

<p>1 Monday, 10 August 2020 2 (10.30 am) 3 THE CHAIR: Good morning, everyone. I am Alexis Jay and I'm 4 the chair of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual 5 Abuse. With me are the other panel members of 6 the inquiry: Professor Sir Malcolm Evans, Ivor Frank and 7 Drusilla Sharpling. 8 On behalf of the inquiry, I welcome you all to this, 9 the second stage of the substantive hearing in the 10 Investigation into Child Protection in Religious 11 Organisations and Settings. On 16 March of this year, 12 this investigation began its public hearings at 13 Pocock Street. We heard opening speeches from inquiry 14 counsel and those core participants who wished to make 15 one, as well as the evidence of a complainant witness, 16 PR-A10. That hearing was suspended after one day, in 17 order to comply with government guidance on the 18 management of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. 19 Following this, the solicitor to the inquiry sought 20 the views of all core participants about the possibility 21 of resuming the hearing remotely and, having considered 22 all responses, I ruled on 16 April 2020 that a remote 23 hearing was both desirable and practicable. 24 The first two weeks of the remote hearing took place 25 between 11 and 22 May. This week, we have a further</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 1</p>	<p>1 week of evidence to accommodate those who were not able 2 to attend the hearing in May. 3 I would like to thank all core participants, 4 witnesses and representatives for their co-operation in 5 preparing for and conducting this hearing, and to thank 6 the inquiry staff for their hard work in making the 7 necessary arrangements. 8 This is a thematic investigation which is managing 9 what religious organisations and settings are currently 10 doing to keep children safe. 11 Before we hear from lead counsel to the inquiry, 12 Fiona Scolding QC, some points on timing: we will begin 13 each day from 10.30 am. We will take a 15-minute break 14 every hour and we will take a one-hour break for lunch 15 at approximately 12.45, returning at 1.45. We intend to 16 sit no later than 4.00 pm each day. 17 By way of an agenda, we rely on the hearing 18 timetable which sets out the order in which witnesses 19 will be called, save for where unforeseen circumstances 20 require a change to be made. 21 A simultaneous hearing transcript will be produced 22 and is available to those taking part in this hearing 23 via a web browser. The transcript will be published at 24 the end of each day on the inquiry website and any 25 directions arising from the day's hearing will also be</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 2</p>
<p>1 published on the website. 2 Participants are asked to mute their microphones and 3 turn off their camera unless they are speaking. If 4 microphones pick up noise such as typing, they will 5 place the person on screen as if they were speaking. 6 Turning off cameras will keep the screen from becoming 7 distracting by looking too busy for those using the 8 gallery view. 9 I have made a restriction order protecting the 10 identity of the complainant core participants and 11 covering the redactions and ciphers applied in this 12 investigation. For technical reasons, it will not be 13 possible to broadcast the hearing with the usual 14 three-minute delay. All witnesses and core participants 15 have been reminded of these restriction orders and of 16 the need to take great care in giving evidence or 17 addressing the inquiry to avoid any inadvertent breaches 18 of these orders. 19 If there is an inadvertent breach of a restriction 20 order, I will make an immediate further order over the 21 evidence incorrectly given. Members of the public and 22 the press will be prohibited from publishing that 23 evidence. 24 The first witness from whom we will hear is an 25 anonymous witness whose identity is protected by</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 3</p>	<p>1 a restriction order. The evidence of this first witness 2 will not, therefore, be live streamed, but a transcript 3 and audio file of the evidence will be uploaded to the 4 inquiry's website as soon as possible. 5 Please go ahead, Ms Scolding. 6 MS SCOLDING: Chair, I must first alert you to the fact that 7 there has been an inadvertent breach of a restriction 8 order in respect of an image, and identify that there is 9 a need for you to make an immediate restriction order so 10 that someone's image does not appear. It inadvertently 11 appeared for a very brief period of time first thing 12 this morning. 13 I would also identify that the live stream needs to 14 be cut in order to prevent the damage ongoing, and we 15 will resume the live stream after the morning break. So 16 if I can just indicate that now. Somebody, I believe, 17 is currently anticipating that, so, chair, if it would 18 be appropriate, please would you make that order? 19 THE CHAIR: Yes, I will make that order. 20 Opening remarks by MS SCOLDING 21 MS SCOLDING: Thank you very much. Thank you, chair. I am 22 Fiona Scolding, lead counsel to this investigation. 23 Mr Olinga Tahzib is also counsel to this investigation 24 and he is here this morning. Ms McNeill is not here for 25 this phase of the investigation, as she is on maternity</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 4</p>

<p>1 leave. I welcome everyone back on behalf of the counsel 2 team to this second phase of the remote hearing into 3 child protection in religious organisations and 4 settings. 5 Chair, I will firstly introduce those core 6 participants who are in attendance today, and then make 7 some brief introductory remarks before we have our first 8 witness this morning, who will be in closed session. 9 Each representative only appears on screen if they 10 speak, so, as I introduce everyone, I would ask them to 11 unmute their microphone and video and indicate whom you 12 represent. First, Mr Scorer of Slater & Gordon? 13 MR SCORER: Good morning, chair and panel. Myself and my 14 colleague, Kim Harrison, represent Lloyd Evans, 15 Migdal Emunah, Southall Black Sisters, Sadia Hameed, 16 Lisa Oakley, Yasmin Rehman and the Interfaith Alliance. 17 Thank you. 18 MS SCOLDING: Next, Mr Collins of Hugh James Solicitors. 19 MR COLLINS: Good morning, chair, good morning, panel. I am 20 Alan Collins, Hugh James Solicitors, representing the 21 ex-JW advocacy core participants. 22 MS SCOLDING: Next, Ms Moore of AO Advocates who is in 23 attendance today. Mr Cervenka will be attending the 24 hearing later in the week. 25 MS MOORE: Good morning, chair and panel. My name is</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 5</p>	<p>1 Ms Moore and I represent Kol v'Oz along with my 2 colleague Mr Cervenka. 3 MR SCORER: Next, Ms Walker of counsel? 4 MS WALKER: Good morning, chair and panel. Amelia Walker. 5 I'm representing the Home Office, also looking after the 6 interests of other government departments involved in 7 this strand. Thank you. 8 MS SCOLDING: Next, Ms de Coverley, counsel. 9 MS DE COVERLEY: Good morning, chair and panel. I am 10 Alice de Coverley. Alongside Sarah Hannett, I represent 11 Ofsted. 12 MS SCOLDING: Ms de Coverley appears to be in some type of 13 disco-type environment. I think we will apologise for 14 that. Next, Ms Idelbi. 15 MS IDELBI: Good morning, chair and panel. I represent the 16 Charity Commission. 17 MS SCOLDING: After that, Mr Humphreys. 18 MR HUMPHREYS: Good morning, chair and panel. I am 19 Justin Humphreys. I'm chief executive and representing 20 Thirtyone:eight. 21 MS SCOLDING: Next, Mr Brady. 22 MR BRADY: Good morning, chair and panel. Shane Brady 23 representing the Christian Congregation of Jehovah's 24 Witnesses. 25 MS SCOLDING: Next, Ms Murphy?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 6</p>
<p>1 MS MURPHY: Good morning, chair and panel. I am 2 representing the United Reform Church today on behalf of 3 Ioannis Athanasiou. 4 MS SCOLDING: Thank you very much, Ms Murphy. I'm not sure 5 I could see you, but it may well be other people could. 6 I know you're representing the United Reform Church and 7 Mr Athanasiou, who has previously represented them, will 8 be joining us later in the week. 9 Last, but by no means least, Ms Heard. 10 MS HEARD: Good morning, I'm Alice Heard and I'm 11 representing the Methodist Church. 12 MS SCOLDING: There are a number of core participants, 13 chair, who are not in attendance today but may be 14 attending the hearing on other days and/or following the 15 proceedings on the live stream. They are the 16 United Synagogue, the Baptist Union of Great Britain, 17 the Union of the Hebrew Congregations, Liberal Judaism, 18 the Evangelical Alliance, Reform Judaism, the 19 Pagan Federation and Shema Koli. 20 Chair, as you know, I gave a full opening statement 21 on 16 March 2020 and further opening remarks on 11 May. 22 The transcripts of both are available on the IICSA 23 website. 24 I am, to the relief of all, I suspect, not going to 25 repeat those, but simply to identify and recognise very</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 7</p>	<p>1 briefly the terms upon which this hearing is going to 2 take place. 3 Firstly, this inquiry recognises the vital role that 4 religious organisations play in the provision of 5 education, religious pursuit, social, leisure and 6 community activities for millions of families. Their 7 actions and activities over the past six months during 8 the COVID-19 pandemic have shown their importance to our 9 society, both to those with belief and those with none. 10 Every religious organisation has written to us of 11 their abhorrence of such child sexual abuse and their 12 dedication to stamping it out. This investigation seeks 13 to examine if their practices, policies and procedures 14 at present are adequate to do so. 15 We have already spent just over two weeks looking at 16 a cross-section of organisations and groups representing 17 a wide spectrum of beliefs and practices. As I must 18 stress, our investigation is not focused on any one 19 particular organisation and is not meant to provide an 20 in-depth investigation of particular incidents. 21 Our role is to see how far religious organisations 22 diverge from the child protection norms imposed in other 23 parts of life; how far they understand and observe what 24 may be considered to be basic protections; the 25 particular barriers to reporting abuse for those who are</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 8</p>

<p>1 members of various religious communities; and the impact 2 and effects when reports of abuse are made to the 3 religious community or about the religious community. 4 Are there barriers in reporting abuse and having it 5 dealt with adequately and effectively? 6 I wish to thank each and every core participant and 7 witness to this investigation for their patience and 8 co-operation over the past six months. We have asked 9 much of you, learning new technology and ways of working 10 at a time when many of you have great personal and 11 professional burdens. Being a witness is an onerous 12 obligation, and we recognise the pressure this may put 13 upon you. We also recognise that giving evidence 14 remotely has its stresses and strains, and is not the 15 same as giving evidence in the same room as everyone 16 else. For some, that may bring a sense of relief; for 17 others, it may not. Thank you for being willing to 18 share your experience and expertise with us. 19 I wish to ask that each of you continues to show the 20 patience and forbearance that you have shown to date to 21 us. Our timetable is complicated. We will try as hard 22 as possible to make sure that everything goes smoothly, 23 but please forgive us if this is not the case. 24 I will spend a few minutes reminding everyone of 25 what will happen and will reiterate some important</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 9</p>	<p>1 points to remember. 2 First, and above all, it is not possible, as has 3 been seen this morning, to operate a Zoom hearing and 4 also have a three-minute delay to the live stream. This 5 hearing is, therefore, in most cases, going live on the 6 internet. 7 As you have already seen, if there were to be an 8 inadvertent disclosure, we will ask for the feed to be 9 cut and a restriction order to be immediately made so 10 that the information can be removed from any recording 11 and cannot be published further. 12 Second, we know that giving evidence by video is 13 tiring, more tiring than giving evidence in a courtroom. 14 We have therefore incorporated breaks on an hourly 15 basis, and any witness can ask for further breaks if 16 needed. 17 The primary mechanism for questioning is by counsel 18 to the inquiry -- that's either myself or Mr Tahzib -- 19 on behalf of the chair and panel. We will have our 20 first break this morning at 11.30, with lunch at 12.45 21 and a mid-afternoon break around 2.45, and we aim to 22 finish every day at around 4.00 pm. 23 Third, this inquiry has the assistance of very 24 capable technical support teams, but in the event of 25 a problem, please wait while RTS, our audio-visual</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 10</p>
<p>1 provider, hopefully work their magic. If necessary, we 2 will simply take a short break until various technical 3 issues are resolved. 4 Today, we will be hearing from PR-A5 and, as you 5 know, her evidence is not being live streamed. The 6 first live streamed witnesses today will be 7 Ms Sarah Davies and Mr Duncan Corbett, members of an 8 organisation called the Ex-Jehovah's Witness Advocates 9 Opposing Crimes Against Children, who will be heard 10 alongside Mr James Lloyd Evans who now provides an 11 online service of advice and information about the 12 Jehovah's Witnesses. It is anticipated that their 13 evidence will begin at around 11.45. 14 Later on today, we will hear from Mr Paul Gillies, 15 a senior officer at the central branch of the Christian 16 Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses. Mr Gillies's 17 evidence will be heard tomorrow as well. Tomorrow 18 afternoon, we will hear from Ms Jane Booth of 19 Bradford Council and Mr Jim Gamble, who is representing 20 the City of London and Hackney Safeguarding Children's 21 Partnership. 22 On Wednesday, we will hear from Dr Steven Wilson, 23 the chief executive of the United Synagogue, and from 24 Rabbi Jehudah Baumgarten on behalf of the Union of 25 Orthodox Hebrew Congregations, an umbrella organisation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 11</p>	<p>1 for many synagogues within the Haredi Jewish community. 2 On Thursday, we will hear from Ms Nazmin Akthar of 3 the Muslim Women's Network, followed by 4 Mr Daniel Greaves of the Home Office and Ms Kate Dixon 5 of the Department for Education. 6 On Friday, we shall hear from Mr Harvey Grenville 7 who has supervised investigations on behalf of 8 the Charity Commission into religious organisations and 9 their ability to deal with child protection issues. 10 We shall then hear closing submissions from those 11 core participants who wish to do so on Friday afternoon. 12 Chair, we are already in closed session, but I now 13 pause and pass over to Mr Tahzib, who shall call the 14 first witness. 15 THE CHAIR: Thank you, Ms Scolding. 16 MR TAHZIB: Thank you. Good morning, chair. 17 WITNESS PR-A5 18 Examination by MR TAHZIB 19 MR TAHZIB: PR-A5, firstly, thank you very much for 20 attending to give evidence. As you know, rather 21 strangely, I am going to have to call you PR-A5. You 22 know that that's to protect your identity. Before we 23 begin, I just want to run through a few preliminaries. 24 You will see that various parts of your statement have 25 been redacted. The purpose of these redactions is,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 12</p>

<p>1 again, to protect your identity. Could I ask you to try 2 your best not to mention any of the parts that have been 3 redacted and, additionally, not to mention the names of 4 anyone who doesn't already appear in your statement as 5 that may lead to you being identified? 6 A. Okay. 7 Q. You have a paper bundle in front of you. That has your 8 witness statement within it and other relevant documents 9 that I will be referring to. This isn't a test of 10 memory, so by all means refer to your witness statement 11 and any of the other documents that you have there in 12 your bundle in front of you. 13 Finally, we intend to take a break at 11.30 am, but 14 we can stop at any time, so if you need a break at any 15 moment, just let me know, and we can arrange that. It 16 is no problem. 17 PR-A5, could I ask you first to turn up your 18 statement, please. It is behind tab A1 of your bundle. 19 Have you had a chance to read through your statement 20 recently? 21 A. I have, yes. 22 Q. And are the contents of that statement true, to the best 23 of your knowledge and belief? 24 A. They are, yes. 25 Q. You describe at paragraph 4 of your statement that you</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 13</p>	<p>1 were born in 1985 and that you have three older 2 siblings -- a sister and two brothers. Over the page, 3 you say at paragraph 5 of your statement that your 4 parents were both members of the Jehovah's Witnesses and 5 attached to a congregation in the Midlands. How 6 significant a feature of your upbringing were the 7 activities of that congregation? 8 A. It was my upbringing. It was part of -- every facet of 9 our lives was dominated by the religion, from the meals 10 we sat down to eat, there would be prayers before them. 11 There was literally no part of our day which wasn't 12 dictated by some Jehovah's Witnesses activity. 13 Q. Could you describe for the inquiry, please, some of 14 the activities that you were involved with, as part of 15 the congregation, as a child? 16 A. Obviously the meetings that you had to attend. When 17 I was a member -- when I was a childhood member, that 18 was the Tuesday night book study, the Thursday night 19 meeting, and then, obviously, the Sunday meeting and 20 public talk and Watchtower study. Then, on top of that, 21 the family Bible study, individual Bible study, once 22 a week, both took place once a week. Watchtower study 23 and then the field service. So the field service would 24 be every week on, like, a Saturday. If you were off 25 school -- before I started school, that would also be on</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 14</p>
<p>1 a Tuesday. And also on a Sunday as well, when they 2 brought in Sunday witnessing. 3 Q. We will come back a bit later on to look at a couple of 4 those in a bit more detail, field service and Bible 5 study. But for now, are you able to describe whether 6 any of those activities involved you being unsupervised 7 by your parents? 8 A. So, yes. In field service, you would be put into pairs, 9 so you'd be -- there's, like, a group that was taken by 10 a man and they divide you off into twos and invariably 11 I would be paired off with somebody else, either -- 12 throughout my childhood, with various different members 13 of the congregation, away from my mother. 14 Q. Aside from field service, did any of the other 15 activities that you described -- 16 A. Bible study. So there were occasions I had Bible 17 studies obviously with Peter and also there were older 18 women in the congregation, when I would go into my teens 19 when I had a couple of Bible studies as well. They 20 didn't last very long. 21 Q. Could you assist the inquiry to understand, what was the 22 relationship like between adults and children within the 23 congregation? How would adults and children relate to 24 each other? 25 A. So most children would refer to the adults as "aunt" or</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 15</p>	<p>1 "uncle" because, obviously, you're meant to be sisters 2 and brothers, so it makes sense, a sort of continuity of 3 that. I did that less than, I think, other children. 4 I wasn't inclined to call people "aunt" or "uncle". For 5 whatever reason, it didn't sit very comfortably. But 6 there were obviously many members that I called "aunt" 7 and "uncle", but not as much. Some of them almost -- 8 like, completely believed they were family. 9 Q. You go on in your statement, and you have just referred 10 to it now as well, to describe a particular member of 11 the congregation, Peter Stewart. You say that he 12 attended the same Kingdom Hall as your parents. For 13 those who might not be aware, could you briefly explain 14 what a Kingdom Hall refers to? 15 A. The Kingdom Hall is the place of worship, so it is like 16 a church, basically, where everybody meets as a whole 17 congregation. 18 Q. One of the things that you say in your statement is that 19 you knew that Peter Stewart was a ministerial servant. 20 What did you understand that to mean at the time? 21 A. So just, within the hierarchy of the congregation, he 22 was one of the senior members, so he had a position of 23 some sort -- like, you know, he had responsibility -- he 24 had responsibility -- they refer to them all as 25 responsibilities. It's like a privilege to be given</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 16</p>

