

3.1 Institutional care

History	32
Summary of institutional care allegations	34
Government institutions	35
Seaforth Home, 1921–75	35
Glandore Industrial School / Glandore Children’s Home, 1950–73	40
Struan Farm School, Naracoorte, 1947–69	57
Non-government institutions	62
Farr House, Anglican Church, 1860–1982	62
Kennion House, Anglican Church, 1886–1984	66
St Vincent de Paul Orphanage (Goodwood Orphanage), Catholic Church, 1866–1975	75
Convent of the Good Shepherd (The Pines), Catholic Church, 1941–74	88
Salvation Army Boys Home, Eden Park, 1900–82	92
Salvation Army Girls Home / Fullarton Children’s Home, 1900–86	108
Salvation Army Boys Home, Kent Town, 1929–72	112
Homes for Aboriginal children	117
Koonibba Children’s Home, 1913–63	118
Gerard Mission Children’s Dormitory, 1946–61	119
Colebrook Home, 1927–81	120
Campbell House Farm School, Meningie, 1959–63	123
Kurbingai Hostel, 1958–62	124
Oodnadatta Children’s Home, 1924–27, 1946–74	125
Otherway House, 1983–84	126
Homes for children with disabilities	127
Lochiel Park Boys Training Centre / Community Unit, 1958–present	127
Minda, 1898–present	136
Hospitals	139

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

History

The accommodation of South Australian children in purpose-built institutions emerged in the late 19th century, when authorities stopped placing children alongside adults in the Destitute Asylum, and did not fall out of favour until the 1970s. The rationale behind large congregate care was to segregate State children from the broader community for training and education to make them ‘useful’ citizens. The children were dealt with as ‘types’ and ‘groups’ rather than as individuals. They could be placed in government or private institutions; the latter generally operated by religious organisations to provide a Christian environment and spiritual training believed to be beneficial for ‘neglected’ and ‘delinquent’ children. Once ready to be released into society, a child in State care who had been living in an institution could be placed in foster care, apprenticed for service or returned to their families on probation.

The first official State institution for children in South Australia, the Magill Industrial School, was completed in 1869. It was a receiving home for children who had been placed in State care, but had not yet been placed out to ‘boarding-out’ homes (foster homes) or placed ‘in service’ (employment), which were the predominant forms of care at the time. The industrial school was later moved to Edwardstown and was renamed the Glandore Industrial School in 1949, the Glandore Children’s Home in 1958 and, finally, the Glandore Boys Home in 1966. The Magill Industrial School site became the Boys Reformatory, Magill, known simply as ‘the Reformatory’.¹

Another early government facility for children placed in State care was the Central Depot in Adelaide’s central business district, which operated for 65 years from 1900. It provided temporary accommodation for children waiting on a court appearance before being committed into State care and children being transferred between care placements.²

The other principal government institution in this early era was Seaforth Home at Somerton. Seaforth opened in 1921 as a beachside home for convalescing children and a holiday residence for those who had been placed out in service.³ After concerns about ‘mingling’ of the sexes at the industrial school, from 1928 boys under the age of six and all girls were moved to Seaforth and it became the principal government institution receiving children placed in State care.

Religious organisations also operated institutions providing large congregate care. The Anglican Church had Farr House (opened in 1860) and Kennion House (1886); the Catholic Church operated institutions such as the St Vincent de Paul Orphanage (1866), known as Goodwood orphanage, and St Joseph’s Orphanage (1903).

The private schools and institutions operated by religious organisations could be proclaimed by the Governor as reformatory schools or institutions for the ‘reception, detention, maintenance, education, employment, and training of State children’ and would be subject to government supervision and control.⁴ They accepted children in State care in return for subsidies⁵, but also accepted children placed privately by parents, or referred by welfare officers working for private organisations.

The relationship of the government with non-government institutions strengthened in the mid 1950s to the early 1970s with legislative and departmental changes. From 1950 the Children’s Welfare and Public Relief Board (CWPRB) inspected institutions for the placement of children under the age of seven years. The Social Welfare Act in 1965 required all non-government children’s homes to be licensed, which meant that homes had to be inspected and recommended.⁶ After the passing of the *Community Welfare Act 1972* and the establishment of the Residential Child Care Advisory Committee (RCCAC) in

¹ Under the *State Children Act 1895*, ss. 40–1, and *Maintenance Act 1926*, ss. 111–2, only ‘convicted’ children were to be sent to reformatory schools, although a child who had not been ‘convicted’ could be sent there if ‘in the opinion of the court and under the special circumstances of the case’ the child ‘ought’ to be sent to a reformatory school; alternatively, a child who was not ‘convicted’ could be transferred to a reformatory school with the approval of the Governor for ‘misconduct’.

² The Central Depot closed in 1965. *Finding Your Own Way (FYOW)*, Nunkawarrin Yunti of South Australia Inc., July 2005, s. 4, p. 19.

³ State Children’s Council (SCC) annual reports 1922, p. 3, and 1921, p. 3.

⁴ *State Children Act 1895*, ss. 16, 21–2; *Maintenance Act 1926*, ss. 16, 153–4.

⁵ *State Children Act 1895*, s. 79; *Maintenance Act 1926*, s. 151.

⁶ State Records of South Australia (SRSA) GRG 29/6/1966/186, see documents in Licensing of children’s homes under the Social Welfare Act; *Social Welfare Act 1926–1965*, s. 106.

1974, non-government homes were subject to further licensing and funding agreements⁷, and certain standards of care and uniform procedures were expected.

Institutional care was criticised from the start. The 1883–85 Way Commission outlined shortcomings such as institutions' poor quality of staff, children's frustrations (seen in absconding and violent behaviour) and medical crises due to unsanitary practices. The commission's report quoted a regular volunteer at Magill, who said, 'Everyone must be against the system of a large institution for children. It seems to repress every kindly, childish feeling.'⁸ The 1938–39 inquiry into delinquent children stated that institutions operated under 'regimes of discipline, impressed by force and inflicting mental and physical distress' rather than fostering 'trustworthiness, self-responsibility, and self-respect'. It noted:

The life which most of them [residents] are leading would produce mutinous feelings in a normal or even unusually quiet boy. The result on one who has shown himself to be adventurous and high-spirited (as well as wayward) can easily be imagined.

The CWPRB 'future policy' of 1941 established several new institutions, many of which reflected the 1939 inquiry's recommendations to improve the physical appearance and atmosphere of government institutions.⁹ These included the establishment in January 1947 of a residential farm school near Naracoorte, Struan Farm, to provide a home for 'the better class of delinquent boy[s]' from the reformatory as well as children committed as neglected or destitute.¹⁰ In June 1944 the CWPRB became concerned at the lack of accommodation for State children who were

making the transition to working in the community, and as a result it established Kumanka Boys Hostel in North Adelaide in 1946 and Allambi Girls Hostel in Norwood the following year.¹¹

Historical records reveal that sexual abuse in institutions was an issue. During 1948 and into the first half of the 1950s the CWPRB faced reports of frequent incidents of sexual 'misconduct' at the Edwardstown Industrial School (later to become Glandore).¹² During 1950 the CWPRB provided evidence, drawn from 'actual cases known to the department', to a Commission of Inquiry Relative to Sexual Offenders.¹³ In 1951 the Glandore Industrial School superintendent wrote to the CWPRB to report that after hearing 'a chance remark', he had questioned a boy who had recently been at Struan Farm School. He discovered information 'regarding abnormal sex conduct' at the farm school. The boy named seven boys who had been involved and who 'used to talk about it quite freely, saying what good fun it was and telling the others that they ought to try it some time'. One of these boys had 'got into bed with him one night' but had 'jumped out again quick when he called for help'. The boy also said that it was 'common talk among the boys from Magill that anybody could have a go at' two particular Struan boys.¹⁴ The CWPRB conducted enquiries and resolved that 'greater supervision of the boys was necessary'.¹⁵ It generally dealt with institutional sexual 'misconduct' by sanctioning discretionary corporal punishment by superintendents and transferring boys to the Magill Reformatory.¹⁶

During the 1950s and into the 1960s, overcrowding and understaffing of institutions became major issues as an increasing number of children were placed in State care.

⁷ *Community Welfare Act 1972*, s. 61.

⁸ South Australia, Parliament 1885, Royal Commission to report on the *Destitute Persons Act 1881*, second and final report, (Way Commission), Parl. Paper 4, no. 228, Part II 'Children under the care of the government', para. 63.

⁹ CWPRB annual report 1941, p. 3.

¹⁰ SRSA GRG 29/124, vol 14, CWPRB minutes (minute 962), 27 Sep. 1945, and (minute 838), 18 Mar. 1943; CWPRB annual reports 1946, p. 2, and 1941, p. 3.

¹¹ SRSA GRG 29/6/1944/240, 'Establishment of a hostel for working girls'; CWPRB annual report 1946, p. 6.

¹² CWPRB annual report 1949, p. 6.

¹³ For example, see CWPRB minutes in SRSA GRG 29/124, vol. 16, (minute 1121) 19 May 1949, and (minute 1145) 10 Nov. 1949; vol. 17, (minute 1279) 12 June 1952, (minute 1285) 24 July 1952, and (minute 1395) 30 Sep. 1954; CWPRB annual report 1950, p. 3.

¹⁴ SRSA GRG 29/123 [unit no and name removed], superintendent Glandore Industrial School to CWPRB secretary, 17 Oct. 1951.

¹⁵ SRSA GRG 29/124, vol. 16, CWPRB minutes (minute 1247), 25 Oct. 1951.

¹⁶ For example, see CWPRB minutes in SRSA GRG 29/124, vol. 15, (minute 1096) 7 Oct. 1948; vol. 16, (minute 1190) 14 Sep. 1950 and (minute 1244) 4 Oct. 1951; vol. 17, (minute 1267) 27 March 1952, (minute 1279) 12 June 1952, (minute 1282) 3 July 1952, (minute 1287) 7 Aug. 1952, (minute 1288) 14 Aug. 1952 and (minute 1267) 27 March 1952.

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

By 1960, the lack of space in institutions such as Glandore resulted in older boys being housed with younger, more vulnerable boys.¹⁷ In October 1964 the CWPRB stated that in the previous five years 'the number of children placed annually under official control increased by 49 per cent'.¹⁸ The CWPRB also reported that it lacked sufficient institutional staff.¹⁹ A Glandore file from 1966–67 regarding the behaviour of various boys includes staff references to 'sex relations' between boys, 'sadistical' bullying and 'standing over' of smaller or more vulnerable boys by older boys and descriptions of children as 'backward', 'frightened' and 'starved for affection'.²⁰

The *Community Welfare Act 1972* represented the demise of large congregate care and a new philosophy relating to the care of children. The department prioritised differential treatment, which emphasised children as individuals with specific needs. It embraced unit living and smaller group care as ways of integrating children in State care into the community. In 1979 the Minister for Community Welfare stated:

*The thrust of the department over the past decade has been to make every effort to ensure that children remain in the community wherever this is possible and appropriate. This direction arose from an identification through local and overseas observations that institutional care was no more effective than other programmes, and was often associated with long term negative consequences. Although a secondary factor, it became increasingly apparent that the cost effectiveness of institutional intervention strategies was becoming questionable.*²¹

The overall philosophy of the department was to support and enhance the 'preservation, strengthening or restoration of the family unit'.²²

By the end of the 1970s, most large institutions had closed.

Summary of institutional care allegations

The Inquiry heard allegations from 114 people that they were sexually abused as children living in large congregate care. Of these, nine told the Inquiry that they were victims of sexual abuse in more than one institution.

The Inquiry was able to determine from available records that 69 of the 114 people were children in State care at the time of the alleged sexual abuse, which occurred in government and non-government institutions, homes for Aboriginal children and homes for disabled children. Due to the lack of available records and/or the Aborigines Protection Board (1934–63) (see page 14) in acting contrary to the existing legislative scheme, the Inquiry was unable to determine whether 11 of the people were children in State care at the time of the alleged sexual abuse.

In regard to the remaining 34 people, existing records indicated that they were not children in State care at the relevant time. However, 20 of these alleged cases of sexual abuse took place in the same homes where the 69 people who had been in State care were living. Accordingly, their allegations are set out in this report as they support the allegations made by those people who do come within the terms of reference. Fourteen of the 34 people who were not in State care alleged sexual abuse in non-government homes from where no people in State care came forward. Their allegations are not published as they do not come within the terms of reference. However, their evidence made an important contribution to the knowledge of the Inquiry concerning large congregate care and the long-term effects of child sexual abuse.

The allegations of sexual abuse, which span the 1940s to 1970s, include acts of gross indecency, indecent assault, and oral, vaginal and anal intercourse/rape. The alleged perpetrators include staff, other residents (children), visitors to the institutions, adults in the outside community and adults whose identities remain unknown.

¹⁷ See correspondence on SRSA GRG 29/6/1960/509, Glandore Children's Home additional temporary accommodation.

¹⁸ CWPRB annual report 1964, p. 3.

¹⁹ *ibid.*

²⁰ See SRSA GRS 4164/8/8, file 20/001/68, Glandore Boys Home supervisor's notes.

²¹ Department for Community Welfare (DCW), Children and youth under institution care, submission to the Senate Standing Committee on Social Welfare, South Australia, Sep. 1982, p. 7.

²² *ibid.*

Government institutions

Thirty-nine PICs (persons in care) gave evidence to the Inquiry that they were sexually abused while placed in government institutions. The Inquiry was able to confirm from records that all of those people were in State care at the time of the sexual abuse. Three of the 39 PICs said they were sexually abused at two government institutions—Glandore Children's Home and Struan Farm School. The PICs alleged their abusers were members of staff, older residents, people visiting the institutions and people they had contact with outside the institutions. The alleged abuse included anal penetration, fellatio, digital penetration, indecent assault and gross indecency.

Seaforth Home, 1921–75

History

Seaforth Home was established in 1921 as a beachside convalescent home for children.²³ After 1928, all girls and boys under six remanded in State care by a court were sent directly to Seaforth.²⁴ During the 1930s, between 30 and 50 children—mostly girls—lived there at one time. School-age girls were taught dressmaking and other domestic duties,²⁵ while those over 14 spent much of their time working in the laundry.²⁶ The 1938–39 Inquiry into the treatment of 'delinquent' children found that Seaforth Home was 'used partly as a dumping ground for adolescent girls who, by reason of their subnormality or instability, cannot retain a situation found for them'. The report said these girls required 'a separate home or institution where they would receive proper training'. The report concluded that the home was 'attractive, well run, and well organised and therefore ideal for babies and younger children'.²⁷

Another report in 1940 by the secretary of the Children's Welfare and Public Relief Board (CWPRB) suggested the girls needed to be taught 'vocational and technical subjects', instead of being purely focused on domestic duties.²⁸ By subjecting girls to laundry work day after day there was 'a danger that the inmates may be exploited in the interests of the successful running of the institution'.²⁹

In the early 1940s improvements were made at Seaforth, including a separate sleep-out for small boys and a playroom filled with new toys.³⁰ By 1950, however, the kindergarten was 'overcrowded'. The CWPRB transferred boys under six to the Glandore Industrial School if they were suitable for primary school.³¹ In 1968 the average number of children at Seaforth was about 79, with a maximum at any one time of 101.³² The staff to children ratio was about one to 12.

A 1971 department annual report stated:

*The wide age range of the girls at Seaforth has been a problem for some years. Because of special problems with some disturbed and retarded older girls, alternative arrangements for this group of girls are being considered.*³³

The following year the report said:

*Seaforth Home provides open residential care for children placed under care as neglected or uncontrolled and for some children on remand, or safekeeping or for truants. Infants, toddlers and children to age six and girls up to age 18 were accommodated and a social worker was attached to the home on a part-time basis.*³⁴

²³ SCC annual report 1922, p. 3.

²⁴ Before 1928, all children were sent directly from court to the Edwardstown Industrial School.

²⁵ CWPRB annual report 1934, p. 5.

²⁶ Government of South Australia, Report of the committee appointed by the government to inquire into delinquent and other children in the care of the State, Sep. 1939, p. 15..

²⁷ *ibid.*

²⁸ SRSR GRG 29/6/1940/333, Report on Seaforth Convalescent Home, pp. 6–7.

²⁹ *ibid.*, p. 7.

³⁰ CWPRB annual report 1941, p. 4.

³¹ CWPRB minutes, vol. 16, (minute 1197), 2 Nov. 1950.

³² Dept of Social Welfare (DSW) annual report 1968, p. 17.

³³ Dept of Social Welfare and Aboriginal Affairs (DSWAA) annual report 1971, p. 13.

³⁴ Dept for Community Welfare (DCW) annual report 1972, p. 22.

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

In 1973 the department noted that numbers at Seaforth had ‘steadily declined’ during the previous few years.³⁵ Two years later it was closed and replaced by five independent cottages (including two located previously at Glandore).

Allegations of sexual abuse

Nine women told the Inquiry they were sexually abused while in State care and placed at Seaforth Home. Records confirm that they were in State care and that they lived at Seaforth for varying amounts of time between the late 1940s and early 1970s. Each PIC was placed in State care by a court for being either neglected, destitute, illegitimate, under unfit guardianship or, in one case, charged with a criminal offence.

The allegations of sexual abuse made by the nine PICs include indecent assault, digital penetration and vaginal sexual intercourse. The alleged perpetrators were staff members, including a visiting health professional sanctioned by the home, other residents and visiting family members.

Abuse by multiple perpetrators

The Inquiry took evidence from a woman who was placed in State care in the mid 1960s when she was 13, after a court found she was neglected. She said she experienced sustained sexual abuse in her family before being placed in State care. According to her State ward index card (SWIC), the PIC spent eight months at Seaforth before she absconded. She alleged sexual abuse at Seaforth and later at the Convent of the Good Shepherd, known as The Pines.

The PIC told the Inquiry that within about one month of her arrival at Seaforth, a man she believed was a maintenance worker touched her breasts and digitally penetrated her on the home’s grounds. She said this occurred on about six occasions. She also said a female staff member washed her breasts and vagina numerous times under the guise of instructing her: ‘She showed me how to wash properly, and I said I could do it, but she—again I thought she was giving me love and I accepted again.’

The PIC said a man she met while walking from Seaforth to primary school also sexually abused her. She said:

The rest of the group had gone, and he was just going around, and he’d gone past me, and then I saw him turn and come back, and he asked where I was going, and I said I was going to school, and he asked if he could take me down to the beach and get an ice-cream, so I should really go, you know—supposed to be going to school, and he said, ‘Go later. Just say that you didn’t feel well’, and that’s what I did. I went with him and we had sex. He got me an ice-cream.

She said she had sexual intercourse with this man on about six occasions. To her recollection, Seaforth residents were not escorted to and from school; on the occasions when she met this man, she often did not attend school or arrived late. She said that at one stage she absconded from Seaforth and stayed with the man for a short time: ‘I got this man to pick me up and I stayed with him a couple of days’.

Departmental records for this PIC show that she absconded from Seaforth for almost two months. No details are evident about her location or return. She was then transferred to another government home.

She told the Inquiry that because of the sustained family abuse she experienced at home, she became highly sexualised and had begun to self-harm by the time she was placed in care. As a result, she said she felt that the sexual abuse while in State care ‘was my fault. It was me, not them, to blame’.

Abuse by staff

A PIC lived at Seaforth for two years in the mid 1960s after a court determined she was neglected and illegitimate and placed her in State care when she was five. After Seaforth, the girl was placed with relatives.

The PIC said she ‘hated’ Seaforth and recalled being struck with a wet belt as punishment because ‘I didn’t make my bed properly’. She told the Inquiry that on several occasions over a ‘reasonably long period of time’ a

³⁵ DCW annual report 1973, p. 19.

member of the home's general staff took her into a building, pulled down her underwear, opened his pants and lay on her. She could not recall being penetrated but remembered a residual 'wet spot' near her vagina. 'He told me if I told anyone he'd kill me.' She did not tell anyone until she was an adult, when she confided in a parent.

In the late 1960s a seven-year-old Aboriginal girl was placed in State care until she turned 18, a court finding she was neglected and under unfit guardianship. The PIC told the Inquiry she did not know why she was removed from her family. She recalled being told by a relative to run 'and then I came to a great big fence and it was too big of a fence for me to jump'. She said she was sexually abused at Seaforth Home, Clark Cottage, the family home and in foster care.

Records indicate she spent about 12 months at Seaforth, after two months on remand at another government institution. She recalled she was unhappy and frightened at Seaforth, 'being in this great big place and so lost ... my hell started then'. She said Seaforth staff told her that 'nobody wanted us, and my family didn't want me and my mum didn't want me'. The PIC said female staff members took children to a separate building on Seaforth grounds to see a doctor who visited the home. On the PIC's several visits, which she recalled as occurring weekly, she was always left alone with the doctor. She said he touched her in a sexual manner, but she did not want to elaborate, saying, 'I've reached a stage where I'm comfortable talking about that he did something to me, but ...'

Abuse by other residents

In the late 1940s, when she was seven, an Aboriginal girl was placed in State care until the age of 18, a court finding she was destitute. The PIC told the Inquiry that when she was living on the mission there was constant fear that children would be taken away from their families. She recalled occasions when police, accompanied by a 'welfare worker', looked for 'half-caste' children, who hid in bushes around the church at the mission. She spoke of the day when the

... welfare worker caught up with us ... This white lady ... grabbed me and looked at me and asked me who my father was and all that. She had a look at my hands—turned my hands over—and said, 'Oh, yeah, she's teachable because her father's white'.

She remembers being taken away with her siblings. She spent the next 11 years living at Seaforth, interspersed with foster placements.

She told the Inquiry she was sexually abused at Seaforth and later at one of her foster placements. She said the department's workers had told her and her sibling that their parents did not want them any more. As an adult, when she obtained her departmental records under freedom of information legislation, she realised her mother had written to the department numerous times asking to have them returned to her.

The PIC said she was 'petrified' at Seaforth:

When they first took us in there, they showered us, and shaved our hair ... and bathed us, and checked our ears and checked our chests and things like that. We wouldn't eat because we didn't like the food; we didn't like the smell of it. We didn't know what we were eating because it was different. We didn't want to eat it either because we weren't sure if it was going to be poisonous.

She gave evidence that when she was about 10 she was sexually abused at Seaforth by an older girl who slept in the same dormitory. This girl came to her bed on two or three occasions at night after the lights went out and kissed and fondled her. The PIC said the incidents ended because the PIC was removed from the dormitory due to illness. She said, 'I never told anyone because it's something you don't like to talk about' but she 'knew it wasn't right'.

A nine-year-old girl was placed in State care by a court in the early 1950s for unlawfully damaging public property. She was placed in the family home for about nine months and then spent about three years at Seaforth, which included several holiday placements. She absconded from Seaforth numerous times, after which the

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

department transferred her to another government institution. She told the Inquiry she was sexually abused while placed in the family home and at Seaforth.

She said an older girl sexually assaulted her at Seaforth. She 'was a service girl ... We had to respect the service girls because they were the working girls. We had to do what they told us.' Throughout her time at Seaforth, the older girl climbed into her bed and touched her breasts and genitals. The PIC described the abuse as 'horrible'. She said she reported the behaviour to a staff member, who was dismissive; the PIC cannot recall her words, but 'can just remember a feeling of feeling put down'. Records received by the Inquiry do not record this disclosure to staff.

Abuse by visitors

A PIC told the Inquiry her father and a relative's partner sexually abused her while she was placed at Seaforth in the early 1970s. Departmental records show she spent a total of eight months at the home on two occasions when aged 10 and 11. She was initially there on remand and returned after a court found her to be neglected and placed her in State care until she turned 18. The PIC said there was violence at home and her mother 'would be drinking and taking drugs and having other men at the house' and her father would often be away truck driving.

The PIC alleged her father sexually abused her from the time she was five, and departmental records show the department was on notice about allegations of sexual abuse against the father concerning two of the PIC's siblings during her first stay at Seaforth, and allegations against the father concerning the PIC and two different siblings during her second stay.

While she was at Seaforth, the PIC alleged the abuse would occur when her father took her and her siblings out.

The PIC alleged that at Seaforth:

The home was allowing my father to continue to have access to us. We would spend weekends with him. He would send a couple of us to the shop and

keep one at home. The one who remained at home would be sexually abused. This happened to me on many occasions.

A departmental report shows the father visited Seaforth regularly and had 'a good deal of affection for his children which, despite what has happened, is in some measure reciprocated by all the children except [the PIC]'. The PIC told the Inquiry a family member and her partner visited her at Seaforth on several occasions. She alleged the partner forced her to perform oral sex and had sex with her in his car during these visits, which took place on the Seaforth grounds. She said she believed that staff knew about these incidents:

I know that on some occasions staff would come past the car and see what was happening. They would look the other way and walk off. It was mostly one particular female staff member who did this.

Departmental records received by the Inquiry show staff had concerns during the PIC's second placement at Seaforth. One report noted that the PIC and the family member's partner were in a car and that the partner was 'kissing and cuddling' the PIC. On another visit, it was reported that staff noticed the partner was again alone with the PIC in a car, 'lying on back seat of car with [the PIC] on top of him'. It is recorded that the PIC was spoken to but she claimed 'the entire incident was innocent'. It was reportedly decided that the PIC would not be allowed to be alone in the car with the man, and that other staff would be made aware of this. It was reported that the PIC's departmental worker said he had spoken to the family member and the partner together and the partner 'denied he was making any sexual advances and was very upset over the situation'. The worker reportedly told them

They were not to take children out for the day from Seaforth but may visit them as usual but to stay within the grounds. [The partner] not to stay in car to talk with children but get out away from the car.

The problem of supervising visitors to Seaforth was not new. About 14 years earlier, in February 1962, the matron wrote in a letter to the department:

The visitors' room here will not accommodate more than two families at a time. Frequently it is necessary for the children to see their parents in the grounds. They are asked to occupy one of the garden seats. On more than one occasion, when doing a round of the visitors, I have found the children in their parents' car, with other people besides their parents, and whose names are not on the permits. It is also difficult to keep the other children away from these cars, especially subnormal girls. It would be a great assistance in the supervision of visitors here, if cars were not permitted in the Grounds.

A handwritten note on the bottom of the matron's letter said, 'Visitors to be informed when permits are issued that cars will not be permitted in the Grounds'.

There is no evidence that staff reported the incidents of the PIC and her visitor in the car to the police.

The PIC told the Inquiry:

I have been affected sexually by the abuse because I don't want anyone to touch me in a sexual way. I even find it hard to let people give me a hug ... it has affected my confidence and self-esteem.

The department instituted court proceedings for neglect in relation to a PIC when she was aged about seven in the early 1970s. Her SWIC shows she was remanded to Seaforth for about two months during adjournments of the court proceedings before the final order placing her in State care until she turned 18 was made 11 months later. The PIC said her mother 'was constantly entertaining male guests and the house was filthy' and her father was often away for work. The PIC alleged she was sexually abused at Seaforth and also in the family home, before and after being placed in State care. She alleged her father sexually abused her from the age of three until her teenage years. She also said that before being placed in State care, she and her siblings were 'dragged into performing sexual acts' on her mother's men friends.

The PIC described Seaforth as a 'cruel and uncaring place'. She said that during one court hearing related to the neglect charges she was asked whether she liked the

home. 'I thought that must have been a trick question, so I said, "It's marvellous," and then they said, "Good. You can stay," and I thought, "Oh, no".'

She said her father took the siblings out of Seaforth during the day more than once, '... where he sexually abused us while we were there—out with him. He sent one of us off to the shop and abused the other one.' She alleged he put his fingers in her vagina.

The PIC said that during the same period at Seaforth, a partner of a family member visited her several times and had sex with her in the grounds of the home. She said her relative facilitated the abuse by keeping watch for staff in the car park area. The PIC alleged that Seaforth staff 'knew what was going on'. Records obtained by the Inquiry indicate staff at Seaforth were aware of possible misconduct by the partner in regard to the PIC's sibling, at a later date.

After two months at Seaforth, the PIC was placed in foster care and then in the family home, where, she said, her father's sexual abuse continued.

Abuse by outsiders

Awoman told the Inquiry about sexual abuse she alleged occurred during holiday placements from Seaforth in the early 1960s. The PIC was placed in State care by court order in the late 1950s when she was six, charged with being neglected and under unfit guardianship. The departmental files recorded allegations of sexual abuse at her family home. She was initially placed at Seaforth for a few months and was then transferred to several foster placements over the next two years, returning to Seaforth briefly between each placement. The PIC returned to Seaforth in the 1960s when she was nine and stayed there for three years. She also alleged she was sexually abused in one of her later foster placements.

The PIC's records show her holiday placements from Seaforth occurred over a two-year period. She alleged abuse during several holidays with one couple, and said the husband would force her to have vaginal intercourse with him and, while digitally penetrating her, would masturbate and ejaculate into a handkerchief. Departmental records show four visits to the couple's home during one six-month period.

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

The PIC also alleged she was sexually abused by male foster carers at other holiday placements while at Seaforth, but could not specify which placements. She alleged she was indecently assaulted while showering and that she was forced to have sexual intercourse in her bed.

The PIC said that on her return to Seaforth an older resident advised her not to report the sexual abuse. She said she told a senior staff member but no action was taken. As the department was unable to locate the PIC's file relating to her time at Seaforth, the Inquiry could not ascertain whether staff at Seaforth noted or responded to her allegations.

The PIC told the Inquiry she later reported the abuse to two departmental workers while living in another government institution. She said one worker did not offer any advice and changed the subject. The PIC's client file did not record a disclosure of sexual abuse. A report on the file written by the second worker makes no reference to the PIC disclosing sexual abuse but does note that she 'will not accept another foster home placement and that there is no point in looking for a foster home'. A later note on the file indicates concern at the PIC's sexualised behaviour but there is no information indicating whether anything was done about it.

A female PIC was 13 when she was placed in State care by a court in the early 1960s for being neglected and under unfit guardianship. She told the Inquiry she had suffered several years of physical and sexual abuse by a man who lived with her family; departmental workers had visited but 'did nothing'. The PIC said she ran away and was then placed in State care. The PIC told the Inquiry she was sexually abused while placed at Seaforth and Vaughan House and in foster care.

The PIC's initial placement was Seaforth, where she stayed for six months. She said that while at Seaforth, she and 15 to 20 other residents were taken to a hotel for a dinner. An older friend of hers was not invited: 'Anyone over 16 didn't go'. She recalled that 'Matron lined us up before we went and said we were all to behave and do as we were told ...

we would get lollies if we were good'. At the hotel, a number of men in suits were sitting at a table and 'every girl sat next to a man'.

She said that after the dinner the man next to her said, 'We're going upstairs for a while'. He led her from the dining room, 'took me upstairs and had sex with me'. The PIC did not understand what was happening:

He just said, 'We're going to get undressed and go to bed for a while', and it was sort of made clear that you didn't repeat to anyone else what had happened. We were only there for maybe 10 minutes at the most.

The PIC said she was bleeding afterwards: 'I felt sick. It hurt. You didn't say anything.' She said other girls, each with a different man, went upstairs, one at a time. 'When I came back down, we had ice-cream.' The children were taken back to Seaforth on a bus. The PIC remembered that she was given lollies.

Records obtained by the Inquiry show outings from the home were common. As early as 1946, the department's annual report noted the practice of allowing some girls out on visits was established for some who were treated as 'trust girls'. Such girls were, 'when possible, taken to the pictures and to other places occasionally, and allowed more privileges'.³⁶

Glandore Industrial School / Glandore Children's Home, 1950–73

History

The Glandore Industrial School had its origins in the Industrial School, Magill, which was moved to Edwardstown in 1898 and used as a receiving house for children in State care. During the late 1920s the CWPRB became concerned about the 'mingling of the sexes' at the Edwardstown Industrial School and it was resolved that all girls and boys under the age of six would be moved to Seaforth. The school then became a home for boys aged six to 18. In 1949 it was renamed Glandore Industrial

³⁶ CWPRB annual report 1946, p. 10.

School,³⁷ in 1958 Glandore Children's Home³⁸ and in 1966 Glandore Boys Home.

A newspaper report about a boy being flogged at the Industrial School hastened the government's existing plans for an Inquiry into the treatment of 'delinquent' children in June 1938. The Inquiry found that young offenders were placed at the school, although it was supposed to receive only neglected or destitute boys.³⁹ It also found that there was no supervision of the older boys at night. The only trained staff were the matron and Education Department teachers. The Inquiry's report recommended adequate staff training and the construction of new institutions to separate young offenders from children in need.⁴⁰

Despite such recommendations, the school remained understaffed after the outbreak of World War II. In 1944, the CWPRB found it to have 'an appearance of general neglect'.⁴¹ A visit the following year found some improvements but that there was still a great need for 'more home-like conditions'.⁴² The CWPRB observed that poor conditions combined with the shortage of staff may have contributed to the increased number of incidents of absconding.⁴³

The CWPRB expressed concern at the ongoing sexual misconduct, primarily between boys, at the school. In 1947 the CWPRB discussed the use of corporal punishment for sexual offences. The department's medical officer was consulted; he inferred 'that the question is really one relating to cases of so-called sexual perversions'.⁴⁴ The medical officer stated his belief that masturbation was 'normal experimental action' however, 'the act of sodomy' and other 'perversions' required 'segregation of the

originator', psychiatric care and possibly corporal punishment. He believed the decision to use corporal punishment should be at the 'discretion' of the superintendent, a sentiment endorsed by the CWPRB.⁴⁵

In 1948 the CWPRB reported on sexual misconduct involving an attendant at the school. The male attendant was charged with indecent assault of two teenage boys. He claimed it was 'a framed-up job' based on 'pure malice'. However, he was suspended from duty and the decision was made that

*Even if he is found to be 'not guilty' of the charges brought against him, there is enough information in the evidence to indicate quite clearly that he is an undesirable [sic] type to have on the staff.*⁴⁶

The CWPRB was concerned that the attendant had 'unearthed unnatural sex activity' and 'listened to dirty sex talk among the boys' and had failed to report this to the superintendent. The charges were dropped but the officer was not reinstated.⁴⁷

Other reports of 'subnormal sexual misconduct' among boys at the school in the late 1940s appear in historical records.⁴⁸ The boys involved were transferred to the Boys Reformatory, Magill. The CWPRB noted its concern about 'the obvious lack of supervision over the boys ... consideration should be given to introducing proper night lighting, supervision through doors, and better records from staff on evening and night duty'.⁴⁹

Records show that problems with sexual misconduct continued into the 1950s. In October 1951 four boys were transferred to the reformatory for sexual misconduct.⁵⁰

³⁷ CWPRB annual report 1949, p. 6.

³⁸ *Maintenance Act 1926-1958*, s. 152(a), which states that the Industrial School, Glandore, 'will bear the name of Glandore Children's Home'. This new section is inserted in s. 7 of the *Maintenance Act Amendment Act 1958*.

³⁹ So-called 'delinquent' boys were 'placed under the Board's custody and control,' in order to avoid their being sent to a reformatory; this classification enabled the Board to place them into institutional care. 'Delinquent' report 1939, p. 15.

⁴⁰ 'Delinquent' report, pp. 31-2 and 36-7.

⁴¹ SRSa GRG 29/124, CWPRB minutes, vol. 14, 1943-45, (minute 887), 16 Mar. 1944.

⁴² *ibid.*, (minute 942), 26 Apr. 1945.

⁴³ *ibid.*, (minute 881), 3 Feb. 1944.

⁴⁴ SRSa GRG 29/6/1947/238, 'Corporal punishment for sexual offenders in institutions', 1947.

⁴⁵ *ibid.*

⁴⁶ SRSa GRG 29/6/1948/153, 'Appointment of [name] as male attendant at Industrial School', 1948.

⁴⁷ *ibid.*

⁴⁸ SRSa GRG 29/124, CWPRB minutes, vol. 15, 1946-48, (minute 1095), 30 Sep. 1948.

⁴⁹ *ibid.*, (minute 1096), 7 Oct. 1948.

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

Another was moved out in July 1952, prompting the CWPRB to request 'detailed particulars and numbers of all boys who had been involved in unusual sexual behaviour' and to discuss the issue with the school's superintendent.⁵¹ The CWPRB resolved that in regard to sexual offenders at the school, 'every case [was] to be fully reported, setting out the punishment inflicted, together with any recommendation that he [the superintendent] cared to make'.⁵² The CWPRB also requested a report from the medical officer on the best treatment for sexual offenders in institutions.⁵³

By the late 1950s almost 100 boys were in residence, including some young offenders. Dormitories were overcrowded and, as the CWPRB secretary reported, it was 'more difficult to control a large number of boys'. He suggested to the chairman that 'the worst boys' at the school should 'be placed in another institution where the discipline and training would be more rigid and in keeping with this type of boy'.⁵⁴ By 1960, the shortage of accommodation was regarded as 'acute', with some older boys having to remain in the younger boys' dormitory due to the lack of alternative beds.⁵⁵

By the mid 1960s, between 85 and 130 boys were accommodated at Glandore at one time.⁵⁶ In 1964 the University of Adelaide Psychology Department conducted a research project on absconding at Glandore.⁵⁷ The report described a regimented program beginning with 'veille' at 6.30am. Boys slept in one of 10 small dormitories,

according to age. A dormitory 'mother' and female staff supervised the younger boys at night, while male attendants supervised older boys.⁵⁸ Boys were placed away from the home with holiday hosts during school holidays.⁵⁹ Boys interviewed about absconding said that the most common motivation behind the decision to abscond was fear of being reprimanded, caned or otherwise physically assaulted. Another prevalent reason was general dislike of the institution.⁶⁰

Department of Social Welfare annual reports for 1968–70 emphasise the purpose of Glandore as a temporary home for neglected or uncontrolled boys: The department 'tries actively to place as many boys as possible back with their own parents or with relatives or suitable foster parents'. This policy was partly influenced by 'problems of overcrowding'.⁶¹ During 1971, 47 boys were permanently transferred from the home into departmental cottages, hostels and the Lochiel Park Boys Training Centre.⁶²

The passing of the *Community Welfare Act 1972* signalled the end of Glandore Boys Home as a large congregate care institution. According to the department's annual report in that year: 'The accepted principle that children in residential care benefit from being in small groups is to be put into practice'.⁶³ The home was closed in 1973 and some buildings on the site were converted into cottage homes.

⁵⁰ *ibid.*, vol. 16, 1949–51, (minute 1244), 4 Oct. 1951.

⁵¹ *ibid.*, vol. 17, 1952–54, (minute 1283), 10 July 1952; (minute 1282), 3 July 1952 and (minute 1287), 7 Aug. 1952.

⁵² *ibid.*, (minute 1288), 14 Aug. 1952. Unfortunately the correspondence docket related to the board's discussions of this issue (483/1948) is missing/destroyed. Although a punishment book for the Boys Reformatory has survived, no punishment records for the Industrial School have been located.

⁵³ *ibid.*, (minute 1285), 24 July 1952.

⁵⁴ SRSA GRG 29/6/1958/363, CWPRB secretary to chairman, 'Establishment of an Institution for the unruly type of boy at Industrial School Glandore', 27 May 1958.

⁵⁵ SRSA GRG 29/6/1960/509, see correspondence on Glandore Children's Home additional temporary accommodation.

⁵⁶ CWPRB annual report 1963, p. 11, and 1964, p. 12.

⁵⁷ SRSA GRG 29/6/1964/541, 'Psychological tutorials at Glandore Children's Home', p. 6.

⁵⁸ CWPRB annual report 1961, p. 11.

⁵⁹ *ibid.*, 1964, p. 12.

⁶⁰ Psychological tutorials, p. 29, and DCW annual report 1963, p. 11.

⁶¹ DSW annual report 1968, p. 17; 1969, p. 18 (quote used); 1970, pp. 18–19.

⁶² DSWAA annual report 1971, p. 12.

⁶³ DCW annual report 1972, p. 22.

Allegations of sexual abuse

Twenty-seven PICs gave evidence to the Inquiry of the sexual abuse they allegedly experienced while placed at the Glandore home. Records show they lived at the home for varying amounts of time; between them they span the years from the 1940s to the early 1970s. The Inquiry was able to confirm from records that they were all in State care at the time of the alleged sexual abuse. They had all been placed in State care by a court—24 were committed after being found to be under unfit guardianship, destitute, neglected, and/or uncontrolled and three had been convicted of criminal offences. Their allegations of sexual abuse included indecent assault, digital penetration, anal rape, oral rape and prurient interest, perpetrated by staff members, other residents and outsiders.

Some PICs said they complained to either the matron, nursing staff or other workers at Glandore about the sexual abuse. They recalled that the responses to such complaints ranged from, 'You must have been sitting on cold concrete or have piles', 'Stop telling tales', 'Hush up about it', 'Do you want to go on holidays, will that make it better?' to being given a hug by a kind nursing sister and told 'Not to worry about it, just keep away from him'.

The PICs also gave evidence about a regime of physical punishment at the home. Reference was made to a guard:

Everyone was so scared of that man. He used to walk around with a big stick in his pants all the time. If he thought that you were doing something wrong, by gee, you would cop it.

One PIC also told of a senior officer who would always walk around with his cane down his trousers:

He used to sneak around the back of the dormitories of a night-time to look through the windows to see if anyone was out pillow-fighting or anything like that, and then he'd come in and the cane would start ... of course you'd cop it in front of everybody, no matter what ...

A teacher with almost 40 years' experience told the Inquiry he taught at Glandore in the late 1960s. From what the children would say, he believed there was a very strong punishment regime at the home.

... one thing which I think gives an indication of the feeling in the place was every day when the kids rocked up to school, as they came into the classroom we virtually had to frisk them because of weapons being carried ...

Abuse by multiple perpetrators

One PIC was placed in State care in the late 1950s when he was 10, a court finding him in need of discipline. He was initially placed with his parents but after three months was transferred to Glandore. He lived there for a few years and was placed out for holidays during that time. He was charged with unlawfully absconding in the early 1960s and transferred to the Boys Reformatory, Magill, where he alleged he also was sexually abused.

The PIC told the Inquiry he was sexually abused within a week of his arrival at Glandore. He said a residential worker took him to a shower block and directed him to undress and have a shower. While he was drying himself, the worker told him to bend over, then anally raped him. The worker allegedly told the PIC he would be in Glandore for a while and if he opened his mouth he would be in trouble. The PIC did not tell anyone about this abuse: 'No, I was bloody scared, absolutely'. The PIC's SWIC shows he was absent without leave one week after being transferred to Glandore. He recalled running away: 'It scared the living hell out of me and I thought, "If this is all I've got here, I might as well not stay".' A few months later the police questioned him about sexual assaults but he denied ever being assaulted because he was frightened.

The PIC also said during his time in Glandore he was placed out for a weekend holiday with a couple. During the weekend, the husband left the home and was absent overnight. The PIC woke the next morning with the wife in his bed, masturbating him. He said he 'bolted', absconded

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

to a country town in South Australia and told no-one about the abuse

... because I felt ashamed. You feel as though it's your fault it's happening. You can't understand why it's happening. You don't sort of blame the people that's doing it to you. You seem to blame yourself.

A man who gave evidence about alleged abuse at Glandore was placed in State care in the early 1960s by a court order after he was found to be neglected and under unfit guardianship at the age of four. He recalled violence and alcohol abuse in his family home and told the Inquiry he was sexually abused in foster care, at Glandore and at Kumanka Boys Hostel.

The PIC's SWIC records that he was at Glandore in the late 1960s when he was aged 11 to 13. The PIC said rape and sexual abuse were common knowledge at the home. He recalled that:

It was sort of like an ongoing thing type ... there's a sort of code you learn when you're in places like that, you know. You don't see things [and] you don't hear things [and] you don't—you know.

