

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**

FIRST SUPPLEMENTARY JOINT WITNESS STATEMENT OF:

- 1. WESLEY COLLEGE PRINCIPAL**
 - 2. CHAIR OF WESLEY COLLEGE SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES**
 - 3. CHAIR OF WESLEY COLLEGE TRUST BOARD AND GENERAL SECRETARY OF
WESLEY COLLEGE TRUST BOARD**
- IN RESPONSE TO NOTICE TO PRODUCE NO 454, DATED 24 MAY 2022
FURTHER DISCLOSURE REQUESST (VARIED ON 1 SEPTEMBER 2022)**

Dated 16 September 2022

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**FIRST SUPPLEMENTARY JOINT WITNESS STATEMENT OF WESLEY COLLEGE
PRINCIPAL, CHAIR OF SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES, CHAIR OF WESLEY COLLEGE
TRUST BOARD AND GENERAL SECRETARY OF WESLEY COLLEGE TRUST BOARD**

IN RESPONSE TO NOTICE TO PRODUCE NO 454, DATED 24 MAY 2022

FURTHER DISCLOSURE REQUEST (VARIED ON 1 SEPTEMBER 2022)

We, Dr Brian Francis Evans, Wesley College Principal,

David Morris McGeorge, Chair of Wesley College School Board of Trustees,

Janette Maisie Tasker, Chair of Wesley College Trust Board, and

Christopher Mathew Johnston, General Secretary of Wesley College Trust Board

together say:

Introduction

1. We are providing a first supplementary joint witness statement to the Inquiry on behalf of Wesley College and in response to the Royal Commission's request for further disclosure in relation to Notice to Produce No 454 dated 24 May 2022.

Response

Question 3(d) Provide all information and data relating to any allegations of abuse which has occurred in the Wesley College boarding houses, during the hours in which students were under the joint care of the Wesley College Trust Board and the Methodist Church (1950-present day)?

2. In order to answer the Commission's request for the College to complete its response to Question 3(d) for the period 1965-1990, we have:
 - (1) Reviewed Board of Trustees of Wesley College (**School Board**)'s minutes for the period 1977 to 1990. The School Board was established on 30 November 1976 following integration of the College.

- (2) Searched for the Wesley College Trust Board (**Trust Board**) minutes for this period and reviewed the Trust Board minutes found in the College's archives.¹
 - (3) Reviewed the Hostel Council minutes found in the College's archives for this period.²
 - (4) Identified additional allegations of abuse reported to the Boards.
3. Where the information is specified in these records, we have identified the complainant (and gender/ethnicity if specified), alleged respondent, nature and location of the abuse, any action taken by the Boards/College and/or if the College has received a redress claim. We have added this information to **Amended Schedule 5**.³ We have also added the information outlined at paragraph [68] of our statement of 8 July 2022 regarding further allegations of abuse received in 2021 and 2022.

Question 3(i) Summarise what is known about the nature and extent of abuse at the College, including changes over time and the perceived reasons for the changes?

4. We confirm that our comments at paragraphs [93] and [94] of our statement joint witness statement of 8 July 2022 related to the College's history post-1990 following our review of the College's records for this period. Given the limited information we have found regarding further allegation of abuse prior to 1990, we are unable to provide further comment on the nature and extent of abuse at the College pre-1990.

Question 9 Explain how the leadership of Wesley College and the Trust Board have responded to reports of abuse at Wesley College, and:

- a. To the extent responses have changed over time, describe the changes and the reasons for such changes.**

¹ The Trust Board minutes found in the College's archives are from 1974 to 1976.

² The Hostel Council minutes found for this period are from 1977 to 1987.

³ The updated Schedule 5 is **enclosed** as a separate document in the ShareFile link filed with this witness statement. The new information is highlighted in orange for ease of reference.

b. In relation to all responses to reports of abuse, what have been the advantages and disadvantages of the responses by the Church and/or by Wesley College?

c. Describe any particular considerations, processes or steps taken when responding to reports or complaints of abuse received from Pacific peoples.

5. In reviewing the available records for allegations of abuse of abuse reported to the Boards for the period 1965 to 1990, we have found limited reports of abuse, which has made it difficult to provide further comment on whether the College's responses to such incidents have changed over time. However, we note the following additional incidents of abuse have been identified for this period:

- (1) In March 1975, the Trust Board minutes record that having returned on probation, a student was suspended following a violent attack on two fellow students in the dining hall.⁴
- (2) In November 1990, the School Board minutes record a complaint by parents made to the Trust Board of general bullying and physical punishment by senior students, of junior students to maintain 'control'.⁵ The Chairman of the School Board appreciated the parents' concerns but pointed out that such matters should be taken up with the Trust Board. It is unclear from the minutes of the Boards whether any actions were taken in respect of the [GRO-B] general complaint, however actions were taken in respect of their son discussed below.
- (3) In November 1990, the School Board referred an assault of a student by the [GRO-B] to the School Board's Discipline Committee.⁶ It is unclear whether the assault took place in the College's boarding houses. The Discipline Committee moved that the suspension of the [GRO-B] be upheld and extended until the end of the year. The School Board recommended that the [GRO-B] was not to attend

⁴ Wesley College Trust Board 'College Committee' Minutes (Principal's Report), 13 March 1975, p2 [WC.01.00075].