<p>1 responsibilities. So if you are given any form of 2 privilege, of responsibilities, it means that you're 3 a good spiritual -- good Jehovah's Witness. 4 Q. Would that have been something that you were aware of 5 when you were a child? 6 A. Yes, because you're exposed to every single meeting. 7 The language that you're exposed to as well is quite 8 adult language. So even as, you know, sort of 9 a four/five-year-old, I'd use terms that potentially 10 other four/five-year-olds wouldn't because I'd sat 11 through so many meetings where I'd been exposed to these 12 terms. Spiritual purity and things like that, I would 13 have had an idea of it, yes. 14 Q. You said that it was a position that carries with it 15 responsibilities. Are you able to just briefly 16 summarise what the main role of the ministerial servant 17 would be within the congregation? 18 A. I think it depends, like, on what they're used for, but 19 generally it's for taking field service, when -- sort of 20 taking book study. So an elder used to have a book 21 study group and, when he was on holiday or otherwise 22 engaged, his ministerial servant in that group would 23 take the study for him. It just meant so many things. 24 I'm just trying to think of an example. But mainly for 25 me, field service and taking book study group as cover.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 17</p>	<p>1 Q. You mentioned there field service. I want to just look 2 at that in a bit more detail with you now. Again, for 3 those who might not be aware, could you just describe 4 what field service groups are? 5 A. It's the meeting that's held before you go out on the 6 work on ministry and go out knocking on doors. 7 A meeting is held where scriptures are read. It lasts 8 about ten minutes. Prayers are held and people are 9 assigned their territory, so the person leading the 10 field service assigns where you're going to work and 11 also who you're working with. 12 Q. You say at paragraph 8 of your statement that because he 13 led the field service group, Peter Stewart would pair 14 himself to go with you door to door. Would it just be 15 the two of you who would go together? 16 A. Yes. 17 Q. How old would you have been at that time? 18 A. So I think -- well, back then, I would have been, like, 19 four or five. It wasn't unusual. There were many 20 people who assigned themselves to work with me 21 throughout my time as a Jehovah's Witnesses. It was 22 certainly not unusual for me to go to -- I can't 23 actually -- I think one occasion I can remember working 24 with my mother. It was certainly a rarity that I would 25 ever be assigned to work with my mother.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 18</p>
<p>1 Q. It may be that you have just answered this, but would 2 there be -- aside from your case, would there have been 3 other cases of adults who were paired alone with 4 children in this way? 5 A. Yes. It was -- there must have been. It can't just 6 have been me. My sister was. Yeah, no, my sister never 7 worked with my mother either. So she definitely was 8 paired with other people. 9 My friend, one of my very close friends, I can 10 remember her -- the very few occasions that she actually 11 went out on field service, I can remember her being 12 paired off again. It was the whole thing of trying to 13 build her up spiritually, so spending time with other 14 members of the congregation aside from her mother to 15 offer her that spiritual support. 16 Q. Just moving on, you referred previously to Bible study 17 classes as well, and I just want to come to look at 18 those briefly now. One of the things that you say -- 19 this is paragraph 9 of your statement -- is that in the 20 late 1980s, Peter Stewart started coming to your home to 21 lead Watchtower Bible study classes. Could you briefly 22 explain to the inquiry, why was it that he started doing 23 that? 24 A. Obviously my father couldn't lead them anymore because 25 he was disfellowshipped and you're meant to have a man</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 19</p>	<p>1 lead the Bible study, any Bible study, but certainly 2 The Watchtower study, because that was the main -- even 3 if all of the others fall by the wayside, The Watchtower 4 Bible study has to be done because you have to prepare 5 answers and stuff, because you're meant to -- even as 6 a very young child, you're meant to be able to at least 7 attempt an answer during the Sunday meeting. So he 8 would -- yeah, that's when he was doing it, because he 9 was -- and he'd obviously ... 10 Q. Again, just for clarity, you mentioned there that your 11 father was unable to do it because he was 12 disfellowshipped. Could you briefly explain what it 13 means to be disfellowshipped, please? 14 A. To be disfellowshipped means that everybody within the 15 congregation, for the most part, stops talking to you 16 and you're not -- you're meant to have very limited 17 contact. It's not meant to extend into the house, but 18 my mum did extend -- we were meant to stay away from him 19 as much as possible because you're told that they're 20 being used by the devils. So if someone was 21 disfellowshipped, they're being used by the devil so you 22 shouldn't listen to them or have any contact with them. 23 Q. These classes that Peter Stewart was providing you with, 24 would these sorts of Bible study classes be common for 25 those who are Witnesses?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 20</p>

<p>1 A. Yes. Every Jehovah's Witness family has to have 2 a Watchtower study. I certainly don't -- even the ones 3 that aren't, you know -- on the fringes of 4 the congregation, but to the best of my knowledge, 5 everybody has a Watchtower study. 6 Q. How often do they take place and how long would they 7 last? 8 A. So once a week, for an hour. 9 Q. One of the things that you say at paragraph 9 is that 10 the classes would also sometimes take place at his home, 11 at Peter Stewart's home. Was it usual for classes to 12 take place there? 13 A. They would always take place in a person's home. So 14 normally it would be the family's home. But obviously 15 for convenience, if, for whatever reason, they decided 16 that it would be at his house as well, but it was always 17 within a family home that the Watchtower studies take 18 place. They don't take place in -- a lot of 19 the activity -- so like the field service groups 20 I mentioned earlier, they also take place within 21 people's homes. A lot of Jehovah's Witness activity -- 22 the Tuesday night book study also takes place within 23 people's homes. It's quite limited what activity 24 actually happens at Kingdom Hall. 25 Q. I see. What would your parents be doing whilst these</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 21</p>	<p>1 classes were taking place? 2 A. They would participate. So my mum would be with -- so 3 she'd be participating with us. 4 Q. You describe between paragraphs 12 and 15 of your 5 statement the first instance of abuse by Peter Stewart. 6 Are you able to describe for the inquiry what took 7 place, please? 8 A. Yes. I'd had Watchtower study at -- it was at my 9 mother's house and, once it finished -- it was in the 10 day time, I can remember, because obviously my dad was 11 at work. There was a spider that lived in the shed at 12 the bottom of the garden that I'd talked about. Somehow 13 we went down there to see that and lifting me up to see 14 the spider, he -- as you can read in my statement, 15 touching me and, yeah ... 16 Q. You describe in your statement how that incident, 17 Peter Stewart effectively began a regular pattern of 18 abuse. Are you able to describe briefly for the inquiry 19 how it was that the abuse progressed? 20 A. Basically, every occasion that I saw him, where he could 21 find some way either of getting me alone -- or not even 22 necessarily getting me alone. If he was able to 23 manipulate the situation on every occasion that he saw 24 me, something would happen. The degree of what happened 25 depended on how much privacy he could access, how much</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 22</p>
<p>1 privacy he could get. 2 Q. You mentioned there privacy. One of the things that you 3 describe is that, on some occasions, the assaults would 4 take place even when other people were in the next door 5 room. Is that correct? 6 A. Yes. And in the same room, so ... 7 Q. One of the things you say, this is at paragraph 24 of 8 your statement, is that Peter Stewart took advantage of 9 your childlike understanding of the teachings of 10 the Jehovah's Witnesses and your fear of being seen to 11 be simple in the eyes of your mother and the Witnesses. 12 Are you able to elaborate on what you mean by this and 13 how he would do that? 14 A. I'm not entirely sure how he did it, but I was very 15 certain that when I would -- before I can remember, 16 I was very certain that when Armageddon came, that I was 17 going to die at Armageddon because I'd been committing 18 fornication. How he shared -- imparted that knowledge 19 to me is beyond my memory now, but I grew up believing 20 constantly that, yeah, Armageddon -- every meeting I sat 21 through, every time they referenced Armageddon, I was 22 utterly and totally convinced that I was going to be 23 (inaudible). 24 Q. You describe later in your statement, this is now 25 paragraph 27, that the abuse suddenly stopped in 1994</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 23</p>	<p>1 when you were about 9 years old. Why was it that the 2 abuse stopped? 3 A. Because he was taken to prison. 4 Q. Is that something that you knew at that time? 5 A. I don't think I knew initially, but I think after a few 6 months -- after he disappeared for a while, we sort of 7 knew. 8 Q. Is it fair to say that around that time you didn't feel 9 able to tell your mother about the abuse that 10 Peter Stewart had perpetrated? 11 A. Yes. I tried -- like, there were many times I tried. 12 I just couldn't ever. I always used to say to her, 13 "Mum, I've got something to tell you. I've got 14 something really important to tell you" and then I just 15 couldn't tell her. There was one occasion when the 16 elders were around, when it all kicked off and everybody 17 was sort of -- when it finally broke. I thought they 18 were coming around to -- I thought I was in trouble as 19 well, which is why I told her at that point because 20 I thought, my feeling was -- I didn't know I'd been 21 sexually abused at that point. I didn't know that it 22 was sexual abuse. I just -- I thought I'd been doing 23 something horrifically wrong that I couldn't stop doing. 24 I thought, "Oh, God, I'm going to be in trouble", so 25 that's when I told her, and then, in the morning, yeah,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 24</p>

<p>1 I just couldn't face it, so I said, "No, no, it's true".</p> <p>2 Q. Thank you, yes, I'll come back in a moment to look in</p> <p>3 more detail at that visit by the elders that you</p> <p>4 referred to there. Just before I do, Peter Stewart was</p> <p>5 obviously released from prison, you say at paragraph 34</p> <p>6 of your statement that, in around 1999, you found out he</p> <p>7 was going to be released. Can you help the inquiry to</p> <p>8 understand, what impact did finding that out have on</p> <p>9 you?</p> <p>10 A. Well, I found out because he was meeting at the</p> <p>11 Kingdom Hall, because obviously we use the same</p> <p>12 building, although he was in a separate congregation.</p> <p>13 For whatever reasons, probably best known to him, he</p> <p>14 decided, as part of his written statement, to attend --</p> <p>15 because, obviously, you have to attend meetings and sit</p> <p>16 at the back. He decided on that, and other occasions,</p> <p>17 to attend our meeting and that's how I discovered that</p> <p>18 he was out of prison.</p> <p>19 Q. You say towards the end of that paragraph:</p> <p>20 "This all led to what I can only describe as an</p> <p>21 epiphany. I finally decided to tell someone about the</p> <p>22 abuse. I called a close friend first and then my</p> <p>23 mother."</p> <p>24 How did they respond once you told them about the</p> <p>25 abuse?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 25</p>	<p>1 A. The weirdest thing was, it was only a few months before</p> <p>2 that suddenly things clicked that I'd realised what had</p> <p>3 happened was sexual abuse, to be able to find the words</p> <p>4 to even say what it was. Obviously at that point I just</p> <p>5 didn't have a clue. My friend was a little bit shocked</p> <p>6 but not like -- she'd known me from when I was quite</p> <p>7 young, so I think she'd always thought there was</p> <p>8 something strange, anyway, going on. My mum was just</p> <p>9 really upset. She was just devastated that she had let</p> <p>10 it happen and just -- yeah, really -- still angry at</p> <p>11 him. Hence why she wrote a letter, which is probably</p> <p>12 the most cringeworthy -- some people might react</p> <p>13 a little bit stronger; my mother writes</p> <p>14 a strongly-worded letter.</p> <p>15 Q. I wanted to come on to that letter next, because you say</p> <p>16 at paragraph 37 that your mother wrote a letter to</p> <p>17 Peter Stewart himself in May 2000 which you weren't</p> <p>18 aware of at the time but you've since learnt of. Is</p> <p>19 that correct?</p> <p>20 A. I saw his reply, because when the letter came through</p> <p>21 that he replied, I realised it was his handwriting,</p> <p>22 so ...</p> <p>23 Q. Do you know what your mother wrote in that letter?</p> <p>24 A. I've got an idea, that she was upset, she was ashamed of</p> <p>25 herself, she was just absolutely devastated that it --</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 26</p>
<p>1 this could happen. I think -- I just -- her</p> <p>2 comprehension that a Jehovah's Witness could do this was</p> <p>3 just -- she just couldn't get her head around that.</p> <p>4 Q. You mentioned that Peter Stewart replied to the letter.</p> <p>5 What did he say in his reply?</p> <p>6 A. He asked me to forgive him, to not -- yeah, to not let</p> <p>7 what he did go on and damage me in my future life. He</p> <p>8 was just being everything that he always was. He was</p> <p>9 just using it as a tool of manipulation. The fact that</p> <p>10 he -- I think the fact that he felt confident enough to</p> <p>11 write the letter and then, having written the letter, go</p> <p>12 on to deny the abuse to the elders, shows everything</p> <p>13 about -- he knew that -- he clearly was -- it was a tool</p> <p>14 of manipulation for him, that's all.</p> <p>15 Q. It's right that after your mother received</p> <p>16 Peter Stewart's reply, she spoke to an elder at the</p> <p>17 congregation and an investigation was initiated into</p> <p>18 Peter Stewart. You describe this at paragraph 39 of</p> <p>19 your statement. That was around November 2000; is that</p> <p>20 right?</p> <p>21 A. Yes, I believe so.</p> <p>22 Q. Can you briefly describe, what did that investigation</p> <p>23 involve, please?</p> <p>24 A. Not a lot. They asked me to write a letter -- because</p> <p>25 he was dissociated, I was allowed to write a letter</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 27</p>	<p>1 rather than having to meet him face to face, which is</p> <p>2 obviously what would have happened had he not</p> <p>3 dissociated himself. So I wrote a letter. They then</p> <p>4 spoke to him. He denied it. They believed him and that</p> <p>5 was the end of it, as far as they were concerned.</p> <p>6 Q. You say at paragraph 40 that it was clear to you that</p> <p>7 the elders wouldn't accept your account because they</p> <p>8 focused on the fact that you didn't have two witnesses</p> <p>9 and they disregarded the supporting statements that your</p> <p>10 sister could give.</p> <p>11 A. Actually, what I made very clear to them, there were two</p> <p>12 witnesses to the abuse. But, yeah, they disregarded her</p> <p>13 evidence because it's not simply -- what I think a lot</p> <p>14 of people, who even believe in Jehovah's Witnesses,</p> <p>15 don't understand, it is not simply a case of a two</p> <p>16 witness rule, they have to be two credible witnesses.</p> <p>17 So if the Jehovah's Witnesses feel in any way the person</p> <p>18 is spiritually impure, they don't believe their account,</p> <p>19 which is, you know, most people, in their eyes.</p> <p>20 Q. You mentioned then that it had to be two credible</p> <p>21 witnesses and that's why it wasn't accepted. Was that</p> <p>22 something that was made known to you at that time?</p> <p>23 A. Yes.</p> <p>24 Q. You say at paragraph 41 of your statement that in 2001</p> <p>25 a circuit overseer, Brother Shah, came to see you and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 28</p>

<p>1 your mother. Again, for those who might not be aware, 2 are you able to summarise what a circuit overseer is? 3 A. A little bit like a regional manager. You've obviously 4 got the elder -- the ministerial servants, then you've 5 got the elders, then you've got the circuit overseer who 6 sort of oversees the circuit, and then there's the 7 district overseer above him. He comes and checks the 8 congregations are -- the elders are doing their job and 9 keeping everybody in line, basically. 10 Q. So in 2001, the circuit overseer, Brother Shah, came to 11 see you and your mother. Can you describe what 12 happened, please, during that visit? 13 A. I just had a lot of counselling, so to be counselled 14 means you're basically being told off. Just 15 concentrating on -- because, at that point, I was quite 16 poorly and they just wanted to concentrate on getting me 17 going out -- they seemed to think if I went on field 18 service more, it would solve all the problems and also 19 I needed to dress a little bit more modestly and, again, 20 that would also solve all my problems. There is a lot 21 of talk about modest dressing in the 22 Jehovah's Witnesses. 23 Q. One of the things you say in your statement is: 24 "They kept telling me that my clothing was too 25 provocative and worldly."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 29</p>	<p>1 Was that something said to you in that meeting with 2 Brother Shah? 3 A. Yes, and many others. So there was one rather heated 4 exchange I had with Paul -- again, that was in my 5 statement for the trial -- where I felt that he was 6 inferring that somehow my abuse had been a result of -- 7 even though I was 4 -- it ended with me saying, "Well, 8 how can a 4-year-old dress provocatively?". Most 9 exchanges I had, when I was being counselled, involved 10 them having a good go at me about my clothing and making 11 me feel that I was -- I couldn't say what I felt like. 12 It was incredibly demeaning. I would even try and -- 13 I'd go with my mum, who took me shopping, to buy clothes 14 that they'd hopefully find appropriate, but nothing was 15 good enough, so ... 16 Q. Just moving forward, you describe at paragraphs 43 and 17 44 of your statement that, in 2001, you decided to 18 disclose your abuse to someone outside your family and 19 outside the Jehovah's Witnesses, and that was to 20 a psychologist, whom you had seen previously. Is that 21 correct? 22 A. Yes. 23 Q. It's right that she then reported the abuse to the 24 police? 25 A. Yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 30</p>
<p>1 Q. Can you briefly describe, what happened after the police 2 became involved? 3 A. All of a sudden, the elders re-opened their 4 investigation. The exact words were from 5 Chris Manning(?), who'd been in charge of investigating, 6 "Well, you've made life very difficult for us now. We 7 have to relook at this", and so they suddenly found 8 scope to reinvestigate it, and then obviously the police 9 were -- I know it is not in everybody's case, but for me 10 they were absolutely fantastic. They made it very clear 11 that he shouldn't be attending the meetings, I shouldn't 12 be having to go and sit in a room with him every week 13 whilst there was a live investigation, and, yeah, the 14 elders -- I don't know what they did in terms of that 15 investigation, because, after he died, they were still 16 investigating, even though he'd died, because they came 17 and asked me for a second statement, and I was, like, 18 "Well, he's dead, so there's not really much point now, 19 is there?" 20 Q. It is right that the police actually went to 21 Peter Stewart's house in order to arrest him but they 22 found him dead. Is that correct? 23 A. Yes. So they had decided to prosecute -- well, they 24 convinced me to prosecute, because I wasn't sure to 25 begin with, and they went around to arrest him and he</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 31</p>	<p>1 had died. 2 Q. Between paragraphs 46 and 64, you describe something of 3 the consequences that Peter Stewart's abuse has had on 4 your life, on your education, on your work and on your 5 health. If you feel able to, are you able to summarise 6 for the inquiry the impact that the abuse has had over 7 the years? 8 A. It's really hard to, because -- I think because I was so 9 young, it became a part of who I was almost. It's not 10 so much the impact, as it changed -- it changed who 11 I became, it changed who I was, it changed all of my 12 life. So, yeah, it just -- it meant that I struggled -- 13 like, attendance-wise at school. I was still in all the 14 top sets, but I just struggled to get to school because 15 I was just so poorly a lot of the time. I suffered from 16 incredible migraines. When I was a very young child, 17 just the constant concentration of thinking about the -- 18 you know, just -- because, obviously, it weighs on your 19 mind quite a lot thinking, "Okay, I'm doing something -- 20 Armageddon is coming at any moment and I'm going to be 21 killed. It's something I can't stop doing". That 22 weighs -- that takes up so much brain space. Also then 23 you're planning ways to get away from the abuse. It 24 took up all of my head. There was very little left over 25 to be able to do anything else. Obviously, with going</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 32</p>

<p>1 into the investigation and everything that happened in 2 my GCSE years, at a point when it should have all been 3 over, that should have gone, he shouldn't have had that 4 level of influence over my life anymore, it became, 5 again, this massive thing. He decided to start 6 attending the meetings and get himself reinstated and 7 I had absolutely no control over stopping that and it 8 just -- again, it became -- it went back to what it was 9 like when I was younger. It took over everything and, 10 you know, made me completely screw up my GCSEs, my 11 A levels, and, yeah, it is impossible to explain. It 12 literally just decimated my life.</p> <p>13 Q. I want to move forward and briefly just discuss your 14 civil claim against the Jehovah's Witnesses. When did 15 you first decide to bring a civil claim?</p> <p>16 A. It was after I went to see my mum. My mum is, 17 obviously, still a believing Jehovah's Witness. I've 18 told her so many times to put the books away, but she 19 didn't, and there was a book out and it caused me to get 20 quite upset and have a panic attack. On the journey 21 home -- at that point, my mum lived quite a long while 22 away, and on the journey home I fully explained to my 23 husband everything, because, up until that point, 24 I hadn't really told him. It wasn't something I'd 25 talked to him -- my dad didn't know right up until when</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 33</p>	<p>1 he died. It wasn't something I've spoken to a lot of 2 people about in my life. Yeah, he was just absolutely 3 horrified at what they did and the way they investigated 4 it, the fact that they -- the way they treated me. It 5 just -- I think just the utter contempt that they 6 treated me with and just the fact that they just refused 7 to believe me. It was just astonishing. He was, like, 8 "No, they need to be held accountable for this. It's 9 just not fair".</p> <p>10 Q. It's right that after you started civil proceedings, two 11 elders from your mother's congregation came to see your 12 mother. That was around November 2013. Is that 13 correct?</p> <p>14 A. That's correct, yes.</p> <p>15 Q. Were you present at that meeting as well?</p> <p>16 A. I was, because what had happened previously to that is 17 that my mum had been told that the district overseer was 18 actually going to pay her a visit. Obviously, in light 19 of me filing the papers, I obviously presumed it was -- 20 he was going to put pressure on her. It's the way they 21 work. To give you an example, the letter that 22 Peter Stewart wrote to my mother, years previously when 23 she had gone around to show Alan Orton, one of 24 the elders in her congregation, he had taken the 25 letter -- luckily, for everybody's sake, my mother only</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 34</p>
<p>1 took a photocopy around to them because she suspected 2 this would happen. He took the letter from her and tore 3 it up in an effort to sort of get rid of the evidence.</p> <p>4 So because of instances like that over the years, 5 and there are several more, my mum was of the belief 6 that the district overseer was coming to put pressure on 7 her to stop her giving any evidence or supporting me in 8 pursuing the claim. However, that turned out not -- in 9 the end, it was just two elders and they denied the 10 district overseer was ever coming, but ... who knows?</p> <p>11 Q. So the two elders attended that meeting. You were also 12 present?</p> <p>13 A. Yes, sorry, that's while I was there -- I then took 14 advice from my -- from the legal team at the time and 15 they suggested that I should go and potentially have -- 16 report the abuse, so that's what I did.</p> <p>17 Q. What was said at that meeting? What was stated by the 18 elders?</p> <p>19 A. Oh, it's just the same old -- I think they made 20 reference to the blue envelopes, they -- what did they 21 say? I have had those conversations so many times. 22 They -- I think they just didn't believe that he would 23 have -- that they would have known about this -- about 24 the person who was abused previously and that he'd 25 potentially admitted it and stuff like that. It was</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 35</p>	<p>1 just the same old thing, they just wanted to read 2 scriptures to me and, instead of actually dealing with 3 anything properly and going through the facts of what 4 potentially could have happened, what potentially could 5 have gone wrong, if there was any learning from that in 6 the future, they just wanted to listen without hearing 7 anything that I was saying and read scriptures to me, 8 and just, yeah, give the same old platitudes, really.</p> <p>9 Q. Do you recall if anything was said at that meeting about 10 your civil claim?</p> <p>11 A. I don't believe so. No, I wouldn't have mentioned 12 anything.</p> <p>13 Q. Without going into the details of your civil claim, it's 14 right that the claim was defended all the way up to 15 trial by the Jehovah's Witnesses; is that correct?</p> <p>16 A. That's correct, yes.</p> <p>17 Q. But you were ultimately successful in your -- I think 18 your civil claim. If we could just pause there for 19 a moment. Danny, could we bring up, please, JLE000032. 20 PR-A5, this is behind tab 12 of your bundle, right at 21 the end. This is the judgment of Mr Justice Globe. 22 There we see the front page of it. But this was the 23 case. In summary, you were successful in your claim for 24 compensation. Is that correct?</p> <p>25 A. That's correct, yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 36</p>

