to survive. Former Witness David Reed (1989a) also suggests that the main reason for the Society's success is that it is able to impart a certain mystique about the authority of the presidency. Until recently, members of the Governing Body remained completely anonymous to Witnesses at grass roots level. Their photographs were never to be seen in Kingdom Halls or in any of the organisation's literature. Witnesses everywhere continue to believe that God is using the Governing Body as his channel of communication, and any correspondence for which it is responsible is endorsed only by the Society's official rubber stamp. The role attributed to the Watch Tower presidency thus carries the same symbolic significance for the Witnesses as the papacy for Roman Catholics.

The structure of the movement and the intense loyalty demanded of each individual at every level demonstrates the characteristics of totalitarianism identified by Friedrich: namely, an elaborate total ideology making chiliastic claims with a promise of a utopian future, a single mass party, a monopoly of the means of communication and central direction and control of activity through bureaucratic co-ordination (Friedrich 1954). Although, historically, totalitarianism has been heavily over-laden with ideology, the Watch Tower Society controls millions of people who are denied freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly and freedom of conscience yet, paradoxically (or so it would seem to the outsider), devotees regard themselves as free, and non-members as oppressed or 'in shackles'. When people join the Watch Tower Society, they must adhere to its teachings, which means subjecting themselves to the theocratic rule of God himself and to judicial committees that claim the right to function as a literal government. In the Witnesses' eyes, these committees supersede secular courts since they act as divine judge and jury over eternal destiny (Reed 1989a). Why, then, do the Witnesses submit to this kind of authority?

Introducing modernity

I explained in Chapter 1 how, despite its international success, the Watch Tower Society has been largely neglected by academic writers. Other than the small amount of literature that addresses Watch Tower conversion and recruitment, most of the remaining sources focus on tension of one form or another between the Witnesses and secular states. With the exception of the historical examples of persecution of Watch Tower evangelists (which was often a result of their own attacks on official authorities), this tension mainly derives from the Witnesses' refusal to participate in activities pertaining to citizenship. Though some of the material raises important issues concerning the relationship between the Watch Tower community and secular society, most of this is written from a macro perspective and fails to examine the strategies which the Witnesses adopt for managing their beliefs in the various contexts of their daily lives. In addition to this, there is a serious shortage of academic literature on defection. Although Botting and Botting (1984) comment on the long-term effects of Watch Tower theology on former members, their discussion centres on those who have been disfellowshipped rather than on voluntary defectors. Most of the available material on defection is autobiographical and therefore lacks sociological analysis. There is, of course, always the potential for further research in every substantive area of social science, but by far my biggest concern about the current sociological literature on the Watch Tower Society is that there is little or no material on the relationship between the Witnesses and modernity. This is not to suggest that research to date is wholly empirical, but, where academics have attempted to theorise the current position of the movement, it is usually in relation to conversion and/or continuation of membership.[11] Search as I may in the sociological, anthropological and historical material, I find no attempt to link the beliefs and activities of the Witnesses to the general characteristics of modern secular society. This is where I believe the concept of modernity is useful.

The literature on modernity is, as anyone who has ever consulted it knows, abstract and dense. The concept has no simple definition and there

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is very little consensus among sociologists about when modern societies broke with traditional ones.[12] Modernity is complex and multi-layered and involves contrasting and contradictory principles. In the following account, I have outlined a number of issues that provide a backdrop for my analysis. Although the content of this chapter is by no means a blueprint of the modernity thesis, the literature emphasises three main spheres of modern life – the economic, the political and the cultural. Broadly speaking, the economic sphere involves the dominance of industrial capitalism; the political sphere involves the rise of liberal democracy and the consolidation of the nation state; and in the cultural sphere rationality replaces traditional authority (Jones 1993). Other literature focuses on the impact of these structural changes on the construction of modern identities (see, for example, Giddens 1991, Hall and Gieben 1992, Weeks 1992). More dynamical, perhaps, is the claim that the modern age is being replaced with a new social order which is characterised by flexible forms of technology (that is, post-Fordism), globalisation and a cultural ethos containing a radically new set of art forms, lifestyles and values.[13] Bauman, however, sees modernity as:

> a historical period that began in Western Europe with a series of profound social-structural and intellectual transformations of the seventeenth century and achieved its maturity: (1) as a cultural project with the growth of the Enlightenment; (2) as a socially accomplished form of life with the growth of industrial (capitalist and later communist) society.
>
> (Bauman 1991: 4)

There can be little doubt that industrialisation has altered the religious landscape in the West. Some modernity theorists suggest that capitalism has had a corrosive effect on our sense of moral order.[14] The rapid expansion in economic scale bolstered by technological innovations (particularly throughout the twentieth century) gave rise to the enormous loss of confidence in environmental matters and the subsequent emergence of a mood of uncertainty – a mood in which religion has taken on new and sometimes unexpected roles. On the one hand, market demands have required larger economic units in order to expand internationally while, on the other, people have felt inclined to reassert local and national identities in their search for psychological security. These contradictory economic and cultural pressures have brought about some significant changes in religious expression. Sociologist Paul Heelas argues that one of the most important consequences of modernity is the decline in mainstream religion and the emergence of a society in which the individuals are free to negotiate their own identities as consumers. For Heelas, modernity lies at the heart of the New Age movement, which he defines as:

> the faith which has been placed in obtaining progress by way of scientific expertise, together with the application of reason to the management of social and individual affairs; the faith which has come to be placed in the promises of consumer culture; the loss of faith in religion, in particular in northern Europe.
>
> (Heelas 1996: 135–6)

Similarly, Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sachs invites us to think about the consequences of the transition from traditional communities, where life chances, beliefs and identities were narrowly circumscribed, to a modern situation in which lifestyles, relationships and careers are open to a multiplicity of options:

> Modernity is the transition from fate to choice. At the same time, it dissolves the commitments and loyalties that once lay behind our choices. Technical reason has made us masters of matching means to ends. But it has left us inarticulate as to why we should choose one end rather than another. The values that once led us to regard one as intrinsically better than another – and which gave weight to words like 'good' and 'bad' – have disintegrated, along with the communities and religious traditions in which we learned them.
>
> (Sachs 1990: 6)

All these writers suggest that rationalisation has led to the increased differentiation of social institutions. Industrial societies with high levels of technology have seen the freeing of communities from religiously sanctioned controls and the emergence of autonomous individuals driven by their own values. The loss of community and the rise of individualism are regarded by modernity theorists as essential features of secularisation – a process which arguably has its roots in the 'modern' discourses of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[15] Since then, modernity has become identified with major changes associated with industrial capitalist societies including the rise of the secular state, the expansion of a capitalist economy, the formation of classes, the emergence of distinctive patriarchal relations between men and women, racial divisions and 'the transition from fate to choice'. Over a long period of time, so we are told, these processes brought about a materialistic social order governed by individualistic, instrumental and rational impulses. These historical trends and changing social patterns resulted in a variety of lifestyles and a huge proliferation of consumer products. Life chances both within and between nation states have since become enormously complex and asymmetrical. Throughout the twentieth century, modernity became a progressively global phenomenon (Hall and Gieben 1992).

Davie (1994) offers a historical analysis of religious expression in her examination of the relationship between the ordering of societies and the

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cultural forms with which they have become associated. Though she acknowledges that there are disagreements among historians about the origins of modernity, Davie argues that the shift from pre-industrial to production-based societies made heavy demands on organised religion. Migration away from the countryside to what eventually became large industrial conurbations brought about lower levels of religious practice than had previously been the case (particularly among the working classes) across the whole of Western Europe. Davie suggests that this was mainly because of the increasing detachment of many people from their previous churches. In the case of the sizeable minority who, for whatever reason, were able to find employment, Sunday in its traditional form as a day of rest had become like any other – a day of struggle. Davie goes on to explain how, since the eighteenth century, the scrutiny of all knowledge has led to widespread pessimism in both Eastern and Western societies. The undermining of the traditional formulas of the earlier period infected religious and secular life to the extent that creeds of both kinds began to be replaced by continuous self-questioning. As far as Britain is concerned, Davie argues that this has caused the mutation rather than the disappearance of religious life in a society which plays a crucial role in a global economy but which is still rooted in the Judaeo-Christian tradition.[16] Although Davie believes that the sacred will continue to persist, the forms in which it will do so will be fundamentally different from those of previous times. The various manifestations of religion at the beginning of the twenty-first century reflect the age of heterogeneity and self-fulfilment described by postmodernists. In short, individual freedom has led to the adoption of beliefs that are as unconventional as they are diverse.

The weakening of tradition and the rise of individualism have also blurred the boundaries between the public and the private spheres, both in our emotional lives and in our relationships with wider society. Individuals have become increasingly aware of their own ability (and often their own need) to construct new identities in a world which is atomised and fluid.[17] One does not need to have read modernity literature to realise that this is a condition that has caused some considerable concern to current scholars, as expressed in the following passage by Gehlen:

> Any individual transplanted into our times from the vigorously concrete cultures of antiquity, of the Middle Ages, or even of the baroque era, would find most astonishing the conditions of physical proximity, and the lack of structure and form, in which the people of our time are forced to vegetate; and would wonder at the elusiveness and abstractness of our institutions, which are mostly 'immaterial states of affairs'.
>
> (Gehlen 1980: 74)

Gehlen's commentary hints strongly at a culture without shared meanings. Particularly significant (at least for the purpose of this book) is the effect that

the 'elusiveness' to which he refers have had on religious beliefs. The abstract nature of social institutions and the absence of an overarching religious ideology has left us increasingly alone in an impersonal (some might say *heartless*) world (Lasch 1980, 1991). With the weakening of mainstream Christianity, monosemic beliefs have become ever more obscure and difficult to uphold, and this has led to significant changes in religious behaviour. The plurality of religious movements indicates that faith is now well and truly a matter of choice, and is no longer part of one's membership of society. Davie (1994) suggests that the majority of people lack discipline in their spiritual orientation in a society in which it is common to believe without belonging. This modern form of religious expression allows the individual to select at will from a variety of goods that can be tailored to meet his or her lifestyle.[18] Faced with so many rival movements – traditional, cultic and postmodern – no single religion can ever be the final arbiter of truth and falsity. In the absence of clear divisions and boundaries, a variety of religious beliefs and practices exist alongside monosemic and revelatory doctrines. The religious eclecticism of the modern world operates on the basis that we can *all* discern reality and that all versions of it are equally valid, as Bruce explains:

> Like the hominid creature drawn on charts of human evolution, who starts on the left-hand side as a small hunched hairy beast and gradually grows and sheds hair until he turns into the sleek human on the right, modernization has seen the individual grow and stand erect. From a stunted and ill-formed beast, subordinate to his Gods as he was subordinate to his political masters, the individual has risen in confidence, claiming first the right to make choices in ever-expanding spheres of behaviour and now insisting, . . . on the right to define reality and then, because the definitions clash, asserting relativism as the practical attitude.
>
> (Bruce 1995: 134)

The relativist's insistence that we are all now released from social constraints and free to decide what counts as knowledge poses a threat to those who extol rational thinking.[19] But the coexistence of individual sovereignty and rationality represents one of the contradictions to which modernity theorists draw our attention. The modernists' belief that it is both possible and desirable to produce valid knowledge has long been recognised as one of the main sources of dispute between modernity and postmodernity theorists.[20] However, modernity writers also contend that self-authoritarian, pluralistic societies are likely to undermine notions of rational knowledge. They call this condition *anti-foundationalism*. Individuals who yearn security in the modern world of contradictions often experience personal and emotional crises (Giddens 1990, 1991, Wagner 1994). The Watch Tower Society has managed to offer its devotees a meaningful identity at a

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time when free thought has shaken the very foundations on which substantive value systems are built. To the Witnesses, the modern world presents risk – risk of moral contamination, risk of physical harm and, ultimately, risk of eternal damnation. So what is the significance of their monotheistic system with its literal interpretation of scripture and non-negotiable prescription for salvation in a world where polysemic beliefs and absolutist cosmologies occupy the same stage?

Certainty in an uncertain world: the Witnesses' response to ambiguity

In his article on the modern world in the *Guardian* on 3 April 1997, journalist Douglas Rushkoff commented:

> It's a place where nothing is fixed and everything is uncertain. Facts are reduced to conjecture. Linear arguments are deconstructed into discontinuous obscurity. Stories no longer have absolute endings. Authorities have no advantage. Autonomy is the only rule. The holy maxim: empower thyself. So let the celebrations begin. We are liberated from linear thinking and its determinist conclusions. Now we can live in a reality where anything can happen. We don't need heroes, saints, martyrs or messiahs – especially not ones who enforce their messages with a terrifying day of judgment to divide the saved from the damned.

In this passage, Rushkoff offers a concise description of the anti-foundational society. But while the days of catechisms, commandments and absolutes may be regarded as a thing of the past for religions which allow individuals to construct their own identities, the Watch Tower Society claims to offer its adherents the same degree of existential security in the twenty-first century as it did 130 years ago. By renouncing modern notions of individual freedom and liberty, the Witnesses have won recruits year by year and managed to maintain their exclusivity throughout the world. The real problem that modernity poses for the Witnesses is the problem of *choice*.

For sociologist Peter Wagner (1994), modernity is haunted by ambiguity. Wagner argues that although the Enlightenment celebrated freedom and autonomy, modern societies have never allowed liberation in its fullest sense to take place. The state, for example, has always had to safeguard what have been regarded as important objectives of the modern project as well as maintain social order. Far from fulfilling the humanist promise of self-realisation, it has had to restrict practices and discipline individuals to such an extent that total human emancipation has become untenable. At the same time that societies have become marked by difference and plurality, the decline in traditional authority has made the construction of modern identities an ever more precarious and anxious exercise. One of the paradoxes of modernity is that the disembedding of people from their

social and cultural contexts at the end of the nineteenth century led to a situation in which the autonomy of one individual meant the exploitation of another. Wagner argues that this is part of the general ambiguity of modern *reasoning* and modern *practice* (1974: 22–4). The capacity to choose new ways of life has weakened tradition to such a degree that we are now living in what Berger calls 'the terror of chaos' (Berger 1977: 109), and it is against these uncertainties of modernity that the Witnesses seem to have launched their appeal. One way of surviving in a pluralistic world is to select one particular fragment of what is on offer and transform it into an all-encompassing worldview. Joining the Watch Tower community enables individuals to eschew those secular institutions that weaken identity. In this sense, the Witnesses have successfully constructed certainty and reduced the risks caused by confusion. But on what cultural resources have they drawn in order to achieve this?

As far as the *certainties* of modernity are concerned, Heelas contends that the enterprise culture of Thatcher and Reagan throughout the 1980s created a climate in which it was impossible (at least in principle) not to think of individuals as more autonomous and better able to take control of their own lives than ever before. This self-empowerment marks a shift away from the influence of traditional, overarching systems towards one's own inner sources of authority and responsibility. But if self-authority is an indicator of certainty, the Watch Tower Society hardly exemplifies it. The Witnesses' continued deference to external authority suggests that they are in no way inclined to gravitate in the same direction as those involved in the New Age. This is not to suggest, however, that the Witnesses' worldview is the complete antithesis to modernity (their movement was, after all, founded as a result of the rejection of orthodox Christianity) for, although world-renouncing tenets undoubtedly curtail life options, modernity theorists do not deny that even some so-called moderns continue to hold absolutist beliefs. In exercising their freedom to choose a post-traditional lifestyle, the Witnesses have solved the problem of finding ontological security in a world of uncertainty. For them, absolutism is the essence of a meaningful identity that eradicates risk and ambiguity with one fell swoop.

The Witnesses' version of truth is the answer to modern doubt. Reactions that advocate the complete transformation of society are part of a phenomenon which sociologists call *fundamentalism*.[21] This is a highly problematic concept (not least because it is used in a pejorative sense to stigmatise beliefs and behaviour that are considered widely unpopular or of which people disapprove), but can, if used accurately, help to illuminate the status of various social movements in the modern world. Some writers regard fundamentalism as a product of late capitalism, and it can take a variety of forms, both religious and non-religious (Davie 1994, 1995, Harris 1994).[22] The available literature suggests that fundamentalist movements arise out of conditions of uncertainty. Generally speaking, it is the passion and simplicity of fundamentalism that gives it its appeal. Fundamentalists are

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known for their preoccupation with an all-encompassing explanation of the world and their defence of essential truths. According to Davie, they evoke the reaffirmation of these truths 'within a situation that has been profoundly disturbed by the pressures of an expanding global economy and the effects that this has had on social, political or ideological life' (Davie 1995: 2–3).[23] Fundamentalism can thus be seen as a by-product of the modern age. *Religious* fundamentalists see God and the devil as active forces in everyday life and ascribe the most mundane events and decisions to divine authority. Most believe that we are not far from the final judgement where God will intervene, ridding the world of all its ills and rewarding the righteous with everlasting life. The main goal of religious fundamentalism is to protect society from moral decay. This is usually accompanied by a programme of radical reform. Fundamentalists often deliver public sermons to warn nation states – be they communist or secular humanist – of the dangerous forces of atheistic and liberal thinking. Their level of activity ranges from supporting right-wing causes to engaging in direct political action against certain social and moral issues (Davie 1995: 3–4).

The sociological literature on fundamentalism provides an appropriate starting point for an analysis of the Watch Tower movement. The Witnesses' literal interpretation of the Bible can be seen as a retreat to the certainties of fundamentalism by a people who are threatened by the loss of a stable sense of self. Hunter (1991) argues that, in the case of religious fundamentalism, sacred texts play an essential part in sealing beliefs and activities with the approval of divine authority. 'Given the moral and religious ambiguities that seem intrinsic to modern and post-modern thought and aesthetics, the text becomes the source of all religious and moral authority, establishing safe, definable and absolute standards of life and thought' (157–8).

The belief that the inerrant word of God has been correctly translated from original Greek and Hebrew manuscripts has earned Watch Tower theologians a deference not unlike that of papal infallibility. As far as the Witnesses are concerned, religious conviction is not just about attending meetings at their local place of worship, or even believing in the existence of an omniscient being; it is about substantiating beliefs with tangible evidence. Scriptural literalism signifies a *revealed* truth that guards against polysemic beliefs by presenting a one true interpretation of the Bible that holds good for the whole of humanity. Polysemy would seriously undermine the exegeses of Watch Tower interpreters.[24] The certainty that devotees construct from scriptural texts is a proverbial stick with which to beat moral danger. These texts enable them to consult Jehovah on every aspect of their lives.

Although religious fundamentalism is a relatively recent phenomenon, there can be no denying its tension with modernity. Bruce (1990) argues that fundamentalism is never likely to be a major social force because of the ideological dominance of science, technology and humanism, all of which are better able to accommodate cultural diversity. Fundamentalist tenets are

in direct conflict with most definitions of liberalism, and liberal thinking is anathema to the Witnesses as they step up their appeal for a puritanical lifestyle based on literal biblical interpretation. Though they are a product of modern conditions, the Witnesses have also successfully resisted some of the very features of the modern world theorised by the above scholars. Only an organisation as highly insulated as the Watch Tower Society would be able to enforce fundamentalist doctrines and a puritanical code of conduct with such a high degree of conformity. The outside world is clearly a world that requires careful management on the part of the Witnesses, who jeopardise their eternal salvation when they cross the organisation's ascetic boundaries. Millenarian beliefs act as a defence against those forces that threaten the fabric of the community. But since the Witnesses represent only a tiny percentage of the world's population, no empirical study of their social relations can constitute either an acknowledgement or a devastating critique of the modernity thesis. What such a study can do, however, is help us to understand how they perceive the world, and what they are able to offer prospective recruits.

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RESEARCH REPORT NO. 33

Conceptualising the prevention of child sexual abuse

Final report

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June 2015

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Introduction

Significant numbers of Australian children have experienced neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse. The adverse, long-term consequences of these experiences are well demonstrated in the research literature and well recognised by the policy and practice communities. It is also now well recognised that responding to abuse and neglect after it has been detected is only one aspect of prevention. Indeed, the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009–2020 (Council of Australian Governments [COAG], 2009b), which provides a long-term strategy for children's wellbeing and safety, and advocates a shift in focus from statutory tertiary responses to locating child abuse prevention and child safety within a public health model. In this approach, primary prevention and universal supports for all families are the central strategies out of which more intensive interventions should flow. In other words, the focus needs to be on preventing abuse and neglect *before* it occurs.

The six supporting outcomes of the National Framework reflect this focus on prevention, particularly outcomes 1, 2 and 5 (outcomes 3 and 4 reflect early intervention and tertiary responses respectively).[a] While these outcomes address all forms of child abuse (i.e., emotional abuse, physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse and exposure to domestic violence), child sexual abuse is also addressed in a separate outcome—outcome 6. The key strategies for outcome 6 are to:

- raise awareness of child sexual abuse and the online exploitation of children;
- enhance prevention strategies for child sexual abuse;
- strengthen law enforcement and judicial processes in response to child sexual abuse and exploitation; and
- ensure survivors of sexual abuse have access to effective treatment and appropriate support (COAG, 2009b).

Outcome 6 thus clearly acknowledges that the dynamics and drivers of child sexual abuse and exploitation may not be the same as other forms of child abuse, and that preventing and responding to sexual abuse may require different strategies.

In early 2013, the Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS) and PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) collaborated to develop a project proposal to explore the specific dynamics of child sexual abuse (CSA) and their implications for prevention and early intervention. AIFS was subsequently commissioned by the Department of Social Services to develop a framework synthesising the dynamics of child sexual abuse based on the available research, and subsequently to identify the key determinants underpinning these behaviours. This high-level overview would then enable us to identify gaps and key directions for primary prevention and early intervention.

The overall aims of this project were to consider the specific dynamics of child sexual abuse and their implications for prevention and early intervention. Specifically we aimed to:

a The six supporting outcomes are: (1) children live in safe and supportive families and communities; (2) children and families access adequate support to promote safety and intervene early; (3) risk factors for child abuse and neglect are addressed; (4) children who have been abused or neglected receive the support and care they need for their safety and wellbeing; (5) Indigenous children are supported and safe in their families and communities; and (6) child sexual abuse and exploitation is prevented and survivors receive adequate support (COAG, 2009b).

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- document and conceptualise the broad range of behaviours that constitute "child sexual abuse" and exploitation, and the contexts in which these occur;
- identify the factors and facilitators associated with the various forms of perpetration of child sexual abuse;
- map current prevention, early intervention and therapeutic responses against this analysis; and
- assess key points of prevention and intervention in light of identified risk factors and facilitators of child sexual abuse and apparent gaps in prevention.

Project description

Project components

While the major component of the project has been a synthesis of the literature, we also undertook the following additional activities:

- an expert roundtable with high-level police representatives responsible for child safety in their jurisdiction;
- an expert roundtable with researchers and practitioners involved in the child protection, sexual abuse and treatment fields;
- a desktop review of current policy and program approaches to preventing child sexual abuse, including any available evaluations; and
- further one-on-one consultations with key individuals.

These activities have assisted us in making sense of the research evidence and were essential to the process of identifying key directions for prevention efforts.

Our approach

Locating prevention in a public health framework

Our thinking on prevention, and particularly primary prevention, is informed by a public health framework for violence prevention and the literature on social determinants of health and wellbeing (Box 1 on page viii). This framework comprises three aspects. First, it uses a systematic approach to defining and understanding the problem in order to develop and evaluate interventions aimed at reducing that harm. Second, the framework sees prevention as comprising three levels: primary, secondary and tertiary. These levels move from universal strategies to change the underlying conditions *at the population level* that give rise to child sexual abuse occurring to increasingly targeted strategies with at-risk populations to working with those who have experienced or have perpetrated sexual abuse. Third, it uses a social-ecological framework to describe the nested relationships between individuals, families, communities and the wider social environment. Box 1 provides a detailed explanation of the public health framework.

Focus on learning from perpetration

A key lens in this project was a focus on the factors associated with *perpetration* (i.e., what causes individuals to commit sexual offences against children and young people). Perpetration of sexual abuse remains under-examined within the broader child maltreatment field. As noted by the International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ISPCAN, 2013):

> Historically in the child protection field, more attention has been paid to the management of the victim or the potential victim of child abuse than to the potential or actual perpetrator of violence. A focus on girls as potential victims of sexual abuse has resulted in programmes across many countries that aim to empower girls as prevention strategy. At best, their effectiveness is unclear. (p. 4)

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Box 1: Public health framework: Key elements

The public health approach to prevention

The public health approach aims to provide the maximum benefit for the largest number of people. It adopts a systematic process for achieving this by:

- defining the problem through the systematic collection of information about the magnitude, scope, characteristics and consequences of violence—this step aims to understand the "who", "what", "when", "where" and "how";
- understanding why abuse occurs in terms of the causes and correlates, the factors that increase or decrease risk, and the factors that could be modified through interventions;
- developing and testing prevention and intervention strategies, as well as evaluating them for process learnings and effectiveness; and
- "scaling up" by implementing effective and promising interventions in a wide range of settings. The effects of these interventions on risk factors and the target outcome should be monitored, and their effects and cost-effectiveness should be evaluated.