⁵ Wesley College Board of Trustees Minutes 1990, p77 [WC.01.00073].

⁶ Wesley College Board of Trustees (In Committee – Discipline Committee) Minutes, 19 November 1990, p 11[WC.01.00074].

prizegiving but that his name was to be recorded as [GRO-B] on the College Honours Board.

6. This does not mean that there were no further incidents of abuse and violence at the College during this period, however, from the information we have found and reviewed, it appears that any such incidents were not reported to the Boards.
7. Our statement of 8 July 2022 outlined how the College's response to allegations of abuse and violence changed in the 1990s, 2000s and 2010s, referring to ERO reports. We have been unable to source any additional ERO reports for the period of 1965 to 1990 from the Ministry of Education, or the Wesley College archives, however reference is made in the Trust Board's reports to the Conference to the government's reporting and inspections. We have reviewed comments on the Department of Education inspectors' findings recorded in the Conference Yearbooks for the period of 1965 to 1990.⁷
8. While we have not identified any information relevant to reports of abuse or the College's policies and procedures for student safety, student behaviour etc. in the comments in the Conference Yearbooks concerning government reporting/inspections, the reports include general reference to the care of the students by the College, discipline and special character:
 - (1) The 1979 Conference received a report from the Trust Board that noted that the Trust Board and Board of Governors had made submissions to the Minister of Education supporting the desire to bring the parents and school together, especially in the preparation of programmes for moral education.⁸ In addition, the Trust Board noted that:⁹

It was felt that there was a prime need for self-discipline and guidelines on discipline to be set by the Principal and Staff so that young people should learn that in an ordered society there was a need for respect for rightful authority.

⁷ The ERO was established on 1 October 1989.

⁸ 1979 Conference Yearbook, p172 [MET.04.00102].

⁹ At p172.

...

It was submitted that it should be the task of each school board and staff, its pupils, its parents and its community to find the best way to further the mental and physical wellbeing of staff and pupils.

- (2) The 1980 Conference received a report from the Trust Board that discussed the Department of Education Inspectors' Report of the same year.¹⁰ The Report indicated that the special character of the College was fully preserved under integration and reported that:¹¹

...the 305 boys are taught to be honest and to love and care for others and are given preparation for life in a Christian frame work with emphasis being placed on the boys' understanding of the beliefs, traditions and way of life of other races. the Principal and Staff so that young people should learn that in an ordered society there was a need for respect for rightful authority.

- (3) The 1986 Conference received a report from the Trust Board that discussed the Department of Education Inspectors' Report of the same year.¹² The Trust Board noted that the report referenced the "enthusiasm of the students for their school, the dignity with which all involved are accorded and the mutual respect shown to one another". The Report also drew attention to aspects needing to be addressed by the Trust and Staff.¹³ The Trust Board did not provide any further details in its report to the Conference on the aspects needing attention identified by the Department of Education.¹⁴

Statement of Truth

This statement is true to the best of our knowledge and belief and was made by us knowing it may be used as evidence by the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care.

¹⁰ 1980 Conference Yearbook, p108 [MET.04.00103].

¹¹ At p108.

¹² 1986 Conference Yearbook, p139 [MET.04.00104].

¹³ At p139-140.

¹⁴ At p140.

Dated: 16 September 2022

GRO-C

Signature:

Dr Brian Evans, Principal/Tumuaki, Wesley College

GRO-C

Signature:

Jan Tasker, Chair of Wesley College Trust Board

GRO-C

Signature:

David McGeorge, Chair of Wesley College Board of Trustees

GRO-C

Signature:

Christopher Johnston, General Secretary, Wesley College Trust Board

**WESLEY COLLEGE FIRST SUPPLEMENTARY JOINT WITNESS STATEMENT | RESPONSE TO FURTHER
DISCLOSURE REQUEST – NOTICE TO PRODUCE NO.454**

QUESTIONS 3(D) AND 9

SCHEDULE OF DOCUMENTS

Document ID	Description	Author	Date
MET.04.00102	1979 Conference Reports and Resolutions	MCNZ	1979
MET.04.00103	1980 Conference Reports and Resolutions	MCNZ	1980
MET.04.00104	1986 Conference Reports and Resolutions	MCNZ	1986
WC.01.00073	Minutes of the Wesley College Board of Trustees	Wesley College Board of Trustees	1990
WC.01.00074	Minutes of the Wesley College Board of Trustees (In Committee – Discipline Committee)	Wesley College Board of Trustees (In Committee – Discipline Committee)	19 November 1990
WC.01.00075	Minutes of the Wesley College Trust Board 'College Committee' (Principal's Report)	Wesley College Trust Board – Principal	13 March 1975