<p>1 Q. One of the things that you say in your statement at 2 paragraph 84 is that, in the course of your civil claim, 3 you discovered that Peter Stewart had admitted to 4 abusing another child before you. Can you just assist 5 the inquiry by elaborating, what was it that you 6 discovered in the course of your civil claim? 7 A. That he was subject to a judicial committee and under 8 which he admitted he had abused another child in the 9 congregation. Yeah. 10 Q. Had that taken place prior to his abuse of you? 11 A. It was during. So it would have been right back at 12 the -- you know, in the early years, but it was 13 alongside, certainly. 14 Q. PR-A5, as you may know, the chair and panel have the 15 power to make recommendations. In light of your 16 experiences with the Jehovah's Witnesses, do you have 17 any recommendations or thoughts about how the child 18 protection practices of the congregation could be 19 improved? 20 A. I think they could maybe show a little bit more 21 compassion, as they are always preaching about 22 compassion. They certainly at no point ever -- one 23 thing. Although the judgment actually makes -- it says 24 that it wasn't disputed that the abuse happened, when 25 the elders were giving evidence, they made it quite</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 37</p>	<p>1 clear that, actually, they didn't believe that it had 2 happened, certainly not at the times that it had 3 happened, and certainly not in the timeframe. They made 4 it very clear that they still didn't believe me, even in 5 court, and I just -- Paul Gillies' statement trying to 6 dismiss my evidence feels like a continuation of 7 the contempt they seem to have for anything -- yeah, any 8 disclosures that I've ever attempted to make to them. 9 So, yeah, maybe practising what they preach would be 10 a good start. 11 I think in addition to that, mandatory reporting. 12 I don't see how -- why that isn't a good idea. I can't 13 understand why we don't have it. I think not having it 14 just merely protects abusers and also institutions that 15 potentially don't want their activities exposed. 16 I think specifically with children of 17 Jehovah's Witnesses, because, remember, the children 18 aren't Jehovah's Witnesses, they are children of 19 Jehovah's Witnesses, and I think especially with 20 children of Jehovah's Witnesses, there needs to be 21 some -- a greater level of awareness, some, like, 22 vulnerability markings in respect of those children, 23 sort of in terms of Social Services, police and 24 teachers, so that when teachers -- especially because 25 they may be the only adult, non-Jehovah's Witnesses that</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 38</p>
<p>1 these children will come into contact with, I think they 2 need to have a level of awareness that when they're 3 dealing with them, yes, they might seem a little bit 4 different, but they're still -- they might have very 5 different indications of abuse, but that they will -- 6 they are still -- if they're showing those -- just an 7 example. When I worked with the NSPCC, I went into 8 schools and did, like, school service things, and pre 9 going into leading those sessions, you have a meeting 10 with the teacher and they disclose any potential issues 11 that might be happening with the children before you go 12 in. One of the children in the classes was 13 a Jehovah's Witness child. The teacher said to me, you 14 know, basically, she described a whole list of behaviour 15 which is quite worrying behaviour exhibited by the child 16 but then went on to follow it up, "But his parents are 17 Jehovah's Witnesses". I think that means they get 18 failed by every -- it's not just the Jehovah's Witnesses 19 organisation that fails them, it's the police, it's 20 Social Services, because they seem different anyway and 21 they're not properly understood. So I think training in 22 that respect and, I say, vulnerability markers should 23 any abuse come to light. 24 I think -- I don't really know how to describe it. 25 That's the best way of describing it, because they're</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 39</p>	<p>1 not going to change. They are who they are. They have 2 built a system based -- an organisation based on their 3 beliefs and they think they're directed by God, they 4 believe Armageddon is coming. These are really 5 firmly-held beliefs. Even mandatory reporting, however 6 how much it is imposed, there are going to be loopholes, 7 so I think there has to be some kind of external 8 protection for those children within the organisation 9 because, otherwise, they're literally just failed by 10 everybody. 11 MR TAHZIB: PR-A5, thank you very much. We are hugely 12 grateful to you. You will be relieved to know what's 13 the end of my questions for you. If you just pause 14 there for one moment, I am going to turn to the chair, 15 just to see if the chair and panel have any questions 16 for you as well. Chair? 17 THE CHAIR: Thank you. No. We have no questions, but 18 I, too, would like to thank you very much indeed. We 19 appreciate that it takes such courage to give us 20 evidence and to talk about your truly shocking 21 experiences. We are grateful for that. Thank you. 22 (The witness withdrew) 23 MR TAHZIB: Chair, thank you very much. I wonder if this 24 might be an appropriate moment for the mid-morning 25 break, chair?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 40</p>

<p>1 THE CHAIR: Yes. We will return at 11.45 am. Thank you. 2 (11.30 am) 3 (A short break) 4 (11.45 am) 5 THE CHAIR: Please go ahead, counsel. 6 MS SCOLDING: Good morning, again, chair and panel. Good 7 morning to our next witnesses -- Ms Davies, Mr Corbett 8 and Mr Lloyd Evans, who will be giving evidence 9 concurrently. 10 Just a few introductory matters. But I turn first 11 to the hearing centre manager, if he could swear or 12 affirm these particular witnesses. 13 MS SARAH DAVIES (affirmed) 14 MR DUNCAN JAMES CORBETT (affirmed) 15 MR JAMES LLOYD EVANS (affirmed) 16 Examination by MS SCOLDING 17 MS SCOLDING: Good morning to you all. Thank you very much 18 for coming. A few introductory matters. First of all, 19 as there are three of you, the transcriber has to write 20 down everything that I say and that you all say, so we 21 need to be especially careful not to speak over the 22 other. I will direct my questions at one of you, and 23 identify which one. If one of the other witnesses 24 wishes to contribute in any way, please could you, in 25 the old-fashioned way, raise your hand physically, and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 41</p>	<p>1 I will come to you next? 2 Secondly, this is not a test of memory. Please feel 3 free to refer to your statements, your exhibits and any 4 notes you have made. 5 Thirdly, we will be having a break after an hour, in 6 any event. But we can have breaks more frequently, if 7 that's needed. 8 Fourthly, you should have a bundle in front of you, 9 which consists of both your witness statements, those of 10 others and other documents which are relevant to your 11 evidence. I am going to take you to those files in 12 a moment, but just to double-check that you all have 13 those files in front of you? 14 MS DAVIES: I do. 15 MR LLOYD EVANS: I do. 16 MS SCOLDING: Ms Davies, turning to you first, and just to 17 indicate that, for all of the witnesses giving evidence 18 this morning, we shall be publishing their witness 19 statements at an appropriate moment upon the website, 20 because there is a large amount of information in all of 21 them, which we are not going to be able to go through 22 this morning. 23 Ms Davies, turning to you, first, please, can you 24 please confirm for the inquiry's purposes your full 25 name?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 42</p>
<p>1 MS DAVIES: My name is Sarah Davies. 2 MS SCOLDING: We have four witness statements from you, the 3 first of which is behind tab A1 of the bundle, which is 4 dated 3 December 2019. It is 24 pages long. Can you 5 confirm that you signed this witness statement? 6 MS DAVIES: I can confirm I have signed the witness 7 statement. 8 MS SCOLDING: Can you confirm it is true, to the best of 9 your knowledge and belief? 10 MS DAVIES: It is true, to the best of my knowledge and 11 belief. 12 MS SCOLDING: We have a second witness statement from you, 13 dated 25 February 2020, behind tab A2, which is 16 pages 14 long. Again, can you confirm that you signed this 15 witness statement? 16 MS DAVIES: I can confirm I signed that witness statement. 17 MS SCOLDING: Is it true, to the best of your knowledge and 18 belief? 19 MS DAVIES: It is. 20 MS SCOLDING: Thirdly, behind tab A4 we have a third 21 statement from you dated 11 May 2020. That is four 22 pages long. Again, did you sign this witness statement? 23 MS DAVIES: I did sign the witness statement. 24 MS SCOLDING: And is it true, to the best of your knowledge 25 and belief?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 43</p>	<p>1 MS DAVIES: Yes, it is. 2 MS SCOLDING: Last, but by no means least, behind tab A5 we 3 have your fourth witness statement, dated 30 June 2020. 4 It is four pages long. Did you sign it? 5 MS DAVIES: I did sign it. 6 MS SCOLDING: Is it true, to the best of your knowledge and 7 belief? 8 MS DAVIES: Yes, it is. 9 MS SCOLDING: Mr Corbett, if I can turn you next, we only 10 have one witness statement from you, which is behind 11 tab A3. It is two pages long. Can you confirm that you 12 signed this witness statement, please, Mr Corbett? 13 MR CORBETT: Yes, I can. 14 MS SCOLDING: Is it true to the best of your knowledge and 15 belief? 16 MR CORBETT: It is. 17 MS SCOLDING: Thank you. Mr Lloyd Evans, could I turn to 18 you next. Could you please confirm for the inquiry your 19 full name? 20 MR LLOYD EVANS: Any full names is James Lloyd Evans. 21 MS SCOLDING: You have provided four statements to the 22 inquiry, the first of which, chair and panel, is behind 23 tab A6 of the bundle. It is 39 pages long and it is 24 dated 17 January 2020. Can I ask you to confirm, 25 Mr Lloyd Evans, did you sign this witness statement?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 44</p>

<p>1 MR LLOYD EVANS: I did. 2 MS SCOLDING: Is it true, to the best of your knowledge and 3 belief? 4 MR LLOYD EVANS: It is. 5 MS SCOLDING: We have a second statement from you, dated 6 17 February 2020. This is 45 pages long. Can you 7 confirm that you signed this witness statement? It is 8 behind tab A7, chair and panel, of the bundle. 9 MR LLOYD EVANS: I did. 10 MS SCOLDING: Is it true to the best of your knowledge and 11 believe? 12 MR LLOYD EVANS: It is. 13 MS SCOLDING: Turning next to tab A8, which is your third 14 witness statement dated 13 March 2020, which is 12 pages 15 long, did you sign this witness statement? 16 MR LLOYD EVANS: I did. 17 MS SCOLDING: Is it true, to the best of your knowledge and 18 belief? 19 MR LLOYD EVANS: It is. 20 MS SCOLDING: Last, but by no means least, your fourth 21 witness statement, which is behind tab 8 as well, into 22 (i), chair and panel. That's a seven-page witness 23 statement dated 27 July 2020. Again, did you sign this 24 witness statement? 25 MR LLOYD EVANS: I did.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 45</p>	<p>1 MS SCOLDING: Is it true, to the best of your knowledge and 2 belief? 3 MR LLOYD EVANS: It is. 4 MS SCOLDING: I just want to start with a brief introduction 5 to the nature of the activities that you all undertake. 6 Mr Corbett? 7 MR CORBETT: I just noted that you didn't ask me to confirm 8 my full name. Does that matter? 9 MS SCOLDING: Could you confirm your full name, thank you 10 very much? 11 MR CORBETT: It is Duncan James Corbett. 12 MS SCOLDING: Thank you very much, Mr Corbett. I just 13 wanted to ask you a brief introduction into the nature 14 of the activities that you all undertake. Ms Davies, 15 turning to you first, can you tell us a little about 16 your group, the ex-JW Advocates Against Crimes Against 17 Children and what work it undertakes, please? 18 MS DAVIES: Yes. It was a group that was set up to advocate 19 for the interests of survivors of sexual abuse within 20 the JWs, obviously through the IICSA process and 21 elsewhere, the recent APPG on adult survivors of CSA, 22 and more broadly with a view to reducing the possibility 23 of incidents of CSA with the JWs within the UK. 24 The group is made up of 13 individuals which 25 consists of eight females and five males. Some ex-JWs,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 46</p>
<p>1 some are former elders, some are both ex-JWs and 2 survivors. But Duncan will explain a bit more about 3 that when he speaks. 4 Within the group, I am both an ex-JW and a survivor 5 of childhood sexual abuse. I am also a signatory on the 6 witness statement submitted to the inquiry. Although 7 the evidence submitted to the inquiry for which I am 8 a signatory has been compiled and agreed collectively by 9 all the group members. We are all advocates for those 10 who currently don't have a voice. I'm also a member of 11 various Facebook ex-JW groups, including, specifically, 12 survivor groups, and both of these activities are 13 carried out in the hope that we can improve the 14 situation for both current JWs and for those who are 15 survivors of sexual abuse. 16 MS SCOLDING: Thank you very much, Ms Davies. Mr Corbett, 17 turning to you, what's your role within what I'm going 18 to call the ex-JW organisation, please? 19 MR CORBETT: As Sarah explained, the group has a mixture of 20 backgrounds. Myself, I'm a former elder for 18 years. 21 There are other members of the group who are survivors 22 of abuse within JWs, there are people who have family 23 members or friends who are survivors. There are those 24 who identify as dedicated and baptised 25 Jehovah's Witnesses, there are some others who have</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 47</p>	<p>1 served as elders, along with myself. There are people 2 who currently work in the NHS, some who work in the 3 field of mental health and learning disability, and with 4 experience of working both in public sector and as 5 volunteers with children and vulnerable adults. So they 6 bring with them their experience of having received 7 safeguarding training in those contexts. 8 Some of the members of the group, as Sarah 9 mentioned, are in more than one of the categories. So 10 we have one who, as an elder, formerly shunned members 11 of his own family who were victims of abuse, and he 12 himself, as a young JW, was a victim of abuse. So he 13 falls into multiple of those categories. 14 There are also members who have never been 15 Jehovah's Witnesses -- one who is a Social Psychology 16 PhD researcher of religious discourse; another who is 17 a Criminologist MSc who completed qualitative research 18 into the long-term impact of shunning. So those with an 19 academic interest. 20 I think it is worth mentioning at this point -- 21 I know when members of the group have spoken before to 22 an All-Parliamentary Group, the question was raised, why 23 is there no internal group of Jehovah's Witnesses 24 designated with this responsibility. The simple answer 25 to that is that there is no internal mechanism within</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 48</p>

<p>1 the Jehovah's Witness organisation to promote change 2 from within. 3 The response to any attempt to do that would be that 4 the governing body is God's appointed channel and, if 5 change is required, then change will come from them, and 6 we should simply be patient and wait for it to happen. 7 So a number of members of the group have attempted 8 to promote change from within the organisation and been 9 unable to do so. 10 The culture is one of seeking confirmation. 11 A recent example would be a letter was sent to circuit 12 overseers asking them to find people in the 13 congregations that they cover who had been 14 disfellowshipped previously and shunned, and then 15 returned to the congregation, and who would be willing 16 to say that they saw that as a loving provision. 17 Now, there are many Jehovah's Witnesses who don't 18 see that as a loving provision. There are many 19 ex-Jehovah's Witnesses who don't see it as a loving 20 provision. But the letter was not an attempt to gather 21 the views of people within the organisation; it was 22 merely an attempt to source people who would be prepared 23 to stand up and confirm the already published views of 24 the organisation. 25 In fact, they specifically asked for people who</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 49</p>	<p>1 would match the statement that had already been made on 2 their website. So that goes some way towards explaining 3 why this is a group largely of ex-JWs. It is very 4 difficult to have influence from inside. 5 MS SCOLDING: So neither you nor Ms Davies have ever been 6 invited to any Jehovah's Witness events to explain 7 possibly why you decided to leave, the concerns that you 8 have got, in order to have some form of dialogue about 9 child sexual abuse in this particular context? 10 MR CORBETT: No. The mere idea that you would express those 11 views would lead you to be considered as what they term 12 an apostate. You are someone who is speaking against 13 the organisation, and therefore to be avoided. 14 MS SCOLDING: Mr Lloyd Evans, can I turn to you. Can you 15 tell me about the activities that you undertake? 16 MR LLOYD EVANS: So I am the founder and senior editor of 17 a website called jwsurvey.org. That was set up almost 18 nine years ago, so in that nine-year period I have been 19 following very closely stories related to 20 Jehovah's Witnesses in general, but specifically 21 regarding developments in the field of child sexual 22 abuse and child protection. 23 I have also authored two books on the religion, one 24 of which contains a chapter on child sexual abuse. 25 I also make videos dealing with the issue of child</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 50</p>
<p>1 sexual abuse within Jehovah's Witnesses, including two 2 documentary films that are on YouTube. 3 MS SCOLDING: Can I understand, Mr Lloyd Evans, we will talk 4 about this in a few more details, but you, again, were 5 a Jehovah's Witnesses until relatively recently. You 6 were brought up in the faith; is that right? 7 MR LLOYD EVANS: So I was baptised in 1990. I started 8 fading around 2010, and I disassociated in 2013. 9 MS SCOLDING: Can I just double-check, when you mean 10 baptised, baptism is not something that's undertaken at 11 birth, it is undertaken when somebody is ready to 12 receive the spirit, or ready to engage in an almost 13 adult way. So you were baptised when you were a child 14 or an adult? 15 MR LLOYD EVANS: To the extent that can be said of an 16 11-year-old, yes. 17 MS SCOLDING: You described yourself as being dissociated. 18 Does that mean you left, rather than it left you? 19 MR LLOYD EVANS: It is a little bit complicated. I was 20 basically brought before a judicial hearing on grounds 21 of apostasy because I had revealed myself to be speaking 22 out against the organisation. A print-out of my story 23 on my blog was actually in front of the elders, and it 24 was just a case of saying, "Do you stand by these 25 words?", to which I answered, "Yes", to which they said,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 51</p>	<p>1 "Well, in that case, you are no longer one of 2 Jehovah's Witnesses". When I asked for clarification as 3 to whether I was disfellowshipped or dissociated they 4 said I was dissociated. 5 MS SCOLDING: Mr Corbett, you have already told us that you 6 were an elder in the Jehovah's Witnesses. Can you tell 7 us when you left the organisation and, again, were you 8 disfellowshipped, which, as I understand it, is 9 a process of expulsion, in effect, from the 10 organisation, or did you dissociate yourself, ie, you 11 decided that you no longer wished to be a member of 12 the organisation? 13 MR CORBETT: In fact, neither of the above. I was serving 14 as an elder right up until the point when I left, in 15 2013. So I was appointed as an elder in 1995, so served 16 for a total of 18 years. I had what you would refer to 17 as doctrinal issues concerning some new ideas that had 18 been published in Watchtower magazine, and part of my 19 responsibility, as a congregation elder, was to teach 20 those ideas to the congregation. 21 I found that, studying the article, I was unable to 22 convince myself that the teaching was, in fact, 23 scriptural, and, as a result of that, after much 24 wrangling internally, I decided the only thing for me to 25 do was to leave.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 52</p>

