

**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 QC, Ms Kerryn Beaton QC, 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

Ms India Shores for the Anglican Church

Ms Maria Dew, Ms Kiri Harkess and Mr Lourenzo Fernandez for the Methodist Church of New Zealand and Wesley College

Ms Lydia Oosterhoff for the Survivor Network of those Abused by Priests

Mr Brian Henry for Gloriavale Leavers' Support Trust

Mr Chris Shannon and Ms Clare Sykes for Gloriavale Christian Community

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

**Date:** 13 October 2022

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**TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS**

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5 **MS BEATON:** Madam Chair, I think we now have Christopher Longhurst and counsel Lydia  
6 Oosterhoff for SNAP.

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### OPENING STATEMENT BY SNAP

9 **MS OOSTERHOFF:** Tēnā koutou katoa. (Greetings to you all). May it please the Commission.  
10 Counsel's name is Ms Oosterhoff and I appear on behalf of the Survivor Network for those  
11 Abused by Priests, also known as SNAP. On World Sight Day, a brief visual description of  
12 myself, I'm a blonde Pākehā female, much as I don't like to admit it, I am of middle age, I  
13 am wearing a black jacket and a dark blue dress.

14 Commissioners, appearing before you today in person are representatives from  
15 SNAP, Dr Christopher Longhurst, SNAP's national leader, and Mr John O'Malley, SNAP's  
16 senior advisor.

17 Thank you for the opportunity to appear here today for this important final Royal  
18 Commission of Inquiry hearing.

19 As a survivor support network, SNAP asks the Commissioners to look closely at the  
20 evidence that will be put before you in the coming days. SNAP asks that the evidence is  
21 viewed critically and the witnesses questioned appropriately in order to establish exactly  
22 the policies and how these are applied in practice and whether this is operating as intended.

23 SNAP would like to repeat what it has asked of the Commission for its duration:  
24 That the Commission focuses on making recommendations for change for those who sit at  
25 the heart of this Commission. This includes ensuring that responses are tailored to  
26 individual survivors' needs; that policies are put in place to prevent what has occurred in the  
27 past occurring in the future; and these policies are followed. It also means ensuring that  
28 those who are responsible for abuse and those who cover for them are held to account.

29 To open, Dr Longhurst would like to address you on behalf of SNAP's members.  
30 Tēnā koe, Madam Chair.

31 **CHAIR:** Tēnā koe, Ms Oosterhoff and tēnā koe, Dr Longhurst. Welcome back.

32 **DR LONGHURST:** Kia ora. Ngā mihi nui, Ms Oosterhoff. Tēnā koutou katoa. Tēnei te mihi  
33 manahau ki te mana whakahaere, ki ngā Kōmihana, me ā koutou mahi whakahirahira. Ki  
34 ngā mōrehurehu kua puta mai, he mihi maioha. Heoi, ko ngā whakamānawatanga katoa ki a

1 SNAP me ā koutou mahi whakahirahira. Ō rātou kōrero, he tapu. Ō rātou reo, he kaha. Nō  
2 reira, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā tātou katoa.

3 (Greetings Ms Oosterhoff and acknowledgments to all here. Here are my sincere  
4 greetings to the organisers, the Commissioners and for your important work. And to all of  
5 the survivors who are here, my warm greetings, my warm salutations. However, I have my  
6 utmost respect to SNAP for your exceptional work, what you have shared, your stories are  
7 sacred, your voices are strong, and with this I acknowledge you all.)

8 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Tēnā koe.

9 **DR LONGHURST:** Ko Chris Longhurst tōku ingoa, ko Leona tōku māmā, ko Donald tōku pāpā.  
10 E te taha tōku papa nō Ingarangi ōku tīpuna, e te taha tōku māmā nō Iraini ōku tīpuna.

11 (I am Chris Longhurst. Leona is my mum and Donald is my father. On my father's  
12 side, my ancestors are from England. On my mother's side my ancestors are from Ireland.)