He said he got raped by 'most of north wing ... sometimes it was pack rape, sometimes it was one ... it was sort of like an ongoing thing'.

He told the Inquiry that visitors to the home often took the residents on outings. He remembered a well-dressed man who took him out of Glandore several times and sexually abused him in various locations. He allegedly forced the PIC to perform oral sex at a beach and in a park. On one occasion the PIC performed a sex act while the man drove his car. The PIC said that individual men often took him—and many of the other boys—out of Glandore.

He also told the Inquiry that other men came to collect him to take him out of the home, apparently with the sanction of staff. He was always taken out on his own, sometimes staying overnight. He recalled one man taking him to a place in the city where there were other older men with boys; men and boys went into rooms that were sectioned off. The PIC recalled that boys were fondled under the

tables; on reflection, he believed 'us kids were nothing but a meat market'.

While at Glandore, the PIC went on holiday placements to a family when he was 11. The PIC told the Inquiry that only a couple of weeks after he had gone to this family, the foster father sexually abused him in the bath and anally penetrated him in a bed: 'I was scared to be alone with him ...' The man had warned him: 'You open your mouth, you're dead'.

The PIC said:

I'm pretty sure [my foster mother] ... was away for the weekend or something and he must have, I don't know, drugged me or something, but I woke up in bed, in their double bed. I didn't feel too good, blood everywhere. I don't know how long I was there. He wasn't around.

He said the foster mother came in and he told her:

'I'm hurting. I don't know what's wrong', and she came over and said 'Well, let me have a look,' and she pulled back the covers ... I think she went to the phone or something ... I was taken away ... back to Glandore, stayed there a while and started living at Kumanka.

He remembers some people speaking to him, but does not recall whether they were police. He does not remember going to court. The department could not locate any records about this foster family.

Abuse by staff

One PIC lived at the Glandore Industrial School for almost three years in the early 1940s. He was seven when he was placed in State care after a court found he was destitute. He was released from Glandore when he was nine and placed on probation to his family. He told the Inquiry he was sexually abused at both placements.

The PIC remembered being taken into the Industrial School:

I know I was only young but we were living out on the footpath. We were evicted from the house ... the second night ... my mum yelled out a piercing scream. I can hear her to this day, screaming. She says, 'Hide, hide, the welfare are coming'.

The PIC said he was taken straight to Glandore that night. He was left alone in a dark quadrangle and told to wait until a staff member came to collect him. He remembered being so 'absolutely mystified and terrified' that he soiled himself. Then

... a nurse came out [and] took me into this little ward called 'little boys ward' ... noticed that I'd wet myself and other things, promptly told me to take my clothes off, rubbed my face in them, told me to go into the little ward.

The PIC said he was sexually assaulted during more than two years of his placement at Glandore. He described being hit by a senior staff member with a leather strap 'half a metre long, two inches wide, with a handle on the end of it with little tails on the other end of the strap'. The PIC said the staff member

... hit you so hard you really never felt anything. You sort of went numb. Then whatever he did after that, you could feel him doing things or something like that but you weren't quite sure what was happening but it was hurting.

The PIC said he was later

... bleeding from my behind. I would be numb and when the numbness worn off, the pain would hit and I would eventually turn up into what they called the infirmary ... I didn't know what was going on. I didn't realise at the time.

This happened on two occasions. He said the nature of the abuse then changed. The next time, he went to the senior staff member's office and remembered seeing

... a bottle of Coke, there was chocolates, there was a sponge cake ... of course they all tasted brilliant to me and I was told that I could have these things and so I got into them but as I was doing it

he was taking my pants down. I let this go on because I thought, 'Well, you know, what can I do anyway,' but I was more interested in eating these Coca-Colas and all that sort of thing. He was plying into me and things hurt. I knew he was doing things but not as great as being strapped.

He told the Inquiry the rapes continued for about two years.

At the end I was that used to it, it was—there was no really big drama in it and I thought this is the way life was. I didn't know anything else.

The abuse stopped without explanation. The PIC recalled 'missing the Coca-Colas actually, because I'd gotten used to this interference'.

He also told the Inquiry he was once called to the room of a female staff member at night. The PIC thought he was to be punished and went to the staff quarters. The female staff member 'plied me with Cokes again, chocolates and sponge cakes and taught me all you want to know about sex'. He had regular sexual intercourse with this person and with a second female who alternated shifts with the first. He remembered having sexual intercourse with both together.

He told the Inquiry that over the past year he had started having flashbacks for the 'first time ... I wake up at night in a sweat. I can feel that bloody strap.'

A PIC was hospitalised as a result of family violence before being placed in State care for a criminal offence in the 1950s when he was nine. He recalled that 'I was a little bit happier being away from home, away from the violence, but violence eventually followed me there anyhow'. According to his SWIC, he spent eight years at Glandore and also spent time at the Boys Reformatory, Magill, and in foster care. He said he was sexually abused in all those placements.

The PIC told the Inquiry he absconded from Glandore because he experienced repeated sexual abuse. His SWIC notes that he absconded twice during the period he described and that his behaviour was 'rather mixed'. The

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

PIC believed the abuse started about a week after he arrived at the home, when a staff member took him into a small storage room and anally raped him: 'I was in extreme pain'. He said he remembered the staff member, who sometimes took the boys to sporting events, 'extremely well'. He said the worker sexually abused him monthly over about two years, always taking him to the same storage room, raping him and forcing him to perform oral sex.

The PIC said he complained to two senior staff members soon after the sexual abuse began. He said both caned him; one intimated he was lying while the other implied that the abuse was part of the process of growing up. He spoke of the caning: 'I used to cry all the time. It wasn't something that you—you could not possibly stand there. The pain was too bad.' He said he was sent to hospital for surgery to repair damage to his hands. The Inquiry received one departmental record noting three visits to hospital, two of them for attention after 'accidents'. The reason for the third visit is not noted and the department could not locate any other records.

The PIC also spoke of being anally raped by a man he believed lived and worked at the home. He recalled the bed in the man's small room: 'That's where he used to sodomise me'. The PIC believed he was not the only victim, saying the man 'had a lot of boys there ... a lot of boys'.

One of the staff members to whom the PIC said he disclosed the sexual abuse appears to have used the disclosure to initiate his own abuse of the boy. The PIC said this staff member took him to the home's shower block, anally raped him and forced him to perform oral sex. The PIC recalled, 'I was told that to get things that I wanted' such as tuck shop allowance or to buy lollies, he would have to submit to the staff member. He also said he enjoyed board games and the man would spend time playing games with him—'It was a part of a privilege for me'—but he would use the occasion to touch the PIC's anus and then 'lead me off'. The PIC said the sexual abuse occurred in various locations around the home, including

the staff member's office and the shower block. He said the man did not warn him to keep quiet, but rather reiterated that the sexual interaction between them was appropriate. The fact that 'I should never complain because it was a normal thing, was drummed into me'.

The PIC said that after the abuse he became a 'loner ... I was always angry [about] what happened to me ... It ruined my life, as far as I'm concerned'.

Another PIC was placed in State care by a court in the mid 1950s when he was 10, having been found to be neglected and under unfit guardianship. He said his father was an alcoholic and when drunk was violent toward family members, including him. He said it was a 'sad story'. The time had come for his mother to move on and 'I think that's what she did, but I don't blame her for that'. He was then placed in State care, spending almost three years at Glandore and often being placed out for short holidays.

He told the Inquiry that one night, not long after his arrival at Glandore, he woke up vomiting in bed. He got up and turned on the dormitory light, attracting the attention of the worker on duty. The PIC said the worker led him out of the dormitory to the shower block. After he had showered, the worker offered to dry him: 'I thought he was helping me and I felt good about that because no-one had dried me before except my mother or father'. While drying him, the worker told him to bend over and hold on to the bench, then anally raped him; he said he yelled out, cried and was ordered to have another shower. He was told, 'Only sooks cry—stop crying, you bloody sook'. The PIC said the man washed his penis in a sink and told him, 'You're not to tell anybody about the shower or your punishment'.

About a week after the incident,

I explained it all to the nurse and she was very kind. She give me a hug and told me not to worry about it, just keep away from him and she'd take care of it for me. I can still remember her saying them words. To me she was like a second mother, if you could understand.

He said he did not hear any more about it, 'nothing whatsoever, not a word. So I just let it go and got on with my life in the home'.

The PIC's departmental records do not mention his disclosure of the abuse.

The PIC told the Inquiry, 'The actual abuse has always been there in my mind'. He said that 'although relieved and happy' about talking to the Inquiry, he felt 'traumatised and sickened', and in particular

I had a lot of difficulty explaining myself, the problem being the little boy in me and his memories kind of clashing with me, a grown-up 60-year-old talking and interpreting to a man my age or thereabouts, about my abuse, and a young boy inside me trying to get in on the discussions.

Another PIC said that after his father left home the family was living in poverty. He said he would run away and the police would bring him back home until finally the 'welfare' took him. His SWIC records that he was placed in State care in the mid 1950s when he was nine and spent the next 7½ years at Glandore.

The PIC told the Inquiry that soon after arriving at Glandore, a worker forced him to perform oral sex and then anally raped him. He said the sexual abuse continued every two to three weeks, sometimes in the coal shed or in the early hours of the morning in his dormitory bed. He said the worker told him not to tell anyone. On one occasion, he said, the abuse caused him to bleed and, feeling unable to go to the nurse, he went to the toilet and stopped the bleeding with toilet paper.

The PIC recalled that he was terrified of the worker and 'my whole body would go rigid and just wait for it to be over'. After each act of abuse he felt dirty and ashamed. He had nightmares about it and started to get sores on his body; he went to the matron but was not asked what was wrong. The PIC said he did not tell anyone about the abuse because of his fear and shame, until the police came to Glandore. When police first spoke to him he denied he had been abused, then 'broke down' and told them the truth.

In March 1958, the worker, a 32-year-old from Glandore, was arrested and charged with committing acts of gross indecency with three different boys from the home, including this PIC, over a period of about six months. The department also suspended him at that time. The court record reveals that the worker's offending came to light when another boy who previously lived at Glandore complained to his parents that he had been indecently interfered with over some months by the same man. A letter from a police officer to the Crown Prosecutor's office stated:

A statement was obtained from the youth, and as a result of information given by this youth, I went to the Industrial School the same evening and obtained further statements of a similar nature from two other inmates [names]. It was the information supplied by the youth [name] that led to the subsequent arrest of [the worker] on charges of gross indecency. Mr James Francis Slade, the superintendent of Glandore Industrial School, remarked to police on being interviewed, that he was very shocked at what had happened. He and the Welfare Department had no idea whatever that such behaviour was going on between inmates at the school and [the worker].

The PIC said he gave evidence in court. He recalled the experience of appearing in the witness box and of 'going to pieces inside'. At the time, he was offered no counselling. The worker later pleaded guilty to three charges relating to three different boys, including the PIC. He was sentenced in the Supreme Court in the late 1950s. Justice Mayo, the sentencing judge, said:

You have been in respectable employment and I have a report about you which—apart from the present matters—is all in your favour. It is very difficult indeed to know what to do in a case like yours, because there is some feeling abroad now that these cases should not be treated so seriously as is comprehended by the section of the Statute under which you are charged (Section 71 of the

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935–1956), and whenever I have to sentence in a case of this sort I always feel a difficulty as to what is the proper way to treat the offender personally and to deal with him with regard to discouraging others who may be likely to act in the same way. The maximum term is three years. Here there are three separate offences, so that if I dealt with them separately and gave you the maximum sentence it would be a matter of nine years, which I certainly do not intend to do. But as the law stands I have to impose a sentence, although you have no other convictions against you, and it is with a certain amount of regret that I feel compelled to impose a sentence, because, as I say, the attitude towards this type of offence appears to be changing, but it must still be regarded as a very serious one. The sentence of the court is that on each count you be imprisoned and kept to hard labour for the term of six calendar months. They will be served concurrently.

A PIC alleging sexual abuse at Glandore was placed in State care in the late 1950s when he was eight, on a charge of being neglected and illegitimate. He told the Inquiry that after his mother died ‘the police came and the ambulance came and they took us all away’. He spent a few years at Glandore before being placed in foster care, where he alleged he was also sexually abused.

This PIC told the Inquiry he was anally raped by a worker at Glandore about three months after being admitted:

I was just in total shock, you know? I was too frightened to say or do anything because of all the teasing and that sort of thing that used to go on around the place, you know? You couldn't let anybody know what was happening.

He said the abuse, usually anal penetration, continued over two to three years in a garden shed on the property and sometimes in the dormitory. He said he would often try to resist his assailant and the abuse reached a stage where ‘I threatened to dob on him, you know, to give him up, you know, make sure the police got involved’. The man punched him on the nose, breaking it, then took him to the

sick room, where he was only given a cloth to stop the bleeding.

He said he was then briefly fostered out but returned to Glandore when he was about 10. He alleged that on his return he

... was approached by the same person and forced to have anal sex again. I really wanted to commit suicide but I didn't. I just decided that I was going to toughen up and just allow it not to happen again, but it continued to happen.

The PIC said he threatened the worker again with going to the police and soon after that he was sent out to another family.

A PIC whose first memory is of Glandore was placed in State care in the late 1940s, when he was two, after a court found him destitute. According to his SWIC, he was placed in a foster home briefly, then returned to his parents' care, but was sent to an institution soon after, the reason recorded as ‘no home’. He said he was sexually abused at Glandore and later at Struan Farm School, Naracoorte.

His SWIC shows he was transferred to Glandore in the mid 1950s when he was eight. He lived there for about six years, and was also placed out to foster care during this period. He described his stay in Glandore as ‘quite traumatic at times. Yes, when I think about it, it was. And other times were very, very good.’ The PIC told the Inquiry he was anally raped by a man he did not know but who ‘had the keys to our hall, to our little room’. He said the sexual abuse happened once or twice a month over ‘too many years’. He sought medical help at one stage:

I was bleeding, right, and I went and told the lady. But, like I said, I think I thought it was just part of the system ... I've never forgotten it. I know that I was bleeding. [She said] ‘Oh, we'll fix this up. Yes, not a problem.’ I know that she went into another room and discussed it with somebody else.

No record was made of this treatment in the PIC's departmental files.

He told the Inquiry the abuse had ruined his life: ‘I've never forgotten the first time; it was terrible’.

A PIC placed in State care in the early 1960s at the age of 12 after being charged with a criminal offence spent about one month on remand at Glandore. He was then released on probation to a family member for the remainder of his term.

The PIC recalled that the boys at Glandore showered in a communal area under staff supervision. He had not been at Glandore long when another boy warned him in the showers to 'be careful', but he did not understand what the boy meant. He said that one evening while he was trying to sleep, a staff member took him out of the dormitory to a nearby area and told him to touch his [the man's] penis, but he refused. The staff member then said he knew the PIC's genitals were not developed and, 'if I stick this into you, it will make yours come out'. The PIC said he realised the man had seen him showering and that he suddenly understood the other boy's warning. He said the staff member then anally raped him. In pain, he resisted and was told, 'If you don't like that, you can always suck mine'. The PIC said he was then made to perform oral sex on the man briefly before refusing to continue. He said his underwear was bloodied as a result of the anal rape and the stained underwear was replaced: 'One pair disappeared and the new pair just arrived'.

He said that after he left Glandore he disclosed the abuse to a family member but recalled not being believed.

In the early 1960s, at 13, one PIC was brought before the court on larceny charges. He lived at home with his family and did not mind going to school. He said that one day he was with an older boy who stole some pens, so he took some too. As a result, he was placed in State care until he turned 18, and was sent to Glandore. His SWIC indicates he spent one year there before being charged with other offences and transferred to Brookway Park, where he alleged he was also sexually abused.

The PIC told the Inquiry that on his first day at Glandore he was taken to a room to be issued with his outfit. He said he stripped and the worker issuing the clothing exposed himself then forced the PIC to perform oral sex. He said the worker also masturbated him and forced him to reciprocate. The abuse was interrupted when a person

approached the room. The PIC absconded from Glandore that night and went to his family home. He did not tell his parent what had happened to him and the parent returned him to Glandore. The punishment for absconding was the cane, but because the PIC's parent had returned him, senior staff promised he would not be caned. However, the PIC recalled, 'as soon as [the parent] left it was on'.

He said the same worker attempted to sexually assault him on a second occasion, approaching his bed with another staff member, waking him and taking him to the shower block. The PIC said he resisted the worker and the assault was unsuccessful. Soon after this attempt, he absconded from Glandore for the second time. The PIC's departmental files do not record his absconding.

The PIC told the Inquiry he disclosed this abuse to his parent and to his departmental probation officer. As a consequence, he became a target of 'every screw in the joint' at Glandore. He said the worker who had sexually abused him took him from his bed to an isolated area and threatened him if he continued to speak out. He said staff physically abused him for any minor infraction, using their hands or a set of keys on a large metal ring. He told the Inquiry: 'You don't know at 12 ... [later] I thought, "What an idiot," you know? No wonder man was brought up to keep his mouth shut.'

He said his departmental worker never spoke with him alone. The senior staff at Glandore allegedly sanctioned this physical intimidation; the PIC reported one as saying, 'You will learn, mate, to keep your fucking mouth shut while you're here. You will learn.' The PIC said he also disclosed his situation to a teacher of the school at Glandore, 'which I'm pretty sure didn't help me'.

The PIC told the Inquiry he wanted

... someone to sit down and listen to what's going on and do something about it, or at least try. But, you know, nobody back in my day wanted to know about it, let alone try anything.

He said of his experience at Glandore that, 'when I gave [the perpetrator] up you get bashed' and 'in the end you just—you more or less just give up, you know'.

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

None of the PIC's departmental files provided to the Inquiry records information on the abuse, or his disclosure, interaction with staff or absconding. One notation records that he 'needs ... discipline'.

One PIC was five when placed in State care in the mid 1960s when a court found him neglected and under unfit guardianship; he remembered that there were many arguments in the family home. The PIC was placed in Glandore for five months. Later, in the early 1970s, he was placed in Windana for two weeks. He alleged he was sexually abused in both institutions.

The PIC did not recall details of his time at Glandore: 'It couldn't have been good, because I never remember anything from it'. He said he did remember being forced to perform oral sex on a staff member who took him to a toilet cubicle. The PIC said the staff member warned him not to say anything about the incident. He believed another staff member must have discovered them because he was taken to an office by this second person and asked about what had occurred. The PIC recalled being questioned and seeing the alleged perpetrator in an adjacent area behind what appeared to be a glass partition. He said this was 'intimidating'. He said that when questioned in the office he 'denied anything ever happened ... I was just so scared'.

A PIC was placed in State care in the mid 1960s when he was five, after a court found him neglected and under unfit guardianship. He told the Inquiry that he remembered being raped when he was about three and running home afterwards. He said he also remembered the police taking him and his siblings away from his parents. Departmental client files reveal the department had been involved with the family due to allegations of unsatisfactory housing and domestic complaints.

The PIC told the Inquiry he was sexually abused at Glandore, in foster care and at Stuart House. He started living at Glandore soon after being placed in State care and stayed four years. Records received from the department show he was 'unsettled' at the home, absconded and was a frequent bed-wetter.

The PIC told the Inquiry he had unpleasant memories of the home:

First I went to small boys, because I was only six. The ladies were awful ... I remember the day I first went in there when they, what you call, de-louse you, right? They spray this powder on you, right, like under your arms and between your legs, and on your head.

He said that on about three occasions he woke up naked in the morning outside the locked dormitory after having gone to bed with his pyjamas on. He had a feeling of having been drugged and cannot recall what happened to him: 'My rectum was sore at that time ...'

The PIC said that he did not tell anyone: 'That's how things work. You don't say anything about anything.'

Abuse by staff and other residents

In the late 1950s, when he was nine, a PIC was placed in State care until 18 after a court found he was neglected and under unfit guardianship. He was first placed at Glandore, where he spent five years before being transferred to foster care. The PIC told the Inquiry he was sexually abused at Glandore and later at one foster placement.

He said he had no sense of being neglected at home and was unsure why he was placed at Glandore when he was nine: 'All of a sudden I've got ... no family, none of my stuff, none of my clothes, nothing'. He recalled that during his first few days at Glandore, older boys administered 'a belting' to the new residents to establish the pecking order. On his second night he saw two people get into bed with a boy in his dormitory; the boy cried out and the PIC raised the alarm, prompting the two people to hide. The PIC said an attendant told him to be quiet.

The PIC alleged two unidentified older boys anally raped him on his third night at Glandore. He recalled crying out for help but there was no response. The two boys escaped through a window to an adjacent building. The PIC told the Inquiry there were usually between one and two staff on duty at night and that the older boys knew staff routines,

including when a staff member was due to visit the dormitory. The next day, he said, he reported the rape to the staff member on duty; he thought he would be called to the superintendent but 'I never heard no more about it'.

On another occasion, the PIC said he resisted two older boys who tried to rape him in the dormitory, then fled again through a window. He told the Inquiry that such attacks were known as being 'raided'. The PIC remembered disclosing the abuse to two visitors who took residents on outings—they told him they would follow up his allegations. He said he never went out with them again, nor was the matter discussed with him at the home. The PIC recalled also attempting to tell a female staff member about the attacks but 'she didn't want to know about it'. The departmental records supplied for this PIC do not note any abuse or disclosure.

The PIC said that during his time at Glandore two staff members approached him for oral sex. He told one of them 'to get away' but the other persisted: 'He would catch you doing something and then force you to do the other things or you would get in more trouble'. Staff, he said, acted 'like it was their right' to abuse the residents. He remembered that the boys discussed the abuse but 'You got to the stage where you thought it was just part of the norm; keep your mouth shut, otherwise you were worse off than everybody else'. He recalled that older residents sexually abused younger boys 'all the time—all the time'.

One PIC who spent five years at Glandore was placed in State care by court order in the mid 1950s at the age of six; records show the court found he was neglected and under unfit guardianship. He told the Inquiry that he was anally penetrated four times at Glandore; three times by older boys and once by a man.

He said the first assault happened not long after he arrived at Glandore, when he was in the little boys ward. He recalls walking between this ward and a dormitory 'when I was knocked to the ground, my pants pulled down, and they were into my bum'. He was anally penetrated by unknown older boys and was injured. He told the officer of the ward what had happened and was taken to the first aid room, where a nurse and matron said, 'We'll have to tell [the

superintendent] about this'. His anal injuries were treated for the next three to four evenings, but he heard nothing more from anyone about the incident.

The PIC said the next incident occurred one night while he was asleep in the little boys ward and woke up to find a man on top of him, penetrating him digitally and with his penis. He said that when he resisted, the man whispered to him, 'Shut up or I'll fuckin' kill ya'. The other boys in the dormitory had by this time woken up. Attendants arrived and removed the man from the dormitory, and a woman he did not know consoled him before he was put back to bed. The next day the superintendent told staff that no-one else was to go near the PIC and he was left in bed until lunchtime. During the next few days, the PIC said, a Glandore officer frequently approached him and upset him by asking, 'Do you remember what happened in your bed the other night?' Another officer told him that if he said he didn't remember, 'they'll leave you alone'. The officer told him:

The bloke that did it, the man that did it, was a policeman, and the police have the right to come on to Glandore and have a boy any fuckin' time they want one, so you all better keep your bums clean in case—for when they come back.

He told the Inquiry that for several days after that he and the other boys did not wash or wipe their anuses in the hope of avoiding assault.

Another time, he was invited by one of the older boys to learn how to wrestle. He said he had seen older boys going into the grass forts they had built in the vegetable patch to 'wrestle', a euphemism for anal sex. He recalled a woman, possibly the superintendent's wife, who would shout:

I can see you two boys. I can see you'. She said, 'You get out of there or I'll tell [the superintendent] what youse are doin', and you could see the kids pulling their pants up and running at the same time out of the veggie patch. That happened quite a few times.

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

He told the Inquiry he ‘wrestled’ with an older boy: ‘It just seemed to be the way to go in those days. You know, that was the thing’. Another time, he agreed to ‘wrestle’ with an older boy because he wanted some special toys the boy had stolen from the schoolroom.

The PIC told the Inquiry he also witnessed several instances of abuse while at Glandore. He said he saw the superintendent cane a 9½-year-old boy, beating him so severely on many parts of his body that he had to go to hospital. The beating stopped only when officers came into the superintendent’s office and took the cane amid a ‘yelling match’. Records show the boy referred to by this PIC spent three days in the Adelaide Children’s Hospital in the mid-to-late 1950s. The PIC also said he saw a young boy being sexually abused by an older boy in the shower block.

He told the Inquiry he has

... never ever forgotten the main parts of what happened to me at Glandore, like the four sexual things, the canings and that, and what happened to one or two of the other boys. Never forgotten.

Another PIC was found by a court to be destitute and placed in State care in the mid 1960s, when he was almost nine. He said his family

... had no money. We had no clothes. We had nothing. I did what I had to do to survive for my family’s sake and I pinched things—food, nothing else.

He was sent to Glandore for 10 months and, according to his SWIC, he was then released from State care.

He told the Inquiry that one night at Glandore he was dragged by the neck out of his bed by a male staff member; the man shone a light in his face and smelt of cigarettes but he never saw his face. He said he was taken to the shower block, where he was held down and repeatedly sexually assaulted by three older Aboriginal boys. They penetrated him and made him perform oral sex while the staff member watched from the doorway. He recalled that these assaults occurred on several occasions, about once a week, although they stopped quite some time before his release from Glandore. The PIC told the Inquiry that after each time, he complained to a worker that

he had ‘been hurt’, to which the response was, ‘Do you want to go on holidays; will that make you happy?’ The PIC recalled a direct correlation between the abuse and being sent for holidays. His SWIC reveals that during the 10 months he lived at Glandore he averaged one holiday a month, except for one month, when he is recorded going on four holiday breaks.

Another man who gave evidence to the Inquiry was placed in State care in the early 1960s when he was nine, a court finding he was neglected and under unfit guardianship. He said that previously he had witnessed alcohol abuse and violence between his parents and he was himself physically and sexually abused. He told the Inquiry about repeated sexual abuse over his four years at Glandore in the early 1960s, after which he was transferred to another institution.

The PIC said other boys at Glandore anally raped him; he recalled six alleged perpetrators and named three. The PIC said other boys warned that if he reported the abuse he would ‘cop it’. He recalled: ‘When you’re young you’re terrified. You don’t know what’s going to happen.’ The PIC alleges he was assaulted several times as a warning and that his jaw was broken on one occasion, resulting in surgery. His SWIC shows he was in hospital for almost two months at this time.

As a result of the rapes, his anus bled and he sought medical attention from staff. He did not disclose the cause of his injuries and the female staff member treating him told him he must have been sitting on cold concrete, or have haemorrhoids, for his anus to be in such a condition.

Two years later, the PIC said, a staff member took him to the toilet in the evening, undid his pyjama pants and anally raped him. After that the man tried to orally rape him but ‘I kept my mouth shut tightly’, as a result of which the man caned him. The PIC said this man anally raped him on a second occasion.

He said he told a family member about the abuse by the boys and the staff member, and that the family member referred the allegations to senior staff at the home. He cannot recall any investigation, nor staff speaking to him about his allegations. The staff member did not approach him again.

Another PIC was seven when a court found him to be neglected and under unfit guardianship and placed him in State care in the early 1960s. The PIC told the Inquiry that previously he had experienced physical violence in his family, and while in State care he was sexually abused at Glandore and Windana Remand Home.

The PIC said that soon after his arrival at Glandore a staff member took him to a shed on the property and sexually abused him. The PIC did not want 'to go into detail' but said the abuse occurred frequently: 'If I refused to get involved then I was belted, punched, hit, slapped—you know, when you get in the shower—slapped on the arse'. He said he was forced to perform sexual acts on the worker and the worker indecently assaulted him. This progressed to anal penetration.

The PIC recalled that on one occasion, when he was seven, two men in suits photographed boys in the shower block.

He also said older boys at Glandore sexually abused younger boys at night in the boys dormitory. Asked whether this happened to him, he said, 'It always did, always'. He did not report the abuse at the time and had not done so since because of 'the pain of getting back to it all'.

In the mid 1960s, a PIC was placed in State care when he was almost 13 after committing larceny—he told the Inquiry he had been physically abused at home and stole to get food.

He was placed at Glandore for three weeks after the court order and, later, for two years. He also lived at Struan Farm School before returning to Glandore for one year before his release from State care at 18. The PIC told the Inquiry he was sexually abused at Glandore and Struan.

He told the Inquiry he was raped by an older resident on four occasions at Glandore. He could not remember how old he was when the rapes started or how long he had lived at the home. He recalled that the older boy was 'built like a man'. 'I knew that he was doing it to other boys ... and he had threatened me a number of times that he was

trying to get me.' The PIC recounted one incident when this boy

... had jumped on me, put his hands straight over my mouth so I couldn't scream, and two other guys were holding my legs down, and I know what he was doing.

The PIC also said he was raped by two other residents at Glandore but 'their faces I'd never seen because it was always in the dark and they always followed this guy called [name]'. In addition to the rapes, the PIC alleged he was

*... tied up by the penis, dragged down the corridor of one of the dormitories, then attacked and smothered in toothpaste, then I was held—
toothpaste burns. I don't know if you know. It burns.*

The abuse usually occurred at night. The PIC said:

They only had one person in charge of all the boys, and that person maybe would come down every once—every half to an hour, and [the other residents] always kept somebody out on guard.

The PIC said he absconded from Glandore regularly, 'because of the abuse, the way—and also the way that the authorities were treating that abuse'. He said, 'What hurt was, I had a strong feeling they knew what was going on but they weren't doing anything'. He told the Inquiry he reported the older boy who raped him after the first assault but said a senior staff member 'didn't believe me, told me to go away'. Later, he said, this staff member 'said he would do something about it because he'd had other complaints'. However, the older boy would stay on at Glandore, be removed for several months then return to the home. The PIC said:

Everybody's fear would just come back again because they knew what was going to happen. We could never understand why they kept bringing him back.

The department informed the Inquiry that not all records relating to this PIC could be located. The records provided do not record the PIC's disclosure of abuse to staff.

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

A PIC who alleged his father physically and sexually abused him was placed in State care in the mid 1960s at the age of 11, after a court found him to be destitute. He told the Inquiry he was sexually abused while placed at Windana Remand Home, Glandore, in the family home, at Kumanka Boys Hostel and McNally Training Centre.

Records received from the department show the PIC was placed at Glandore when he was 12 and was in and out of the home over two years—also spending time at foster and holiday placements.

The PIC alleged he was forced to have oral sex with several different Glandore staff members. Of one staff member he said:

Whenever he felt like oral sex he would take me off to a dormitory or to the ablutions block on the western side of the central dormitory. When he wanted to have oral sex he was aggressive and intimidating to frighten me.

He also alleged he was sexually abused by a number of boys at the home and that the abuse was often forced oral sex. He alleged that one boy anally raped him and threatened him with violence: 'He pushed my face into the pillow and said, "Shut up, cunt, or I'll smash your face"'. On another occasion, after being sexually abused by a boy, he had reported the abuse to a staff member, who replied, 'Oh, bullshit, you little liar'.

The records show after that after more than a year at Glandore the PIC spent several months living with his parents. He alleged his father sexually and physically abused him and that he reported this to a worker with the department and begged to be returned to Glandore. He said the worker called him a liar and a troublemaker. A note on the department's file states that the PIC came into the office saying that he wanted to return to Glandore, that he had been a slave to his mother and accused of being a thief. The author of the note did not record an allegation of physical or sexual abuse of the PIC by his father.

The PIC was returned to Glandore and alleged that the sexual abuse by staff and boys resumed.

Abuse by other residents

A PIC who alleged he was sexually abused at Glandore and later in foster care had been placed in State care in the early 1950s when he was two, after a court found him neglected and under unfit guardianship. He said he came from a large family and some of his siblings were victims of familial sexual abuse.

His SWIC records that after several placements over four years, he was transferred to Glandore, having been found 'difficult to manage' in foster care. The PIC spent several periods at Glandore over the next six years, during which time he also went into numerous foster care and holiday placements. He told the Inquiry that each time it was 'heartbreaking to come back to Glandore and I remember most times coming back and the first night just sobbing my heart out in bed'.

The PIC told the Inquiry about his impressions of Glandore, particularly its regime of physical punishment for minor incidents. As a six-year old, he was often scared and later absconded several times, 'mainly because I couldn't stand the brutality of the place. You can only take so much.' He said he avoided contact with other residents and staff where possible. He told the Inquiry that during the night there was limited staff supervision of the children's dormitories, apart from the regularly scheduled rounds performed by a single officer. This schedule was known to residents, which facilitated the 'raids' on children in the unlocked dormitories.

The PIC said that in the late 1950s he was playing in the grounds when an older boy approached him in a threatening manner. He tried to run away but the older boy dragged him to a secluded area, took down his pants and sexually assaulted him. He had never disclosed the abuse at the home: 'I was hurting, ashamed and fearful of what would happen to me if I reported it ... I just buried it'.

In the early 1960s, a nine-year-old boy who had been living with a grandparent was placed at Glandore after a court found him to be destitute. The PIC recalled being collected from school by a departmental worker and police, without knowing why or where he was going. Before being admitted to Glandore, he was taken home, bathed, had his

head shaved and was given new clothes: 'To me it was just a big game, you know, when you're growing up, and didn't know what sort of impact [such an event will have]'. He said the departmental worker who took him to Glandore did not explain what was happening. It was not until he was an adult that he learned of his family's attempts to have him returned. He spent between one and three years at Glandore before being placed into long-term foster care, a placement he described as generally positive.

At Glandore, the PIC said, he was ill for a short time and placed in the infirmary, where three older boys unknown to him forced him into a toilet and anally penetrated him. He told the Inquiry this happened on three occasions during the day over several days when the area leading into the infirmary was unattended. He said the boys covered his mouth and warned him to keep quiet. He said he was 'too scared' to disclose the abuse. The PIC told the Inquiry he was aware of sexual activity among the boys and remained frightened for much of his time at the home: 'You stick with the fellows that are in your dormitory that you know and you just stay with them and steer clear of everybody else'.

In the late 1940s, a PIC who was less than one year old was placed in State care until 18 after a court found him to be destitute. The PIC told the Inquiry he was sexually abused in foster care, at Glandore and at Struan Farm School.

The PIC told the Inquiry that he spent about two or three weeks in Glandore when he was about eight, during which time a boy sexually abused him.

I had just moved in there, and I was there by myself when an older boy ... came in, pushed me down, face on the bed, and pulled my pants down and said to me he was going to ... fuck me between the legs, whether I liked it or not. ... He entered my backside instead. He said after it he would bash me if I reported it. I spoke to a screw later, a guy called [name] at that time, and he said, 'Oh, don't be a telltale. Get out before I put you on yard duty'.

The PIC said the same boy later abused him at Struan Farm.

The records indicate that the PIC had another placement at Glandore after he left Struan Farm just before his 16th birthday. The PIC said two Glandore residents—brothers—sexually assaulted him in tall marshes.

Rumours had been spread that I was an easy target. One of the two stuck his cock up my arse and I remember getting up, pulling up my pants, and I was walking back and I felt just—the bell had rang. What annoyed me, I thought was he was one of my friends, but they told me that if I said anything I was due for the same thing—a bashing again. So I just kept quiet. Now, this same person before tried it again, but I was lucky because an officer walked in at the same time ... [The boy] did catch up with me at a later date and locked me in a laundry basket.

Another PIC told the Inquiry he was abused at Glandore over a two-week period. Departmental records show that in the mid 1960s, when he was six, the PIC was placed in State care until 18 for being destitute; he said his parents had separated and his mother became ill. Records indicate that, as a six-year-old, the PIC stayed at Glandore for about six months and later returned briefly on two occasions. The PIC alleged he was sexually abused at Glandore and also at a foster placement.

He remembered being taken to Glandore in a car with a departmental worker. On arrival he was issued with a set of clothes, and shown his bed in the small boys dormitory and the classrooms. He recalled 'a very strange feeling, in that I was in an environment that I had absolutely no idea where I was, what I was doing, or anything'.

The PIC told the Inquiry that on his first day at Glandore he was approached by two teenage boys who asked him if he wanted an 'upen'. He did not know what the term meant but 'I said yes because I didn't want to upset anybody'. After school that day, the two boys dragged him under a building and anally raped him: 'To provide lubricant they spat at my anus'. The PIC recalled thinking, 'I don't understand why this is happening' and said he began crying. Later he discovered that 'upen' referred to anal

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

intercourse. He said the two older boys also forced him to perform oral sex and that they threatened him, so he did not tell anyone. The message was clear, he said: 'Don't talk about this, otherwise you are in trouble'. He recalled crying that evening while the small boys were escorted to the shower block.

The PIC said there was another instance of sexual abuse at the home but he could not recall details. He said he witnessed sexual activity among other boys:

A staff member and myself walked in on two boys having sex—sexual intercourse on the bed. Then there were other occasions where boys were down in the toilet block, down the back of Glandore Boys Home, and basically, you know, you were told to nick off.

He said a staff member 'stated to me that what they were doing was wrong and that I really got a clear message that this was a wrong practice'.

The PIC told the Inquiry:

Being mixed with other boys who were known perpetrators of abuse and ... sticking boys in there where there was nothing like that, I think it was a bloody mixture for disaster. It left vulnerable children to be preyed upon by older, more street-wise children.

In the early 1960s, when he was 11, another PIC was placed in State care by court order until 18 because he was found to be neglected and under unfit guardianship. He told the Inquiry he was from a large family and, after his parents separated, it had been difficult for his father to work and care for the children, some of whom began stealing food to help out. The PIC recalled the police taking him from his home to Glandore and his father's distress. He alleged he was sexually abused at Glandore and then at Stuart House Boys Hostel.

According to his SWIC, the PIC stayed at Glandore for three months after being placed in State care. The PIC told the Inquiry that one night an older boy came to his bed after lights-out, exposed his penis and attempted to climb into bed. He said the boy told him to masturbate him; he

refused but the boy persisted 'night after night' despite the refusals. Eventually he masturbated the boy to 'appease him'. On another occasion the same boy climbed into his bed and attempted to anally penetrate him. He resisted and 'made so much noise' that a worker came into the dormitory and turned on the lights, which caused the other boy to flee. The officer asked what was happening, but the PIC said he told him nothing had occurred, as he felt 'guilty by association'. He said the boy never approached him again.

The PIC told the Inquiry he felt he could not disclose the abuse to anyone at the home: 'If you told them, you'd get the cane. If you said anything, you'd either get a slap in the mouth or you'd get the cane'. He recalled that the boy who assaulted him had implied that if the PIC did speak out, then he would be attacked: 'He was a big kid, and the big kids punched you out. So there was always that inference of threatening.' The PIC said he became aware of other boys being raped by older residents; he described hearing screaming in the dormitory and in the toilet block. He had approached staff to tell them 'what was happening. They just said, "Don't be stupid. Get back to what you're doing," and then "If you keep it up, you'll get the cane".'

The PIC said he, along with other boys, were transferred from Glandore to Stuart House, but his brother had not been transferred. The PIC said he had been extremely upset at being separated from his sibling: 'I remember it like it was yesterday; I was crying and crying.'

In the late 1960s, an Aboriginal PIC was placed in State care by a court for being neglected and having unfit guardianship. He was four years old when he was taken away from his family in regional South Australia; he believes he was at a mission station but has limited memories of his time there. He told the Inquiry that while in State care he was sexually abused at Glandore and later at Slade Cottage.

The PIC was sent to Glandore within a month of being placed in State care and remained there until he was nine. He said the little boys at Glandore had 'to sit down on our knees and pray before we'd go to bed'. He told the Inquiry he was sexually abused by another boy at Glandore; he did

not detail the alleged abuse but recalled that it occurred at night in the dormitory. He remembered he felt ‘discomfort’ around his anus but said he did not tell anyone because he ‘felt ashamed of himself’.

One man who contacted the Inquiry spent almost a month at Glandore in early 1970 when he was 12, after a court placed him in State care for larceny. According to his SWIC, he spent the first day on remand at Windana Remand Home and, because of overcrowding, was then transferred to Glandore.

He remembered being ‘very scared’ at Glandore, particularly of older boys whom he saw sexually abusing younger boys. He described to the Inquiry the grounds, highlighting the places boys would go ‘if we were trying to get away from the older boys’. The PIC recalled fighting constantly with older boys who attempted to climb into his bed naked, and said this occurred from the first few days he arrived at Glandore. He also recalled older Aboriginal boys jumping on his friend in the dormitory and that he got into a fight with them when he tried to help his friend.

Abuse by outsiders

Another PIC was placed in State care in the early 1970s when he was six, a court finding him to be neglected. He told the Inquiry he was sexually abused at Glandore and later at Stirling Cottage.

He was initially placed at Windana Remand Home but was moved to Glandore after two weeks because, his SWIC records, Windana was overcrowded. He is recorded as being at Glandore for five weeks. He told the Inquiry he was frequently taken from the home in the evening by a man he did not know and driven in a black car to a large house past Montefiore Hill in North Adelaide. He said he was given a drink and lollies during the drive. There was usually another man in the house. The next morning, the PIC said, he would be back at Glandore; sometimes his anus would be bleeding. He said the same man was on duty at night when he left and returned to Glandore. He

guessed he was a staff member and so he approached him about what had happened, but was told to ‘hush up about it’.

Struan Farm School, Naracoorte, 1947–69

History

In 1946, the State Government purchased Struan Estate and 469 hectares of adjoining land near Naracoorte, taking control in January 1947. Struan Farm School was developed as a rural farm colony—the CWPRB believed that it was a place where reformatory boys could ‘mix satisfactorily with the neglected and destitute type of boy’. The school was not proclaimed under the Maintenance Act as an institution to which the court could commit boys. Instead, the CWPRB took responsibility for the transfer of selected boys from other institutions.⁶⁴

Although the home had the capacity to take in 30 boys, during the 1950s only 18 to 20 lived there at any one time.⁶⁵ They worked the gardens on school land, were trained in various farming tasks and were taught how to use farming equipment and machinery. They were paid ‘small remuneration for services rendered’.⁶⁶ Often the boys trained on the properties of local landowners who required them to care for stock. After completing their training, some boys were placed out to live and work on nearby properties.⁶⁷

Boys were permitted approved visitors and were sometimes allowed to visit their own homes. Residents’ interaction with the local community was encouraged through camps and participation in sporting clubs. The institution also organised outings for the boys to points of interest in the district.⁶⁸

In 1951 an issue ‘regarding abnormal sex conduct’ at Struan Farm emerged. Information from a former resident suggested that sexual activity among residents was common, including the targeting of specific children.⁶⁹ The CWPRB consulted a former member of staff and then

⁶⁴ SRSA GRG 29/124, CWPRB minutes, vol. 15 (minute 1022), 27 Feb. 1947.

⁶⁵ See CWPRB annual reports for this era.

⁶⁶ SRSA GRG 29/124, CWPRB minutes, vol. 15 (minute 1035), 5 June 1947.

⁶⁷ CWPRB annual report 1950, p. 7.

⁶⁸ FYOW, s. 4, p. 63; CWPRB annual report 1950, p. 7.

⁶⁹ SRSA GRG 29/123, Glandore Industrial School superintendent to CWPRB secretary, 17 Oct. 1951.

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

decided that 'greater supervision of the boys was necessary, and all boys should be made to work longer hours'. It called for 'careful consideration of the future of Struan'.⁷⁰ The CWPRB raised concerns about the placement of Magill Reformatory boys at Struan Farm. The CWPRB noted in 1954 that 'the first responsibility of the Board in regard to this institution [Struan Farm] was the care and training of State boys' and registered its preference that Struan Farm be used for non-delinquent boys in State care.⁷¹

In 1960, the superintendent who had been in charge of Struan Farm from its inception retired and was replaced by a former deputy superintendent of the school.⁷² During the 1960s up to 30 boys were accommodated at the institution.