<p>1 I simply stopped attending meetings. So I was at 2 a wedding, as it happens, at the Kingdom Hall on 3 a Saturday and spoke to one of the elders there and 4 simply informed him, as a courtesy, that he would need 5 to find somebody else to conduct the Watchtower study 6 the following morning, because I wouldn't be there, and 7 neither would I be attending any meetings from that 8 point onwards.</p> <p>9 So I am removed as an elder. That was announced at 10 the congregation, I have heard. But I am not 11 disfellowshipped or dissociated.</p> <p>12 MS SCOLDING: Thank you very much, Mr Corbett. Ms Davies, 13 could you tell us how long you were a Jehovah's Witness 14 for and the circumstances in which you no longer became 15 a member of the organisation?</p> <p>16 MS DAVIES: I was born into the faith. I was baptised at 17 age 13. In -- at the end of 2006, I met my now husband, 18 who is not a JW. The elders of the congregation hounded 19 me for over a period of 18 months to attend a judicial 20 committee in order to assess my sins. In the meantime, 21 I had got married and had our first child. When I did 22 go to the judicial committee, I was found to be 23 repentant of my sins. I hadn't attended a meeting --</p> <p>24 MS SCOLDING: I'm so sorry to interrupt. What were your 25 sins?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 53</p>	<p>1 MS DAVIES: My sin was, in their terms, I had sex before 2 marriage and I was married to an unbelieving person.</p> <p>3 MS SCOLDING: Thank you.</p> <p>4 MS DAVIES: So I attended the judicial hearing and they 5 deemed that I was repentant of my sins, but I hadn't 6 attended meetings for that period, from meeting my then 7 husband to that point. So that was then early 2007 -- 8 sorry, early 2008. It was announced at the next meeting 9 that I was repentant of my sins and, therefore, people 10 could now associate with me. I then never returned to 11 the meetings. So I am faded. I am neither dissociated 12 or disfellowshipped.</p> <p>13 MS SCOLDING: Thank you very much. In all of your witness 14 evidence, you seek to identify that there are some 15 aspects of Jehovah's Witnesses' culture, practice and 16 procedure which the three of you and others in your 17 group, Ms Davies and Mr Corbett, consider are inadequate 18 in respect of child sexual abuse. I want to talk about 19 those, but, firstly, I would like to understand how the 20 Jehovah's Witnesses work from all of your experiences as 21 having been members of that religious organisation for 22 a long period of time.</p> <p>23 What I may do, at various points, as I have already 24 done, is, when it's not clear to -- it wouldn't 25 necessarily be clear to a layperson what a term means,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 54</p>
<p>1 I will ask you to explain it. We also have Mr Gillies 2 coming to give evidence later today, and I will also ask 3 him to explain some various bits and pieces.</p> <p>4 Ms Davies, could you help us by telling us how much 5 commitment is expected from a typical Jehovah's Witness, 6 so to speak, from your personal experience?</p> <p>7 MS DAVIES: Obviously I was born in, second generation. My 8 parents are both devout Jehovah's Witnesses. My father 9 is an elder. I have got six siblings, and at the time 10 there were three meetings a week. There was a Bible 11 study on a Tuesday evening, which consisted of a small 12 group from our local congregation, and this was 13 conducted in a JW's house, taken by an elder or 14 a ministerial servant. This was based around the study 15 of one of the Watchtower publications and was 16 a question-and-answer-style study and this lasted for 17 around about an hour.</p> <p>18 MS SCOLDING: Can I just stop you now? You have mentioned 19 the words "Watchtower publication". Can you explain to 20 us -- and Mr Corbett also raised it -- what is 21 a Watchtower publication? What does that mean?</p> <p>22 MS DAVIES: They are publications produced by The Watchtower 23 that are Bible-based -- apparently Bible-based with 24 interpretations of the scriptures in terms of 25 the Jehovah's Witness faith. But I think Duncan can</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 55</p>	<p>1 probably give you a better explanation.</p> <p>2 MS SCOLDING: When I come on to Mr Corbett, I will ask him 3 for an explanation in more detail about The Watchtower, 4 just so that people who are maybe watching along have 5 some understanding of what it is.</p> <p>6 So you would have a Bible-based session based on 7 The Watchtower once a week on a Tuesday, you said. 8 Please carry on.</p> <p>9 MS DAVIES: Thursday meetings -- Thursday evening, sorry, 10 there was meeting at the Kingdom Hall. The first part 11 was what was known as the Theocratic Ministry School and 12 that was in order to help people in terms of 13 the preaching work.</p> <p>14 Members of the congregation, mostly men, would carry 15 out Bible-based assignments. Obviously, sisters, or 16 women, were not allowed to preach from the platform. 17 The second half of that meeting was Bible-based talks or 18 question and answers from the publication called the 19 Kingdom Ministry. That meeting lasted around an hour 20 and 45 minutes.</p> <p>21 Sunday, there was a meeting at the Kingdom Hall, 22 which was a public talk given by an elder, followed by 23 the study of a Watchtower article, which was a question 24 and answer study, and this meeting lasted for two hours. 25 Saturday evenings, and either prior to the Sunday</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 56</p>

<p>1 meeting or after, depending on when the Sunday meeting 2 was, we would be required to engage in the ministry or 3 the preaching work. There was also the expectation that 4 through school holidays or on weekdays also an increased 5 activity in the preaching around the twice-yearly 6 circuit overseer visit.</p> <p>7 So before each meeting there was an expectation that 8 the material would be studied and that you were prepared 9 to participate. If you had an assignment in the 10 Theocratic Ministry School, especially as being 11 a female, you'd have to prepare with another female and 12 then practise that.</p> <p>13 Also, at the time, there were twice-yearly circuit 14 assemblies which lasted two full days and a yearly 15 four-day convention. This later dropped, for circuit 16 assemblies, to being a one-day and then a two-day each 17 year. These were in London. The yearly district 18 convention then dropped to three days but we would also 19 have -- my particular family would have what's called 20 a working assembly. So not only did we have our 21 assigned assembly, we would go to another assembly in 22 order to volunteer and help out. We had a Bible study 23 every Monday evening, and this would consist of whatever 24 my parents felt appropriate or we would complete the 25 assigned Bible reading for the week. If the Bible</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 57</p>	<p>1 reading hadn't been completed for the week within that 2 family Bible study, we would then be expected to 3 complete it on our own. There was an expectation that 4 we would daily follow a publication called "Examining 5 the scriptures daily" or known as the day's text, which 6 consisted of a daily passage of scripture with 7 a narrative that followed.</p> <p>8 The Watchtower and Awake! were produced bi-monthly 9 at the time and there was an expectation that these 10 would be read and examined in order to prepare for the 11 ministry work or for the meetings that they would be 12 covered in.</p> <p>13 Obviously, as a daughter of an elder, there was an 14 expectation that we would be exemplary in all these 15 activities. Do you want me to cover what it was like as 16 a child?</p> <p>17 MS SCOLDING: From what you have described, just from the 18 length of time it's taken you to describe it, it 19 indicates that the vast majority of your childhood was 20 taken up or engaged with activities around the 21 Jehovah's Witness faith. Would that be a fair summary?</p> <p>22 MS DAVIES: Yes, that's correct.</p> <p>23 MS SCOLDING: You have described the fact that you would 24 have to attend meetings three times a week. Is that the 25 case for all children or was that simply because you</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 58</p>
<p>1 were the daughter of an elder?</p> <p>2 MS DAVIES: That was for all children.</p> <p>3 MS SCOLDING: How large would a typical congregation be? 4 How many people would be in it?</p> <p>5 MS DAVIES: I think, at the time, there was around 100/120 6 in my particular local congregation, and there were two 7 congregations within that town.</p> <p>8 MS SCOLDING: As a child, how did you perceive adults within 9 your community? How were those who were Jehovah's 10 Witnesses, whether elders or members of 11 the congregation, seen by children?</p> <p>12 MS DAVIES: The elders in the congregation are perceived, or 13 it's communicated that they are appointed by 14 Holy Spirit, and effectively, you know, what they direct 15 from the platform and the counsel that they give is to 16 be followed. They are to be respected and they are to 17 be followed.</p> <p>18 Also, in terms of kind of the congregation setup, it 19 was very familial, so not only did we refer to people as 20 brothers and sisters, we would also refer to other 21 adults, who were nonfamily members, as "uncle" and 22 "aunt". So there was this kind of engrained culture 23 that everybody is family.</p> <p>24 Do you want me to explain more about the social 25 side?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 59</p>	<p>1 MS SCOLDING: Yes, please.</p> <p>2 MS DAVIES: So growing up, we weren't allowed to make 3 friends outside of the JW's. There were no birthdays, 4 Christmas, Easter, Father's Day, Mother's Day or any 5 kind of what's termed as a secular celebration. We were 6 not allowed to engage in learning about any other 7 religion, and during my time at school, I would have to 8 sit out of assemblies and any activity that involved the 9 above celebrations, including religious education and 10 sex education.</p> <p>11 We were taught that we were different and that it 12 was okay to stand out because we were God's chosen 13 people from the only true religion. Partly because of 14 that setting out, I was bullied at school, not being 15 able to join in with those activities -- no play dates, 16 no birthday parties, no extracurricular activities 17 outside of the school, because of what's called a bad 18 association with people outside of the religion.</p> <p>19 I wasn't allowed to join the choir because of 20 the hymns and any celebrations such as harvest festival 21 or Christmas plays, but I was assured that it was okay, 22 we were meant to stand apart from the rest of the world.</p> <p>23 During senior school, my parents wrote to the school 24 to advise them that I was not allowed to be assigned 25 homework on either a Tuesday or Thursday as it was our</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 60</p>

<p>1 meeting night and, if any was assigned, that I would not 2 be completing it. As parents' evenings also fell on 3 a Thursday, these were also not attended due to the 4 importance placed on meeting attendance. 5 Moving towards the end of my senior school, you were 6 encouraged to either pursue a full-time career in 7 witnessing by becoming a pioneer and supporting yourself 8 with whatever activity allowed you to carry that out, 9 but because the JW's believe that Armageddon will come 10 and those who are not faithful will not receive 11 everlasting life, you are taught that further education 12 is wrong. So not only because it would bring greater 13 association with the world, but because this world is 14 temporary, secular education is pointless, as it will be 15 no benefit to you in the new system. You are better 16 off, in order to gain access to that new system, 17 preaching and studying the word of God. 18 By the time I was 16, I had actually had very little 19 interaction with anyone outside of the Jehovah's Witness 20 faith other than my time at school and there were 21 restrictions imposed as part of that. When I left 22 school, I actually trained as a hairdresser because 23 I was told that everyone would need their hair cut in 24 the new system. I was allowed to go to college one day 25 a week because the other four days I worked with a JW</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 61</p>	<p>1 family in a salon. This also meant, at the time, all my 2 clients were Jehovah's Witnesses. So there's no sex 3 before marriage, only heterosexual relationships 4 allowed. Females are not allowed to be in the company 5 of males outside of the family without another person 6 being there. As a teenager, if you were so much as to 7 be seen spending time with another JW male, that male 8 would be questioned as to what his intentions were 9 towards you. 10 You're taught that everyone on the outside of the JW 11 faith are worldly and are controlled by Satan or those 12 not JW's are bad association, thus instilling a fear of 13 these people outside of the congregation. 14 The congregation and the wider -- 15 MS SCOLDING: Would you like a couple of moments and I can 16 come back to you in a minute, if you would find that 17 helpful? 18 MS DAVIES: I'd like to finish, if that's okay. 19 The congregation and the wider community is where 20 your friends are. Your social interactions, your 21 advice, your spiritual counselling, your emotional 22 support and who you seek out in times of need or 23 hardship, you trust implicitly everybody within that 24 community because JW's are the only true religion with 25 the only true God. The congregation is your life, they</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 62</p>
<p>1 are your community, and there is no need for anyone 2 outside of that. Being born in, this was normal, and 3 I knew no different. 4 MS SCOLDING: Thank you very much, Ms Davies. 5 Mr Lloyd Evans, you were also brought up as 6 a Jehovah's Witness. Would you suggest that your 7 experience and that of Ms Davies was -- was similar to 8 that of Ms Davies, in terms of what you were told about 9 those who weren't Jehovah's Witnesses and your 10 interaction with others outside the faith? 11 MR LLOYD EVANS: Yes. It is an incredibly insular group. 12 Why would you want to spend lots of time with people if 13 you feel as though or you believe that they are due to 14 die imminently at an apocalypse? So you wouldn't want 15 to get attached on that basis alone, but you're also 16 told that these people are bad association, they have 17 bad habits that will rub off on you. So the safe bet is 18 to only associate or to confine your association to 19 within the organisation. 20 MS SCOLDING: So, therefore, not only would all your 21 religious life be based around the Jehovah's Witnesses, 22 but fundamentally your entire life -- your social life, 23 your friendship, your family life, all of that -- would 24 take place in the context -- or in a Jehovah's Witness 25 context?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 63</p>	<p>1 MR LLOYD EVANS: Yes. During my whole childhood, I can 2 probably count on one hand the number of times that 3 I went around to a schoolfriend's house, for example. 4 Almost exclusively, with a very few exceptions, I was 5 only ever associating or socialising with fellow 6 believers. 7 MS SCOLDING: Both you and Ms Davies have talked about the 8 millennial -- what would be called the millenaral 9 aspects of belief, so the idea of an imminent 10 apocalypse. Is that something that all 11 Jehovah's Witnesses sincerely believe or is there 12 a spectrum of belief as to the imminence of 13 the Apocalypse. 14 MR LLOYD EVANS: I checked this on Wikipedia. It is 15 "millennialist". It relates to the belief that there 16 will be a replacement, essentially, of the world's 17 leadership at a future point, at a future doomsday, you 18 might say, following which, earth's governance will pass 19 on to a government that is administered from the 20 heavens, and Jehovah's Witnesses happen to be one of 21 the groups with that sort of belief system. 22 There is no room for deviation. The only extent to 23 which there can be deviation within the 24 Jehovah's Witness religion is that, as you might expect, 25 there are different levels, perhaps, of taking things</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 64</p>

<p>1 seriously. So I mentioned before about bad association. 2 Worldly people, as they would be called, people who 3 aren't Jehovah's Witnesses, would automatically be bad 4 association because, if Armageddon were to come 5 tomorrow, well, they are going to be destroyed. But you 6 can even have bad association within the religion if, 7 for example, you have a Jehovah's Witness who isn't 8 following the -- let's say the study regimen that Sarah 9 very helpfully spelled out earlier. If someone weren't 10 attending the meetings regularly, for example, they 11 might also be classed as bad association. But when it 12 comes to the actual beliefs and the dogma that are 13 passed down by the governing body, there is no room for 14 people to have their own interpretation or, if they have 15 their own interpretation, they know that they must keep 16 it to themselves because if they were to voice it, if 17 they were to circulate it among fellow believers, they 18 would quickly be identified as an apostate. 19 MS SCOLDING: Again, taking that one stage further, if there 20 was a conflict between God's word, as plainly the idea 21 of the Apocalypse comes from Revelation and comes from 22 the idea that God will judge us all, if there is 23 a conflict between, shall we say, the spiritual world 24 and the secular world, in your experience, which takes 25 precedence?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 65</p>	<p>1 MR LLOYD EVANS: Well, I outlined in my evidence -- I think 2 it is tab A6. I won't bore you with the paragraph. But 3 it is actually in the baptism questions. 4 Jehovah's Witnesses go through a series of questions 5 when they are about to be baptised. One of 6 the questions relates to this idea of separateness and 7 the scripture is read: 8 "We must obey God as ruler rather than men." 9 So although the worldly governments are to be 10 respected insofar as it's understood that they are 11 tolerated as an instrument of administration by God, if 12 there's any deviation between what the worldly 13 government wants of Jehovah's Witnesses and what the 14 organisation requires, then the organisation must come 15 first. 16 MS SCOLDING: Thank you very much, Mr Lloyd Evans. 17 Mr Corbett, can I turn to you. We have heard about the 18 fact -- Ms Davies has spoken about the fact that her 19 father was an elder. There are people who are called 20 ministerial servants and elders. We have heard both 21 PR-A5 and Ms Davies talk about them. You obviously were 22 an elder. Could you just briefly explain what that 23 meant? 24 MR CORBETT: Yes. Could I just go back to the question of 25 Watchtower? You asked me to clarify that as well.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 66</p>
<p>1 I have a note here. 2 MS SCOLDING: Yes. Maybe you could clarify that in 3 a moment, because I will come on to ask you about 4 The Watchtower in a minute. If I can ask you to answer 5 the question about being an elder, and then we can come 6 on to the Watchtower. Thank you. 7 MR CORBETT: Certainly, yes. To a large extent, ministerial 8 servants are notionally appointed to look after 9 administrative duties in the congregation, so they would 10 be in charge of making sure that the public address 11 system at the Kingdom Hall is working, that the 12 Kingdom Hall is being cleaned and maintained. But 13 elders focus their attentions on the more spiritual 14 aspects of looking after the congregation. So they're 15 responsible for teaching. Sarah talked about the 16 meetings, so, to a large extent, those would be 17 delivered by elders. 18 It should be noted that there is a crossover. My 19 own experience, there was a sort of unwritten rule that 20 someone could only be appointed as a ministerial servant 21 when they reached the age of 20, roughly speaking, and 22 couldn't be appointed as an elder until they reached the 23 age of 30, roughly speaking. Because I was raised as 24 a Jehovah's Witness and I was a full-time minister for 25 a long time, I qualified as early as feasible to be</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 67</p>	<p>1 appointed a ministerial servant. I was 19. That meant 2 I was a ministerial servant for ten years before I was 3 appointed as an elder, at age 29. Obviously, you don't 4 suddenly switch from the duties of a ministerial servant 5 to the duties of an elder. There is a period of 6 transition. 7 So, in the later years serving as a ministerial 8 servant, I was looking after one of those groups that 9 Sarah mentioned that meet in people's homes, so I was 10 conducting that question and answer. I was also giving 11 public talks in my local congregation and nearby 12 congregations where I was well known by that 13 congregation. 14 So I was moving towards the sort of responsibilities 15 that an elder would normally undertake. 16 As an elder, my duty for much of that time was 17 conducting the weekly Watchtower study, which, again, 18 Sarah mentioned, so that's a question and answer 19 one-hour discussion at the Kingdom Hall. I would also 20 give public talks, both at the local congregation and at 21 other congregations within the circuit. 22 In the later part of my time as an elder, I was 23 also -- used to give talks at circuit assemblies, which 24 is where roughly 20 congregations make up a circuit and 25 often ten or so of those would meet at a time, about</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 68</p>

