

**ABUSE IN CARE ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY  
FAITH-BASED INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE HEARING**

**Under** The Inquiries Act 2013

**In the matter of** The Royal Commission of Inquiry into Historical Abuse in State Care and in the Care of Faith-based Institutions

**Royal Commission:** Judge Coral Shaw (Chair)  
Dr Anaru Erueti  
Ali'imuumua Sandra Alofivae  
Paul Gibson

**Counsel:** Mr Simon Mount KC, Ms Kerryn Beaton KC, Ms Katherine Anderson, Ms Tania Sharkey, Mr Michael Thomas, Ms Kathy Basire and Ms Alisha Castle for the Royal Commission

Ms Rachael Schmidt-McCleave and Ms Julia White for the Crown

Ms Sally McKechnie and Ms Brooke Clifford for Te Rōpū Tautoko, the Catholic Bishops and Congregational Leaders

Mrs Fiona Guy-Kidd, Mr Jeremy Johnston and Ms India Shores for the Anglican Church

Ms Maria Dew KC, Ms Kiri Harkess and Mr Lourenzo Fernandez for the Methodist Church and Wesley Faith

Mr Brian Henry, Mr Chris Shannon and Ms Sykes for Gloriavale

Ms Sarah Kuper and Mr Matthew Hague for the Presbyterian Church

Ms Helen Smith and Ms Sarah Kuper for Presbyterian Support Central

Mr Sam Hider for Presbyterian Support Otago

Mr Andrew Barker and Ms Honor Lanham for Dilworth School and Dilworth Trust Board

Mr Karl van der Plas, Mr Jaiden Gosha, Ms Rachael Reed and Ms Ali van Ammers for the Dilworth Class Action Group

**Venue:** Level 2  
Abuse in Care Royal Commission of Inquiry  
414 Khyber Pass Road  
AUCKLAND

**Date:** 21 October 2022

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**TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS**

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19 How are we going? Right. We are now on to the closing statement from SNAP.  
20 Tēnā koe, Ms Oosterhoff.

21 **CLOSING STATEMENT BY SNAP**

22 **MS OOSTERHOFF:** Tēnā koe, ma'am. Tēnā koutou katoa. May it please the Commission.

23 Thank you, again, for this opportunity to appear at this, the last hearing of the Royal  
24 Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care. Counsel's name is Ms Oosterhoff and I appear  
25 on behalf of the Survivor Network of those Abused by Priests Aotearoa, also known as  
26 SNAP.

27 A visual description of myself. I am a Pākehā female and since my last appearance  
28 I have been told that I am not in fact of middle age, so I will say I'm approaching middle  
29 age. I have long blonde hair which is currently tied back in a bun, I'm wearing a grey dress,  
30 a black jacket and a pounamu necklace.

31 Commissioners, as with my opening statement, I'm appearing alongside  
32 representatives from SNAP, Dr Christopher Longhurst, SNAP's national leader, Mr John  
33 O'Malley, SNAP's senior advisor, and also here today is Alexander Cionca.

1 SNAP would like to start by acknowledging all the courageous survivors who have  
2 come forward to share their stories with this Commission. It shows courage and mana to  
3 share such trauma and pain. SNAP also acknowledges those survivors who have not yet  
4 been able to come forward, which SNAP understands is for a range of reasons that are no  
5 fault of the survivors.

6 SNAP thanks the Royal Commission for its hard work, for giving survivors a voice,  
7 and for showing New Zealand that Aotearoa has a shame that many did not know existed.  
8 This Commission has provided many with hope that the future will bring change and that  
9 tamariki, rangatahi and vulnerable people can live a life free of abuse.

10 As mentioned in the opening submissions, SNAP has come to this Commission with  
11 confidence and hope that those who sit at its heart have been heard and their lived  
12 experiences will not be repeated.

13 As is fitting for a survivor-led network, Dr Longhurst will deliver SNAP's closing  
14 submissions to you, written copies were provided last night and a slightly updated copy was  
15 provided this morning.

16 Tēnā koe, Madam Chair, and tēnā koutou, Commissioners.

17 **CHAIR:** Tēnā koe, Ms Oosterhoff.