In June 1969 the acting director of Social Welfare wrote to the Minister proposing that Struan Farm be discontinued. He said that because the farm was a completely open institution, only selected boys who wanted to receive instruction in farm work were sent there for training.⁷³ Although there was accommodation available for 30 boys, 'in recent years relatively few boys committed to our institutions have genuinely wished to transfer to Struan Farm'.⁷⁴ He also raised the issue of the 'consistently high cost per child [per] day' to run the institution and the difficulty of securing 'satisfactory staff'.⁷⁵

Struan Farm School was closed on 31 October 1969 and the institution was taken over by the Department of Agriculture as a research station.⁷⁶

Allegations of sexual abuse

Six men alleged they were sexually abused at Struan Farm School during the 1960s. The Inquiry was able to confirm from records that they were all in State care at the time of

the alleged abuse, which included anal rape and indecent assault perpetrated by staff and other residents. The reasons for their placement in State care by court order were: committing a criminal offence (three men), being destitute (two), and no reason recorded (one).

Abuse by staff

One PIC was 12 in the mid 1960s when a court placed him in State care to the age of 18 for committing a criminal offence. His family background included physical violence and alcohol abuse. He told the Inquiry he was sexually abused in a foster placement and later at Struan Farm.

The PIC was sent to Struan Farm in the late 1960s, when he was 14, and spent about nine months there.

He told the Inquiry he was sexually abused at Struan Farm within weeks of his arrival. While working in the paddocks, he found a small animal and took it back with him at the end of the day's work. He said a staff member took him into a small room and 'dead set laid into me with a cane as punishment'. After later rescuing the animal, the PIC was again punished and 'that's when things started to happen in there as well'. The PIC said that after caning him, the staff member pulled the PIC's trousers down, put him over his knee and began touching his bottom, while masturbating himself. The PIC said this abuse occurred again between four and six times in the same room, and was generally preceded by a punishment: 'That's where he'd take me in there and do it ... If he could find an excuse to cane me, that's when it would happen'. He said the staff member never spoke to him during the abuse. When asked by the Inquiry whether there had been anyone he felt he could talk to about what was happening, the PIC said 'no'.

⁷⁰ SRSa GRG 29/124, CWPRB minutes, vol. 16, (minute 1247), 25 Oct. 1951.

⁷¹ *ibid.*, vol. 17, (minute 1276), 28 May 1952.

⁷² CWPRB annual report 1961, p. 13.

⁷³ SRSa GRG 29/6/1969/261, Acting director of Social Welfare (SW) to Minister SW, 'Struan Farm – suggested discontinuation by Department of Social Welfare', 9 June.

⁷⁴ *ibid.*

⁷⁵ *ibid.*

⁷⁶ *ibid.*, memo to heads of branches and institutions from a/secretary SW, 24 Oct. 1969.

The PIC said when the staff member's room was broken into,

I got the blame ... I denied it. He didn't ever used to say much. He used to hit you with a cane. 'I'll get the truth out of you sooner or later,' he'd say ... You'd be there bawling your eyes out, 'No, it wasn't me, wasn't me'.

The PIC remembered that after he had been caned 'you could damn feel it. It used to burn ... I remember some marks that used to bleed'.

The PIC said he did not tell anyone about the staff member's abuse but he ran away with another boy, whom he named. Their records show that both were reported as absconding for four days. The PIC told the Inquiry they were on the run for a few days, were without food and became hungry. They broke into a building and were apprehended by police and charged with larceny. Both were remanded to secure care facilities.

He said he suffers from anxiety and depression, and 'I now wonder if the illness came about because of what happened to me as a young child, being sexually abused and physically as well as mentally'.

When asked what he would have liked during his childhood, he said, 'What I would have liked was a good normal straight life, you know?'

Abuse by staff and other residents

A PIC was placed in State care until aged 18 in the late 1940s when he was two years old after a court found him destitute. According to his SWIC, he was briefly placed in a foster home, then returned to his parents' care, but was sent to an institution soon after; the reason recorded as 'no home'. He told the Inquiry he was sexually abused at the Glandore Industrial School and later at Struan Farm. According to records, the PIC went to live at Struan Farm when he was 15 in the early 1960s and lived there for almost 18 months. He said: 'sexual behaviour down there was quite frequent, and if you didn't comply you'd know about it'. The PIC told the Inquiry he witnessed sexual

activity among residents and between staff and residents, and named several locations in the school building and on the grounds where this occurred. He also described systematic physical abuse, saying he was once beaten unconscious by three male staff members. He did not know why this had occurred, but was warned, 'There's more to come'.

The PIC told the Inquiry he was anally raped by a staff member soon after his arrival: 'He had a go at me in the cow shed'. He described the man but did not remember his name. He said he saw the same man abuse other residents in the same location.

He said a group of five or six older boys raped him, usually in a storage room, two to three times a week for over a year.

Some of the bigger boys had a go at me, and if you didn't comply, what they would try and do is nearly drown me in [a creek] down there.

The PIC told the Inquiry he felt as though 'I had no choice in the matter':

You said nothing to nobody. Right? If you said something to somebody you either got a good smack in the mouth or they would have gotten a big stick and they would have all laid into you.

The PIC was transferred from Struan Farm into foster care and told the Inquiry that had he not been transferred, 'I don't know if I would have survived it or what, at Struan. It was bad, real bad.'

Abuse by other residents

One PIC told the Inquiry he was anally raped at Struan Farm by a resident in the early 1960s. He had been placed in State care until the age of 18 in the late 1940s when he was less than one year old, when a court found him destitute. He said his first memory was 'Seaforth, when I was locked in a baby's cot'. The PIC told the Inquiry he was sexually abused in foster care, at Glandore Children's Home and at Struan Farm.

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

According to his SWIC, the PIC was placed at Struan Farm for about one year when he was 14. He said another boy anally raped him in the laundry: 'I wasn't a person who was a strong build. I was a weakling. At Struan he just pushed me down and that was it.'

He remembered being in 'agony' after the incident. He said he told a worker at Struan Farm, who said:

Well, there's not much you can do about it. What can we do? He said, 'I'll get you transferred well away from him,' and I said, 'Yes. Where?' He said, 'The dairy,' so I went down the dairy. There I was safe. I thought I was safe and I remained safe until I left Struan.

The PIC said the same boy had previously sexually abused him during his first placement at Glandore.

Records provided to the Inquiry concerning the alleged perpetrator indicate that by the mid 1960s the department was aware this person was initiating 'homosexual activities' on other boys.

A PIC who was at Struan Farm in the mid 1960s alleged he was raped by a group of boys there. The only record received by the Inquiry is a SWIC that shows the PIC was placed in State care at 15 and sent to Bedford Park Boys Training Centre and then Struan Farm. It does not record the reason or who made the order. The PIC alleged he was sexually abused at both placements and, before he was placed in State care, at two non-government homes—of the latter, he said he was indecently assaulted by a nun at the first home when aged between seven and 10 and anally raped by other residents 'a few times' at the second home when he was 10.

The PIC told the Inquiry that as a teenager he started spending time on the streets. According to his SWIC, at 15 he was placed at Bedford Park for two months and then transferred to Struan Farm for one year.

He said he was placed on a train to Struan Farm without being told where he was going or what was happening to him. He felt his transfer to Struan Farm was 'the only time that I could actually see something happening' in terms of a departmental effort to respond to a report of previous

sexual abuse at Bedford Park. 'And yet, when I got to Struan', it became clear the response did not extend beyond transferring him to another institution. He believed the staff at Struan Farm knew of his previous abuse: 'They knew when I'd come down ... the paperwork would have gone down with me.' When the PIC arrived at Struan Farm a senior staff member allegedly told him: 'Bad luck. These things happen in institutions'.

The PIC said he was physically assaulted at Struan Farm in retaliation for his disclosure of abuse at Bedford Park. One day, recently arrived residents told the PIC he was to be assaulted:

A message come down with the last lot of blokes ... I was going to be set up and belted. Every time ... there were scores settled so, you know, you'd come with a message from a mate that one of the blokes down there had done something.

The PIC said a resident who was a friend of the boy who sexually assaulted him at Bedford Park said, 'Just passing on a compliment from up town'—and a fight broke out between them. The PIC said staff dealt with the fight in the following way:

We were ordered into the boxing ring, gloves on ... I gave him a bit of a touch-up and I had a split lip myself, and people left me alone. I was going to fight back.

Not long after the boxing match, the PIC alleged, three residents physically assaulted and anally penetrated him while he was working in the farm's grounds. 'I was left up there just distraught.'

The PIC said he absconded from Struan Farm once. When the school bus dropped the children off for church he had said to a fellow resident, 'I've had enough of this. I've never been charged with anything. I shouldn't be here, and I just can't handle it any more.' Then, with the other resident, he fled from the church.

We were waving at cars, and nobody would stop, and if we thought it was a cop car or some other car, we'd dive in the bushes and hide. Anyway, we saw this car coming, so we jumped out and waved

it down. A worker from Struan Farm was driving the vehicle. You'd have to be dead unlucky. [He] sat us down for a while and told us how disappointed he was, told us that he understood what we did and took us back to Struan.

The PIC said staff 'caned us bloody chronic' when they were returned. They were caned again the next morning in front of the other residents and were threatened with transfer to a secure care institution. The PIC said the approach was:

'Boys had run away, great expense', lined us up and got another six, and we were under threat of going to Magill. It worried the shit out of me. I'd never been there. I'd heard all the stories.

The PIC was released from State care at 18. He told the inquiry the effects of the alleged sexual abuse on him included not knowing how to love, trusting very few people, being over-cautious with his own children, not giving freely of himself, having never had a childhood, and having learnt nothing but hatred. He told the Inquiry he wanted to give evidence because

There are so many kids whose lives have been utterly screwed up, and if I can add a little to that and something is eventually done to stop it, so be it.

A man gave evidence about being raped at Struan Farm in the late 1960s, when he was 16. The PIC was placed in State care by a court in the mid 1960s when he was almost 13 after a minor offence. He told the Inquiry he was sexually abused at both Glandore Children's Home and Struan Farm.

He said the Struan Farm staff recognised his talent for farm work and that he worked on various jobs around the school without supervision. He said he was working alone in one of the fields when the first incident of abuse was perpetrated by 'one of the bigger boys, the older ones'. This boy had been sent to help the PIC finish his work. To the PIC's recollection,

I stopped for a rest or had some lunch or something, and he had come along and threatened me. Wanted me to do some acts and then I ran off.

Later that night, the same older boy and another boy confronted the PIC. The accomplice 'held me by the head with a knife to my throat and the first boy penetrated me while the other guy was holding me down'. The PIC recalled this as 'the worst one I can remember' of all the abuse he experienced in State care.

The PIC did not tell anyone at Struan Farm about what had happened: 'I was too distraught and too upset, and going from experience, no-one would listen. They didn't want to know.'

When asked whether a departmental worker visited the farm and monitored his progress, the PIC said, 'If there was, I certainly can't remember that—never.'

After the abuse, the PIC 'just wanted to get away and I couldn't get away quick enough'. He said that in the years that followed,

... it never left. So I basically, for the rest of my life, which I have done, I literally buried myself in work, working 18, 16, sometimes 20 hours a day.

In the late 1960s, when he was 14, a PIC was placed in State care until 18 years for offending. He told the Inquiry he had been sexually abused by a family member and by a schoolteacher before being placed in State care. He said he was sexually abused at Windana Remand Home, McNally Training Centre and Struan Farm, and later in foster care.

The PIC lived at Struan Farm for three months in the late 1960s, and told the Inquiry there were about 15 boys there when he arrived. As the 'new kid on the block' among a small group, the PIC said he was physically abused. He recognised some residents from McNally and believed they may have known he was sexually abused while at that institution. He said he and another boy were at some caves near Struan Farm when the other boy physically assaulted and anally raped him. Records obtained by the Inquiry confirm that this boy was at Struan Farm at the same time as the PIC. Records show the alleged perpetrator absconded from Struan Farm soon after.

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

Non-government institutions

Fifty-three people gave evidence to the Inquiry that they were sexually abused while placed in non-government institutions. Of these, the Inquiry was able to confirm from available records that 17 people were in State care at the time of the alleged sexual abuse. The Inquiry was unable to determine whether five of the people were in State care because of the lack of existing records and/or the actions of the Aborigines Protection Board (see page 14). Available records indicated the remaining 31 people were not in State care at the time of their alleged sexual abuse, however the Inquiry has reported their allegations because their experience at the same institutions supports the evidence of the people who were in State care and reported sexual abuse.

The abuse, which included gross indecency, indecent assault and anal and vaginal penetration, was allegedly perpetrated by staff, other residents, people outside the institution with whom a child would have contact, and people who remain unknown to the PICs.

The Inquiry also heard allegations of sexual abuse from an additional 14 people who were placed in other non-government homes, but has not reported them. After investigating their allegations by requesting and obtaining records, the Inquiry determined they were not in State care as defined by the terms of reference. No people in State care who were placed at these homes came forward.

Farr House, Anglican Church, 1860–1982

History

The Church of England set up Farr House in 1860 as a small institution to house neglected children in a home environment. Originally known as the Orphan Home, Adelaide, it operated in Stepney, then moved to Carrington St in the city and finally to Upper Mitcham¹ in the early

1900s until its closure in 1982. In 1935, when the home was incorporated, it was renamed Farr House after charity worker Julia Farr, who had been the driving force behind its establishment and operations.²

Farr House was primarily a girls home, while Kennion House was the Church of England's equivalent for boys. However, as early as 1935, the home's treasurer contacted the Children's Welfare and Public Relief Board (CWPRB) to say it had space to take in additional children of either sex under the age of eight.³

After the Residential Child Care Advisory Committee (RCCAC) was established in 1974, Farr House entered a contractual agreement with the department and in 1976 received funding to assist with operating costs and appoint a social worker. In 1980 Farr House provided a home for up to 20 girls aged between eight and 18. The institution gave 'preference' to

*Girls who need residential care because parents and relatives are unable to cope, and the child is unsuitable for fostering. Farr House is set up to function as closely as possible to a small family unit, in order to provide care, consistency and individual attention.*⁴

By this time Farr House, Kennion House and St Mary's Mission of Hope in Prospect were managed by Anglican Child Care Services (ACCS), rather than by in-house committees. In applying in August 1980 for a renewal of its licence under section 61 of the *Community Welfare Act 1972*, the ACCS administrator emphasised that although Farr House 'was available to all children between the ages of eight and 18', it still catered primarily for adolescent girls. He qualified this further by stating that the home was 'not able to cater for children with gross physical, emotional or psychological disabilities' but that it 'can cope with behaviour problems'.⁵

¹ The suburb was also known as Springfield.

² FYOW, s. 1.5.

³ SRSA GRG 29/6/1935/272, 'Notifying additional room for children (under eight years) in the home'.

⁴ South Australian steering committee for educational projects for children in residential care, 'Children in residential care projects funded in South Australia 1979–80', Special Education program, Sep. 1980.

⁵ SRSA GRS 714/1/P, Correspondence of the Residential Child Care Advisory Committee (RCCAC), Sep.–Dec. 1980, Anglican Child Care Services to RCCAC secretary, 15 Dec. 1980.

A departmental visitor to Farr House in the late 1970s gave evidence to this Inquiry that suggested the home retained an old-fashioned attitude towards caring for ‘the needy’, saying, ‘At Farr House it was very much ... a closed environment’.⁶

During the early 1980s the Anglican Church began to move away from providing congregate institutional care, and Farr House was redeveloped to provide smaller group care in 1981. In March 1982 the superintendent and his wife resigned, reportedly because ‘they were out of sympathy with the new attitudes towards child care being developed by the ACCS Committee’.⁷ The home closed soon after and the department transferred the resident girls to other forms of care.

Allegations of sexual abuse

Two PICs gave evidence of sexual abuse while they were in State care and placed at Farr House—one in the mid 1960s to 1970s, and the other in the early 1980s. Both had been placed in State care by court order until they were 18. The alleged abuse was perpetrated by temporary carers, including a staff member on one occasion.

Abuse by multiple perpetrators

In the early 1970s, one month before her third birthday, a PIC was placed in State care with siblings until she turned 18, a court finding they were neglected. The PIC told the Inquiry her mother was unable to care for her and her stepfather was violent and abused her both physically and sexually. Initially placed in Seaforth Home with her older sibling, she ‘cried my eyes out on my first night there’. After a short, unsuccessful fostering arrangement, she was placed in Merrilama Cottage, where she alleged she was sexually abused, and then moved into a longer-term foster placement with a family for six years:

I was well fed and I had very good manners but I thought I was a horrible child, because that’s the way they made me feel. I used to wet the bed constantly up until I was about 10 ... I could

never do anything right, and they used to hit me with a belt.

According to her SWIC, in 1980 the department placed the then 12-year-old PIC in Farr House for about two years. The PIC told the Inquiry that she ‘just didn’t fit in’ at the home. One of the staff

... would play emotional games with the girls ... made sure that we were too scared to ring our social worker ... (a) I didn’t know the number and I didn’t know which office [she] worked out of and (b) it was made very clear to us that we weren’t allowed to call.

The PIC told the Inquiry a male worker at Farr House sexually abused her by hugging her and the other girls inappropriately, and touching her on the bottom. She said she told a staff member about this, but she believes nothing was done.

The PIC also said that one Christmas holiday period while at Farr House, it was arranged for her to stay outside the metropolitan area with a family that had its own children and foster children. She recalled getting ‘lots of nice presents’ from the family. However, she alleged that about New Year’s Eve the foster father woke her, gave her a hug, and kissed her:

But it wasn’t the kiss I was expecting ... and his hands ended up on my bum ... I don’t think I did anything because to me it was affection. I just thought that was how it was.

She alleged the abuse later continued when he kissed her again, ‘sticking his tongue down my throat’, then penetrated her with his fingers and got her to masturbate him. She recalled another incident when he penetrated her, and said she believes she started to bleed as a result. At that stage she did not tell anyone and she was

... pretty numb about the whole thing. I withdrew and I thought that there was something wrong with me because it wasn’t the first time somebody had abused me.

⁶ Children in State Care Commission (CISC) of Inquiry general witness [name not for publication], 6 March 2007.

⁷ Brian Dickey, *Giving a hand: a history of Anglicare since 1860*, (Anglicare SA, Adelaide, 2003), p. 169.

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

The PIC said she attempted to tell a Farr House staff member in private about the foster father's abuse, but her concerns were effectively dismissed and she did not raise the issue again until soon after leaving State care. She said that, at this time, she disclosed the foster father's abuse to her former departmental worker at Farr House. She understands the worker then went to a member of the Anglican Church and asked that she receive counselling—but 'they point blank refused'. She believes that this worker 'genuinely cared about me'.

The PIC also told the Inquiry that some years later she called a branch of the department and voiced her concerns about her foster father, but she was told she had 'no proof'. She said she also told one of her carers after she left Farr House that she was going to take legal action: 'I was trying to get help. I was a mess and I didn't want to continue being a mess.'

The Anglican Archives provided only minimal documentation regarding the PIC to the Inquiry; there is no record of disclosure of the abuse. Her departmental records also do not reveal any information relating to her allegations. Records from the department show it had approved the foster father and his wife as foster parents and were paying them guardianship payments for the care of another child at the time.

On the basis of the PIC's evidence, she disclosed the alleged abuse by the foster father on at least three occasions. She also gave evidence about her abuse to the Anglican Diocese of Adelaide's Board of Inquiry into sexual abuse and misconduct⁸ and was offered counselling. But she said:

I don't want the counselling now. I wanted it when I was 19 to save myself years and years of aggro and picking men that really weren't good enough for me; you know, men that beat the crap out of me or men that put me down or any of the above.

Abuse by outsider

One PIC told the Inquiry she was 10 when her mother died in the mid 1960s and, as a result, she and her sibling were placed in care. This is confirmed by the PIC's SWIC, which shows the siblings were placed in State care by court order until they turned 18 because they were neglected. They were placed in the care of 'The Matron, Orphan Home Inc Farr House'. The PIC remained at Farr House for 7½ years until just before she was released from State care. She recalled Farr House as:

Scary, huge. I don't know if it was the house so much that daunted me, or actually moving to the city. Lots of people, loss of friends, all that sort of thing. I'm not a great stickler for rules and I'm still not and I used to continually be in trouble for doing things wrong.

She did not recall physical abuse at the home, but has a strong recollection of being punished:

Having to sit at the dinner table for up to an hour after dinner until you had cleared your plate and if you didn't eat it you got it for breakfast the next morning, cold. I was continually having to polish 32 pairs of school shoes, scrubbing floors.

Playing school netball, being in the church choir and, on Sundays, going to church three times and teaching Sunday school were all opportunities for her 'to get out and not be stuck at [the] home'.

The PIC did not remember seeing her social worker at Farr House: 'I don't recall ever seeing them there. I had to go to them ...'

She visited the welfare office in the city from when she was about 13, and recalled the old building where she went to collect clothes. In particular, she remembered a raincoat she was given by the department: 'I associate this ghastly raincoat with that building'. She had different welfare officers and encountered one who was 'absolutely wonderful' and who later helped her find her siblings.

⁸ Synod of the Diocese of Adelaide, *Report of the Board of Inquiry into the handling of claims of sexual abuse and misconduct within the Anglican Diocese of Adelaide* (The Hon Trevor Olsson and Dr Donna Chung), May 2004, Anglican Diocese of Adelaide, viewed 8 March 2008, <<http://www.adelaide.anglican.com.au/communication/reports-and-publications/>>

Going out for weekends with different families was common at Farr House.⁹ The PIC told the Inquiry that when she was in her early teens, her friend at the home asked her whether she would accompany her on a visit with a young couple. The PIC recalled being driven to an old building on a main road in the eastern suburbs, sitting in the back of the car with her friend, who was clearly upset. The PIC sensed her friend knew what was about to happen. Once they arrived at the building, a woman explained that they were going to have a massage or were going to practise massage. She led them down a dark hallway into a room, where they found a man surrounded by lights mounted on tripods. After the lights were turned on, the PIC said, the woman told her to take all her clothes off and lie down very quietly, 'virtually just not to move at all', on the table. The PIC did not say anything in response: 'I don't know why, but I think I just did it'. The PIC alleged the man proceeded to rub oil on her body, and massage her completely from top to bottom, including her genital area:

I know he touched my genitals. I don't know if he penetrated me with his fingers or anything, but I know it took quite a long time and then he got me to roll on my back.

The PIC said she was uncertain where her friend was at this time, but remembered that they both had a bath later. The PIC believes the woman said something to the effect of it all being

... a treat that we had when we went to her place ... and we didn't have to talk—she said we didn't have to talk to anyone else about it.

On reflection, however, the PIC says:

I think she probably said, 'We won't talk to anyone about this', not 'You don't have to'. But the way we were, and I think in our innocence, it was the sort of

thing we didn't discuss between us anyway, let alone discuss with someone older because—I guess with the matron we had at the orphanage, number one, we probably didn't believe we'd be believed ... So I think it was just a very private thing.

The PIC believes she probably swore her friend to secrecy:

The threat of death or something horrid, being a 13-year-old, whatever I was. Yes. I think we just sort of came to some sort of pact that we weren't going to talk about it.

The PIC said she was unsure whether she returned to the house. She told the Inquiry that after this, she started wagging school, climbing out of the windows of the home and going to the Pancake Kitchen with boys: 'I just became a real ratbag'. On a couple of occasions the police had to take her back to the home.

The PIC also told the Inquiry that in her later teen years, while on a high school camp, the two bus drivers would sleep at night next to different girls, including her, and fondle them. She believed a couple of girls may have mentioned the abuse to a prefect, but did not know the outcome of this:

I know myself and several other girls on that trip—I didn't tell anyone else. I don't know if anyone else reported it to their parents when they got home. I know it wasn't reported to the teachers on the trip.

After pressuring her social worker, the PIC said she moved out of Farr House and was placed with a foster couple. She said they were 'a really weird couple. I look back on that now and how they ever got into a foster situation is beyond me'. She alleged 'it was nothing for them to be walking around the house naked' and that they would have sex in her presence: 'I was always really embarrassed so I'd just go and hide in my room or I'd go out'.

⁹ FYOW, s. 1, p. 7. Documentary evidence of weekend placements for girls survives in journals and day books from the 1970s–80s held at the Anglican Archives.

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

Reflecting on the abuse she experienced, the PIC told the Inquiry:

There's many times my mind has touched on this and I've thought, 'No, don't go there'. But I think, if I really thought it through, it would be one of the reasons for a lot of my actions later in life. I went totally off the rails for quite a long time. I thought sex was love, so if I had sex with someone they loved me.

She said she would have liked ready access to an advocate while in care:

I'd say to matron, 'I want to ring my welfare officer to make an appointment to go and see her', or 'I want to ring her to talk to her', or what have you and she'd say, 'Well, no, you can't ring now because you're grounded', or 'You haven't got any pocket money left', or what have you ... I had to wait until I did have pocket money so that I had the money to ring her to make an appointment to go and see her. Because there was no way in the world I could go from school down to the welfare office to visit her without an appointment, without matron knowing about it, because I'd be late home.

The PIC felt that the Inquiry was an opportunity for

... people less fortunate than me to come out feeling better about themselves. That's really important to me ... I hate to admit it but I think this has been very good for me to talk about it.

Kennion House, Anglican Church, 1886–1984

History

Kennion House was established in December 1886 as the Children's Home at Walkerville, principally to care for Church of England children. In the early years, some parents or guardians were required to sign an agreement to place their child under the sole care and control of the home's management committee. Parental contributions paid for a substantial proportion of the home's running costs.¹⁰ In the early 1900s, it was decided to restrict the home to boys and it became known as the Church of England Boys Home.¹¹ In 1955 the home was renamed Kennion House after the late George Kennion, who was Anglican bishop in Adelaide at the time of its foundation.¹²

The Children's Home had to deal with reports of sexual behaviour in the 1950s. A new superintendent had been appointed in 1951 but by 1954 had been advised to take 'an extended holiday as soon as a replacement could be found'.¹³ Records show that the management committee 'strongly favoured' the appointment of a married couple to run the home.¹⁴ Until a replacement was found, an interim superintendent managed the home; under his watch seven boys were removed for 'homosexual behaviour'.¹⁵

Kennion House was licensed as a home in 1965 under the Social Welfare Act. By the beginning of the 1970s, it accommodated about 30 boys aged five to 17. All the boys were from 'broken homes', apart from one who was termed an 'orphan'. They attended various local primary and high schools—an attempt by management to preserve each child's individuality and prevent him from being labelled as from a boys home.¹⁶

¹⁰ Dickey, p. 56.

¹¹ FYOW, s. 2, p. 5 and s. 1, p. 15.

¹² Minutes of Church of England Boys Home Management Committee, discussion of name change, 21 July 1955.

¹³ Anglican Archives (AA), Box 162, Church of England Boys Home (CEBH) management committee minutes, 20 Dec. 1951; Box 162, CEBH management committee minutes, 9 Jan. 1954: it was reported in the minutes of an emergency meeting of the finance committee that, given the home's 'staff troubles' and the superintendent's reduced health, [name] had been advised to return to England on holidays.

¹⁴ AA, Box 162, CEBH management committee minutes, 21 Jan. 1954.

¹⁵ AA, Box 170, entry in Discharge Book A-J, undated.

¹⁶ AA, Box 165, Kennion House 1964–78, Annual General Meeting minutes, superintendent's report, 1975.

Until 1972 Kennion House operated without significant input from the State Government or the Synod of the Diocese of Adelaide.¹⁷ Contact with the department had been limited to seeking subsidies for children if their parents failed to pay maintenance.¹⁸ However, the passing of the *Community Welfare Act 1972* and establishment of the Residential Child Care Advisory Committee (RCCAC) two years later forced homes to become licensed in return for government funding. Under the licence, institutions agreed to adopt uniform procedures and provide a certain standard of care.¹⁹ Kennion House was to care for children aged from six to 16. From 1975, the department paid a proportion of each child's maintenance and the salary of a part-time social worker.²⁰ 'Though still legally autonomous, Kennion House was now officially part of the child welfare network of South Australia.'²¹

In 1976 the first group of girls was admitted to Kennion House.²² The home's era as a large congregate care institution ended in the mid 1980s, when it was adapted for smaller group care.

Allegations of sexual abuse

Six PICs told the Inquiry they had been sexually abused at Kennion House between the mid 1940s and the 1970s. One PIC was the subject of a court order that placed him in State care during his time in the home. The other five had been placed in the home by their parents, mainly because of marital breakdown; the Inquiry did not receive any records to show that they were in State care at the time they lived at the home.

The sexual abuse allegedly occurred when the boys were aged from about five to 16 and included anal rape, indecent assault and general recollections of sexual molestation inflicted when a PIC was taken out by visitors to the home. The alleged perpetrators included staff members, other resident boys and visitors.

Abuse by multiple perpetrators

An Aboriginal man who approached the Inquiry was placed in State care until the age of 18 as a one-month-old baby in the mid 1960s. He lived at a government home and in foster care before being legally adopted. In the early 1970s, aged six, he was again placed in State care until he turned 18, when found to be neglected. Of living with his adoptive parents, the PIC remembered 'discipline more than affection', and at school he felt 'the odd one out'.

The PIC told the Inquiry he was sexually abused at Kennion House, in foster care and at Otherway House.

He spent several years living in cottage homes and placements with his family before being placed at Kennion House when he was 11, in the late 1970s. He remained there for about three years.

The PIC told the Inquiry that soon after arriving at the home he was sexually abused by an older resident, who forced him to engage in mutual oral sex on several occasions. The older boy also allegedly abused other boys at the home. The PIC said he felt 'stuck' because he had wanted to leave his family home and 'it was kind of my choice to go there so I had to, like, put up with it'. After a while, he regarded the abuse as normal. He thought he might have reported the abuse to the home and, as a result, was 'kind of separated from the others for a while'.

The PIC also told the Inquiry that after he had been at the home for some time a staff member forced him to perform sexual acts, starting with oral sex and developing into anal intercourse. He also recalled being taken out on weekends, usually in the evening, to a private residence in an Adelaide suburb by two men known to the staff member; and on occasions the staff member himself took the PIC out to this home: 'I was taken there for them'. There was another boy about his age there. The PIC said he performed oral and anal sex with one of the men, while the other man

¹⁷ These homes were licensed from 1965, but were not subject to the further conditions that later accompanied the provision of funding.

¹⁸ AA, Box 163, CEBH minutes, 19 May 1955; AA, Box 174, CWPRB to superintendent CEBH, 31 May 1960.

¹⁹ In 1972, for example, the State Government had provided financial assistance to the home by subsidising half the cost of building the deputy superintendent's cottage, ablution block and northern dormitory. See AA, Box 165, CEBH minutes, 20 July 1972.

²⁰ Elizabeth Bleby, *Kennion House: A hundred years of children*, (Anglican Child Care Services, Prospect, 1986), p 63.

²¹ *ibid.*

²² *ibid.*

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

performed sexual acts with the other boy. These incidents would occur about once a month, and the PIC said he was given gifts to keep quiet.

He told the Inquiry he did not say anything about the abuse because he felt 'it was my choice to go [to Kennion House]'. He said the staff member manipulated the situation: 'It was turned around and they were doing what I wanted ... like I deserved what was happening, you know'. The PIC began absconding. He was apprehended by police and returned, then suffered a loss of privileges as punishment.

The PIC also told the Inquiry he was taken on weekends to fancy dress parties in an Adelaide suburb, attended by men only. He recalled he 'was always given tablets ... a bit like Valium'. He said, 'You were, like, teamed off with somebody ... paired off', and believes he was sexually assaulted at these parties; he recalls being 'sore in the buttock'. Photographs were taken and 'you were given things to keep quiet, sort of thing—either gifts or money'. He recalled waking up the following morning at one of the houses where a party had taken place. He said that sometimes the people involved in the abuse took him on normal outings.

With the exception of the SWIC, there are no departmental records for the period after the PIC was placed in Kennion House until he was released from State care at 18.

The PIC told the Inquiry that in his mid to later teens he became involved in male prostitution and developed a 'really bad drug habit'. He reflected: 'That's what got me by, I suppose.'

As a result of the Inquiry he would like 'the right ones to be held accountable for what they do to people'.

Abuse by staff

One PIC was placed in the Church of England Boys Home in the mid 1940s when aged five and lived there with siblings until he turned 14. He recalled being driven to the home in a black car with his siblings sitting in the back seat, walking up the steps and the door closing. He did not recall anything being said about why he was

being sent there, and the Inquiry has no evidence that it was by court order. While no departmental client files on the PIC's childhood were received by the Inquiry, other departmental records show the PIC's mother left the family, the father brought in housekeepers, and the department assumed a supervisory role by visiting the family home while the father was away working. There were no records to show that the PIC was placed in State care.

The records show that eventually, through the Women Police Branch, the PIC and his siblings were placed in the Church of England Boys Home. A departmental probation officer recorded that the PIC's father wanted to know 'what kind of place it was' and 'he was told that it was excellent and that the matron was a very fine woman and that the boys should be very happy there'. Four days later, the matron notified the department of the PIC's admission. It is recorded in documents received by the Inquiry from the Anglican Archives that the PIC's father had been unable to care for him and his siblings after his mother left the family, and that he paid maintenance to the home for the care of the children.

Although the PIC told the Inquiry he had fond memories of Christmas at the home, he generally recalled a difficult and unvarying daily life, where after-school hours were spent on chores, with no time for sport.

The PIC described the arrival of a new staff member in the early 1950s who

... had a look on his face like a cat that was about to eat a canary, to put it in simple terms, and that's about what he did.

The PIC told the Inquiry that one morning, when he was in his later primary school years, the staff member took him to his personal shower, told him to undress, bent him over, put his penis between his legs and ejaculated. There was no penetration. On other occasions, the PIC said, the staff member stood behind him and washed his back in the shower while masturbating himself. This happened almost daily for 'a month or more; probably longer'. The PIC recalled that the staff member would say, 'Don't go saying this to the boys' or 'Don't do this to the boys'.

The PIC told the Inquiry he started wetting his bed and did not understand why:

Sometimes you'd wake up in the morning thinking, well, you know, because we used to get a hiding, if we did ... And you'd go, 'Good. I haven't wet my bed. You beauty', but of course the sheets and that had dried during the night and it wasn't until you got out of bed you'd see the little puddle underneath the bed. 'Oh, gawd, here we go again.'

He got 'a lot of flak' from other boys about being with the staff member every morning, and developed a sense of shame because it started to register 'what was actually happening'. It is recorded in documents of the home that the PIC was 'causing trouble'.

The PIC told the Inquiry the staff member hit him on his ear one morning when he refused to go with him. This perforated his eardrum, requiring immediate and ongoing medical treatment by the home's doctor and extended time off school. He said the staff member then organised for him to sleep in his lounge room, which was next to his bedroom, and gave him a stamp album, encouraging him in his collecting.

The PIC told the Inquiry the effects of the ear injury have continued in his adult life.

He gave evidence that he told his older brother at the home about the abuse by the staff member, and he assumed his brother would have told their father. But nothing eventuated:

... I was too frightened to tell anybody, because you've got to remember I had one eardrum bugged and I think probably in the case—with the home itself—when this happened to a lot of the boys I don't think anybody was game enough to say anything really. I think the fear factor was there, because he was a very domineering type of person in respect of the way he stood over you, the way he looked at you.

However, he said that just before leaving the home, he was called out of bed one evening to give an explanation of events to three or four members of the home's board. He

does not know what came of this. He said of one board member:

I can even picture him now, just looking down at me as if to say, 'You know, you're an insignificant little fella. We don't want to know about it. Get out of here.'

He said of another board member: 'I don't think he really wanted to know about it either that I can recall'. Another member had followed him back to his room: 'I can recall her saying to me not to worry. You know, "Don't worry about it", type of thing, in a motherly sort of way.'

When a new staff member arrived to replace the alleged offender, the PIC felt distrustful and wary:

Well, this happened to me with this fellow. What's this bloke going to be? I think that he—the defiance came out pretty quick and it stayed that way until I left the home.

The PIC told the Inquiry that the abuse

... to put it bluntly, bugged my life to a certain degree ... Having said that, for 50-odd years I've just put it to the back of my mind and that's where it has stayed ...

He added:

... but every now and again I'll read a case where—child abuse, you know. Something has happened to a kid and everything and this does come back. I get to the stage I do feel angry and I just go off on my own and just get out. You know, I'll go and get a six-pack of beer or something like that and sit under a tree until I calm down. But most of it has gone now.

Another PIC lived at the home from the age of four to 14, having been placed there in the late 1940s by his father, who paid maintenance for his care. The PIC already had siblings in the home. The Inquiry did not receive any records to show that the PIC was placed in State care at the home. Records received from Anglican Archives show the boy had previously been placed in another children's home, where other siblings had also lived. The department

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

provided the Inquiry with a family file, but no client files in relation to the PIC's childhood were received. The family file shows the PIC's mother left the family home when the PIC was a toddler, and before his placement in the children's homes the PIC had been placed with foster families under the supervision of the department.

The PIC told the Inquiry of abuse by the same staff member as the previous PIC. He recalled the arrival of the staff member at the home:

... there was a change. All of a sudden there was this authority thing ... 'Do this' and 'Do that' and 'You're going to get it', and [he] carried switches around, peppercorn switches, and he made sure what we were doing, we had to do. We worked every night ... gardens, in general, work. Milking cows ... he used to march around with a switch and, boy, if you were caught out of boredom, you got it ... Even if you were working in the garden, you'd get it around your legs. You wouldn't know really what for. It was more like prison, I guess, prison.

The PIC told the Inquiry his memories about the abuse came to him 'out of the blue' after he heard about the Inquiry on the radio. He has memories of the staff member taking him to the showers in the morning and of the two of them being naked under the shower, the staff member washing his back and buttocks: 'I can still see the hairs on his back'. The PIC said this occurred on one occasion when he was in his earlier primary school years. He has a sense that there were 'heavy investigations' in relation to the staff member, which he believes included him, but at the time he denied what had happened. He said: 'I believe that had I told them what was going on, I might have been one of the boys that did disappear up to Struan Farm'.

After the staff member left the home, the PIC told the Inquiry: 'it became a different—a totally different environment. It's an environment where success can be at the end of the life'.

The PIC said his overall feeling about the home is very positive. On his decision to come to the Inquiry, he said: 'I'm not here to grind axes. I'm here to make sure it doesn't happen again to any kid.'

The few records available to the Inquiry from Anglican Archives in relation to the two PICs and minutes from the home's board of management do not reveal any record of the two PICs' allegations against the staff member.

A former worker at the home gave evidence to the Inquiry that he learned that many of the boys' records were blown off the Kennion House veranda in the 1970s and were lost. However, in the 1950s he started keeping his own records, particularly noting health issues; there was an admission form, notes on parents, and medical information kept in a file. He recalled that the home had only limited contact with the department in these earlier years, usually only in relation to maintenance payments.

The two PICs discussed above named several other boys who they believed were victims of the staff member's abuse. One said the abuse started to 'fester into the boys. It was the boys' banter, it was boys' talk, it was common talk.' He said some of the boys who had been victims soon disappeared from the home, and he thought they went to Struan Farm.

The home's records provided to the Inquiry show the staff member had been advised to take 'an extended holiday as soon as a replacement could be found' in the mid 1950s. Although the staff member continued to state his intention to return, the board terminated his employment. One PIC recalled, 'It was cheers all around, I can tell you. We know why he never come back. Everybody knows why he never come back.'

The other PIC believed that the home's management thought:

'Well, let's get him out of here before the damage is done' ... I think he was told to go in a quiet manner because of what basically had happened, because the home itself, as I understand it ... relied on a lot of donations. I'm of the opinion that if this had got out, regardless of whether it was me or who it had been, and more or less got into the press whatever the case may be, I think a lot of those donations and a lot of those people that were donating and doing good things for the home would have stopped.

After the staff member left the home, seven boys were removed for ‘homosexual behaviour’, according to records from the home. One PIC recalled ‘five boys clearly being taken from the home’. Records show the person acting in the dismissed staff member’s role had ‘the unpleasant task of interviewing the parents of the boys who have been removed’, however ‘the atmosphere was happier without such rigid discipline’.

One former worker at the home told the Inquiry that when he arrived about the time of the staff member’s departure, the home’s secretary informed him that certain boys would be leaving because they had shown ‘inclinations of homosexuality and some were effeminate’. He also recalled being asked by a boy whether the boy’s older brother was going to ‘do [his] back in the shower’. He said that when he repeated this to the secretary he was told, ‘Yes, well, that’s what we’ll be having to deal with’. The former worker said, ‘We never thought of any abuse and what it caused and the trouble. It was not something we knew anything about really in those days much.’

He confirmed to the Inquiry that some boys did leave the home at the time, including those who had been ‘interfered with’ by the staff member.

The former worker told the Inquiry he was later told by another staff member that a newspaper had reported that the offending employee had been given ‘nine months for sexual harassment with boys at a boys school where apparently he had had a job as housemaster’ in another State.

He told the Inquiry he became part of a committee to do things at the home—‘like make more sport, better ovals, better conditions and everything to try and make a lifestyle that would try and correct things’.

There is no indication on the evidence available to the Inquiry that the home sought police involvement in relation to the offending staff member or professional assistance to counsel the boys who allegedly had been abused. While any conclusion by the Inquiry can be limited only to the evidence received, it appears there was disquiet in the home about the offending staff member’s conduct.

Accounts follow of two PICs placed in Kennion House by their fathers because of family breakdown. Both PICs independently told the Inquiry they were sexually abused by a worker at the home during their primary school years, and identified the same perpetrator.

One of the PICs told the Inquiry he was seven when his father placed him in the home in the mid 1960s. He said he remembers very little of his mother: ‘Just that she left. Came home one day, she wasn’t there, and never saw her again.’ The PIC said he stayed at the home until he was 11. The PIC alleged he was sexually abused at Kennion House and also at a later placement at the Salvation Army Boys Home (Eden Park). His SWIC shows he was placed in State care during his teenage years, however the Inquiry did not receive any record of a court order placing him in State care during the time he was at Kennion House or Eden Park.

The PIC recalled life at Kennion House:

Initially I really hated it, and I hated not seeing my mother and I hated not seeing my sisters, and I just hated everything, and I was just really alone, apart from my brother, and just this strange place, strangers ... Then the regime in the home of having to get up and do this and do that, it was all just so foreign. It probably wasn’t until later in life that these things had a major effect on me.

The only solace for the PIC was going to the nearby River Torrens to fish and swim, usually by himself.

The PIC recalled one particular staff member to be a strong disciplinarian:

I was strapped by him quite a number of times for climbing up on the roof, stealing food, running away, not doing what you’re told, wetting your bed.

He told the Inquiry he had been at the home for only a few months when, as a privilege, a worker gave him a tin of almonds and let him feed his special pet. He said that one day the man—‘a very friendly guy’—started cuddling him and then fondled his penis through his clothing. This abuse

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

developed into anal intercourse, which he said ‘really hurt me’. The PIC recalled an employee who used to give out clothes asking him why his underpants were dirty and had blood on them, but he said,

At the time I did not understand what was going on and I did not know how to stop him. I remember that after this happened I became very withdrawn.

The PIC said he felt he could not tell anyone what was happening. He started wetting the bed—this happened daily, according to the Anglican Archives files received by the Inquiry. As a result he was sent to the Adelaide Children’s Hospital to see a psychologist, but he said he felt he could not disclose what was happening to him because he was

... very, very scared of this person to the point where the appointment I had ... I did nothing more than stand against the wall for an hour and would not talk to this person.