<p>1 1,000 people would meet together in a venue, and I also 2 gave talks at district conventions where -- normally 3 these would be held in a football stadium, so I gave 4 public talks at Norwich and at Milton Keynes, at those 5 sort of venues as well.</p> <p>6 MS SCOLDING: If I can just indicate, obviously the 7 Jehovah's Witnesses don't have paid ministers. They 8 don't operate a sort of hierarchical structure when it 9 comes to who is able to provide spiritual assistance. 10 So, in effect, the spiritual life of the congregation 11 and the theological and scriptural aspects of it are all 12 organised and run by the elders; is that right?</p> <p>13 MR CORBETT: That's right. In fact, when you're appointed 14 as an elder, that kind of imbues you with a certain 15 level of confidence because you are told that the 16 Holy Spirit has made this decision. At the time when 17 I was appointed, the process was slightly different from 18 the way it is now.</p> <p>19 The current elders would meet together and discuss 20 those they thought might qualify. If they agreed that 21 somebody qualified, they would make a recommendation to 22 the visiting circuit overseer at his biannual visit. 23 The circuit overseer would then confirm that he was in 24 agreement and, if he was, a letter of recommendation 25 would be sent to the Britain branch. The branch would</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 69</p>	<p>1 then reply in confirmation so that the elder was 2 appointed from the branch. So the last part of that 3 process no longer happens, the appointment is made now 4 directly by the circuit overseer.</p> <p>5 Nevertheless, the elders' manual, which you're given 6 when you're appointed, tells you that you have been 7 appointed by Holy Spirit. It says that, based on 8 Revelation, chapter 1 and verse 16, Jesus controls all 9 bodies of elders for the purpose of accomplishing 10 Jehovah's will and that, by means of the Holy Spirit, he 11 can influence any elder to make an expression that 12 results in a wise decision. So, as an elder, you read 13 that and you think, "That's me, then. When I make 14 a comment at an elders' meeting, that is potentially the 15 Holy Spirit, God's active force, moving me to make 16 a comment or express an opinion that will help the body 17 of elders to reach a wise decision".</p> <p>18 So it imbues you with a level of confidence in your 19 abilities and the decisions you make which is perhaps 20 not really commensurate with your own abilities.</p> <p>21 MS SCOLDING: How did you view yourself in respect of 22 the rest of the congregation? We heard about the fact 23 that you were considered to be spiritually -- you are 24 theocratically selected, you are selected by God. Does 25 that therefore mean that the rest of the congregation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 70</p>
<p>1 has to submit and obey you, or is there a relationship 2 of equals, in that you would all equally have 3 responsibility and all be -- there wouldn't be a sort of 4 "them and us" situation?</p> <p>5 MR CORBETT: The message that is given to elders is that 6 they are servants of the flock, and in fact that term 7 has been used during the history of Jehovah's Witnesses. 8 They would be The Watchtower servant or the field 9 service servant. But the designation now for most of 10 those, I think, is overseer rather than servant.</p> <p>11 But, nevertheless, it is emphasised that an elder 12 should not demand the obedience of the flock, but should 13 perhaps behave in a way that encourages it. They should 14 be seen to be taking the lead. The flock is then 15 encouraged to follow their example. So, ideally, it is 16 a process of -- a willing following of a good example is 17 the way it's idealised.</p> <p>18 MS SCOLDING: Does that, therefore, mean that people are 19 able to challenge or criticise your authority in what 20 you are saying, particularly in respect of scripture or 21 theology? I will come to Mr Lloyd Evans once you have 22 finished with you, Mr Corbett.</p> <p>23 MR CORBETT: I certainly never experienced that myself, 24 because it is drilled into the congregation that they 25 are expected to be submissive to those taking the lead</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 71</p>	<p>1 among them. That's the scriptural precedent that is 2 used. "These ones are keeping watch over your souls, so 3 you should be obedient to them so they do this with joy, 4 not with sighing". So, to a large degree, that is true 5 of the congregation. They mostly are submissive.</p> <p>6 Perhaps the occasional exception to that might be 7 someone who is before a judicial committee and is 8 clearly rebelling against the rules and often it would 9 be someone, perhaps, who is in their late teens, they 10 have been brought up as a Witness and now they have 11 decided to flex their muscles, so to speak, and in that 12 context I have experienced -- I have been on the 13 receiving end of a sort of rebellious rejection of 14 the authority of elders, but that would be very much the 15 exception rather than the rule.</p> <p>16 MS SCOLDING: Can I ask, either at the time of your initial 17 appointment as an elder in 1995 or at any later date, 18 did anybody ever suggest that you would need 19 a Disclosure and Barring check in your role as elder, or 20 any other form of recruitment check to make sure that 21 you were a person, shall we say, of good bona fides in 22 the secular world as well as in the spiritual world?</p> <p>23 MR CORBETT: No, that was never suggested. The only 24 qualifier in that respect is what essentially amounts to 25 a self-certification, when somebody is first appointed.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 72</p>

<p>1 So when I was first appointed as a ministerial servant, 2 two elders met with me and checked with me was there any 3 reason that I needed to divulge now why I shouldn't be 4 appointed as a ministerial servant and why that 5 shouldn't be announced to the congregation. Those 6 questions have been modified since. They include 7 a specific question now: "Have you ever been involved at 8 any time in the past with child sexual abuse?". The 9 guidance is that if the person answers "no" to all of 10 these questions, then the appointment can go ahead. So 11 it is a self-certification. It applies at the first 12 appointment, so when someone who is already 13 a ministerial servant and has answered those questions 14 briefly, is then appointed as an elder, they wouldn't be 15 asked the same questions again, so in my case, a gap of 16 ten years, the questions would not be repeated. If they 17 moved to a different congregation, typically they would 18 swiftly be reappointed as an elder or ministerial 19 servant in that congregation and, again, there would be 20 no repetition of the questions. So it is a one-off, 21 once for lifetime, self-certification. 22 MS SCOLDING: Mr Lloyd Evans, you wanted to come in at this 23 point, and in particular I know in your witness 24 statement you have talked about the issue of headship, 25 something we have heard about in some other of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 73</p>	<p>1 the investigations because it is something that is 2 common amongst a number of socially conservative, 3 I suppose I would say, Christian organisations. I know 4 you wanted to come in about the role of the elder, 5 please. 6 MR LLOYD EVANS: Yes. I just don't think it can be 7 overstated too much the authority and influence that 8 elders have. I think I have submitted in my own 9 evidence reference to the 2013 Watchtower of November 15 10 which says, at that time -- this is towards the end of 11 the current system of things -- "the life-saving 12 direction that we receive from Jehovah's organisation 13 may not appear practical from a human standpoint." 14 That's for the elders. Then it says "All of us", 15 indicating all Jehovah's Witnesses, "must be ready to 16 obey any instructions we may receive, whether these 17 appear sound from a strategic or human standpoint or 18 not". So there isn't latitude for disagreeing with or 19 not following along with direction from the elders. In 20 fact, Jehovah's Witnesses watch a monthly programme 21 called JW Broadcasting, and in one of these episodes it 22 was explained that if elders were painting the 23 Kingdom Hall and they ordered that everyone paint the 24 Kingdom Hall using only 2-inch paintbrushes then that's 25 how the Kingdom Hall should be painted. So the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 74</p>
<p>1 authority that's given to elders is very overreaching, 2 and in terms of headship, there's, again -- they heed to 3 the idea that's expressed in certain Bible verses that 4 the head of every man is a woman -- sorry, the head of 5 every woman is a man and they also indicate that the 6 head of every man is God, so the headship runs top-down 7 from God and Jesus through the organisation and then 8 into the family so that the head of every family, in 9 other words, the man, has the final say on matters 10 pertaining to the family. 11 MS SCOLDING: Mr Lloyd Evans, I will ask you and I will ask 12 Mr Corbett and Ms Davies to confirm, can women occupy 13 any -- now, in a number of religions, women can occupy 14 theocratic positions. They can't occupy positions as 15 ministers. Can women occupy any positions of power or 16 authority or any senior pastoral roles in the context of 17 the Jehovah's Witnesses? 18 MR LLOYD EVANS: Absolutely not. Women are permitted to 19 engage in the preaching work to the maximum extent, so 20 they can, for example, be pioneers. A regular pioneer 21 is someone who dedicates 70 hours per month to 22 preaching. So a woman can be a regular pioneer and even 23 a special pioneer and even a missionary. But none of 24 these roles involve any kind of teaching. The teaching 25 is exclusively done by elders and ministerial servants.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 75</p>	<p>1 They also have -- elders specifically have the role of 2 adjudicating over wrongdoing. 3 There is no possibility whatsoever for women to be 4 involved in any sort of administrative role within the 5 congregation, even when it comes to Kingdom Hall 6 meetings. The only time they are going to go anywhere 7 near a platform is to either clean it or to give some 8 kind of demonstration of how to offer literature or to 9 otherwise give an experience at the direction of 10 the male speaker. 11 MS SCOLDING: Mr Lloyd Evans, can I also double-check, at 12 the time when you were an elder, was there anybody 13 either within the congregation or within the circuit as 14 part of the circuit organisation or within the central 15 branch who was called a safeguarding officer, a child 16 protection officer, either of male or female persuasion? 17 MR LLOYD EVANS: Not when I was an elder, no. Having said 18 that, I must say I was an elder for 12 months. But in 19 the 12-month period that I was an elder, I wasn't made 20 aware, "This individual is your designated safeguarding 21 officer". 22 MS SCOLDING: Mr Corbett, same question to you: were you 23 ever aware of anybody called a child protection officer, 24 a safeguarding officer? Was there anyone within your 25 elder organisation who took responsibility for that? Or</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 76</p>

<p>1 anyone within the local circuit who did? Or anyone 2 nationally who did? 3 MR CORBETT: Not that I was aware of. 4 MS SCOLDING: Ms Davies, same question to you? Were you 5 ever aware of anyone who was a child protection officer 6 or safeguarding officer or had responsibility for that 7 in the context of the congregation to which you 8 belonged? 9 MS DAVIES: That is not anything that I was aware of. 10 MS SCOLDING: Ms Davies, to you: we have heard 11 Mr Lloyd Evans' view of the role of women within the 12 context of the congregation. From your role as a woman, 13 were you ever permitted to undertake any pastoral role? 14 You were obviously the daughter of an elder, so you had 15 an important position, shall we say, in terms of leading 16 by example as a representative of your father's good 17 spiritual guidance. But were you ever encouraged or 18 asked, or was your mother ever encouraged or asked, to 19 take on any role or responsibility to do with preaching, 20 teaching or any pastoral authority? 21 MS DAVIES: No, and I think, as Lloyd explained, in terms of 22 we can go out and preach door to door. The extent of 23 any kind of responsibility would be volunteering maybe 24 at some of the assemblies, where you'd help in the 25 mothers and babies room or the pram park or, again, as</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 77</p>	<p>1 Lloyd said, help with the cleaning. But there was also 2 the directive that if you were in a position where you 3 had to say a prayer over the ministry, and there was no 4 other qualified elder or ministerial servant, you would 5 have to wear a head covering in order to recognise that 6 authority that God had given to men. 7 MS SCOLDING: Can I indicate, as a woman, what impact do you 8 think the nature of the structure of the way that the 9 Jehovahs organise themselves in terms of men or women 10 has on the ability of yourself and others to be able to 11 report abuse if it takes place? 12 MS DAVIES: Specifically with regards to the structure, it's 13 almost a silencing. If I had reported my abuse within 14 the religion, I would have had to have gone to my 15 father. Then it would have been my father's decision as 16 to whether it then went to the body of elders. 17 But, also, if a married woman reports it to her 18 husband, the husband would have to attend that judicial 19 committee. Whereas, if the husband had committed 20 wrongdoing, he would not have to have his wife present 21 at the judicial committee. So in terms of impact, and, 22 again, women are referred to as the weaker vessel, it's 23 a submission. There's an expectation of submission with 24 regards to the headship and with regards to the 25 authority within the congregation.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 78</p>
<p>1 MS SCOLDING: Can I now ask, Ms Davies, you identify in your 2 witness statement that there were various activities 3 involving children. The Jehovah's Witnesses themselves 4 identify that parents have the primary responsibility 5 for the protection, safety and instruction of their 6 children, and that activities don't take place within 7 the Jehovah's Witness where members of the family are 8 not present. So they don't separate parents from 9 children in their instruction or activity or make 10 arrangements to do so. 11 Ms Davies, was that your experience? 12 MS DAVIES: So whilst there's no structure, in terms of 13 formal structure -- 14 MS SCOLDING: No Sunday school or anything like that where 15 the children would all go off? 16 MS DAVIES: But there are situations that do allow it. So, 17 for example, and I think Duncan will probably be better 18 to pick up the detail on this, but in terms of -- you 19 know, I would support others in the congregation. As 20 I was in my early 20s, I would arrange to take their 21 children to field service, I would arrange to support 22 them. There are lots of activities that go on in terms 23 of mentoring. When I went through what's termed 24 questions for baptism, I was only 12 and a half at the 25 time, and I was questioned directly by an elder on his</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 79</p>	<p>1 own on three separate occasions. 2 So whilst there is no formal structure, there is 3 opportunity to allow people to be on their own with 4 other adults within that congregation, but I think 5 Duncan can expand a bit more on that. 6 MS SCOLDING: Thank you very much, Ms Davies. 7 Mr Lloyd Evans, I see you have your hand up. I'm also 8 very conscious of the time. Can I suggest that we will 9 start back on this topic after lunch? 10 Can I ask the three of you, please, not to discuss 11 the contents of your evidence with anyone, as you are 12 all on oath, at lunchtime, and, chair, with your 13 permission, if we may return at 1.45 pm. 14 THE CHAIR: Yes. We will return at 1.45 pm. Thank you. 15 MS SCOLDING: Thank you very much. 16 (12.45 pm) 17 (The short adjournment) 18 (1.45 pm) 19 MS SCOLDING: Mr Lloyd Evans and Mr Corbett, just before 20 lunch I was about to ask you about activities that would 21 be undertaken with children where their parents either 22 might not be present or might not be supervising them 23 closely. Mr Corbett, from your experience, when and 24 does that occur? 25 MR CORBETT: Yes. I think CCJW would say, "We don't sponsor</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 80</p>

<p>1 or design any activities to separate children. 2 Therefore, we have no problem". The fact that there's 3 no design doesn't mean that it doesn't happen. In my 4 own experience, I was raised by my mother as 5 a Jehovah's Witness, from as early as I can remember. 6 She converted when I was a baby. My father is not, and 7 never was, a Jehovah's Witness. So that meant that 8 I was at meetings and on field service with my mother, 9 an older sibling and a younger sibling with only six 10 years between all three of us -- sorry, actually four 11 years between all three of us, and that was not 12 uncommon, for a mother to be a Jehovah's Witness without 13 her partner being a member of the congregation. So 14 I can remember occasions where I would go to a meeting 15 or field service with my mother, but I would end up 16 being in the ministry with an older male member of 17 the congregation. I can remember travelling in the car 18 with a person I thought of as "uncle" and, yeah, he was 19 a lovely guy, a lot of time for him. 20 At meetings, it's not uncommon for someone else to 21 offer to help out a family such as that with numerous 22 children, "Children, come and sit with me". It wouldn't 23 be uncommon for a child, who's asleep in a pram or 24 pushchair, to be left in the foyer of the Kingdom Hall 25 or one of the anterooms of the Kingdom Hall so as not to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 81</p>	<p>1 wake them during the meeting. 2 As I grew up, because my father was not 3 a Jehovah's Witness, various older male members of 4 the congregation sort of took me under their wing in 5 a mentoring sense. They worked with me in the ministry, 6 they took me on projects maintaining the Kingdom Hall 7 and cleaning the Kingdom Hall, and generally tried to be 8 a sort of spiritual father figure to me, given that 9 I didn't have a father who was a Jehovah's Witness. 10 So I think to say, "It can't happen because we don't 11 design any occasions for it to happen", is not strictly 12 true. In my own experience in a work context, for 13 example, I once took along a 15-year-old doing work 14 experience to the place where I worked. There was 15 nothing there that was designed to harm young people. 16 Nevertheless, we were forced to do a complete risk 17 assessment because this was someone under the age of 16 18 now in the workplace. We had to do a complete risk 19 assessment of all the things that could be a risk that 20 we wouldn't have thought of as an adult, to the point of 21 introducing him to the tap in the kitchen that might 22 dispense hot water, surprise, surprise, but we had to go 23 through that process to assess the risk and mitigate 24 against it. 25 MS SCOLDING: From your experience when you were</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 82</p>
<p>1 a Jehovah's Witness, were any of those mitigating risk 2 assessment factors ever thought about or considered when 3 dealing with adults and children mixing together? There 4 is nothing in principle wrong with that, of course there 5 isn't, but was any thought given to issues around risk 6 assessment or thinking about what the detriment might be 7 of those sorts of activities, as well as the positives? 8 MR CORBETT: Nothing that I was aware of. I think the only 9 thing that sticks in my memory is that, when attending, 10 for example, a large district convention at a football 11 ground, we were warned that people could walk in from 12 the street and attend that event, and, therefore, we 13 should not leave valuable things on our seats, which, in 14 the context of being in a Kingdom Hall, we would 15 normally feel quite comfortable doing that, but we were 16 reminded that there was that threat because of 17 the venue. But other than that, I can't think of any 18 occasion where there was any sort of warning of 19 particular risk or any sort of assessment done. 20 MS SCOLDING: Mr Lloyd Evans, how about you and your 21 experience of, shall we say, unsupervised -- activities 22 unsupervised by parents? 23 MR LLOYD EVANS: Am I allowed to very quickly just mention 24 something about the authority of women, very quickly, 25 just for the sake of completeness?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 83</p>	<p>1 MS SCOLDING: Very quickly. 2 MR LLOYD EVANS: There are some instances in which women can 3 have roles within the congregation involving, let's say, 4 operating the sound equipment, but that's only if 5 there's a shortage of men. So I just wanted to make 6 that clear. 7 In terms of the role of -- the access to children 8 and the lack of supervision or the instances in which 9 children are separated from their parents while engaged 10 in Jehovah's Witness worship. This is a very important 11 point, because the inquiry has just heard evidence from 12 PR-A5, which has been summarised, I understand, in which 13 it was made very, very clear that PR-A5's abuse occurred 14 as a direct result of items of religious worship where 15 children are separated from their parents. In PR-A5's 16 case, she would attend meetings for field service and 17 she would be assigned to work with other people in the 18 congregation to whom she was not related, and in the 19 case of Peter Stewart, he took the opportunity, when 20 taking these meetings for field service, to say, 21 "I think I'm going to work with you". So this is 22 entirely a common experience. When you are engaged in 23 preaching as a Jehovah's Witness, you go to the meeting 24 for field service, it's even depicted -- I have referred 25 to this in my evidence. It is depicted in one of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 84</p>