18 We have received a written copy, I'm not sure if we have got the updated one,  
19 because we've just had one -- but I'm sure that you will illuminate us.

20 **MS OOSTERHOFF:** There were only very small amendments.

21 **CHAIR:** Very small amendments. All right, thank you.

22 **DR LONGHURST:** Ngā mihi nui, Ms Oosterhoff. Tēnā koutou katoa. Tēnei te mihi manahau ki  
23 te mana whakahaere, ki ngā Kōmihana, me ā koutou mahi whakahirahira. Ki ngā  
24 mōrehurehu kua puta mai, he mihi maioha. Heoi, ko ngā whakamānawatanga katoa ki a  
25 SNAP me ā koutou mahi whakahirahira. Ō rātou kōrero, he tapu. Ō rātou reo, he kaha. Nō  
26 reira, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā tātou katoa.

27 **CHAIR:** Kia ora.

28 **DR LONGHURST:** Ko Chris Longhurst tōku ingoa, ko Donald tōku papa, ko Leona tōku mama.  
29 I te taha tōku papa nō Ingarangi ōku tīpuna. I te taha tōku māmā nō Aerani ōku tīpuna.

30 (Greetings everyone. Here, I sincerely acknowledge the organisers, and the  
31 Commissioners for the significance of your role. To all of the survivors present, I warmly  
32 greet you. However, with great respect I salute the exceptional service of SNAP. Their  
33 stories are sacred, their voices are strong. With this, I greet, salute and address each and  
34 every one present.

1 My name is Chris Longhurst, my father is Donald, Leona is my mother. On my  
2 father's side my ancestors hail from England. My ancestors from mother's heritage are from  
3 Ireland).

4 For those who cannot see me today, I am a Pākehā male, I am middle-aged, I am  
5 wearing a blue suit today and a white shirt and a yellow tie and I have brown hair, long  
6 brown hair, it is up today.

7 Thank you again for this opportunity to present at this last hearing of the  
8 Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care on behalf of SNAP Aotearoa New Zealand.

9 We look to this Commission for full accountability for abusers, adequate redress for  
10 survivors, and protection from abuse occurring in the future.

11 These closing submissions apply to all institutions that have been investigated as  
12 part of this Commission and any other institutions that work with tamariki, rangatahi and  
13 vulnerable people.

14 In our opening submissions we acknowledged how many foundations for  
15 faith-based institutions were noble. We referred to Methodists principles to do no harm, to  
16 do good, and to recognise the ordinances of God. However, founding principles are one  
17 thing, practices are another.

18 We would like to recognise and thank Methodist witness Reverend Tara Tautari  
19 who acknowledged us during her evidence and took responsibility for the suffering of  
20 survivors. She agreed that theologically the ideals are there, however this was not the lived  
21 experience of survivors. We would like to tautoko Reverend Tautari's evidence, though  
22 add that unfortunately this suffering is still the experience of our members.

23 Sadly, in other places, this hearing has confirmed what we were hoping to avoid.

24 Each of the witnesses apologised to the Commission for the harm caused to  
25 survivors while in their care. We acknowledge those apologies and the global recognition  
26 of survivors' suffering. However, there are still survivors who wait for personal apologies.  
27 We ask you, where are the personal apologies today? Our members continue to have their  
28 complaints denied without any acknowledgment of wrongdoing. A public apology is not  
29 enough. As we said at the start of the hearing, words are just words; words that do not  
30 translate into actions are insincere.

31 For our closing submissions, SNAP has a number of points we would like you -- we  
32 would like to ask you, Commissioners, to consider when you write your final report.

33 First, effective training, operational and financial auditing and full accountability  
34 are essential for those who work in this area.

1 Second, there must be a statutory, mandatory reporting scheme for abuse.

2 Tied to this is our third point. Clergy and religious must not be exempt from being  
3 required to report knowledge of abuse obtained through confession.

4 Fourth, those who abuse children should not be given a second chance within any  
5 institution, faith-based, State or private.

6 Fifth, SNAP recognises the right of freedom of religion. However, we want it to be  
7 recognised that rights come coupled with responsibilities. And finally, as we have said  
8 time and time again, this is not a historical issue.