Levels of prevention

In the context of sexual abuse, the public health approach conceptualises three levels of prevention:

- *Primary prevention*—This refers to strategies aimed at preventing violence *before* it occurs. It includes strategies that aim to tackle the underlying causes of abuse and bolster protective factors. Its focus is on population-wide effects.
- *Secondary prevention/early intervention*—This refers to programs that involve the early detection of risk or early manifestations of the problem. In terms of child abuse, this can involve interventions with populations that have one or more risk factors associated with child maltreatment, such as poverty, parental substance abuse, young parental age, parental mental health concerns, and parental or child disabilities. Programs may target services for communities or neighbourhoods that have a high incidence of any or all of these risk factors.
- *Tertiary prevention*—These are responses set in motion *after* the violence or abuse has occurred. They aim to prevent the consequences of violence and include, for example, child protection responses, counselling and trauma services, justice responses, and perpetrator behaviour change programs.

The social-ecological model

An understanding of sexual abuse as having multiple causes is best conceptualised in the social-ecological model, demonstrating the interactive nature of a range of key factors. Developed initially by Bronfenbrenner (1977), the social-ecological model describes the interrelatedness of different spheres of social life and the interactions between individuals and their environments. The social-ecological model has been extremely influential in conceptualising child protection responses. The ecological dimension refers to the following spheres:

- *Individual-level influences* (also called the microsystem)—These are personal history factors that increase the likelihood of an individual becoming a victim or perpetrator of sexual abuse (e.g., alcohol and/or drug use, attitudes and beliefs that support sexual interaction with children, impulsive and other antisocial tendencies, hostility towards women, and a childhood history of sexual abuse or witnessing family violence).
- *Interpersonal relationship-level influences* (exosystem)—These factors increase risk as a result of relationships with peers, intimate partners and family members. Peers, partners and family members can reinforce attitudes and shape the individual's behaviour and range of experiences.
- *Community-level influences* (mesosystem)—These are factors that increase risk due to community and social environments, and inform an individual's experiences and relationships with schools, workplaces and neighbourhoods.

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- *Societal-level influences* (macrosystem)—These are larger, structural factors such as government policies or laws that influence attitudes and behaviours; for example, gender inequality, religious or cultural belief systems, societal norms, and economic or social policies that create or sustain gaps and tensions between groups of people (adapted from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2004, pp. 4–5).

These levels of classification are not rigid or mutually exclusive. Groups that might be specifically the target of a primary prevention activity may include those at risk of either experiencing or perpetrating violence. Tertiary prevention, such as developing a strong criminal justice response to child sexual abuse, can support primary prevention messages. In addition, many services are involved in all levels of prevention.

For this project the key questions are:

- What range of behaviours, relationships, and circumstances are associated with the *perpetration* of child sexual abuse?
- What risk factors are associated with these dynamics?
- What do these risk factors suggest about:
  - — early intervention efforts with at-risk populations; and
  - — preventing sexual abuse from occurring in the first place?

Figure 1 provides a visual representation of this approach.

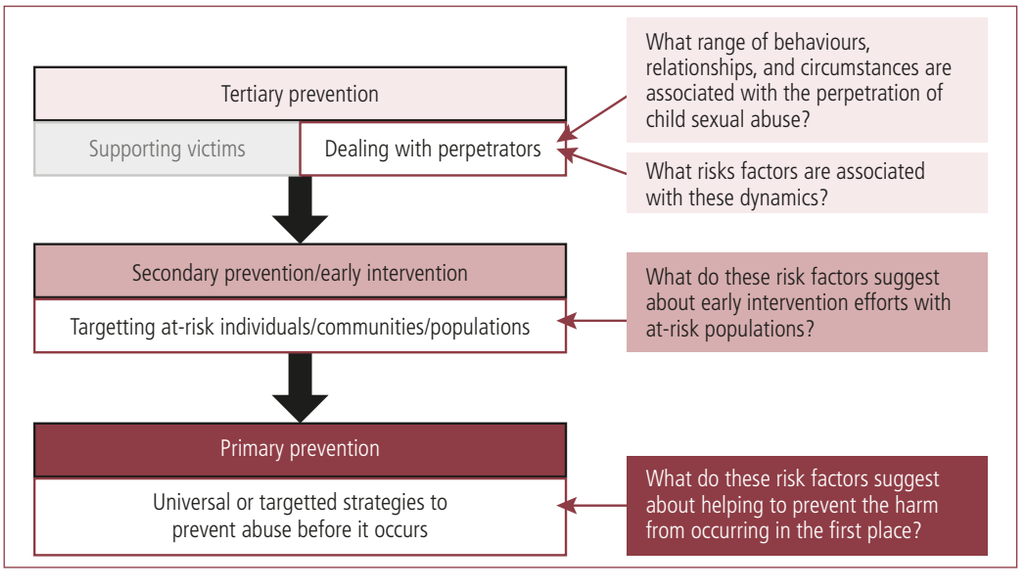


Figure 1: Approach to linking risk factors of perpetration to prevention efforts

Limitations

The intention of this project was not to provide an exhaustive account of all forms of child sexual abuse and exploitation, but rather to consolidate the key themes and findings across the literature into a high-level conceptual mapping of:

- the dynamics of child sexual abuse (i.e., the circumstances, relationships and settings in which child sexual abuse and exploitation occur);
- the range of factors and conditions associated with these behaviours; and
- the implications of these for primary prevention and early intervention efforts.

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We necessarily drew on a wide range of literature reflecting a diversity of disciplines, populations, methodologies, and measures in order to do this. Our aim was to identify common findings and themes in order to create an overall map of the dynamics of child sexual abuse and to identify directions for prevention efforts. As such, critique of methodology as per a more traditional literature review is limited.

It is also important to note that we have looked at both adult offenders of child sexual abuse as well as literature on young people who sexually abuse. This is emphatically not to suggest that adolescents with sexually abusive behaviours are somehow "mini sex offenders"—the empirical, clinical and practice literature is clear in pointing out that the treatment needs of young people cannot be based on work with adult offenders, and that the developmental and trauma needs of this population need to be acknowledged (Nisbet, Rombouts, & Smallbone, 2005; Pratt, Miller, & Boyd, 2012). However, as our focus is on behaviours, settings, and contexts, it is important to include it in our mapping.

Report structure

Part A synthesises the available research in relation to:

- prevalence data and literature review methodology;
- dynamics and contexts of child sexual abuse;
- risk factors for child sexual abuse; and
- current approaches to child sexual abuse prevention.

Drawing on the key findings and themes arising from this synthesis activity, Part B:

- identifies the conceptual, policy and practice challenges that the prevention of child sexual abuse presents;
- presents a conceptual mapping of dynamics associated with child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation; and
- outlines key directions that could be taken to strengthen prevention strategies.

PART A

Background literature

A1 Background data

A1.1 Prevalence of child sexual abuse in Australia and internationally

In a meta-analysis of global prevalence rates of sexual abuse, Stoltenborgh, van IJzendoorn, Euser, and Bakermans-Kranenburg (2011) reviewed 331 studies published between 1980 and 2008, with a collective total of nearly one million participants. However, there was no consistent definition of child sexual abuse, with many studies leaving the definition of sexual abuse up to the individual participant. The results of the meta-analysis were that 18% of females and 8% of males reported a history of child sexual abuse, with higher rates found in studies using self-reports than informant or crime statistics. The researchers were unsure if the higher numbers for females were because they were more likely to suffer child sexual abuse, or if males were less likely to report or disclose experiences of child sexual abuse, or if it was a combination of the two. What the meta-analysis did indicate was that it took much longer for males than females to disclose sexual abuse (often taking 10 years or longer to disclose). The authors also found that the prevalence of child sexual abuse for females was higher in individualistic cultures, such as Australia and New Zealand, than in collectivist cultures, which they suggest is potentially due to higher rates of disclosure in the former. The prevalence rates for Australia were 22% for females and 7% for males (in comparison, the world mean was calculated at 17% and 7% respectively).

Other research by Dunne, Purdie, Cook, Boyle, and Najman (2003) noted that in Australia the "overall impression is that risk of sexual abuse faced by children and adolescents has remained stable for males, and may have increased for females" (p. 142), suggesting that females were more likely to be victims of child sexual abuse than males in Australia. Dunne et al.'s research presented findings that penetrative abuse is three times higher for females than males (12% and 4% respectively), and that having a history of being sexually abused as a child was higher for females in general across all ages between 18 to 60 years than it was for males.

Nationally representative figures estimated by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (2006) put the proportion of Australians who had been sexually abused before the age of 15 years at 12% for females (956,6000) and 5% for males (337,400). Two-thirds of all child sexual abuse victims (68%) reported being sexually abused before the age of 11. More than 90% of female victims and 80% of male victims knew the perpetrator. However, during their life course females were more likely to have been sexually abused by family members in comparison to males:

- Fathers, step-fathers and other male relatives (including siblings) made up more than half (52%) of those who sexually abused girls, compared to approximately one-fifth (21%) of those who abused boys.
- Over a quarter of boys (27.3%) were sexually abused by "another known person"[1] compared to 11.0% of girls.
- Nearly 1 in 5 males under the age of 15 had been sexually abused by a stranger (18%), compared to fewer than 1 in 10 females aged under 15 years (9%).

1 "Other known person" includes acquaintance, neighbour, counsellor or psychologist or psychiatrist, ex-boyfriend or girlfriend, doctor, teacher, minister, priest or clergy and prison officer.

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These figures suggest that boys are abused in a more diverse array of settings and relationships, compared to girls, for whom family relationships are the most common contexts. Findings from community-based prevalence studies conducted in Australia, with comprehensive measures on types of sexual abuse, found that males had prevalence rates of 1–8% for penetrative abuse, and 6–16% for non-penetrative abuse, while females had prevalence rates of 4–12% for penetrative abuse and 14–36% for non-penetrative abuse (Price-Robertson, 2012).

These figures suggest that:

- experiences of child sexual abuse are common for both females and males; and
- there may be different dynamics of victimisation experienced by boys compared to girls.

The following section considers these dynamics in more detail, with specific consideration given to relationships and contexts, and how perpetrators exploit victim vulnerabilities.

A1.2 Victimisation and perpetration: How perpetrators exploit victim vulnerabilities

For the past three decades, child sexual abuse prevention in Australia and in many parts of the world has focused on how to prevent victimisation of children rather than preventing perpetration. Putman (2003) undertook a review of the literature on risk factors for child sexual abuse and identified the following:

- *Gender*—Girls are at 2.5 to 3 times higher risk of child sexual abuse than boys. Approximately 22–29% of child sexual abuse victims are male.
- *Age*—The risk for sexual abuse rises with age. Over a third of victims are aged 12 or older, a quarter between the ages of 8 and 11.
- *Disabilities*—Having a physical disability is associated with increased risk, particularly where the child's perceived credibility is impaired (e.g., children with a visual, hearing or mental impairment). Factors for increased vulnerability include dependency, institutional care and communication difficulties, with boys being overrepresented in this cohort.
- *Socio-economic status*—This does not appear to have the same relationship with sexual abuse as it has with physical abuse; however, a higher number of cases reported to child protection services are from among those with low socio-economic status.
- *Family*—The absence of one or both parents, parental impairments (such as maternal illness or parental alcoholism), social isolation and punitive parenting increase risk.
- *Intergenerational transmission*—Putman (2003) argued that little is known about the intergenerational child sexual abuse due to research methodologies that collapse all forms of child abuse together. However, a review by Tarczon (2012) found that a maternal history of childhood sexual abuse is the single strongest predictor of sexual abuse in the next generation, with a daughter's risk of abuse being nearly four times greater when her mother reports a history of sexual abuse.

Davies and Jones (2013) studied 138 cases of young girls (average age 15 years) presenting to a forensic examination centre in the United Kingdom. Their research detailed the victim vulnerabilities that perpetrators look for when searching for their victims. Factors associated with victimisation were found to include:

- use of alcohol or drugs in the family or by the victim;
- having a physical disability;
- being cared for by someone other than parents;
- having a learning disability;
- having a history of sexual activity; and
- having a history of psychiatric support.

Research with perpetrators has found that child molesters target vulnerable children who exhibit certain traits, behaviours or characteristics that perpetrators feel they will be able to manipulate. Other perpetrators look for children with a disability or requiring care away from their immediate family.

A2 Reviewing the literature on child sexual abuse

A2.1 Approach taken in reviewing the literature

We first undertook a review of the national and international research literature published since 2000. There were two key research questions that drove this task:

- What range of experiences and behaviours constitute child sexual abuse and exploitation?
- What are the drivers, risk factors and correlates of child sexual abuse and exploitation across: (a) different types of perpetration; and (b) across different dimensions of a social-ecological framework?

The development of a picture of child sexual abuse based on empirical research was then used as a basis to consider the following question:

- What does this suggest about the key elements of holistic prevention and intervention responses?

To assist us in these tasks, we convened two professional expert forums: one with police/criminal justice professionals, and another with practitioners and researchers (see the Appendix for details). These forums highlighted a number of issues in how professionals think about and engage in the prevention and early intervention of child sexual abuse.

A2.2 Outcome of this approach in the scoping

For this literature review, peer-reviewed articles, books, grey literature and policy documents were identified and accessed to provide the basis for the research synthesis presented in Parts A and B of this report.

Overall, over 300 documents were identified, accessed and compiled into an EndNote reference library. The purpose of this library was to create an in-depth database of the most pertinent literature relating to child sexual abuse perpetration and primary prevention. This library does not contain policy documents or other grey literature, only peer-reviewed articles, unpublished PhD theses and books. Although the number of identified materials may appear high, after consulting the literature, there were gaps in the topics and themes covered by the materials (which were often acknowledged by the writers themselves) due to a lack of research in to child sexual abuse perpetration prevention. The majority of the literature compiled was also non-Australian, primarily from the United Kingdom, the United States, Ireland and Canada.

Databases

Numerous databases were searched for relevant peer-reviewed articles, including the EBSCO social sciences databases, PubMed, InformIT and ProQuest. Grey literature, books and policy documents were sourced through Google and Google Scholar searches of relevant keywords, outlined below. Searches were limited to material published after 2000, although some pre-2000 literature was included on a case-by-case basis; for example, Finkelhor's theory of child sexual abuse perpetration, which was published in 1984.

Keyword searches

An initial keyword search was undertaken with approximately 60 variations of identified keywords to form the basis of the literature that would be accessed for this literature review. The main keywords that were used initially included "primary prevention", "child sexual abuse", "CSA", "perpetration prevention", "risk factors", "protective factors", "types of offending", "public health" and "prevention strategies". Keywords were altered to reflect how the literature defined and wrote about sexual abuse and perpetration, and new searches were undertaken with the reworked keywords.

A2.3 Key issues in interpreting literature

There were several issues identified with interpreting the literature for this report. The key issues were:

- a lack of consensus on the definition of child sexual abuse;
- varying sample sizes;
- selection bias in perpetrator samples; and
- confusion in the classification of paedophiles, hebephiles and ephebophiles, as opposed to child molesters more generally.[2]

Definition of child sexual abuse

Across the reviewed literature there is much difference in how child sexual abuse is defined. Government policy documents tend to use the legal definitions of sexual abuse against a child, and these are often fragmented; for example, in Victorian criminal law, incest is separated out from persistent sexual abuse or indecent sexual abuse, and child sexual abuse can only be perpetrated against individuals under the age of 16 years. Australia's other states and territories also have different laws pertaining to the sexual abuse of children, and the age of the victim when the sexual abuse took place, and some may refer to child sexual abuse as incest or as sexual abuse.

Some of the academic literature (especially those published in peer-reviewed journals) put limitations on the definition of child sexual abuse; for example, that the perpetrator has to be at least 5 years older than the victim for it to meet the study criteria. Other definitions do not include non-contact behaviour (for example, online communications between victim and perpetrator), or non-penetrative actions. Therefore, it was important to not presume that the definition of child sexual abuse would be standard across the literature that was consulted.

Research reports conducted by larger institutions and organisations tended to have a broader definition of child sexual abuse, based on the public health model. The World Health Organization (WHO) (1999) definition of child sexual abuse is the most commonly used one in this area:

> The involvement of a child in sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent to, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared and cannot give consent, or that violates the laws or social taboos of society. Child sexual abuse is evidenced by this activity between a child and an adult or another child who by age or development is in a relationship of responsibility, trust or power, the activity being intended to gratify or satisfy the needs of the other person. This may include but is not limited to:
>
> - the inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity;
> - the exploitative use of a child in prostitution or any unlawful sexual activity;
> - the exploitative use of a child in a pornographic performance and materials. (p. 62)

2 Paedophiles are individuals who are sexually attracted to pre-pubescent children. Hebephiles are those individuals who are attracted to children at the age of puberty (11–14 years). Ephebophiles are attracted to children in later adolescence. However, the term paedophile is often used in research literature, to describe all individuals sexually attracted to children under the age of 16 years. These are psychopathological classifications, while child molester or child sexual abuser is a socio-legal classification.

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Other international organisations and reports into child sexual abuse (e.g., Averdijk, Muller-Johnson, & Eisher, 2012; ISPCAN, 2011; UBS Optimus Foundation, 2013) use the WHO definition of child sexual abuse where there may be competing legal definitions across states or countries, and because this definition also includes a description of potential perpetrators. This description of perpetrators defines the role that a perpetrator may have in the victim's life; however, it is not a prescriptive definition of perpetrators.

As part of our research, we also used the WHO definition when searching for literature, due to its broad nature. There was also no guidance from the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009–2020 (COAG, 2009b) regarding a definition of child sexual abuse as it does not actually define what child sexual abuse is or who potential victims and perpetrators may be.

Sample sizes

The majority of the research on perpetrators of child sexual abuse has been conducted with small sample sizes, and this is especially true for the limited number of currently available Australian studies. The smallest was a sample of one (a case study), with several studies using samples of between 10 and 150 perpetrators.[3] Sample sizes are often small due to perpetrators wishing to prevent further incrimination for crimes they may not be in prison for, perpetrators continuing to express innocence even when incarcerated, prisoner release while the study is underway, and/or disqualification from the study due to other factors. In order to assess the quality of the studies and determine their usability for this report, we also consulted the methodology that was used by the researchers.

Perpetrator samples

Not only were perpetrator sample sizes small, but they also had some selection bias; that is, results may have been affected by the choice of participants, which in many child sexual abuse studies are often not random, and lead to conclusions being drawn that may not be generalisable for a broader population. The majority of the studies (with the exception of the Project Prevention Dunkelfeld research) were undertaken with convicted and currently imprisoned child sexual abuse perpetrators, thus limiting the conclusions that could be drawn. As several researchers have pointed out, incarcerated child sexual abuse offenders (who make up a small proportion of child sexual abuse perpetrators, as only a minority are charged, prosecuted and found guilty) may not be representative of child molesters and paedophiles in general.

In studies that were testing child sexual abuse prevention, the research was conducted with perpetrators who had a history of child sexual abuse perpetration. However, these studies did not take in to account the difference between risk factors for perpetration in the first instance, as opposed to those that lead to re-offending; therefore the studies tended to examine only risk factors for re-offending. Likewise, there were no studies with only perpetrators who were Indigenous, or from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, thereby making the findings from the published research difficult to generalise across various Australian community populations.

Paedophiles vs child molesters

Feelgood and Schaefer (2011) argued that it is important to differentiate between paedophiles and detected child sex offenders. As they noted, paedophilia is a psychopathological classification, while child molester or child sexual abuser is a socio-legal classification, and the comparison of the two is fraught with difficulties. Their study examined offenders from the Prevention Project Dunkelfeld in Berlin (undetected, or "dark figure" offenders), who gain support and help in dealing with their feelings for children. Feelgood and Schaefer noted that the Dunkelfeld offender is very different from the "average" child sex offender who is incarcerated (see Box A1 on page 7).

3 Research based on victims of child sexual abuse tends to have bigger sample sizes.

Box A1: Characteristics of typical Dunkelfeld offenders

Dunkelfeld offenders:

- are well-educated (high numbers with postgraduate education) in comparison to detected offenders;
- have few or lower levels of psychiatric disturbance than detected offenders;
- are predominantly paedophiles as opposed to detected offenders, of whom only 25–50% can be classed as paedophiles;
- have male rather than female victims;
- are politically active; and
- are unlikely to have children.

See section A6.2 for more information about Project Dunkelfeld.

The Dunkelfeld offender is unlikely to be a parent but is more likely to fall in to the categories of authority figures, strangers, or online or adolescent abusers. Intra-familial child sexual abuse is considered unlikely due to their lack of sexual interest in adults (often preventing them from developing relationships with women with children or having families of their own) (Beier, Ahlers et al., 2009; Feelgood & Schaefer, 2011). The wide discrepancy in Dunkelfeld offender motivation, characteristics, behaviours and risk factors means that it is difficult to categorise their child sexual abuse into one simple category.

Therefore, there may be differences between paedophiles and child molesters more generally, and the two terms cannot be used interchangeably. Although some paedophiles are child molesters, not all child molesters are paedophiles, as later sections on theories of child sexual abuse perpetration will discuss. We will not differentiate between, for instance, paedophiles working as teachers who sexually abuse children and teachers who opportunistically begin to sexually abuse children under their care and supervision. Instead, the focus will be on the broader context and power relationship between the adult and child.

Key points on the distinction between paedophiles and child molesters are:

- the differences between the two groups affects the prevention programs that are implemented;
- it is important to look at the context in which the offending behaviour is occurring (e.g., authority and care settings vs online) as that will influence the effectiveness of prevention programs; and
- the two terms are not interchangeable—not all paedophiles are child molesters and vice versa.

A2.4 Key themes in the literature

Diversity of perpetrator characteristics

Both the literature and our engagement with stakeholders highlighted the diversity of relationships, contexts and perpetrator characteristics involved in child sexual abuse. A limited array of perpetration characteristics includes:

- adult male family members engaging in intra-familial abuse;
- adolescents (or even children) who engage in sexually concerning or abusive behaviour—within or beyond the family;
- teachers, guardians and other non-familial carers abusing children in their care;
- adult men targeting pubescent girls for sexual interactions; and
- the production and circulation of child exploitation material ("child pornography").

The literature to date has not brought these diverse circumstances together to consider how they differ; what, if anything, these dynamics have in common; and whether there are shared

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risk factors across them. Nor does the literature necessarily offer a way of grouping these circumstances. The consequence is that prevention strategies (e.g., teaching children protective behaviours or cybersafety programs) may be useful in targeting some aspects of child sexual abuse but not others.

We have attempted to do just this. By grouping the range of dynamics in child sexual abuse, we have identified two key dimensions: *relationships* and *contexts or settings*. These are not mutually exclusive, but are used to highlight the idea that some forms of child sexual abuse are made possible and shaped by the relationships between victims and perpetrators, while other forms of child sexual abuse are significantly shaped by the settings and contexts in which victims and perpetrators meet or engage. This is highlighted by the notion that sexual abuse is only possible at the convergence or interaction of two factors: the person (both victim and offender) and the situation (context or setting) (see Smallbone, Marshall, & Wortley, 2008).

Relationships

While undertaking this research, we identified the following relationships within which sexual abuse can be committed. These can be grouped in terms of being familial/kinship, non-familial but known relationships, or strangers with no prior relationship with the victim.

Child sexual abuse occurring within familial relationships is considered to be the most prevalent form of sexual abuse (with the exception of one or two researchers who disagree with the statistics). Within this category, though father–daughter sexual abuse is often thought of as the most prevalent form of incest, there is research that suggests that sibling sexual abuse occurs at a similar or higher rate. In fact, some studies suggest that up to 43% of intra-familial abuse is between siblings. Although victim–offender profiles of sibling abuse suggest a similar incidence rate as adult–child sexual abuse (92% of offenders are men, with 71% of victims being girls), there is also a high rate of male–male sibling sexual abuse (accounting for a quarter of offences) (Stathopoulos, 2012). According to Rosenman and Rodgers (2004), in their study of the PATH Through Life Project with over 7,000 participants around Canberra, only 1% of the survey population who experienced sexual abuse as children experienced parent–child sexual abuse ("parent" meaning the biological parent of the victimised child).[4] As with the ABS Personal Safety Survey and Stoltenberg et al.'s (2011) analysis, the PATH Through Life Project found that more females than males reported experiencing child sexual abuse.

Contexts and settings

There are specific contexts within which sexual abuse occurs, some within the relationships mentioned above. Child sexual abuse occurring within institutional settings (including residential, care, education, sporting or religious organisations) generally see higher rates of boys being victims of abuse than girls; however, girls are victims of teacher–student sexual abuse at a higher rate than boys (Knoll, 2010; Moulden, Firestone, Kingston, & Wexler, 2010; Sullivan & Beech, 2004). Generally, sexual abuse committed by educators occurs at a similar rate globally. In the American Association for University Women (2001) survey, 10% of students between 8th and 11th grade reported sexual abuse by a teacher, while a similar Israeli survey found that 8% of students reported sexual abuse perpetrated by a teacher (Knoll, 2010).

It is difficult to quantify online child sexual abuse perpetration rates, but there have been attempts to discover how many children are approached and sexually solicited online. One study of 10–17 year olds found that 20% had been approached and sexually solicited in the past year (Beech, Elliott, Birgden, & Findlater, 2008). The crossover between online consumption of child exploitation material and offline sexual abuse perpetration was estimated at between 15% and 55%.

4 The study only researched what forms of abuse during childhood were perpetrated against survey respondents at home. One per cent reported parental sexual abuse (including non-biological or parental authority figures). No other forms of sexual abuse (e.g., stranger-perpetrated or extra-familial relationships) were inquired about.