On the second occasion he went there,

I even wet myself standing there, where I wouldn’t move and I just wanted to go and get out of there. I didn’t want to be there.

The Anglican Archives records show the doctor ‘agreed that [the PIC] was seriously disturbed’ and said he had ‘found it almost impossible to make contact ... [the PIC] was very much like an onion, when you peeled off one skin, there was another underneath’.

The PIC told the Inquiry the alleged perpetrator drove him in his car to the psychologist appointments:

That damn car is burned in my brain. He used to play with me, pretending that his car was an aeroplane, as he would drive me to the hospital.

The PIC remembered the man would stop near a park and say, ‘You won’t tell anybody will you?’ He said the abuse had been regular, but it stopped about this time. Describing its effect on him, he said:

I was always very scared and very worried. You’re always looking over your shoulder, and any free time

you had you’d try to be out of the place. That’s why I used to try to spend a lot of time down the river as much as I could; ask [the superintendent] if I could go down the river; if I could go to a friend’s house; if I could do this; if I could do that. Just try to be away from the place.

After four years in the home, when he was about 11, the PIC left to live with his father and new stepmother, but he said he was abandoned again and was soon placed at Eden Park.

The PIC reflected to the Inquiry about the impact of the abuse:

Later on in life when I realised that—the initial hang-up was the sexual abuse. That was the big hang-up and that’s what you have nightmares about and you wake up about, but later on in life when you get more of an understanding and when you have children of your own, things suddenly click into place that, hang on, this was premeditated. He knew exactly what he was doing. He had picked a target and worked out how to soften that target to his advantage.

Records received by the Inquiry from the Anglican Archives show another PIC was six when his father placed him in Kennion House in the late 1960s. He was discharged about 18 months later. The Inquiry did not receive any records showing that the PIC was in State care when he was at Kennion House.

Before being placed in Kennion House, the PIC recalled ‘quite clearly ... my father throwing my mother out naked—out the front door on to the street’. He now knows that ‘she ran away for her own safety because she was getting beaten up all the time’. The PIC recalled missing his parents while he lived at the home.

He told the Inquiry the first instance of sexual abuse was in a shed, when a worker pulled his overalls down and exposed himself, then put his hand on the PIC’s genitals and got the PIC to do the same to him. The PIC said he was ‘terrified, horrified, traumatised’ and that his ‘mind was shutting down’, but he didn’t tell anyone about the abuse:

'If I'd have told anyone, I most probably would have got the strap for lying. They wouldn't have believed a five-year-old or a six-year-old.'

On the second occasion, the same worker allegedly repeated his abuse in the same manner, but this time at the toilet during a service at St Andrew's Church. The PIC said he had to leave the service to go to the toilet, where the worker was waiting for him. He said he was 'scared and petrified' again. After a third similarly abusive occasion in the boiler room, for which he said he was given five cents by his abuser, his 'senses were shutting down'.

On another occasion, while he was lying in the sick room at the home, he had been 'orally raped'. He could not see who this person was: 'There was this weight upon my chest, or upon me, and I was—well, gagging ...' The PIC said he also believes he was anally raped at that time because when he went to the toilet he noticed he had been bleeding from the anus and 'I was very sore'.

He remembered that a particular staff member was 'free with handing out the strap or the cane', and told of an instance—after the second time he was abused—when he and others were caught throwing a Bible in the church, and the boys had to 'drop our strides and bend over the bed, and straps on the rear end and caned'.

The PIC told the Inquiry that the sexual abuse 'changed me from being, I don't know, a fairly easygoing sort of a kid ... to someone that really couldn't trust or have any trust in adults'. The PIC said he feels shame and guilt about what happened, and 'I thought that I had something on my forehead saying, "Abuse me", you know'.

He told the Inquiry that when he left the home he told nobody about the abuse but would be reminded of it in his primary and secondary years at school:

All the time, especially if we had a sports day and they cut the grass. Walking to school or from school, the smell of freshly cut grass would trigger it.

He later disclosed his abuse to the Anglican Church and started receiving counselling. Several years later he started legal action, and a confidential settlement was reached. He

also made a submission to the 2004 Board of Inquiry into the handling of claims of sexual abuse and misconduct within the Anglican Diocese of Adelaide. He said:

For what they've done to me as a child, it's made me a stronger person and given me a very good character. I think I've got morals that are good and I've got integrity, and they're things they can't take.

A PIC told the Inquiry of being placed at the home in the late 1960s, when he was about five. Other siblings were also placed at Kennion House; their parents had separated and their grandmother was no longer able to provide care. The initial placement was short lived and they returned to live with their grandmother, but the PIC soon went back to the home, staying there until he was about 10. The Inquiry did not receive a copy of a court order placing the PIC in State care in the home; and the PIC told the Inquiry he cannot recall whether the department went to the home. The department told the Inquiry it could not find any records of the PIC's childhood.

According to records received from the Anglican Archives, the PIC was reported by the home to be 'quiet, shy, slow to mix. Slow to talk at first. V. tidy and able to dress on his own'. The PIC said he felt very disorientated in the beginning:

I had no understanding really of what was happening; just really feeling very much upset and I remember peeping in to see everyone in the dining room and I was very scared—very, very scared.

He said that soon after his arrival he was playing near the laundry when a staff member took him to a flat at the back of the teenage section; the curtains were drawn in the room and it was dark. The PIC remembered that they each took their clothes off and the staff member fondled his genitals and penetrated his anus area with his finger. 'I knew it wasn't right, what he was doing.' The PIC said he became upset and cried, and the incident ended. The abuse continued, but he did not feel he could say anything:

He would visit at night ... once when I was sick, he came and got me from my bed and took me ... to that flat ... but by this stage, he's developed a

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

relationship with me, where staff knew that we were close.

The PIC told the Inquiry the staff member called him 'his pet. He made me feel special, and people just accepted that we were close'. They went on outings together.

But the PIC said he also used to hide from the staff member under the house, which was accessed through a trapdoor. Also, school for him was like 'an escape' from the home, but he said he 'always had a problem of peeing my pants' and he kept a spare pair with him. He recalled that as he got older he 'started to feel bad about myself, knowing that it was wrong, feeling very isolated and feeling separated' but the attention, such as riding on the staff member's shoulders, made him feel important: 'A sense of feeling wanted, needed, loved, maybe'.

The PIC had recollections of sexualised behaviour by boys in the home, and said it was evident to him and others at the time that the staff member was involved with other boys.

The PIC told the Inquiry that the staff member left the home and it was not known what had happened to him. Soon, he and other children were called into the office and told to say goodbye to him on the telephone. The PIC said he 'went silent. I wouldn't talk to him because he hadn't been around and I felt betrayed that he hadn't been around.'

Later, the PIC told the Inquiry, his mother asked him whether the staff member had touched him, but he denied it: 'I felt unsafe to tell her ... in fear of my life' because the staff member had threatened him previously in the deep end of a swimming pool when his hands were down his bathers, telling him, 'You will not tell anyone', or words to that effect.

The home's visitors' book for the relevant time reports that it was 'an unsettled month' because the staff member had been dismissed. The book refers to details of the dismissal being set out in a management report. However, no such

report or minutes of the committee for the relevant period were located in the Anglican Archives records received by the Inquiry. Investigations by the Inquiry did result in finding articles published in *The Advertiser* at the time, showing that the staff member was to appear before the Local and District Criminal Court for sentencing on a charge of indecent assault on a male person. The newspaper reported that the staff member's solicitor had said:

... there had been 18 occasions of assault against the complainant, a 17-year-old youth whose name had previously been suppressed from publication. The boy had accepted \$1 each time he went into [the staff member's] room ...

The Advertiser subsequently reported the chair of the home as saying:

On the first intimation to the committee that an offence was suspected of having been committed, the committee had directed that it be reported to the police. This was promptly done.

The PIC also told the Inquiry that one evening when coming back from Cubs in the car with another staff member, this man, who was popular among the boys, put his hand on the PIC's leg and moved up to his 'private area'. He said, 'I just froze. Because of what happened with [the other staff member] ... I didn't want to go down there again.' But he said he felt in control and pushed the staff member's hand away.

The PIC said he was a 'bit nervous' coming to the Inquiry,

... and putting myself through, you know, like, talking about dark places. I don't open up to many people and I don't really trust a lot of people and I don't have a lot of confidence. I know I've pushed myself to get where I am today...

St Vincent de Paul Orphanage (Goodwood Orphanage), Catholic Church, 1866–1975

History

The St Vincent de Paul Orphanage was established in 1866 for orphaned and destitute Catholic children. It was overseen by a board of management consisting of Catholic priests and laypeople. Originally at rented premises in Walkerville, the orphanage was relocated several times, finally to Goodwood.¹ Its supervision was transferred to the Sisters of St Joseph in May 1868 and the Sisters of Mercy in 1890.²

The *Destitute Persons Relief Act 1866–67* permitted the government to pay financial subsidies to private institutions for the care of children; and in 1867 the orphanage was proclaimed an industrial school under the *Destitute Act*.³

Children at Goodwood were initially housed in temporary structures, but by the end of the 19th century work had begun on a new building. Construction continued over the next 40 years as the number of residents rose. In 1911 it was reported that six sisters were caring for 91 children; in the mid 1920s, eight sisters had 72 girls and 60 boys in their care.⁴ During the late 1940s and early 1950s, immigrant children, mainly from Britain, also arrived at the orphanage.⁵

In 1941–2, the Catholic Church decided to ‘rationalise’ the management of its homes, which meant segregating boys and girls—a policy that continued until the late 1960s. Girls were moved from St Joseph’s Orphanage, Largs Bay, to Goodwood and boys were transferred from Goodwood to Largs Bay, with older boys moving to the newly reorganised Boys Town at Brooklyn Park.⁶

Unlike government institutions, which increasingly emphasised the need to prepare residents to live and work in the community, the orphanage remained a ‘closed environment’.⁷

In 1975, as a result of the move away from large congregate care for children, the orphanage closed and residents were transferred to cottages in the suburbs, including Waverley Cottage at Dulwich, Bon Agor Cottage at Royston Park, Yaroona at Westbourne Park and Orana at Plympton.

Allegations of sexual abuse

Fifteen women gave evidence to the Inquiry that they were sexually abused as girls while placed at Goodwood Orphanage from the 1940s to 1970s. The alleged perpetrators included staff, other girls, outside carers, visitors to the orphanage and family members.

Some of the women told the Inquiry they gave evidence to the recent Senate Inquiry into child migration⁸ and some have sought resolution of their grievances with the Catholic Church.

From records received from the department and the Catholic Church’s Professional Standards Office (PSO), the Inquiry established that two of the PICs were in State care while at the orphanage; one was a child migrant and the other was placed in State care by a court for being destitute.

There were generally few records received in relation to PICs at the orphanage, however from the available records it appeared that 12 of the PICs were not in State care and had been privately placed. There were no available records for the other PIC, which meant that the Inquiry was unable to determine whether she was in State care.

¹ Anne McLay, *Women on the move. Mercy’s triple spiral. A history of the Adelaide Sisters of Mercy, Ireland to Argentina 1856–1880 to South Australia 1880*, (Sisters of Mercy, Adelaide, 1996), p. 199; Marie Therese Foale, *Think of the ravens. The Sisters of St Joseph in social welfare*, (Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart, Adelaide, 2001), pp. 17–9.

² Foale, p. 21; McLay, p. 199.

³ Foale, p. 18.

⁴ McLay, pp. 202–3.

⁵ Senate Community Affairs References Committee 2001, *Lost innocents: righting the record – report on child migration*, Canberra, submission no. 127 by the South Australian Department of Human Services, which claims that of the children who came to South Australia during the 1940s and 1950s, ‘predominantly female’, ‘were placed in the care of the State and most girls were placed initially at the Goodwood Orphanage’.

⁶ McLay, pp. 203–4.

⁷ *ibid.*, p. 211.

⁸ *Lost innocents: righting the record*.

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

Abuse by multiple perpetrators

A PIC was about 13 when placed in Goodwood Orphanage in the mid 1950s after her parents had separated and relatives were no longer able to look after her. She stayed at the orphanage until she was 17. The department told the Inquiry that it could not find any records on this PIC and the Inquiry did not receive any records that she was in State care when she was at the orphanage. Records were received from the church PSO about her time at the orphanage.

The PIC told the Inquiry she found the orphanage 'very frightening because there were heaps of strangers there'. She was not introduced to anybody and was called by her assigned number. The orphanage 'was just a horrible place' to her:

I thought I would die before I left ... The kids used to say, 'We've got to get out of this place'. It was often something that was said.

She told the Inquiry of incidents of sexual abuse and attempted abuse. On one occasion she stayed with an orphanage worker and his wife and children: 'They seemed quite a nice family'. She alleged the worker made an 'embarrassing pass' at her at the kitchen table, and on another occasion, when he took her back to the orphanage, she alleged 'he tried to kiss me in the car'. However, she said his wife later questioned her because her husband 'had told her what happened'. After she told the wife about the incidents, the PIC said, the woman pushed and hit her and said: 'Don't you dare tell anyone' and, 'You probably just stopped my daughter from becoming a nun'. The PIC said she was 'really distraught'. She did not tell anyone about this but remembered 'crying in bed for a couple of days' and being given a tonic from the doctor. She said that after she had left the orphanage the worker asked her to go on an interstate trip with him, but she managed to deflect the approach. The PIC said she never told anyone about the worker's conduct.

On one occasion, the PIC alleged, she was sent from the orphanage on holiday with a family in a regional area of the State when, at night on the bed, the father gave his daughter 'a passionate kiss' and insisted the PIC kiss him, explaining that he and his daughter '... do it all the time'. But the PIC said she refused: 'You were very apprehensive about who you were going with in the holidays because they were strangers'.

On another occasion, in her final year at the orphanage, a priest had come in for a special mass for the nuns. The PIC said she had to get the meals and the nuns were in prayer at the time. She took lunch to the priest and as she put it on the table he chased her around the table and eventually 'pushed' her against the wall and 'pushed his hands up and down' her chest. He smelt of alcohol. She said she 'ducked down and got under his arm and ran out the door'. After that,

... I went to mass, I'd look up and he seemed to be smirking ... I just hated it ... that was one of the reasons why I hated being there. Then finally I would just not look at him. I would just go in there and look down all the time.

The PIC said she recounted the incident to an orphanage visitor who 'used to go and talk to the nuns. She used to make out that she was our confidante'. She does not know whether the visitor told the nuns about her allegations; they are not contained in the PIC's records from the church PSO.

The PIC told the Inquiry she left the orphanage at 17 to work, and in later years studied and then worked in a profession. She says of her experiences in the orphanage, 'I've always hidden and not talked about [it] and kept it quiet ...'

The PIC supports the idea of appointing an advocate in whom children can confide, and she told the Inquiry: 'I don't ever remember anyone coming and asking us at any time at all in our life how were things, were we being treated properly'.

Church records received by the Inquiry show that in the mid 1950s, a PIC then aged six was placed in the orphanage by her father and stayed until she was 14. She told the Inquiry that after her mother left the family home to be in a new relationship, her father contacted Catholic Welfare for assistance. The Inquiry did not receive any records showing that the PIC was in State care while at the orphanage.

The PIC told the Inquiry her days at the orphanage were 'pretty terrible'. She was a bed wetter and suffered physical punishment as a result:

... they used to belt you if you wet the bed, and I used to wet the bed every day, so every day I got thrashed, usually with a feather duster or a wooden hairbrush. The nun ... used to come in about 5.30, I think, and come to my bed and pull back the blankets and thrash me, and then I had to take my sheets downstairs to the laundry and wash them.

The PIC told the Inquiry that when she was about seven or eight an orphanage girl who she believes was older than her used to get into her bed and sexually abuse her. She would grab the PIC's hand and put it 'in places' on her; and she penetrated the PIC with her fingers. The girl would follow her to the toilet and do sexual things to her there as well. The PIC said this happened about twice a week over a year, and she was

... too scared to say anything to anyone and I just kept it to myself—the girl was quite aggressive with me and she frightened me ... I think feeling ashamed and also her aggressiveness contributed to me not being able to say anything about it.

The PIC reflected:

I don't think I was educated enough ... They didn't teach you about sex there. They didn't teach you those things. Even when I got my first period I was scared to death because I didn't know what was happening.

She told the Inquiry that on one occasion when she was 12, she left the orphanage for a holiday with her mother and new husband, who were both alcoholics. The PIC alleged her mother's husband raped her on her first night. She ran away and disclosed the abuse to her father but 'I didn't know how to tell him what had happened, and I just said that he had put his thing between my legs and that he hurt me'.

Her father took her back to the orphanage and she does not know what happened after that '... but, to me, it was like I'd done something wrong'. She does not know whether anybody at the orphanage knew about it. She told the Inquiry that years later she reminded her father of her disclosure but he could not recall her telling him '... so I don't know if anything was ever done'.

The PIC's records from the church PSO do not contain any allegations of sexual abuse. They show that when the PIC was 14, her father advised the orphanage that his daughter and her sibling would not be returning. The PIC told the Inquiry that living with her father was difficult because he was an 'alcoholic'. Church records show the department was concerned about the PIC's situation. Apart from a SWIC, the department did not provide any records relating to the PIC's childhood. In the mid 1960s, the PIC was placed in State care to live at the Convent of the Good Shepherd (The Pines), until the age of 18, after a court found her to be uncontrollable. The PIC told the Inquiry she can recall living in a house with a prostitute just before this occurred and said she met an older man with whom she had a sexual relationship. While she was living in this house 'the police came and took me, and it was after that that I went to The Pines'.

The PIC said she believes what happened to her sexually as a child affected her later, but it was more the 'beatings' and the 'thrashings' at the orphanage. What happened, she said, also affected her ability to make choices about relationships:

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

I didn't feel that I was good enough to be able to make the right choices. I don't think I was educated enough to. They didn't teach you about sex there. They didn't teach you those things.

A PIC told the Inquiry she used to run away from home, and she believes she was 'under child welfare'. She thinks she was in Goodwood Orphanage for about one to two years between the ages of eight and 12 in the late 1950s or early 1960s, but does not know whether her parents or child welfare authorities placed her there. The Inquiry did not receive a record of a court order placing her in State care, or any relevant records from the church PSO or department.

The PIC could not recall the exact name of 'Goodwood'. She could remember 'the space, the height of the buildings' and the play areas but not the names of children or nuns. She remembered 'being upstairs in a room—a big ... dormitory-type place and lots of kids crying'.

She recalled that the institution was 'absolutely horrible ... The whole time I was there I had to live off my wits'. She said she had general memories of being sexually abused on several occasions by a nun who 'used to play with me and I remember there was another nun watching'. She also recalled another occasion of a nun lying across the bottom half of her body in a sexually suggestive way, wearing her underwear only—'I just remember her being on me and trying to push her off'—and another nun performing oral sex on her.

The PIC further alleged that a man who owned a shoe company took her out of the institution and to his home for prostitution. She has memories of running away from the orphanage and being in an unused factory with street children and adults, and being taken to a house where she got 'sexual instruction'. She recalled living on the streets and on one occasion being taken back to the institution.

The PIC told the Inquiry she is 'angry because I wasn't protected' while she was in care, but said: 'It means a lot to me to tell my story to somebody, officially'.

In the late 1950s, a PIC was privately placed in the orphanage when she was three, according to records received from the church PSO. The PIC told the Inquiry her parents had separated and placed her and her siblings in care because of debt. Her mother was abusive and had substance abuse problems, and her father worked away from home and was unable to cope with the children. The records show the PIC was immediately placed with a foster family arranged by Catholic Welfare. She was placed back in the orphanage when she was about five in preparation for school, and stayed for about 18 months. After a short time living at her family home, she was placed in Morialta Protestant Children's Home. She alleged she was sexually abused in both the orphanage and at Morialta. The Inquiry did not receive any records placing her in State care or any departmental client files, and the PIC cannot recall any departmental involvement at the time.

The PIC said the orphanage was

... awful, the food was awful, the other children treated you awfully. The nuns were all nasty and violent. They were all very, very—you know, just overworked. Who knows?

On many occasions, older girls would hang her from the balcony by her ankle or wrist. She believed the nuns knew about this but 'they didn't stop it. They actually, more often than not, left the older girls to discipline you or punish you, you know, or look after you'. She said there was never any affection.

The PIC told the Inquiry that on one occasion, a youth group took her on an outing from the orphanage to a park, where a man took her to a car, removed her knickers and raped her. Back at the orphanage, she said, she was punished because she had no knickers:

And I was punished on the day I was raped, because obviously I had no knickers when I got back to the orphanage because, I don't know, he kept them, took them. I don't know what he did with them.

She told the Inquiry that after the assault she started wetting her bed, for which she was ‘punished severely’. She said she did not feel as though she could talk about what happened to her and, while on holiday with foster parents, ‘I didn’t know what it was, to tell them’.

The PIC also recalled a worker at the orphanage taking her to a cottage and touching her in a sexual way. She remembered that the girls ‘weren’t allowed to go near him. If it was found out that you’d gone near him or been with him you were in huge trouble, huge’. But she said, ‘The thing that I remember—the worst experience was when I was raped, so that overpowers anything else other than going into the cottage.’

The PIC said she still cannot confide in others because ‘even in the orphanages or homes you couldn’t confide in one of the other kids, because it was one for all and all for one’.

A PIC’s father placed her in the orphanage in the early 1960s, when she was about four or five. The Inquiry did not receive a record to show that she was placed in State care. The department informed the Inquiry that no records about her exist, and the PIC said she cannot remember seeing anyone from the department when she was in the orphanage. Records from the church PSO indicated that the PIC’s mother had left her father. The PIC told the Inquiry she was sexually abused while placed at the orphanage—on holiday leave and by her father when he took her on outings—and also when she was sent to another placement.

She initially stayed in the orphanage for about four years in the late 1960s until she was about nine. One of her siblings was living there with her. She recalled the orphanage as a ‘humungous, absolutely huge, scary place’. For her, the nuns generally were ‘quite scary’ and she was hit on the hands with a cane. She said, ‘We had a few nasties’, and

I remember being told I was going to go to hell a lot. That was quite a regular occurrence as we were growing up ... I don’t think I was mistreated but I don’t remember being happy ...

The PIC told the Inquiry she was sexually abused on one occasion when she was billeted with a family on holiday leave. She alleged the father of the family took her for a drive in his truck, parked in sand dunes, exposed himself and tried to have intercourse with her.

The PIC also told the Inquiry that when she was ‘very, very young’, her father regularly took her out of the orphanage on weekends and molested her in a caravan, making her perform oral sex on him. She thought her sibling went with her on these occasions. She said her father rewarded her with gifts and money, which she took back to the orphanage and would ‘have to sort of hide it from the nuns’.

She said that many times when her father came to the orphanage to get her, she and her sibling ran away and hid:

... quite a few times they would struggle to get us. We’d be hiding, like under the beds and anywhere that we could find ... They thought that we were just naughty and didn’t want to go to him.

The PIC said she did not tell anybody at the orphanage about the abuse; however she recalled being at a sports day at another home where her other siblings lived, and one of the nuns hiding her as her father approached.

The PIC told the Inquiry one of her siblings told a nun about her own abuse by her father, and her father was imprisoned as a result. However, the PIC’s records from the church PSO show that near the end of her first year at the orphanage, her father was imprisoned for indecently assaulting another child, not the sibling, and that Catholic Welfare knew this. Records indicate that ‘allegations’ were made against the father by a sibling after his release from prison, while the PIC and her sibling were still living at the orphanage. The nature of the allegations is not explained in the records and their outcome is not recorded; it is recorded that the father felt ‘disgusted’ by the allegations and wanted the PIC and the sibling who made them to be either adopted out or placed in long-term foster care. The PIC told the Inquiry that after her sister’s disclosure ‘... all of a sudden I’m fostered out and she’s fostered and that was all the beginning of another traumatic time in my life’.

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

In the late 1960s, when the PIC was about nine, Catholic Welfare placed her with a foster family, with whom she lived for about five years: 'I hated every minute of it'. She said that the orphanage had sent her on holidays with the family before placing her permanently with them.

The PIC told the Inquiry she thought the department was involved at one stage when she went with the family. Church PSO records show the foster mother was advised that permission would have to be sought for the girl to remain permanently at the foster home, and that 'this would mean that their home would have to be opened to inspection to the Department of Social Welfare'. The records contain a copy of a letter requesting permission from the director of the department for the PIC to be discharged from the orphanage and placed with the foster family in accordance with the provisions of section 170 (1)(c) of the *Social Welfare Act 1926–1965*. It is recorded that permission was received.

The PIC told the Inquiry that the foster father started to sexually abuse her while she holidayed with the family: 'He was touching me every chance that he could get'. She said this developed into oral sex and masturbation.

The PIC remembered that on one occasion when she was 11, the foster father allowed his own father to abuse her when she was playing the piano at his house; to 'have a grope' and put his hand down her pants. She said: 'I remember, like, freaking out and screaming'.

The PIC told the Inquiry the foster father hit her with a leather strap 'to keep my mouth shut, and I reckon it used to happen quite often as I got older because I was getting a bit more rebellious'.

Reflecting on the effects of her childhood abuse, the PIC said:

I didn't know the difference between having sex with someone and just making love to someone, or who I can and who I can't, you know? That's the sort of thing I never had because I was never taught that. It's got to be instilled in a person, a little person when they're growing up ...

She also said she 'went to many, many years of therapy to get rid of all this' and 'I lived in another person's body most of my life. I'm just starting to come back into mine.'

Records received from the church PSO show a PIC was placed in Goodwood in the 1970s for about a year when she was nine. Her extended family was unable to care for her after her mother left the family home. The PIC recalled, however, that she 'never felt neglected' by her mother. She told the Inquiry her father was violent and that he and her brother sexually assaulted her before she was placed at the orphanage.

The Inquiry did not receive any records from the department in relation to the PIC's childhood. However, PSO documents show the department paid a subsidy while the PIC was in the care of Catholic Welfare. The PIC could not recall any contact with the department during her time at the orphanage. The Inquiry did not receive any records to show that she was in State care while at the orphanage.

Although the PIC enjoyed the 'sense of ... belonging to a larger family' that life in the orphanage offered, she recalled punishment by a particular nun who

... used to use the cane and ... the buckles of belts and jug cords ... without warning. [The nun would] grab you by the hair and she'd grab you by the arm, and she'd just drag you out of the dormitory and you'd be kicking ...

The PIC said that 'sometimes you just never knew' what provoked this behaviour. She told the Inquiry this same nun sexually assaulted her weekly; she would 'pull the bed ... sheet down and the blanket down' and digitally penetrate her. The PIC said she believes the nun abused other children, and the children would protect each other, but 'if you went to say anything, you'd be taken downstairs and flogged'.

The PIC alleged that after six months in the orphanage, one and sometimes two male visitors started to sexually assault her. She would

... hear footsteps coming up the steel stairs and along the balcony and into our dormitory. [These men] would take a young girl with them and they

would come back an hour or so later ... Some of the younger girls used to refer to them as 'the tickle men'.

She said she was often taken from her bed by the men, who made her stand facing a wall with her hands flat against it while they fondled her and also 'entered my backside area'.

The PIC said that one night she told one of the men to leave the girls alone, and he

... dragged me from bed by the feet and dragged me along the floor. He took me up to the third floor attic where he took off his belt and undressed me. He made me lay across his lap while he belted me across my backside and legs. I recall him telling me if I were to say anything, no-one would believe me as I was the devil's child.

She alleged the same man also sexually abused her and a sibling in an office after a school fete. The PIC told the Inquiry that a nun at the orphanage gave her medication at night to make her drowsy. She believes this was connected to the abuse.

She alleged that on one occasion one of the men 'slung me over his shoulder and took me to the laundry at the back of the orphanage, where he raped me'. She started to bleed and was 'belted' afterwards by the man for being a 'dirty girl'. She alleged she was then forced to take her clothes off and sit in a drain.

The PIC told the Inquiry she often spent school holidays with families while at the orphanage. She alleged that a father in one such family anally raped her in the stables on their property on two occasions. She was 'too scared to say anything', and he would put his hand around her mouth as if to suffocate her if she tried to speak: 'That was one of the threats after the abuse'.

She recalled she had to return to this home on a few occasions, but she ran away during the night and followed the bus stops back towards the city. The police would find her and take her back and she would run away again. She said she was not asked why she was running away, but was punished with the cane by the nuns and told:

... that I was just naughty and that I should learn to behave, and if I learnt to behave, people would treat me better ... In the end I didn't have to go there any more.

The PIC said she saw school as an escape from the abuse, but in the orphanage,

I don't think I felt anything really, to be honest. I know that—terrified would be a word, and scared, and silenced, and I think it's taken its toll on me ...

Although she did not disclose the abuse she suffered, she believes that the nun who medicated her and one of the nuns in charge 'surely knew of the sexual abuse. These people were in charge and did nothing'.

As an adult, the PIC believes she still has a big problem with confidence. She told the Inquiry she had been too scared in the past to come forward: 'My hope is that I will be seen, heard and believed'.

Abuse by staff

A PIC was six when her mother placed her in Goodwood Orphanage in the early 1940s for about four years. She told the Inquiry her mother was unable to care for her, her father was an alcoholic and there was violence in the family home. The PIC recalled her mother telling her before she went into the orphanage that she was going on holiday and would have a 'wonderful time'. The Inquiry did not receive any documents to show that the PIC was in State care at the orphanage, however records show she was placed in State care after running away from Goodwood when aged about 11. The PIC said she was sexually abused at the orphanage and later in foster care and boarding placements. Departmental and court files show one perpetrator was convicted of indecently assaulting her.

The PIC told the Inquiry a nun who did the night rounds sexually abused her in the orphanage's attic:

... you're laying in bed and you're listening for the beads and you're listening for the angelus just, you know, to be sung and I used to think, 'Will she come tonight? I hope she doesn't,' and then I'd say, 'Our Father, and Hail Mary' and you know, and

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

then you hear the click of the beads and she would come, yes, and she would take me and come up to the attic.

The PIC alleged that in the attic, the nun would ‘feel’ her ‘down below’ and want her ‘to lick and suck her breasts’. The nun swung from being loving to telling the PIC she was ‘a dirty little girl’. The PIC said the nun, who told her not to tell anybody about the abuse, also locked her in the attic sometimes. She did not know how often the abuse occurred and said: ‘Sometimes it seemed to me that it always happened and sometimes I’d make myself believe that it never happened—or try to’.

The PIC said she told the priest in the confessional that the nun had been doing ‘rude things to me’. His response was to call her around to where he was sitting and ask her to show him where the nun had touched her. She said she took her pants off and the priest patted her in the genital area and accused her of lying: ‘I lost my faith in religion then’.

The PIC said she never told anyone else what had happened to her, although she spoke to a counsellor when she was in her 70s. She said: ‘I wouldn’t even tell my sisters ... because I was ashamed and it was my fault ... I mean, I was so damn scared and so frightened’.

After four years at the orphanage, when she was about 11, she ran away, carrying her younger sister: ‘I couldn’t take any more’. A probation officer’s report on the PIC’s departmental file states:

She said she was unhappy [at Goodwood Orphanage] and could not bear it any longer. The mother said she would not, under any circumstances, allow the children to return to the Orphanage ... she was prepared to have them committed by the State as ‘Destitute’, as she considered that to be in the future interest of the children. She was sure that the children would then not be unhappy ...

Departmental and church PSO records received by the Inquiry do not contain any of the PIC’s allegations of sexual abuse at Goodwood.

The month after the two sisters ran away, a court found them to be destitute and placed them in State care until they turned 18. The PIC told the Inquiry her departmental officer asked her why she ran away from the orphanage, but ‘I wouldn’t say. No, you never tell.’ She had ‘never stopped’ thinking about her experiences.

A PIC who gave evidence of sexual abuse at Goodwood told the Inquiry she and her siblings also suffered sexual abuse, as well as alcohol abuse and violence, in the family home in the early 1950s. The PIC’s mother placed the children at the orphanage in the late 1950s, when the PIC was six, and she lived there for about five years.

Church PSO records show the PIC’s parents separated and that her mother was unable to care for the children. They show the family was ‘known to the Children’s Welfare and Public Relief Department’ and received financial assistance from the department. Her SWIC shows she was placed in State care when she was nine after a court found her to be destitute, and she was placed with the orphanage matron. The PIC alleged she was sexually abused in later placements with her family, at the Convent of the Good Shepherd (The Pines) and in foster care.

The PIC told the Inquiry the orphanage was ‘fantastic until I was raped’, and said, ‘I had good schooling, food’. She recalled a regime of harsh punishments: ‘If one person done something wrong, you all got whipped, you know. Like, they’d lock you up in things. They [the nuns] were aggressive.’

The PIC alleged a worker she did not know raped her in an upstairs bathroom when she was 10. From the available records, the PIC was in State care at this stage. She said she was alone at the time, cleaning the bathroom, when the worker entered, forced her to the floor and began,

... you know, like, pulling my pants down and things like that, and I can remember hitting my head there at one stage ... yes, he penetrated me; yes, the pain was excruciating.

The PIC remembered bleeding as a result of the assault and seeking help from a nun. She recalled being able to explain only that ‘he was rude to me ... you don’t say “rape”; you don’t know at that age’. She said the nun did not ask what she meant and ‘scruffed me; shook me ... and I got told off for being down late because I should’ve been down, and that I’m not to cause trouble’. She said she was not given any medical assistance.

The disclosure is not included in her church PSO records. Her SWIC notes of her time at the orphanage: ‘No complaints. Is a quiet child’.

The PIC began absconding from the orphanage and was placed with her family soon after. She told the Inquiry that during her years in care she was missing

*Guidance ... Discipline. Direction. Education.
Privacy to my body that belonged to me. No rights; no choices—I can go on and on and on.
But life was dealt that way. You know, you can’t change that.*

Another PIC told the Inquiry that her mother died when she was a baby and she was placed in Goodwood Orphanage in the mid to late 1950s by her extended family, when she was about seven. She stayed for about two years.

Although no records were received from the department about the PIC’s childhood, the church PSO records indicate that an officer of the department referred the PIC and her sibling to Catholic Welfare for placement—her placement in the orphanage and that of her sibling in another children’s home are confirmed in a file letter from the welfare bureau to the department. The PIC cannot recall anyone from the department visiting her at the orphanage. The Inquiry did not receive any records to show that she was in State care when she was at the orphanage.

Of her arrival at the orphanage, the PIC recalled,

My father and [aunt] went into an office, and this nun came and took me away. I never had a chance to even say goodbye to them. I was just taken away. And I had no idea where I was. I just remember this real big door ... and being led into a big hallway, this big, this huge place. Just seemed so monstrous, the front entrance of it ... it had huge, high ceilings.

The PIC told the Inquiry she recalls the nuns at the orphanage as ‘very inhuman’. One nun in particular ‘seemed to get great pleasure and delight in denigrating and humiliating us’. She recalled being hit on the back with a strap ‘whichever way you were standing’ and remembered blood drying on her clothes and not being allowed to shower to wash it off.

The PIC told the Inquiry she was sexually assaulted soon after her arrival at the orphanage. She alleged a man she believes may have been a priest sexually assaulted her. She said a nun took her to a room on the ground floor, where a man put her face-down on a table, lifted her dress, removed her underpants and: ‘The next thing I know is I’m in this excruciating pain because he stuck his fingers up my little bottom’. She said she now believes he was masturbating at the same time. He allegedly told her she was ‘worthless’ and that she deserved to be treated in this way; and she should not tell anyone because no-one would ever believe her. She said she bled badly and the man returned her to the nun, who put her to bed.

The PIC told the Inquiry this abuse occurred possibly twice a week over some time, and would follow a similar pattern. Sometimes the nun who took her to the man would beat her, and she would try to run away, only to be taken back again.

She described one occasion when the man was digitally raping her:

He pushed so hard, he pushed me off the table and I hit my head, and I was in so much pain, my head was so sore, my bottom, and flying off the table ...

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

She recalled retaliating on the final occasion, which was at the cottage on the premises. She tried to resist, kicking and using her fists, and the man dropped her on the floor. There was yelling and he called her a 'worthless nothing' and told her to go.

The PIC told the Inquiry she did not tell anyone about the abuse at the time and thought she would not be believed. She recalled that she felt

... so lost, so lonely, so sad, so worthless ... Oh, I cried every day. I cried myself to sleep every night. I used to go off into the toilet any time, and I would just sob ...

The PIC left the orphanage when she was about nine and spent the rest of her childhood in foster care. She said she did not disclose the abuse to her foster mother because by that time 'it was all blocked, everything was blocked'.

She has recently met a person she describes as her 'rock', who gave her the 'strength to come forward'. She said that in approaching the Inquiry, 'I want to be believed. I want some form of justice ...'

A PIC told the Inquiry her father was a violent alcoholic and 'used to lay me out with an iron cord across the room'.

The PIC believes her family placed her and one of her siblings in the orphanage on two occasions when she was about 10 or 11, because her mother had to work. The few records from the church PSO show the PIC and her sibling were twice placed at the orphanage in the early 1960s, the first placement being when the PIC was 11. The department said it could not find any childhood records of the PIC and the Inquiry did not receive any records to show that she was in State care.

The PIC recalled a life of hardship in the orphanage, cleaning and scrubbing toilets and 'being bashed and terrified and hungry'. She said nuns hit the children with sticks in the playground, and recalled eating 'nothing decent' and just bread and jam for dinner at night. 'They didn't celebrate anything,' she said. 'We were just nothing. We were just numbers in Goodwood.'

She told the Inquiry she slept in a dormitory with her sibling, but they were not allowed to get up at night to go to the toilet and were punished for wetting the bed. She said she would allow her sister to urinate in her bed in the morning to protect her from punishment: 'I used to get belted every day'. When they wet the bed, the nuns would put the wet bedclothes over their heads and make them walk around.

The PIC said that during her first stay in the orphanage a 'horrible woman' would sexually abuse her in the dormitory in the middle of the night. 'The woman used to stick her fingers inside me and masturbate while she was doing it.' The PIC said the woman may have been a nun—'she had real short hair' and she thought she wore a habit sometimes. She alleged the abuse occurred twice a week.

The PIC said she told nobody of the abuse, including her mother:

I wouldn't say anything because I was too scared they were going to get my [sibling], and they wouldn't believe me anyway. They'd never believe you, you're only a kid.

In her early teens the PIC was placed in another children's home interstate until she was 'thrown out' in her mid-teens.

The PIC thinks counselling has helped her deal with her childhood experiences in care, and said: 'I don't think I'm nothing any more but it's only in the past year or two that I haven't thought that'.

Abuse by other residents

A PIC was placed by her mother in Goodwood Orphanage in the mid 1950s on her eighth birthday; she recalled her mother making her a blue birthday cake that day, then getting out a suitcase and taking her to the orphanage. The Inquiry did not receive any records that she was placed in State care.

She believes her parents had separated when she was about four, and later her mother's boyfriend sexually abused her.

The PIC said she hated being at the orphanage, although she liked the religious side of it. There was no television, radio or 'down-time' and they were always making labels, polishing floorboards, at school or working. She remembered the negativity of the nuns, who would tell the girls they would never amount to anything.

She told the Inquiry two older girls sexually abused her at Goodwood. She said the girls were in charge of younger girls in her dormitory; they acted as supervisors for one of the nuns and bullied the younger girls.

The PIC said she stood up for herself against the two girls and used to say to herself, 'I'm not going to let them break me'. In retaliation the two girls sexually assaulted her by vaginally raping her with a broom handle. The assault caused her to bleed, but she did not go to a doctor, and did not tell anyone about the incident because she 'had no-one to go to', so she just 'shut off'.

She said that after about two years she left the orphanage, and told the Inquiry she was raped by a relative of her mother's partner; and later sexually assaulted by another of her mother's partners. She said that her mother rejected her complaints. She became pregnant when she was 17 and had the baby adopted. She said that she now has access to good counselling to help her deal with issues of rejection.

Abuse by outsiders

One woman who gave evidence was a child migrant who was placed in the orphanage after her arrival in Adelaide as an 11-year-old in the late 1940s. The PIC alleged she was sexually abused while on a holiday placement from the orphanage and again during a placement in foster care after she left Goodwood. Records received by the Inquiry from the church PSO confirm that she was a child migrant placed at the orphanage and then later in foster care. For the purposes of the Inquiry, she is considered to have been placed in State care while at the orphanage.

The PIC told the Inquiry that when she was 12 to 14 she was placed for short holidays from the orphanage with a family for whom she later worked. She alleged that a

neighbour of the family took her and another girl to the beach on one occasion and 'put his hands into my bathers'. But 'we were never able to tell anyone about this at the time'. Years later, the other girl disclosed that the neighbour 'had done the same thing to her'.

Another PIC was placed at the orphanage as a toddler in the 1950s when her parents separated and lived there until she was 13. According to PSO records, her mother placed her in the home. The Inquiry did not receive any records that she was in State care. The PIC alleged she was sexually abused while taken out of the orphanage and at a subsequent placement at The Pines.

She recalled having a number at the orphanage: 'It was marked on our clothes ... we were mostly called by that number'. She said that when she was young a nun came up behind her and 'whacked me on the backs of my legs really hard because she told me that I wasn't walking quick enough'. But she also would be 'belted' with the handle of a feather duster for walking too quickly. She alleged that two nuns 'flogged me non-stop', and others turned a blind eye.

She alleged that, aged seven or eight, she was sexually abused when taken out of the orphanage; she thinks the perpetrator may have been her father. When trying to remember the details of the abuse, all she could recall is that 'I had something stuck up inside of me'; she said she imitated the abuse on another girl, using a coat hanger: 'I actually told her, "I'm going to show you what my daddy does" ... I remember she cried and I said, "You're not allowed to cry ..."'

The PIC said she did not tell anyone about the abuse: 'He used to say, "Don't you tell anyone", so I never did.' She said: 'After what happened with my father I just sort of would block things out if anyone touched me in that way.'

The PIC said she kept running away from the orphanage, and on the last occasion, when she was about 13, she was placed at The Pines. She alleged that her father and other people sexually abused her there.

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

Another PIC said she was about six in the early 1950s when her father 'kicked' her mother out of the family home when she 'came home from work on the back of a motorbike and the whole street was talking about it'. She told the Inquiry she spent some time living with a grandparent, and then her father and stepmother, until they 'had to get out' of their Housing Trust home. She alleged she was sexually abused in a foster home and then at Goodwood Orphanage. The Inquiry did not receive any records to show that she was in State care for either placement.

The PIC said she was first put into a foster home when she was about seven or eight, but cannot recall any contact with the department at this time.

She alleged the foster father sexually abused her, penetrating her one evening after she had asked him to do up her dress in his room before they went out. She said he talked of their

... special love ... our secret ... and we couldn't tell anybody because I'd be punished, and these things we don't talk about. It's a special type of love, you know, all this crap.

She said she was abused many times after that, mostly in the shed at home. Her foster mother 'had no idea what was going on' and the PIC said she told nobody. She recalled 'the smell of it all, and then I just remember him cleaning me up ...'

The PIC told the Inquiry that as a result of the abuse she became uncontrollable and started stealing. She said she was 'punished' and her father placed her in the orphanage, where she remained until her 14th birthday. She again did not recall having any contact with the department while she was at the orphanage.

Of her introduction to the orphanage, she recalled:

People come to meet you, these nuns with their habits on that I'd never seen in my life, and all your worldly possessions that went in a suitcase were taken off you, and you never saw them again because you had to share everything.