<p>1 the videos on jw.org, a video showing a meeting for 2 field service. In addition, there are other aspects of 3 worship identified in our evidence -- I'm talking about 4 the ex-JW group as well -- baptism questions, Bible 5 studies and fatherless boys. The Shepherd book, in its 6 list of the responsibilities of service committees, 7 actually includes assigning someone in the congregation 8 to conduct a Bible study with -- and the implication is 9 with a minor. And there is obviously the instructions 10 for members of the congregation to keep an eye out for 11 fatherless boys. So there are many ways that we have 12 identified in which children are separated from their 13 parents while engaged in Jehovah's Witness worship at 14 the encouragement of the organisation's literature, and 15 I would like the inquiry to consider that in light of 16 the opening day of this hearing where Mr Shane Brady 17 stated twice, emphatically, that that doesn't happen. 18 MS SCOLDING: What you're saying is, whilst the familial 19 nature, in a way, of a Jehovah's Witness congregation 20 means there is an essence of trust that lies between 21 members of that congregation, such that thought would 22 not necessarily be given to things such as grooming 23 because they would all be seen as upstanding members of 24 the Jehovah's Witness community; is that right? 25 MR LLOYD EVANS: That's absolutely correct. You think the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 85</p>	<p>1 best of your brothers. It is an international 2 brotherhood. You are all unitedly serving Jehovah. Why 3 would anybody in your congregation look to abuse you or 4 look to exploit you in any way, especially when you are 5 engaged in what is considered to be the life-saving 6 preaching work? And yet, we have seen in the case of 7 PR-A5, and I can tell you it's happened in other cases 8 as well, where the field -- the preaching work in 9 particular has been exploited as an avenue of worship in 10 which predators can access children. 11 MS SCOLDING: Mr Corbett, you had your hand up? 12 MR CORBETT: That's fine. Lloyd has covered the point. 13 MS SCOLDING: Thank you very much. I just need to check 14 something. Could I ask all of you to keep your videos 15 on, even if you are not giving evidence, if you are 16 a witness. Sorry, you may well have been given slightly 17 different instructions. So Ms Davies' video is 18 currently off. I would ask if Ms Davies wouldn't mind 19 turning her video on. 20 Moving on -- in fact, my next question was to 21 Ms Davies, to identify and ask, she, within her first 22 witness statement, identified that the definition of 23 regulated activity, in terms of who has various sort of 24 risk assessments and checks, doesn't really work in 25 respect of the way that the Jehovah's Witnesses worship</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 86</p>
<p>1 and spend time with each other, and that that definition 2 needs to be changed. I don't know where -- Ms Davies, 3 if you would like to answer why and in what ways do you 4 think the definition of regulated activity needs to be 5 changed? 6 MS DAVIES: Could I defer to Duncan for that question, 7 please? 8 MS SCOLDING: Of course. Mr Corbett, the ball is now in 9 your court. 10 MR CORBETT: I think it's precisely for the reasons that we 11 have just discussed, that many of the activities are 12 things that occur by the nature of the activity rather 13 than being an activity that is specifically designed. 14 So, for example, conducting a Sunday school might be 15 a regulated activity because we expect that only 16 children will be there. If one parent agrees to look 17 after the children of several other parents while they 18 go out and engage in field ministry as 19 Jehovah's Witnesses, there is equally an adult with 20 children in their care, but it's in an informal setting 21 and the congregation might say, "Well, we didn't make 22 that arrangement", that's true, but it occurred as 23 a result of, as a natural by-product of, an arrangement 24 that you made, and many of these instances -- for 25 example, sharing infield service with someone to whom</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 87</p>	<p>1 you're not related, being -- taking part in construction 2 or maintenance on Kingdom Halls, all of those things are 3 not specifically designed to separate children from 4 their parents, but that will happen as a natural 5 consequence of those things. 6 MS SCOLDING: So your suggestion is that those in positions 7 of trust in the context of any religious organisation -- 8 so, for example, the elders or the ministerial servants 9 in the case of Jehovah's Witnesses; in other religious 10 organisations, it would be other people -- should be 11 subject to an enhanced DBS check, given the power and 12 authority they may have over other members of 13 the congregation. Is that right? 14 MR CORBETT: Yes. That position that they're given imbues 15 them with the trust of the congregation. It is a stamp 16 of approval and reminding ourselves that this is viewed 17 as an appointment that comes from God, not from the 18 congregation. "How could somebody in that position be 19 deemed as a potential threat to my child?", it is 20 unlikely that a member of the congregation will consider 21 that. 22 So if the congregation is going to give the person 23 that level of trust, then they ought to consider 24 carefully to whom it is given. 25 MS SCOLDING: Mr Lloyd Evans, if we can talk about issues of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 88</p>

<p>1 trust, we have heard from all three of you the fact that</p> <p>2 the Jehovah's Witnesses encourage very strong bonds of</p> <p>3 trust and confidence between each other, and you've</p> <p>4 talked about simply people not believing that other</p> <p>5 people could be guilty of sexual offending. What then</p> <p>6 happens when sexual offending is reported? What, in</p> <p>7 your experience, Mr Lloyd Evans -- and I will then come</p> <p>8 to Ms Davies and Mr Corbett -- would then be the</p> <p>9 response of members of the congregation to the fact that</p> <p>10 such may have taken place in their midst?</p> <p>11 MR LLOYD EVANS: How would the members of -- sorry, the</p> <p>12 members of the congregation wouldn't necessarily be able</p> <p>13 to react, because they would be largely kept in the dark</p> <p>14 about the entire process, so everything is done behind</p> <p>15 closed doors. Even the Shepherd the Flock of God book</p> <p>16 is out of reach to Jehovah's Witnesses. This is one of</p> <p>17 the problems with the child abuse policy, that there is</p> <p>18 no single policy spread across multiple documents all</p> <p>19 available on a "need to know" basis. When an individual</p> <p>20 case comes to the attention of the elders, obviously</p> <p>21 they will handle that themselves, and they will take</p> <p>22 instructions from the branch office. Ultimately, the</p> <p>23 branch office decides whether abuse is reported, whether</p> <p>24 a crime can be brought to the attention of the local</p> <p>25 authority. So there is no opportunity for the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 89</p>	<p>1 congregation really to have any say whatsoever.</p> <p>2 Frankly, a lot of the information that's coming to light</p> <p>3 in this hearing will be news to any Jehovah's Witnesses</p> <p>4 who are watching.</p> <p>5 MS SCOLDING: Mr Corbett, if I could ask you, what I suppose</p> <p>6 I was interested in is whether or not -- in a number of</p> <p>7 the other investigations, and in fact in this one, one</p> <p>8 of the things that's been said, and there's been some</p> <p>9 research done on this, is that those with religious</p> <p>10 belief tend to believe well above us, something which</p> <p>11 ultimately is good, but that therefore means that when</p> <p>12 sexual abuse does come to light, they may well be less</p> <p>13 willing to believe that it has happened as a corollary</p> <p>14 of that trust and confidence that's reposed in other</p> <p>15 people. Is that something which you have seen from</p> <p>16 first-hand experience, or other members of your group</p> <p>17 have?</p> <p>18 MR CORBETT: Yes. Certainly there is a propensity towards</p> <p>19 believing the person who has an established reputation</p> <p>20 as a spiritual person in the congregation. Having been</p> <p>21 appointed as an elder, one of the qualifications elders</p> <p>22 are asked to consider when appointing someone is: is he</p> <p>23 a spiritual man? So the fact that he has been appointed</p> <p>24 implies to the congregation that he is a spiritual man.</p> <p>25 Among the qualifications that the body of elders would</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 90</p>
<p>1 consider is his reputation in the congregation.</p> <p>2 For example, it's unlikely that they would appoint</p> <p>3 somebody who spends many hours in the field service on</p> <p>4 his own without that being as part of group-arranged</p> <p>5 witnessing, for the reason that nobody in the</p> <p>6 congregation knows that this person spends many hours in</p> <p>7 the ministry.</p> <p>8 So the lead has to be a seen lead. But they would</p> <p>9 rather the person spend fewer hours talking to others</p> <p>10 about his faith but do it in the context where other</p> <p>11 members of the congregation can see him doing it, so</p> <p>12 that builds his reputation. He's now seen as</p> <p>13 a spiritual person because he's taking part in all of</p> <p>14 the things that Jehovah's Witnesses are expected to do,</p> <p>15 and once he's in that position, then it would make it</p> <p>16 more difficult for members of the congregation to</p> <p>17 consider him even as a potential person who might abuse</p> <p>18 children.</p> <p>19 MS SCOLDING: Ms Davies, do you have anything you wish to</p> <p>20 add to this? And would you mind keeping your camera on</p> <p>21 at all times, if that's possible? I'm not sure what's</p> <p>22 happened to Ms Davies. Ms Nicholls, I was wondering if</p> <p>23 you could try to find out what's happened to Ms Davies.</p> <p>24 I will carry on asking questions of Mr Corbett and</p> <p>25 Mr Lloyd Evans, if Ms Nicholls, my instructing</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 91</p>	<p>1 solicitor, can make some enquiries as to whether there</p> <p>2 might be some technical difficulties. I know there were</p> <p>3 first thing this morning.</p> <p>4 Can I now turn, Mr Lloyd Evans and Mr Corbett, to</p> <p>5 practices and procedures? As far as I understand it,</p> <p>6 there are three sources of current child safeguarding</p> <p>7 guidance. There are policies which the elders have and</p> <p>8 the elders alone; there are policies which are for all</p> <p>9 members of the Jehovah's Witnesses; and then there are</p> <p>10 policies for those who are unfamiliar with their</p> <p>11 teachings. I think that's right, isn't it?</p> <p>12 MR LLOYD EVANS: That's the way I've characterised it in my</p> <p>13 evidence, but that's not necessarily the way that CCJW</p> <p>14 would characterise things.</p> <p>15 MS SCOLDING: So there were a number of different</p> <p>16 publications. One of the things that both of you, in</p> <p>17 fact, made is that that therefore means there's no one</p> <p>18 corpus of material to which everyone can refer when</p> <p>19 deciding what to do if there are reports of child sexual</p> <p>20 abuse; is that right?</p> <p>21 MR LLOYD EVANS: That's absolutely correct. There's</p> <p>22 the May 2019 Watchtower, which is basically the only</p> <p>23 guidance intended for Jehovah's Witnesses; there's then</p> <p>24 the Shepherd book for elders along with any</p> <p>25 supplementary letters that may be sent by CCJW; and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 92</p>

<p>1 there is the scriptural position document that's 2 available on jw.org, which, in my view, has been written 3 more to convey the policy in a way that's more palatable 4 for outsiders. 5 MS SCOLDING: Mr Corbett, do you have anything you would 6 like to add in respect of the policies and procedures? 7 In particular, obviously some policies are -- Shepherd 8 the Flock of God, as I understand it, is something which 9 the elders receive but ordinary members of 10 the congregation don't receive. Both yourself and 11 Mr Lloyd Evans and Ms Davies have indicated some 12 concerns about the fact that that policy is kept, so to 13 speak, amongst a small group of people. Firstly, can 14 you explain why you've got those concerns and, secondly, 15 isn't that no different to the fact that, in any 16 organisation, you might have technical guidance which is 17 for those who have got more experience and expertise and 18 general guidance which would go to the congregation or 19 to members of the public who are worshipping? 20 Mr Corbett, if I could ask you and then Mr Lloyd Evans, 21 please. 22 MR CORBETT: Perhaps it would help to explain if I describe 23 the attitude towards the elders' handbook. When you're 24 given this, you're told -- and in the copy that I have, 25 it says that it's the property of the congregation.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 93</p>	<p>1 It's not yours. And I should have returned my elders' 2 handbook at the time that I was no longer an elder. 3 Nobody came and asked me for it, so, as it happens, 4 I still have a hard copy of it. 5 If I had wanted that book spiral bound, say, to make 6 it easier to refer to, then the instruction was, I would 7 have to do that myself. I could allow another elder to 8 do it on my behalf. 9 In extreme circumstances, I might ask a female 10 member of the congregation, a sister, to do it, but if 11 I did, I would have to watch while she did it, to ensure 12 that she wasn't reading it or making copies of 13 the information. CCJW argues in their statement that 14 the only information in this book is already available 15 to members of the congregation in other sources; it's 16 just that this book brings it all together. That would 17 beg the question, why are only elders allowed to refer 18 to it or have a copy or even to ring bind it for 19 somebody else? 20 So, yes, you're right in saying it's usual for there 21 to be technical documentation for some people and 22 layperson documentation for other people. It's not 23 usual for the technical documentation to be hidden and 24 kept secret from laypeople. It's just that they would 25 look at it and say, "This doesn't make any sense to me.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 94</p>
<p>1 I will read the 'For Dummies' guide that helps me to 2 understand it". But if they wanted to refer to the more 3 technical information, if they wanted to understand it 4 and go to that trouble, they could; it wouldn't be kept 5 secret from them. That's the thing that's concerning. 6 MS SCOLDING: Mr Lloyd Evans, if you could come in briefly 7 about that? 8 MR LLOYD EVANS: If you were crafting an ideal environment 9 for child protection, you would want more transparency 10 and not less transparency, because, when you don't have 11 transparency, when you have a rule book that's available 12 on an "eyes only" basis containing some rules that 13 ordinary Witnesses aren't aware of -- for example, 14 I refer to "Ask, don't tell" policies whereby sins can 15 be forgiven if they haven't been disclosed for many 16 years. These are in the Shepherd book, but ordinary 17 Witnesses aren't aware of them. What happens then is 18 you have an imbalance between those who know what the 19 real rules are and the ordinary rank and file who aren't 20 aware, and I can't see how this is conducive to child 21 protection, because, when you have a predator, say, who 22 is an elder and he knows what the rules are, but perhaps 23 the family of the child he is pursuing doesn't know the 24 rules, I can't see how that's healthy. 25 MS SCOLDING: The next issue I wanted to raise with you, and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 95</p>	<p>1 I will ask Mr Corbett first, but before I do so, 2 Ms Davies, I believe you were unfortunately ejected from 3 the meeting, but you are now back. Is that right and 4 can I ask you to turn your camera on, please? 5 MS DAVIES: Yes, I am back. My camera is showing on for me. 6 MS SCOLDING: Okay. It is now on, and I can see you in all 7 your glory, but previously -- if you wouldn't mind just 8 keeping it on. Thank you so much. 9 One of the other criticisms that all of you make in 10 your witness statements is that the policies aren't 11 necessarily followed in practice. Now, we have 12 Mrs Justice Lieven in a relatively recent decision of 13 the High Court called Lancashire v E&F, which is behind 14 B23. Danny, would you mind getting up INQ004963_009. 15 Chair and panel, behind B23. I don't think we need to 16 go into the particular facts other than to say that, 17 according to Mrs Justice Lieven, information had been 18 given to the elders of the congregation about alleged 19 sexual abuse of a father of his children. The 20 Jehovah's Witnesses were then aware that the father was 21 still seeing the mother, although there was some 22 confusion as to the exact nature of whether the children 23 were supervised or weren't supervised when seeing their 24 father, and the local authority ended up becoming 25 involved.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 96</p>

<p>1 There was then an issue about what information the 2 elders had or had not given, or should or should not 3 disclose in the context of the care proceedings. 4 Mrs Justice Lieven makes various points about what 5 she considers to be the differences between the 6 policies. Now, I don't think we necessarily need to go 7 to that, but at paragraph 18 she says: 8 "This can only raise a suspicion that the policies 9 are drawn up perhaps for public consumption but not 10 followed. I note that what has happened in this case 11 does not appear to be an aberration by just the two 12 ministers ... because it is clear from the documentation 13 that has been produced that [the particular person's] 14 allegations were raised and considered at a higher 15 level ..." 16 This was all about whether or not there should have 17 been reporting to the local authority or to the police 18 of allegations of child sexual abuse, with the elders 19 knowing of it but not reporting it, despite the fact 20 that relevant policies seemed to indicate that that is 21 what should have happened. 22 Mr Lloyd Evans, is this an aberration or is this 23 something where you have experience or you understand 24 that this has happened in other circumstances? 25 MR LLOYD EVANS: This isn't an aberration, and this speaks</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 97</p>	<p>1 to what I was explaining earlier, about there being 2 really three types of policy: one for the rank and file, 3 so to speak; one for outsiders; and one for elders. In 4 this case, we are talking about child safeguarding 5 policies, which the organisation has at some point -- 6 not while I was an elder, but since I was an elder -- 7 realised it is advantageous to at least be seen to be 8 taking a proactive approach to child protection. 9 What's happened, as far as I can tell, is they have 10 produced child safeguarding policies for the sake of 11 having child safeguarding policies, even if, as in this 12 case, and as observed by Mrs Justice Lieven, they 13 haven't necessarily followed the child safeguarding 14 policies. 15 MS SCOLDING: Mr Corbett, is there anything else you'd like 16 to say about that? 17 MR CORBETT: I have nothing to add on that. 18 MS SCOLDING: And Ms Davies? 19 MS DAVIES: I have nothing further to add. 20 MS SCOLDING: Thank you very much. As far as I understand 21 it, the most recent document that the entire 22 congregation would have had where issues of child sexual 23 abuse and exploitation were discussed throughout is 24 The Watchtower of August 2019. Chair and panel, it is 25 behind tab B27. Mr Corbett, you were going to tell us</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 98</p>
<p>1 about The Watchtower earlier and I stopped you and said 2 we'd ask about it later. Can you just explain briefly, 3 from your understanding and experience, what 4 The Watchtower is and how it's used? 5 MR CORBETT: In the late 1800s, a man called 6 Charles Taze Russell began publishing a magazine called 7 The Watchtower and Herald of Christ's Presence or 8 something like that. The religion he started later 9 became known as Jehovah's Witnesses. They took that 10 name on, I think, in the 1930s. So the term 11 "Watchtower" has come to be synonymous with the 12 religion. It's the main magazine that they produce. 13 But The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society produces all 14 kinds of literature as well as The Watchtower magazine. 15 They have produced a magazine that was called Golden Age 16 and then became called Awake! and that's its current 17 name. They also produce books and pamphlets, tracts, 18 that they use in their ministry. 19 MS SCOLDING: As I understand it, Mr Corbett, The Watchtower 20 is the subject of study -- Ms Davies told us that first 21 of all -- and certainly upon instructions 22 Mr Justice Chamberlain was told in another case 23 involving the Jehovah's Witnesses that this is the 24 authoritative guide, so to speak, to the way that 25 Jehovah's Witnesses should approach. So one has</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 99</p>	<p>1 various -- if one looks at an example, let's look at 2 "Love and Justice in the Face of Wickedness", which is 3 CJW000060_010, just so we can see an example. We can 4 see that it says: 5 "Jehovah God hates all forms of wickedness." 6 One then has a reference to the relevant scriptural 7 passage: 8 "How he must hate child sexual abuse." 9 One can see at the bottom there are then sort of 10 questions that I'm assuming, right at the bottom, 1 to 11 3: 12 "According to this, how does Jehovah feel?" 13 It is a Socratic method of teaching. One reads the 14 article and then there are notes which I'm assuming are 15 used for guidance by the elders of the congregation to 16 provoke discussion and understanding of what's meant. 17 Is that right? 18 MR CORBETT: Absolutely right, yes. 19 MS SCOLDING: I know that your group has produced 20 a critique, shall we say, of this particular episode of 21 the Watchtower. Now, I don't think we need to go into 22 what you consider may or may not be scriptural 23 inaccuracies, because this investigation can't make 24 those decisions and determinations, neither would we 25 wish to do so. But you make some criticisms as to the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 100</p>

<p>1 way that this particular document is drafted. 2 Danny, would you mind getting it up again, 3 CJW000060_010. The first issue you raise we can see at 4 paragraph 3, an example of it: 5 "Sadly, child sexual abuse is a worldwide plague and 6 true Christians have been affected by this plague. Why? 7 'Wicked men and impostors' abound and some may try to 8 enter the congregation. ... some professing to be a part 9 of the congregation have succumbed to perverted fleshly 10 desires and have sexually abused children." 11 Mr Corbett, what's your concerns about the way that 12 that is worded and how that would be perceived by 13 Jehovah's Witnesses in your opinion? 14 MR CORBETT: To put it in its context, this material is 15 produced and disseminated by world headquarters. Every 16 Jehovah's Witness in the world will be looking at the 17 same issue of Watchtower, so it's not directed 18 specifically at Britain. But the people who write and 19 approve the publishing of it would be aware of what 20 happens in Britain as well as in all other places in the 21 world. 22 What concerns us here is that this encourages a view 23 of child abusers as being peripheral to the 24 congregation. They are "wicked men", they are 25 "imposters", so they have snuck into the congregation,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 101</p>	<p>1 or they are people who were in the congregation but have 2 succumbed to some temptation. So both of these ideas 3 paint a picture of somebody who is weak, who perhaps 4 occasionally attends the congregation. They certainly 5 would not portray the idea of someone in an appointed 6 position, for example, and yet the people who wrote and 7 approved the article would be aware of the figures 8 produced by the Britain branch, which indicated that 9 107 accusations against elders and ministerial servants 10 were made over a period of ten years. 11 If the Jehovah's Witnesses were to know that one 12 accusation a month, almost, is being made against 13 appointed men, elders and ministerial servants, in their 14 congregations, they would be shocked to hear that, 15 because this article portrays elders as the people -- in 16 fact, at the end of this paragraph, you've got one 17 example how elders handle instances of serious 18 wrongdoing. Elders are portrayed in this article as the 19 people who handle the wrongdoing, who bring the 20 wrongdoer to justice, who help him to restore his 21 spirituality, who comfort the congregation, who assure 22 the victim and the parent. There is a whole series of 23 phrases in the article that refer to elders in the 24 context of the person who hears the report and who 25 handles the report and makes sure that the law is obeyed</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 102</p>
<p>1 in those circumstances. There is not a single reference 2 in the article that suggests an elder or ministerial 3 servant could be a perpetrator, but we know that 107 4 were in Britain, or in England and Wales, rather, 5 I should say -- 6 MS SCOLDING: (Overspeaking) against 107. 7 MR CORBETT: And we know that the Australian Royal 8 Commission found 108 elders and ministerial servants who 9 were accused -- of the 1,006 perpetrators identified 10 there, 108 were elders and ministerial servants at the 11 time they committed the abuse. 28 of them, 12 incidentally, were appointed after a first complaint had 13 been made against them, in the Australian case. We 14 don't have any such figures for Britain on those kind of 15 cases. 16 MS SCOLDING: We are carrying out a slightly different 17 investigation in the UK than they carried out in 18 Australia. Mr Lloyd Evans, you would like to come in 19 here, I can see your hand up. 20 MR LLOYD EVANS: Would it be possible to show on the screen 21 paragraph 6 of the article? 22 MS SCOLDING: Yes, that is _011. "A sin against the 23 congregation", is that the relevant passage you're 24 looking at? 25 MR LLOYD EVANS: Yes. You will see there it says -- I just</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 103</p>	<p>1 want to show this as an example of the very, very clever 2 use of wording. This, in my view, is a masterful use of 3 wording so that, when you breeze through it, it all 4 sounds fine, but when you zero in on the actual words 5 used and how they've been used, it all, in my view, 6 unravels. It says: 7 "We do not tolerate in our midst individuals who 8 unrepentantly commit wicked deeds or who bring reproach 9 on the good name of the congregation." 10 So you read that, as a Jehovah's Witness, and you're 11 immediately reassured that these individuals will not be 12 tolerated, but the active word in that paragraph which 13 you're missing is "unrepentantly". So if they're 14 repentant when it's brought to the attention of elders, 15 then they will be reproved and, even though we are 16 talking about someone who has sexually abused a child, 17 they will, in fact, be tolerated, in that they will be 18 allowed to continue in the congregation because they 19 have been found repentant. And the same is true if an 20 individual is disfellowshipped because they have been 21 found unrepentant. What then happens is, they go into 22 this cycle of forgiveness where they can circle back to 23 the congregation and start attending after a while once 24 they have been reinstated. Again, because they are 25 deemed repentant, the congregation "tolerates".</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 104</p>