A3 Relationships and contexts of child sexual abuse perpetration (by adults)

A3.1 Intra-familial child sexual abuse

The literature indicates that intra-familial child sexual abuse is considerably different to other forms of child sexual abuse. Key findings indicate that for intra-familial abuse:

- girls are more likely than boys to be victims (although boys do make up a substantial number of sexual abuse victims within familial relationships);
- it tends to occur more frequently and over a longer period than child sexual abuse that is extra-familial or perpetrated in contexts and settings outside of the home;
- the sexual acts are more intrusive (e.g., more penetrative acts) and cause greater emotional and physical injury to the victim;
- it starts at an earlier age;
- it can occur with other forms of maltreatment (e.g., physical abuse); and
- often the abused children and their families are unknown to child protection authorities.

We have further broken down the research into abuse that occurs in biologically related families and blended families.

Biologically related families

Child sexual abuse occurring within biological familial relationships not only includes the biological father as the possible perpetrator but also siblings, mothers, grandparents, cousins, aunts and uncles.

Research into child sexual abuse committed purely within and across familial relationships is difficult to find as the majority of research targets currently incarcerated perpetrators, who often have victims from within their own families as well as unrelated children.

Familial relationships present many more opportunities for offending than other forms of relationships. Familial relationships also allow for sexual abuse to have an earlier onset, happen more frequently and for a longer duration than sexual abuse occurring within other perpetrator–victim relationships, and be more intrusive (e.g., more penetrative acts) (Fischer & McDonald, 1998; Smallbone & Wortley, 2004; Wakeling, Webster, Moulden, & Marshall, 2007). Intra-familial offenders progress more quickly to serious sexual acts than when sexual offences are committed in interpersonal relationships (on average in less than 30 days) (Fischer & McDonald, 1998).

Blended families

Although blended families are defined by some as families that contain one step-parent and a joint child between the biological parent and the step-parent, in this report we include families where there is only a step-parent and not necessarily any new offspring between the biological parent and the step-parent. Although many sexual abuse cases include fathers abusing their children, Black, Heyman, and Slep (2001) argued that intra-familial abuse is highest in single-parent families or "blended" families (e.g., biological parent and step-parent as main caregivers).

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There are also data that children of mothers who were dissatisfied with their marriages were seven times more likely to be abused within the family than mothers who were satisfied with their marriages (Black et al., 2001). Care needs to be taken in interpreting such findings; there is a risk that it may be misinterpreted to suggest that family formation per se is a risk factor for child sexual abuse, and the research literature appears to be in disagreement over whether there is any greater risk of sexual abuse for children in blended families over biological families. Wakeling et al. (2007) found there was no distinct difference in blended versus biologically related families with regard to actual perpetration numbers. They also noted that one UK study found that while child sexual abuse is reported at a higher rate within blended families, on investigation, the biological parent had perpetrated the abuse *prior* to a change in family circumstances. McRee (2008), on the other hand, found that the presence of a non-related, non-biological adult increased the risk for physical and sexual abuse when compared to families with two biological parents or a single parent and no other adults. However, McRee's data were 20 years old at the time of their review. A Dutch study presented data that suggested that there is no difference in child sexual abuse rates between blended and biological families (4% for both groups) (van IJzendoorn, Euser, Prinzie, Juffer, & Bakermans-Kranenburg, 2009). Interestingly, this study found that adoption was a protective factor for child sexual abuse and other maltreatments (van IJzendoorn et al., 2009), and similar results have been recorded when surveying foster care situations (Euser, Alink, Tharner, van Ijezendoorn, & Bakerman-Kranenburg, 2013).

A3.2 Extra-familial child sexual abuse

Research into purely extra-familial abusers—neighbours or acquaintances of the victim's family—is limited due to the reasons outlined in the earlier section on literature limitations.

There are a limited number of researchers who believe that non-familial relationships account for the majority of child sexual abuse, and that strangers and authority figures victimise girls at a higher rate than boys (Bolen, 2000). This is contrary to other research in this field and is especially in opposition to research showing that boys are more likely to be victimised by strangers or within institutions than girls (Foster, Boyd, & O'Leary, 2012). However, Bolen did discuss in great detail risk factors for victimisation and how these are linked to the offender's age and relationship to the victim, as well as the location of the abuse. According to Bolen, children under the age of 13 years had a higher likelihood of being sexually abused by acquaintances of the family, family friends and neighbours than children over the age of 13 years. The majority of such abuse also took place within the victim's home or nearby. The abusers shared characteristics in age, though Bolen argued that girls between the ages of 10 and 13 years were more likely to be abused by an offender under the age of 20 years than were children under the age of 9 years.

A3.3 Authority and care contexts

People who sexually abuse children while in a position of authority and care include:

- educators (including administrators and other staff employed by schools);
- clergy;
- sports coaches;
- adults working in residential care facilities (e.g., for children with disabilities or children in transition between homes); and
- adults in any position of authority over children (e.g., in youth organisations).

Key findings from the literature include that:

- child sexual abuse in these contexts is often due to a combination of the individual's psychology as well as the opportunities afforded by the situation;
- perpetrators in these contexts are often difficult to screen for due to a lack of previous criminal convictions and a generally solid background;
- boys are victimised at a greater rate than girls;

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- grooming is often employed to allow access to children without supervision from colleagues, superiors or family members of the victims; and
- abuse in authority and care settings is often shorter in duration, with fewer penetrative acts.

All children are involved with adult authority figures, whether through their school education, religious instruction, being coached as part of extracurricular sporting activities, or any other numerous contexts where an adult who is not the child's parent or carer is responsible for the safety of the child. As such, the prevalence of child sexual abuse within authority and care contexts is estimated to be much higher than stranger-perpetrated and online child sexual abuse. There are numerous inquiries and commissions undertaking extensive work in discovering cases of historical child sexual abuse in non-government institutions, dating from as far back as the 1920s through to today; for example, the UN Committee on the Rights of Children, the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (Ryan Commission) in Ireland, the current Northern Ireland Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry, and the current Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Therefore, part of this section discusses clergy-perpetrated child sexual abuse. Due to the amount of time that children spend during their youth in educational settings, this section also presents the literature about perpetration by teachers and educators.

Non-government institutions: Clergy-perpetrated abuse

Research into clergy-perpetrated abuse indicates that environments considered traditionally "safe" and where adults should be trusted (i.e, the home, church or school) are the locations for the majority of the abuse, with the victims' and priests' homes being the primary sites. Terry (2008) concluded that clergy who sexually abuse are not dissimilar to other child sexual abuse perpetrators: they often commit a variety of sexual and non-sexual offences, have a late onset of deviant behaviour, use similar grooming techniques as non-clergy, and only a few "specialise" in a particular victim type. We note that other research suggests that a number of child sexual abuse offenders across all contexts have early onset of these behaviours.

It is widely published that children in institutional settings (where they are subject to authority and liable to abuse by those in possession of authority) are at greater risk of all forms of abuse than their non-institutionalised counterparts (Green, 2001). However, there has not been a wealth of literature on the specific tactics engaged to groom and enact abuse in these settings. Green described and analysed the power and control exerted not just upon children but upon "non-abusive staff to try and maintain their allegiance or compliance, or alternatively to ensure they are too fearful and demoralized to complain" (p. 6). Particular organisational features can render staff and children vulnerable to exploitation, such as the "enclosed nature of the settings", staff "inability and reluctance to deal with sexuality/sexual abuse issues and the effect of gendered, homophobic belief systems on how both staff and children construe and respond to sexuality and sexual abuse issues" (Green, 2001, p. 6).

Further, the data indicate that boys are also more likely to be the victims of clergy-perpetrated child sexual abuse (81% boys to 19% girls) (Terry, 2008). These data also show that there is a close relationship between the family and the priest, and many victims are enticed through gifts, alcohol, drugs and other benefits, though some are threatened, using psychological or spiritual rather than physical abuse.

The so-called John Jay Report (John Jay College of Criminal Justice, 2004) examined reports made by some 10,667 individuals of clerical sexual abuse within the Catholic Church in the US. The study investigated some of the specific risk factors that encompass child sexual offending and found that, as per "the general population, child sex abuse in the Catholic Church appears to be committed by men close to the children they allegedly abuse" (p. 68). Grooming (such as buying gifts for victims and using social events as occasions for abuse) was found to be a common method of procuring victims and the abuse often occurred in the home of the alleged abuser or victim.

Regarding the profile of the abuser, the John Jay report (2004) found that allegations were first made at the time the priests were 35 years of age or younger. It further reported that fewer than 7% of the priests were reported to have experienced physical, sexual or emotional abuse as children. Among the accused priests in the study (n = 4,392), 19% were classified as having

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an alcohol or substance abuse problem, but only 9% used drugs or alcohol during the alleged instances of abuse.

Educational settings

Educational settings are taken to mean schools, including after-school care, at kindergarten, primary and secondary levels. Educators can mean teachers, teachers' aides, and anyone else employed by schools to either teach or care for students. Although the majority of the research into educators is focused on teachers as perpetrators, much of the research also considers administrators at schools as educators.

Moulden et al. (2010) cited a number of differences in characteristics between "professional perpetrators" and other sex offenders, relating to both psychological state and offence planning. Professional perpetrators are defined by Sullivan and Beech (2002) as perpetrators who "use either institutions or organisations within which they work to target and abuse children" (p. 153). Australian organisation Child Wise (2013) defines professional perpetrators as "those considered hardened paedophiles, the ones that employ far more sophisticated techniques to manipulate their organisational settings and their victims" (p. 50). While this latter definition is an extension of Sullivan and Beech's definition, it illustrates how professional perpetrators can operate in a care or education setting. However, Child Wise refers to these perpetrators as paedophiles, even though there is no evidence to suggest that child sexual abuse perpetrated in care and authority or education settings is committed exclusively by paedophiles (as the literature below outlines).

Moulden et al.'s (2010) overview of the literature identified characteristics that are common to this cohort: "adult, single, male, often university educated, minimal substance abuse issues, generally prosocial attitudes, virtually no prior sexual or even criminal offenses, and few psychological deficits" (p. 404). Additionally, they noted that there is a discrepancy in the literature between research that suggests "professional perpetrators are controlling and manipulative" and research indicating these "offenders are socially inadequate" (p. 406). Moulden et al. drew upon Ward's Pathways Model (see section A5.2) to describe the majority of offenders as following a Self-Regulation Model, which includes an offence pathway characterised by "explicit planning (e.g., grooming) rather than one that was opportunistic in nature" (p. 405).

Knoll's (2010) research showed how sexual abuse perpetrated by teachers against their charges differs from child sexual abuse perpetrated in other care, supervision and authority contexts. Both female and male teachers can be offenders, although female teachers' actions have traditionally been seen in a more favourable light by communities and by the criminal justice system, being considered either "well-meaning" or "harmless initiation" (see also Stathopoulos, 2014). Two distinct categories of teachers and victims were identified by Knoll in his research:

- victims younger than 7th grade (generally under the age of 12); and
- victims in late middle or high school (generally between the ages of 14-17).

This type of crime, according to Knoll (2010), is less premeditated and it is possible that it is "bad judgement" on the part of the teacher that they begin a sexual relationship with their student (especially in cases where the student is aged 16 years or above). Regardless of whether or not it is bad judgement on the teacher's part, professional perpetrators often target vulnerable or marginalised students, who feel gratified by the extra attention.

Teachers who target the first group of children are generally considered to be high achievers, recognised with awards for their teaching efforts. When allegations arise, often parents and administrators are unwilling to believe the victim and there is a tendency to ignore or dismiss allegations. The teachers accomplish this by grooming not only their victims but also the families of the victims, and their colleagues or superiors.

The grooming techniques used by educators were also identified by Knoll (2010). These techniques include:

- selecting victims based on the compliance of the student and the likelihood of secrecy;
- finding students who can be easily controlled and are estranged from their parents;
- giving a student special attention, support or rewards;
- slowly introducing the student to sexual discourse;

- increasing touching and physical contact; and
- involving the parents in the grooming process to gain their trust and enable the teacher or educator to take the child out of the parent's supervision for overnight or extended trips.

The research data in to teachers and educators, coupled with research into clergy as perpetrators of child sexual abuse, suggest that professional perpetrators do not have the same or even similar risk factors to offending as those within familial or other extra-familial relationships. The research indicates that this cohort may be the most difficult to reach with child sexual abuse prevention techniques that do not originate from within their own organisations.

Care and other settings

Research indicates that when children are sexually abused in care and broader organisational settings there are often other forms of abuse also being perpetrated against the victim (Irenyi, Bromfield, Beyer, & Higgins, 2006). Although there have been numerous Australian inquiries into the maltreatment and abuse of children in care and out-of-home residences, the issue of child sexual abuse in these scenarios has not been solved.

As with other forms of child sexual abuse, males have been overwhelmingly noted as the abusers in care and organisational settings. Offenders are also more likely to be between the ages of 20 and 50 years of age, as with other forms of child sexual abuse in extra-familial and authority and care settings. Research literature suggests that these types of offenders may have alcohol and drug problems—often not enough to have been investigated by authorities, but enough to have been screened for in pre-employment interviews (Irenyi et al., 2006)—or physical impairments that may be associated with mood swings, aggressiveness, depressiveness or cognitive dysfunction, such as diabetes or thyroid conditions (Langevin & Watson, 1996, as cited in Irenyi et al., 2006). As with child sexual abusers in religious and educational settings, perpetrators in organisational settings manipulate situations to their benefit and look for opportunities to offend; therefore, it is best to target these perpetrators using situational crime prevention approaches (see section A5.3 for more information).

A3.4 Indigenous and CALD communities

Indigenous communities

It is clear across the literature that experiencing multiple disadvantages—such as a combination of poverty, lack of family cohesion, broader family/community violence and/or parental substance misuse—can be associated with child sexual abuse. Indigenous communities face multiple issues and disadvantages. A particular context of offending that has been more widely reported in Australian Indigenous communities is not simply adult child sex offending, but "problematic sexual behaviours in children", a matter afforded detailed exploration by the Australian Crime Commission (O'Brien, 2008). This review of the literature cited general agreement among researchers that, unlike adult–child sex offending, the offending behaviour of children and young people is not driven by a "pre-existing sexual predilection for children", but rather the context in which the abuse occurs, namely the "familial, social, cultural, economic, educational and material aspects of the child's life" (p. 12). Another review by Staiger (2005) for the Australian Childhood Foundation (ACF) found that the contextual aspects documented by the literature give rise to children's sexually abusive behaviours. These contextual aspects have been found to be dominant in many Indigenous communities and highly prevalent among the Indigenous children with problem sexual behaviours. Staiger and her colleagues noted specifically the ACF's observation that the children who were referred to them with problem sexual behaviours were more likely to be experiencing:

- experiences of trauma, loss and alienation;
- physical and/or sexual abuse;
- witnessing incidents of family violence;
- illicit drug use or alcohol abuse by parents or caregivers (Staiger, Kambouropoulos, Evertsz, Mitchell, & Tucci, 2005, as cited in O'Brien, 2008, p. 12).

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Each of these aspects was consistently established by the literature as being precursors to problem sexual behaviours in children. A number of reports documenting risk factors facing Indigenous communities have cited these aspects as "often characteristic of life" in some places (O'Brien, 2008, p. 12).

Adolescent sexual abuse perpetration is not the only form of sexual abuse that takes place in Indigenous communities. Indigenous adults often present as perpetrators, but their risk factors for offending against children sexually may be different to other offenders. In section A4.1 we present the risk factors associated with adult child sexual abuse offending in Indigenous kinship relationships.

CALD communities

Unfortunately, current literature into child sexual abuse in CALD communities is sparse. In examining the number and type of child abuse cases referred to forensic examination, Davies and Jones (2013) noted that the majority of perpetrators in reported cases were Caucasian males. This led the researchers to the conclusion that CALD communities "may hold a large amount of unreported cases" (p. 146). Therefore, it has been difficult to build a detailed picture of child sexual abuse perpetration in CALD communities. However, one risk factor would certainly be traditional gender values; of increasing concern is the knowledge that girls from CALD backgrounds raised in Western societies are being forced into marriages in their parents' homelands (Forced Marriage Unit, 2012). We have not consulted any literature on this issue as it is not traditionally defined in research literature as child sexual abuse. However, we would be interested in exploring whether Australian legislation and criminal justice authorities consider forced marriages to be a part of the definition of child sexual abuse.

A3.5 Female offenders

As mentioned in the earlier section about child sexual abuse perpetrated in education settings, women do perpetrate such abuse; however, it is culturally not met with the same disapproval as for male teachers who abuse children. Women sexually abuse children on a much smaller scale and for very different reasons than men. Prevalence data suggest that between 3% and 10% of child sexual abuse is committed by women (Denov, 2003; Peter, 2009), most often those who have children under their care and supervision (as teachers or sports coaches, for instance), who are young (between 16 and 25 years) and emotionally immature, or who have low education or a mental illness (Gannon & Alleyne, 2013; Knoll, 2010).

Generally the literature in to female offenders who are teachers indicates that they are well-educated, can and regularly do have age-appropriate relationships, choose victims who are generally adolescents, and groom their victims with gifts, money and attention (Gannon & Alleyne, 2013; Knoll, 2010). This is unlike other female offenders, who are more likely to have a history of domestic and sexual abuse, a mental illness, low education, and have pre-teen victims; are themselves young (under the age of 25); use force to sexually abuse; and abuse their victims in a non-education care setting, such as in a child care facility or in the victim's home while babysitting (Knoll, 2010; Peter, 2009).

In this report, we have not included women child sexual abusers who are teachers or in positions of authority and care within the category of female offenders. This group are instead discussed alongside male child sexual abuse perpetrators, in section A4.2.

Due to the low prevalence rates for female child sexual abuse perpetrators, there is not a lot of research on them, nor on the treatment and recidivism prevention work being undertaken with incarcerated female offenders. However, Bader, Welsh, and Scalora (2010) found that 18% of female perpetrators re-offend. Clements, Dawson, and das Nair (2014) concluded in their study that professionals working on treating female perpetrators often did not perceive female child sexual abuse to be as serious or harmful as that perpetrated by males, even though the victims themselves reported the same health and psychological wellbeing issues. This perception has led to courts giving more lenient sentences to female perpetrators than their male counterparts; Australian courts often respond similarly (Angelides, 2008, 2010; Deering & David, 2009).

A3.6 Stranger-perpetrated child sexual abuse

Contact child sexual abuse

There is limited research on stranger contact offending. The research that is available has suggested that this form of child sexual abuse is generally more violent than other forms of child sexual abuse and more likely to result in the death of the child (Rebocho & Gonçalves, 2012). Rebocho and Gonçalves sampled and compared 216 incarcerated Portuguese men who had either sexually abused a child under the age of 13 years, or raped someone over the age of 14 years. The age of consent in Portugal is 14 years. In most other jurisdictions around Australia, the USA and the UK the age of consent is 16 years, and a perpetrator sexually abusing a 14-year-old child would be classified as a child molester not a rapist. According to Rebocho and Gonçalves, the rapists are labelled "hunters" or "poachers" while the child molesters were called "trollers" or "trappers". Table A1 offers an outline of how these offenders differ from each other.

Table A1: Typology of contact child sexual abuse offenders

Manipulative/child molesters (known to victim)		Coercive/rapists (strangers)	
Trollers	**Trappers**	**Hunters**	**Poachers**
■ Opportunistic ■ Plan and fantasise about child sexual abuse ■ Encounter victims in course of day-to-day activities ■ Victim expected to perform sexual acts on offender	■ Opportunistic ■ Plan and fantasise about child sexual abuse ■ Specifically finds work to be close to children or be able to entice them to their homes ■ Victim expected to perform sexual acts on offender	■ Predatory ■ Attack quickly and swiftly ■ Use weapons to subdue ■ Perform more violent, generally penetrative acts on victim, but victim not expected to perform sexual acts on offender	■ Stalk victims outside of the offender's neighbourhood ■ Use weapons to subdue ■ Perform more violent, generally penetrative acts on victim, but victim not expected to perform sexual acts on offender

Source: Rebacho & Gonçalves, 2012

Online child sexual abuse

Online child sexual abuse is of growing concern to police and investigators, internationally as well as in Australia. This form of perpetration can include not only grooming children in a virtual environment and accessing child exploitation material, but also producing and distributing exploitation material without necessarily having a sexual interest in children. The true extent of online perpetration is currently not known. However, when surveying US children aged between 10 and 17 years, 20% said they had been approached and sexually solicited online (Beech et al., 2008). Some of the issues identified by Beech et al. were a lack of clear definitions worldwide about what qualifies as child pornography and image dissemination. The International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children (2013) has developed a model against which to review international legislation. Australia meets the model criteria, including having legislation that:

- specifically relates to the illegality of child pornography;
- defines child pornography;
- criminalises child pornography, regardless of whether there is an intent to distribute it;
- requires Internet service providers to report suspected child pornography to law enforcement agencies;
- punishes attempted crimes;
- includes grooming provisions; and
- ensures criminal penalties for parents or guardians who participate in the exploitation of their child for pornography production.

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Currently, in some jurisdictions outside of Australia, Beech et al. (2008) noted that online child sexual abuse is seen as being less harmful than traditional forms of child sexual abuse, as it does not involve physical contact. They also noted that the crossover from the consumption of child exploitative material to committing contact child sexual abuse is high: between 15% and 55% of all perpetrators will cross over at some point. Krone (2004) noted that once a paedophile makes contact with a paedophile network, the seriousness of their offence increases. Although the true extent of online child sexual abuse may be difficult to discover, and at first instance may be considered to be less harmful than contact offending, online abuse is not harmless, passive nor victim-free.

Online child sexual abuse behaviours are often active (e.g., not just searching for and viewing child exploitation material), and perpetrators will seek out contact with minors. Online communication facilitates contact with a large number of children, allows for the initiation and continuation of grooming, allows the perpetrator to detach from the behaviour in which they are partaking; and helps them to remain anonymous in a way that is not otherwise possible. Perpetrators can blackmail their victims to provide further sexual favours by capturing non-consensual images and distributing or threatening to distribute them widely (Bluett-Boyd, Fileborn, Quadara, & Moore, 2013). There have been attempts to create a typology of Internet offenders, with Krone's (2004) typologies scale being widely accepted by researchers. Krone conceptualised Internet offenders in a hierarchy to explain how an individual can go from having no sexual interest in children to being a serious sexual offender. In order, these types are:

- the *browser*, who inadvertently comes across child sexual abuse material and saves it;
- the *private fantasy* creator, who uses digital images to create material for their personal use;
- the *trawler*, who actively seeks images on a non-secure browser and through open keyword searches;
- the *non-secure collector*, who collects material through peer-to-peer networks;
- the *secure collector*, who actively seeks material, but only through secure networks;
- the *groomer*, who cultivates online relationships;
- the *physical abuser*, who sexually abuses children to whom they were originally introduced online (i.e., contact offending);
- the *producer*, who records their own abuse or the abuse of others; and
- the *distributor*, who distributes to any of the above levels but may not take any interest in child sexual abuse for their own gratification.

One of the key questions arising from the viewing, collection and distribution of child pornography is the likelihood of the user actively sexually assaulting the child. Bourke and Hernandez (2009) examined two groups: online offenders with no known child sex offence history and those with a recorded child sex offence history. Their findings demonstrate that those who were merely classified as viewers or collectors, without any known prior child sex offence history, "were significantly more likely than not to [also] have sexually abused a child via a hands-on act" (p. 183) and "that the offenders who abused children were likely to have offended against multiple victims, and that the incidence of 'crossover' by gender and age is high" (p. 191).

Their findings stand somewhat in contrast to a 2009 study by Swiss researchers (Endrass et al., 2009), who examined the "recidivism rates for hands-on [active] and hands-off [passive] sex offenses in a sample of [once incarcerated] child pornography users using a 6 year follow-up design" (Background section, para. 1). That study concluded that for 52% of the 231 convicted child pornography offenders in the sample (who had no previous convictions), the chance of recidivism and committing "hands-on" sexual abuse was low, given the right treatment.

However, the weight of research appears to lend more support to the findings of Bourke and Hernandez (2009). For example, Canadian research by Kingston, Federoff, Firestone, Curry, and Bradford (2008), following 15-year recidivism rates of the 341 child pornography offenders analysed (albeit only a criminally convicted cohort), found that "after controlling for general and specific risk factors for sexual aggression, pornography added significantly to the prediction of recidivism" (p. 341).

Bourke and Hernandez (2009) also explored in some depth the motivating factors behind online offending and their similarities to the issues raised above in relation to individual causal motivations to offend. The authors referred specifically to the "thinking errors" that are present in this category of offenders:

> A particular challenge for treatment practitioners relates to the numerous cognitive distortions evidenced by child pornography offenders, and the need to discern these thinking errors from legitimate causal or contributing explanations for their behaviour. While the phenomenon of cognitive distortions has been the subject of considerable research, considerably less is known about thinking errors utilised by child pornography offenders. (p. 184)

Bourke and Hernandez (2009) acknowledged the research of Taylor and Quayle (2003), which showed that cognitive distortions and fantasy play an important role in the behaviour of child pornography offenders. However, Bourke and Hernandez augmented this with their view that the accompanying "thinking errors" facilitated the behaviour by minimising the offender's guilt and enabling "disowning" behaviours. They saw this evasion and avoidance of responsibility as a key part of the online offending process. The authors nonetheless lamented the fact that very little is still known about online child pornography offenders:

> While it is indisputable that certain factors (e.g., psychiatric disorders, developmental and psychological vulnerabilities) influence criminality, the influence of these factors on child pornography offenders is unknown. Based on our clinical observations, however, only a very small minority of offenders (e.g., psychopaths) who commit child pornography crimes are motivated by non-sexually deviant interests; rather, most are motivated by a pre-existing sexual interest in minors. (pp. 184–185)

A3.7 Adolescents and children

Peer-to-peer sexual assault vs child sexual abuse

The research literature has been unclear as to how to differentiate between sexual assault by children and adolescents against their age-peers, and the sexual abuse of younger children or developmentally challenged children by older children and adolescents. Some literature has tested the efficacy of relationship programs for teens by defining peer abuse as child sexual abuse, while others have suggested that peer sexual assaults are the effect of child sexual abuse victimisation in the history of the offending adolescent. In this report, we have distinguished between peer-to-peer sexual assault or harassment (e.g., "sexting", harassment or date-rape/acquaintance-rape) from child sexual abuse, where the focus is on the sexual gratification of an older offender through the abuse of a child. The dynamics of the two crimes are also different, have different risk factors and ages of onset, and may be linked to factors other than a history of child sexual abuse or neglect and maltreatment.