13 I am a Pākehā male of middle age. I have long brown hair. Today it is up in a bun.  
14 I am wearing a royal blue suit, a white shirt and a maroon tie today.

15 On behalf of SNAP Aotearoa New Zealand, I would like to thank you,  
16 Commissioners, for granting us leave to appear at this hearing. This hearing is significant  
17 for all survivors of faith-based abuse as it is for members of faith-based organisations and  
18 society as a whole.

19 Through critically examining the response of faith-based institutions to abuse, this  
20 hearing has the mana to shape the responses of the future. There are two main points we  
21 would like you to consider while the upcoming evidence is heard.

22 The first is, it is easy to write policies. However, to be effective, those policies must  
23 be implemented and monitored effectively. The second point is, accountability, integrity  
24 and transparency. These are key in preventing abuse.

25 Commissioners, we have already shown you during this Commission that our  
26 members have not only suffered abuse, but the process for seeking a response from  
27 faith-based institutions has often been re-traumatising today. This is because the principles  
28 and procedures in policy documents have not been followed today.

29 The assurances from church leaders today to do no harm and to do good, they're not  
30 new. In evidence the Methodist Church advised in 1743 that its renewal movement was  
31 based on the desire to, first, do no harm, second, to do good, and third, to attend to the  
32 ordinances of God. Please keep this in mind when you listen to the evidence. Promises  
33 have been made in the past and broken. Otherwise we wouldn't be here today.

1           We need faith-based institutions to be open, honest and transparent in order to  
2 uphold their promises to God, to do no harm. Well, to do no further harm. We cannot  
3 allow the institutions to continue to rely on excuses that they have used in the past, that  
4 prevent exposing abuse. For example, the sanctity of the priesthood and respect for  
5 privacy.

6           Commissioners, we ask you in the days that follow to look not only at the policies  
7 that will be put before you, but to ask how have these been applied. Look at the evidence  
8 and its validity. We must go past just hearing about policies that are considered to amount  
9 to adequate self-regulation.

10          This leads to our next point. Accountability, integrity and transparency in all  
11 institutions and their activities. If we are to make changes that last, changes to the systems  
12 that allowed abuse to occur, then we need to ensure that people abide by the appropriate  
13 policies.

14          We must lift the veil of secrecy that many faith-based institutions have operated  
15 within and ensure accountability. Something that has been unfortunately lacking in the  
16 past.

17          To do so we must see evidence of change in the coming days. Change not in words  
18 but in action. These policies for change must be transparent. What we need to see  
19 evidence of is effective policies for change that do not only safeguard for those in the  
20 future, but heals for those in the past. And this needs to be supported by strong  
21 mechanisms for accountability and transparency.

22          Accountability and transparency means monitoring and real-time reporting of  
23 outcomes, including education and training outcomes. Accountability and transparency  
24 means ensuring those who work with children and vulnerable people are adequately vetted  
25 and tested to ensure they are psychologically able and mature enough to take on such  
26 important roles.

27          In conclusion, Commissioners, we entirely support the representations of Frances  
28 Tagaloa, we are saying the exact same thing. When you examine the evidence put before  
29 you during this hearing, we ask you to examine it critically. In the end, at the centre of this  
30 whole inquiry are the survivors. So we ask you to question how survivors are faring under  
31 the policies and under their practices.

32          We know that our members and others across Aotearoa are watching this hearing  
33 with keen interest and with hope. However, to be honest, also with apprehension. SNAP  
34 needs to support our members beyond next week and beyond when this Commission is

1 over. Our efforts will continue. We, the survivors, with dignity are doing the mahi  
2 whakahirahira. He tapu mātou kōrero, he kaha mātou reo. Nō reira, tēnā koutou, tēnā  
3 koutou, tēnā tātou katoa. (We, the survivors, with dignity are doing the important work,  
4 Our stories are sacred and our voices are strong. With this, I greet, salute and address each  
5 and every one present.)

6 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Kia ora.

7 **CHAIR:** Kia ora, Dr Longhurst.