The PIC told the Inquiry she started wetting the bed and was punished by a particular nun:

If we wet the bed, we had to be up and dressed and the bed stripped by six o'clock. If we weren't, then she would start on us with a ... wooden brush, clothes brush-type thing ... She would give us—I mean, I'm talking six good whacks ... Then we either had the sheets draped around us and paraded us on the balcony ... we had to go down and wash them.

On one occasion, she said, a nun beat her with a wooden brush on her back and the backs of her legs, injuring her so severely she had to stay in bed for three days.

The PIC said that while at the orphanage she went out on a few occasions with her former foster parents. She would go with different girls from the orphanage. The sexual abuse by the foster father allegedly continued as before; he would separate her from the other girls, getting them to '... go and buy some lollies, and "you can stay and help me do this", you know, sort of thing'.

She said she eventually discussed the situation with her friend at the orphanage, and thinks someone overheard them and reported them to a nun, 'because we were talking dirty in the bathroom'. The PIC said that when the nun approached her she revealed 'just exactly what had happened, what had been happening to me'. She claimed the nun did nothing, but assumed she must have told the mother superior.

The PIC told the Inquiry she stopped going out with the couple after this, but surmises that they continued to take out other girls. She said that more than a decade later she met her foster mother, who told her she had seen one of the orphanage girls on the foster father's lap 'and she didn't like what she thought was going on'.

She said she later disclosed the abuse to her brother, who in turn told her grandmother. And then her father was told, but his response was, 'What did you do to cause it?' Nothing appears to have occurred as a result of the disclosures.

The PIC said she left the orphanage 'looking for a life that I never had ... looking for love in all the wrong places'. At 17, she was charged with false pretences. Her SWIC records that the offence was proved but recorded without conviction in the Children's Court; she was placed in State

care for two years but released earlier on petition. The PIC told the Inquiry that she disclosed the sexual abuse at the police station. 'During all of this, they wanted my history too, and it was given to them, plus the sexual abuse, so they knew then.'

She told the Inquiry the police did nothing, although she said a policewoman later took her 'under her wing'.

The Inquiry received minimal documentation on the PIC from the church PSO and only her SWIC from the department: none records her allegations. The documentation received from the South Australian Police also has no record of the allegations.

The PIC told the Inquiry: 'I guess the whole thing has affected my life, because I'm not so trusting. I'm not so trusting.'

Another PIC was placed in the orphanage by her family with her sibling in the mid 1950s, just after her 12th birthday. Her parents had separated when she was a baby and her father and extended family were unable to care for the children. She was discharged from the orphanage at 17. The church PSO provided the few records concerning the PIC; the department said it could not find any. The Inquiry did not receive any records placing the girl in State care.

The PIC told the Inquiry that on her first day at the orphanage the girls had to line up their shoes and put their hands down. A nun smacked every girl on the palm with the spine of a feather duster because:

Our shoes weren't straight. We hadn't put our shoes straight and there were other shoes that were crooked and, you know, they weren't all lined up evenly.

She said she 'hated it from then on' and felt she could not talk to anyone in authority, 'because we were too scared. We were terrified of the nuns,' although she says there were 'some nice ones'.

She recalled being found with a comic book and, as a result, being 'belted' with the back of a brush

... until my hands were just red raw. I didn't cry first off ... and I think because I didn't cry she kept

doing it until I did cry. That's probably why I got more.

She had been doing well at school, but after arriving at the orphanage 'I just thought I seemed to go backward ... I couldn't concentrate'.

The PIC told the Inquiry that on one occasion when she was 15 or 16, she spent her holiday with a woman who used to visit the orphanage and was a friend of one of the nuns. She would give the girls lollies: '... I thought she was a nice lady. I think everybody did ...' The PIC reflected that if

Someone shows a bit of attention and sort of gives you something, you'd think that was really great because you never got love, you never got nothing —you know, unless you were told off from the nuns.

The PIC said that at the woman's house, they shared a room containing two single beds. She alleged that the woman woke her one night, told her to take off her pyjamas and said something like, 'I just want to show you and check just to see—I just want to show you how your mother would love you'.

The PIC alleged the woman kissed her on the lips and penetrated her. She told her to stop but the woman assured her, 'I'm not going to hurt you. I'm just checking.' The woman eventually stopped, and told the PIC she was not to say anything about the incident.

The PIC cannot remember what happened after that, except:

I just lied there for a while. I think I was a bit scared to go back to sleep. I was pretty much awake, I think, and thinking, 'What's she doing? Why is she doing this to me?' I didn't understand anything at all at that time.

The PIC told the Inquiry that the next day, it was 'as though nothing had happened'. She did not disclose the abuse to the nuns back at the orphanage because 'I was too scared because she was a friend of [a nun] and I felt they're not going to believe me anyway ...'

She said she mentioned the incident to her sibling, who then contacted the nuns. When the nuns talked with her,

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

I sort of said, 'No, it's all right', because I was too scared to say actually something did happen—they're not going to believe me anyway because it's [a nun's] friend and they'd believe her before me. After that I wasn't allowed to see her, talk to her or anything.

Afterwards, the PIC said, 'we didn't see much of her. We didn't see her around much at all. So whether something was done I'm not sure'.

The church records do not contain any evidence relating to the allegations or her sibling's alleged disclosure.

Convent of the Good Shepherd (The Pines), Catholic Church, 1941–74

History

In July 1942 the Catholic Archbishop of Adelaide proposed an eight hectare Plympton property known as The Pines as the location for a new reformatory to be run by the Sisters of the Good Shepherd.⁹ This replaced the Catholic Girls' Reformatory at Parkside, which had been operated by the Sisters of St Joseph. By December 1942, The Pines, formally named the Convent of the Good Shepherd¹⁰, was proclaimed as a private reformatory school for girls, enabling it to receive children in State care. Most girls were placed at the home after being convicted of criminal offences or found by a court to be uncontrollable or neglected. The home also took in girls placed privately. The government paid a weekly subsidy for each State child.¹¹

The Pines was required to follow regulations and keep records on the State children in its care. A letter from the secretary of the Children's Welfare and Public Relief Board

(CWPRB) to the matron in January 1943 outlined her responsibilities, which included advising the board of a girl's illness, absconding and 'any untoward happening' so the board could fulfil its duty as guardian.¹²

The CWPRB annual report in 1944 stated that:

*Girls committed to this Home are accommodated in good wholesome surroundings, and keen interest is taken in their welfare by the Matron and staff. During the weekdays the girls are fully occupied with various phases of laundry work, and their leisure hours are carefully provided for by means of concerts and other features.*¹³

Three sisters initially ran the home and five more joined the staff as the number of girls increased.¹⁴ In 1945 the CWPRB was concerned about 'overcrowding' and requested that 'steps be taken to relieve the congestion'.¹⁵

In 1948 departmental probation officers began monthly visits to The Pines.¹⁶ Their reports reveal an institution that limited girls' contact with the outside world. While girls at the government institution Vaughan House were allowed 'trust' outings, the matron at The Pines refused to introduce such a system.¹⁷ She also refused to allow girls any contact, even by letter, with male friends.¹⁸ A probation officer was also concerned that girls were discouraged from discussing plans or hopes for the future. As a result of these reports, the archbishop agreed that limited trust outings in the company of probation officers would be introduced.¹⁹

In the 1950s, the CWPRB became concerned with aspects of care in the home, including staff refusal to seek medical treatment for residents, refusal to allow residents to have

⁹ CWPRB annual report 1943, p. 4; SRSA GRG 29/124 CWPRB minutes, vol. 13, 2 July 1942.

¹⁰ Also known as the Home of the Good Shepherd.

¹¹ SRSA GRG 29/124 CWPRB minutes, vol. 13, 24 Dec. 1942.

¹² SRSA GRG 29/6/1942/328, CWPRB secretary to matron, 'Convent of the Good Shepherd, The Pines, Plympton, to be a reformatory school for girls of the Roman Catholic religion', 12 Jan. 1943.

¹³ FYOW, citing CWPRB annual report 1944.

¹⁴ FYOW, s. 2, p. 8.

¹⁵ SRSA GRG 29/6/1942/328, CWPRB acting chairman to matron, 17 May 1945.

¹⁶ *ibid.*, CWPRB chairman to various recipients, 'The Pines, Plympton, to be a reformatory school for girls of the Roman Catholic religion', 16 Dec. 1948.

¹⁷ *ibid.*, memo CWPRB acting chairman to CWPRB, 29 May 1944.

¹⁸ *ibid.*, senior probation officer to CWPRB chairman, 8 Apr. 1949.

¹⁹ *ibid.*, memorandum, CWPRB secretary, 26 Oct. 1949.

contact with their families, and the 'brief and sketchy' reports provided to the department.²⁰ A probation officer was asked to provide a summary of incidents to be sent to the archbishop for his information.²¹ The CWPRB expressed its concerns to the archbishop's representative in July 1956.

In September 1956 the matron resigned. The new matron introduced changes—girls were to be divided into four family groups of 12–15, each cared for by a nun as housemother, with its own dormitory and recreation and dining areas. New buildings were added to provide more facilities for recreation and training. In this era, older girls still worked in the laundry, which had been established in 1942 to provide an income for the home.²²

In early 1961 the matron telephoned the department to say there was no vacant accommodation at The Pines. Girls were 'sleeping on the veranda, on the floor, and a girl admitted privately had to be placed temporarily in a storeroom'.²³ By 1965 there were 83 girls in the home, of whom about a third were State children.²⁴

The Pines remained a 'private training centre' for Catholic girls after the passing of the *Community Welfare Act 1972*. Research conducted in 1972 revealed that 90 per cent of girls had been referred either by the Women Police Branch or the Department for Community Welfare. Only a few of the girls were placed under court orders; the focus was on providing a home and training for 'delinquent' teenage girls who were accommodated in three semi-independent living units.²⁵

In 1973, 39 per cent of the girls at The Pines were under the care and control of the Minister. However, of the remaining privately placed girls, 65 per cent 'were referred by or in consultation with the Department for Community Welfare'.²⁶ The department provided welfare workers for girls placed under court orders and those referred by the department.²⁷ Interviews conducted with girls in 1972 showed the majority were not involved or consulted about their placement and regarded it as 'punishment'.²⁸ From 1974 all referrals to The Pines were made through the Catholic Family Welfare Bureau in an attempt to increase family involvement in the decision to place a girl at the home.²⁹

In the same decade, a research paper identified the group mother—the sister in charge of a group of 10 to 12 girls—as the most significant figure in the girls' treatment:

*On the assumption that these girls usually have a poor self image because of previous experiences of failure or rejection, the group mother/girl relationship often becomes the principal means of awakening or restoring a girl's sense of self-worth.*³⁰

In 11 November 1974, a senior church official informed the archbishop that the church was 'presently unable to offer residential care for teenage girls at The Pines'.³¹ The home closed as a residential care facility at the end of 1974 and the Good Shepherd sisters moved into other aspects of child care.³²

²⁰ *ibid.*, CWPRB secretary to matron, 17 July 1956.

²¹ *ibid.*, outline of girls and incidents, July 1956.

²² Professional Standards Office Records Service, Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide (PSORS CAA), Box 620, The Pines, Plympton—Good Shepherd Sisters: 1973–1981, paper 'South Australia historical background of the period under consideration and purpose of the Good Shepherd order in establishing and running The Pines'.

²³ SRSA GRG 29/6/1942/328, CWPRB chairman memo, 3 Mar. 1961.

²⁴ CWPRB annual report 1965, p. 14, records that 24 departmental children were in the home in 1964–65.

²⁵ PSORS, CAA, Box 620, Summary of research paper on rationale behind placement at The Pines attached to letter dated 11 Mar. 1972.

²⁶ *ibid.*, Paper titled The Pines, 20 Oct. 1973.

²⁷ *ibid.*

²⁸ *ibid.*, Summary of research paper, 11 Mar. 1972.

²⁹ *ibid.*, SA historical background of the period under consideration.

³⁰ *ibid.*

³¹ *ibid.*, provincial superior to archbishop, 11 Nov. 1974.

³² *ibid.*, memo to archbishop, 9 Feb. 1977.

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

Allegations of sexual abuse

Four women gave evidence to the Inquiry regarding sexual abuse at The Pines in the 1950s and 60s. Three had been placed in State care by a court for being neglected, destitute or for a criminal offence; the fourth was placed at The Pines by her mother. The sexual abuse included indecent assault, unlawful sexual intercourse and rape, allegedly perpetrated by staff, other residents and outsiders.

Abuse by multiple perpetrators

A PIC born in Adelaide in the late 1940s was placed in care by her mother when she was about two. The Inquiry received evidence of some departmental involvement in maintenance payments but no records to show that she was in State care. The PIC alleged she was sexually abused at Goodwood Orphanage and later The Pines, where she was transferred when aged about 13.

An admission and discharge register from the church PSO shows that the PIC was placed at The Pines after Goodwood, but the Inquiry has not received any records specifically relating to her time there.

The PIC alleged another girl at The Pines sexually abused her, which led to her absconding and suffering further sexual abuse by her father.

I know there is a girl who molested me there once and I remember running away from that and then I had—I can't recall the age when my father come back, but he—I went to go for visits with him and he used to drink and he molested me, but I didn't say anything and then one day I just cracked and threw these chairs around but I never told what happened.

The PIC told the Inquiry that when she taken back to The Pines she was placed in a detention room called a 'kuji'. She also told the Inquiry she was pack-raped on more than one occasion in the kuji but the circumstances and details of the perpetrators is unclear.

The PIC told the Inquiry she suffered further sexual abuse

after leaving care, and had an abusive marriage. She said her motivation in giving evidence was 'so that nothing ever happens to any children again'.

Abuse by staff and other residents

A woman told the Inquiry she was physically and sexually abused by family members before being placed in State care in the mid 1960s, when she was 13. After being found by a court to be neglected, she was placed at Seaforth Home and later The Pines. She alleged she was sexually abused in both homes.

The PIC was transferred to The Pines in the late 1960s at the age of 14, and said she lived there for three years. She alleged she was sexually abused by other residents, who penetrated her with objects and woke her during the night to 'touch and play with my breasts, and they'd take us—because they didn't wake anybody else up—they'd take us into the bathroom'.

The PIC also alleged she was sexually abused by a priest at The Pines:

He touched me on the breast and vagina ... I felt guilt because I felt like I was making him sin because I was allowing him to do it ... It was me, I wasn't good, so I was evil.

She told the Inquiry the priest would say 'just that it would be all right, that he just needed relief'. She said she told a nun about the abuse by the other girls and was 'pretty sure' she mentioned the incident with the priest, but 'she said that that wouldn't happen, the priest wouldn't do those kind of things, and she wouldn't listen to me'.

The Inquiry has received records from the Catholic Church and the department that relate to the PIC's time in State care but do not include any allegations of sexual abuse.

The PIC said she believes the sexual abuse has had a huge impact on her life:

... it haunted me right through my life. It's been a big part ... everywhere I seemed to go I'd been abused, but when I said anything they didn't believe it had happened, and so in the end I think I just gave up.

Abuse by outsiders

A PIC was placed in State care in the early 1960s as a nine-year-old after a court found her to be destitute. She had lived at St Joseph's Orphanage from the age of six and was later placed with her family before being placed at The Pines. She alleged sexual abuse in both of these earlier placements and at The Pines, and later in foster care after her release from The Pines.

She was 13 when placed at The Pines after she was charged with larceny. The PIC told the Inquiry she went to school at The Pines but was punished for her classroom behaviour and sent to work in the laundry. She said she was treated like 'slave labour' and also described punishments such as being locked in bathrooms and under stairs.

The PIC absconded from The Pines regularly and said she sometimes hid in the roof cavity in her family's home, where her siblings would sneak food to her. On one occasion she travelled interstate and was sexually abused in a regional town: 'I was gang-raped by three, pulled into a car'. The PIC told the Inquiry the incident was reported to police. She was placed temporarily in a house for adopted children and soon after was returned to The Pines. Her SWIC notes that she had absconded and was 'working in [the town]'.

The PIC said she had been unhappy at The Pines and wanted to leave because she was made to work and denied an education. She told a staff member that she would commit suicide 'so they ended up getting me a job'. Her SWIC reported that 'girl is not conforming and is a real menace' at the home.

The PIC told the Inquiry her time in care delayed her development and she took many years to recover: 'You've got no direction and I had no direction until I was 31, when I started to self-improve'.

Another PIC who alleged sexual abuse while placed at The Pines told the Inquiry that her mother died when she was eight. She left school after Grade 7 and began working; not long after this her father decided to place her at The Pines:

My father, on the advice of our local Catholic priest, [name], arranged for me to go to a finishing school. My father told me that I would like it there. I would be taught sewing, cooking and be turned into a proper young lady ... My father paid those nuns for my board and keep, but I was put to work and only work.

Documents received from the Catholic Church confirm the PIC's father placed her at The Pines when she was 14. She said she was so unhappy there that she ran away with a group of girls, and that one girl stole some property while they were on the run. She said she and other girls were charged with larceny and as a result she was placed in State care. Her SWIC shows she was charged with larceny at 15, committed by a court into State care and placed at The Pines until she turned 18.

The PIC described the court hearing:

I also tried to explain to the judge that my dad could not speak or read English, and had he known what was happening that day he would have been there for me. The judge said, 'It is no excuse for him not to be here. It seems to me your parents don't care about you. This leaves me no choice but to send you back to The Pines as a ward of the State until the age of 18.'

She said she found her treatment by the justice system

... unbelievable. We were taken to the police station, fingerprinted, mug shots taken, and branded like common criminals. I was just 13 and did not commit any crime ...

The PIC told the Inquiry she continued to run away from The Pines and seriously injured herself once when she 'jumped out of a two-storey building'. She said she was sent to Vaughan House as punishment for running away.

She alleged she was sexually abused on an outing while still under a placement order at The Pines. She said she was about 17, had met a boy at a dance and on the way home he stopped his car to have a cigarette and then sexually abused her:

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

Then he started kissing me, and before I knew it I was on the floor being raped against my will. I was a virgin. I became pregnant to this lad. I kept it quiet from the welfare department because they would have taken my baby from me and kept me as a ward of the State until I was 21, so I told no-one. I got married to someone that I didn't love. I was trapped.

She claims to have suffered emotionally as a result of the abuse and generally from her time at The Pines:

I have nightmares ... I suffer from claustrophobia. I have a degenerative bone disease due to never getting proper food, milk, cheese. I have chronic arthritis, tinnitus, hearing loss, and a heart condition.

Salvation Army Boys Home (Eden Park), 1900–82

History

From 1900–82, Eden Park—the name by which the Salvation Army Boys Home at Mount Barker was commonly known—provided care for the boys deemed the most vulnerable in society. Boys at Eden Park were commonly referred to in historical records as ‘uncontrollable’, ‘sub-normal’ or ‘severely emotionally disturbed’.

The home was proclaimed as a private institution that could receive State children in December 1900,³³ when it was known as the Boys Probationary School. The Salvation Army had offered to take over the government’s Boys Reformatory, but the State Children’s Council (SCC) preferred that the Army take responsibility for two new ‘probationary’ institutions for boys and girls. These were to house children who the council believed required ‘discipline’ and ‘training’ such as habitual truants. The department was at different times closely involved in utilising, supervising, licensing, funding and advising

on Eden Park’s development throughout the period it operated.

Eden Park was a farm property of about 53 hectares in the Adelaide Hills near Wistow. The boys’ dormitories and officers’ accommodation were in the main building, a 17-room stone mansion. Outbuildings provided a school and recreation rooms as well as punishment cells. After it was proclaimed, the Boys Probationary School at Mount Barker was run by the Salvation Army and staffed by its officers. However, the institution was ‘absolutely under the control of the Council’ and subject to the same ‘supervision and authority of the secretary’ as the government’s own industrial school and reformatories.³⁴

The property was a working farm, but only limited agricultural training was provided to residents. Generally, boys performed tasks such as milking, wood chopping and other general work. The CWPRB transferred boys from the Industrial School to Mount Barker for ‘bad’ conduct; boys at the Reformatory who displayed ‘good’ conduct could also be transferred there. The home took in children placed privately by their parents or referred by other non-government agencies.³⁵ Members of the CWPRB inspected the institution regularly and, in turn, the Salvation Army reported regularly to the board.³⁶

The probationary school operated in this way until it was abolished as a private institution for the reception of children in State care in January 1945.³⁷ The separation between the government and the institution occurred as a result of allegations of sexual abuse at the home during 1940 and 1941.

The management style and culture of the home, as well as some individuals and particular practices, became the subject of complaints and inquiries. Investigations revealed an ongoing reliance on physical punishment at the home and a culture of older boys taking advantage of younger boys.

³³ *State Children Act 1895* defines a private institution as ‘an institution or establishment for the detention, maintenance, reformation, training, employment of destitute or neglected children, established and maintained by private persons’. Under section 22 ‘The Governor, on the recommendation of the Council, may proclaim any private institution as an institution for the reception, detention, maintenance, education, employment and training of State children; and thereafter such institution, until abolished as by this Act provided, shall be under the supervision of the Council’.

³⁴ SCC annual report 1901, p. 4.

³⁵ CWPRB annual report 1940, p. 10.

³⁶ See entries in CWPRB minutes for confirmation of this.

³⁷ SRSA GRG 29/6/1941/263, CWPRB acting chairman to the chief secretary, 10 Jan. 1945; draft of extract for *The Government Gazette*, 25 Jan. 1945, p. 85.

The first incident of ‘indecent conduct’ at Eden Park appearing in CWPRB records occurred in September 1940 and involved a staff member and three boys. Given the ‘gravity of the offences’, the staff member was arrested, tried and jailed, and the boys were committed to the reformatory at Magill.³⁸ Two months later the CWPRB referred to another incident and ‘urged’ the probationary school superintendent to ‘exercise such supervision’ as to ensure similar incidents could not occur.³⁹

However, six months later, police arrested another employee of the home for ‘acts of gross indecency’.⁴⁰ The CWPRB recorded its concern at ‘action pending against several boys for sexual offences’, and recommended that ‘serious consideration ought to be given to the propriety of leaving the boys in the institution at present’.⁴¹ The CWPRB secretary reported that ‘the moral tone of the home is such that I feel convinced steps should be taken to remove the present wards of the department from that environment’.⁴²

In January 1941, the Salvation Army replaced Eden Park’s entire male staff, including the superintendent. It ‘assured the department that steps would be taken to see there was no repetition of the wrong practices’.⁴³ In August the CWPRB met representatives of the Salvation Army to enquire into the ‘cases of sodomy and indecent conduct’ at the school. The board was concerned that the most recent perpetrator had been able to take ‘advantage of the opportunities provided to him to indulge in acts of the most revolting indecency’. The perpetrator had himself reported

homosexual practices to the officer in charge of the home, but no action had been taken.⁴⁴ The CWPRB resolved that, while ‘aware of the good work done in the past years at the Boys Probationary School’ it would recommend the institution be closed.⁴⁵ All State children were removed between September and November 1941,⁴⁶ however Eden Park did not have its licence removed until January 1945.⁴⁷ Eden Park continued to care for children placed privately.

In 1950 the institution again came under the supervision of the department. The department visited and inspected Eden Park after amendments to sections 188 and 189 of the *Maintenance Act 1926–1937*, which provided that all children under seven in ‘benevolent institutions’ were to be visited and thereby supervised by the CWPRB.⁴⁸ Departmental officers inspected Eden Park about every four months, recording notes on living conditions and staffing arrangements.⁴⁹ The CWPRB secretary advised the department’s inspector:

*Try not to embarrass the superintendent and if possible work in harmony with him. Anything that may be wrong will be dealt with by this department and not by you.*⁵⁰

Inspectors’ reports from the 1950s describe the home as ‘pleasing’ and ‘well run’ and the boys as ‘happy’. However, the home’s night supervision was described as ‘passive’.⁵¹ In 1959, after reports of a ‘dark punishment room’ surfaced, the CWPRB requested the inspector to undertake ‘discreet inquiries about the segregation room

³⁸ SRSA GRG 29/124, vol. 13, CWPRB minutes, (minute 713), 3 Oct. 1940; GRG 29/6/1941/263, CWPRB chairman to under-secretary, 24 July 1941, in 1. ‘Boys Probationary School, Mount Barker report on various inmates’, 2. ‘Reqg. additional staff at Industrial School and Boys Reformatory, Magill’.

³⁹ SRSA GRG 29/124, vol. 13, CWPRB minutes, (minute 720), 21 Nov. 1940.

⁴⁰ SRSA GRG 29/6/1941/263, CWPRB chairman, to under-secretary, 24 July 1941.

⁴¹ SRSA GRG 29/124, vol. 13, CWPRB minutes, (minute 751), 17 July 1941.

⁴² SRSA GRG 29/6/1941/263, 1. ‘Report on various inmates’, 2. ‘Reqg. additional staff’.

⁴³ *ibid.*, 1. ‘Report on various inmates’.

⁴⁴ *ibid.*, Crown Solicitor to Attorney-General, 6 Aug. 1941, in 1. ‘Report on various inmates’.

⁴⁵ SRSA GRG 29/124, vol. 13, CWPRB minutes special meeting, (minute 755), 7 Aug. 1941.

⁴⁶ *ibid.*, (minute 764), 2 Oct. 1941 and (minute 771), 20 Nov. 1941.

⁴⁷ See documents on file SRSA GRG 29/6/1941/263 and CWPRB minutes, 21 Aug. 1941 and 11 Jan. 1945.

⁴⁸ *Maintenance Act Amendment Act 1950*, s. 189.

⁴⁹ SRSA GRG29/6/1954/4, Inspection reports on ‘Visitation by Inspectors of Salvation Army Boy’s Home Mt Barker’.

⁵⁰ *ibid.*, CWPRB secretary to Miss DM Bannear, 4 Mar. 1954.

⁵¹ *ibid.*, see various reports, Mar. & July 1954 and Aug. & Dec. 1958.

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

and for how long children are placed in it'.⁵² The welfare officer discussed 'behaviour problems' with the superintendent, but was 'unable to obtain any direct admission from the superintendent that boys are locked in a dark, dingy room'.⁵³ It appears from records that the matter was not pursued.

In 1961 a departmental probation officer reported on the home in response to a spate of absconding. After inspecting the home and consulting with the superintendent, the officer concluded that while Eden Park suffered overcrowding and lack of supervision, the institution was 'sound for any boy who would not require any great or persistent supervision'.⁵⁴

In 1963 'allegations of misconduct of a serious nature towards boys at this home' were again raised. A departmental supervisor of institutions reported that a female domestic assistant had been

*... disturbed and distressed at night by sudden violent screams from boys in their dormitories. In the morning she has found, it is alleged, that some boys' sheets are blood-stained. The portions of the sheeting so stained, she claims, strongly suggested sexual malpractices towards some of the boys.*⁵⁵

The assistant had complained to 'those in charge' but had been told boys were 'only having nightmares'. The staff assistant suspected that 'some staff member could be interfering with the boys' or that 'boys of perverse habits' were responsible. The CWPRB passed the information to the police, but police inquiries were 'inconclusive' and 'no further action was taken'.⁵⁶

From 1965, with the proclamation of the Social Welfare Act, Eden Park was required to apply for a licence because

it accommodated more than five children under 12.⁵⁷ Licensing also made the home subject to regulations under the new Act.⁵⁸ A 1968 report commented that the superintendent was 'a little too authoritarian in his attitude toward the boys in the home'. However the officer also noted that on other visits he had found 'the boys have enjoyed warm relationships with the members of the staff they have direct contact with'.⁵⁹

In 1970 the department became aware that a former Eden Park staff member had approached solicitors because he was 'gravely concerned about some aspects of the home'. The allegations concerned a small 'lock-up room' with no light or windows that was used for punishment, and a staff member who regularly carried a leather strap he 'used as a matter of routine on the children'.⁶⁰ A field officer investigated and found the allegations to be 'substantiated' although 'exaggerated'. The assistant senior welfare officer highlighted the 'unsatisfactory' selection of staff and recommended that the home undergo 'careful reassessment and reorganisation'.⁶¹ The Minister for Social Welfare, in his reply to the solicitors who had passed on the concerns, wrote:

*I can assure you and your client that, despite the fact that the children at the home are not under the control of the Minister, every care will be taken to ensure and protect their welfare.*⁶²

After the passing of the *Community Welfare Act 1972* licensing requirements for children's homes became more rigorous. Positive changes were noted in inspections of Eden Park, attributed to increased funding and the retirement of the long-term superintendent, who had been described as old-fashioned and inflexible.⁶³

⁵² *ibid.*, memo, 18 Sep. 1959.

⁵³ *ibid.*, report from welfare officer MC Wilson, 20 Aug. 1959.

⁵⁴ *ibid.*, report from probation officer attached to memo, 3 Oct. 1961.

⁵⁵ *ibid.*, supervisor of institutions to CWPRB secretary, 13 July 1963.

⁵⁶ *ibid.*, handwritten note on supervisor of institutions to CWPRB secretary, 13 July 1963 & CWPRB chairman to Salvation Army, 17 Sep. 1963.

⁵⁷ See *Maintenance Act Amendment Act 1965*, s. 162(a).

⁵⁸ Regulations under the Social Welfare Act 1926–1965.

⁵⁹ SRSA GRS 4164, file 14/6/1, Eden Park Boys Home (Salvation Army) Mt Barker (Wistow), welfare officer to assistant senior welfare officer, 18 Apr. 1968.

⁶⁰ SRSA GRG 29/6/1954/4, Johnson & Johnson solicitors to Minister for Social Welfare, 19 May 1970.

⁶¹ *ibid.*, assistant senior welfare officer to deputy director Social Welfare, May 1970.

⁶² *ibid.*, Minister of Social Welfare to Johnson & Johnson, 26 June 1970.

⁶³ SRSA GRS 4164, file 14/6/1, inspection report, 2 July 1970.

In the later 1970s, with the closure of many large congregate-style institutions, accommodation at Eden Park was restructured to provide care for boys in smaller units. By 1976, the home had been divided into three units of 12 boys each—Aroona, Barmera and Coorong—each with its own bathroom and lounge facilities. A residential care worker supervised each unit.⁶⁴ Staff were advised that:

*Many boys coming into the home have been exposed to some grave moral behaviour and therefore the [residential care worker] should be alert to new boys coming into the home, listening to boys' conversation, checking their language, and gestures, and also to be alert to boys ganging up for bullying or sexual behaviour.*⁶⁵

In 1981 the department observed continuing deficiencies at Eden Park. They included the home's physical isolation, which restricted children's access to family and the community and the fact that staff methods and the overall management style were 'geared to discipline and efficiency' rather than the needs of each child. Many of the boys regarded admission to the home as 'a punishment for bad behaviour' and, because most children were referred to the home by outside agencies, it had largely become 'a dumping ground for problem children'. In particular, it was reported that some older boys were unmanageable and had 'a destructive influence on more vulnerable boys'.⁶⁶

In May 1982 the department conducted a review of Eden Park. After inspecting the institution and interviewing Salvation Army authorities, the inspection team concluded that the program at Eden Park was 'highly unsatisfactory'.⁶⁷ Concerns regarding parental access and staff quality were raised. One month after this report was written, the social worker at Eden Park informed the Eden Park Special School principal of her suspicion that three

boys had been 'victims of sexual abuse'.⁶⁸ The principal reported this to the Eden Park superintendent and the incident was reported to the department. The boys concerned were placed elsewhere and the department questioned Salvation Army authorities about supervision in the dormitories at night. It was found that once residents were settled there was 'no adult in the immediate vicinity of the dormitories'.⁶⁹

Further allegations were made regarding the use of 'punitive measures' for disciplining boys at the home in late 1981.⁷⁰ As a result, the department outlined 'major concerns' with Eden Park to its superintendent. These included the 'punitive and controlling philosophy of care' and 'limited supervision at night'. The department stated that it

*... considered that the overall philosophy of care is based on a staff philosophy that reflects emphasis on control and punishment rather than more modern and appropriate styles of managing difficult children.*⁷¹

In the same month the Salvation Army advised the department that it intended to close Eden Park. It stated that there was 'no present need for this service' and that 'there is a change in the pattern of child-care which we must recognise'.⁷² The home was closed on 31 December 1982.

Allegations of sexual abuse

The Inquiry received evidence from 18 PICs who alleged sexual abuse at Eden Park. The allegations spanned 1940 to 1982; some concerned repeated abuse by the same perpetrator, while others were single instances.

The allegations ranged from gratifying a prurient interest (for example, the humiliating practice of making boys stand

⁶⁴ Salvation Army Territorial Archives & Museum, Melbourne, Mt Barker Boys Home (Eden Park) Sth Aust., 'The Eden Park Boys Home Mt Barker' and 'Eden Park Home for Boys – Residential Childcare Workers Brief', undated.

⁶⁵ Residential Childcare Workers Brief, undated.

⁶⁶ SRSA GRS 4164, file 14/6/1, RCCAC secretary to deputy director general, 29 Sep. 1981.

⁶⁷ *ibid.*, Dept of Social Security, Review of operations, subsidies section, 4 May 1982.

⁶⁸ *ibid.*, Suspected rape: report on action taken by Eden Park Special School.

⁶⁹ SRSA GRS 4164, file 14/6/1, RCCAC secretary to director Central Northern Region, 17 Aug. 1982.

⁷⁰ *ibid.*, RCCAC secretary to director general, 19 Oct. 1982.

⁷¹ *ibid.*, Residential and Foster Care assistant supervisor to Eden Park superintendent, 17 Nov. 1982.

⁷² *ibid.*, Salvation Army Territorial Social Services secretary to director general, 26 Nov. 1982.

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

naked as a punishment) to fondling and kissing, forced oral sex and anal rape.

Most allegations were against staff members and some were against other boys at the home. In two cases, the alleged perpetrators were from outside the home and in one case the perpetrator is unidentified.

Of the 18 PICs, five were placed in State care by a court or under an administrative order by the department. The remainder were placed by parents, by referral from government or non-government agencies, or by unknown sources without an order placing them in State care.

Their evidence of family life before going into care was typified by problems including fighting parents, broken marriages, alcoholism, domestic violence and sometimes sexual abuse. One PIC recalled:

It all changed on a rainy night somewhere in the Adelaide Hills ... our mother and father were in the front of the car yelling and arguing. And then my mother got out of the car and I never seen or heard her again.

Some of the PICs who alleged they were sexually abused at Eden Park said they had been given the impression before their arrival that it would be a camp-like farm environment. Most said they had little idea what to expect.

One PIC recounted the moment when he was told of the decision to send him to the home.

The conversation was along the lines, 'Your father and I, we've decided to go travelling around Australia and as you're the last one home, that causes a problem, so we've arranged for you to go to a lovely place in the country where you can live there, you know, there's cows and there is this, that and everything else'.

Most of the PICs said life at Eden Park was harsh, regimented and often violent. One PIC described it as a scary place for a young child. Another said daily activities were 'routine, strict, and almost like ... a jail sort of thing, but for kids'. A third PIC described the home as 'like a

concentration camp with the worst kinds of punishments' and remembers 'crying for days and days just wanting to be out of that place'.

PICs gave evidence that they were required to perform hard physical work on the rural property adjoining the home, in addition to going to school. One PIC recalled his difficulty in coping with both the physical and schoolwork: 'I don't think I learned anything because I was milking cows seven days a week plus whatever chores I had to do'.

All 18 PICs spoke of boys being physically punished by staff, with one describing physical punishments by one officer:

He used to bash us all bad. He'd lose control and start sweating and just bash you until you just dropped on the ground and cowered ... they had, like, a round, batony-type thing that they used to carry in their pocket.

Another PIC recalled his initial impressions of Eden Park:

As we drove up the driveway we got our first shock of things to come. I was nine, nearly 10, and as I looked out to the yard I saw two Salvation Army officers in full uniform chasing an older boy around a yard. At first I thought it was a game until I realised they were beating him with bell-shaped batons and strapping him when he slowed or stumbled ... my heart went in my mouth and I thought, 'Where in God's name are we?'

Abuse by multiple perpetrators

A PIC who lived with his mother after his parents separated was aged 10 when placed in State care during the 1940s after he truanted from school and committed offences. He was soon transferred to Eden Park. He had previously lived at the Salvation Army Boys Home at Kent Town, where he also alleged he was sexually abused—although not in State care at that time, he was known to the department.

Department records show the PIC was at Eden Park for eight months before being transferred for 'misconduct'.

He alleged three people sexually abused him there. He recalled that two men in their 20s lived at the home in separate quarters and, as part of the boys' punishment, the superintendent 'would deliberately put you in there so that they could carry on with you'. The PIC said he was put in the room with these men on two occasions and one of them raped him: 'I started, you know, singing out'. He reported the incident to his parent, who informed his welfare worker, 'but nothing happened, once again'.

The PIC also alleged he was sexually abused by the wife of one senior staff member: 'She'd play around with me and get me into bed and get on top of me and I was terrified'. He had been frightened that the woman's husband would find out and harm him.

The PIC also gave evidence that an older boy regularly attempted to get into bed with him and 'do things'. He said that as a result of the instances of sexual abuse he absconded from the home several times.

The department's file for this PIC relates to his placements and transfers and does not record any complaint of abuse. No records have been received from the Salvation Army in relation to him.

One PIC born in the early 1950s alleged multiple incidents of sexual abuse by staff members, other resident boys and unidentified visitors to the home.

Records show the PIC was placed in State care by a court in the early 1960s for attempted larceny subsequent to his time at Eden Park. The only record received from the department is a SWIC relating to placements in the early 1960s. There were no records to show that he was in State care during his time at Eden Park in the 1950s. The Salvation Army informed the Inquiry it has been unable to locate any record of him.

The PIC told the inquiry he was placed at Eden Park when he was about five and remained there for seven years. He alleged that when he was about 10 he was sexually abused and anally raped by a staff member on several occasions:

I used to give him oral sex and then he would blow all over me and urinate all over me. I used to stink. Nobody would come near me because of what he used to do to me.

He said the staff member beat him, made him carry a heavy ball and chain and also

... used to come and just turn your custard upside down and take the plate away and we had to eat it off the table, or he'd put it on the floor and make you get on your hands and knees to eat it off the floor.

The same man continued to abuse him over a long period and on one occasion, in 'the lock-up' at the home: 'He chained me, put padlocks to me, took me to the saw bench, chained me up over the saw bench, and raped me'.

The PIC alleged he was sexually abused by a second staff member, who forced him to masturbate him and then urinated on him.

He also alleged two unknown men raped him when visiting the home one Christmas. The men took him to the hay shed, where 'they tied me up and raped me over the barrel, over the bales of hay'.

The PIC also told the Inquiry that on separate occasions three older boys at Eden Park forced him to masturbate them.

He said he told his father about some of the sexual abuse and that his father confronted the officer in charge of the home, but nothing was done. The only record received from the department was the PIC's SWIC; no records have been received from the Salvation Army. In the absence of such records the Inquiry could not verify that a complaint was made, whether it was recorded or what, if anything, was the response.

Following his time in State care the PIC has spent time living on the streets and been in jail. He told the Inquiry the sexual abuse has affected his marriage: 'I was too wild, still am. Mentally I'm—I can't hack marriage. I just can't. I just can't.'

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

A PIC alleged sexual abuse at Eden Park in the mid 1970s when he was about 10. He told the Inquiry he was sexually and physically abused by his father before going into care. Records indicate the PIC was placed at Eden Park as a result of a Child Guidance Clinic referral. The Inquiry did not receive any records to show that he was in State care at this home.

The PIC gave evidence of harsh conditions at Eden Park, including physical and humiliating punishments. He said he began wetting his bed, was placed in a special dormitory for bed-wetters and faced further punishments, including ‘the strap, standing outside all night, getting ... all your hair cut off, getting the cane’. He recalled that on one occasion his head was shaved in front of all the other boys, who were told the punishment was ‘because I was a dirty little piggy that wet my bed and this is what happens to dirty little piggies’.

He said the first instance of sexual abuse was at a camp arranged and managed by the staff at Eden Park. A staff member sexually assaulted him in a tent. He pulled down the PIC’s pants and performed oral sex on him, then told him: ‘That’s how I want you to do it to me’. The PIC said he then tried to do it to the staff member but twice was told that ‘I done it wrong’. The staff member said he was going to punish him. The PIC said the man then took him down to the river and anally raped him. ‘He told me if I did tell anyone, that I’d be fucked up and I’d disappear like a little boy’.

The PIC says he reported the rape to a staff member, who said he would look into it, but nothing was done. Two or three weeks later, while he was watching television with other boys, the abusive staff member collected him and forced him to perform oral sex.

He also alleged another Eden Park employee anally raped him in a cellar and, later, in a shed at the home. He said he was too scared to resist and too frightened to report the abuse, although he did tell his grandmother but is unsure whether she took the matter further.

The PIC told the Inquiry that while at Eden Park he stayed with a man during a holiday period. After they had been swimming and returned to his house, ‘I was having a

shower, and he came in halfway through my shower and escorted me to the bedroom ... He had sex with me’. The PIC said he reported the incident to a staff member at Eden Park but ‘I was told I was nothing but a troublemaker and a liar, and that if I persisted I’d be punished’.

The Inquiry did not receive any records from the Salvation Army to verify whether reports were made, recorded or responded to in relation to these allegations. Files have been received from the department but, apart from confirming the PIC’s placement at Eden Park under recommendation from the Child Guidance Clinic, no reference is made to sexual abuse.

The PIC was placed in State care when he was 12 and alleged he suffered further sexual abuse during placements at Lochiel Park Boys Training Centre and Brookway Park.

Abuse by staff

An Aboriginal man born in the mid 1950s alleged staff sexually abused him while he was placed at Eden Park in the late 1960s.

Records received from the department show that just before his 13th birthday the PIC was charged with offences and placed by a court in State care until he turned 18. Eden Park was the first of his many placements and he remained there for nine months. The PIC said Eden Park was

... a very bad place, very evil place and that’s the word that I put it—very evil. Although it was under the Salvation Army it wasn’t a very friendly atmosphere.

The PIC alleged a staff member bent him over a table, caned his bare bottom and then, while rubbing his bottom, the man exposed his penis and masturbated: ‘I seen him a couple of times sort of underneath my armpit and he was playing with himself’. The PIC said the abuse happened more than once. He also alleged that another staff member sexually abused boys:

A few times he got us in the shower, three or four of us at a time there, just so we would rub ourselves in front of him to—for us, even though we were young people, you know, he used to touch us, like, on the

penis and make sure we got an erection. I can still remember there he used to put his mouth around our penises, you know ...

After his release from Eden Park the PIC was placed in foster care for several months. He said he told his foster parents about some of the incidents of sexual abuse but was unaware whether any action was taken as a result.

The PIC later spent time at other government homes and secure institutions. No records were received from the Salvation Army. The records received from the department do not record allegations of sexual abuse.

Of his time at Eden Park, the PIC said: 'That really destroyed a lot of me, you know'.

A PIC who gave evidence about Eden Park in the 1960s told the inquiry he was the victim of violence in the family home, became disruptive at school and was expelled. He said his parents separated, he had a poor relationship with his stepmother, and his father took him to a non-government home when he was in primary school. A record has been received from that home confirming his presence there when he was 10. The PIC said he spent some time with his family and then in other non-government homes before going to Eden Park in the mid 1960s when he was about 13.

No records have been received from the department or the Salvation Army. The Inquiry did not receive any records to show that he was in State care while at Eden Park.

The PIC alleged he witnessed and suffered violence inflicted by staff at Eden Park and described the punishment as 'floggings', saying one Salvation Army officer used his belt:

He'd start on your legs until you went down. You'd go down and your legs would go down behind you and once you went down then he would start on your back and just keep on lashing and lashing and lashing ... the welts you had after a belting like that, you were black and blue.