Sibling sexual abuse

Children and adolescents who offend against their siblings have often been victims of neglect, or have experienced domestic violence and poor family cohesion. Living in a highly sexualised environment (not necessarily with child exploitation material, but usually with adult pornography) where they can view pornography or adult members of the family partaking openly in sexual behaviour can also be a risk factor for sibling sexual abuse. The child or adolescent who is presenting with problematic sexual behaviours or sexually abusive behaviours may also exhibit other violent behaviours; for example, bullying behaviour in school. Stathopoulos (2012) noted that certain family environments could have a negative effect on a child's sexual development, causing them to behave in a sexually inappropriate manner towards siblings. Early exposure to pornography can also lead children to copy behaviours they have witnessed with their siblings (Stathopoulos, 2012). Research is extremely limited on sibling sexual abuse, even though prevalence data indicate that up to 40% of abuse is sibling sexual abuse (Stathopoulos, 2012). It is often not separated from other forms of intra-familial abuse or investigated separately.

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Non-sibling sexual abuse

Adolescent sexual abuse perpetration may have different drivers when compared to adult perpetration, as section A4.2 illustrates. Boys have been found to be more likely to perpetrate sexual harassment when they are being bullied or experiencing family victimisation.[5] Girls are more likely than boys to experience sexual abuse at home and at school, while boys are more than twice as likely to sexually harass others compared to girls from a similar background to the boys (Fineran & Bolen, 2006).

Adolescent males perpetrate at higher rates than females. Nearly one in ten youths (9%) have reported perpetrating some form of sexual violence in their lifetimes (Ybarra & Mitchell, 2013). The majority of teen perpetrators first begin engaging in sexually abusive behaviours after the age of 15 years. Male and female perpetrators were only equally represented at the ages of 18 or 19 years (48% females, 52% males). Ybarra and Mitchell also found that boys were more likely to engage in abusive behaviour against younger children, whereas girls were more likely to do so against older children/adolescents.

In a meta-analysis of 59 studies that compared incarcerated adolescent child sexual abuse perpetrators and other incarcerated, but non-sexual offending, adolescents, Seto and Lalumiere (2010) found that adolescents who engage in sexually abusive behaviour towards children/young people:

- were slightly older than adolescents with non-sex offences when they had first contact with the criminal justice system;
- had no major differences in comparison to non-sex offenders regarding antisocial tendencies, which indicates that antisocial behaviour is not a risk factor for young people to sexually abuse;
- had a lower likelihood of a substance abuse problem than non-sex offenders;
- were more likely themselves to have been a victim of child sexual abuse (on average, 46% reported a history of child sexual abuse, compared to 16% of non-sex offenders);
- were more likely to have experienced physical abuse than non-sex offenders;
- were more likely to have witnessed or been present when sexual or non-sexual violence was occurring in the family; and
- had experienced a higher prevalence of emotional abuse or neglect than non-sex offenders.

Children under the age of 10 years may often engage in problem sexual behaviours. Children aged 14 years and under can display sexually abusive behaviours that may involve the sexual abuse of children younger than them, children who are older but lack resilience, or children with mental impairments. As children under the age of 14 cannot be charged with any crime in most Australian jurisdictions, those who have been identified as partaking in these behaviours are usually offered treatment. For example, in Victoria, this is managed through Therapeutic Treatment Orders in the Children's Court.

A3.8 Summary: Common behaviours and strategies in perpetrating child sexual abuse

Not only are there common risk factors that increase the likelihood of perpetration (and common factors that do not influence risk to a measurable extent), there were also common behaviours identified. Table A2 (on page 19) outlines the nature of the acts often perpetrated against children, what type of force is used in eliciting the desired outcomes, and in which contexts enticements and secret-keeping are generally seen. These data do not imply that these behaviours are only seen in these particular contexts, but rather that the majority of researchers agree that this is where they are more likely to be found; however, there are always exceptions.

5 The authors use "sexual harassment" to define the children's sexually abusive behaviour. This terminology is more commonly used to describe unwanted sexual behaviour in workplaces, but the behaviour described by the researchers fits our definition of child sexual abuse.

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Table A2: Common sexual abuse behaviours and the type of perpetrator engaging in them

Behaviour	Perpetrators
Penetrative acts	Familial offenders Online child exploitation material producers and distributors Teachers and educators Clergy
Non-penetrative acts	Familial offenders Interpersonal offenders Online child exploitation material producers and distributors Teachers and educators Clergy Female offenders
Use of physical force	Interpersonal offenders Online child exploitation material producers and distributors Clergy
Use of emotional force	Familial offenders Interpersonal offenders Online non-contact offenders Clergy Teachers and educators
Use of verbal force	Interpersonal offenders
Use of spiritual force	Clergy
Enticements	Online non-contact offenders Teachers and educators Clergy Female offenders
Secret-keeping	Familial offenders Interpersonal offenders Teachers and educators Female offenders

The majority of child sexual abuse occurs within familiar—and familial—relationships.[6] As such, it tends to be characterised by:

- prolonged or repeated victimisation;
- secrecy; and
- delayed disclosure.[7]

Perpetrators expend significant effort in identifying and building a connection with a potential victim, and use a range of grooming strategies to do so,[8] such as:

- identifying the most vulnerable child, such as those who are picked on by their siblings, are struggling at school, or are lonely (Craven, Brown, & Gilchrist, 2007);
- identifying vulnerable or receptive families, such as a single mother with primary care for her children (Leberg, 1997; van Dam, 2006);
- isolating the child from other children or their guardian; for example, by sending other siblings to bed early, or encouraging the child's mother to take up activities outside the home;
- conferring a "special status" on the child, such as by making them feel more adult or worldly (Herman, 1992);

6 Nationally representative statistics show that approximately 90% of girls and 80% of boys have known the perpetrator of the abuse, with girls more likely to have been sexually abused by family members. Fathers, step-fathers and other male relatives (including siblings) made up more than half of perpetrators against females (52%), and approximately one-fifth of perpetrators against boys (21%) (ABS, 2006; see also Mouzos & Makkai, 2004).

7 On these characteristics, see Finkelhor (1986), Herman (1992), and Smallbone & Wortley (2001).

8 Reviewing the research on grooming, Craven, Brown, & Gilchrist (2006) provided the following definition: "A process by which a person prepares a child, significant adults and the environment for the abuse of this child. Specific goals include gaining access to the child, gaining the child's compliance and maintaining the child's secrecy to avoid disclosure" (p. 297).

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- gradually desensitising the child to sexual touch (Smallbone & Wortley, 2001); and
- becoming "indispensible" to significant adults in the child's life; for example, by offering to look after the child or children, or doing tasks that parents and teachers have little time for, which puts them in a position of trust (Craven et al., 2007).

These strategies demonstrate long-term planning (whether conscious or not), such that perpetrators gain "insider status" and its benefits (e.g., trust, authority and respect) long before they start offending (van Dam, 2006). These benefits are especially amplified in contexts of intra-familial sexual abuse.

Along with these varied strategies to create opportunities for offending, perpetrators may use bribes, threats, coercion, denial and blackmail to continue the offending and to ensure victims' compliance and silence. This can take the form of creating secrets the child must keep, thus rendering them complicit or making them co-conspirators in their abuse (Paine & Hansen, 2002); demonstrating the perpetrator's potential for violence by harming others; threatening that the family will break down or the non-offending parent will be upset if the child discloses; or making the child feel responsible for not stopping the abuse (Craven et al., 2006, 2007).

As Table A2 illustrates, there are certain behaviours that are very specific to sexual abuse perpetrated within particular contexts; for example, both victims and perpetrators of sexual abuse within religious settings have often reported experiencing spiritual coercion. Other behaviours appear across multiple forms of child sexual abuse; for example, the use of emotional force or emotional blackmail is commonly seen in sexual abuse within familial and interpersonal relationships, and also in online and institutional/educational settings. Certain behaviours, such as the use of physical force, are seen in specific contexts and relationships due to the dynamic between the victim and perpetrator; in interpersonal relationships the perpetrator may only have a limited amount of time alone with the victim and therefore may resort to threats of or actual physical force to gain the victim's compliance. This is not as much of an issue for sexual abuse within familial relationships, where the perpetrator is more likely to have extended periods alone with the victim.

A4 Mapping risk factors

A4.1 Research results on perpetration risk factors

In this section we present the risk factors for offending across the identified relationships and contexts. Before doing so, it is useful to consider what factors have been associated with child sexual abuse overall. These differ from those identified for child maltreatment more generally (see Box A2).

Box A2: Risk factors associated with child maltreatment

- Individual risk factors:
  - parents' lack of understanding of children's needs, child development and parenting skills;
  - parents' history of child maltreatment in family of origin;
  - substance abuse and/or mental health issues, including depression in the family;
  - parental characteristics, such as young age, low education, single parenthood, large number of dependent children, and low income;
  - non-biological, transient caregivers in the home (e.g., mother's male partner);
  - parental thoughts and emotions that tend to support or justify maltreatment behaviours.
- Family risk factors:
  - social isolation;
  - family disorganisation, dissolution, and violence, including intimate partner violence; and
  - parenting stress, poor parent–child relationships, and negative interactions.
- Community risk factors:
  - community violence;
  - concentrated neighbourhood disadvantage (e.g., high poverty and residential instability, high unemployment rates, and high density of alcohol outlets), and poor social connections.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2014)

For instance, while there is a crossover with child maltreatment risk factors, the literature on adult perpetrators of child sexual abuse also emphasises factors such as:

- their history of violence and delinquency;
- their maladaptive sexual behaviours, such as deviant sexual fantasies;
- social deficits, such as lack of empathy and social skills deficits; and
- attitudinal and cognitive variables, such as their attitudes towards rape, the "sexual precociousness of children" and cognitive rationalisations (Whitaker et al., 2008).

Indeed, in their meta-analysis of 89 studies of sex offender risk factors, Whitaker and colleagues (2008) found that child sex offenders were more likely than non-offenders to have poorer

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family functioning, more harsh discipline, poor attachment and generally worse functioning in their family of origin. Child sex offenders also demonstrated:

- poorer social connectedness to others (e.g., loneliness, poor social skills);
- significantly higher sexual externalising problems;[9]
- higher sex drive and preoccupation with sex;
- more deviant sexual interests;
- greater sexualised coping;
- attitudes that are more tolerant of adult–child sex; and
- cognition that minimises perpetrator culpability.

On most of these measures, there were no significant differences between child and adult sex offenders. Whitaker et al. (2008) concluded that while child sex offenders are different from non-offenders, they are *not* different from adult sex offenders. In other words, while both child and adult sex offenders share a number of risk factors with general (non-sexual) offenders, the point of difference relates to the sexual component of their behaviour. This is echoed in other research on the attitudes of child sex offenders, which finds that their beliefs and attitudes in relation to children as sexual objects; general preoccupation with sex; and beliefs about entitlement, authority or control distinguish them from a range of other offenders (Helmus, Hanson, Babchishin, & Mann, 2013; Marziano, Ward, Beech, & Pattison, 2006; Ward & Keenan, 1999).

The following sections consider risk factors associated with particular forms of child sexual abuse. Box A3 provides definitions of the terms that are used in the literature we reviewed.

Box A3: Definitions of perpetrator risk factor terms

Perpetrator risk factors

Personal characteristics

Biologically unrelated male: A well-documented risk factor for certain forms of child sexual abuse is the presence of a biologically unrelated male. In authority, care and extra-familial relationships this can mean a male who has unrestricted access to a child due to their authority status (e.g., a teacher or priest) or by being considered trustworthy by the family (e.g., a neighbour). Within a familial relationship, the male can be an uncle, step-father, de facto or boyfriend to the mother who is biologically unrelated to the child. This risk factor has been calculated from victim response surveys and other records where the offender's relationship to the victim is detailed. In cases of online perpetration, research indicates that males unknown to the victim are the main offenders.

Young: Generally means the perpetrator is under the age of 25 years, although for peer and sibling abuse it means under 18 years.

Psychological deficits: The perpetrator has a low IQ or is cognitively impaired.

Traditional gender values: Generally understood to be values that place women and children in an inferior position to the male offender's wants and needs. It can mean also acting on these held values; for example, through preventing a female partner from controlling her own finances, expecting children to be deferential to the offender's authority within the family, etc.

Interest in child exploitation material: The offender has accessed and used such material.

Computer savvy: The perpetrator is a very competent user of information technologies. They can upload material, connect with other users, encrypt their uploads and downloads, can possibly access a "darknet" (anonymous online file sharing service), and find ways of evading detection on the Internet.

continued on next page

9 No definition or explanation of what this refers to is provided in Whitaker et al.'s (2008) study.

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continued from previous page

Substance misuse: When perpetrators currently or at the time of the child sexual abuse have alcohol or other substance abuse issues.

Social characteristics

Highly sexualised environment: A highly sexualised environment for adult perpetrators is usually defined as one where there is high pornography consumption and a high degree of sexual discourse between adults, and where the children are often exposed to this behaviour. It does not necessarily mean creating or accessing child exploitation material. For peer and sibling offenders it often means they have witnessed sexual acts between adults in their home, or have been exposed to high levels of pornography. It has been measured from self-reports, or from online offenders, generally from details taken about their search and browsing histories prior to their arrest.

Social isolation: The offender has not had close or significant friendships and relationships in their childhood or early adulthood.

Low socio-economic status: The perpetrator may be unemployed, or have low-level employment.

Low education: When the perpetrator has education only up to high school graduation level.

Childhood history and past behaviours

Child sexual abuse history: If the perpetrator was a victim of child sexual abuse when a child, they are more likely to become a child sexual abuse perpetrator themselves.

Childhood neglect: This is usually defined as the perpetrator having experienced neglect as a child or adolescent rather than referring to someone who neglects their own children. There are not always substantiated or reported cases of neglect in the history of the perpetrator, so this is often measured by self-reports describing childhoods that have been characterised by neglect.

Childhood physical abuse: The offender was physically abused as a child.

Large family size: The perpetrator grew up in a family with three or more children.

Early parenthood: The perpetrator was aged 15 to 20 years when their child was born.

Prior sexual criminal behaviour: The perpetrator has a history of sexual crime, not necessarily against children.

Prior non-sexual criminal behaviour: Criminal behaviour of a non-sexual nature either while an adolescent or adult.

Violent behaviour: The perpetrator has a history of violent and abusive behaviour. This is usually defined as other, non-sexual, criminal behaviour (for adults or adolescents) or problems with regulating emotional outbursts in children. For adults and adolescents it has been measured by looking at criminal records, reports from child protection services or self-reporting from the perpetrator.

Victim risk factors

Poor family cohesion: This is usually defined as a family where one parent may be absent due to personal/health issues (e.g., depression or substance abuse), where parents may be emotionally or physically absent and the child is being raised by other family members, or where there is poor health in the family. It is often linked with low-income families. Where there is poor family cohesion an offender may have more opportunities to sexually abuse children, or in the case of female, Indigenous and peer/sibling offenders, they may themselves have a history of poor family cohesion that has led to behavioural and developmental issues.

Domestic violence in the family: Child sexual abuse is often found in families where there are other forms of violence and abuse being perpetrated against the children or the perpetrator's partner. Familial and some Indigenous offenders of sexual abuse may also be committing domestic violence. Peer/sibling sexual abuse perpetrators may have witnessed domestic violence in the family; likewise female offenders. It is measured through self-reports or reports from the police or child support authorities, or the offender may have been first reported for domestic violence and it is through this that their sexually abusive behaviours are discovered.

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Table B1 also provides a summary of these risk factors and associations found in the research with particular types of child sexual abuse and perpetrators.

Risk factors for adult familial offenders

The following risk factors for familial offenders have been identified by the research:

- biologically unrelated male (including step-father, de facto boyfriend of mother) (Black et al., 2001; Smallbone et al., 2008);
- traditional gender values (Fischer & McDonald, 1998; Proeve, 2009);
- highly sexualised environment (Simons, Wurtele, & Durham, 2008);
- social isolation (Ward, 2003; Farmer, Beech, & Ward, 2012; Simons et al., 2008);
- prior non-sexual criminal behaviour (Smallbone & Wortley, 2004);
- poor family cohesion (Simons et al., 2008); and
- domestic violence in the family (Sinanan, 2011; Simons et al., 2008).

This is not to suggest that all families presenting with these risk factors will have child victims of sexual abuse, but there is a higher likelihood of child sexual abuse within a family where these risk factors are present than one where they are not. It has been noted that it is extremely difficult to distinguish between the risk factors for perpetrators within or outside a familial relationship because the majority of studies combine various types of child sexual abuse (Black et al., 2001). Black et al. still successfully disaggregated the profile characteristics of fathers who sexually abuse their children, and found that compared to non-abusive fathers, the sexually abusive fathers scored significantly higher on the Child Abuse Potentiality Inventory (Milner, 1986), a measure of propensity to abuse, including sexual abuse. Specifically, the sexually abusive fathers scored higher in relation to distress ($r = 0.39$), loneliness ($r = 0.40$), rigidity ($r = 0.35$), and unhappiness ($r = 0.44$).

There is disagreement about whether having a history of child sexual abuse is a risk factor for adults who commit sexual abuse against a family member. Smallbone and Wortley (2001) reported that 57% of currently incarcerated intra-familial offenders reported having a history of being a victim of child sexual abuse, whereas other research has found lower rates of offenders reporting being the victim in childhood of sexual abuse (Schaefer et al., 2010; Terry, 2008).

Extra-familial offending risk factors

The difficulty with categorising risk factors for adult acquaintances or neighbours of the family is that there seems to be only one major risk factor in the perpetrator's background: that they are a biologically unrelated male with access to the child. There is conflicting evidence about whether neglect, substance misuse, low socio-economic status, a history of physical abuse and child sexual abuse, interest in child exploitation material, or violent behaviour are risk factors associated with this cohort of offender.

Risk factors for authority and care relationships

Risk factors for child sexual abuse perpetration in authority and care relationships are relatively broad:

- biologically unrelated male (Knoll, 2010; Moulden et al., 2010; Sullivan & Beech, 2004);
- young (Moulden et al., 2010; Sullivan & Beech, 2004, who found that 68% of perpetrators had offended against a child by the age if 21); and
- child sexual abuse history (Sullivan & Beech, 2004).

As the above list illustrates, the risk factors for authority and care offenders is very circumscribed. Unlike other child sexual abuse perpetrators, this limited number of risk factors suggests that screening for child sexual abuse perpetration tendencies in authority and care contexts would be very difficult. The list below includes the variety of risk factors that have been tested for in authority and care offenders, but where research has concluded that they were not risk factors:

- psychological deficits;

- traditional gender values;
- interest in child exploitation material;
- computer savvy;
- substance misuse;
- highly sexualised environment;
- social isolation;
- low socio-economic status;
- childhood neglect;
- childhood physical abuse;
- large family size;
- early parenthood;
- prior sexual criminal behaviour;
- prior non-sexual criminal behaviour;
- poor family cohesion; and
- domestic violence in the family.

This cohort of child sexual abuse offender therefore does not exhibit the risk factors that can help easier identification in other relationships and contexts. Without these risk factors these offenders would be difficult to detect by traditional pre-employment screening means (due to their lack of contact with authorities).

Risk factors for Indigenous communities

As the list below illustrates, the risk factors for child sexual abuse perpetration in Indigenous communities is less about the individual's personal history and more likely to cross into intergenerational issues with isolation, abuse and community breakdown. As Indigenous families and communities are structured differently to other Australian families, a lack of family cohesion or domestic violence, for example, will involve not only the immediate parents of the perpetrator but also those who would otherwise be considered by non-Indigenous Australians as extended family or family friends. Therefore, child sexual abuse is more likely to cross between familial and extra-familial boundaries in Indigenous communities than non-Indigenous ones.

Risk factors include:

- substance misuse (Hunter, 2008 Smallbone & Rayment-McHugh, 2013; Staiger, 2005);
- highly sexualised environment (Smallbone & Rayment-McHugh, 2013);
- low socio-economic status (Hunter, 2008; Smallbone & Rayment-McHugh, 2013; Staiger, 2005);
- low education (Hunter, 2008; Stathopoulos, 2014);
- childhood neglect (Hunter, 2008; Staiger, 2005); and
- domestic violence in the family (Smallbone & Rayment-McHugh, 2013; Staiger, 2005).

While substance misuse is an issue in Indigenous communities, it has not been identified as a direct risk factor in the perpetration of intra-familial abuse. Spatz-Widom and Hiller-Strumhofel (2001) noted that "parental alcohol abuse may leave children more vulnerable to sexual abuse by others" (p. 53); however, the relation that the perpetrator has to the victim was not specified. Other researchers found that "whereas an alcoholic father was a risk factor for child sexual abuse by a family member, an alcoholic mother was a risk factor for child sexual abuse by a person outside the family" (Fleming et al., 1997, as cited in Spatz-Widom & Hiller-Strumhofel, 2001, p. 53). This may imply that in Indigenous communities alcohol misuse by a parent or carer is a risk factor for victimisation rather than for perpetration of child sexual abuse. In a US study of the pathways through which a history of child sexual abuse and the use of alcohol influence men's self-reported sexual aggression intentions, Davis et al. (2012) concluded that intoxication heightened "the effects of child sexual abuse history on sexual entitlement cognitions, such that sexual entitlement cognitions were highest for men who had a child sexual abuse history"

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(p. 179). The authors claimed their experimental research suggests that having experienced child sexual assault "may facilitate sexual assault perpetration through its effects on in-the-moment cognitions and that these effects may be exacerbated by alcohol intoxication" (p. 179). Recent research appears to confirm these findings (see Davies & Jones, 2013).

Risk factors for female offenders

As mentioned previously, while the number of female child sexual abuse perpetrators is very low, it is useful to point out where female and male adult sexual abuse perpetrators are similar and different. Researchers agree that the following risk factors contribute to a woman committing child sexual abuse against a child. They may also be risk factors for female professional perpetrators, although female professional perpetrators are more likely to have risk factors relating to their context rather than the more general risk factors for female perpetrators.

The risk factors for females perpetrating child sexual abuse appear to be slightly different to those associated with male perpetrators both within and outside familial relationships. Most interesting is how having a low education and socio-economic status, along with having experienced multiple forms of child abuse, can be risk factors for sexual abuse perpetration in women.

The risk factors for female offending include:

- young (16–25 years) (Wijkman, Bijleveld, & Hendriks,, 2011);
- low-socio economic status (Mapp, 2006; Wijkman et al., 2011);
- low education (Mapp, 2006; Wijkman et al., 2011);
- child sexual abuse history (Elliott, Eldridge, Ashfield, & Beech, 2010; Mapp, 2006; Wijkman et al., 2011);
- childhood neglect (Elliott et al. 2010; Wijkman et al., 2011);
- poor family cohesion (Elliott et al., 2010; Wijkman et al., 2011); and
- domestic violence in the family (Elliott et al., 2010; Mapp, 2006; Wijkman et al., 2011).

Risk factors for online offenders

Here we consider the risk factors only for those perpetrators who are accessing child exploitation material and making contact with children in online environments, either for the purpose of contact offending or for the purpose of receiving child exploitation material from them. We have not included teens involved in sexting or online sexual harassment in this cohort.

Risk factors for online offending include:

- biologically unrelated male;
- young (16–25 years) (Beech et al., 2008; Krone, 2004);
- interest in child exploitation material (Beech et al., 2008; Krone, 2004);
- computer savvy (Beech et al., 2008; Krone, 2004);
- highly sexualised environment (Beech et al., 2008; Bourke & Hernandez, 2009; Krone, 2004);
- social isolation (Beech et al., 2008); and
- violent behaviour (Beech et al., 2008).

Risk factors for sibling sexual abuse and adolescents with sexually abusive behaviours

Sibling sexual abuse has not been as widely researched as other forms of child sexual abuse; however, the research literature does suggest the following risk factors for youth who sexually abuse siblings:

- young (16–18 years) (Stathopoulos, 2012);
- highly sexualised environment (Latzman, Viljoen, Scalora, & Ullman, 2011; Stathopoulos, 2012);

- childhood neglect (O'Brien, 2008; Stathopoulos, 2012);
- violent behaviour (Latzman et al., 2011; O'Brien, 2010);
- poor family cohesion (Latzman et al., 2011; O'Brien, 2010; Stathopoulos, 2012); and
- domestic violence in the family (Latzman et al., 2011; O'Brien, 2010; Stathopoulos, 2012).