<p>1 In my view, this paragraph alone is a perfect 2 example of how words have been very carefully used to 3 give Jehovah's Witnesses the impression that everything 4 is okay. It's only when you critically analyse the way 5 the words have been used, which, frankly, 6 Jehovah's Witnesses are not encouraged to do, that you 7 realise where the loopholes are. 8 MS SCOLDING: Can I take you to something which makes it, 9 shall we say, slightly clearer that the issue, as with 10 many religious organisations, is that repentance is 11 important. If we go to CJW000060_012 under "Handling 12 Instances of Serious Wrongdoing: 13 "The elders are primarily concerned with maintaining 14 the sanctity of God's name ... They are also deeply 15 concerned with the spiritual welfare of their 16 brothers ... and want to help [anyone] ... 17 "In addition, if the wrongdoer is a part of 18 the congregation, elders are concerned with trying to 19 restore him if that is possible. A Christian who gives 20 in to wrong desire and commits a serious sin is 21 spiritually sick ... In a sense, the elders are 22 spiritual physicians. They endeavour to make 'the sick 23 one ...' Their Scriptural counsel can help him to 24 restore his relationship ... but this is only possible 25 if he is genuinely repentant."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 105</p>	<p>1 Again, it seems clear that repentance is a part, 2 shall we say, of any allegation of wrongdoing and 3 looking at that is important as well as the deep 4 importance of the spiritual welfare of those in the 5 congregation who may have made the allegation of sexual 6 abuse. Is that right, Mr Lloyd Evans? 7 MR LLOYD EVANS: Correct. It's worth flagging the fact that 8 the organisation -- again, if you read this article and 9 you hear the language "spiritually sick" and that elders 10 are spiritual physicians who can restore someone who has 11 sexually abused children, they have the power, or they 12 are described as having the power, to restore someone 13 who has sexually abused a child so that they won't do it 14 again. 15 We are dealing with a very backward impression of 16 paedophilia, full stop, that completely underestimates 17 the nature of paedophilia and the fact that when someone 18 does abuse a child, they will more than likely go on and 19 abuse others. But here Jehovah's Witnesses are being 20 told, actually, that's not the way it works, elders have 21 the power to intervene in this cycle and make it so that 22 a paedophile is restored and cannot abuse again. 23 MS SCOLDING: Is that not, Mr Lloyd Evans, a slight 24 exaggeration, because on the previous page, 25 CJW000060_011, it's made absolutely clear in this</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 106</p>
<p>1 particular document that child abuse is a sin against 2 the victim, against the congregation, against the 3 secular authority and, above all, a sin against God. 4 MR LLOYD EVANS: Yes, but I don't see how that negates what 5 I have just said. Something can be a sin but the elders 6 are the spiritual physicians who can cure the sinner. 7 So the sin of child abuse is being condemned here and 8 I might point out that the words "sin" and "sinner" and 9 "sinfulness" are used far more times in this article 10 than the word "crime" will ever be found in this 11 article. The point is, having established child sexual 12 abuse as a sin, guess what, the elders are in a position 13 to cure the sinner and restore them. 14 Can I ask you about, plainly, in the context of 15 the world view, the Weltanschauung, of 16 the Jehovah's Witnesses, the idea of something being 17 a grave sin is of utmost importance to them because of 18 the spiritual impact that would have upon -- the impact 19 that would have upon your spiritual life and your life 20 in the future. So it is a very serious issue. Why does 21 it matter that it's couched in terms of sin rather than 22 in terms of a crime? 23 MR CORBETT: I think in terms of the way the congregation 24 deals with it and the way the elders deal with it, 25 doesn't matter. The problem arises because there is</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 107</p>	<p>1 a confusion between sin and crime. It's obvious that 2 this article -- Lloyd has referred to it already, 3 "sins", "sin", "sinning" mentioned 25 times; violating 4 a criminal law, once; how evil that crime is, once; in 5 the following article, reporting allegations of crime, 6 not necessarily child abuse, once. It is obvious that 7 the emphasis of this article is about handling the sin. 8 But CCJW is pointing to this as a child protection 9 document. "This is our policy on child safeguarding". 10 It is inadequate when it comes to handling the crime. 11 If I can just point to paragraphs 12 and 13 of 12 the article, for example -- 13 MS SCOLDING: CJW000060_012. This is the "spiritual 14 physicians" passage, is that right? And "clearly we 15 have a weighty responsibility". 16 MR CORBETT: What I'd like to draw attention to is the 17 question at the bottom of the page there. This is the 18 question that would be asked of the congregation: 19 "Do elders comply with secular laws about reporting 20 an allegation of child abuse? Explain." 21 Somebody would likely put their hand up in the 22 congregation and say, "Yes, of course, they do". What's 23 interesting is, the question does not ask, "Do elders 24 report allegations of child abuse?" It does not ask, 25 "Do they report all allegations of child abuse". It</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 108</p>

<p>1 asks, do they comply with secular laws about reporting 2 an allegation of child abuse. Then if you look 3 carefully at where the answer is, in paragraph 13, just 4 underneath the bold print where the question is: 5 "Yes. In places where such laws exist, elders 6 endeavour to comply with secular laws ..." 7 What does "endeavour" mean? Do they or don't they? 8 And what about in places where there is no secular law, 9 such as in Britain, for example, where reporting is not 10 mandatory. What happens in this case? The answer to 11 that is that elders immediately seek advice -- I'm just 12 trying to find -- 13 MS SCOLDING: When they learn of an allegation, elders 14 immediately seek direction on how they can comply with 15 the laws about reporting it. As I understand it, that's 16 by telephoning the legal department and the service desk 17 of the Britain branch -- 18 MR CORBETT: Precisely. Now, a member of the congregation 19 coming away from having studied this Watchtower, if they 20 stepped out of their Kingdom Hall on a Sunday lunchtime 21 and went to call on somebody in the ministry who asked 22 them, "I've heard that Jehovah's Witnesses don't report 23 allegations of child abuse to the police", they would 24 say, "No, we have just talked about it this morning. 25 Absolutely, we do. Elders report. That's what we just</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 109</p>	<p>1 discussed". So they come away with an impression of 2 what happens, but the wording is accurate, strictly 3 speaking, yes, they do endeavour to comply, they call 4 the branch, the branch tells them, "Actually, there's no 5 law that requires you to report this", they make their 6 assessment based on criteria that CCJW has submitted, 7 and then they advise the elders whether or not that 8 crime needs to be reported. 9 So, yes, the emphasis of the article is on dealing 10 with the sin, because that's what elders are for, 11 they're not there as detectives, they're not there to 12 handle crime, that's the job of the police, but it 13 implies that they do comply with the requirement to 14 report because it's implied there is a requirement and 15 it's implied that elders go along with it, and any -- 16 obviously, it has to be written with an international 17 perspective. Everybody in the world is reading the same 18 guidance. And that's why, largely speaking, the 19 direction is, you call the local branch because the 20 branch is familiar with what the law is locally, but the 21 article is written to give the impression that the crime 22 has been handled as well as the sin, even though the 23 emphasis of the article is very obviously on the sin, 24 and we are not saying there's anything wrong with that, 25 but to pretend that it's a child safeguarding policy</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 110</p>
<p>1 that handles the crime is misleading. 2 MS SCOLDING: I think the third criticism you have of what's 3 said in the Watchtower is the fact that the emphasis is 4 placed upon parents to protect the children rather than 5 the organisation to protect the children. Can we go to 6 CJW000060_015: 7 "How to protect your children. 8 "Who have the responsibility to protect children 9 from harm? Parents do. Your children are a sacred 10 trust ... educate yourself about abuse. Maintain good 11 communication with your children. Educate your 12 children." 13 Again, it emphasises the gross sin and the wicked 14 deed of child sexual abuse. 15 MR CORBETT: One of the things it mentions there in 16 paragraph 20, "Learn about the kind of individuals who 17 abuse children and the tactics they use". You 18 mentioned, not many minutes ago, about the practice of 19 grooming. I was interested, there was a study published 20 just a couple of days ago, on August 6, by Susan Raine 21 and Stephen Kent, who are sociologists at MacEwan and 22 Alberta Universities respectively. They said 23 perpetrators prepare the child and significant adults 24 and create the environment for abuse. They aim to earn 25 trust and compliance while maintaining secrecy. The</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 111</p>	<p>1 advice there was, it's important for people to 2 understand that most sexual abuse doesn't happen because 3 somebody abducts your child from a public park, it's 4 usually a family member, extended family member or 5 somebody they know in the community, whether religious 6 or otherwise, who is most often responsible. 7 Given what we have said about the familial 8 relationships within the congregation, basically, 9 everybody in the congregation is an extended family 10 member when you're a Jehovah's Witness, and we have seen 11 already that religious ministers within 12 Jehovah's Witnesses -- elders and ministerial 13 servants -- are not above being perpetrators of child 14 sexual abuse, and yet parents are being told that they 15 should educate themselves about this, while in the very 16 same article being told that the perpetrators of abuse 17 are wicked impostors who have crept into the 18 congregation, people who have succumbed to sin, people 19 who are on the edge of the congregation, not somebody 20 who might be an elder or a ministerial servant within 21 the congregation, for example. 22 MS SCOLDING: Can I ask, as far as training is concerned, 23 did either of you, Mr Lloyd Evans or Mr Corbett, who 24 were both elders, ever receive any training on spotting 25 signs of children who may be subject to abuse? Was</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 112</p>

<p>1 there ever a sort of training day run by any sort of</p> <p>2 safeguarding professional about how to identify this,</p> <p>3 about how to see that this might be going on in the</p> <p>4 congregation, when you were both members?</p> <p>5 MR CORBETT: Briefly, no.</p> <p>6 MR LLOYD EVANS: No.</p> <p>7 MS SCOLDING: Ms Davies, as a young person growing up in the</p> <p>8 context of the Jehovah's Witnesses, was there ever any</p> <p>9 discussion -- obviously this was in the 1980s and 1990s,</p> <p>10 so discussion about child sexual abuse was less, but one</p> <p>11 of the things that we have learned, certainly what has</p> <p>12 been said in some cases is that, in fact,</p> <p>13 Jehovah's Witnesses, there has been quite a lot of</p> <p>14 spiritual material for quite a lot of time about that.</p> <p>15 Were you ever taught about the possibilities or the</p> <p>16 dangers of grooming as a child growing up?</p> <p>17 MS DAVIES: I wasn't, but I'd like to refer to the witness</p> <p>18 statement JWA000013, paragraphs 18 to 23, if that's</p> <p>19 okay.</p> <p>20 MS SCOLDING: That's absolutely fine. That's your second</p> <p>21 witness statement, if I remember rightly.</p> <p>22 MS DAVIES: That's correct.</p> <p>23 MS SCOLDING: That, chair and panel, would be behind tab A2.</p> <p>24 Which paragraph?</p> <p>25 MS DAVIES: If we could start with paragraph 18. This is</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 113</p>	<p>1 the list of documents that the CCJW disclosed in terms</p> <p>2 of material -- in terms of training to protect people</p> <p>3 from abuse. You will note there that there's also ones</p> <p>4 included around incest and pornography. So if you</p> <p>5 obviously remove those from the list, because they are</p> <p>6 not specifically about child abuse, between 1981 and</p> <p>7 1986, there is only one article on CSA, and that is</p> <p>8 contained within the Awake! magazine, which is primarily</p> <p>9 directed to the public for the preaching work.</p> <p>10 If you discount the pornography article, which,</p> <p>11 again, does not address child sexual abuse, there is</p> <p>12 a six-year gap in terms of the next article that deals</p> <p>13 with child sexual abuse, and, again, from the Awake!</p> <p>14 magazine, and at that time I would have been 14. My</p> <p>15 abuse had stopped -- it stopped when I was around 11 or</p> <p>16 12. But there's a heavy reliance on the fact that these</p> <p>17 things will be brought to our attention by our parents.</p> <p>18 Now, if our parents implicitly trust people within the</p> <p>19 organisation and they don't feel that it's a threat to</p> <p>20 their children, then it is not something that they are</p> <p>21 going to discuss within the family.</p> <p>22 MS SCOLDING: Thank you very much. That's very helpful,</p> <p>23 Ms Davies, and thank you very much for making that</p> <p>24 reference to that particular passage. Can I just</p> <p>25 clarify and identify, incest is sexual abuse. It's</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 114</p>
<p>1 simply sexual abuse within families, rather than outside</p> <p>2 families.</p> <p>3 MS DAVIES: Sorry, yes.</p> <p>4 MS SCOLDING: That's absolutely fine. We have already</p> <p>5 talked about the fact that the elders would telephone</p> <p>6 the service desk or the legal office and there would</p> <p>7 then be advice given as to whether there's a legal duty</p> <p>8 to report or not and they would review and say whether</p> <p>9 or not it would be reported. Would the elders rely on</p> <p>10 what the service desk and the branch office told them</p> <p>11 about whether or not the matter should be reported to</p> <p>12 the police or their local authority designated officer?</p> <p>13 Mr Corbett, if I ask you about that?</p> <p>14 MR CORBETT: Yes. In fact, there have been instances I've</p> <p>15 heard of where elders have been removed from their</p> <p>16 position as elder for failing to follow that advice.</p> <p>17 MS SCOLDING: I think I will ask Mr Gillies about this, but</p> <p>18 one of your -- somebody else who has given a witness</p> <p>19 statement has compiled a list of people whom she</p> <p>20 believes were not reported to the police where there</p> <p>21 were -- despite the fact that the elders knew them.</p> <p>22 I think she's identified 19. I think I will deal with</p> <p>23 that with Mr Gillies. So there have been a number of</p> <p>24 cases which have resulted in criminal convictions</p> <p>25 ultimately, where the elders may have known of the abuse</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 115</p>	<p>1 but didn't report it?</p> <p>2 MR CORBETT: Yes, that's certainly plausible.</p> <p>3 MR SCORER: As far as you're aware from your group, is the</p> <p>4 not reporting abuse to the statutory authorities,</p> <p>5 whether that's the police or the local authority,</p> <p>6 something which still continues, or is it a relic from</p> <p>7 previous days when there would have been issues across</p> <p>8 all religious bodies about not reporting things?</p> <p>9 MR CORBETT: Maybe I can refer you to the article,</p> <p>10 paragraph 14, the 2019, so that's CJW000060_012.</p> <p>11 MS SCOLDING: Yes, B27, chair and panel.</p> <p>12 MR CORBETT: We need the next page as well, please.</p> <p>13 MS SCOLDING: So _013, please, Danny.</p> <p>14 MR CORBETT: The paragraph that spills between these two</p> <p>15 pages says:</p> <p>16 "Elders assure victims and their parents and others</p> <p>17 with knowledge of the matter that they are free to</p> <p>18 report an allegation of abuse to the secular</p> <p>19 authorities."</p> <p>20 This is the part of the policy that has changed over</p> <p>21 the years. In the 1970s and 1980s, for example, an</p> <p>22 elder might call the branch and speak to somebody that</p> <p>23 he knew there, and in one example that I know the advice</p> <p>24 was, "Corner the man who abused your daughter in the</p> <p>25 Kingdom Hall and threaten him". Later on, they</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 116</p>

<p>1 realised, obviously, that people were bringing cases 2 against Watchtower. The advice was then changed. 3 Elders were given specific advice: "Do not tell people 4 not to report to the police". So it is a negative 5 statement. This is the latest change, so slightly more 6 positive, "Tell people they are free to report to the 7 police". This indicates something about the culture: 8 why would you need to tell people they are free to 9 report to the police unless there is a culture that 10 causes them to believe otherwise? The example that 11 I gave at the beginning, where the advice was, "Threaten 12 the man", I asked the person who had been given that 13 advice, "What would you have done if the abuser had been 14 a teacher at the school of your child rather than 15 someone in the congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses where 16 you attended?" "I would have gone to the police 17 straight away" was his immediate reply. There was no 18 hesitation. "I would have gone to the police". Then 19 I asked, "Why was that not your immediate response when 20 someone in the congregation abused your daughter?" 21 "Well, we didn't understand about things in those days", 22 was the sort of stuttering reply. But, in essence, what 23 it speaks to is the culture, which says, "I must not 24 bring the congregation into disrepute. This person 25 who's committed the abuse allegedly is my spiritual</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 117</p>	<p>1 brother. Maybe he can be restored. Maybe he's 2 genuinely repentant". At this point in JW history, the 3 process meant that the child would have to confront the 4 abuser with a statement of what had happened in front of 5 elders and the accused. "Do I want to put my 6 12-year-old daughter through that process?" Probably 7 not. So all of that hindered the reporting. 8 So that's a sort of -- another criticism of 9 the article, really, is that this is portrayed as a good 10 thing that people have the right to report, but actually 11 what it really portrays is there is a culture that makes 12 people feel that they shouldn't. 13 Also, when we talk about the child confronting the 14 perpetrator, notice while we are on this page the 15 footnote at the bottom of page 11: 16 "A child is never required to confront an alleged 17 abuser. A parent or another trusted confidant may 18 advise the elders of the allegation without exposing the 19 child to further emotional harm." 20 MS SCOLDING: That's something that wasn't the case in the 21 past but is now the policy, that there is no longer 22 a confrontation, shall we say, in the context of 23 (overspeaking) -- 24 MR CORBETT: As a group, we welcomed that change. However, 25 the fact that this, along with the whole of the rest of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 118</p>
<p>1 the article, is written in the present tense implies 2 that things have not changed, that this is the way 3 things have always been. So suppose somebody -- again, 4 you're a Jehovah's Witness who has just finished 5 studying this Watchtower article. You go into the 6 ministry and you meet someone who left 7 Jehovah's Witnesses because they were abused and they 8 were put through this process of confronting their 9 abuser at the judicial committee, and they say, "That's 10 never right. I should not have been put through that." 11 You say to them, "No, we never allow that. We never 12 force an abuser -- we never force a child to confront 13 their abuser". Effectively, you're saying to that 14 person they're lying because this article is leaving you 15 with the impression that that's the way things have 16 always been. It would have been more honest to give 17 a history here and to say, "We recognise that in the 18 past this has happened. We recognise that was a mistake 19 and it's caused harm to children. We are sorry for 20 that. And now we have made this improvement". That 21 would have been honest, open and transparent. This 22 article attempts to paint the rosy picture that this is 23 how things have always been. 24 MS SCOLDING: I note the time. I know Mr Lloyd Evans had 25 his hand up. Chair, may we have our mid-afternoon break</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 119</p>	<p>1 at this particular moment, and when I come back, 2 Mr Lloyd Evans, I will pass to you. Thank you. 3 THE CHAIR: Yes. We will return at 3.00 pm. Thank you. 4 (2.45 pm) 5 (A short break) 6 (3.00 pm) 7 MS SCOLDING: Chair, if I may ask your permission, I suspect 8 I will be another half an hour to 45 minutes with these 9 witnesses, but I would like us, if at all possible, to 10 start Mr Gillies from the Christian Congregation of 11 Jehovah's Witnesses. Would it be possible for us to sit 12 slightly later today, until 4.15 pm, in order to, at the 13 very least, begin his evidence? 14 THE CHAIR: Yes, we will do that. 15 MS SCOLDING: Thank you very much. 16 Mr Lloyd Evans, we were just dealing with the 17 procedures, I think, for reporting out, I believe, just 18 before the break, and you had your hand in the air. 19 Please? 20 MR LLOYD EVANS: Yes. It was in relation to the information 21 in the May 2019 Watchtower, that parents are reminded 22 that it is their right to report to the authorities by 23 the elders. I felt it was important to draw attention 24 to the ruling of Mrs Justice Lieven, which is tab B23, 25 I think, which has some relevant information on this in</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 120</p>