He alleged an officer at the home repeatedly sexually abused him, initially when he awoke in his bed to find the man fondling his penis and subsequently at various places

at the home and also when they travelled to Adelaide on occasions.

The PIC told the Inquiry the officer's sexual abuse escalated and one evening he anally raped him. When he protested he was warned not to tell anyone. The next day the officer put him into a drum of liquid fertiliser and

... hosed me down like a dog ... I threatened to tell. I didn't know who I was going to tell because I had no-one to tell, but I was going to run away and just get the hell out of there.

He said he did not report the sexual abuse:

It was my dark secret. It was something I didn't tell anybody. Once it started to happen I was more in tears and more upset and I used to lie awake and cry at night and I was going worse at school than what I'd ever gone. I was going backwards.

Another PIC said he was from a broken home and was sent to an orphanage when he was in primary school. A year or so later he was sent to Eden Park:

I just remember one night we—like, we were at the orphanage and then the next minute we're in a dormitory at Eden Park; didn't even know where we were. We were taken at night time.

No records have been received from the department or from the Salvation Army about the PIC's placement at Eden Park. The Inquiry did not receive any records to show that he was in State care while at Eden Park.

The PIC told the Inquiry physical punishments were common at Eden Park, but one staff member took a particular interest in him and was kind and affectionate, hugging and kissing him:

He gave me all the attention. He promised to take me out of there. I had to meet him at the workshop area after dark. I'd be waiting for him to come. I just—didn't know back then, but I just liked the attention I was getting.

He said the staff member told him to keep their meetings secret. The man later took him to live with him and his family in another State, where he had been transferred. Initially, he said, he enjoyed family life but soon after they

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

moved the staff member started to sexually abuse him:

He started coming in my room and—you know, the kissing and the cuddling. Then it started—he reckons it was sex education ... I'd have to take my pyjamas off and I just felt uncomfortable. After a while—the last thing I remember was I rebelled against him and he bashed me out the front of the—they had a white garage, I remember. I remember my nose was pouring blood and I got sent back to Adelaide.

The PIC said he returned to Eden Park, where he remained until he was 15. On his return he suffered violent physical punishments and on one occasion absconded.

He said he did not report the sexual abuse. He told the Inquiry he still suffers from the effects of the abuse and struggles to show affection:

I get really uncomfortable when I get hugged ... I'm told I don't show emotions or empathy, but I had to suppress that when I was in the boys home because I didn't want to get hurt.

Another PIC who alleged sexual abuse at Eden Park during the 1960s had been under the supervision of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs.

The Inquiry has not received any records from the Salvation Army or any records that he was in State care while at Eden Park. Some records have been received from the department, including a letter from the director of Aboriginal Affairs to the Child Guidance Clinic confirming the PIC's presence at Eden Park.

The PIC had previously been at Colebrook Home, which was run by the United Aborigines Mission, where he alleged he was sexually abused by a carer and by older boys.

He told the Inquiry an Eden Park staff member sexually abused him when he was a teenager. He alleged the perpetrator made him strip naked on several occasions and once locked him in a shed and beat him with a strap. He remembered that his mouth felt dirty but he could not recall precisely what happened.

The PIC said he had sex with other boys at Eden Park:

It was a sexual relationship. It was just for sex. I don't know how it started or where it came from. There was a couple of other boys but I don't know their names. We just used to just go and have it off, you know.

He had his own way of coping with a difficult childhood: 'I used to have an imaginary world growing up. Dungeons and dragons stuff, you know. It was my escape from reality.'

He said that when he left Eden Park he was placed at the Salvation Army Boys Home at Kent Town, where he alleged he was also sexually abused.

APIC who had an unsettled family life was at Eden Park in the early 1970s. He told the Inquiry his father, a heavy drinker, had been violent towards him.

He said that a departmental worker visited him months before he was placed at Eden Park. He told the worker about his father's physical violence 'in front of my mother and father ... and they denied it, of course'. He said that his mother then sent him to youth camps where he said he was sexually abused by a male carer eight times over four weekend camps.

He said his behavior at home and at school deteriorated, and he insisted to his mother that he did not want to keep attending the camps, although he did not tell her about the sexual abuse because the man had threatened him. The man told him: 'If you say anything no-one will believe z you, and if you say anything I'll just tell them that you did it to me'.

The PIC told the Inquiry he was then placed at Eden Park from the age of nine. No records have been received from the Salvation Army. Some records have been received from the department and, while they mention he was at youth camps and Eden Park, there is no mention of the legal basis for these placements. The Inquiry did not receive any records to show that he was in State care during his time at Eden Park.

Of Eden Park, the PIC recalled that he was told:

I'd be going up to a place where there would be horses, there would be a farm and it would be a more stable place for me to live for a while. That's how he described it and he told my mother that she had no choice. She either let me go or I'd be taken off her.

The PIC alleged he was heavily caned at Eden Park. On one occasion, staff members physically punished him for making a comment considered blasphemous; the wife of one staff member was 'kicking me so hard that her shoe fell off'.

On several occasions, he said, one staff member punished him physically and then kissed, cuddled and comforted him. The man then fondled him, rubbing his genitals and asking him to do the same to him.

He reported the physical and sexual abuse to a welfare officer, he said, but no action was taken. No records have been received from the Salvation Army to verify whether the complaint was made or recorded, or the nature of any response.

The PIC gave evidence that the sexual abuse has affected him in a number of ways. He does not like to be touched or hugged and at times has become suicidal and spent time in psychiatric care:

It was devastating, because the abuse that I'd suffered—I felt ashamed. It had obliterated my confidence. I felt dirty and I felt as though I had to go around with this secret that I had to hide all the time. I feel uncomfortable about [sexual contact]. I'm the sort of person that doesn't really like to be touched, unfortunately. I find it hard to hug people or have people hug me. I really like my own space.

Another PIC who alleged sexual abuse at Eden Park during the 1970s told the Inquiry his parents separated when he was about seven and he was sent to an Anglican Church home and then to Kennion House. No records have been received from the Salvation Army, and the only records from the department relate to the PIC's teenage years, when he was placed in State care, and not

to his placement at Eden Park. The Inquiry did not receive any records to show that the PIC was in State care while he was at Eden Park. The PIC alleged he was sexually abused at Kennion House and Eden Park.

He recalled that his stepmother assured him Eden Park was 'a lovely place in the country'. He said that as a teenager at Eden Park, he was required to perform difficult physical work and staff inflicted heavy physical punishments. He recalled being put in an isolation cell, which was 'a stone room about four feet by four feet', and said boys would be sent there 'for two or three days at a time'. He also alleged he was assaulted by a staff member while working in the sawmill,

... because maybe I wasn't carrying a big enough load—a sufficient enough load as what he considered—he was angry, he picked up a lump of timber, threw it at me and hit me in the side and broke my ribs.

The PIC alleged that another officer at Eden Park sexually abused him on several occasions in a shed and a barn, forcing him to masturbate the man and be masturbated, and perform oral sex.

In a further incident, the same officer allegedly cornered him in a room, fondled him and then anally raped him. The PIC said he suffered anal injuries and severe pain. He disposed of his underpants, which were stained with blood. Another officer found them and punished the boys collectively in an attempt to get the owner of the pants to confess.

The PIC told the Inquiry he has felt shame and guilt ever since he was abused. He was too frightened to tell anybody about the incidents so no report was made. He described his time at Eden Park as

... like living in a war zone, and it's hard to put into words the constant heightened awareness of fear that you didn't know who the next threat was coming from or where it was coming from.

He said he still suffers the effects of the physical and sexual abuse:

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

One thing, and I've had to do it over the years, is get out of the habit of when I walk into a room I make sure I know where the exits are and make sure they're clear.

A PIC born in the late 1950s was placed at Eden Park when he was about nine after his parents' marriage broke down. He had previously spent some time in another orphanage where, he said, he had been relatively happy. As records have not been received from the Salvation Army or the department, the basis for his placement at Eden Park is unclear. The Inquiry did not receive any records to show that the PIC was in State care when he was at Eden Park.

The PIC told the Inquiry he was specifically assigned to a particular staff member at Eden Park. He was required to perform domestic chores at the man's private residence under the supervision of his wife, including scrubbing floors, cleaning the kitchen, preparing firewood, tending the vegetable garden and working with beehives. He said he worked every day except for Saturday afternoon and Sunday.

The PIC recalled physical punishments and other punishments, including solitary confinement in a lock-up: 'I have been in there a few times. You couldn't lay down. [Officer's name] put me in there for a couple of days once when I ran away.'

He told of a humiliating incident where an officer punished boys for having a pillow fight:

He came down and turned on all the lights, made us all get out in the passage, strip off—or strip off first before he took us out into the passage. I used to hate that. I still cover myself now and I'm a full-grown man ... then he walked up and down blowing [a fan] at our genitals.

He also alleged he was stripped naked by the officer on other occasions, including as punishment for bed-wetting: 'I wet the bed in the wing once and was transferred to "wet-bedders". He'd strip me and march me over there.' He did not report the incident.

The PIC said he has suffered as a result of traumatic experiences at Eden Park:

I've always struggled in relationships because I just—I don't know, feeling like—if the kids fall over, I just say, 'Get up. You'll be right.' I don't run up there and cuddle them.

Abuse by staff and other residents

An Aboriginal PIC gave evidence about alleged sexual abuse at Eden Park in the 1960s. Born in the late 1950s, he said he was removed from a large family when he was 15 months old and had almost no contact with his siblings or other family members for many years.

Department records show the PIC was under the supervision of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, which placed him in foster care at 15 months. There was no record of an administrative or court order placing him in State care.

The records suggest problems including bed-wetting developed in the foster home in the mid 1960s and the PIC was referred to the Child Guidance Clinic. As a result, he was sent to Eden Park when he was nine, staying for more than four years. The Inquiry did not receive any records to show he was placed in State care while at Eden Park.

The PIC recalled that he cried on his first day at Eden Park and was physically punished. He alleged that not long after arriving he was anally raped by six boys aged about 16 to 18. The PIC told the Inquiry he reported the matter to a staff member, who 'flogged the shit out of—he flogged me and then threw me in a little cupboard under a set of stairs'. The PIC said he then told the staff member he was bleeding from the anus but was called a liar: 'He rubbed my face in the poo and the pee and then belted me for that, for being dirty'.

The PIC alleged that from this time on and for about the next four years the same staff member sexually abused him, raping him in the dormitory at night and then rewarding him by giving him marbles. He also alleged he was raped by the staff member in the big hall and occasionally in the lofts in the dairy. The PIC told the Inquiry

he did not report the abuse to the department: 'I was frightened of the welfare and I didn't know how to tell my mum'.

At 13 he returned to live with his mother, before being charged with offences and placed in State care by a court for two years, which was later extended by two years. He was placed in hostel accommodation.

The PIC told the Inquiry that after spending years in care he was glad to regain his sense of Aboriginality: 'I missed 12 years of it and I liked being a Nunga'.

A PIC was initially placed in State care under a three-month care and control order in 1980 when he was nine, and was in State care under further longer-term orders for various periods until he turned 18. His parents had separated and his mother was unable to manage him. The PIC said, and departmental records confirm, that his mother physically abused him and sought his removal from the family home.

At an early stage, the PIC was at the Northern Region Admission Unit where, he said, older girls touched him in a sexual way:

Not as in I was raped or anything ... it's just I think one of those kind of experiences that guys and girls maybe do—you have ... I just think it was nothing bad.

Departmental records show the PIC's young age when he arrived at the unit appears to have been of concern to a staff member, who was

... a little reluctant to have [the PIC] there ... as he was only nine years and there had been a certain amount of trouble tonight amongst the older members of the unit.

After a few days the department and Child Guidance Clinic placed the PIC at Eden Park, where he remained for 18 months until the early 1980s. He was subsequently in numerous homes, including Smith Street Cottage, Slade Cottage and the Southern Region Group Home. The PIC told the Inquiry he was sexually abused in all four placements.

Although the three-month care and control order ran out during his placement at Eden Park, records show the boy was in constant contact with and under the supervision of the department.

The PIC said Eden Park was an intimidating environment like a concentration camp, with the worst kinds of punishments. He remembers crying for days and days, just wanting to be out of the place but unable to do anything about it:

... the staff were strict and they weren't nice people. They actually thought they were the army. It was the Salvation Army, they're meant to be Christian people.

He alleged a Salvation Army officer sexually abused him at Eden Park on about three occasions. The first time, he said, the officer took him from his bed to the television room, where he was required to polish the man's shoes. The PIC said he rebelled using foul language and was then physically punished and raped by the officer. The following day he noticed bleeding from his anus. He said he told a schoolteacher at the home, and thinks he was taken for medical treatment at Mount Barker—but he did not tell the doctor how the injury had been caused because he was too embarrassed.

The PIC alleged that on a second occasion he remained behind gardening as a punishment while other children went to their families' homes. He said the officer again took him to the television room where he masturbated himself and made him participate. He did not report this incident.

He said that on a third occasion when he was in his dormitory alone he awoke to find a man bending over him and penetrating his anus. The PIC said he did not clearly see the man but testified that he had the same sound and feel as the officer who had previously sexually abused him. He told the Inquiry he did not report this incident

... because of the punishments and everything I'd have after it. Like, I wasn't just being raped; after that it was made sure that I wasn't near any other people for four days. I was up the back, either having to do hay baling—like, you know, at the age I

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

was, lifting hay bales that virtually weighed as much as three people, having to throw them inside a truck—or ripping blackberry bushes out around the sewerage pit.

He wondered at the time whether the carer of his unit knew ‘stuff was happening to me’, because this man used to take him for drives and ‘he knew about me being taken to the doctor. He was asking me who and I was denying it, saying, “Look, nothing’s happened to me”, rah-rah-rah’.

Salvation Army documents and departmental files received by the Inquiry do not mention the alleged abuse by the officer. The Inquiry made enquiries of medical facilities in the Mount Barker region, but was unable to locate any records relating to the PIC.

The PIC also alleged he was anally raped by a bigger, older resident in the television room at Eden Park:

He just jumped on top of me and held me down. My pants was pulled down and he done what he wanted to do ... It started off sort of like a play-fighting act. Sort of jumped on me and everyone was play fighting, and then it just sort of turned to what it turned to.

Salvation Army and departmental records show the older boy was also alleged to have raped another boy around this time; and when that abuse was disclosed to authorities, an investigation occurred and the alleged perpetrator was removed from Eden Park.

A departmental document reveals that the headmaster at Eden Park provided a written report about the other boy’s rape allegation. It is not evident from the records available whether this alert in relation to alleged sexual abuse of the other boy occurred before or after the alleged abuse of the PIC.

Abuse by other residents

A PIC born in the early 1960s alleged he was sexually abused at Eden Park between the late 1960s and the mid 1970s. The PIC told the Inquiry he was placed at Eden Park when he was about nine because he had become ‘very antisocial’ and was getting into fights at school. The

Inquiry did not receive a record of a court order placing him in State care until he was 15 and had left Eden Park.

The only record received from the Salvation Army appeared to be an admission register showing the PIC was admitted (the place of admission is not recorded) in the late 1950s, which pre-dates his birth. Substantial client files have been received from the department, including a document from the Salvation Army that reveals the PIC was admitted to Eden Park at the age of nine because his mother was not coping with him and also on doctor’s advice.

The PIC told the Inquiry he witnessed a lot of violence by staff toward boys and said physical punishments were inflicted on him regularly: ‘There was a lot of public floggings. People that had been recaptured from running away, people that had been fighting amongst each other.’ Boys were sometimes placed in a ‘lock-up’, and staff often beat boys on the bare hands with

... a leather strap, like a razor strap of black leather. If you gave way on doing that and refused to do that, it was, sort of, grabbed by the elbow or the shoulder and whacked around the back of the arse or legs.

According to the PIC, one staff member was particularly brutal: ‘He used to froth at the mouth. He was a real psycho.’ Another popular punishment was to make the boys run around the basketball court ‘until we dropped’. At night boys were made to stand outside in the cold: ‘You were stripped down to your jocks and you stood out on the front lawn out the front of [officer’s name] place’. The PIC also alleged he saw a staff member lift a boy by the ankles and place him, head first, into a drum of cow manure.

He told the Inquiry he was sexually abused by older boys at Eden Park:

I was raped within days of being there ... by the older kids ... sometimes two, three times a week, sometimes even more. It all depends what took their fancy you know; whose fancy—they took of you, you know. Sometimes there were three or four involved.

The PIC said the abuse continued until he was about 13 and better able to defend himself.

He said that at 15 he left Eden Park and soon got into trouble with the police. He was caught stealing, went to court, was placed in State care until 18 and lived in two government institutions.

During his teenage years, he said, he spent a lot of time on the streets and performed sexual favours for men at parties and homosexual beats around Adelaide for money. He used drugs and alcohol.

The PIC said he believes the sexual abuse has had long-term affects on his life: 'It's made me very promiscuous'.

Departmental records show a PIC was first placed in State care under a three-month administrative order when he was three years old in the mid 1970s. At this time the PIC's mother was in hospital and his father was away from home. The records show that when he was 6½ a court found he was neglected and placed him in State care again for three years. Towards the end of that order, when he was nine, he was placed at Eden Park. The order expired while he was at Eden Park and when he was 10 another court order was made placing him in State care until the age of 18 because he was 'in need of care'. The PIC alleged sexual abuse at Eden Park and also at a subsequent placement at Kennion Cottage, Ferryden Park.

The PIC was placed at Eden Park in the early 1980s when he was nine and stayed for about one year. He was in State care when he first arrived at Eden Park. He said he believed he was about four years younger than the other boys there, and recalled the daily activities as 'routine, strict and almost like ... a jail sort of thing but for kids'. The PIC said he has blocked out many memories of unpleasant times at Eden Park. Records show a departmental worker regularly visited him.

The PIC does not have a clear memory of the sexual abuse he alleged occurred at Eden Park. He told the Inquiry he believes he was forced to perform oral sex and was anally raped by two older males on several occasions and over a period of time. He thought he received medical

attention and that one of the perpetrators was removed from the home.

Documents from the Salvation Army show the PIC reported allegations of sexual abuse to a staff member, who reported the matter to his superiors. The matter was also reported to the local police. The records show the PIC was to be interviewed by police, but when they visited Eden Park he was not there; an employee had taken him to a rape crisis centre. It is also noted that another boy at the home had also made allegations against one of the suspected perpetrators.

The Salvation Army documents include a departmental officer's report to his director-general, in which the officer stated that the PIC was interviewed by an officer from Eden Park; the two alleged perpetrators were sent home; police were notified; and the PIC was taken to the rape crisis centre. The report also notes that boys were left unsupervised for periods during the day and, except for periodical checks, there was no adult in the immediate vicinity of the dormitories.

There is no indication in the report whether there was any follow-up investigation or action by the Salvation Army, police or the department. Police have not located any records in relation to these allegations.

Records were received from a hospital Sexual Assault Referral Centre confirming that an Eden Park staff member presented the PIC for a medical examination. The records note that the PIC made allegations of sexual and physical abuse by older boys at the home. They state that he alleged the boys had forced him to perform oral sex and threatened him with a knife. The notes on file also record that the PIC said he was scared to return to the home and that a departmental officer was notified by telephone of the alleged abuse.

In addition, while substantial client files have been received from the department, the documents relating to the alleged sexual abuse, as provided by the Salvation Army, were not located on these files. The Inquiry found only one brief handwritten note relating to the allegations.

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

Documents on the department's file reveal that the PIC was placed in foster care soon after the incident but no reason is given. The records refer to the breakdown of the Eden Park placement but do not say why it failed. They make no reference to the alleged sexual abuse of the PIC.

Another PIC to allege sexual abuse at Eden Park during the 1980s was under the department's supervision but no records were received to show he was in State care. The PIC's parents divorced when he was very young. He was placed at Eden Park for just under a year during his middle primary years and believed he was there because his mother couldn't cope with him.

Departmental records show that just before his ninth birthday the Child Guidance Clinic referred the PIC to Eden Park because he was considered uncontrollable. A register received from the Salvation Army shows he was at Eden Park for just over 10 months.

The PIC considered Eden Park 'a scary place for a young child'. He said that in addition to going to school during the day, boys were required to perform chores, mostly cleaning. He recalled a strict regime with a lot of punishment, including physical punishment:

You got caned for your bed not being made properly; your shoes not being shiny enough; your locker not being tidy enough ... I was frightened the whole time I was there.

The PIC told the inquiry that smaller and bigger boys were housed in the same areas and that some of the older boys were sexual predators. He alleged he was anally raped by two older boys and forced to perform oral sex on many occasions. He said one of the older boys would hold him down while the other raped him, and that they would take turns. He recalled yelling in vain for help, and did not report the assaults for fear of retribution: 'I was just confused ... I was dominated so I couldn't speak out. I was bashed and threatened so I was in fear.'

The PIC told the Inquiry that on one occasion a staff member became aware of the sexual abuse but did nothing:

I recall one morning being in bed with an older lad and a staff member walked in and sort of seen what was going on and said to cut it out and shut the door and walked out.

No records other than a register naming the PIC have been received from the Salvation Army, thus the Inquiry is unable to check on what appears to have been an inadequate response by a staff member to an incident of sexual abuse.

The PIC told the Inquiry that after leaving Eden Park he lived with his mother and suffered violence from her partner. In this period, he said, 'I just went off the rails more'. He started to commit crimes and said he has spent time in adult prisons: 'I'm angry at myself. I'm angry at the people that did what they did to me'.

Abuse by unknown perpetrator

APIC who alleged sexual abuse in the 1950s at Eden Park told the Inquiry he was placed at the home when aged about five because his mother had become ill. No records were received from the department or the Salvation Army. The Inquiry did not receive any records to show that he was placed in State care.

The PIC told the Inquiry he was at Eden Park for about three or four months and was sexually abused by an unknown man. He recalled that over some weeks the man regularly entered his room at night while he was crying and fondled him.

The PIC said he was confused as a result of the abuse because 'you just couldn't differentiate between what was love and affection and caring and, I guess, wanting to have a father and things like that'. He said he did not report the abuse because

I was too scared to, and with the—I guess the day-by-day ridicule and that sort of stuff, you just couldn't talk about it anyway.

He also said that when he was aged eight to 11 and outside of care he was sexually abused at home by friends of his mother and by his older brother.

As a consequence of the abuse, he said, he felt confused about his sexual identity as he grew older and even attempted suicide.

One PIC who was born in the late 1960s recalled his mother taking him to Eden Park in a taxi when he was about nine:

She turned around and walked back to the taxi—I don't know—and I was waving goodbye and she wouldn't turn around and wave goodbye or nothing to me. She just kept walking.

The PIC has vague memories of something happening to him at the home when he was in a room with three men; he thinks he was drugged and sexually abused by Salvation Army officers. He told the Inquiry his mother removed him from the home about one year later.

The Inquiry has received some records from the department but these do not relate to the PIC's time at Eden Park. It did not receive any records to show that he was in State care at that time. No records were received from the Salvation Army.

Abuse by outsiders

A PIC alleged abuse at Eden Park by a visiting priest in the 1970s. He was born in the early 1960s; his parents divorced when he was two and his mother then took over his care.

The PIC said that before being placed in State care he was sexually abused by the local Catholic priest when he was about six:

I recall at Sunday School, after Sunday School, him seeing me there and talking and paying me a lot of attention, which I liked, and I remember being fondled—just fondled outside my clothes ... in my genital area, and then I remember on a couple of occasions having my genital area exposed and him playing with me there.

The alleged sexual abuse continued and escalated to the point where, the PIC said, the priest took him to a country town and anally raped him. He recalled: 'It was like he loved me and God loved me and I was special ... he was the only man who paid that kind of attention to me'. As a result, he did not tell anybody about the abuse.

When the PIC was 10 a court placed him in State care until 18 as a result of break and enter offences, according to his SWIC. He was sent to Windana Remand Home for a short period and then placed at Eden Park.

The PIC told the Inquiry the same priest who had sexually abused him visited him at Eden Park several times. On each of those visits he was taken for a drive and there would be fondling and, on at least one occasion, anal penetration. The PIC said he was told he was special and that the priest was doing it because God wanted him to.

He said he did not report the abuse to the authorities at Eden Park or the department. Other than a SWIC, no client files have been received from the department and no records have been received from the Salvation Army.

The PIC has committed numerous criminal offences as an adult, mainly involving property and dishonesty. He expressed a desire to rehabilitate and took various courses while in custody to improve his education. With the assistance of the Inquiry, the PIC faced a victim of one of his crimes in a restorative justice session.

Although none of the sexual abuse was reported at the time, the PIC told the Inquiry that in about 1990 he made a report to an official from the Catholic Church and the Department of Correctional Services. Documents received from the South Australian Police confirm that such a report was made and indicate they declined to investigate the matter further as the report was made when there was a statute of limitations applicable to sexual offences.

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

Salvation Army Girls Home / Fullarton Children's Home, 1900–1986

History

The Salvation Army Girls Home, also known as The Haven, was proclaimed as a private institution that could receive State children in October 1900.⁷³ At that time it was known as the Girls Probationary School. The home was run by the Salvation Army but was under the control of the State Children's Council (SCC) and 'subject to the supervision and authority' of the SCC's secretary to the same extent as a government institution.⁷⁴

During the 1920s the school accommodated girls regarded as 'uncontrollable', or 'habitually absent' from school, as well as girls on remand and those charged as destitute or who were transferred from other government institutions.⁷⁵ In 1936 the Aborigines Protection Board placed three 12-year-old Aboriginal girls at Fullarton to undergo a three-year course in domestic arts and paid a subsidy for their maintenance.⁷⁶ However, in the same year, members of the Children's Welfare and Public Relief Board (CWPRB), which had replaced the SCC in 1927, inspected the home and found conditions unsatisfactory. Complaints led to improvements including 'better shoes and clothing for the girls'.⁷⁷

In 1944, the Salvation Army informed the board it intended to close the home.⁷⁸ The following year it was removed from the list of gazetted institutions approved by the government and the girls were transferred to other institutions.⁷⁹ The home continued to operate, taking in children placed privately.

In 1950 the home again came under the board's supervision as a result of amendments to the Maintenance Act requiring that the board inspect any institution caring for illegitimate children under seven.⁸⁰ The home was inspected periodically and inspection report forms were completed.⁸¹ From 1965, with the passing of the Social Welfare Act, the home's matron was required to apply for a licence to run a children's home. The licence required the home to fulfil obligations under the Act and follow accompanying regulations.⁸²

In 1969 the Salvation Army's Women's Social Services department announced a plan to form an auxiliary for the Fullarton Children's Home. The home had been renamed as it now provided a 'substitute home' for boys as well as girls, with the main focus on keeping siblings together where possible.⁸³ The staff wanted to form the auxiliary because of the Aboriginal children in their care; 'there are special and peculiar difficulties that are encountered only when working with a combination of Aboriginal and white children'.⁸⁴

In 1972 the Salvation Army reported that the home was caring for 31 children,⁸⁵ most accommodated because of family or foster care breakdown, illness of parents, or for 'behavioural difficulties'. Fourteen children had been referred to the home by the department.

With the passing of the Community Welfare Act and the establishment of the Residential Child Care Advisory Committee (RCCAC) in 1974, the Salvation Army entered into new licensing and funding agreements with the government. The department paid for a social worker to

⁷³ *State Children's Act 1895*, s. 22. For proclamation, see *South Australian Government Gazette*, 8 Nov. 1900, p. 1105.

⁷⁴ SCC annual report 1901, p. 4.

⁷⁵ SCC/CWPRB annual reports for 1920s.

⁷⁶ *The War Cry*, 11 Feb. 1939.

⁷⁷ CWPRB annual report 1940, p. 4.

⁷⁸ *ibid.*, 1944, p. 4.

⁷⁹ *ibid.*

⁸⁰ *Maintenance Act Amendment Act 1950*, ss. 188 and 189.

⁸¹ SRSA GRG 29/6/1954/3, Visitation of Salvation Army Girls Home, Fullarton, by inspectors.

⁸² *Social Welfare Act 1926–1965* and regulations under the Act, nos 66–72, *SA Government Gazette*, 27 Jan. 1966.

⁸³ Salvation Army Heritage Centre, Nailsworth, Child Care and Family Services leaflet, 1972.

⁸⁴ *ibid.*, Women's Social Services to Lt-Col. Walters, TWSSS, Melbourne, 19 July 1969.

⁸⁵ *ibid.*, Child Care leaflet, 1972.

help assess and care for children admitted to the home. Each child's case was also to be regularly reviewed at meetings of the home's review board, which were attended by an officer of the department.

During the 1980s the Salvation Army made an arrangement with the Department of Aboriginal Affairs to provide a home for several Aboriginal girls who were completing high school.⁸⁶ In 1981 the matron applied to the RCCAC for funding to hire a psychologist because of the increasing number of children admitted with 'disturbed behaviour'.⁸⁷ The RCCAC declined funding and suggested children be referred to a psychologist and that staff undertake further training.⁸⁸

During this period the RCCAC's emphasis was on encouraging non-government agencies to move away from congregate residential care. As a result, Fullarton Children's Home closed at the end of June 1986. The building was retained and is still used as the Salvation Army's South Australian divisional headquarters.

Allegations of sexual abuse

Six PICs gave evidence that they were sexually abused while placed at the Salvation Army Girls Home.

The Inquiry was able to confirm from available records that three of the PICs were in State care during their time at the home; one was placed there by court order for being neglected and two were placed there under the supervision of the Aborigines Protection Board.

In relation to one PIC, the Inquiry did not receive any records and it is not known which organisation or person was responsible for her placement.

Another PIC was placed in State care by a court for significant periods both before and after her placement at Fullarton Girls Home, although it seems unlikely there were any court orders in force at the time of this placement. The

basis of the sixth PIC's placement is unknown but she is likely to have been placed by a parent.

The alleged sexual abuse ranged from vaginal and digital rape to indecent assault and fondling. The alleged perpetrators included one staff member, fellow male and female residents and, in some cases, people not connected with the home. Two PICs alleged they were abused while away from the home on a visit.

Despite their allegations of sexual abuse, some of the PICs said they enjoyed living at the home. One recalled:

I loved the house, the atmosphere. It was the most—if I could change back time, I would have stayed there permanently because I was most wanted. It was the most warming—fair enough, things happened with the guys and that, but I never looked at that side of it. I just looked at it being a warming, caring place where you could go when you had nothing.

The Inquiry heard evidence that the living conditions were very basic and the home was run quite strictly, with a strong religious emphasis. One PIC reminisced:

It was a real Christian place ... We used to have to clean the dining room floors and you have to get on your hands and knees and scrub all the marks off and then you'd put polish on it. We had a big open dormitory on the first floor. The doors were never closed. It was freezing cold. But I think they were kind to us.

Another PIC recalled the atmosphere at Christmas:

It was, like, the best time, because we used to go out to Christmas parties all the time, and it was, like, all these rich white fellas used to take us out to Christmas parties and buy us a lot of presents.

⁸⁶ Salvation Army Australia Southern Territory Archives and Museum, Lt-Col. John C Kirkham, *Southern Soup-Soap-Salvation*, a compendium of Salvation Army Social Services in the Australian Southern Territory, 2003, p. 58.

⁸⁷ SRSA GRS 4164, File 14/7/1, Fullarton Children's Home (Salvation Army), matron to RCCAC, 18 Feb. 1981.

⁸⁸ *ibid.*, RCCAS secretary to matron., 16 Apr. 1981.

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

Abuse by staff

A PIC told the Inquiry she first learned she was Aboriginal at 13. She has no recollection of her parents but thinks she was placed in care as a baby in the early 1940s. The only record received from the department is an index card that relates to the department's correspondence about the PIC; the Inquiry did not receive a record of a court order placing her in State care. The PIC told the Inquiry she was sexually abused in a foster placement (court records show the foster father was convicted of two counts of indecent assault in relation to the PIC) and then later at what she thinks was the Salvation Army Girls Home.

The PIC told the Inquiry she was placed in a Salvation Army home when she was a teenager; she was not sure which home but thought it may have been the Fullarton home. No records have been received from the Salvation Army in relation to her. The PIC alleged a handyman took her to a shed on the grounds, pulled her pants down and digitally penetrated her. She said she did not disclose the sexual abuse to anyone.

Asked how she felt about her time in care, the PIC said: 'I just have this terrible sadness'.

Abuse by other residents

A PIC born in the mid 1960s told the Inquiry her parents separated when she was about eight and the department became involved at about that time: 'When it suited my parents they wanted me and when I didn't fit in with either one of their lifestyles, I was removed'. The PIC was placed under a series of short-term orders but there were periods when she was not in State care. She said she was sexually abused when placed at Pleasant Avenue Cottage and later at the Fullarton Children's Home.

Records show the PIC's mother placed her at Fullarton when she was 13 and she remained there for about a year. There were no records to suggest that she was in State care at this time. The PIC thinks she came to be at Fullarton because

My mum didn't want me and she said I was better off in a foster home and so one of the welfare workers dropped me off at the Salvation Army home.

The PIC recalled of the home: 'I fell in love with the house, the atmosphere, some of the kids ... I felt wanted. I felt needed.' She told the Inquiry: 'There was some kids I didn't like and there was an episode that tore my life apart in Fullarton. I was raped by a guy called [name].' She said the perpetrator lived at the home but she did not report the sexual abuse:

That's one thing I never told anybody. I couldn't. I didn't trust—it was just that I did not know how to open up to anybody about what happened with guys, because I wasn't the only one. There were a few other girls that [the boy] did it to. I wasn't the first and I wasn't the last ... he used to brag about it to all the boys.

She said she did not want to be considered a victim: 'I'm not sitting back saying, "Oh, poor me". I'm going beyond that. I'm facing everybody and I'm not scared to face anybody. I was back then.'

An Aboriginal PIC who was born in the 1940s came from a large family and spent her early years on a mission. She gave evidence that she suffered extensive sexual abuse by two men when she was aged between about six and nine. One of the perpetrators was her uncle, whom she remembered confronting when she was 11:

It was a responsibility that you had on your shoulders that, if you said anything, you would smash the family up. So I had a lot of trauma around that where, when I was 11, then I confronted it myself and said, 'Why are you doing this? You're my uncle.'

The PIC said she also confronted the second man who was sexually abusing her but did not report the abuse to anyone else: 'No. It was satisfying enough for me to confront them myself.'

The APB placed her at Fullarton just before her 13th birthday. The Inquiry has received minimal records: only a memo recording she was to be admitted to the home from the department, as well as a file from the APB. No records have been received from the Salvation Army. The Inquiry did not receive a record of a court order placing her in State care.

The PIC believes she was at the home for less than a year in the 1950s. She gave evidence that older girls at the home sexually abused younger girls and that this happened to her on two occasions. She alleged the older girls induced her to touch their breasts or vaginas but after the second occasion she refused.

The PIC also said she was sexually abused by a man after she left the home and was in the workforce.

She told the Inquiry,

I think that people who sexually abuse children should be punished for that because they have an ability as adults to be able to stop themselves doing that and children don't have the ability to defend themselves.

Abuse by outsiders

An Aboriginal PIC who was born in the 1940s at Point Pearce Mission told the Inquiry her mother died when she was about seven and her father was unable to care for her and her siblings. She recalled that at 10 she was put on a bus at Point Pearce and taken to the Fullarton home, where she lived for about two years before spending time in other Salvation Army homes until she was 15.

Records on the PIC have been received from the department but not from the Salvation Army. They relate only to her situation from the age of 15, and indicate she was under the supervision of the APB, which confined her to Point Pearce when she was 15. The Inquiry did not receive a record of a court order placing her in State care before then.

The PIC said she was placed with different families during holiday periods while resident at Fullarton. During a stay with one such family in a small country town when she was about 11, a male teenage member of the family sexually abused her: 'Their son was taking advantage of me... I felt so embarrassed and frightened.' She could not recall details of the abuse and said: 'I never told his parents nothing about it because I was too frightened'.

The PIC recalled attempting to run away from the Fullarton home and believes this is why she was transferred to another Salvation Army home when she was about 15. She said she then got permission from the Army to live with family members; she alleged she was sexually abused while living there.

Born in the mid 1960s, an Aboriginal PIC was five when she was placed in State care until the age of 18 after a court found she was neglected and under unfit guardianship. She said she does not recall being taken away from her family because she was too young at the time. 'I don't really remember a lot when I went to the home. I don't remember Welfare taking us. I don't remember really how old I was ...'

Two months after being placed in State care, the PIC was transferred to the Fullarton home with one of her older sisters and, according to records from the department, remained there for 11 years. The records indicate she was happy there: 'No complaints, appears happy and contented'. The only documents received from the Salvation Army are identity papers.

She has fond memories of the home:

Yes, three meals a day, and because it was the Salvation Army Girls Home, they owned the Balfours factory, so we used to have cream cakes—everything. We had the bestest food. We had always good meals all the time.

The PIC alleged she was sexually abused when she was about seven while visiting her family, possibly over a weekend. She had difficulty recalling what happened in any

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

detail but spoke of lying on a double bed in a house with a man, and said he did sexual things to her and may have penetrated her:

I remember the next day he came around and Mum was in the kitchen and this man walked in and I seen him, so I jumped under the table, and I hid and I got into trouble, because I shouldn't do that to our uncles ... I never told anybody.

A PIC born in the mid 1960s alleged she was sexually abused during a placement at the Fullarton home in the 1970s. No records were received from the department relating to this placement, and the only record received from the Salvation Army is a single document that shows the PIC was admitted when she was six and remained there for more than nine years. The record suggests her father admitted her. The Inquiry has not received a record of her being placed in State care.

The PIC told the Inquiry she has few memories of her early childhood but alleged that when she was very young her alcoholic father made her give him oral sex:

I think for a very long time I didn't really understand what was happening, and it was only later that I realised what had happened and how inappropriate it was, and I'm talking years later.

She gave her impressions of life at the home:

There was no individuality. It was very institutionalised, so, you know, tea at this time, this at this time, you know, and certain times—'This day is when you start wearing your winter clothes' and 'This day is when you start wearing your summer clothes', and you did what they told you to ... Yes, just a constant memory of pies and pasties and bread and milk for dessert or, for breakfast in winter, you got it with hot milk.

The PIC said that while at the home she spent some holidays and weekends with a couple and that the man sexually abused her. She recalled him coming to her bedroom at night but not the full details of what happened. She thought the abuse involved penetration: 'As far as I remember, I think maybe digital ... I would just lie there still and ... pretend that I was asleep'. She did not report the abuse: 'I guess it was a sense of, well, what difference would it make and who would care anyway?'

The PIC told the Inquiry that after being released from Fullarton she went to another Salvation Army home, where she was much happier. She said she then told another girl about the earlier abuse and this girl in turn mentioned it to others, including her father.

The Inquiry received evidence from a former cottage parent from the other army home who said the PIC disclosed to her that while she was staying with a family during holidays a man had sexually abused her. She said she passed this information on to a staff member at the home: 'The response, as I recall it, was, "Well, these people have been good to the Salvation Army. If [name] is not going we'll have to find someone else to go."'

Salvation Army Boys Home, Kent Town, 1929–72

History

In 1929 the Salvation Army informed the secretary of the Children's Welfare and Public Relief Board (CWPRB) that it had purchased 'a beautiful home, with delightful surroundings' at 64 Kent Terrace, Kent Town. It intended to relocate the 'smaller boys', aged between six and 12, to this home from Eden Park to reduce overcrowding and to better separate and 'classify' boys.⁸⁹ At that time the Salvation Army requested that the home be proclaimed a

⁸⁹ SRSA GRG 29/6/1929/49, Proposed new home for boys at Norwood, Brigadier Ward to CWPRB secretary, 25 Jan.

private institution for the reception and detention of State children, in the same manner as Eden Park.

The CWPRB refused this request. There were already seven institutions to which a court could commit children. The CWPRB also did not want to show 'undue preference' to any religious denomination and believed that boys committed for delinquency or truancy were better off away from the city and the 'disturbing influences by parents'.⁹⁰ As the CWPRB often used the isolation of Eden Park as a placement option for boys who had been committed to the Industrial School but who were regarded as too 'uncontrollable' to remain there, the idea that these same boys could return to metropolitan Adelaide 'had no force of appeal to the board'.⁹¹

As a result, the Kent Town Boys Home opened on 27 April 1929 as a home for boys placed privately. However, by the mid 1950s the APB placed Aboriginal boys at Kent Town, paying a subsidy for their maintenance.⁹² In addition, as a result of an amendment to the Maintenance Act in 1950, Kent Town, as a 'benevolent institution' caring for illegitimate children under seven, was subject to supervision by the CWPRB. Periodic departmental inspection reports from March 1954 – May 1965⁹³ reveal that the home generally accommodated 45 to 48 boys, including sometimes up to eight boys who were younger than seven.⁹⁴

Residents attended Norwood Primary and Technical schools and received religious instruction from Salvation Army officers. The boys were sent to the Salvation Army citadel each Sunday for the purpose of mixing with other children.⁹⁵

The passing of the Social Welfare Act in 1965 required the manager of the Kent Town home, like the heads of all non-government institutions, to apply for an operating licence.⁹⁶ By 1970 Kent Town was taking in boys ranging in age from five to 18. A Salvation Army report from that year stated that parents had placed five boys; the remainder being placed by the departments of Social Welfare and Aboriginal Affairs, Education and Repatriation, and the Northern Territory Administration.⁹⁷

The home closed in January 1972 and the boys were transferred to Salvation Army homes at Eden Park and Fullarton or to other private placements.⁹⁸

Allegations of sexual abuse

Five PICs gave evidence about allegations of sexual abuse while they were placed at the Kent Town home. The Inquiry could not find any record of court orders placing them in State care. The Department of Aboriginal Affairs placed three Aboriginal PICs at the home. The department was involved in the placement of a fourth PIC who later became a State child under a court order. No records were received about the placement of the fifth PIC.

The allegations of sexual abuse were made against a staff member, other resident boys, visitors and people outside the home. Some of the allegations involved single incidents, while other PICs gave evidence about repeated abuse. The PICs accused the perpetrators of offences including anal rape, unlawful sexual intercourse, forced oral sex and indecent assault.

No client files were received from the Salvation Army for any of the five PICs, although some documents related to

⁹¹ *ibid.*, minutes forming enclosure, 7 June.

⁹² *ibid.*, proposed reply to the chief secretary's minute.

⁹³ SRSA GRG 29/168, Unit 43, File 27355004/91, APB secretary, 22 Feb. 1956.

⁹⁴ *Maintenance Act Amendment Act 1950*, ss. 188 and 189 and SRSA GRG 29/6/1954/2 Salvation Army Boys Home Kent Terrace Norwood Visitation by inspectors.

⁹⁵ There were eight boys under seven in June 1960.

⁹⁶ SRSA GRG 29/6/1954/2, inspection report, 23 July 1959.

⁹⁷ *Social Welfare Act 1926–1965* and regulations under the Act, nos 66–72, *SA Government Gazette*, 27 Jan. 1966.

⁹⁸ Salvation Army Social Service annual report 1970, p. 6.

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

one PIC. In most cases records were received from the department. None of the records disclosed allegations of abuse. None of the PICs asked the Inquiry to pass on their allegations to police.

Abuse by multiple perpetrators

A PIC born in the mid 1950s lived at the Kent Town home in the early to late 1960s but was unsure how he came to be in the Salvation Army's care. Both the army and the department said they could not find any records about the PIC, and the Inquiry did not receive any records to show that he was placed in State care.

The PIC said his parents separated when he was young, and when he was about eight his father was unable to continue caring for him and sent him to the Kent Town home, where he found discipline was 'very, very severe and that was a shock. Life was often quite vicious and brutal but it was a predictable life'.