There are risk factors that overlap between adolescent and sibling sexual abusers, but there are also risk factors that are unique to the adolescent cohort:

- biologically unrelated male (Seto & Lalumiere, 2010);
- young (Hanson, 2011);
- interest in child exploitation material (Hanson, 2011; Seto & Lalumiere, 2010);
- computer savvy (Hanson, 2011);
- highly sexualised environment (Lowenstein, 2006; Seto & Lalumiere, 2010);
- childhood neglect (Lowenstein, 2006; O'Brien, 2010; Seto & Lalumiere, 2010);
- violent behaviour (Lowenstein, 2006; O'Brien, 2008);
- poor family cohesion (Lowenstein, 2006; O'Brien, 2010; Seto & Lalumiere, 2010); and
- domestic violence in the family (Lowenstein, 2006; O'Brien, 2010; Seto & Lalumiere, 2010).

A4.2 Common factors associated with perpetration

Across the various contexts and settings of child sexual abuse, there are similarities in the risk factors to perpetration, as well as similarities in the behaviours engaged in by perpetrators. The common risk factors to perpetration (biologically unrelated male, young, highly sexualised environment, childhood neglect, violent behaviour, poor family cohesion, and domestic violence in the family) can be outside the perpetrator's control; for example, being young, having a history of neglect or being a victim of domestic violence.

Across a lot of the research into assessing the recidivism risk of child sexual abuse offenders, research was supportive of the hypothesis that a pro-offending attitude was an assessable risk factor for future offending (Allan, Grace, Rutherford, & Hudson, 2007; Craissati, Falla, McClurg, & Beech, 2002; Helmus et al., 2013). However, while studies with college students and analyses of website contents have found that some men and women have attitudes that are pro-sexual activity with children or at least not censuring of that behaviour (Cromer & Goldsmith, 2010; Maynard & Wiederman, 1997), there are no data about whether these attitudes translate to offending behaviour.

As outlined in the previous section, there is a major outlier when documenting common risk factors: individuals committing sexual abuse in authority and care relationships do not appear to have the same risk factors to their perpetration as those in other relationships. As the previous section also illustrated, having a criminal background (either sexual or non-sexual in nature), early parenthood, large families and psychological deficits are often not risk factors for child sexual abuse offending across almost all relationships and contexts. Where there are commonalities in risk factors, these are potential areas to target for programs aimed at preventing sexual abuse.

The research literature suggests that there are certain factors that are associated with the perpetration of multiple types of sexual abuse (see Table A3 on page 28). These include:

- biologically unrelated male;
- young;
- highly sexualised environment;
- childhood neglect;
- violent behaviour;
- poor family cohesion; and
- domestic violence in the family.

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Table A3: Common risk factors, by relationship/context of child sexual abuse offending

Risk factor	Relationship/context
Biologically unrelated male	Familial Authority and care Extra-familial Online Peer
Young	Online Peer Sibling Female
Highly sexualised environment	Familial Online Indigenous Peer Sibling
Childhood neglect	Female Indigenous Peer Sibling
Violent behaviour	Online Peer Sibling
Poor family cohesion	Familial Female Indigenous Peer Sibling
Domestic violence in the family	Familial Female Indigenous Peer Sibling

However, there are also numerous ambiguous findings from the research regarding other risk factors. There is disagreement between researchers about the following:

- substance misuse;
- low socio-economic status;
- child sexual abuse history;
- childhood physical abuse;
- prior non-sexual criminal behaviour; and
- violent behaviour.

This disparity may be due to differences in the research populations being approached for study. For example, incarcerated males comprise only the known and currently apprehended child sexual abusers and are more likely to be from a low socio-economic status, whereas unapprehended child sexual abuse perpetrators are perhaps more likely to be from a more solid financial background (Beier, Ahlers et al., 2009; Schaefer et al., 2010). Researchers have attempted to explain perpetrators' psychology and this ambiguity. Drawing upon Milner's (1986) Child Abuse Potentiality Inventory, Black et al. (2001) found that, regardless of context, offenders scored higher on the emotional need scale ($r = 0.33$) and the sexual need scale ($r = 0.26$) compared to non-abusers. Many studies have noted the use of "defence mechanisms" by child sex offenders across all contexts of offending. "Defence mechanisms" refer to cognitive strategies that individuals use to minimise inner conflict, often unconsciously, by altering their own perception and interpretation of external events and internal motivations (see Vaillant, 1977, as cited in Miller, 2013). In a study of non-violent child sex offenders, Drapeau, Beretta, de Roten, Koerner, & Despland, 2008, as cited in Miller, 2013) found that such offenders tended

to use "more primitive and immature defence mechanisms such as dissociation, in which the unwanted thought, impulse or feeling is split off and quarantined from consciousness" (p. 513).

Other individual-level factors include:

- *Sexual interest:* While neuropathology in concert with sexual interest may provide the environment for the desire for sex with children to arise in a potential offender, numerous studies suggest that sexual interest in children, even if not consciously known to a person, can be screened for (Abel et al., 2012).
- *Neuropathology:* Biological brain chemistry abnormalities have been raised in the literature as a cause (or even neuroplastic symptom) of child sexually abusive behaviours. A range of medical and psychiatrically oriented research has shown that child sex offenders:

  > can suffer from neurological issues, including exposure to neurotoxins and genetic disorders in childhood/infancy (Blanchard et al., 2002); and a strong correlation with head injury (Blanchard et al., 2002; Fruend & Kuban, 1993). This premise is reinforced by research suggesting that paedophilia may be related to biology, hormones and neurotransmitters (Bradford, 2000). (McCartan, 2008, p. 60)

To this end, a range of research has pointed to the effectiveness of particular drugs for suppressing sexual desire and deviant behaviour, and reducing re-victimisation (see Bradford, 2000; McCartan, 2008). McCartan noted research showing that "certain areas of the brain can have an impact upon sexual behaviour and therefore the targeting of these areas can have positive effects" (p. 73). In relation to whether brain injury or trauma itself can cause child sexually abusive desires and behaviour, Miller (2013) concluded that "what this trend of neuropsychological research may be identifying is a behavioural pattern of impulsivity, egocentricity, impaired judgment, deficient empathy, and discounting of consequences" (p. 514).

A5 Theories on how and why child sexual abuse occurs

There are various psychological and criminological theories that attempt to explain child sexual abuse perpetration. The majority of research has up until now been undertaken with incarcerated populations of child molesters, and therefore these theories may present with a selection bias. If we consider a social-ecological model for child sexual abuse prevention, it is clear that the individual perpetrator is part of a much larger set of relationships than the one between themselves and their victim. As such, risk factors for child sexual abuse perpetration may exist at a broader, societal level; for example, in the portrayal of children and women in advertising or the hyper-sexualisation of children. The levels within the social-ecological model are the individual, family, community, organisations/institutions, and society.

This section describes three key etiological theories used to explain why child sexual abuse occurs—Finkelhor's Four Preconditions Model, Ward's Pathways Model, and the situational crime prevention model, which is based on the rational choice theory for crime perpetration. Both the Four Preconditions and the situational crime prevention models insist on looking beyond the individual to other external factors that could be or are influencing their actions: for Finkelhor's model, it is societal factors that influence perpetration, and for the situational crime prevention model, it is a situation, organisation or institution's settings that can create opportunity.

A5.1 Finkelhor's Four Preconditions Model

Finkelhor's (1984) Four Preconditions Model has been widely used for understanding child sexual abuse offenders. It was the first to move beyond the notion that child sexual abuse only occurs as father–daughter incest or when men who are strangers molest a multitude of children. The four preconditions are:

- motivation to sexually abuse;
- overcoming internal inhibitors (for example, concern that their thoughts and behaviours are wrong);
- overcoming external inhibitors (for example, finding a child in their vicinity whom they can sexually abuse); and
- overcoming the resistance of the child.

According to this theory, *all* these preconditions need to be met in order for child sexual abuse perpetration to be possible and to occur.

Finkelhor (1984) argued that there are three components to the motivation to sexually abuse:

- sexual contact with the child satisfies an emotional need;
- the child is a source of sexual arousal;
- alternative sexual partners are not available. (p. 54)

However, these are not preconditions and they don't necessarily have to occur, or can overlap with one another.

Regarding overcoming internal inhibitors, this precondition is crucial, as without it the perpetrator will not commit any acts of abuse, as they may be inhibited by social taboos or fear of hurting the child.

The third and fourth preconditions move the explanation for offending beyond the perpetrator to account for their external environment. External inhibitors can include if there are bystanders around to protect the child (e.g., the child's mother, other family members, teachers, etc.), or if the environment is not conducive to abusing a child. The resistance of a child is the final barrier to committing the act; if the child is emotionally insecure, needy or without a support network then the child molester can break through a child's barrier more easily than if the child is more resilient to their advances.

Finkelhor (1984) noted that these preconditions not only operate on an individual level but on a more sociological level. Social factors and characteristics can act as motivators or inhibitors to child sexual abuse perpetration. Table A4 outlines how the preconditions work in relation to individual and social/cultural factors.

Table A4: Preconditions for sexual abuse and individual and social/cultural factors

Preconditions	Individual factors	Social/cultural factors
Motivation to sexually abuse	Arrested emotional development Need to feel powerful and controlling Re-enactment of childhood trauma to undo hurt Biological abnormality Fear of adult women Traumatic sexual experience with adult Inadequate social skills Marital problems	Masculine requirement to be dominant and powerful in sexual relationships Erotic portrayal of children in advertising Male tendency to sexualise all emotional needs Repressive norms about masturbation and extramarital sex
Overcoming internal inhibitors	Alcohol Psychosis Impulse disorder Senility Failure of incest inhibition mechanism in family dynamics	Social toleration of sexual interest in children Weak criminal sanctions against offenders Ideology of patriarchal prerogatives for fathers Social tolerance of deviance committed while intoxicated Child pornography Male inability to identify with needs of children
Overcoming external inhibitors	Mother is absent or ill Mother is not close to or protective of child Mother is dominated or abused by father Social isolation of family Unusual opportunities to be alone with child Lack of supervision of the child Unusual sleeping or rooming conditions	Lack of social supports for mothers Barriers to women's equality Erosion of social networks Ideology of family sanctity
Overcoming the resistance of the child	Child is emotionally insecure or deprived Child lacks knowledge about sexual abuse Situation of unusual trust between child and offender Coercion	No availability of sex education for children Social powerlessness of children

Source: Finkelhor (1984), pp. 56–57

Finkelhor's model demonstrates the importance of looking beyond the individual victim or perpetrator when assessing where primary prevention programs should be introduced and how other seemingly unconnected societal pressures and gaps can lead to an environment where a child can be sexually victimised.

A5.2 Ward's Pathways Model

The work of Ward and Siegert (2002) is regarded among researchers as being very instructive for investigating the individual's role in committing child sexual abuse. Their theory is often

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referred to as Ward's Pathways Model. It is differentiated by its explanation of how offenders use apparently normalised interactions to gain both trust and access to victims.

The Pathways Model is a psychological theory that suggests that certain pathways are the key to child sexual abuse perpetration. These pathways stem from "clusters" of problems that are found in the psychology of adults who sexually offend against children. These clusters are:

- difficulties in identifying and controlling emotional states;
- social isolation, loneliness and dissatisfaction;
- offence-supportive cognitions (e.g., belief that everyone sexually abuses children and that children enjoy the abuse); and
- deviant sexual fantasies.

There can be more than one cluster apparent in any one individual. Clusters are different from the pathways in that they are clinical phenomena that are found among child sexual abusers, whereas the pathways are associated with different psychological and behavioural profiles (Ward, Polaschek, & Beech, 2006).

There can be overlap between the various pathways. The five aetiological pathways that were identified are discussed in Table A5.

Table A5: Pathways and developmental trajectories in Ward's Pathways Model

Pathway	Developmental trajectory
Multiple Dysfunctional Mechanisms	Distorted sexual scripts [a] Idealised relationships Dysfunctional ideas about children's sexuality Deviant sexual arousal Heightened self-esteem based on perceived legitimacy of actions
Deviant Sexual Scripts and Relationship Schema	Distorted sexual scripts plus dysfunctional relationship schema Sex/intimacy confusion Vulnerability in seeking sexual activity Relationships perceived in sexual terms Relationships are unsatisfying, short-term and with periods of rejection
Intimacy Deficits	Normal sexual scripts Insecure attachments, which lead to problems in adult relationships Maladaptive strategies to avoid unsuccessful adult relationships Intimacy deficits and feelings of loneliness Substitutes child as a surrogate
Emotional Dysregulation	Normal sexual scripts Emotional regulation problems Unidentified emotional structures Early established link between sex and emotional wellbeing Sex used as soothing strategy Unable to mobilise social supports when stressed High anger and emotional dysregulation Child used to satisfy sexual need and punish partner
Antisocial Cognitions	Normal sexual scripts Pro-criminal attitudes and beliefs Antisocial tendencies Patriarchal attitudes and sense of superiority Disregard of social norms, especially children and sex Exploits opportunity to self-gratify

Notes: Sexual scripts are "the cognitive representations individuals acquire during the course of their development that specify how to behave in sexual encounters" (Ward et al., 2006, p. 64).

Source: Adapted from Ward et al. (2006).

The Pathways Model makes it clear that it aims to explain adult perpetrators' behaviour, not problem sexual behaviours or sexually abusive behaviours that may be exhibited by children who sexually abuse other children. Ward and Siegert (2002) argued that the Multiple Dysfunctional Mechanisms pathway is exhibited by "pure" paedophiles; that is, those who can be diagnosed

with paedophilia. Perpetrators with the Deviant Sexual Scripts and Relationships Schema are those who may have a possible history of child sexual abuse themselves.

As Ward et al. (2006) noted, "in the pathways model situational triggers are hypothesised to interact with the various predispositions of individuals to sexually abuse children. The nature of the situational triggers will vary according to the particular profile of causes underlying each individual's offence trajectory or pathway" (p. 73).

A5.3 Rational choice theories and situational crime prevention

Rational choice theory is a sociological model used to understand social and economical behaviour. While it was initially modelled to explain the economic behaviours of individuals, since the 1980s and 1990s it has been used to explain involvement with crime. Criminologists have used rational choice theory to argue that criminals are logical and will find ways to have their needs for money, sex or excitement met. Broadly speaking, rational choice theory posits that individuals will rationalise the commitment of a crime (i.e., undertake a cost-benefit analysis) and will commit it if the benefit of the crime outweighs the consequences, and if there is little or no chance of being caught.

Similar to rational choice theory is routine activity theory, which posits that if there is a suitable target, a motivated offender and no authority figure to prevent the crime from occurring, then the crime will be committed. Routine activity theory is closely linked to the idea that the given environment in which a would-be offender finds themselves plays just as important a role in the crime being committed as the individual's psychology.

Arising out of rational choice theory and routine activity theory is the situational crime prevention model. Researchers have focused on this model as having a great deal of potential for preventing sexual abuse (see Smallbone et al., 2008). In theory, situational crime prevention is more efficient than other prevention models because the target is the situation, not the individual's motivation. Clarke (1997) outlined the components of this prevention model, namely that it: (a) is aimed at a very specific form of crime; (b) involves the management, design or manipulation of the environment in a systematic and permanent manner; and (c) ensures the crime is more difficult or risky to commit, or has fewer rewards. Currently, situation crime prevention is more commonly used for targeting "everyday crimes", such as graffiti, loitering, theft from motor vehicles, crowd control and shoplifting. Although this theory is successful in preventing crime from occurring within certain environments and situations, some argue that it only deters the criminal; it does not offer a cure for their behaviour. Scholars who are researching the potential for situational crime prevention to prevent child sexual abuse have presented compelling data for how to reduce child sexual abuse perpetration in organisational or institutional settings (Leclerc, Wortley, & Smallbone, 2011; Smallbone et al., 2008). Clarke and Homel's (Clarke, 1997) 16 opportunity-reducing techniques include:

- target hardening;
- controlling access;
- deflecting offenders;
- controlling facilitators;
- screening entries/exits;
- strengthening formal surveillance;
- using surveillance by employees;
- assisting natural surveillance;
- removing the target;
- identifying property;
- reducing temptation;
- denying benefits;
- setting rules;

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- stimulating conscience;
- controlling disinhibitors; and
- facilitating compliance.

Kaufman, Tews, Schuett, and Kaufman (2012) focused on how organisations can use situational crime prevention to prevent child sexual abuse and argued that this is the best model for preventing abuse outside of familial contexts. According to Kaufman et al., the organisational climate and local community influences that can directly or indirectly influence or control behaviour in a setting, the physical attributes of the environment, and lifestyle and routine activities can all have an effect on whether child sexual abuse is perpetrated within an institutional setting. They presented a six-step process that organisations and institutions can use in order to ensure that their environments become safe spaces for children and prevent child sexual abuse from happening. The six steps are:

- *brainstorming organisational risks*, such as children being left alone with one staff member for extended periods of time—undertaken by staff who know the organisation well, over at least two sessions running to about 4.5 hours in total;
- *obtaining input on risks from staff, volunteer, and the organisation's community*—there must be community buy-in and reassurance that all risks have been identified and the community feels their fears are being understood;
- *linking risk-to-risk reduction with prevention strategies*;
- *prioritising risks*—reflecting practical realities and how they limit or modify risk reduction;
- *implementing risk reduction and prevention strategies*—stagger the implementation in order to reduce resistance to change; and
- *ongoing monitoring and reassessment*—assess the effects of the strategies 4–6 months after implementation (pp. 151–160).

As Kaufman et al. (2012) noted, it is not enough to have Working With Children Checks if the environment facilitates the sexual abuse of children; for example, by having areas such as gym change rooms isolated from the rest of the school, or having lockable classrooms to which only one teacher has the keys and access.

A6 Current approaches to prevention

In this section we present approaches to prevention. This section steps beyond the previous review areas to look at how child sexual abuse is being prevented, or how researchers are theorising it could be prevented, based on findings from studies of perpetration behaviour and psychology.

A6.1 Public health model

Primary prevention

In this report, we have been mainly interested in research results on the primary prevention of child sexual abuse rather than on preventing recidivism. Using the public health and socio-economic models, primary prevention looks at child sexual abuse perpetration at all levels of society, including whole communities, organisations, families and individuals, whereas preventing recidivism is aimed only at the individual perpetrator who has already committed sexual abuse against a child.

For example, both the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and WHO define primary prevention as preventing violence before it occurs. This definition is also used when discussing sexual assault (see VicHealth, 2007) and is also focused on preventing victimisation (or continued victimisation). However, among Australian program providers of protective behaviours education (see section below on protective behaviours), there currently appears to be some misunderstanding and a lack of consensus about what the primary prevention of child sexual abuse is.

Developmental prevention

Outlined by Smallbone et al. (2008), developmental prevention aims to "prevent the emergence, over the course of individual social cognitive development, of dispositions and vulnerabilities associated with the onset of child sexual abuse offending" (p. 65). They noted that individuals, especially men, would require interventions at key life phases in order to reduce and prevent the likelihood of child sexual abuse offending. The life stages noted are during:

- early attachment relationships;
- transition to school;
- transition to high school (Colton, Roberts, & Vanstone, 2010); and
- transition to parenthood.

However, programs aimed at women, such as the Elmira Project, which aim to develop stronger links between low socio-economically situated mothers and their infants, could have a positive effect in building stronger relationships (emotional and physical) that could play a role in lowering child sexual abuse offending in the long term. Smallbone et al. (2008) argued that focusing on these life stages could potentially reduce child sexual abuse prevention because children's social cognitive skills need to be addressed and strengthened in order to ensure that later emotional and sexual development is not hindered, and progresses along a normal trajectory. Currently, there is no one established program that delivers developmental prevention

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against child sexual abuse offending at the four life stages, nor has there been an evaluation of whether or how this would work across a broad population.

A6.2 Current international programs

Primary prevention

Prevention Project Dunkelfeld

Prevention Project Dunkelfeld (PPD) is an innovative German primary prevention strategy aimed at paedophiles and hebephiles who have not been arrested or convicted of any sex crimes against children but are seeking help and treatment. It has been in operation since 2002, following constant requests from 1996 onwards from self-diagnosed paedophiles or hebephiles for help to prevent them from becoming child sexual abuse offenders (Beier, Ahlers et al., 2009; Beier, Neutze et al., 2009). Within 38 months of the PPD being set up, there were 808 respondents to national advertisements on television, radio and in print seeking participants for the project. Men who came forward were offered anonymity and promised confidentiality provided they were not currently sexually abusing a child. Of the respondents, 234 reported having committed child sexual abuse or child sexual exploitation at least once in their lives and so they were discounted from the study/project. The project uses cognitive behaviour therapy, group and individual therapy, sexological tools (e.g., finding ways to connect with adult sexual partners) and medical options (e.g., chemical castration) to help participants control their thoughts and feelings towards children.

The official partners of PPD are victim support organisations, media relations and campaign companies, and a web developer who aided in the creation of a media message that would speak to the right demographic while also not alienating support from the German public. There were a variety of reasons why potential offenders sought support, including:

- being urged by friends, relatives or spouses to get help;
- being referred to the project by their doctor;
- having the empathy to realise the harm they could do;
- wanting to be cured;
- waning to be attracted to adults; and
- wanting to have a family of their own.

Many men who were not paedophiles or hebephiles were worried about their sexual attraction to younger looking women.

PPD has uncovered vital differences between currently detected child sexual abuse offenders and undetected or Dunkelfeld offenders. Dunkelfeld offenders:

- were generally well educated, with higher numbers having graduate and postgraduate qualifications;
- had low levels of psychiatric disturbance;
- had higher levels of paedophilia than among detected child sexual abuse offenders;
- were primarily male;
- were politically active;
- had a better ability to reflect on their behaviour and thoughts;
- were less antisocial; and
- rarely reported having committed any other form of crime (Feelgood & Schaefer, 2011).

Those who feared harming a child for the first time were also more receptive to treatment (Feelgood & Schaefer, 2011).

There are limited data available on the effectiveness of PPD, with researchers noting that the initial part of the project was wrapping up in 2013 when data would be released on the

effectiveness of the treatment (Feelgood & Schaefer, 2011).[10] At first glance, however, this may not be a possible treatment strategy in Australia due to mandatory reporting laws, which may make it difficult to promise confidential treatment to paedophiles and hebephiles who have not yet committed a contact offence but who do access child pornography or fantasise about sexual relations with a child. While this project encapsulates the idea of primary prevention by seeking out contact with potential (future) offenders, it would be necessary to see evaluations of the program.

Stop it Now! UK & Ireland campaign

A telephone hotline was established about 10 years ago in the UK (based on the US hotline Stop it Now!) to allow individuals who were worried about their thoughts and actions around children to anonymously speak with the helpline staff about their concerns. Over the course of 10 years, over 14,524 individuals have called the helpline, with over 54% of all the calls coming from adults concerned about their own behaviour, 24% coming from family and friends concerned about another adult's behaviour, and 4% of calls concerning a child exhibiting sexualised behaviour. Only 2% were women. Two-fifths of callers had not yet abused a child but were concerned that they might. The justice system also works with Stop it Now! UK & Ireland by referring any cautioned or bailed offenders to the organisation to receive help while they are awaiting trial. A small number of individuals who have committed child sexual abuse have referred themselves to the police and have been arrested. The organisation offers face-to-face interviews for offenders, offenders' families and youth with sexualised behaviours, and offers to install an Internet browser application called Securus that monitors web-browsing habits and logs the pages a user visits. This program has been considered very effective; however, no independent research exists detailing the efficacy of the helpline and face-to-face interviews (Denis & Whitehead, 2012).

Preventing recidivism

Focus is currently on mental health treatment programs in correctional settings for child sexual abuse and other sex offenders. However, the research literature indicates there are other options for reintegrating an individual back into the community and reducing the risk of reoffending.

Circles of Support and Accountability (COSA)

One of these programs is COSA, which was established in Canada 15 years ago. The purpose of this program is to support released child sexual offenders through group and individual meetings, help them find employment and housing, and reintegrate them back into society after their period of incarceration. Results indicate that offenders who have been part of COSA have between a 70% and 83% lower chance of sexual reoffending than those who did not partake in the group (Finkelhor, 2009; Wilson, Cortoni, & McWhinnie, 2009). The program is now available in the UK and the USA, and there have been suggestions that it could be introduced in Australia, although there is no information post-2009 about this.

The COSA program was initially established to fill a gap; in the past offenders were being released following the end of their prison sentence without any community supervision or aid in their reintegration into the community. Volunteers from a local religious group decided to work with two released offenders and met with them on a daily basis (in a group or "circle" that involved the perpetrator and five volunteers, or on a one-on-one basis). Although the two offenders were classed as high risk, with a 100% chance of violent sexual re-offending at their release, they were successfully reintegrated into the community (Wilson et al., 2009). Since then, the Ontario section alone of COSA has aided 200 released sex offenders, and Circles UK was established by the government to allow for the training of volunteers to work with recently released offenders.

There is no established timeframe within which a circle works. The circle meets until they feel that the offender is ready to go ahead alone. Often the circle can be brought together again if months or years down the track the offender feels that they need circle support again (Wilson

10 As of February 2014, there has been no new information published about this program's effectiveness.

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et al., 2009). There have been cases where the COSA method for reintegration has not worked for an offender, resulting in their re-arrest, although usually not for a sexual offence. However, as Bates and Wilson (2012) noted, this was often because the volunteer members of the circle were not working well together or communicating well with the offender. More long-term evaluations of this program are required, but initial results, as well as increased enthusiasm by the UK government to fund the circles, suggest this may be a viable option to prevent reoffending.

