

DOCUMENT A

SUBMISSION TO THE FAMILY AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE OF
THE VICTORIAN PARLIAMENT RE
INQUIRY INTO THE HANDLING OF CHILD ABUSE BY RELIGIOUS
AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS

1a. My name is Douglas Christopher Fenwick. My status with respect to this Inquiry is one of being a **CONCERNED CITIZEN** of Australia about the past and possibly present state of affairs with respect to (particularly) the sexual abuse of children by persons who are in the position of carers. I am now 81 years of age.

1b. My residential address is [REDACTED]

1c. My e-mail address is [REDACTED]

1d. My qualifications are BVSc (Hons) 1954, MANZCVSc (Foundation Member) 1971, MVSc (Research) 1974, PhD (U of Q) 1988, DipFreelJourn 2005. I do not belong to any group organisation. The above MANZCVSc and PhD suggest I have a logical mind.

1e. My interest is that I have become acquainted with a male person whose story I believe about sexual violation as a child by a Roman Catholic priest and who subsequently received physical abuse from those nuns and his parents whom he attempted to inform about his injuries. I am not a gullible person.

1f. I began to research the web about every aspect of this problem in December 2011. Many sites confirmed not only a past, but an ongoing problem worldwide, in many youth organisations, but particularly within the ranks of the Roman Catholic Church. The best site I discovered was that of the Broken Rites group here in Australia at <http://brokenrites.alphalink.com.au/>

1g. I would exhort every member of your committee to look at this site closely and at length because it contains evidence relating to every aspect of your terms of reference. I will be disappointed if the final proceedings do not contain an acknowledgement that they have done so.

1h. This site lists every criminal conviction (120+) and every successful case of litigation for damages against the Roman Catholic Church (120+) since 1993 as viewed on 20.7.2012.

1g. The volunteers at 'Broken Rites' have recorded extracts from the Court proceedings of all of the aforementioned cases including dates and times, Judges statements, prosecution statements, victims' statements, as well as the attempts made by the defendants' solicitors to delay proceedings. The information is recorded as it was presented. As I said, I will be disappointed if your committee members do not take the time to peruse that site.

It contains too much material within your terms of reference to ignore –

2 (1). the practices, policies and protocols in such organisations for the handling of allegations of criminal abuse of children, including measures put in place by various organisations in response to concerns about such abuse within the organisation or the potential for such abuse to occur;

2 (2). whether there are systemic practices in such organisations that operate to preclude or discourage the reporting of suspected criminal abuse of children to State authorities; and

2 (3). whether changes to law or to practices, policies and protocols in such organisations are required to help prevent criminal abuse of children by personnel in such organisations and to deal with allegations.

The Broken Rites site addresses all of these terms of reference in its own way.

It also conforms to your

8. DEFINITIONS AND TERMINOLOGY

The Committee acknowledges that there are terms and definitions relating to the Terms of Reference that require further clarification.

Criminal abuse of children

In the context of criminal abuse of children, criminal abuse generally includes:

- Unlawful physical assaults.
- Sexual abuse offences, such as rape or indecent assault under the *Victorian Crimes Act 1958*.
- Any acts of criminal neglect that may give rise to child protection intervention under the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*.
- Facilitating such offences by others.

Sexual and other forms of physical abuse are often linked with demeaning or degrading behaviour that include verbal and emotional abuse. The Terms of Reference allow for consideration of such behaviour that may lead to criminal abuse or allow it to occur.

The Broken Rites site answers in BULK every question asked under section 10 of the terms of reference –

The site also has masses of evidence relating to the questions asked from 11 to 13.

Under the section on Parliamentary Privilege, I would like to say that during the months of December 2011 to March 2012, I summarised the Broken Rites site information and produced graphs on *The Number of First Convictions of Catholic-Associated Personnel Each Year Since 1985*, *Frequency Distribution of Delay Times between Offences and Reporting of Offences* and *Yearly Variation between Average Delay Periods*, as well as a mass of concise data under the chapters of

- Staff Investigated, Charged Or Convicted
- Types Of Sexual Offences Committed

- **Delays Between Offences And Reporting To Police**
- **Victim Suicides, Behavioural Changes In Abused Children**
- **Grooming Techniques**
- **Betrayals Of Trust, Cover-Ups, And Protection Of A Paedophile Culture By The Church**
- **Service As Chaplains**
- **Reports On Church-Sponsored Healing Programs**
- **Discussion & Conclusions.**

The text relating to the chapter headings above took only 45 odd pages. I followed these chapters with Appendices containing actual statements as recorded by Broken Rites voluntary staff attending Court cases.

The Appendices include verbatim statements from Judges, prosecuting counsel, police, victims, victims' families and statements made by victims to representatives of the Broken Rites organisation.

Apart from my summary, the site states the dates and times and places of the Court hearings as well as the newspapers in which the reports appeared - without any subsequent challenge.

I exhort every member of this Parliamentary Inquiry via the FAMILY AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE OF THE VICTORIAN PARLIAMENT to read this simple 45 page A5 12 point single-spaced summary of the Broken Rites website as a background knowledge of the problem.

I COMPILED THE SUMMARY DURING THE MONTHS FROM DECEMBER 2011 TO MARCH 2012. MY AIM WAS TO PRODUCE A BOOKLET THAT THE BROKEN RITES PEOPLE COULD SELL IN ORDER TO RAISE FUNDS TO SUPPORT THEIR PRAISEWORTHY EFFORTS. BECAUSE I HAVE CUT AND PASTED ALL OF THE EXTRACTS IN THE APPENDICES, I UNDERSTAND THAT I WOULD BE IN BREACH OF COPYRIGHT IF I ORGANISED PUBLICATION OF THE MATERIAL. I DO NOT YET HAVE PERMISSION FROM BROKEN RITES TO DO THAT, SO I TRUST THAT THE MATERIAL WILL BE USED BY THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY ONLY AT THIS STAGE, UNDER PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGE.

If the committee wishes me to appear at the Inquiry in any capacity, I would need to be compensated for air fares and accommodation if I have to travel anywhere except Brisbane.

Doug Fenwick

Concerned Citizen of Australia

16.8.2012