He alleged he was sexually abused on numerous occasions while at Kent Town, and spoke of incidents involving other boys:

I would have woken on a number of occasions in my time at Kent Town with an Aboriginal boy standing over me, putting his penis in my mouth ... You'd be sound asleep and someone would hop in your bed and remove your pyjamas and begin trying to penetrate you.

The PIC alleged that sexual abuse sometimes occurred in the showers:

We had communal showers and there would often be boys that would rub themselves up against you, that would try and soap you, that would try and grab your genitals.

He also alleged he was repeatedly sexually abused over three years by a staff member: 'Initially it was fondling and

that led to oral sex and that led to penetrative anal sex'.

On weekends he would ride with other boys to areas around the Botanic Gardens and the River Torrens, and on most of these outings strange men would talk him into participating in sex acts:

They'd say, 'Look, do you want to earn a dollar?' and you'd say 'a dollar?... yes,' and they'd say 'drop your daks' and they'd perform oral sex, and sometimes they'd give you the dollar, other times they'd tell you to piss off.

He did not report these incidents because:

It was just easier often to just not do or say anything and, you know, just allow these things to happen, because you very quickly worked out it would take 10 minutes of your time, and you moved on.

The PIC told the Inquiry he left the home when he was about 15 but had nowhere to live: 'I basically became a street kid'. He said he has tried to put the memories of his childhood behind him: 'I've tried to forget an awful lot of life as a child. It wasn't much of a childhood in many ways.'

Abuse by other residents

An Aboriginal PIC from Point Pearce Mission lived at the Kent Town home for 10 years in the 1960s from the age of about five. He did not know his father and his mother was unable to care for him.

Records show the Department of Aboriginal Affairs placed him in foster care. A few records were received from the Salvation Army and some from the department, which referred to an earlier involvement of the APB in the PIC's foster care and Kent Town placements. Maintenance and other financial payments were made but there is no evidence of a formal transfer of control to the department.

In 1958 the APB wrote to the PIC's mother, stating that the PIC 'not only comes under our department but, being an illegitimate child, also comes under the children's welfare'.

The PIC told the Inquiry the Kent Town home was a very strict place:

There was a lot of corporal punishment going on all the time. You know, that was with a cane. You'd have to hold out your hands and you'd get six whacks on the tips of your fingers. You kind of had a choice of that or, you know, you could drop your pants and get a leather belt on the bottom.

He alleged he was sexually abused there when an older boy induced him to go outside at night, then anally raped him on the lawn:

I don't remember the pain. It just was the shock of it all and I tried to get away. He must have got off so, you know, there was a mess as well. I went away and cleaned myself up. That was pretty well my first introduction to sex.

He did not report the abuse: 'I was too embarrassed about it. Even though I didn't know what sex was, it was just embarrassing. I felt ashamed.'

The PIC also gave evidence that he saw quite a few younger boys being abused by older boys at the home.

He was released in the early 1970s when the home was closed down, and alleged he was subsequently sexually abused in the family home.

Regarding the effects of the sexual abuse, the PIC said: 'I put on a good front. I think the psychological scars are always there in your background. A lot of things will remind you.'

Abuse by outsiders

An Aboriginal PIC was born on Point Pearce Mission in the mid 1940s and was placed in care by his parents in the mid 1950s, partly because he had a disability.

The Inquiry received some records from the department but none from the Salvation Army. The records indicate the PIC's mother wanted the APB to place him in a home. When the boy was seven the APB wrote to the manager at Point Pearce, stating that his mother agreed he should be placed under the board's care and control until he turned 18. The letter also said it was extremely difficult to place any Aboriginal child in any home at the time.

Correspondence indicates that the board approved payment of 25 shillings a week maintenance. These documents suggest the PIC was not formally placed in State care pursuant to a court or administrative order but that the placements were under the supervision of the APB.

The PIC was placed at the Kent Town home when he was eight and remained until he was 16. He found the home to be very strict, with harsh physical punishments.

He said he required ongoing treatment for his disability at the Adelaide Children's Hospital, and alleged that a hospital employee who was involved in his care started to sexually abuse him. The man would touch him on his genitals, laugh and say 'Oops, I'm sorry,' as though it had been an accident.

The PIC further alleged the man came to the Kent Town home and asked the officer in charge whether he could take the PIC out:

He asked the captain if he could take me out, and the boys around me ... all had their arms up to talk to the captain, because that's what we had to do,

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

and I had my arm up to say no because I knew what [name] was up to, but the captain wouldn't turn around and look at me and he gave permission for [name] to take me home.

He said the man took him to his house and told him to have a shower. While he was in the shower the man allegedly came in and started touching him and showing him how to wash himself. The PIC said the man then carried him into his bedroom, lay on top of him and 'started loving me like I was a woman'. The PIC, who said he was about 10 at the time, alleged that similar abuse happened on one more occasion.

He said he did not report the incidents because the man had warned him not to. He also thought of the abuser as 'someone who loves me', even though he knew the sexual abuse was wrong.

The PIC told the Inquiry that when released from care at 16 he had nowhere to live, so he spent time on the streets and abused alcohol.

Another Aboriginal PIC told the Inquiry he was placed at the Kent Town home in the 1950s when he was about 15. No files were received from the Salvation Army in relation to this PIC. When asked how long he was at Kent Town, he said 'Thank God, not long'. Records from the department show he was under the supervision of the APB, which also placed him at Colebrook Home and the Salvation Army Boys Home, Eden Park. The PIC alleged he was sexually abused at both of those homes. The Inquiry did not receive any record of a court order or transfer of control placing him in State care.

The PIC alleged that while he was at Kent Town a staff member from another home where he had lived picked him up and took him to an ice-skating rink. He recalled being taken to a room and given lollies and feeling dirty when thinking about the occasion afterwards. He could not recall precisely what happened but believes he was sexually abused. He did not tell anyone about the incident.

Abuse by unknown perpetrator

One PIC alleged he was sexually abused in the 1940s at the Kent Town home, where he was placed when he was about 10. He was known to the department at the time but was not placed at the home under a court order. After about a year at Kent Town he was placed in State care for offending and sent to Eden Park, where he also said he was sexually abused.

The PIC alleged that on about 10 occasions at Kent Town he woke up and found a male in his bed, touching his genitals and encouraging him to reciprocate: 'They had men in there and half the time you'd wake up you'd find somebody in bed with you'. He believed his abuser was either a live-in employee or an older resident. The PIC did not believe that reporting the sexual abuse would have done any good: 'If you reported it, all you got was a backhander for telling lies "because our boys wouldn't do that"'. To escape the abuse he absconded several times and went to his mother's house: 'I'd just stay there until they come and picked me up'.

No records relating to this PIC were received from the Salvation Army. Documents from the department confirm he was absconding but do not indicate there was any investigation of the cause.

Homes for Aboriginal children

History

From the early 1920s until the mid 1960s, South Australian legislation permitted Aboriginal children to be treated differently to non-Aboriginal children in terms of their care. Unlike a non-Aboriginal child, an Aboriginal child could be placed in State care without any need for a court appearance.⁹⁹

From 1923, the Chief Protector of Aborigines, with the approval of the State Children's Council (SCC) and its successor the Children's Welfare and Public Relief Board (CWPRB), could commit any Aboriginal child to any institution by completing a transfer of control form¹⁰⁰, which would make the child a State child.¹⁰¹

In 1939, the role of Chief Protector was abolished and the Aborigines Protection Board (APB) was created.¹⁰² The APB could commit any Aboriginal child to an institution with the approval of the CWPRB, without a court appearance¹⁰³ and such a child would be a State child ('the section 38 process'). An Aboriginal child could be sent to live in any government or non-government institution, however they could also be placed in dormitories on mission stations run by religious organisations such as the United Aborigines Mission (UAM), a body of evangelical Christians that began in South Australia in the 1920s, and the Christian Brethren, which established the Umeewarra Mission near Port Augusta in 1937.

The Supreme Court of South Australia has found that the section 38 process was 'a cause of ongoing tension'

between the APB and the CWPRB¹⁰⁴, with the CWPRB refusing to give its approval to the process generally and the APB then acting unilaterally. This meant that Aboriginal children were removed from their parents contrary to the existing legislation.¹⁰⁵

Missionary organisations applied for and received child endowment subsidies for Aboriginal children placed in dormitories on their stations.¹⁰⁶ Parents whose children lived on mission stations applied to the APB to take their children for holidays. In one case, the UAM secretary directed mission superintendents not to allow this as 'they either don't return, or if they do, you have trouble for months getting them to settle down again'.¹⁰⁷ Writing to one woman who was seeking permission to take her children for a holiday over Christmas, the UAM secretary advised: 'In the interest of the children you should forget the idea and leave them where they are being looked after'.¹⁰⁸

Cultural attitudes toward Aboriginal children and appropriate disciplinary practices influenced life in these homes. In 1951, the UAM secretary advised a superintendent of one of the homes: 'You sure will need to be strong with them, the brats need the strap'.¹⁰⁹ In 1954 the UAM secretary recommended corporal punishment, deprivation of food and denial of 'some pleasure' as disciplinary measures. Returning children to their parents was a last resort: 'We don't like turning any child loose again, but if they will not be controlled by those who are trying to uplift and help them, then they will just have to go'.¹¹⁰ The UAM took its cue from the Chief Protector of

⁹⁹ *Aborigines (Training of Children) Act 1923*.

¹⁰⁰ *ibid.*, s. 6.

¹⁰¹ *ibid.*, s. 7.

¹⁰² *Aborigines Act 1934–1939*

¹⁰³ *ibid.*, ss. 38–40.

¹⁰⁴ *Trevorrow v State of South Australia (No 5)* [2007] SASC 285 at [37].

¹⁰⁵ See discussion in Chapter 1, Approach of the Inquiry.

¹⁰⁶ United Aborigines Mission (UAM) Archives, records relating to Colebrook Home and children's dormitories at Gerard and Oodnadatta missions show the UAM received subsidies from both departments for different children. See also SRSA GRG 52/1, File 693/1956, Correspondence of the Aborigines Department re control of neglected, destitute and uncontrollable Aboriginal children, APB secretary to the parliamentary draughtsman, 23 Oct. 1958.

¹⁰⁷ *ibid.*, Box 38, Oodnadatta correspondence 1949–53, UAM secretary to superintendent, 18 Nov. 1950, and 27 June 1951.

¹⁰⁸ *ibid.*, Box 72, Gerard outward correspondence 1949–53, UAM secretary to Mrs. _____, 23 Dec. 1949.

¹⁰⁹ *ibid.*, Box 38, Oodnadatta correspondence 1949–53, UAM secretary to superintendent, 22 Feb. 1951.

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

Aborigines: ‘The Aborigines protector used to say, they only know the one way and that is the lether [sic]’.¹¹¹

Insufficient standards of care due to staff shortages and substandard facilities were an ongoing concern. In 1953 one missionary was urged by the UAM secretary: ‘You must lift the standard of the home or we will loose [sic] out with the children’.¹¹²

It was not until the early 1960s that the same legislative provisions applied to Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children in terms of the way they were placed in State care. The APB and the provisions relating to the transfer of control of Aboriginal children between the APB and the SCC/CWPRB were abolished by the *Aboriginal Affairs Act 1962*.¹¹³ After this time, legislative requirements for the licensing of children’s homes affected non-government homes for Aboriginal children. Mission-run homes that were ill-equipped and poorly staffed did not receive licences, as was the case with Colebrook Home. Other homes were determined to minimise government oversight of operations.¹¹⁴ In the 1980s, organisations providing accommodation and projects for Aboriginal youth received funding from the Department for Community Welfare as well as from the peak bodies of respective religious groups.

Summary of evidence

Ten people gave evidence to the Inquiry that they were sexually abused while placed in homes for Aboriginal children. Of those, one said she was abused in two separate homes. The Inquiry was able to determine from available records that four people were in State care at the

time of the alleged sexual abuse. It was not possible to determine whether the remaining six people were in State care at the time, either because of limited records or due to the placements occurring at the time when the APB was not acting in accordance with the legislative scheme in placing children in State care.¹¹⁵

The allegations included indecent assault, fellatio and anal rape committed by staff members, other residents and people from outside the homes.

Koonibba Children’s Home, 1913–63

History

The Koonibba Children’s Home was established in 1913 as part of the Koonibba Mission Station, established by Lutheran missionaries in 1901 near Ceduna on South Australia’s West Coast. The children’s home consisted of 14 main rooms, including sleeping quarters for the matron, other staff and children. Initially accommodating 28 children, the home was renovated and extended to house up to 70 children. A history of the home noted that it was established to help Aboriginal children be ‘removed from the camp atmosphere, and brought up in a Christian atmosphere’. The South Australian Government took over the mission in 1963 and the home closed that year.¹¹⁶

Allegations of sexual abuse

One woman gave evidence to the Inquiry about alleged sexual abuse at Koonibba Children’s Home while she was in State care.

¹¹⁰ *ibid.*, Box 64, Oodnadatta file 1953–65, UAM secretary to superintendent, 23 Jan. 1954.

¹¹¹ *ibid.*, UAM secretary to superintendent, 27 Jan. 1954.

¹¹² *ibid.*, Box 38, Oodnadatta correspondence 1949–53, UAM secretary to mission staff, 28 Jan. 1953.

¹¹³ For a detailed discussion of the relationship between the State and Aboriginal people see Cameron Raynes, *A little flour and a few blankets, An administrative history of Aboriginal Affairs in South Australia, 1834–2000*, State Records of South Australia, Adelaide, 2002.

¹¹⁴ SRSA GRG 29/6, File 6/275/33, Departments of Social Welfare and of Aboriginal Affairs, *Final report of joint steering committee on the future use of Colebrook Home*, 21 May 1971.

¹¹⁵ *Trevorrow v. State of South Australia*.

¹¹⁶ See Rev. E Harms and Rev. Hoff (eds.), *Koonibba: a record of 50 years work among the Australian Aborigines* by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia 1901–1901, undated, in FYOW, s. 5.3.

Abuse by unknown perpetrator

A woman born in the early 1940s alleged she was sexually abused at the home in the early 1950s. The PIC was 11 and living at Gerard Mission when a court found her to be destitute and placed her in State care until she turned 18. One month later she was placed at the Koonibba home. The PIC alleged she was sexually abused at the mission and the home.

The PIC told the Inquiry she was raped by a man at the Koonibba home: 'Hid behind the trees up in—when I was over at the cows. Nothing I could do about it.' She said the abuse happened 'three or four times' and she did not report it: 'I just made sure that I kept out of his way'.

Records received by the Inquiry contain a letter written by the PIC to her departmental probation officer, which conveys her distress at rumours spreading around the home that she was sexually active. The probation officer forwarded the letter to the superintendent of Koonibba Mission Station, noting the 'rather disturbing information' and recommending 'any action you consider necessary'. A departmental inspection report filed at this time on the PIC noted that, 'she will want some watching before too long with the boys around the Station'. An inspection report filed three months later noted that the superintendent had assured the department that the PIC had been encouraged to come forward with any concerns. The inspector spoke with the PIC and concluded she had 'settled down now'.

Records show the PIC was released from State care just before her 13th birthday. She told the Inquiry she moved to Adelaide not long after. She said she married when she was still a teenager and was physically and sexually abused by her husband.

Gerard Mission Children's Dormitory, 1946–61

History

The UAM established a mission station on land near the River Murray in South Australia's Riverland in 1946. The children's dormitory on the station operated with the intention of providing Christian instruction to resident Aboriginal children. The UAM received government funding to operate its mission and relied on contributions from families living on the station, as well as child endowment payments from the Commonwealth Government.¹¹⁷ Children living in the dormitory attended school in buildings owned by the Education Department.¹¹⁸ Staff included a superintendent and his wife, a teacher and a staff attendant, looking after an average of 10 children at any one time.¹¹⁹

The mission station staff separated children from their parents living on the station. In 1947 the superintendent wrote that 'there is only one child in the dormitory that is there voluntarily' and remarked on the difficulty of keeping families separated: 'If the parents are on the station you cannot keep the children away from them'. There was no formal policy that required children to live in the dormitory until of school-leaving age and the mission lacked the staff to deal with 'the few children there now'.¹²⁰ Compelling children to live away from their parents for extended periods risked the departure of families from the mission. However, the UAM considered separation to be preferable.

The dormitory was often in poor repair. In 1949 one staff member left due to 'the lack of proper housing and facilities'.¹²¹ A letter from the superintendent in 1951 requested the UAM's assistance in repairing the children's sleeping quarters, as 'there are holes in both the boys and

¹¹⁷ UAM Archives, Box 86, SA Gerard correspondence 1947–48, Minister of Works to UAM chair, 9 Oct. 1947; see Parliament of Australia, <http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Legal_and_Constitutional_Affairs/Completed_inquiries/2004-07/stolen_wages/index>.

¹¹⁸ *ibid.*, Box 38, Oodnadatta correspondence 1946–47, UAM secretary to superintendent of Rural Schools, Education Department, 20 May 1946; Box 86, SA Gerard correspondence 1947–48, Gerard superintendent to UAM secretary, 23 June 1947.

¹¹⁹ *ibid.*, Box 72, Gerard correspondence inward 1948–49, Gerard report year ending June 1949.

¹²⁰ *ibid.*, Box 86, SA Gerard correspondence 1947–48, Gerard superintendent to UAM secretary, 23 June 1947.

¹²¹ *ibid.*, Gerard report year ending June 1949.

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

girls sleeping rooms'.¹²² Another letter stated, 'I am always ashamed of anyone coming in to see the place & the first thing they see is the dilapidated huts which serve as sleeping quarters for the dormitory children'.¹²³

An indication of the disciplinary style of the home can be found in staff correspondence. A senior staff member wrote to the UAM praising a colleague in all but one respect: 'I feel that is one thing that Sister [name] fails in, she will not use corporal punishment'.¹²⁴

In 1961, the State Government assumed control of Gerard Mission and the dormitory was closed that year.¹²⁵

Allegations of sexual abuse

One woman gave evidence of alleged sexual abuse while in State care at Gerard Mission Children's Dormitory in the early 1950s.

Abuse by outsiders

The PIC previously spent several years at the mission and continued to live there after becoming a State child. Records received from the department show that as an 11-year-old she was charged with being destitute and placed by a court in State care. The PIC alleged sexual abuse at the mission in the early 1950s and also at her next placement at Koonibba Children's Home.

The PIC said she was removed from her family when she was very young and placed at the mission:

I knew I was going to Gerard and didn't know where it was. I was happy anyway. They gave me a bag of lollies ... I thought I was just going for a ride. I didn't know I was going for that biggest ride, way up there.

She told the Inquiry she was sexually abused on different occasions by three different men who lived at the mission,

but it is unclear whether these incidents occurred before or after she was placed in State care. The PIC alleged that, several times a week, two of the men entered the children's dormitory through a hole in the wall, pulled her underwear down and indecently assaulted her. She also said a third man molested her in a separate incident. The PIC said the men were all young married men who lived on the mission station. She had been 'too frightened' to report the abuse, which she said went on for years.

The Inquiry received records from the UAM and also a file from the department, which confirm that the PIC was at Gerard when she was placed in State care. The UAM records also show that one of the married men the PIC said entered her dormitory and sexually abused her had previously been placed in State care when he was a teenager for indecently assaulting a seven-year-old girl on the mission. After his release from State care, the alleged perpetrator returned to the mission and married, which is when the PIC told the Inquiry he sexually abused her. The Inquiry also received documents showing that about 15 years after the sexual abuse alleged by this PIC, two of the perpetrators named by her (including the perpetrator who had been placed in State care as a teenager) were charged with the carnal knowledge of another girl who lived on the mission.

Colebrook Home, 1927–81

History

Colebrook Home opened in 1927 in Quorn as an institution for Aboriginal children, operated by the UAM.¹²⁶ In January 1944 the home was relocated to a four-hectare property at Eden Hills in Adelaide, to escape ongoing water shortages at Quorn.¹²⁷

¹²² *ibid.*, Box 72, Gerard correspondence inward 1950–51, superintendent to UAM secretary, 20 Feb. 1951.

¹²³ *ibid.*, superintendent to UAM secretary, 24 Sep. 1948.

¹²⁴ *ibid.*, superintendent to UAM secretary, 19 Apr. 1951.

¹²⁵ FYOW, s.8.8.

¹²⁶ Previously Oodnadatta Children's Home, also known as Colebrook Children's Training Home, Quorn.

¹²⁷ FYOW, s. 8, p. 2.

The number of children at Colebrook varied during its years of operation, from a high of 50 in the 1940s and 1950s to 20–30 in the mid 1960s to just five children in September 1971.

From 1927–52 the home was run by Matron Ruby Hyde and Sister Delia Rutter, who then left Colebrook to form their own hostel for girls.¹²⁸ From this time, the home experienced constant staff turnover, shortages and a deterioration in conditions. In 1953, the UAM secretary wrote that with ‘only two workers and already 40 children’ the superintendent and his wife were at ‘their wits end ... I am very much afraid that if we don’t get help for them very soon they will break’.¹²⁹ The home’s facilities were substandard. The buildings had been erected in 1912 and converted into dormitories and a schoolroom. Board of Health inspections found ‘insanitary conditions’ caused by ‘lack of funds and lack of staff’ in 1954¹³⁰ and ‘appalling conditions’ that constituted ‘a menace to the health, of not only the staff and inmates of the home, but to the residents living in the district’ in 1956.¹³¹

Care at the home emphasised discipline and children’s spiritual training. One staff member in the 1950s routinely woke children at night for reading and prayers.¹³² A superintendent in the 1960s wrote that there were children in the home with ‘a real need for more personal contact, a home perhaps, where more time can be directed to their individual needs’.¹³³ During this period, children who wet their beds were sent to school without breakfast to get them out of this habit.¹³⁴ As one superintendent recalled:

We had some missionaries over zealous, who did great harm too, in punishing native children if bread

*was baked on a Sunday, by making them go hungry, and ... waking children up to read the Bible and pray to them.*¹³⁵

After inspections, the UAM’s application to have Colebrook Home licensed under section 162a of the Social Welfare Act was refused in 1966. This meant the home could not accommodate more than five children under 12.¹³⁶ Colebrook was deemed unsuitable for large numbers of children given its poor amenities, inadequate staff and insufficient awareness of Aboriginal children’s emotional and social needs.¹³⁷ In 1969, after community concern was raised and on the recommendation of the Aboriginal Affairs Board, the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs recommended against the renewal of Colebrook’s lease. The UAM could occupy the property until a decision was made regarding its future use.¹³⁸

The few remaining children moved to a nearby cottage and the buildings at Eden Hills were demolished in May 1974.¹³⁹ Colebrook Home was closed on 31 January 1981. Over 54 years, about 350 children passed through Colebrook.¹⁴⁰

Allegations of sexual abuse

Three PICs gave evidence of sexual abuse at Colebrook Home. No records of court orders or written transfers of control were received in relation to the PICs; however the APB dealt with them during the period in which it was placing children contrary to the legislative scheme.¹⁴¹ Only limited records were available and it was not possible for the Inquiry to finally determine their status as children in State care.

¹²⁸ *ibid.*, p. 3.

¹²⁹ UAM Archives, Box 38, Oodnadatta correspondence 1949–53, letter from UAM secretary to Sister [name], 6 Mar. 1953.

¹³⁰ *ibid.*, Box 36, File Minister of Works and architect in chiefs dept, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs SA head office general correspondence.

¹³¹ UAM Colebrook, Box 45, Leverarch file: Colebrook ‘47–Feb. ’58, letter from secretary, Local Board of Health, Mitcham, to UAM general secretary, 5 Dec. 1956.

¹³² *ibid.*, Colebrook 1949–81, letter from UAM secretary to Mr and Mrs [name], 20 June 1955 and letter from Colebrook superintendent to UAM secretary, 30 Oct. 1963.

¹³³ *ibid.*, Colebrook Home inwards 1958–62, letter from Colebrook superintendent to UAM secretary, 30 Aug. 1962.

¹³⁴ SRSA GRG 29/6, File 6/275/33, Department of Aboriginal Affairs (DAA) memorandum from district welfare officer to assistant director, AA, 28 Sep. 1971.

¹³⁵ UAM Colebrook, Box 45, Colebrook 1949–81, letter from Colebrook superintendent to UAM secretary, 30 July 1973.

¹³⁶ Report of joint steering committee on future use of Colebrook Home.

¹³⁷ SRSA GRG 29/6, File 6/275/33, DAA memorandum from district welfare officer to AA assistant director, 28 Sep. 1971.

¹³⁸ Several petitions concerning Colebrook were laid before Parliament and prominent citizens advocated that the lease not be renewed.

¹³⁹ *The Hills Gazette*, Messenger Newspapers Ltd, vol. 2, no. 62, 22 May 1974, p. 4; SRSA GRG 29/6, File 6/275/33, handwritten file note by unidentified person.

¹⁴⁰ FYOW, s. 8.

¹⁴¹ *Trevorrow v. State of South Australia* [2007].

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

Abuse by multiple perpetrators

A PIC born in the mid 1950s told the Inquiry he was placed at Colebrook Home when he was about three. Records received by the Inquiry include a SWIC that shows he became a State child in his teenage years, well after his discharge from Colebrook.

The PIC alleged staff members inflicted violent physical punishments; one man would use 'his hands, belts, sticks, whatever'.

He said that when he was about seven a much older boy sexually abused him in the Colebrook showers, alleging this boy 'got on top of me and forced himself on me'. He did not report the abuse because he was scared.

The PIC also alleged a man with an accent who visited the home sexually abused him when he was between five and eight years old. He told the Inquiry the man

... exposed himself and got me to touch it and play with it and stuff like that... I turned around and he, like, turned around and sort of rubbed it near my backside and that.

Again, he said he did not report the abuse because he was afraid.

He alleged that on another occasion a staff member exposed himself and 'got me to just play with his penis', then got him to perform oral sex. Again, he was too fearful to report the incident.

The PIC also told the Inquiry another man who visited the home regularly sexually abused him. The man would take the boys out bushwalking and swimming:

He treated us, like, very well ... he'd always buy us stuff, especially on the way back—it would be hot, so a nice big milkshake, icy cold, so you'd think a lot about that.

The man sexually abused him while they were swimming: 'He'd have his penis out and, like, put our hand on it' under the water and while the boys were swimming around his legs. He alleged the man also took him to his home

sometimes and got him to masturbate him and perform oral sex.

The PIC said he has felt he was to blame for the sexual abuse and has avoided 'being too close to or touching my children'.

Abuse by staff

A PIC born in the mid 1940s told the Inquiry she was taken from her family as a baby. A record received by the Inquiry shows her father signed her into the UAM's care when she was only a few months old; her mother had died in childbirth. The PIC told the Inquiry that 'the welfare came in and just whipped me away' after her mother's death. She did not see her father or siblings for over 10 years so 'I never really got to know them, unfortunately'. The Inquiry did not receive a record of a court order placing her in State care.

She told the Inquiry that one of the female staff at Colebrook would sit beside her during film nights at the home,

...and I used to go and sit there, but she used to get my hand and place my hand on her knee, and then before I knew it, my hand was going up further, further up her leg.

She said that her hand went high enough to 'feel her private part'.

The PIC said that at 15 she went to live with two different families and was sexually abused at both placements.

A male PIC born in the early 1950s gave evidence that he was sexually abused at Colebrook between the late 1950s and early 1960s.

Records received by the Inquiry show the PIC had been under the supervision of the Aborigines Protection Board when he was placed at the home in the late 1950s. The records show he was at the home until the mid 1960s. The Inquiry did not receive a record of a court order placing him in State care.

The PIC believed he was sexually abused by one of the male staff at the home but does not have clear memories of the abuse, saying he blanked it out:

I remember him hugging me. Whether it was a genuine hug or not, or whatever, I don't know. But then there's a blank and then at the end of the blank there's a bag of lollies, and I was happy.

He also alleged he was sexually abused by another staff member who followed him into the shower and forced him to perform oral sex, while telling him that Jesus loved him. He told the Inquiry he reported the abuse to police and a schoolteacher.

The PIC also alleged he was subjected to physical violence at the home, particularly after he wet or soiled his bed. He was forced to strip off in front of the other children and had his face 'rubbed ... into the shit or piss'.

At 12 he was transferred from Colebrook to Eden Park, and told the Inquiry he was sent to the Salvation Army Boys Home, Kent Town, when he was about 15. He alleged he was sexually abused at both of these homes.

Campbell House Farm School, Meningie, 1959–63

History¹⁴²

Campbell House Farm School was established in 1959 on land owned by the South Australian Government at Meningie and provided to the Aborigines Protection Board. The board used the 1020 hectares to develop a training farm school for Aboriginal boys. The aim was to equip boys for employment in the farming industry, which would also help them assimilate into local communities. The existing homestead was extended and renovated and the surrounding land cleared for crop planting. Campbell House initially accommodated 14 boys and employed three main staff: a superintendent, matron and farm overseer. Three Aboriginal staff performed general domestic duties.

Boys were educated in a range of agricultural skills, including crop and livestock management. They received religious instruction each fortnight from a visiting Salvation Army missionary and attended weekly church services. Boys of primary school age were educated at the local school before being trained in farming, and many of the children were active in local sporting and community clubs.

In 1963 the newly created Department of Aboriginal Affairs reviewed the school's operation and found that the cost of maintaining it was not justified. In mid 1963 the school was closed and its residents were transferred into foster care.

Allegations of sexual abuse

One PIC gave evidence to the Inquiry of alleged sexual abuse at Campbell House while he was in State care.

Abuse by another resident

A PIC born in the mid 1950s was placed in State care at Campbell House in the early 1960s at the age of five under an order by the APB. He told the Inquiry he was taken into care due to domestic violence and alcoholism at home.

The PIC described Campbell House as '... a great place, adventurous, like running outside and that. Paddocks to play in, animals, cows, sheep, chickens'.

He said an older boy who lived in another house on the property sexually abused him on three occasions. He alleged the boy touched his penis while he waited at the bus stop with the other children. 'I kept saying, "No, no," all the time and he said, "It won't hurt," but the other boys didn't help me.' The PIC said he did not report the abuse because he was 'too frightened'.

He said he was placed in foster care when he was seven and alleged he was sexually abused in that placement.

¹⁴² SRSA GRG 52/1, correspondence files of the Aborigines Office and successor agencies, drawn from docket 122/1959, *History of Campbell House*; APB annual reports 1955, 1959 and 1962; AA annual reports 1963 and 1964.

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

Kurbingai Hostel, 1958–62

History

Kurbingai Hostel opened in Semaphore in 1958. It operated as a private hostel for Aboriginal boys aged up to 16.

In 1961 police received complaints about 'inadequate supervision' and 'unsatisfactory general living conditions' at the hostel. Records show that of about 20 boys living at the home in 1962¹⁴³, 10 were in State care. After concerns had been raised about overcrowding it was resolved that State children would be sent to Kurbingai only in special cases.¹⁴⁴ Further concerns about allegations of sexual abuse prompted the transfer of State children from Kurbingai to other homes.¹⁴⁵

The hostel closed in 1962 and the remaining boys were placed in foster care.

Allegations of sexual abuse

Kurbingai Hostel was also referred to as Suttons Boys Home, as it was opened and operated by Jim Sutton. Seven witnesses gave evidence about this institution, three of them referring to it as Kurbingai and four calling it Suttons. Three of the seven witnesses alleged sexual abuse at the hostel. Because of the lack of records and the actions of the APB in the era, it was not possible for the Inquiry to determine whether they were children in State care.

Abuse by staff

A PIC born in the mid 1940s told the Inquiry he was placed at Kurbingai in the late 1950s when he was about 12. The department could not find any client files relating to him and the Inquiry did not receive any records to show he was in State care.

The PIC recalled the home environment:

At any given time I reckon there was between 30 and 40-odd boys. I reckon we had the capacity

max to house about 38 to 40, at a push, because a lot of us boys, in the time that we were there, we were also part of the labour force that helped with the extensions of the place.

He said that while he was living at Kurbingai, a staff member performed bodily inspections of him, peeling back his foreskin and inspecting his anus on the basis that it was for his health and in his best interests. He also alleged the staff member took boys into his bedroom at night.

Department and APB records relating to Kurbingai Hostel show the PIC and other boys gave written statements reporting sexual abuse by the alleged perpetrator. The records also note that police were informed and the department and APB recommended the removal of all boys from the home, which was closed soon after.

A PIC born in the late 1940s alleged he was sexually abused at Kurbingai in the early 1950s.

Records received by the Inquiry show the boy was placed at the home by the APB because his parents had separated and his mother was unable to care for him. The Inquiry did not receive a record of a court order or written transfer of control placing him in State care at this home, although he was later placed in State care by a court for disorderly conduct.

The PIC alleged that a staff member at the home regularly got drunk and asked him and the other boys to go to bed with him. The manager also rubbed Vicks chest rub on the boys when they had a cold:

He liked ... rubbing us down with Vicks, but then he'd be, like, feeling us all over and I was thinking this is not right ... all over our arse parts ... and our genitals.

He also recalled that the same man flogged the boys with a cane, belt or strap for minor things:

When there was a group of us having a shower, he'd come in the showers, too, and he'd be more

¹⁴³ SRSA GRG 52/16, APB minutes 1960–62,.

¹⁴⁴ SRSA GRG 29/6 236/1962, CWPRB minutes (minute 1779), 7 June.

¹⁴⁵ Records indicate that nine children were transferred to Kumanka Hostel in North Adelaide and others to church homes, Campbell House Farm School and Glandore Children's Home. SRSA GRG 29/6 236/1962, CWPRB minute, 28 June 1962; SRSA GRG 52/16, minutes of the APB, 1960–62.

or less saying for us to sort of masturbate, you know, and he'd be, he'd sort of make us do that, and while he'd stand there watching us ...

APB and department records show the PIC made a formal written report regarding the above conduct. Other boys made similar allegations and as a result recommendations were made by both authorities to remove all boys from the home. The home was closed soon after.

Another PIC born in the late 1940s also made allegations of sexual abuse at Kurbingai in the early 1960s. He told the Inquiry he was placed there when he was about 14 as a result of a request by his mother to the APB. From the records available, it did not appear that he was placed in State care by a court order or written transfer of control.

The PIC was at the home for only a few months before it was closed down. The PIC told the Inquiry a staff member sexually abused him and other boys:

So then he started rubbing us down with the Vicks and that and it wasn't just rubbing you down on your chest and that; it was like down between your legs and all that, yes, and that wasn't too—it didn't feel right.

He also alleged the staff member pressured boys into indecent behaviour while showering: 'He'd want us to start masturbating and he'd be standing there watching us.'

Oodnadatta Children's Home, 1924–27, 1946–74

History

The Oodnadatta Children's Home was the first UAM mission station in South Australia.¹⁴⁶ Established in 1924 by Christian missionary Annie Lock, the mission first housed

five children in an iron shed. Matron Ruby Hyde took over care of the children in 1925 and in 1926 they moved to a cottage bought by the UAM. In 1927 Matron Hyde and the 12 children at the mission were transferred to the Colebrook Home at Quorn.¹⁴⁷ The Oodnadatta home reopened in 1947, with two superintendents and 12 children.¹⁴⁸

The home was a rudimentary building with two dormitories, a living area and bathing and cooking facilities. A new dormitory was completed in 1955.¹⁴⁹ The home always housed between 13 and 17 children and there were generally two superintendents, assisted by other staff. Missionaries educated the children until they were accepted at the local Oodnadatta Public School in 1957.

In 1958 many children, some without their parents' consent, were sent south to Colebrook Home, which had relocated to Eden Hills.¹⁵⁰ By 1966, the Department of Aboriginal Affairs had stopped placing children at the home.¹⁵¹ In 1967 the director of Social Welfare advised the Minister that numerous improvements to the home's facilities were needed before it could be licensed under the Social Welfare Act. In 1970 the home cared for six children. A Commonwealth-funded children's hostel was built at Oodnadatta that year and was operated by the Save the Children Fund in consultation with the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. The superintendent of the Oodnadatta mission left to run the new hostel and the UAM did not find a replacement superintendent. By 1974 there was no UAM children's dormitory in operation at Oodnadatta.

Allegations of sexual abuse

One woman gave evidence to the Inquiry about alleged sexual abuse at Oodnadatta Children's Home.

¹⁴⁶ FYOW, s., p. 12.

¹⁴⁷ *ibid.*

¹⁴⁸ UAM Archives, Box 38, Oodnadatta correspondence 1946–57.

¹⁴⁹ National Library of Australia, TRC 5000/272, *Bringing them home* oral history project.

¹⁵⁰ FYOW, s. 8.

¹⁵¹ SRSA GRG 29/6, Item 186/66, Licensing of children's homes under the Social Welfare Act; UAM Archives, Box 59, Adelaide branch office general correspondence, 12 Dec. 1972 – 13 Jan. 1966.

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

Abuse by outsiders

APIC born in the late 1950s told the Inquiry she was removed from her family and placed on an Aboriginal mission when she was a small child. Copies of documents received from the UAM show she was admitted to the mission at her mother's request when she was five and the APB paid maintenance. The Inquiry did not receive a record of a court order or a written transfer of control placing her in State care at this home.

The PIC told the Inquiry that the home's staff were very strict: 'We were physically disciplined on a daily basis with a thick leather strap'. She also recalled 'scuffing my shoes and getting reprimanded for that, and that would be without tea', and that staff forbade the children to listen to music, interact with other people in the town or go to the movies. She told the Inquiry she was forced to go to church and pray.

The PIC alleged she was sexually abused at the home when she was about 10 or 11. She said a young man who was the son of a carer at the home came into her bedroom and got into her bed. He positioned himself on top of her and moved 'in a sexual motion ... I can remember something between my legs, I'm not sure what that was, and wetness'. The PIC believed that this sexual abuse may have happened more than once but she did not report it because she was afraid of being punished:

We were too scared. Too scared. It was about, you know, trying to keep the peace. I can remember doing things to try and please people, and got a beating as a result of it.

She also told the Inquiry she was injured by a staff member after she had asked boys at the home where the mop and broom were kept. The staff member assumed she was fraternising with the boys, she said, and kicked her so hard at the base of the spine that the injured area is still tender.

The records show the PIC was discharged from the home when aged 12 so she could attend secondary school in Adelaide.

¹⁵² SRSa GRS 714/1/P, correspondence of the RCCAC, Jan.–Aug. 1983.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, Sep.–Dec. 1983, supervisor Residential and Foster Care to Otherway House supervisor, 5 Dec. 1983; SRSa GRS 10986/2, branch head circular 1650, Sep. 1984.

Otherway House, 1983–84

History

Otherway House was operated by Catholic Welfare to provide services for indigenous children. The Aboriginal Catholic Community (ACC), an organisation that provided services including an opportunity shop, craft centre and social centre, developed the home. Its staff operated a street work program in Hindley Street in Adelaide's CBD, focusing on the Aboriginal youth who frequented that area. In January 1983, the ACC applied for a licence to operate a home for Aboriginal boys and girls on a property leased from the Aboriginal Lands Trust in Sussex Street, North Adelaide. Otherway House provided emergency and short-term accommodation to adolescent males as an interim to independent living.¹⁵² The licence expired in early 1984; the ACC decided not to continue the program and Otherway House closed in August that year.¹⁵³

Allegations of sexual abuse

One person gave evidence to the Inquiry about alleged sexual abuse at Otherway House while he was in State care.

Abuse by outsiders

An Aboriginal PIC born in the mid 1960s alleged sexual abuse during a placement at Otherway House in the mid 1980s. Departmental records show the PIC was one month old when a court found him neglected and placed him in State care. He was legally adopted as a two-year-old after living in a government institution and in foster care. The PIC was again placed in State care under his adoptive name as a six-year-old in the early 1970s, on the grounds of being neglected. He told the Inquiry he was sexually abused at Kennion House, in foster care and at Otherway House.

He was transferred to Otherway House when he was 17; his SWIC shows he was at the home for just less than two months. His departmental client file does not have a record of this placement. The PIC told the Inquiry the home was

run by the Catholic Church and accommodated Aboriginal boys: 'They used to get guys out of McNally, the training centre. They weren't able to go home, but they would get released out of lock-up into the care.'

He alleged he was drugged and sexually abused by men during his placement at Otherway House: 'Well, one would perform oral and then ... do it to you and then you'd have to do it to someone else'. He also alleged one of the men took him and another boy interstate, where they were drugged and sexually abused.

The PIC was released from State care at 18 and told the Inquiry that for a while he became involved in prostitution: 'I was used to men, plus I knew the men that were willing to give cash'. He said he started this when he was about 17, while still in State care, prostituting himself 'on the odd occasion' until he had 'enough money to leave the State', when he was about 18 or 19.

Homes for children with disabilities

History

Until the mid 20th century the care of children with disabilities was left largely to non-government agencies. Townsend House was established in 1874, Minda Home in 1898 and the Somerton Home for Crippled Children in 1939. Governments endorsed the provision of residential and associated care by non-government agencies and contributed funds and subsidies. Successive governments endorsed the placement and restraint of children with disabilities in adult mental hospitals from the mid 19th century to the mid 20th century. It was not until 1958, when Lochiel Park opened, that the government assumed direct responsibility for the provision of residential care to children with disabilities, including those in State care. With the establishment of the Strathmont Centre, a facility built in the early 1970s, the government displayed its awareness of the distinction between providing residential care for children with disabilities and children with mental health problems.

¹⁵⁴ FYOW, s. 4, p. 44.

¹⁵⁵ SRSA GRG 29/124, CWPRB minutes, vol. 14, 1943–45, p. 2207.

¹⁵⁶ CWPRB annual report 1947, p.3.

¹⁵⁷ SRSA GRG 29/124, CWPRB minutes, vol. 14, 1943–45, p. 2247.

¹⁵⁸ SRSA GRG 29/6 134/1948, suggestion provision of an Institution for Subnormal Children.

Summary of evidence

Twelve people gave evidence to the Inquiry that they were sexually abused while placed in homes for children with disabilities. From available records, the Inquiry was able to determine that 10 of those people were in State care at the time of the alleged sexual abuse. The allegations of the two people who were not in State care are reported in that they alleged sexual abuse in the same homes as the 10 people who were in State care.

The allegations include indecent assault, fellatio, vaginal intercourse and anal intercourse. The abuse was allegedly perpetrated by staff, other residents and adults who preyed on the children who ran away from the homes.

Lochiel Park Boys Training Centre / Community Unit, 1958–present

History

Lochiel Park opened in Campbelltown in 1958. Its initial focus was on children with borderline to mild intellectual disabilities.¹⁵⁴

In August 1930 the CWPRB proposed that a psychological clinic be established to treat children who were considered 'subnormal or mentally defective'. It was decided in 1943 that two such homes should be established, one each for girls and boys¹⁵⁵, but progress in establishing the facilities was slow.¹⁵⁶ As a result, children of 'a mental age of less than five years' were placed at Seaforth Home.¹⁵⁷ Seaforth Home segregated children with disabilities in an isolation block that was intended to be used for children with infectious diseases. The home's medical officer commented in the 1940s that:

*At present there apparently exists no provision in any Government mental institution for the reception and segregation of children who are mentally defective. The need for such an institution is considered an urgent one.*¹⁵⁸

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

In 1948, about 42 children aged between two and 12 also lived at Parkside Mental Hospital.¹⁵⁹ At the time, Minda accepted only children aged between six and 12.¹⁶⁰

The need for specialised accommodation for children in State care with disabilities was raised again in 1952. The CWPRB recommended that 'the provision of suitable residential accommodation for subnormal wards of the State be regarded as urgent by the Government'.¹⁶¹

Lochiel Park provided secure care for boys with mild intellectual disabilities, learning difficulties and behavioural problems. Residents lived in a large dormitory divided into small cubicles. They were allowed group excursions and occasional individual outings and were granted holiday and weekend leave to visit their families. The residents received instruction in personal care and basic living skills and were trained in handicrafts, gardening and animal husbandry.¹⁶² Residents were also assisted in making the transition to independent living in the community, for example in securing employment.¹⁶³

In 1970 Lochiel Park expanded to admit boys from other institutions.¹⁶⁴ The unit became a training centre that could accommodate up to 36 residents. Psychologists and welfare officers visited Lochiel Park to help staff undertake residents' assessments and to develop individual programs, which were to be assessed monthly.