Integrated treatment

While integrated treatment programs are aimed at all sexual offenders, Marshall, Marshall, Serran, and Fernandez (2006) singled out incest and paedophile sexual offenders as those who could benefit from this in-prison treatment. As the authors noted, it is a "semi-structured, cognitive behavioural approach that integrates emotional expression and regulation and operates in a rolling format" (p. 24). The researchers produced a very thorough manual of what the treatment entails, but data on its effectiveness are limited due to a lack of testing. However, the authors note that the program is based on other successful processes employed by therapists and researchers elsewhere, including, for example, Ward's Good Lives approach (see below).

Good Lives

The Good Lives framework, as proposed by Ward and Gannon (2006), is concerned with understanding offending within a broader concept of unmet needs or frustrations with satisfying universal human needs. As Frost (2011) stated, "according to the [Good Lives] model, persons commit criminal acts because they lack opportunity or capability to achieve valued goals by appropriate means" (p. 435). The treatment is focused on building the offender's self-esteem, self-confidence and sense of hope so they can work towards a better life that is free from child sexual abuse. If the treatment is presented ineffectively, it can lead to conflict in a group, result in group therapy being a passive listening experience, or create an adversarial environment that is ineffective for treatment and rehabilitation. However, if a well-trained therapist applies the program, then there is evidence, as noted by Frost, of this program being successful. However, recidivism (re-offending by committing a sexual offence and not just re-arrest for any criminal behaviour) was not discussed.

A6.3 Current Australian programs

There is little overall government policy that dictates either a whole-of-system or whole-of-government approach to child sexual abuse prevention in Australia. Child sexual abuse has been part of other child protection frameworks and not located separately as requiring different responses than other forms of child abuse and neglect. It is noted that the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Assault will make policy recommendations in addition to conducting inquiries. It is as yet unclear whether any government policy recommendations arising from the inquiry will be limited to child sexual abuse in institutional contexts. It is hoped that the present work may assist in informing this.

Apart from the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children (COAG, 2009b), we could not locate any other state/territory or national policies that have specific actions or strategies that target prevention of and early intervention in child sexual assault, other than in NSW, where such a policy specifically targets Indigenous people.

However, the following related policy approaches were identified:

- *national frameworks agreed at COAG level*, including: National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children (COAG, 2009b), National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and Their Children (COAG, 2010), Information Sharing Protocol between the Commonwealth and Child Protection Agencies (NSW Government, 2009), and National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Early Childhood Development (COAG, 2009a);
- *enforcement responses*: the Australian Federal Police and state/territory police at jurisdictional levels have dedicated sexual assault and child abuse teams;

- *child protection legislation*: authorising intervention (but not necessarily the administration of therapeutic responses) where a child has been deemed at risk of child sexual assault;
- *NSW Interagency Plan to Tackle Child Sexual Assault in Aboriginal Communities* (NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs): appears to be the only dedicated response of its type and was recently reviewed by the NSW Ombudsman (2012);
- *mandatory reporting schemes* in each jurisdiction; and
- *WA Protective Behaviours Program*: promoted by the WA Government (though not directly administered by it).

Other prevention strategies currently employed in Australian jurisdictions include Working With Children Checks, residency restrictions, community notifications and sex offender registration. International research into these strategies has been minimal and often they have been introduced without any evidence of their efficacy (Finkelhor, 2009). In Australia, there has been no research testing the efficacy of such programs.

Residency restrictions are somewhat flawed, seeing as most sexual abuse occurs within families and the family's social networks. Background checks in one US state have revealed that after five years of screening 3.7 million individuals, only 5% had a criminal record and less than half of 1% were registered sex offenders (with no data on whether the offence was against children or adults). Community notification of sex offender whereabouts has been linked to a downward decline in crime, but researchers are not sure if this is separate from the general decline in crime (Finkelhor, 2009). Sex offender registration has also not been fully researched for efficacy and, in general, the current research results are mixed at best, with some null and negative effects being found (Finkelhor, 2009).

It would appear from the research literature that these common tertiary prevention techniques are primarily implemented to allay public anxieties about the location of sex offenders, and for governments to appear that they are "cracking down" on sex offenders (Finkelhor, 2009; Miller, 2013; Smallbone et al., 2008). As Miller noted, sexually violent predator statutes "are essentially punitive expressions of societal disgust and fear of contamination by offenders" (p. 515).

Protective behaviours as primary prevention in Australia

Across Australian state and territory jurisdictions there is an uneven level of child sexual abuse prevention education. There are no consistent policies regarding how child sexual abuse prevention is or should be taught to students, whether students should be assessed following the program, whether the teachers receive training to teach about this, or even if parents should know that their children are being taught prevention. Results for each of the key criteria indicate that:

- All the states and territories have "base" child protection policies that prescribe the teacher's role in identifying and reporting any child maltreatment (all suspected cases of sexual abuse must be reported). Only the ACT, SA and WA specially address the role of teachers in child sexual abuse prevention education.
- None of the states have specific child sexual abuse prevention education policies.
- Only the ACT, SA and WA have a commitment in their curriculums to providing sexual abuse prevention education. NSW and Victoria have a weak commitment to it, meaning that it is ultimately the school's decision whether sexual abuse is taught or not. Queensland, Tasmania and NT have no commitment to include prevention education in their curriculum.
- Sexual abuse prevention is primarily taught within the Health and Physical Education subject (Personal Development in NSW, and Physical Education, and Health and Wellbeing in Tasmania). NSW, the ACT and WA specifically mention that sexual abuse prevention education must take place in these classes, unlike Victoria, Queensland, NT and Tasmania, which don't specifically mention child sexual abuse prevention, personal safety or protective behaviours as compulsory units of study.
- All states and territories make resources for prevention education publicly available on their websites; however, it may be difficult for untrained educators to judge the quality of the material and the quality of external providers of prevention education if they have not received specific training. A hindrance for teachers in assessing the suitability of external,

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non-government providers is a lack of accreditation or registration. Only Victoria and the ACT offer guidelines on the use of external providers.

- Only SA and the ACT stipulate that teachers must receive training before delivering sexual abuse prevention education modules. SA also requires all teachers to attend a full-day, face-to-face training session on "Responding to Abuse and Neglect–Education and Care", with three-yearly updates to the training.
- Victoria, SA, Queensland and the ACT assess students on what they have learned from prevention education, but only Victoria makes it explicitly clear that students are assessed on what they have learned.
- In NSW, schools actively seek parental permission to provide sexual abuse prevention education, and in SA and Victoria parents can opt to withdraw their children from such classes. However, if SA parents choose to withdraw their children, teachers are cautioned to find out why the parents wish to do so.
- Information for parents and communities is scant. NSW, SA and Victoria have specific information for parents, but mostly only in English, and they only send parents to cyber-safety websites.

Future research should focus on discovering why these discrepancies exist to begin with. Is it inadequate resources, preference for broader sexuality education, or lack of knowledge about what constitutes effective pedagogical content for this topic? As Walsh et al. (2013) noted, "as long as this work remains outstanding, the effect is one of disunity and unequal provision across the country such that we are a long way from achieving the sixth supporting outcome for the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children" (p. 668). However, coordinating all state and territory child protection policies with the national framework may be a long-term challenge.

Assessments of sexual abuse prevention education programs in schools have found that there are limited data available on the benefit of education programs for either primary or secondary school students in an Australian context (there is currently only one project, funded by the Australian Research Council, that is assessing a sexual abuse prevention program, with results becoming available after 2015). International research into the effectiveness of sexual abuse prevention education (across all year levels in primary and secondary schools) and respectful relationships education (for children and young people aged 12 to 25 years) has found mixed evidence for their effectiveness. Respectful relationships programs aim to prevent or reduce dating and relationship violence (including sexual violence between peers), effective communication skills, and skills to deal with stress, disappointment, rejection, the resolution of conflict and the promotion of healthier relationships (Fellmeth, Heffernan, Nurse, Habibula, & Sethi, 2013). However, one comprehensive research review found that there was "no evidence of an effect of interventions on the outcomes reported", although that was not to say that these programs should be stopped, but rather that more research with strong methodologies needs to be undertaken to evaluate the effectiveness of these programs for children and young adults (Fellmeth et al., 2013, pp. 20–23).

Another international review of the research literature found no evaluations of Australian prevention programs in schools, and so the assessment of sexual abuse prevention education is based predominantly on research from the USA (however, we note that there are some evaluations of individual programs that are not publically available). A final review found that knowledge retention for children at two or three months after prevention education sessions was high, but there is no information about long-term effectiveness. There were some negative outcomes reported in several studies (for example, children being frightened), but it is unknown whether it was the topic or the manner in which the children were taught that caused the issues. It has not been evident if disclosures of child sexual abuse have been linked to participation in prevention education and there are insufficient data to measure if different types of programs and settings are necessary for education provision, nor when the optimal age would be to begin educating children about sexual abuse (Zwi et al., 2007). While research shows that children benefit from sexual abuse prevention education (and some would argue that provision of such education is part of a child's human rights), it should not be seen as or become a replacement for a wider societal responsibility to ensure children are protected against sexual exploitation.

Prevention programs are aimed primarily at young children and adolescents. The programs discussed above only consider the individual (not broader societal, familial or organisational effects on perpetrating behaviour), and the programs taught to children at schools may inadvertently put the onus on children to prevent child sexual abuse. Where there are programs for parents and teachers, it is often to present the information that has been taught to the children and may not involve wider discussion about how to integrate the learned information into day-to-day parenting or teaching.

Programs that are purely focused on sexual abuse prevention have previously been evaluated by researchers, who have found them to be useful in teaching children (in the short term), but there have been no data on whether these programs actually prevented child sexual abuse from occurring (Finkelhor, 2009; Kenny, Capri, Thakkar-Kolar, Ryan, & Runyon, 2008; Topping & Barron, 2009).

Preventing recidivism

Counselling of convicted sex offenders is a treatment form offered or enforced in prisons around Australia and worldwide as part of an offender's rehabilitation, and is in the first instance used to prevent recidivism rather than prevent sexual abuse from occurring in the first instance. This form of treatment is primarily to increase skills for the offender's behavioural self-regulation and to aid the resolution of underlying problems that may have led to the offending in the first place (Finkelhor, 2009). These programs can be successful if they are available for the duration of incarceration, if there is enough funding for effective therapists to undertake the work, and if child sexual abusers are treated separately to adult sex offenders (Smallbone et al., 2008). However, the effectiveness of counselling, especially the use of cognitive behaviour therapy, has not yet been fully evaluated here or elsewhere, with some reservations about how much it can prevent recidivism. One of the issues raised by other researchers working on prevention strategies is that counselling is often only offered within a correctional setting once an offence has been committed (Beier, Neutze et al., 2009). Evidence for the success of counselling for juvenile sexual offenders is much more readily available and multi-systemic therapy has been found to be the most effective for this cohort (Finkelhor, 2009), although there is no information about whether it is used in Australia.

Offender treatment programs tend to be primarily provided in custodial settings. However, there have been efforts to broaden the scope of delivery. In Australia, there were two programs available for preventing recidivism—Cedar Cottages (NSW) and Safecare (WA)—which offered therapy and treatment to perpetrators who were either awaiting trial, had been tried and found guilty, or had admitted their guilt, and rather than proceed with a court trial were put through the program. Each program ran for two years (which could be extended by a year if necessary) and often required the perpetrator and victim to meet, under supervision, to begin healing (for the victim) and behaviour change (for the perpetrator). Both programs were independently evaluated and found to be highly effective in preventing recidivism, and offered an alternative to traditional criminal justice penalties for child sexual abuse (Cant & Penter, 2006; Goodman-Delahunty, 2009; O'Brien, 2010). These programs are no longer in operation.

A6.4 Prevention and children/adolescents with problem sexual behaviours or sexually abusive behaviours

Generally, research has found that treating and preventing child sexual abuse among the younger cohort needs a different strategy to what is used with adults. In Victoria this has resulted in therapeutic treatment orders being issued by courts to take children under the age of 15 years out of the justice system and into therapy for two years. In the UK, the Stop it Now! campaign also offers counselling to youth under 16 years who have been found in possession of child exploitation material or to be exhibiting problem sexual behaviours or sexually abusive behaviours. Both therapeutic treatment orders and the Stop it Now! counselling have reported positive outcomes for youth who have used their services. Research suggests that treatment is

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highly effective and prevents recidivism among children and adolescents if it is administered early on (O'Brien, 2010).

For primary prevention, education strategies, professional (teacher) education and community education have been suggested as effective means of preventing problem sexual behaviours and sexually abusive behaviours from developing in youth (O'Brien, 2010). The basis of calls for community and professional teacher education is the argument that adults without this education do not consider that children are capable of perpetrating sexual violence (Karrington, 2009, as cited in O'Brien, 2010). The community, teachers, justice officials and teachers need education in how sexuality develops in children, and how to respond suitably to appropriate or inappropriate sexual behaviour in children (Webster, 2009, as cited in O'Brien, 2010).

As outlined in section A3.7, often with children and adolescents presenting with problem sexual behaviours or sexually abusive behaviours there is a history of victimisation at the hands of either another child or an adult. Therefore focus has been less on criminal justice interventions and more on holistic therapeutic responses. Research indicates that these are highly successful (O'Brien, 2010). In some jurisdictions, for example in Western Australia, children and adolescents can receive counselling only if they have been convicted of a sex offence (they can receive this treatment even if they are on community orders), but there are problems with the delivery of services within and outside of metropolitan regions due to distance (O'Brien, 2010). Some programs have been discontinued; for example, the Critical Response Team, which offered counselling to youth in remote regions (O'Brien, 2010). There appear to be a variety of programs available across all the states and territories for children and adolescents who are displaying problem sexual behaviours or sexually abusive behaviours, but issues of distance, funding and having no clear federal, state or territory legislation on dealing with children and youth outside of juvenile detention settings means that service delivery varies a great deal across Australia (O'Brien, 2010).

PART B

Child sexual abuse: Current issues and future directions

B1 Key issues in research, policy and practice responses to child sexual abuse

Child sexual abuse is a complex phenomenon, both empirically (i.e., the actual circumstances in which it occurs) and conceptually. The following section identifies key issues that shape what conclusions we can draw from the research, policy and practice responses to prevention.

B1.1 Research issues

As can be seen in Part B, a number of issues (usually methodological) affect the conclusions we can draw about perpetration. These include:

- *Definitions of child sexual abuse*—Different studies use broader or narrower definitions and measures (e.g., self-report measures compared to notifications of child sexual abuse made to statutory authorities that are investigated and substantiated).
- *Lack of available data about the characteristics of child sexual abuse*—It is difficult to obtain an accurate picture of features such as: the age of perpetrators; the age of victims; the incidence of intra-familial compared to extra-familial sexual abuse; the settings or locations in which abuse occurs; and the balance between young people who sexually abuse compared to adult offenders across the range of child sexual abuse types.
- *Distinction between paedophilia and child molestation*—Paedophilia is a psychiatric concept while child molestation is a socio-legal concept.
- *Representativeness of research samples*—As has been well established, the majority of child sexual abuse cases do not come to the attention of the justice system or result in a conviction (Cossins, 2010), yet most research with child sex offenders is drawn from detected and convicted populations. The extent to which these populations are representative of undetected child sex offenders is unclear.
- *Collapsing types of sex offenders*—Most studies on child sex offending, particularly those that look at risk factors, combine different types of sex offenders together (Whitaker et al., 2008). This could mean combining adult and child sex offenders, or combing intra-familial and extra-familial offenders.
- *Assessment of perpetrator risk factors*—Typically, the research assesses risk factors for re-offending rather than the onset of offending. It is possible that these are quite different factors. In addition, most risk factors are individual-level factors. There is limited research that looks at community- or social-level factors or how they interact with individual factors. In addition, compared to risk factors associated with child maltreatment more broadly, risk factors associated with child sexual abuse are not as well documented, nor do they appear to be as predictive as the risk factors associated with child maltreatment.
- *Distinction between adolescent- and adult-onset perpetration*—There has been growing recognition that adolescents comprise a significant proportion of assailants in incidents of child sexual abuse and that their risk factors and therapeutic needs are not the same as those of adult offenders. However, there is a lack of clarity about whether adolescents engaging in sexually abusive behaviour are a distinct population compared to those who begin offending in adulthood. This lack of clarity affects claims about who should be the target of prevention.

B1.2 Locating child sexual abuse as a social and policy issue

Compared to other forms of child abuse and neglect, sexual abuse and exploitation characteristically occurs in a range of relationships and settings within and beyond the family and is predominantly perpetrated by males. By contrast, neglect, emotional abuse and physical abuse typically occur within the family, with mothers predominantly being the adult whom child protection authorities hold responsible (Lamont, 2011). In addition, child sexual abuse involves:

- significant barriers to and delays in children's disclosures that sexual abuse is occurring, and indeed this may not come to light until the victims are adults;
- perpetrator tactics that normalise, conceal or reframe sexually abusive interactions;
- adherence by the general public to myths about child sexual abuse; and
- public demonisation of "child sex predators" when particular types of sexual abuse come to light.

To this end, child sexual abuse reflects a number of the common dynamics and issues associated with adult sexual assault (Clark & Quadara, 2010; Heenan 2004; Tarczon & Quadara, 2012). More recently, the growing recognition that adolescents comprise a significant proportion of those engaging in sexually abusive behaviour adds a developmental consideration in prevention efforts. Meanwhile, the production and distribution of child exploitation material ("child pornography") has, to date, been located within a criminal justice and crime prevention framework.

There are subsequently "different, but independently legitimate, perspectives" on the causes and appropriate responses to child sexual abuse, such as:

- criminal justice;
- child rights;
- child health and wellbeing;
- family and community wellbeing;
- public health; and
- risk management (ISPCAN, 2011, pp. 13–14).

We would also add the perspective of *gender-based violence* to this list.

As a social and policy issue, therefore, child sexual abuse crosses at least four domains—violence against women, family wellbeing and support, child protection, and criminal offending. The consequences of this can be not only different approaches to prevention, but also a risk that "child sexual abuse" falls between the gaps of policy frameworks.

B1.3 Practice issues

Translating a public health approach to prevention into practice

Numerous policies (including the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009–2020, COAG, 2009b), research studies, and expert commentary have noted that statutory responses are not sufficient or sustainable, and are often unable to prevent future harm (e.g., Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth [ARACY], 2008; Bromfield & Holzer, 2008; O'Donnell, Scott, & Stanley, 2008). Economic analyses show that attempting to remedy the effects of child abuse is more costly than preventing it in the first place (Mikton & Butchart, 2009).

While there is agreement that primary prevention is the "change goal", the complex and multisectoral nature of child sexual abuse noted above influences understandings about what an effective prevention agenda should look like. For example, in child protection the orientation

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is towards the rights of the child as well as the rights—and needs—of the parents. Where safety is an issue, the primary focus is the child's right to safety. By comparison, family services start from the idea that children are best cared for in the family. These different emphases can result in different issues triggering a service response. Further, when comparing sexual violence prevention (of which child sexual abuse is one example) to child protection, the targets of any intervention (i.e., those receiving a prevention initiative) differ. In sexual violence prevention, targets can be individuals, communities and organisations, or the broader social environment (e.g., media representations). In the child protection literature on prevention, the target is primarily seen as the family (ARACY, 2008).

This issue was reflected in our consultations, with some stakeholders noting that in current practice diverse activities and targets are being identified as "primary prevention". For example, some services consider the prevention of further offending by a perpetrator as being a form of primary prevention. There were many approaches being called primary prevention when they could more accurately be classified as secondary or tertiary prevention. The aims of primary prevention (such as "changing social norms") were also considered to be too vague, which may suggest that underlying determinants for child sexual abuse are not well identified. This makes it difficult to see how "upstream" prevention efforts connect with a reduction in victimisation.

Difficulty in addressing perpetration within the child protection system

Statutory child protection systems have generally been focused on the safety of the child, and the presence of risk and harm. Some expert stakeholders observed that:

- it could be difficult, when thinking about prevention, for child protection systems as a whole to consider the tactics, strategies and motivations of perpetrators;
- focusing on perpetration highlights the deeply gendered nature of child sexual abuse perpetration, which was sometimes interpreted by practitioners as implying that "all men are child molesters";
- those working with mothers in contact with statutory child protection systems may not be aware of the ways in which their ability to protect is reduced by father's/men's tactics (particularly in situations where family violence is present) (see Tarczon, 2012); and
- there is still a lingering focus on "stranger danger" in child sexual abuse prevention efforts, despite research showing that the vast majority of child sexual abuse victims already know the offender.

This is reflected in the literature, with the majority of research undertaken on child sex offenders and perpetration located within criminology, socio-legal studies and the offender-treatment literature, and is rarely connected back to child maltreatment or child protection.

B2 Conceptualising child sexual abuse: Key findings from the literature

B2.1 Key characteristics of child sexual abuse

Part A reviewed and synthesised current research across different forms of child sexual abuse in terms of the characteristics of and risk factors for perpetration. Several key characteristics from this review were identified:

- *Familial vs non-familial perpetrators and differences in victims*—There are some key differences in perpetration dynamics when the perpetrator is an adult family member compared to a non-family member, namely:
  - *gender of victim*—females are far more likely to be victimised where sexual abuse is perpetrated by a family member, while males are more likely to be sexually abused by non-familial perpetrators (see Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS], 2006, 2013; Rosengard, Laing, Ridley, & Hunter, 2007);
  - *age of victim*—age of first abuse is younger when the abuse is perpetrated by family members compared to non-family members;
  - *demographic characteristics of perpetrator*—parental perpetrators are older than extra-familial perpetrators, are often in marital or de facto relationships, or have participated in long-term intimate relationships with adults, which are typically regarded as protective factors (Goodman-Delahunty, 2014); and
  - *number of victims/frequency or duration of abuse*—perpetrators of familial sexual abuse have fewer victims compared to non-familial perpetrators, but their offending is more likely to be frequent or occur against that victim for a longer period time. While non-familial perpetrators may have a greater number of victims, they may only offend against that individual once or twice.
- *Differences in adolescent vs late onset perpetration*—Research suggests a "bimodal" pattern of perpetration, referring to two distinct periods for onset (i.e., the start of perpetrating abuse). The first is adolescence, with some research estimating that young people may account for up to half of all child sex offences, although most figures suggest between 16% and 28% (Boyd & Bromfield, 2006; Moses, Huntington, & D'Ambrosio, 2004; Nisbet, Rombouts, & Smallbone, 2005; Stathopoulos, 2012). A second distinct point of onset is between the mid-20s to early/mid-30s (Moses et al., 2004). These two distinct periods will likely mean different approaches to prevention are required.[11]
- *Online sexual abuse*—This is an emerging area of concern. While the extent of online sexual abuse is less than sexual abuse perpetrated in familial and/or care relationships, communication technologies vastly speed up perpetrators' capacity to make connections with children and young people, both in Australia and overseas (particularly in the adjacent Asia–Pacific region). Further, the speed of innovation in technology makes

11 To emphasise, the identification of "bimodal" onset in sexual offending is different from broader criminological analyses of the age/crime curve. When looking at offending overall, people are most likely to begin offending between 15 and 19 years of age and then "grow out" of this behaviour ("adolescent-limited"). There are some offenders, however, who continue to offend into adulthood ("life-course persistent") (Moffitt, 1993, 2003). So the model here is onset in adolescence, persistence for some into adulthood. By contrast, the sexual abuse literature suggest two different points in time for onset, and by implication, two different perpetrator groups with possibly different risk factors, situational opportunities, and therefore approaches to prevention.

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detection, investigation and prosecution difficult. Perpetrators may cross over from making connections with children/young people online to making contact offline (in real life), and may move from downloading child exploitation material to virtual forms of child sexual abuse, facilitated through instant messaging services or voice-over-Internet protocol (VOIP) platforms. Further, online social networking platforms or other social media enable "weak connections" between potential victims and perpetrators in the offline world to become more intimate, thus facilitating either contact abuse or the production of child exploitation material. Overall, online child sex offenders use technology to facilitate a range of sexually abusive behaviours, from viewing child exploitation material to contacting potential victims to facilitating overseas child sex tourism.

Figure B1 (on page 49) conceptually maps the diverse characteristics of child sexual abuse according to the following four dimensions: *relationships*, *contexts or settings*, *victim vulnerabilities* and *grooming strategies*. These are not mutually exclusive, but are used to highlight the idea that some forms of child sexual abuse are made possible and are shaped by the relationships between victims and perpetrators, while other forms of child sexual abuse are significantly shaped by the settings and contexts in which victims and perpetrators come together. This is highlighted by the notion that sexual abuse is only possible at the convergence or interaction of two factors: the person (both victim and offender) and the situation (context or setting) (Smallbone et al., 2008). Further, adult perpetrators typically target children who appear vulnerable (due to family dysfunction, social isolation, disability, etc.), and employ a range of grooming strategies to develop trust and intimacy with the child, which enables sexualisation of the relationship to occur (Salter, 1995).

These four dimensions—relationships, settings, vulnerabilities and grooming—are represented visually in Figure B1. This is not intended to be a prescriptive or comprehensive representation. Rather, it is intended to provide a schematic of the diverse circumstances in which child sexual abuse occurs in terms of:

- types of relationships and settings;
- the possible intersections and overlaps between contexts; and
- perpetrators' exploitation of victim vulnerabilities and the opportunities afforded by both the relationship (e.g., a care/supervision relationship) and the setting or context (e.g., child-focused organisation or institution).

This schematic representation can be used to help focus questions on, for example:

- the different programmatic areas at the policy level that exist to address these different dimensions and whether/how they interrelate; and
- the range of prevention approaches targeting these diverse circumstances.