9 Regarding contemporary issues, on this last point, Commissioners, SNAP  
10 understands the terms of reference of this Commission. However, we are regularly  
11 contacted by survivors and their whānau. They are contacting us about abuse that occurred  
12 after 1999. In fact, they are contacting us about abuse that is occurring today.

13 As a survivor-led network, SNAP contacts the relevant faith-based institutions to  
14 report the abuse and to make our own complaints. Unfortunately, we do not always receive  
15 the response we consider appropriate.

16 Commissioners, we have alerted Counsel Assisting, Ms Anderson, about our  
17 concerns. We will provide copies of this with a memorandum.

18 **CHAIR:** Thank you, Dr Longhurst. Are those -- I can also say that the Commissioners have  
19 received copies of the correspondence that you have been having with various parts of the  
20 Catholic organisations, so we are fully aware of those.

21 **DR LONGHURST:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

22 **CHAIR:** Thank you.

23 **DR LONGHURST:** Regarding second chances, during evidence on Monday, Catholic Bishop Pat  
24 Dunn said he disagreed with the Catholic Church's charter for the protection of children and  
25 young people, also known as the Dallas Charter. Commissioners, that charter is an  
26 instruction for instant dismissal of priests convicted of abuse and suspension of those  
27 accused of substantial allegations.

28 Bishop Dunn called that charter a mistake, and claimed abusive priests should be  
29 given a second chance. SNAP strongly disagrees, as we imagine most people would.

30 **CHAIR:** Can I just clarify something, and you may have altered this in your changes. In here  
31 you've said "instant dismissal of priests convicted of abuse and suspension of those  
32 accused" -- it says in the written submissions -- "of substantiated allegations", but you said  
33 "substantial"; there's quite a difference, isn't there?

34 **DR LONGHURST:** Yes, I beg your pardon, substantiated allegations is what I meant.

1 **CHAIR:** You meant substantiated?

2 **DR LONGHURST:** Substantiated allegations, yes.

3 **CHAIR:** Okay, thank you.

4 **MS OOSTERHOFF:** Apologies for that, Madam Chair.

5 **CHAIR:** That's all right.

6 **DR LONGHURST:** Survivors get no second chances. They do not get a second chance at  
7 childhood. They cannot request a second chance to live a life free of abuse. Survivors  
8 must carry their trauma into their adult lives and as we know, often this displays itself in  
9 destructive patterns. Some who were abused are no longer with us, because they  
10 succumbed to the trauma that was so profound.

11 Pope Francis, Bishop Dunn's leader, instructed that the Catholic Church should have  
12 a zero tolerance for abuse and abusers should be irreversibly dismissed.

13 In what Bishop Dunn said, he disrespected Pope Francis's own wishes, he put  
14 tamariki and rangatahi at risk, and he put his own abusive priests before the safety of  
15 children. This is unacceptable. SNAP asks that the Commission hold those who make  
16 such statements to account.

17 We have confidence in this Commission. We consider that comments about second  
18 chances for abusers disrespects the kaupapa of this Commission and the confidence that we,  
19 the survivors, have placed in it. SNAP will file a memorandum with the Commission next  
20 week with further information about the Dallas Charter.

21 We also heard again that the Catholic Church came here willingly with the intention  
22 to work with this Commission. Again, SNAP does not agree. We, the survivors,  
23 compelled the Churches to come here. As you well know, originally the Commission did  
24 not encompass faith-based institutions. It was the survivors who lobbied for the Churches'  
25 inclusion. SNAP's members have no recollection of the Catholic Church coming forward  
26 as a willing participant.

27 Regarding committees, Commissioners, you will remember that during the redress  
28 hearing we made substantial submissions about the secrecy of the committee that oversees  
29 the work of the Catholic Church's National Office for Professional Standards, NOPS. This  
30 is the National Safeguarding and Professional Standards Committee appointed by the  
31 New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference and Congregational Leaders Conference.

32 SNAP has repeatedly asked them for more information about this Committee,  
33 including who sits on it. Unfortunately, our requests have not been responded to. We  
34 thank Ms Anderson for raising our concerns in cross-examination.