Like many other homes, Lochiel Park was affected by the shift away from large institutional care towards cottage homes and family-based foster care in the 1970s.¹⁶⁵ In 1977 residential care was divided into two units, one a

secure unit for new residents who received training until they had adjusted to the centre and the second an open unit that focused on individual residents' needs.¹⁶⁶ Lochiel Park stayed open during a further departmental restructure that closed cottage homes in the late 1970s.¹⁶⁷ A third living unit was established in 1979, designed to help residents make the transition to independent living.¹⁶⁸

Lochiel Park was intended as a temporary residence for children with disabilities who were able to return to living in the community. Children requiring long-term care were generally placed at the Strathmont Centre, which opened in 1971, or Ru Rua Nursing Home.¹⁶⁹ After Strathmont opened, Lochiel Park focused increasingly on secure care for young offenders.

Lochiel Park provided care to children whose needs could not be met in a family-style care setting.¹⁷⁰ However, concerns were raised in the early 1990s that the open style of residential care at Lochiel Park resulted in young offenders being placed in close proximity to younger and vulnerable residents.¹⁷¹ During the 1990s, it was alleged that residents absconded from the centre for days at a time and prostituted themselves in the city. It was also alleged that residents of Lochiel Park were sexually active with known paedophiles. In 1993 it was reported that a 12-year-old resident at Lochiel Park was raped nine times by another resident over a period of two weeks. The Inquiry heard confidential evidence that staff were not permitted to secure the facility and prevent absconding.

Lochiel Park was converted to a community living unit in 1995.¹⁷²

¹⁵⁹ *ibid*

¹⁶⁰ SRSA GRG 29/124, CWPRB minutes, vol. 15, 1946–48, p. 2629.

¹⁶¹ *ibid.*, vol. 17, 1952–54, p. 2977.

¹⁶² FYOW, s. 4, p. 44; CWPRB annual report 1963, p.14.

¹⁶³ DSW annual report 1966, p.17.

¹⁶⁴ *ibid.*, p. 20

¹⁶⁵ Marsden, *A brief history of State involvement in the care of children in South Australia*.

¹⁶⁶ DSW annual report 1977, p. 40.

¹⁶⁷ *ibid.*

¹⁶⁸ DCW annual report 1979, p. 38.

¹⁶⁹ *ibid.*; W Cramond & N Kent, *From darkness to light: A historical note on South Australia's services for the developmentally disabled 1961–1971*, 2003, p.7.

¹⁷⁰ Marsden, p. 36.

¹⁷¹ Marsden, p. 37.

¹⁷² DFACS annual report 1995–96, p. 25.

General evidence

The Inquiry received evidence from a witness who worked at Lochiel Park in the 1970s and 1980s. The witness said the mixture of children was a problem:

There were very vulnerable children as well who'd clearly been physically and sexually abused and neglected, who were probably pretty fearful in many ways of living in these large facilities because there was a fair range of boys ... anything from 12 to 18.

He said some boys were already hardened by experiences of living in other forms of congregate care, particularly at the Salvation Army's Eden Park:

There was a relatively large number of young people who had made that progression through Eden Park to Lochiel Park ... we were as staff often concerned about the young people who'd come through there and some of the stories that certainly told about their treatment. Generally, I think that a lot of young people had reported some pretty rough tactics by some of the other young people, and certainly there was a worrying level of sexual activity that had been reported by some.

The witness said that at night the boys were confined to dormitories without active supervision. The superintendent and the senior residential care worker lived on the property, but well away from the dormitories. The boys had unrestricted opportunity to move around the dormitories and bathrooms at night, and the witness said he has no doubt intimidation and sexual abuse occurred. In later years, with only one staff member on active night shift, there was still an inability to monitor and prevent sexual activities between the boys.

Departmental files record that in the mid 1970s a 15-year-old boy was charged with rape and admitted to Lochiel Park on remand. Although he was considered a serious offender, he was placed with other residents who were victims of sexual crimes. In the mid to late 1970s the superintendent asked for a second night officer to cover

rostered days off, annual leave and sick days. His request noted that Lochiel Park was 'experiencing problems with some particularly unsettled boys'. Later that year it is noted that another 'serious offender' had been living at Lochiel Park and that after several incidents he was removed and placed at Brookway Park, to be put on that home's serious offenders list.

Other general witnesses, including former staff, gave evidence about Lochiel Park from 1990–2004. One witness told the Inquiry about the early 1990s:

When I first started, it was for children with an intellectual disability ... then we started to look at broader criteria and mainly targeting the most difficult young people to house in a residential setting. They would be young people that perpetrated inappropriate sexual abuse on other children, children that had some form of diagnosed mental health issue.

The result was that children in late adolescence mixed with pre-pubescent children. Sexual offenders mixed with victims of sexual offences. Young people with depression (who required a calm and quiet environment) mixed with those who had other mental health issues that caused them to be violent, loud, abusive and difficult to control. Lochiel Park staff had difficulty with the support that this mixture of young people demanded. As a place of last resort, Lochiel Park did not have the option of refusing admission to particular children, even if they were exposed to risk.

There is evidence that staff were aware of some of the sexual contact between the children. Measures were put in place to curb this behaviour, such as a sexual perpetrators program, which was introduced in the early to mid 1990s, and an extensive therapeutic program run in conjunction with Behavioural Intervention Services and a number of other departmental agencies. However, the staff in general felt these programs, although sound in theory, were lacking in practice. A general witness told the Inquiry that no real

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

progress was made due to the different agencies' ideas on policy and the low tolerance levels they applied to children who were among the 'most difficult' under the care of the department.

One witness emphasised that staff did the best they could with the available resources and knowledge. However, resources were stretched beyond capacity, teachers refused to teach children, staff refused to accept advice from psychologists and psychiatrists, and key staff resigned.

Lochiel Park continues to be under pressure because of co-location of children of different ages, those with disabilities and mental health issues, and those with and without criminal records. A general witness told the Inquiry:

Yes, Lochiel Park is struggling. I think, at the moment ... I know that they have got a significant discrepancy in the children that are accommodated there. At the moment, they have got some very street-wise, drug-dependent older children and some very young children. It has not been by management's design but sheer pressure on the system to take young people.

Another continuing problem for Lochiel Park through the 1990s was its inability to prevent residents from absconding. A general witness said:

They would disappear for two or three days at a time. They would come back looking like a lost, bedraggled dog, dirty, filthy, hungry ... sometimes with cigarettes, sometimes with new shoes.

The Inquiry received information that paedophiles would contact the centre and demand that certain boys be allowed out:

As guardianship children, these young boys and girls were prime targets. Some of them became habitual absconders from Lochiel Park. They were available day and night in the city and the parklands and they were easy to manipulate.

Staff started to patrol the Veale Gardens area when the children ran away, and often they would find them and bring them back.

But Lochiel Park was fighting against the tide. The incentives for the children to run away outmatched the measures the department used to detain them. A general witness said:

Sometimes they disappeared into men's homes, who would harbour them for three, four, five days at a time and then let them go. That's when they would come back with decent clothing ... they were basically prostituting for cigarettes, drugs, maybe some alcohol and a good time.

The witness said one of the boys left Lochiel Park and moved into the house of a paedophile, who

... looked after him better than we looked after him. He stopped offending, he got off the streets ... this bloke sent him to school ... stuck by him through thick and thin. [The boy] would run away, he'd bring him back. [The boy] would burn his house down, he'd build a new one. [The boy] would kill this man's cat. He'd buy another. I couldn't believe—[the boy] one day walked into the unit and he was a young man ... you had a known sexual offender actually do more with this kid than the department could. It was just all bizarre.

This was not an isolated case.

At this time, Lochiel Park was an open unit and staff were unable to lock the dormitories to prevent the boys from running away. The Inquiry was told attempts were made on several occasions to detain the children by taking such action as securing the units, but the department disapproved. A departmental employee also recommended the establishment of a treatment unit designed to break the cycle of running away, but the project was never taken up. It was recorded in Lochiel Park logbooks that, on occasions, experienced boys would take other more naive residents with them and introduce them to 'unlawful and

inappropriate sexual behaviour'. A general witness told the Inquiry:

Every time they run and there's reinforcement, be it a dollar or a new pair of sneakers or a skateboard, you have lost whatever therapy you have done leading up to that ... there's a perception—again social worker driven—that unless there's a very, very serious reason, they have a right not to be locked up and to choose what they do.

Allegations of sexual abuse

Eight people gave evidence to the Inquiry that they were sexually abused while placed at Lochiel Park. All were in State care. The alleged sexual abuse included indecent assault, gratifying prurient interest, oral and anal rape, and prostitution. The alleged perpetrators were staff members, other boys living at Lochiel Park and outsiders including a father, a mother's husband, an Intensive Adolescent Support worker, strangers and paedophiles. Some of the abuse occurred when the children absconded from Lochiel Park.

Abuse by multiple perpetrators

A PIC born in the mid 1960s alleged he was sexually abused at Lochiel Park during his placement there in the late 1970s. He had been placed in State care by a court at 12 for being uncontrollable. He told the Inquiry that while in State care he was sexually abused at Brookway Park and then Lochiel Park. Before being placed in State care, he had been sexually abused at Eden Park.

The PIC lived at Lochiel Park for about four years as a teenager and alleged he was sexually abused by a staff member there:

I was in the shower, in the bathroom one day and he came in and was talking about some gibberish—I don't know what he was talking about—and just thought he'd show me the proper way to pull my dick.

He said he reported the incident to another staff member who looked into the allegation and then dismissed it on the basis that his colleague had been performing a medical check:

I got called into the office and I was told that he was following up on a medical problem that I had complained about, and that's all that was to be said about it.

He also told the Inquiry his father sexually abused him when he took him out on visits. He said this abuse had continued from when he was at Bedford Park Boys Training Centre. He said he reported this abuse to a departmental worker: 'She wrote it all down on a piece of paper and then I never saw her again'.

The Inquiry has received client files from the department but they do not contain any record of the PIC's allegations.

When the PIC turned 18 he was discharged from State care and was on his own. He said he could not read or write properly, had not received vocational training, had no job skills, did not know how to live independently and that he committed crime. He held various jobs but nothing worked out for him:

I tried several places, but just didn't like the authority. Tried to get one as a baker, tried one as a truck assistant, but yes, just—I didn't like being touched or being told what to do.

A PIC born in the early 1960s alleged he was sexually abused during his placement at Lochiel Park in the early 1970s. Departmental records show that at 12 the PIC was charged with offences and placed in State care by a court until he turned 18. He was initially remanded to Windana Remand Home where, he alleged, staff required him and other boys to parade nude.

Records show the PIC was placed at Lochiel Park when aged about 13, and remained there for about six months. He told the Inquiry that on 'a couple' of occasions a staff member took him and other boys to a place where men would 'take pictures of us. They'd get us to lie next to other kids and they'd take photos of us naked'. He said he reported the abuse: 'I told a counsellor about it at Lochiel Park and she said she was going to talk to somebody about it but I never heard anything about it'.

The PIC told the Inquiry he absconded from the home on several occasions and was sent to an assessment centre

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

‘to find out why I kept running away all the time’. He alleged a staff member at the assessment centre sexually abused him:

... while I was out there another male person had tried to put his—you know, he tried to root me ... I was actually bleeding from the rear end and doctors were actually involved.

At 14 he absconded from Lochiel Park—‘I shot through at the end because of the abuse. I got sick of it’—and went to live with his mother. He alleged that while living with her he was raped by her husband.

Client files received from the department do not record the alleged sexual abuse. The PIC was released from State care when he was 18. He told the Inquiry:

I just wish it had never happened, that's all. That's all I've got to say. I don't think people realise how much it really plays on your mind. It's not so bad when you're in your 20s but, you know, you get older and it plays on your mind a lot. It still does ... I reckon it's a lot worse.

A woman who contacted the Inquiry was seven when placed in State care in the mid 1990s, after a court found her to be in need of care. The PIC said she experienced physical and sexual abuse before being placed in State care. She told the Inquiry she was sexually abused while placed in foster care, at Lochiel Park and then at Gilles Plains Community Unit.

She was at Lochiel Park for about three years from the age of 12. Of Lochiel Park, she said, ‘If you had a good worker, you were good. If you had a shit worker, you were fucked’. She said three staff members sexually abused her on separate occasions. She deliberately harmed herself while at Lochiel Park and was confined to her room as a punishment: ‘Due to that they used to come in my room and that and start touching me up’. The PIC named one worker who entered her bedroom at night and told her that to gain privileges, such as having a television in her room, she would have to kiss and touch him and let him touch her. She said this happened ‘numerous times there. That’s the only way I could get my TV back or supper’. The PIC

was monitored closely because of her self-harming; she said that ‘sometimes I would have to do that [submit to abuse] so I could go and get a walk’. On these occasions, she said, the worker touched her breasts and genitals underneath her clothing; she performed oral sex on him and he ejaculated. He also allegedly purchased underwear for her to wear.

The PIC named another worker at Lochiel Park who she alleged sexually abused her. She said this man ordered her and another resident girl to his office where, initially, they thought they were to be reprimanded. But on numerous occasions he encouraged her and the other girl to perform sexual acts on one another, and touched both of them while this was happening. She said he also entered the PIC’s room, where he would ‘feel me up’. On one occasion he allegedly asked her to give him oral sex, which she did.

The PIC said a third male worker at Lochiel Park grabbed at her legs, breasts and stomach area and also asked her and another female resident to dress in short skirts for him and to wear lingerie he had purchased.

She attributed her self-harming in part to the abuse, saying, ‘I hated it’. She said of her time at Lochiel Park: ‘If I was outside alone I felt safe because no-one could come and get me, but being in the bedroom was a different thing’.

On one occasion, she said, she absconded from Lochiel Park and was away for three days. On her return, she had an escort agency’s business card and a supply of condoms. She told staff she was working for the agency, being transported by car from client to client. She was about 16 at the time and said of working as a prostitute:

... because I've been hurt so many times, I believe I am the scum of the Earth. Because I'm the scum of the Earth, I've got to do the worst job possible and the worst job possible is prostitution ... So many people have abused me in the past, I just think, why don't I get paid for it? Instead of me getting hurt by youth workers and stuff, I'll just get paid to get hurt.

The PIC did not report the workers’ abuse to the department and came forward to the Inquiry only because

'I'm not at the units no more'. According to the PIC:

You live in a behavioural unit where you're supposedly the naughty kids of the—State. So, how can you say anything? ... If they couldn't find you a foster home anyway, how the fuck could you say anything? If you said anything you would have the shit of the whole entire team of workers, so I learnt to keep my mouth shut.

The department's records pertaining to the PIC include numerous opinions that she had a propensity to make false allegations of abuse.

The PIC told the Inquiry:

I just reckon there should be someone out there that people can talk to about—if they get hurt or stuff, because it's so under the blanket, it's so hidden.

Abuse by staff

In the late 1980s, a court placed a 13-year-old PIC under an interim guardianship order as a result of allegations that his father had been sexually abusing him. About two months later the boy was placed in State care until the age of 18 after a court found him to be in need of care or protection. The PIC told the Inquiry that before he was placed in State care his father had sexually abused him for several years.

He spent time in various homes and foster placements before he was placed at Lochiel Park at 15. He remained there for a little over two years. The PIC had positive memories of Lochiel Park, saying he believed the staff were 'good workers. They were really nice'.

He said while he was in the home's independent living unit, Brookway Drive, a male staff member entered his room and masturbated him:

He came into my room and I don't know how it came about, but he wanked me off and after that I felt really stressed so I just covered myself up with the doona and waited till my care worker came in to see me.

The PIC said he told another staff member he was feeling unwell and was sent to see the doctor but did not disclose the sexual abuse: 'I just went about my daily routine of going to high school and just forgetting'.

He said he suffers from a psychiatric illness that he believes may have been exacerbated by the sexual abuse.

A PIC born in the late 1970s alleged he was sexually abused while at Lochiel Park in the early 1990s. Extensive client files about the PIC from the age of five were received from the department; it received reports that the boy had developmental difficulties and was at risk of physical and emotional abuse. It appears from the records that he was placed in State care when his mother signed papers consenting to his adoption, and as a result he came under the guardianship of the chief executive of the department, pursuant to section 25 of the *Adoption Act 1988*.

Between the ages of five and 12 the PIC was in several placements, including foster care, a private home, cottage care and an assessment unit. The records show he presented carers with challenging behaviour and as a result the placements broke down. He was placed at Lochiel Park, where he remained until he was 16.

Records show he continued his challenging behaviour at Lochiel Park and had a propensity to abscond with other boys. As a result, he was assigned an Intensive Adolescent Support (IAS) worker. The PIC alleged this worker sexually abused him on a camping trip, doing 'sexual stuff, and I ended up in hospital because of it as well'.

Records from the department confirm the PIC went camping for a weekend with the IAS worker with the permission of his social worker. On his return he was found to be semi-comatose and likely to have been under the influence of a drug. He was taken to hospital and examined by Child Protection Services for possible sexual abuse, which could not be confirmed.

The records show that police investigated and charged the IAS worker with unlawful detention and unlawful admission of drugs. The charges did not proceed because of concern about the PIC's ability to deal with the court process. It is

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

also alleged that police discovered photographs of naked boys at the IAS worker's home.

A report on the department's file states that on a previous occasion a worker had entered the PIC's room at an assessment unit and found him standing naked with an erect penis in front of the same IAS worker who is alleged to have sexually abused him. The report states: 'This matter was reported to the acting senior who knew [alleged perpetrator] and did not report this incident to the social worker'.

In the mid 1990s, the boy was known to be absconding from the home with other boys who associated with paedophiles in places such as Veale Gardens.

At 16 the PIC left Lochiel Park to board with an older man with the approval of the department. The PIC has continued to live with the man.

Abuse by other residents

Another PIC was three when he was placed in State care by court order in the early 1960s on the basis of neglect. Departmental records show his parents were considered unfit guardians due to a poor standard of accommodation and an allegation that the father had behaved indecently in front of his children.

The PIC spent short periods at a government home and with his father before being placed in foster care. He alleged his foster father sexually abused him. Over the next seven years the PIC was in several government homes, cottage homes, short foster placements and one long foster placement.

The PIC was placed at Lochiel Park before his 12th birthday. It was noted that he had learning difficulties, which were later identified as dyslexia. He told the Inquiry that during his time at Lochiel Park and throughout his childhood he suffered extensive bullying:

Lochiel Park was full of thugs. I was never a part of Lochiel Park or the kids that were there. It was always different. There were a lot of names and a lot of bullying. I didn't like it there much.

The PIC told the Inquiry he was sexually abused at Lochiel Park. He and another resident were near the animals housed on the grounds when 'the boy that was with me came up behind me and grabbed me by the hips and started ...' He told the Inquiry that what happened was sexual in nature but he could not go into any detail.

The PIC was at Lochiel Park for less than four months before being placed with his father despite an earlier direction from the head of the department forbidding this to occur in light of the previous allegations of abuse.

The PIC was also placed at Kumanka Boys Hostel, where he alleged he also was sexually abused.

Abuse after absconding

APIC born in the early 1980s gave evidence of extensive sexual abuse during a placement at Lochiel Park in the early to mid 1990s.

Departmental records include comprehensive client files and show that in the early 1990s the PIC's parents approached the department seeking assistance because of their son's behavioural problems, including violence and running away from home. The PIC was seen by psychologists and social workers and was diagnosed as having a borderline intellectual disability. He was prescribed medication to calm him down and make his behaviour less challenging but, the PIC told the Inquiry, his parents were unable to control him: 'I'd been carrying on, you know, with having arguments with my parents and breaking out of the house, running away—stuff like that'.

When the PIC was 12 he was placed in State care under a temporary administrative order. During the next two years he was placed in State care under a series of temporary administrative and court orders due to continued erratic and criminal behaviour. In between orders he sometimes lived with his parents but the attempted reunification failed each time. He spent time in cottage accommodation, departmental units and an Intensive Neighbourhood Care placement.

The PIC continually absconded from his placements and the family home. He told the Inquiry he met a man who

'picked me up and introduced me to the beat. He got me drunk and started to kiss me and sex started to happen'. Records show the man was charged with rape but the matter did not proceed to trial; the PIC said he did not want to proceed with the charges 'because I felt sorry for him'.

At 13 the PIC was placed at Lochiel Park. As it was not a secure place, he regularly absconded with other boys, stayed on the streets and began to smoke marijuana:

I kept running away. I did this basically all the time I was there ... Just wanted to be free. I wanted to be home. If I couldn't be home, I wanted to be free.

The PIC said he begged for money on the streets and then progressed to prostitution: 'I started to go on the beat and making money that way'. He told the Inquiry that for about five years he performed sexual favours for male strangers, often in Veale Gardens, and usually went away with these men.

He said he had sex with many men while absconding from Lochiel Park. The departmental records show its staff and the courts were aware of the PIC's conduct but felt relatively powerless to prevent it because Lochiel Park was not a secure unit. One staff member reported that the boy was absent from the unit more than half the time. The PIC spent several periods in secure facilities due to criminal conduct but continued absconding, offending and prostituting himself each time he was released.

The records show the department invested considerable financial and human resources in managing the PIC, including a prolonged period of one-to-one care.

The records show that alleged paedophiles often telephoned Lochiel Park asking for the PIC. On several occasions charges were either not laid or were withdrawn against alleged perpetrators due to a view that convictions were unlikely or the PIC was unwilling to give evidence.

The PIC told the Inquiry he has sympathy for the men alleged to have sexually abused him: 'They need some

help. I feel for them, you know.' He said he has had trouble with drug addiction and criminal offending since his release from State care at 18: 'Speed and dope, alcohol. Been in trouble ever since, basically, you know. Basically, I've been in trouble ever since'.

He also said he has suffered as a result of the sexual abuse: 'Just the loss of your soul. Your soul gets taken away; nothing left ...' He said he manages despite not having had any counselling for sexual abuse: 'I still get through it day to day. I get through it without it.'

Another PIC was first placed in State care at the age of eight in the late 1980s. He was placed on several short-term guardianship orders and later under the guardianship of the Minister until he turned 18. According to his SWIC, his placement in State care was a result of his family being 'unable to cope' with his behaviour. He alleged he was sexually abused while in State care at Clarence Park Assessment Unit and then at Lochiel Park.

The PIC lived at Lochiel Park in the early 1990s for about two years as part of the department's effort to reduce his absconding and offending. The department believed he was engaging in unlawful sexual intercourse during the periods he absconded from placements and that he was known to associate with suspected paedophiles.

Of his time at Lochiel Park, the PIC told the Inquiry, 'I was never really there. I kept on running away, like I was [doing] at every other unit'. He said he absconded regularly, frequented locations in the city known for prostitution and had unlawful sexual intercourse with unknown men. He said he and another boy met a man who took them back to his home and photographed them naked. The PIC said the man was charged and tried for this offence and he gave evidence at the trial. He could not recall the man's full name. The PIC told the Inquiry he was charged with soliciting during this period. The department's records confirm the PIC absconded regularly from Lochiel Park and was suspected of having unlawful sexual intercourse, despite efforts to restrict his movements.

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

Minda, 1898–present

History

During the 19th century children with disabilities were often placed in the Adelaide and Parkside asylums along with adults. The Minda Home for Weak-Minded Children was established in Fullarton in 1898 and was moved to Brighton in 1911. From 1898 to 1912, Minda's income was derived primarily from charitable contributions, parents' fees and government grants. In 1911, the name was shortened to Minda Home because many residents had become adults.¹⁷³

Initially Minda's aim was to provide services for children who were moderately or severely disabled.¹⁷⁴ However, children with profound levels of intellectual disability were approved for admission soon after the home opened.¹⁷⁵ By 1940, however, Minda no longer admitted children with profound disabilities; only those it considered 'trainable'.¹⁷⁶ One reported reason for this was parents' reluctance to admit their children to an institution where they would be in close contact with the profoundly disabled. Restricting admissions meant Minda would be able to receive more of the 'better type epileptic and feeble-minded'.¹⁷⁷ This would be done by declining admission to children under six or over 12, and preferring those aged between six and eight.¹⁷⁸ Twenty-six children with profound intellectual disabilities were transferred from Minda to Parkside Mental Hospital, which served to highlight the fact that the government had no institution for disabled children at that time. The superintendent of Parkside Mental Hospital (previously asylum) noted that

*...because of the inability to obtain admission to Minda Home, several cases with ages three to nine years were admitted to Parkside and must in consequence be accommodated in wards with adult patients.*¹⁷⁹

During the 1940s and 1950s Minda Home experienced a severe staff shortage, according to its annual reports.¹⁸⁰ Further 'chronic' staff shortages were noted in the late 1960s, due to a staff turnover that was 'far higher than desirable'.¹⁸¹

Moreover, the operation of Minda Home into the 1950s was marked by the absence of written procedures concerning residents' rights and staff conduct. Staff used physical punishment as a disciplinary method, in the belief that 'these people could not be controlled without hitting them,' as one former staff member discovered.¹⁸² One history of Minda asserts that as recently as 1958 staff received no training in working with people with disabilities.¹⁸³ The account also states that it was common practice for Minda staff to advise families to have minimal contact with children placed in Minda's care.¹⁸⁴ The account suggests that the Minda board was reluctant to place residents in the community who were capable of undertaking employment because residents performed valuable unpaid labour at the home.¹⁸⁵

The first social worker was appointed at Minda Home in 1966.¹⁸⁶ Revisions to procedures in the home followed, including arranging for residents to visit their families at

¹⁷³ Minda board of management, *Minda: a home and training institution for feeble-minded and epileptic children*, Minda Home, 1948, p. 20; D Crawford, *The care and training of people who were intellectually disabled in South Australia—1870–1990: a personal perspective*, Flinders University, Adelaide, 2001, p. 86.

¹⁷⁴ Crawford, p. 58.

¹⁷⁵ *ibid.*, p. 59.

¹⁷⁶ *ibid.*, pp. 81, 95.

¹⁷⁷ *ibid.*, p. 96.

¹⁷⁸ SRSA GRG 29/124, CWPRB minutes, vol. 15, 1946–48, p. 2629.

¹⁷⁹ In 1913 the Mental Defectives Act was passed and asylums were designated mental hospitals, Crawford, p. 81.

¹⁸⁰ Minda Home Inc. forty-ninth annual report.

¹⁸¹ A Jamrozik, *Social administration in South Australia: Some aspects of management, control, policy-making and responsibility in voluntary social welfare organisations*, Adelaide University, 1968, p. 78.

¹⁸² Crawford, p. 153.

¹⁸³ *ibid.*, p. 185.

¹⁸⁴ *ibid.*, p. 330.

¹⁸⁵ *ibid.*, p. 198.

¹⁸⁶ *ibid.*, p. 195.

Christmas.¹⁸⁷ In late 1970 the Minda superintendent reached an agreement with the Department of Social Welfare that on admission, the department would provide Minda with a full history of each child and the relevant contact details of the child's parents or relatives prior to discharge. Six months before the expiration of the governmental order of custodial care, the department agreed to contact Minda so that any extension of the supervision period could be discussed if necessary. Minda was also instructed to contact the department regarding any outings made by the child, as well as any proposals for the child to take up employment.¹⁸⁸

By 1975, the government contributed more than 50 per cent of Minda's funding.¹⁸⁹ The department's de-institutionalisation of care throughout the 1970s affected Minda Home as children were gradually moved out of the institution. However, as one witness who provided confidential evidence to the Inquiry noted, Minda 'changed more slowly, I think, than a lot of other places'.

Today Minda provides accommodation, training and other services for more than 1000 people living with an intellectual disability. More than 300 people are accommodated, most at Brighton, while more than 200 people who receive Minda services live in the community.¹⁹⁰

Abuse of residents at Minda

*Sexual abuse of people with a handicap has figured as little more than a footnote in public discussion and policy-making.*¹⁹¹

When Donald Crawford started as superintendent of Minda in 1958 he discovered there were no written rules regarding residents' rights or staff conduct. Staff used physical abuse against residents as a method of control under the guise of parent/child disciplinary tactics.¹⁹² It was understood that 'these people could not be controlled without hitting them'.¹⁹³

At this stage, the staff had not received training in the area of working with people with disabilities.¹⁹⁴

Crawford painted a bleak picture of the nature and extent of sexual abuse at Minda:

*There were several allegations of sexual abuse of female residents by staff. These were pursued but remained unresolved. Some aspects of male homosexual behaviour were of considerable concern. In Verco Ward, which accommodated 120 males, the men residents were sexually involved with young boys. Another interpretation of this behaviour was that it was a voluntary activity. Until adequate and appropriate staff and accommodation were provided, other than appealing to the staff to exercise supervision, the issue defied solution.*¹⁹⁵

Regarding the perpetrators of sexual abuse at Minda, Crawford reported that:

There were a few predatory males who sought and engaged in sexual activities with young male residents. With a huge staff turnover of 100 per cent per annum, it is impossible to estimate how many of these people were employed, but a few managed to leave an impression. Three of these men were very bright, resourceful and socially adept persons, well-versed in middle-class ways. Legal and moral constraints prevented a revelation of the damage which one man wrought on several young lives. One man left the employment of his own accord, and it was with considerable difficulty that we were able to eventually get sufficient grounds to dismiss the others. The superintendent had no doubt about their guilt, but even in those days of relative laissez-faire in personnel management, it was not possible to act without evidence. It was the

¹⁸⁷ *ibid.*, p. 197.

¹⁸⁸ SRSA GRG 29/6, File 538/1965, State children at Minda Home: training and accommodation, Report on meeting on liaison work between Minda Home and the Department, 30 Nov, 1970, p. 1.

¹⁸⁹ Crawford, p. 87.

¹⁹⁰ Disability Information and Resource Centre SA, viewed 10 February, 2008, (closed 2014, now see <<http://www.dcsi.sa.gov.au/services/disability-services>>).

¹⁹¹ Crawford, p. 159.

¹⁹² *ibid.*, p. 153.

¹⁹³ *ibid.*

¹⁹⁴ *ibid.*, p. 185.

¹⁹⁵ *ibid.*, p. 157.

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

*exercise of considerable patience and politeness and the constraints that were placed on their activities that eventually led to them providing the grounds for their own undoing.*¹⁹⁶

Crawford went on to say that:

*There were grossly inadequate numbers of staff, no staff training, and the buildings were not conducive to promoting the residents' dignity or privacy. The total situation almost suggested abuse ... It is also highly likely that from 1958 to 1968 there was considerably more abuse than came to my attention and there were times when senior male staff protected offenders ... With constant pressure and an inflexible policy of no abuse, change came very gradually.*¹⁹⁷

Allegations of sexual abuse

Three adults with intellectual disabilities provided information to the Inquiry about sexual abuse while they were living at Minda as children. Two of the adults were in State care at the time. The alleged abuse included indecent assault, attempted rape and rape. The alleged perpetrators included a teacher, staff members and other residents.

Abuse by staff

A PIC born in the early 1940s lived at Minda in the 1950s. The Inquiry received client files that show the PIC was placed in State care by a court before he turned three on the basis that he was destitute. He was initially placed in a government orphanage and then in foster care.

When he was 11 the department arranged for him to be medically assessed. The examining doctor found he had a low IQ and learning difficulties. After receiving the report the department decided the PIC should be transferred to Minda, where he remained until he was 15.

The PIC told the Inquiry that one teacher sexually interfered with him, touching his penis and giving him lollies as a reward. He said he did not report the incident.

The PIC was placed in foster care at 15 and was released

from State care at 18.

Abuse by staff and other residents

A PIC born in the early 1950s was three when placed by a court in State care because his family home was deemed unsuitable. Assessed with borderline intelligence, he remained in State care until he turned 19, living at Minda from age six to 17 in the late 1950s and 1960s.

He alleged that from the time he was about seven, staff members touched him inappropriately at night: 'Staff used to play around. Come around. Checked up on you'. He said two male carers assaulted him in this way, and he also alleged he was sexually abused by older boys who tried to penetrate him.

He told the Inquiry he did not make a complaint because he was scared and he did not think anybody would take any notice: 'There's nothing I can do about it. I was a bit frightened, yes ... They won't believe me'.

By the time he was 17, the PIC was employed and he saved enough money to move out of Minda and into a boarding house. Social workers from Minda kept occasional contact with him over the following years.

Abuse by other residents

A female PIC born in the late 1940s gave evidence to the Inquiry about living at Minda in the 1950s and 1960s. Records received from Minda show the PIC was admitted when she was nine and lived there until she was 14. The Inquiry did not receive a record of a court order placing her in State care.

The PIC told the Inquiry she was placed in foster care as a baby. Minda files show her family placed her in the home and helped pay her fees. She was considered at the time to exhibit peculiar behaviour but told the Inquiry: 'I don't really believe that I should have been put in that home, I'm sorry to say'.

She alleged older girls at the home sexually abused her

¹⁹⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁹⁷ *ibid.*, p. 158.

when she was about 10:

Well, a couple of the older girls come down from the other end, and I don't know who their names were or whatever because it was dark and, yes, I got knocked on the floor and raped ... They used the end of a hairbrush.

These girls warned her not to tell anyone and she did not complain:

You're telling tales and you're in trouble anyway, so I just left it at that ... If I told anybody what they did they'd kill me. If someone says that to you, even if you're in a place like that, you actually believe them. I did get stabbed once.

The PIC alleged that similar sexual abuse occurred on two further occasions and that, subsequently, she was too scared to go to the toilet at night and sometimes wet the bed.

She told the Inquiry she is still affected by the sexual abuse:

Even now if someone stands behind me I just shake, because I can't stand someone, you know, behind me, and that's after all that time ... like, some nights you lie in bed and everything would just come racing back to you what happened and you'd start crying and thinking, you know—then I think, you know, something really must have been mad with me for it to have happened.

The PIC was released to her family at 14 and discharged from Minda at 15.

Hospitals

History

In the late 19th century, children in State care with intellectual disabilities were placed initially in the Adelaide Lunatic Asylum, which was established in 1852. From 1902 children with disabilities were placed into the Parkside Asylum (now Glenside Hospital), which had been established in 1870.¹⁹⁸ The *Education Act 1911* provided that all children between seven and 16 with intellectual disabilities were to be provided with suitable education by their parents. If this were not possible, they were to inform the Minister, who would send children to the appropriate institution, for which the parents would be asked to pay maintenance.¹⁹⁹ This legislation effectively transferred the care of children with disabilities from poorer families to institutions.²⁰⁰ Children with intellectual disabilities also were placed in the Northfield Mental Hospital, established in 1930 and later known as the Hillcrest Hospital. There was no provision in mental hospitals for the separate accommodation of children, nor were activities to stimulate cognitive function or interest provided.²⁰¹

By 1945, Parkside Hospital, Northfield Hospital and the Enfield Receiving Home were the State-run facilities that accommodated children with disabilities. Under the *Mental Defectives Act 1935* the department could direct that children with intellectual disabilities who had been committed to government institutions be transferred to mental hospitals or receiving homes:

If any person while imprisoned or detained in any prison, gaol, reformatory, industrial school or other place of confinement ... appears to be mentally defective, the Minister ... may direct, by order signed by him, that the said person be removed to the hospital for criminal mental defectives.²⁰²

¹⁹⁸ *ibid.*, p. 51.

¹⁹⁹ *ibid.*, p.77

²⁰⁰ *ibid.*

²⁰¹ SA Health Commission, *Psychiatric Alcohol and Drug Services Inventory*, Adelaide, Feb. 1982, p. 4.

²⁰² SRSA GRG 29/6, File 111/45, Release of State wards from hospitals and institutions, 1945.

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

Children with intellectual disabilities removed from departmental institutions were required to be detained in a special section of the Enfield Receiving Home with adult criminals.²⁰³

By the late 1950s concerns that children in State care were treated in this manner reached the CWPRB, which said:

*It would appear that the provisions in an Act which require State children, who may be of tender years, to be transferred to such a hospital, because they were unfortunate enough to be committed to one of this department's institutions, are somewhat out of line with present day methods ... Certifying a child as a criminal mental defective in many cases often seems illogical and repugnant.*²⁰⁴

Changes to sections 46–8 of the renamed *Mental Health Act 1976–77* enabled children in State care to be admitted to receiving homes and mental hospitals in the same manner as children who were not in State care.

Historical records show that conditions in the State's mental hospitals were inadequate. It was reported that in 1961, Parkside Mental Hospital housed 150 male patients aged between 12 and 60. Half of the patients slept on mattresses on the floor; patients who had soiled themselves were hosed down to clean them.²⁰⁵ The report noted that: 'The psychotic and the developmentally disabled shared the same accommodation. Nor was age any barrier so that quite young children were in the same ward as disturbed adults'.²⁰⁶ A study of State-run mental health services in 1961 found that of a total population of 2500 patients, 600 were intellectually disabled and, of these, 142 were aged under 12.²⁰⁷ The co-location of those with mental illness and those with intellectual disability was 'the result of a historical accident based on limited knowledge and on even more limited public funding in a small pioneering colony', noted the study.²⁰⁸

The development of Lochiel Park, the opening of the Strathmont Centre in 1971 for people with intellectual disabilities and the growth and development of accommodation and community services in the non-government disability sector reflected the attempts to separate services for people with intellectual disabilities from mental health services.

Allegations of sexual abuse

One woman and one man gave evidence to the Inquiry about their experiences as children detained in mental hospitals.

Abuse by staff

An Aboriginal woman alleged she was sexually abused during her placement in Hillcrest Hospital in the mid to late 1960s. Records from Hillcrest Hospital and the department show the PIC was placed under a care order interstate when she was 12, soon after her mother's death. The interstate welfare department placed her in Hillcrest as a 'voluntary patient' for psychological assessment for reported 'disturbed behaviour' in her community. It appears there were no local facilities available in her home community. The PIC said: 'They put me in this nut-case hospital here, Hillcrest'. The records show she remained at the hospital for much of the following six years, although she had trial periods of leave in her community and at other homes.

The PIC's SWIC shows that in the late 1960s, when she was 15, she absconded from an Aboriginal girls hostel and was placed in State care by court order until she turned 18, after being convicted of obtaining liquor as a minor and of drunkenness.

She was sent back to Hillcrest where, the PIC recalled, she was 'locked up all the time'. Sometimes she was locked in what she termed a 'blue room', wearing a canvas gown and with only a canvas blanket on the floor and a plastic

²⁰³ *ibid.*, 26/9, File 21/1948, transfers of wards of the department.

²⁰⁴ *ibid.*, 29/6, File 111/45, release of State wards from hospitals and institutions (*Mental Health Act 1958*).

²⁰⁵ Cramond and Kent, p. 4.

²⁰⁶ *ibid.*, p. 7.

²⁰⁷ *ibid.*, p. 8.

²⁰⁸ *ibid.*, p. 8.

bucket for a toilet. She did not like the medication the hospital gave her, which she said made her 'silly'. On one day each week she received what she thinks was shock treatment, after the staff put a chain on her arm and her leg.

The PIC told the Inquiry that when she was about 16, two, possibly three, male nurses at Hillcrest sexually abused her on more than one occasion. She believes they gave her drugs and had intercourse with her; she was sore in her genital region afterwards. She said one of the nurses held her arms and legs down and placed tape over her mouth, preventing her from screaming. The PIC recalled reporting the nurses to a Hillcrest doctor, and said a swab was later taken. She does not recall the police being called. She told her interstate welfare officer that the hospital was treating her badly, but did not tell her what had happened because she was 'a bit nervous'. Hillcrest and departmental records provided to the Inquiry do not mention the allegations.

A social worker who worked at Hillcrest Hospital at the time told the Inquiry that the locked ward in which the PIC was placed was unsuitable for the teenage girl. Her treating medical staff also noted in hospital files that it was unsuitable. Solutions for her care were reportedly difficult to find.

The PIC was encouraged to come to the Inquiry by her friend and advocate, and she said the abuse she experienced 'hurt my feelings and hurt everything else'.

Abuse by other residents

A PIC born in the early 1950s was placed in State care when he was 14. He told the Inquiry that when he was a teenager his father died and his mother became quite ill in the following months and could not look after the family. The PIC said they were poor and could not afford basic necessities such as clothing and books for school.

He said he stopped attending school when his physical education teacher told him to bring sandshoes and clean clothes for an activity:

I thought, well, there's no chance of me getting sandshoes and things, so I'm not going to go any more because I'm going to get into trouble from him.

Departmental records show that at the age of 14½ the PIC was placed in State care by a court due to absence from school. The PIC told the Inquiry he recalled his mother telling the court he was uncontrollable and said no-one advocated on his behalf: 'I didn't even speak in the court. I ended up crying most of the time'.

Once placed in State care the PIC was transferred to the Enfield Receiving Home. The records show that several days later he was transferred to Hillcrest Hospital.

The PIC described his first impressions of the hospital:

I'll never forget walking about 400 or 500 metres from the administration building to the ward where they were going to put me. It was like getting a guided tour of Auschwitz. That's the only way I can describe it. I walked past people in cages, buildings with bars on the roof, just a horrible place and I didn't know what I was doing there. The people in the cages will always stick in my mind ... the ones in the cages were Down syndrome.

The PIC told the Inquiry that on his first day at Hillcrest he absconded and returned to his family home. 'I took off as soon as—you know, I was in Auschwitz. I wanted to get out'. The police arrived in the middle of the night and his brother then took him back to Hillcrest.

The records show the PIC was at Hillcrest for the next 3½ months. He told the Inquiry that in the first two months he was in a ward full of grown men:

Could have been 50 or 100. There was a lot in there. It was a great big room, full of beds and full of people ... There was people that would scare you if you seen them on the street. There was people—very disturbed people. There was people that just used to pace all the time.

3

Chapter 3 Allegations of sexual abuse

The PIC alleged that a man in his ward tried to sexually abuse him:

There was one fellow—he had the bed next to me, because when they took me up there and give me a bed in the dormitory, I ended up in the bed next to one of these homosexuals, I think he must have been. That’s what he told me he was. That’s what he told me he was there for, and I was put in the bed next to him. Not straight away, but after a few days there was one night he tried to get in the bed with me, and he tried again a couple of times after that. During most of the time in that ward 1A, I slept with my clothes on.

The PIC told the Inquiry that soon after his admission a patient exposed himself:

Probably the third day I was there, there was one of these real disturbed fellows. He just sort of dropped his trousers and started masturbating and following me around the place. Eventually I made it to where one of the attendants was in their little room office there, and I called out to him and he come out and had a look and just said, ‘Put it away, George,’ and that was all.

He alleged a patient in his ward offered him money for sexual favours: ‘He offered me money to do things for him. He offered me a pound if I’d fiddle with him and ... on about three or four occasions I took his money’.

The records show the PIC was released from the hospital and State care soon after his 15th birthday: ‘Eventually my mother came and made trouble and got me out. She said, “You’ve got no reason to hold him. It’s no good being here”, and she took me’.

Regarding his time in care, the PIC told the Inquiry:

The best help is to see some good recommendations and ensure that things don’t go haywire in the future ... it was a pretty horrific situation in that ward.