The components of the mapping shown in Figure B1—relationships, contexts, vulnerabilities and grooming—are further described below.

Relationships

Based on the literature reviewed, there are three major relationship groups:

- *Intra-familial relationships*—These comprise a range of familial ties between perpetrators and victims. Depending on the familial context, friends of the family can be considered part of the family. Whether they are blended or biological, familial relationships are often characterised by privacy, complex attachments, frequent and intimate contact, and gender role expectations (e.g., paternal authority). As discussed in the following section, familial environments can contain a range of risk factors—such as family violence, dysfunction and disadvantage—that can increase the risk of child sexual abuse occurring as well, either from a parent or other relative. We have made a distinction in Figure B1 between adult offenders and young people who engage in sexually abusive behaviours.
- *Extra-familial relationships*—These are also interpersonal relationships between perpetrators and victims; however, they are facilitated by somewhat looser or more formal social connections, such as schools, sports organisations or neighbourhood ties. Within this, we specifically draw out:
  - relationships based on care, supervision or authority;

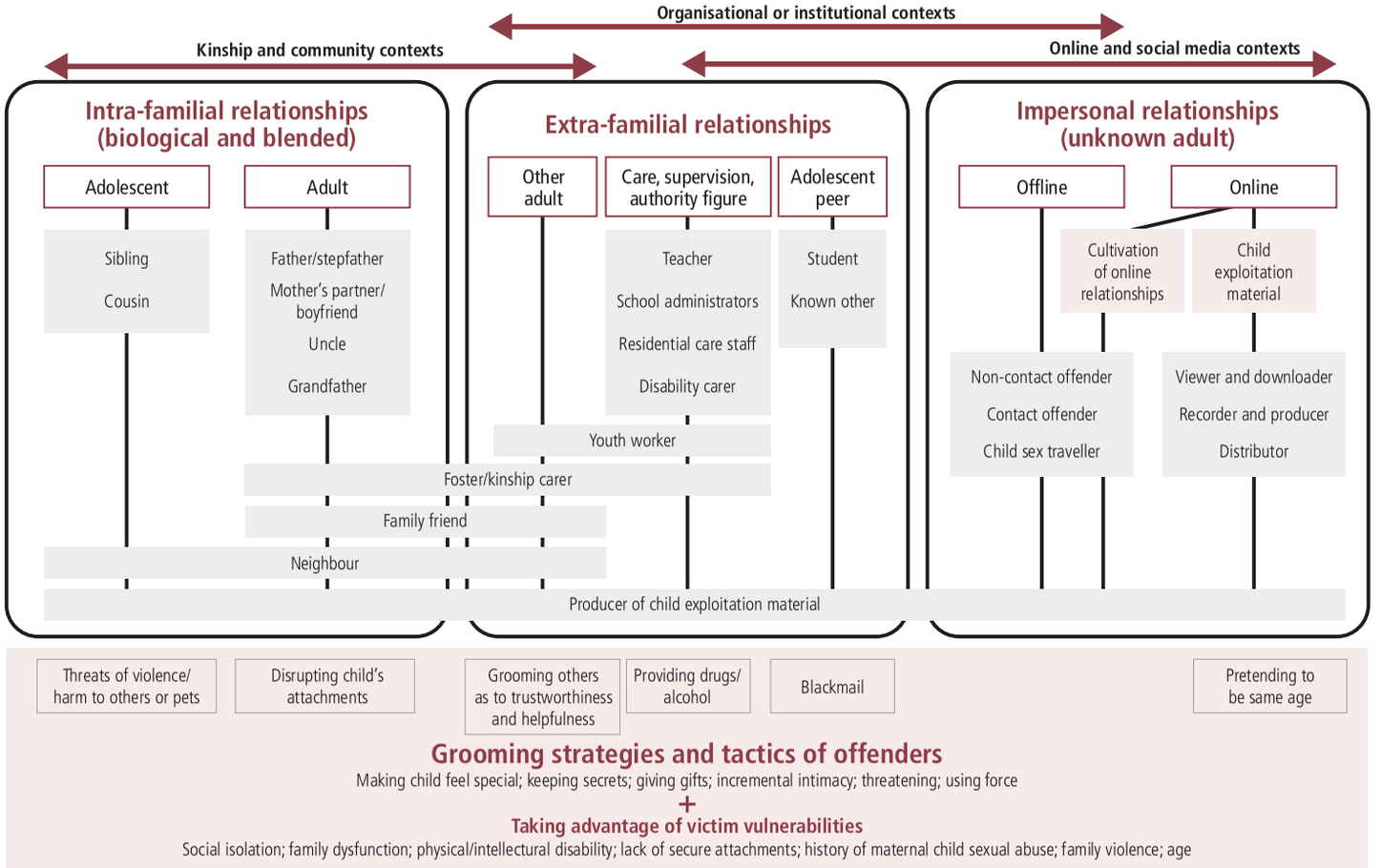


Figure B1: Conceptual map of relationships and contexts in which child sexual abuse occurs

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  - other adult relationships, such as family friends, youth workers, or neighbours; and
  - peer relationships between young people (e.g., young students in school).
- *Impersonal relationships*—This is where there is little to no initial relationship between the victim and perpetrator. This can include "stranger" child sex offenders, who may approach children in public settings such as playgrounds, shopping malls or sporting events. Based on the available research and consultations with key stakeholders, online settings appear to be a key way for adults to manufacture and cultivate a new relationship with a child or young person (in addition to enabling access to child exploitation material [CEM]). As Figure B1 suggests visually, there is some complex overlaps and interconnections between online and offline sexual offending. For example, an individual may use the Internet to make connections with brothel owners and others (including family members) in another country and then travel to that country to engage in contact sex offending. Alternatively, they may use online platforms to engage in "pay-per-view" live streaming, where the offender requests specific sexual activities with a child in another country, which they view online. The production of child exploitation material is also associated with the perpetration of sexual abuse in known relationships (e.g., through contact offending against a child known to the offender).

Contexts or settings

Following consultations with key stakeholders, as well as examining situational crime prevention insights (as outlined in Part A), it became clear that relationship dynamics are not sufficient to explain the occurrence of child sexual abuse. It is necessary to also look at the context or setting in which that relationship is located. Contexts (i.e., the situational environment in which the abuse occurs) influence the nature of the relationship between perpetrators and victims, providing a range of routine activities and interactions with children (Smallbone et al., 2008), and thus shaping how the opportunity to offend against a child presents itself. We have identified two relevant contexts:

- *Kinship and community contexts*—This refers to environments that are particularly relevant for Indigenous Australians. First, familial relationships in Indigenous communities are broader than those in Anglo-European cultures, as well as having a complex arrangement of social interactions and roles. This means that individuals who may not be biologically related are nevertheless considered to be family members within the particular kinship arrangements of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community. Second, a history of colonisation, disenfranchisement and child removal, and the subsequent secondary effects of these traumas means that the community context for many Indigenous children includes a range of risk factors associated with child sexual abuse.
- *Organisational and institutional contexts*—This refers to settings such as schools, sporting or youth organisations, religious institutions, out-of-home care, child care, and so on, where a relationship between children and adults is a feature of the organisation or institution, and where, generally, there is a hierarchical relationship between children and adults.

As shown in Figure B1, the examples given of the relationship between perpetrator and child (e.g., father, teacher, etc.) is influenced by these contexts, such that a neighbour, family friend or carer may be more properly understood as being located within a familial context compared to an organisational one.

Vulnerabilities and grooming

We can add two more issues to the dimensions of relationships and contexts: *victim vulnerabilities*, which are exploited by adult perpetrators and young people who sexually abuse, and specific *grooming strategies*, which are more likely to be used by adult perpetrators.

In line with Smallbone et al.'s theory (2008) that the opportunity for child sexual abuse requires both a motivated offender and a likely victim, victim vulnerabilities are likely to be consistent across the types of child sexual abuse, although they are likely to be particularly salient in relationships based outside the parental family unit. Victim vulnerabilities include: social isolation, family dysfunction, physical and intellectual disabilities, lack of secure attachments,

history of maternal child sexual abuse, family violence, and older age (i.e., the risk of sexual abuse increases with a child's age).

Following on from this, there is a range of grooming tactics that adult perpetrators use. To an extent, the literature suggests broadly similar tactics across different types of child sexual abuse (e.g., Craven et al., 2006). These include:

- making the child feel special (e.g., by making them feel older or more sophisticated than other children; providing them with gifts);
- creating a sense of trust and intimacy (which can extend to the child's family);
- gradual introduction to sexual content or sexual touch; and
- secret keeping (which can have a range of functions, such as creating trust, isolating the child from others, creating a sense of complicity or using blackmail).

However, there are some strategies that are more suited to particular relationships or contexts than others. For example, threats of harm to others may be particularly suited to familial relationships, while pretending to be a child or young person is suited to online contexts.

B2.2 Risk factors associated with the perpetration of child sexual abuse

Overall, risk factors associated with child sexual abuse perpetrated by adult offenders differ somewhat from those identified for adults who maltreat children more generally. The literature indicates that the following are factors found among adult perpetrators of child sexual abuse:

- having a history of being violent or delinquent;
- displaying maladaptive sexual orientations, such as having deviant sexual fantasies;
- having social deficits, such as a lack of empathy or poor social skills; and
- evidence of problematic attitudes and cognitive beliefs, such as attitudes towards rape, belief in the "sexual precociousness of children" and cognitive rationalisations that facilitate sexual offending against children; for example, that sexual activity isn't harmful if motivated by love for the child (Whitaker et al., 2008).

Such analyses do not distinguish between types of child sexual abuse. In our review and synthesis of the literature, there do appear to be some common characteristics of perpetrators associated with particular types of child sexual abuse (see Table B1 on page 52 and Box A3 on page 22). In addition to the general factors above, the following linkages can be made:

- perpetrators living with domestic violence is associated with perpetration in familial relationships and with young people who sexually abuse;
- across almost all types of child sexual abuse there is mixed research support for perpetrators having a history of committing or having been subject to physical or sexual abuse, neglect and violence;
- there is mixed research support for adult perpetrators:
  - having a non-sexual criminal background;
  - misusing alcohol and illegal substances;
  - being of low socio-economic status;
- there is limited research support for adult perpetrators:
  - having a criminal background that is sexual in nature;
  - becoming a parent at an early age;
  - growing up in a large family (3 or more children);
  - having psychological deficits; and
- individuals committing sexual abuse in authority and care relationships do not appear to share the same risk factors for their perpetration as those in other relationships. There is also little indication of the nature of these risk factors, suggesting that prevention for these types of perpetrators may need to focus on situational elements.

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Section A4 provides a more detailed discussion of these risk factors and their association with different types of child abuse and perpetrators.

Table B1: Risk factors identified across types of child sexual abuse and perpetrators

	Adult perpetrators						Young people who sexually abuse	
Perpetrator risk factors	Familial	Authority and care	Extra-familial	Online	Female [a]	Indigenous [b]	Peer	Sibling
Personal characteristics								
Biologically unrelated male	✓	✓	✓	✓	–	✗✓	✓	✗
Young	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗✓	✓	✓
Psychological deficits	✗	✗	✗	✗✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
Traditional gender values	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Interest in child exploitation material	✗✓	✗	✗✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗
Computer-savvy	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗
Substance misuse	✗✓	✗	✗✓	✗	✗	✓	✗✓	✗✓
Social characteristics								
Highly sexualised environment	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓
Social isolation	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗✓	✗	✗	✗
Low socio-economic status	✗✓	✗	✗✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗
Low education	✗✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗
Childhood history and past behaviours								
Child sexual abuse history	✗✓	✗	✗✓	✗✓	✓	✗✓	✗✓	✗✓
Childhood neglect	✗	✗	✗✓	✗✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Childhood physical abuse	✗✓	✗	✗✓	✗✓	✗✓	✗✓	✗✓	✗✓
Large family size	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Early parenthood	✗✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Prior sexual criminal behaviour	✗	✗	✗	✗✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
Prior non-sexual criminal behaviour	✗✓	✗	✗	✗✓	✗	✗✓	✗	✗
Violent behaviour	✗✓	✗✓	✗✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓
Victim risk factors								
Poor family cohesion	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
Domestic violence in family	✓	✗	✗	✗✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Note: ✓ = Research consensus that risk factor is associated with child sexual abuse offending. ✗ = Little or no research consensus that risk factor is associated with child sexual abuse offending. ✗✓ = No research consensus, but literature indicates that they are definitely risk factors for some individuals. [a] The research referred to in the other columns relates to male perpetrators (the majority), while this column relates only to female perpetrators. [b] Indigenous perpetrators operate in a different context due to their wider kinship networks.

B3 Current and future directions for prevention and early intervention

B3.1 Mapping current approaches

Part A of this report provides a review of national and international approaches to the prevention of child sexual abuse. This section briefly discusses current approaches to the prevention of both child sexual abuse and child maltreatment more broadly.

Child-sexual-abuse-specific prevention

There are a number of prevention activities specifically aimed at preventing the sexual abuse of children (see Box B1 on page 54). Through desktop reviews and in consultation with key agencies and researchers, we observed that these efforts are predominantly located within the following domains:

- *protective behaviours education for children*—increasingly referred to as child abuse prevention education, which may also involve parents, and broader school personnel or systems;
- *situational crime prevention*—applied to risky settings, organisations and institutions;
- *therapeutic interventions for problematic sexual behaviours and sexually abusive behaviours*—targeting children and young people who are at risk of sexually offending, prior to their involvement with the criminal justice system;
- *therapeutic prevention of re-offending*—targeting:
  - young people who have come to the attention of the criminal justice system for sexually abusive behaviours;
  - detected and convicted adult sex offenders;
- *criminal justice and other statutory responses*—to identify and monitor sex offenders and their engagement with children and young people; and
- *therapeutic work with children and adolescents who have experienced sexual abuse*—to reduce their vulnerability to re-victimisation.

These efforts tend to lie at either end of the spectrum of prevention. On the one hand there is significant activity in educating children about child sexual abuse and increasing their capacity to deter potential perpetrators—what, from a public health perspective, could be considered primary prevention. On the other there is significant focus on engaging with perpetrators, whether therapeutically or punitively (tertiary prevention). This situation is not unique to Australia, though. Finkelhor (2009) characterised the situation in the USA in similar terms. He concluded that criminal justice approaches to prevention (e.g., sex offender registration and monitoring) have not been effective, while the evidence on the effectiveness of educational programs in reaching "certain of their goals" has been promising, but decidedly unclear as to whether they result in a reduction in victimisation.

Broader child maltreatment prevention

As Higgins and Katz (2008) outlined, a holistic approach to the prevention of child abuse and neglect integrates primary, secondary and tertiary prevention:

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Box B1: Summary of current approaches to child sexual abuse prevention

Protective behaviours (child abuse prevention) education

Walsh et al. (2013) examined various child sexual abuse prevention education programs in the various states and territories of Australia and found no consistent policies regarding: how child sexual abuse prevention is or should be taught to students; whether students' knowledge, skills, confidence or actual use of the strategies should be assessed following the education; whether the teachers receive training; or even if parents should know that their children are being taught prevention strategies.

Situational crime prevention principles

Across Australia, there are no comprehensive policies on how institutions and organisations with a large child and youth cohort should prevent child sexual abuse. However, all states and territories make Working With Children Checks at the pre-employment stage mandatory for any role where work with children is undertaken. Police checks are also routinely undertaken for new or potential employees. Research has suggested that these measures are not enough for preventing sexual abuse in institutions and organisations, as the majority of abusers are never reported in the first instance (Finkelhor, 2009).

Situational crime prevention has been suggested as the ideal model for child sexual abuse prevention at an organisational level (Smallbone et al., 2008). This would involve ensuring that it becomes difficult to perpetrate child sexual assault—for instance within a school, sporting organisation or religious institution—through, for example, whole-of-organisation policies that clearly outline acceptable and unacceptable behaviour from those in authority positions to children, the installation of closed-circuit televisions (CCTVs), or ensuring classroom interiors are visible from common hallways or that doors contain clear glass. However, Australian institutions and organisations are not compelled by any legislation or incentives to introduce policies to prevent child sexual abuse. Outlines of optimal prevention strategies (usually 10-step strategies involving adults as well as children) have been created; for example, by the Canadian Red Cross, Smallbone et al. (2008) or Erooga, Allnock, & Telford (2012). Their efficacy is currently unknown.

Therapeutic interventions for problematic sexual behaviours and sexually abusive behaviours

Currently in Victoria, therapeutic treatment orders and sexually abusive treatment services are available for children and youth who are displaying problematic sexual behaviours and sexually abusive behaviours and are at risk of offending, but before they enter the criminal justice system. In South Australia, Child Protection Services offer counselling to children aged between 2 and 12 years who exhibit problematic sexual behaviours, but this is not linked to any courts or legislation. In New South Wales, sexual assaults are only dealt with by courts, and the majority of counselling for youth is only available within juvenile justice centres (although some courts can refer adolescents to independent therapy). It is unclear whether Queensland and Western Australia offer any services for youth with problematic sexual behaviours.

Therapeutic prevention of re-offending

Therapeutic work with adult perpetrators of child sexual abuse to prevent re-offending is currently limited to prison populations and, in a majority of cases, is on a self-referral rather than compulsory basis. During consultations, stakeholders advised us that two effective treatment programs to prevent recidivism have been recently defunded (Cedar Cottages, NSW, and Safecare, WA) due to perceptions from the respective governments that harsher prison penalties rather than therapeutic work should be undertaken with all child sexual assault perpetrators (Cant & Penter, 2006; Goodman-Delahuntly, 2009).

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Criminal justice and other statutory responses

Currently, all states and territories have a sex offenders registry; however, the majority are not available for public searches. There is also a national registry, Australian National Child Offenders Register (ANCOR), that is in place to allow ease of cross-jurisdiction information sharing. Although all the state and territory registries have been set up under the national model legislation agreed to by all states and territories in 2004, there is a great deal of leeway in the administration of the registers, which is often contrary to what was agreed to by the state and territory Police Ministers' Council in 2004. For example, individuals convicted of a sexual offence and placed on the local register should have legal recourse to appeal their being placed on the register, but this is currently unavailable in any jurisdiction. Only WA offers a service to members of the public to undertake a search of their sex offenders registry; however, individuals must disclose their personal information (including driver's licence number) and agree to not distribute the information to any other parties. (The supplied photo of the sex offender is watermarked with the enquirer's name to prevent the photo from being uploaded online or circulated.)

Therapeutic work with children and adolescents who have experienced sexual abuse

Service providers of counselling and therapeutic work for victims of child sexual abuse include organisations such as the Australian Childhood Foundation, Berry Street, Bravehearts, and the Children's Protection Society (among many others). Counselling and therapeutic services are often in high demand, and due to budgetary constraints adult survivors of child sexual abuse are often placed on waiting lists. Child victims of sexual abuse are prioritised for receiving counselling.

- primary or universal interventions are strategies to reduce risk factors for maltreatment that are targeted at whole communities;
- secondary interventions target families who are at risk for child maltreatment; and
- tertiary interventions seek to reduce the long-term implications of maltreatment that has occurred, and prevent recurrence (Holzer, Higgins, Bromfield, Richardson, & Higgins, 2006).

Child maltreatment prevention can only be effective when the broader social policy contexts around childhood that intersect with the protection of children and prevention of harm are acknowledged and included in a prevention agenda, such as:

- public health services, including mental health, disability, maternal and child health services, etc.;
- housing and homelessness services, including refugee resettlement;
- education;
- domestic violence, juvenile sex offenders, crime prevention and justice system responses;
- drug and alcohol and other adult-focused services;
- Indigenous health and social services;
- child care and early childhood services;
- employment and income security; and
- family law and family relationships services (Higgins & Katz, 2008).

As Higgins and Katz (2008) noted:

> The challenge for these services is that child protection is not their "core business", and often the families who are at risk of involvement in the statutory child protection system are not high priorities for their services. Only by working together in a multidisciplinary way can these services really come together to protect children. (p. 46)

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In the National Child Protection Clearinghouse's[12] audit of prevention programs operating in Australia at the time, Poole and Tomison (2000) classified the main program types into six categories of prevention activities (see Box B2).

Across prevention efforts specifically addressing child sexual abuse and child maltreatment more generally, similar issues have been raised about the right balance of prevention. There has been a tendency to focus on individual-level risk factors, rather than factors that occur or are better addressed at the community or social level, such as partner violence and social norms (such as the sexual nature of children, gender norms or the acceptability of violence towards children) (Klevens & Whitaker, 2007; O'Donnell et al., 2008; Tomison & Wise, 1999).

Box B2: Classification of child abuse prevention activities

Poole and Tomison (2000) used the following classification of child abuse prevention activities in their audit:

> *Community education*—media campaigns (e.g., Australians Against Child Abuse (AACA) Every Child is Important), information materials, and training programs for professionals and community groups.
>
> *Personal safety or protective behaviours programs* have the aim of educating school-age children to protect themselves from sexual abuse. The programs attempt to involve the children's parents in the program in order to raise community awareness of sexual abuse and to teach parenting skills related to protecting children and detecting signs of abuse (Plummer, 1993).
>
> *Family support programs* generally have two major facets: to provide counselling and support, which may incorporate respite care or a home visiting service, to families who are defined as "at-risk" of maltreating their child and who are socially isolated (James, 1994); and secondly to enhance parenting skills (provide parent education), which aims to minimise the likelihood of maltreatment by enhancing parenting skills, and increasing parental knowledge of appropriate child development.
>
> *Child focused programs*. It was apparent in previous Clearinghouse Audits (Tomison, 1996a) that some prevention programs, particularly substitute care programs and individual child counselling programs, focused predominantly on children and young people, without the involvement of, or minimal focus on, their families. It was therefore decided to include a "child focused" category to incorporate programs where the focus was almost entirely on the maltreated or "at-risk" child.
>
> *Offender programs* are primarily designed to prevent the recurrence of sexually or physically abusive behaviour, or the development of such behaviour, and usually focus on males. Thus, the programs incorporate elements of tertiary prevention (the prevention of re-offending) and secondary prevention (targeting young males at risk of offending).
>
> *Child and family centres*, frequently referred to as "one-stop shops", adopt a holistic approach to preventing child maltreatment and promoting healthy communities. Similar programs, known as Family Resource Centers, have been operating in the United States for some time (Tomison & Wise, 1999). Designed to be non-stigmatising and easily accessible, the centres offer highly integrated services that can promote parental competence, meet the diverse needs of children and families, and facilitate a sense of community and the development of social support networks within neighbourhoods. Child and family centres are a relatively new initiative, which is reflected in their small numbers. Many of the centres are run by the large non-government agencies, such as Barnardos and Burnside. (pp. 3–4)

12 The National Child Protection Clearinghouse and its resources have now been incorporated into the Child Family Community Australia information exchange. See <www.aifs.gov.au/cfca>.

B3.2 Future directions

Based on our synthesis of the literature and issues that arose through consultations, we see two broad directions that could be taken to further develop prevention efforts against child sexual abuse and exploitation:

- continue to develop an integrated prevention framework based on a public health approach to prevention; and
- increase the focus on "upstream" risk factors to address underlying factors at a population level.
- These inter-related directions and their implications for policy, practice and programming, and research are examined in the following sections.

Development of an integrated prevention framework

Numerous policies (including the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children; COAG, 2009b), research studies, and expert commentary have noted that statutory responses are not sufficient or sustainable and are often unable to prevent future harm (e.g., O'Donnell et al., 2008). There is agreement that a public health model should be a framework in which to situate the prevention of child abuse, including child sexual abuse; however, there does not appear to be a shared understanding about what this looks like in practice. Through the course of this project we observed a relatively fragmented understanding of prevention across different service systems and agencies.

Given the diverse circumstances in which sexual abuse occurs, as well as differences between adolescents who sexually abuse and adult sex offenders, having a diversity of tools and approaches is crucial. However, the absence of a shared framework for understanding how these fit together means that instead of complementary strategies, there can be competing and contradictory approaches. The consequences of this include:

- diverse or inconsistent criteria informing the funding of programs;
- poor program and initiative design (e.g., lack of a theory of change; not evidence-informed; inappropriate "dosage");
- "sluggish" development of best-practice principles and approaches;
- disconnected or ad hoc prevention activities;
- disconnected "communities of practice";
- weak or inappropriate evaluation methodologies; and
- non-comparable evaluation and research findings.

In combination, these issues mean that despite significant efforts at the program and practice levels, it is very difficult to develop a coherent understanding about "what works" or what is promising (i.e., programs based on theoretically sound principals but yet to be examined empirically).

An integrated public health approach to prevention involves:

- *having a clear, shared understanding about primary prevention*. Primary prevention is concerned with collective *behaviour change* rather than just increasing knowledge or awareness about an issue (though it may do this as part of the process). This is an important distinction. Increasing knowledge or awareness of child sexual abuse is a characteristic of primary prevention but it is not sufficient on its own to achieve behaviour change. To change behaviour, primary prevention efforts target people's fears, self-efficacy, perceptions of social norms, attitudes, barriers, risks and rewards, intentions, and skills and competencies to change people's engagement in harmful behaviours. For example, fear campaigns have been a key strategy in public health efforts to reduce smoking, drink driving, and speeding.
- *addressing the three levels of prevention (primary, secondary and tertiary)*—We also have an additional level between primary and secondary, which could be classified as "progressive

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universalism" or "proactive identification".[13] This is to distinguish between strategies that target the underlying factors or conditions for child sexual abuse compared to strategies to identify at-risk children and families and connect them to early intervention services. Many service systems for child development and wellbeing are universal and there can be a tendency to collapse the focus of these slightly different prevention strategies.