1           In response, we heard that the identities of its members are not secret. However, we  
2 are no closer to knowing who those members are. There is currently no information  
3 publicly available. This means that safeguarding, the safeguarding practices are in fact  
4 currently secret and non-transparent.

5           Regarding the Catholic Church's National Office for Professional Standards, NOPS,  
6 in evidence the Church's representatives confirmed that if a complaint were made today,  
7 this would be directed to NOPS. How is this accountability? You have heard time and  
8 time again throughout this Commission that an institution responsible for abuse should not  
9 be able to investigate its own abusers.

10           We were told individual complaints had been internally reviewed. However, the  
11 Church is only actively considering an external audit. Substantial cost was the reason  
12 provided for why an audit has not yet been performed. Yet this Committee can make  
13 decisions with life-long impacts for survivors. To hear that cost is more important than  
14 effective, transparent, independently-audited redress for survivors is, in SNAP's view,  
15 disappointing and disingenuous.

16           The Catholic Church has significant land holdings, assets and substantial cash  
17 benefactors. In the end, it is a matter of priority.

18           We heard about the figures paid by the Church for a stipend and legal representation  
19 for the abusive priest Sateki Raass. We questioned why this money was available.  
20 However, no funds are available to audit NOPS.

21           Regarding redress, SNAP made substantive submissions at the redress hearing  
22 last year. We would like to thank you, Commissioners, for your comprehensive He  
23 Purapura Ora, he Māra Tipu redress report. SNAP supports the recommendation of an  
24 independent redress scheme for all survivors and their whānau, whether the abuse was  
25 perpetrated by those in faith-based institutions or by the State.

26           We support the kaupapa of a united and equitable scheme that provides one redress  
27 body for survivors. This will ensure that all survivors are acknowledged and respected.

28           In conclusion, Commissioners, we could continue talking about effective change for  
29 survivors for hours. However, I'm mindful of time. Therefore, SNAP will use this  
30 opportunity to reiterate what we have asked the Commission from when it was formed.  
31 Please use this opportunity now to make comprehensive recommendations for change.  
32 SNAP asks you to make recommendations that are not only survivor-centric but  
33 survivor-led, which means survivors are part of the governance of change.



1 Here SNAP wishes to tautoko the evidence of Presbyterian Support Central whose  
2 witnesses acknowledged this approach.

3 Abuse has been rife in Aotearoa New Zealand's history. It is still rife today. We  
4 must recognise this and expose the darkness and the misuse of power that has allowed this.

5 We know that much of the abuse at the centre of this hearing was perpetrated by  
6 those who abused their power, as well as those who shielded them. SNAP asks that  
7 survivors are given back this power that was taken from them without their consent.

8 We also know a society is judged by the way it treats its most vulnerable.  
9 Commissioners, SNAP asks you to make recommendations that ensure Aotearoa  
10 New Zealand is judged favourably on the basis that those persons who are dealing with our  
11 most vulnerable have integrity, that they are transparent, and held to account.

12 Finally, we would like to thank you, Commissioners, for the very generous legal  
13 support and other support you have provided us over the course of this Inquiry. Nō reira,  
14 tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā tātou katoa. (With this, I acknowledge you and each and  
15 every one present). **[Applause].**

16 **CHAIR:** Tēnā koutou. And may I, as I have for all the others, thank, first of all, Ms Oosterhoff  
17 for your services to SNAP, I'm sure they have appreciated those and we have appreciated  
18 your appearances.

19 **MS OOSTERHOFF:** Thank you, ma'am.

20 **CHAIR:** But to you three gentlemen standing there, thank you very much, you are diligent, you  
21 are tenacious, you are courageous, you will not let go and I think that is appropriate, and  
22 thank you for the work that you are doing on behalf of your survivors.

23 You spoke of continuing abuse, you spoke of the apparent restrictions from our  
24 terms of reference which go up to 1999. We still hear from survivors who are currently in  
25 care, who are currently being abused, and I know that you are seeing these people and  
26 referring them. The door is still open, so please make it quite clear and that they will still  
27 be listened to, their accounts will still form part of our considerations.

28 So thank you very much indeed to you all for your submissions.