- *considering different perspectives of prevention* and where they are most likely to be effective regarding the above (e.g., developmental prevention, situational prevention, community-based prevention, prevention education, and criminal justice reponses);
- *identifying the types of strategies associated with each level of prevention* (e.g., prevention education); and
- *applying the range of settings* to which they are best suited.

The benefits of this include:

- enabling the different service systems and agencies to see where their respective prevention efforts sit alongside, and as a complement to, other approaches;
- enabling better collaboration between service systems and agencies; and
- providing a funding rationale for governments and others to fund different types of child sexual abuse prevention initiatives, the findings of which can be used to further inform an integrated prevention framework.

Figure B2 brings these elements together. The key point being made here is that the spectrum from primary to tertiary prevention requires diverse yet complementary approaches and understandings about child safety and perpetrator behaviour.

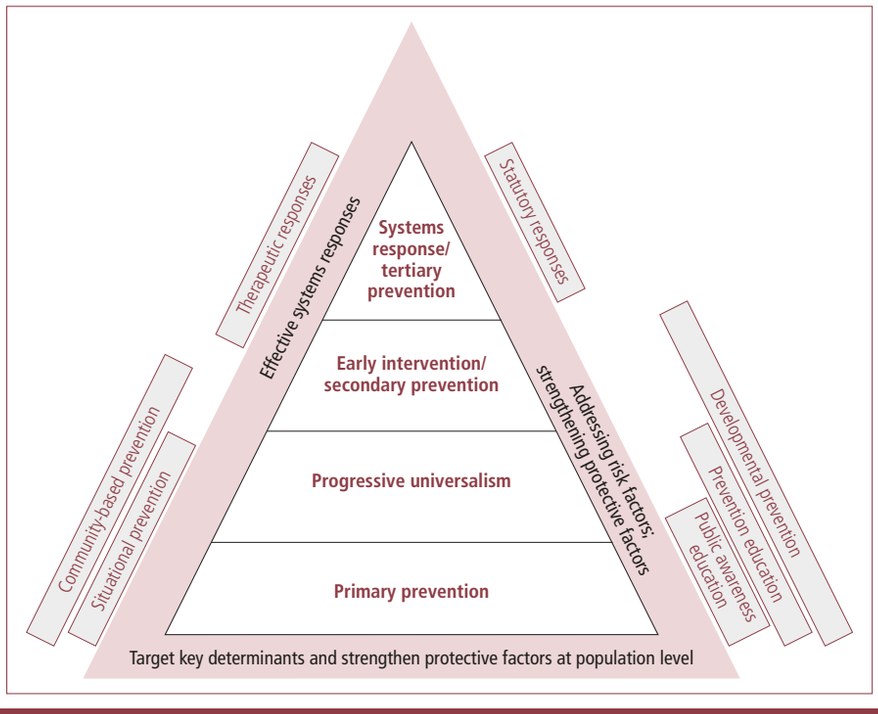


Figure B2: Integrated prevention framework

Figure B3 (on page 59) explains these elements in more detail and uses a matrix approach to demonstrate how these elements interrelate. The matrix brings together: the levels of prevention, domains of focus (using a socio-ecological model) and the range of more specific

13 For example, progressive universalism might lead to strategies to identify and target further interventions tailored to meet the needs of groups of children whom research has shown have greater vulnerability to child sexual victimisation, such as: children with a disability (Higgins, 2010); children in Indigenous communities (particularly remote communities experiencing significant social disadvantage; Scott & Higgins, 2011); same-sex attracted young people (Higgins, 2010); and children who have already experienced other forms of child maltreatment (Price-Robertson, Rush, Wall, & Higgins, 2013).

Level of prevention	Aims	Example strategies	Levels of the social ecology: Individual	Relationships/ families	Organisation/ institution	Community	Society
Primary	To prevent abuse before it occurs by: ■ addressing the underlying factors that facilitate it ■ strengthening the factors that act as buffers against violence ■ changing behaviours that are abusive or that ignore, normalise, deny abuse Change is sought at the level of the whole population.	Increasing awareness of the nature, scope and effects of abuse	Protective behaviours				
		Increasing knowledge about effects, appropriate social response, who perpetrators are, perpetrator behaviours	Public education campaigns				
		Increasing skills	Comprehensive prevention education			Community-based prevention	
		Changing norms/providing new norms					Social norms/social marketing campaigns
		Policies, practices and workforce planning to ensure all child-focused organisations are child-safe			Situational crime prevention Working with children checks		
		Addressing structural factors that underpin risk factors				Community-based prevention	Social and economic policies
Progressive universalism	To provide universal support while recognising differential barriers for some sections of the population (who do not necessarily require intervention)	Targeting/staggering service provision of universal family or health services to isolated, more disadvantaged areas	Comprehensive prevention education Maternal and child health care Family support services				
		Proactively identifying potential risk factors (e.g., sexualised behaviour) through universal service systems and appropriate referral support pathways	Developmental prevention				
Early intervention (secondary prevention)	To target and ameliorate "indicated behaviours" and other risk factors associated with child sexual abuse Interventions are targeted at at-risk individuals or populations who show evidence of potential victimisation or perpetration	Screening individuals/families for particular risk factors and providing appropriate service/intervention					
		Providing at-risk populations (e.g., adolescent boys with history of sexual victimisation) with effective therapeutic support for victimisation	Trauma counselling				
		Planning policies, practices and workforce to ensure organisations/ institutions providing care/guardianship identify and address areas of risk			Situational crime prevention		
		Implementing trauma-informed practice across mental health and human service systems (e.g., child welfare systems or alcohol/drug treatment that are aware of maternal histories of abuse; schools)			Trauma-informed practice		
Tertiary prevention	To provide effective and appropriate therapeutic and other responses to address the short- and long-term effects of victimisation or to prevent re-perpetration Interventions are targeted at identified individuals and their families	Responding appropriately to critical incidents					
		Providing timely trauma-related support for child sexual abuse victims	Trauma-specific support				
		Providing effective therapeutic interventions with young people who sexually abuse and their families	Therapeutic interventions				
		Conducting effective therapeutic interventions with adult offenders	Therapeutic and rehabilitative interventions				
		Ensuring effective criminal justice responses to sex offenders	Sex offender management Effective investigative practice				Law reform and training

Figure B3: Matrix of prevention approaches within a public health model

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prevention approaches, which we have situated according to their "best fit" relative to the levels of prevention and the social ecology. Specifically:

- Prevention is situated within a public health model, which distinguishes between the aims of primary, secondary and tertiary prevention strategies. It is important to note that in reality there are overlaps in these levels of prevention. However, as concepts they enable a systematic approach to prevention.
- The aims or goals of these levels are described. As noted, a key aim of primary prevention is *behaviour change*. Strategies therefore need to target the range of factors influencing behaviour, such as attitudes, knowledge and skills. Such strategies are generally targeted at individuals (even if delivered universally); however, other approaches, such as community prevention or situational prevention, can improve organisational and local-level responses.

This mapping highlights that:

- primary prevention involves multiple prevention approaches across the social ecology that should be complementary (however, within the literature or in practice there is little "marrying up" between these efforts);
- community and society-level factors are best targeted through primary prevention approaches that aim to make changes at the population level; and
- the reach of particular approaches to prevention across the social ecology (e.g., therapeutic responses) can be very narrow.

A tailored approach for adolescents with sexually abusive behaviours

A critical task related to this priority is the development of a prevention framework specifically designed for adolescents with sexually abusive behaviours. As noted throughout, the onset of adolescent perpetration and adult offending suggest two distinct populations. Based on the available evidence, prevention and intervention for adolescent perpetrators should focus on:

- *preventing domestic and family violence*—research and clinincal expertise suggest signficant overlap between the presence of family violence and young people engaging in sexually abusive behaviours;
- *providing early and effective therapeutic support for children and young people disclosing sexual abuse victimisation*—there are often histories of sexual victimisation among young people with sexually abusive behaviours;
- related to this, *implementing awareness raising and training* for educators and other professionals working with children and their families about the dynamics of child sexual abuse as well as behavioural and other markers of possible sexual abuse, including inappropriate sexual or sexualised behaviours; and
- *providing developmentally tailored sex education* for children and young people about respectful relationships (including sexual relationships), power and consent, the nature and effects of pornography, constructive forms of masculinity, and male desire.

Areas for action

Developing an integrated approach to the prevention of child sexual abuse is a significant undertaking. However, it is our view that without consensus about the aims, strategies and conditions for effective prevention (particularly primary prevention), specific initiatives will remain ad hoc and disconnected. A prevention framework needs to be based on research evidence, have the support of the relevant practice communities, and be an accessible reference for all key players working to prevent child sexual abuse.[14]

Table B2 (on page 61) identifies several strategies that can support the development of an integrated prevention framework. It is not intended to be prescriptive but to provide

14 An example of such a framework for primary prevention is the VicHealth framework to prevent violence against women. Its development was driven by policy, which had interdepartmental mechanisms providing buy-in and support across government and other mechanisms to engage the community and service sector. The framework has had significant influence in enabling a systemic, connected approach to prevention.

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suggestions for how the key players—namely policy, practice and research communities—could contribute. We also acknowledge that some of these suggestions may already be underway or in development.

Table B2: Strategies for an integrated approach to prevention of child sexual abuse

Strategies	Policy	Practice	Research
Develop a shared understanding of primary prevention	Facilitate the development of an evidence-based framework for primary prevention to guide prevention initiatives Examine how the framework can articulate with actions under other policy initiatives (e.g., National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and Their Children)	Contribute to the development of a shared framework through practice expertise	Contribute to the development of a shared framework through systematic reviews on risk factors for victimisation and perpetration, within a public health framework
Develop a prevention framework specifically tailored for adolescents	Facilitate the development of a tailored framework that draws on research evidence, service information and therapeutic expertise Consider the implications for current prevention activities across settings (which tend to focus on adults and do not address adolescent behaviours)	Contribute clinical and practice expertise to the development of an adolescent framework	Undertake research (e.g., using incidence data) on young people's sexually abusive behaviours across a range of settings (which may also be compared to adult offenders)
Build capacity across program funders, designers and deliverers about effective primary prevention	Explore opportunities to support capacity development across relevant services and program providers engaged in prevention education Examine how different types of education (e.g., protective behaviours, cybersafety, bullying) can be integrated into a broader, developmentally appropriate respectful relationships curriculum	Work with researchers to develop a suite of accessible, practice-relevant tools (e.g., program logics, understandings of theory of change, evaluation methodologies) to enhance prevention education practice Create communities of practice to enhance capacity in prevention education and which draws from learning and expertise in respectful relationships education	Undertake a review and consultations with programmers to identify minimum elements for effective prevention education programs (e.g., National Association of Services Against Sexual Violence standards; respectful relationships standards) Identify key components of effective community-based prevention and social change across different public health issues to identify promising strategies for preventing child sexual abuse

Moving upstream: From "risk factors" to "key determinants"

In tandem with the continued development of a shared understanding of prevention (and particularly primary prevention), a second key direction relates to focusing efforts further "upstream". This refers to tracing problems back to the source. This is different to saying something is causally related. Causality is generally measured by how *direct* the relationship between a variable and an outcome is. Upstream determinants are those that occur at the macro level, and include structural forces such as poverty, government policies, and popular and news media. Their demonstrable influence is often less direct, but they significantly shape people's opportunities in life.

The overall goal of primary prevention is to reduce the actual incidence of child sexual abuse within the population. Working backwards then, it targets the factors that give rise to, or create, the conditions for sexual abuse and influence behaviour.

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A range of factors have been identified in the literature such as:

- biologically unrelated male;
- psychological deficits;
- traditional gender values;
- attitudes related to male sexual entitlement and sexual dominance;
- substance misuse;
- highly sexualised environments;
- social isolation;
- low socio-economic status;
- low education;
- childhood neglect;
- childhood physical abuse;
- large family size;
- early parenthood;
- violent behaviour;
- poor family cohesion;
- domestic violence in the family;
- living or working in closed familial and institutional settings.

Some of these have been empirically tested as risk factors that are either associated with sexual abuse or predict it (see Box A3 and Table B1).

Some of these factors are common across child maltreatment, but their relationship to child sexual abuse appears to be weaker and less predictive. This is to be expected given the diverse circumstances in which sexual abuse occurs. While it is possible to address each of these factors, it would be very costly in time and funds to do so. It is necessary to move beyond risk factors to consider common underlying causes or conditions.

On this, it is instructive to refer to the literature on the social determinants of health, also sometimes understood as the "new public health". This enables us to consider the underlying conditions that give rise to the above issues. Social determinants are defined as:

> the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age. These circumstances are shaped by the distribution of money, power and resources at global, national and local levels. (World Health Organization [WHO], 2014)

Social determinants can also be referred to as the "causes behind the causes" (i.e., upstream determinants). This means looking to the underlying conditions giving rise to issues, such as family dysfunction and instability, poor social skills, substance misuse, poor parenting and so on, all of which have been identified as risk factors for sexual abuse perpetration.

Focusing on social determinants enables prevention efforts to address root causes in a more efficient manner. In their review on gaps and directions in the prevention of child abuse and neglect, Klevens and Whitaker (2007)[15] argued that "preventative interventions targeting risk factors that are highly prevalent in a population will generate a greater impact on the problem at the population level than targeting factors that are less prevalent", even if the risk factors appear to be less directly related (p. 364). They further noted that the reach and mode of delivery of prevention strategies are important dimensions not only for achieving population-level behaviour change (which is the aim of primary prevention), but are attractive from a "cost-containment" perspective. That is, initiatives are likely to be more cost-effective where: the deliverer is more whole-of-community (e.g., public insititutions compared to individual service providers) and where the recipient is more expansive (e.g., a whole community compared to groups or individuals).

15 Note that this review did not specifically include the prevention of child *sexual* abuse.

Areas for action

Based on literature reviewed in Part A, we see child sexual abuse and its pepertration as coalescing around the following key issues:

- children's structural vulnerability relative to adults within social domains such as families, organisations, and institutions;
- forms of masculinity and rigid gender attitudes that endorse men's social dominance, entitlement (including sexual entitlement), authority and control in a range of settings;
- socio-economic disadvantage and income inequality, including gendered socio-economic disadvantage;
- poor or non-existent psycho-social responses for trauma arising from child abuse and neglect (including sexual abuse and witnessing family violence).

These conditions give rise to many of the risk factors listed in the previous section, such as experiencing domestic and family violence; experiences of violence and abuse; substance misuse; social isolation and weak social ties; and poor family cohesion and insecure attachments.

Drawing on analyses of effectiveness in the primary prevention of child maltreatment and child sexual abuse; international approaches to preventing child sexual abuse; and learnings coming from the prevention of sexual assault, family violence and gender-based violence, we have identfied a number of actions (described in more detail below) that could be taken to strengthen current sexual abuse prevention efforts:

- balance children's structural vulnerability in social institutions;
- engage men and boys in the development of gender-equitable relationships in the home, at work and among peers;
- conduct public education/social marketing campaigns;
- address social disadvantage; and
- develop trauma-informed human service systems as an early intervention mechanism.

These are underpinned by elements of an upstream focus: targeting the underlying conditions giving rise to identified risk factors and targeting these conditions at more collective levels (e.g., community and society levels).

Balance children's structural vulnerability in social institutions

Social institutions such as families, schools, and broader civil society engender unequal relationships between adults and children. In many cases this inequality is a way of protecting children and young people to optimise their development. However, there are aspects of this structural inequality that increase children's vulnerablity to sexual abuse such as:

- beliefs in adults' superiority and natural authority over children;
- attitudes that diminish children's views and self-expression about events, feelings and relationships; and
- beliefs that children should not challenge adults, or that challenge is deliberative provocative.

These beliefs and attitudes can mean: there is an assumption that adults' treatment of and engagement with children and young people is appropriate or in the child's best interest; adults can manipulate a range of situations and groom children with little intervention; and children lie or are confused when they disclose incidents of sexual abuse.

Engage men and boys

There are many initiatives that attempt to engage boys in the development of gender-equitable relationships in the home, at work and among peers in terms of violence against women. In relation to child sexual abuse, two broad approaches can be taken:

- integrate into the initiatives to prevent violence against women key risk factors for child sexual abuse, such as: sexual entitlement, entitlement to having emotional needs met in non-reciprocal ways; and age-related power and vulnerability; and

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- integrate gender equity into family services and maternal and child health services regarding gendered expectations about child care and division of labour following the birth of a child. Strategies to do this could have an effect on:
  - family dynamics;
  - women's social isolation following the birth of child;
  - the prevalence of family and domestic violence;
  - men modelling gender-equitable behaviours to boys; and
  - challenging norms that excuse the use of power, control and domninance in relationships.

Conduct public education/social marketing campaigns

- Public education/social marketing campaigns about the nature of child sexual abuse and who are likely perpetrators could be considered in order to address:
- silence surrounding child sexual abuse;
- how children's vulnerability relative to adults can conceal child sexual abuse;
- misinformation about perpetrators, which inhibits appropriate help seeking and acknowledging wrong-doing;
- community capacity and willingess to respond to disclosures appropriately; and
- the sexualisation of children and young people in popular culture, consumer and other media settings.[16]

Address social disadvantage

- Although socio-economic disadvantage is not associated with child sexual abuse to the same extent as child maltreatment more generally, it does increase the likelihood of sexual abuse occurring. Addressing social disadvantage could:
- reduce mothers' social isolation and their gendered inequality compared to men;
- lessen the prevalence of family and domestic violence;
- improve the collective efficacy and capacity to appropriately intervene in circumstances related to child sexual abuse (e.g., controlling behaviours exhibited by male partners); and
- increase early intervention with perpetrators and young people who sexually abuse.

Develop trauma-informed human service systems

- In addition to specialist trauma services, other human services that are trauma-informed can support child sexual abuse prevention efforts by:
- addressing maternal histories of child sexual abuse, which can affect parenting and protective capacities, is a risk factor for future victimisation for themselves and their children, and leads to a range of other negative outcomes for mothers; and
- acknowledging at an early stage any developmental risk factors for perpetration.

As in the previous section, we have identified a number of strategies that could fall under the above five areas across the social ecology. These are detailed in Table B3 (on page 65).

16 In their review of the research evidence relating to the effectiveness of social marketing campaigns in preventing child abuse and neglect, Horsfall, Bromfield, and McDonald (2010) concluded that although the evidence is mixed, social marketing campaigns to address child maltreatment are most effective when they (a) use mass media paired with a community-level strategy; (b) don't rely solely on television advertising; (c) are aligned with support services; (d) suggest concrete actions that people can take; (e) are sensitive to the needs of the target audience; and (f) are based on a solid theoretical framework. Given the paucity of the evidence base, they also emphasised the importance of any such interventions being thoroughly evaluated. They stated: "the integration of both mass media and community-level strategies appreciates that attitudes and behaviours are complex and that a campaign is unlikely to produce long-term change without broader social reinforcement. Community-level strategies recognise that individual behaviour does not occur in isolation. Social relationships create the environment to either support or challenge child maltreatment, through neighbourhoods, schools, workplaces, health services and other institutions" (p. 24).

Table B3: Upstream actions for preventing child sexual abuse

Action area	Individual	Relationships/ families	Organisation/institution	Community	Society
Balance children's structural vulnerability	■ Teach children and young people assertive communication and other social intelligence skills	■ Encourage parents to use their skills and equity in own relationships to include and support children in decision-making	■ Screen to prevent known perpetrators from working in child-focused services ■ Manage situational settings to minimise risk (e.g., prepare policies and protocols to respond appropriately to disclosures; train staff to respond appropriately) ■ Include children in policy development and encourage them to develop their own code of conduct ■ Engage in open and egalitarian management and decision-making	■ Address social norms and beliefs about adults' natural authority and superiority over children as part of child safety campaigns	
Engage men and boys	■ Implement programs to support healthy sexual and relationships development for children ■ Include sex education in schools that tackles sexualities and sex for pleasure not just sex as biology, e.g.,self-protection skills; safe dating programs; and constructive masculinities and gender equity programs	■ Provide gender equity training for new parents to address changes in roles and expectations	■ Provide organisational training, whole-of-organisation policies, and bystander training on: gender equity; sexual violence; and family violence	■ Introduce community-based initiatives to engage men in gender equity, challenge problematic constructs of masculinity ■ Provide services and referral pathways for men demonstrating aggression and hostility	■ Run social norms campaigns across diverse media platforms to address the sexualisation of children and adolescents
Conduct public education campaigns				■ Conduct public education campaigns to raise awareness about nature and extent of child sexual abuse, who perpetrators are ■ Develop appropriate actionable messages for community members and bystanders matched with resources to assist with taking concrete action ■ Ensure adequate service support for survivors	
Address social disadvantage	■ Provide parenting information and peer support groups to address specific needs of socially vulnerable groups		■ Enable women to maintain their connection to paid work	■ Provide outreach services for socially vulnerable groups and young people ■ Introduce place-based prevention strategies to address child wellbeing	■ Provide income support and poverty reduction strategies ■ Enable women to maintain their connection to paid work
Develop trauma-informed human service systems			■ Build awareness among staff of the role and effects of trauma on a range of capacities, using the principles of trauma-informed care ■ Provide early and appropriate therapeutic support for survivors of child sexual abuse ■ Build capacity across service systems to recognise signs of child sexual abuse, problem sexual behaviours and sexually abusive behaviours, and to provide appropriate responses		

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B3.3 Conclusion

Child sexual abuse is a complex, cross-policy and cross-sector issue. While there are many options for prevention, enormous commitment to prevention among a range of stakeholders, and agreement that child sexual abuse has long-term effects, there are some important tasks to be done to underpin and coordinate this activity.

As discussed throughout, it is necessary to have a shared framework across research, policy and practice communities to guide these different activities.

WEB.0061.001.0078

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Appendix

Two expert panels were held in September 2013. The first expert panel was held on 18 September 2013, and members of ANZPAA (Australia and New Zealand Policing Advisory Agency) were invited to participate. The following experts were invited to the second expert panel held on 27 September 2013.

Appendix Table 1: Participants invited to the second expert panel

Name	Expertise
Stephen Smallbone	Academic/researcher (adolescents/children)
Susan Rayment-McHugh	Academic/researcher (children and adult)
Ian Nisbet	Academic/researcher (adolescents)
Bill Glaser	Academic/researcher
Martine Powell	Academic/researcher (children)
Alfred Allen	Academic/researcher (child sexual abuse forensics)
Tony Ward	Academic/researcher (adult offenders)
Danny Blay	No to Violence executive officer (men's violence against women and children)
Rodney Vlais	No to Violence
Christabel Chamarette	Former clinical director of SafeCare/Indigenous offending
Adam Tomison	Director, Australian Institute of Criminology
Danny Sullivan	Australian and New Zealand Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abuse (ANZATSA)/ Forensicare/clinical interventions and treatment with offenders
Program Manager	Custody Based Intensive Treatment/Outreach (CUBIT/CORE), sex offender treatment, Offender Programs Unit, Corrective Services NSW
Robyn Miller	Principal Practitioner for the Children, Youth and Families Division of the Victorian Department of Human Services
Russell Pratt	Principal Practitioner for the Children, Youth and Families Division of the Victorian Department of Human Services
Leah Bromfield	Deputy Director, Australian Centre for Child Protection
Darrell Henry	Indigenous psychologist, Kimberley
Kris Arcaro	Director, Student Inclusion and Engagement Division, Early Childhood and School Education Group, Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
Jen Harvey	SA Department of Families
Joe Tucci or Janise Mitchell	Australian Childhood Foundation
Karen Flanagan	Save the Children
CEO	National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN)
Hetty Johnson	CEO, Bravehearts
CEO	Sexual Assault Resource Centre, WA
Liz Little	Laurel House
General Manager	Langi Kal Kal Prison
Liz Mullinar	Heal for Life Foundation
Michael Kean and Nadine Hamilton	Children's Protection Society
Cyra Fernandez	Australian Childhood Foundation
Vicki Quinton	Gatehouse Centre
Brooke Harris	South Eastern Centre Against Sexual Assault (SECASA) Aware program

Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

INQUIRY INTO THE JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES AND WATCHTOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA LTD

Public hearing commencing on 27 July 2015

Current Witness List and Possible Order of Witnesses

1	BCB	Jehovah's Witness and survivor of child sexual abuse
2	Max Horley	Jehovah's Witness Elder
3	Doug Jackson	Jehovah's Witness and former Circuit Overseer
4	Joe Bello	Jehovah's Witness Elder
5	BCG	Former Jehovah's Witness and survivor of child sexual abuse
6	Dino Ali	Jehovah's Witness Elder
7	Kevin Bowditch	Jehovah's Witness Elder
8	Jason Davies	Former solicitor with the Queensland Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions
9	Dr Monica Applewhite	Expert Consultant in the Field of Prevention and Response to Child Sexual Abuse by Religious Organizations engaged by the Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia
10	Ron de Rooy	Jehovah's Witness Elder
11	Monty Baker	Former Jehovah's Witness and former Elder
12	Alan Pencheff	Jehovah's Witness Elder
13	Rodney Spinks	Jehovah's Witness and member of the Service Department, Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia
14	Vincent Toole	Jehovah's Witness, solicitor, and overseer of the Legal Department, Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia

15	Terrence O'Brien	Jehovah's Witness Branch Committee member and current director of the Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia

3 August 2015

Please note: the above provisional list is indicative of order and date of required appearance only and is subject to change