<p>1 paragraph 6. 2 MS SCOLDING: This is what the mother in this case -- Danny, 3 it's INQ004963_003 over to _004. This is at the bottom. 4 The mother disclosed these allegations to A and B in her 5 witness statement, she says. 6 MR LLOYD EVANS: First of all, we establish in, I think, 7 paragraphs 3 and 4 that the mother is, in fact, 8 remaining as a Jehovah's Witness. I just think it is 9 important for context. In the ruling in paragraph 6 -- 10 it is a shame because it is broken across two pages, but 11 if we could pick up on the second page -- 12 MS SCOLDING: At the top of page 7. 13 MR LLOYD EVANS: Yes, indeed. 14 MS SCOLDING: "I had to think about the consequences of my 15 actions". 16 MR LLOYD EVANS: The one at the bottom on the screen. The 17 mother says -- this is in 2016, by the way, so the 18 elders met with the mother in 2016, having established 19 that there was abuse, and it took them two and a half 20 years to report it to the authorities. The mother says 21 there -- sorry: 22 "The elders informed me that I had to think about 23 the consequences of my actions as mentioned; I wanted to 24 go to the police but the message I felt I was receiving 25 was that police involvement was not the appropriate</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 121</p>	<p>1 thing to do. I fully accept that this was not what was 2 being said to me, but this is what I was feeling." 3 So, again, this is from a believing 4 Jehovah's Witness and it very well illustrates the point 5 that there's a difference sometimes between what one is 6 told, in terms of what their rights are, and the tone in 7 which that information is conveyed, in this case seems, 8 to the impartial observer, to have left the mother with 9 the impression that it would have been favourable not to 10 report. This is a crucial distinction, because I've 11 given evidence in my own submissions about a Watchtower 12 article that refers to "fleshly-minded individuals". 13 It's actually the 2018 February Watchtower which 14 describes fleshly-minded people as the sort of people 15 who insist on their rights and who take their brother to 16 court. 17 So the way it is conveyed to Jehovah's Witnesses is, 18 just because you have the right to do something doesn't 19 mean that you should do that thing. I think that the 20 Lancashire ruling very well highlights that aspect. 21 MS SCOLDING: I think you identify that in your written 22 witness statement, which we don't need to deal with, but 23 like a number of religious communities who are bound up 24 with each other, there is a view that you shouldn't 25 necessarily report your brother for a crime, so to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 122</p>
<p>1 speak. 2 MR LLOYD EVANS: Indeed. In his evidence, Mr Gillies points 3 out that, as recently as 2017, in some of the guidance, 4 witnesses have been told that the instructions not to 5 take your brother to court don't apply to crimes, but 6 unfortunately, when you have conflicting material, such 7 as The Watchtower, the 2018 Watchtower that I have 8 referred to, which makes no distinction about crimes and 9 whether you should report crimes or not, and when you 10 have this long-established culture of not reporting 11 crimes and keeping things in-house, what tends to happen 12 is, regardless of what's put in print, people prefer to 13 err on the side of caution, especially if they feel as 14 though their place in paradise might be uncertain if 15 they were to make the wrong decision. 16 MS SCOLDING: Thank you very much. That's very helpful. If 17 we can now move on to -- there is obviously discussion 18 within The Watchtower document of something called the 19 Judicial Committee, and we have had quite a lot of 20 discussion about the Judicial Committee. This is 21 a committee which, as I understand it, is formed to deal 22 internally with whether or not individuals can remain 23 members if they have breached the rules of 24 the Jehovah's Witnesses and plainly, as has been 25 identified in the Watchtower articles, child sexual</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 123</p>	<p>1 abuse plainly falls under that mantle, as do a number of 2 other matters which one would expect for 3 a scripturally-inspired religion to do so, such as 4 licentiousness, lasciviousness, greed, various other 5 matters which would offend biblical morality, if one 6 puts it that way. One then has a Judicial Committee 7 which is made up of elders, there would be three elders, 8 as I understand it, on that committee. As you have 9 identified, Mr Lloyd Evans and Mr Corbett, both as 10 elders, you may well have sat on those committees -- 11 Mr Lloyd Evans, possibly not; Mr Corbett, more likely to 12 have done so. 13 Are you given -- Mr Corbett, were you given any 14 training in assessing witnesses, dealing with civil 15 allegations, managing investigations in any way before 16 undertaking the task of a Judicial Committee? 17 MR CORBETT: Some training is given to elders in that regard 18 at elders' schools, which are held every so many years. 19 There is guidance in the elders' handbook. As 20 I indicated to you earlier, it is quite common for 21 someone to progress from being a ministerial servant to 22 being an elder. They would then essentially be in at 23 the deep end. They might be appointed an elder and then 24 it might be a few years before there is an elders' 25 school that they would attend. So, essentially, all</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 124</p>

<p>1 they have is the handbook. There is no specific 2 training course that you must go on before you're 3 appointed as an elder. Your time spent as a ministerial 4 servant is on-the-job training, so to speak. Except 5 that you never have any experience of handling judicial 6 cases because only elders are allowed to do that. 7 So it would be a bit like a learner driver going 8 onto the motorway for the first time. Yes, you sort of 9 know how to drive and you've seen some videos of how to 10 drive on a motorway, perhaps, but, by definition, you 11 cannot have been there as a learner. So, in a way, 12 you're thrown in at the deep end. 13 The way that is dealt with is, typically, because 14 there are three or, for accuracy, sometimes more, but 15 never fewer than three, elders on a committee, what will 16 generally happen is that a recently-appointed elder 17 would serve first, with other elders who have more 18 experience of serving on a Judicial Committee. So his 19 first time would be in the heart of training exercise. 20 The elders' handbook gives guidance on, I suppose 21 you could say, weighing the evidence of witnesses at 22 a Judicial Committee, but primarily it talks about their 23 spiritual standing in the congregation, you know, how 24 much could we rely on their testimony, which would tend 25 to weight itself towards someone who is already an elder</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 125</p>	<p>1 or ministerial servant, perhaps. 2 MS SCOLDING: If we could have a quick look at that, we have 3 behind tab B22 a copy of the extract from the 2015 4 elders' manual, Shepherd the Flock of God. I know there 5 is a more recent version of that, but I don't think it's 6 changed materially in this respect. 7 Danny, it is JWA000009_005, paragraph 21. I think 8 maybe just to say, by way of background, this is the 9 information that elders would be given, but it wouldn't 10 be information that would be generally available. It 11 obviously says things like child abuse is a crime, never 12 suggest to anyone that they shouldn't report an 13 allegation, make it clear that it is a decision for 14 themselves whether they decide to do so, and then: 15 "In a case in where a brother denies an 16 allegation ... and he has been accused by only one 17 witness ..." 18 Let's just be clear, for scriptural reasons on the 19 basis of various pieces of the New Testament, it is 20 identified by the Jehovah's Witnesses that, in order to 21 be removed from the faith or in order to be the subject 22 of spiritual disciplinary action, if I call it like 23 that, rather than secular disciplinary action, there 24 needs to be two witnesses, and we have heard from PR-A5 25 that those witnesses need to be credible witnesses, and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 126</p>
<p>1 I think one can also understand, from the fact that we 2 have had a number of investigations and hearings by this 3 point in time, that it is unlikely that there would be 4 a number of witnesses to child sexual abuse. It tends, 5 on the whole, to be something which takes place in 6 private and, therefore, that may be -- an inevitable 7 corollary of that may be it may be more difficult to 8 administer spiritual discipline, which is the role of 9 the congregation. 10 So I think if we take that as read, it says: 11 "The elders should consult the branch office ...", 12 et cetera: 13 "With regard to the accused, the following questions 14 should be answered: (1) What is his interaction 15 with children? (2) Does he admit to any activity ... 16 (3) What is his response to why the accuser has made the 17 allegation? (4) Has he had to [have counselling] ... ? 18 (5) What is his level of spirituality? (6) Do all the 19 elders ... believe he can be trusted ... ?" 20 Can we go to the top of the next page, please, 21 Danny, _006: 22 "The following questions should be answered with 23 regard to the accuser: (1) What is the level of [their] 24 maturity ... (2) Is he (or she) ... (3) ... serious ... 25 (4) Is his memory consistent ... or does it involve</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 127</p>	<p>1 repressed memories?" 2 I think that has been removed from the 2019 version, 3 if I remember rightly: 4 "(5) what is the reputation of the parents? 5 ... [whether] the allegation should be shared ... 6 with the ... new congregation." 7 This is to do with people moving. Please forgive 8 me, I have it wrong, the exact context in which this is 9 being given. But I'm assuming similar sorts of guidance 10 is given when you're deciding whether or not somebody 11 should be admonished for their spiritual behaviour as an 12 elder in respect of the Judicial Committee; is that 13 right? 14 MR CORBETT: You're right in suggesting this is about when 15 somebody moves. It's pertinent to the case where an 16 accusation is made and the person denies the accusation. 17 In that case, the congregation -- if you are able to 18 bring up the previous page, the first sentence of 19 paragraph 21 makes clear it's when he moves to another 20 congregation. 21 So in such a case where there is no second witness, 22 the congregation where the accusation is made will make 23 a record of the accusation and keep a copy of that in 24 the congregation safe. They will keep the details 25 locally in case a similar accusation should be made at</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 128</p>

<p>1 some point in the future. So one way that the 2 two-witness rule can be satisfied is if a second person 3 comes along and makes a similar accusation against the 4 same abuser. It doesn't have to be precisely the same 5 case, but the same abuser with two victims, now the 6 elders might say, "We have two witnesses". How can you 7 do that unless you keep track of the first one, is the 8 question.</p> <p>9 So the local congregation keeps a track of the first 10 case. The question then arises, what happens if that 11 person moves to a different congregation, what happens 12 to that locally-held record? The answer is, the 13 congregation consults with the branch. I think this is 14 simplified in the more recent elders' manual. But, 15 essentially, the guidance is pretty much the same. It's 16 the branch who decide, and they will probably liaise 17 with the local congregation on the basis of questions 18 like these, but the branch will then decide if and how 19 much information should be shared with the new 20 congregation from what the previous congregation has in 21 its files.</p> <p>22 MS SCOLDING: Let's just take this as an example. So you 23 will have a number of situations -- well, you may have 24 a situation where somebody comes and says, "I'm worried 25 that my daughter has been sexually abused by</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 129</p>	<p>1 a ministerial servant" -- let's take the idea of 2 PR-A5 -- "and I'm worried about that". There's only one 3 person who has been the subject of abuse, but even if 4 a Judicial Committee was formed, there would be no 5 possibility of that person ever being asked to leave the 6 Jehovah's Witnesses --</p> <p>7 MR CORBETT: A Judicial Committee would not be formed if 8 there was no second witness. So unless the accused 9 admitted the allegation, that's as far as it would go. 10 There would be no Judicial Committee.</p> <p>11 MS SCOLDING: So let's assume that, for whatever reason, 12 there wasn't a referral to the police or to the LADO in 13 those circumstances, and we have identified cases in 14 which that hasn't happened. In those circumstances, 15 would there be any kind of risk assessment of 16 the individual within the congregation? Would the 17 congregation even have any idea that there had been such 18 allegations made? If there is any risk assessment, who 19 carries that out?</p> <p>20 MR CORBETT: Again, this can be summarised in a huge 21 imaginary flowchart where every branch leads to "call 22 the branch". Essentially, whatever happens, the end 23 result is, we call the branch for guidance on this, so 24 the allegations -- whether or not there's a second 25 witness, the allegations would be reported by two elders</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 130</p>
<p>1 phoning the branch. The branch would then decide what, 2 if any, guarding measures need to be imposed at the 3 congregation level.</p> <p>4 MS SCOLDING: So there may or may not be?</p> <p>5 MR CORBETT: Elders in training are sort of generically 6 advised that they should keep a lookout for any 7 behaviours like the person has children on his lap, or 8 things of that nature that might cause others to be 9 disturbed.</p> <p>10 MS SCOLDING: If they were to move, again, it would be 11 a decision for the branch and not the congregation.</p> <p>12 MR CORBETT: Yes.</p> <p>13 MS SCOLDING: If you phoned up someone you might have met 14 and said, "Look, nothing has been proven but I'm 15 slightly worried about X, you might need to put 16 something in place", you wouldn't dream of doing that?</p> <p>17 MR CORBETT: I personally wouldn't have, as an elder. 18 I would have followed the instruction: call the branch, 19 the branch will decide, they will tell me do I need to 20 send anything to the new congregation and, if so, what 21 information do I need to send.</p> <p>22 MS SCOLDING: Obviously, within your witness statements, all 23 of you identify your concern about the two-witness rule, 24 when it comes to that. But, in reality, this is an 25 internal disciplinary investigation. Why does it matter</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 131</p>	<p>1 so much the fact that there are two witnesses? If this 2 is just to do with whether you can attend the 3 Jehovah's Witnesses, whether or not you can't, why does 4 this internal scriptural process matter?</p> <p>5 Mr Lloyd Evans, if I come to you first and then 6 Mr Corbett.</p> <p>7 MR LLOYD EVANS: I don't think any of us have an objection 8 to the way Jehovah's Witnesses approach issues on an 9 ecclesiastical basis, and have no objection to whether 10 elders decide a certain individual gets to attend 11 meetings or not necessarily. The issue is when the 12 two-witness rule impacts on the approach the 13 organisation takes to the criminality of child abuse and 14 whether it gets reported or not, and it's been argued by 15 CCJW that the two-witness rule has no bearing on the 16 enthusiasm of Jehovah's Witnesses to report crime. The 17 problem is that, when we examine cases, that's not 18 necessarily what we are seeing on the ground.</p> <p>19 MS SCOLDING: So, in the abstract, there is no problem, but 20 the reality is that the idea of what's sinful and what's 21 criminal is mixed up, potentially wrongly, by ordinary 22 Jehovah's Witnesses. Mr Corbett, if I could come to 23 you?</p> <p>24 MR CORBETT: It might help to put it into a specific 25 example, I think. If you imagine a case where a parent</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 132</p>

<p>1 goes to elders and says, "My child has reported this 2 behaviour. I think they're being abused by person X", 3 what will happen is, if elders follow the policy, they 4 will say to the parent, "We are going to investigate 5 this. In the meantime, be assured that you have the 6 absolute right to report this to the police, if you 7 wish. That's your prerogative as parents. We will seek 8 advice from the branch and we will ensure that 9 a thorough investigation is carried out".</p> <p>10 In that circumstance, it is likely that the 11 congregation member will leave things in the hands of 12 the elders, confident that they will do the right thing, 13 and they will probably say, "Let's take a wait-and-see 14 approach on whether I report or not".</p> <p>15 Elders investigate. The person denies the 16 accusation. All of this might take two or three days. 17 They will have called the branch for advice. They will 18 be advised either to report, or not to report, based on 19 the risk assessment carried out at the branch level. 20 They will then go back to the parents and say, "I'm 21 sorry, there is nothing more that we can do in 22 a judicial sense. The person denies the accusation. 23 There is no second witness. We can do nothing further".</p> <p>24 The interpretation of that from the parents' point 25 of view is, "We can do nothing further" means, nothing</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 133</p>	<p>1 further can be done. The parent is not reminded at this 2 point that when the elder says, "The matter has been 3 handled", what they mean is, the sin has been handled in 4 accordance with ecclesiastical procedure of 5 the congregation. What they do not mean is that the 6 crime has been handled. The fact that they use terms 7 like "judicial", "investigation", "evidence", they use 8 terms that are quasi judicial in nature, assists with 9 confusing these two things in the mind of 10 the congregant.</p> <p>11 So that when the elder comes back and says, "We have 12 handled it and there is nothing more we can do", the 13 likelihood of them then deciding, "Right, if you can't 14 do anything, I will go to the police", there is no 15 instruction for the elders to remind them at this point 16 that they still have a right to go to the police. They 17 are likely to go away with the impression that nothing 18 more can happen on this case, and then -- those, in 19 fact, are the cases that come back to bite CCJW in 20 future years, because that child grows up, realises they 21 were cheated of justice, and nothing has happened to 22 their perpetrator 10, 15, 20 years later, and maybe by 23 this time they have decided they don't want to be 24 a Jehovah's Witness anymore, and now they say, "I will 25 take this into my own hands and I will seek justice</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 134</p>
<p>1 where the system of Jehovah's Witnesses failed me". So 2 although CCJW -- I think if I can reference -- it's in 3 tab 9 and paragraph 76 in the first folder.</p> <p>4 MS SCOLDING: I think it's Mr Gillies's first witness 5 statement, if I remember rightly.</p> <p>6 MR CORBETT: That's right, CJW000052.</p> <p>7 MS SCOLDING: CJW000052_021. Paragraph 76, I think you 8 said. Is that right?</p> <p>9 MR CORBETT: That's right. So there are four categories 10 here: restrictions are imposed. So, in other words, we 11 put in place some safeguarding measures, and these are 12 the four categories: it is determined the congregant is 13 guilty, but they are repentant. So a Judicial Committee 14 happened, but they're repentant.</p> <p>15 They were disfellowshipped and then reinstated, they 16 came back some time later. So, again, their guilt was 17 proven.</p> <p>18 Number three, their guilt was proven by a secular 19 court, even though not by Jehovah's Witnesses 20 internally.</p> <p>21 And, four, someone who was already a child abuser 22 and then becomes one of Jehovah's Witnesses. So CCJW 23 evidence suggests we have handled all the cases.</p> <p>24 There is a case number five, the one we just 25 described: the person is accused, they deny the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 135</p>	<p>1 accusation, it doesn't get to a Judicial Committee, 2 there's a hanging accusation. Now we are into the 3 territory where the branch has to advise whether or not 4 restrictions are applied; the branch has to decide, if 5 that person moves, whether or not information gets 6 passed on. So citing the four cases, which are actually 7 the minority, distracts from the fifth case, which is 8 most likely the majority case, that the abuser denies 9 and there is no Judicial Committee. There is no proof. 10 We are trying to do CCJW a favour here by drawing this 11 to their attention, because these are the cases where 12 people come back and sue them a decade later, 15 years 13 or 20 years later, when this child becomes an adult and 14 realises justice was not done and that's not unusual.</p> <p>15 Statistically, two out of three people leave 16 Jehovah's Witnesses at some stage of their life. It is 17 a religion with a high turnover.</p> <p>18 MS SCOLDING: That's one of the reasons why you're arguing 19 that there should be mandatory reporting within the UK, 20 so that, in a way, it gets taken out of both the 21 parental hands and the Jehovah's Witnesses hands and 22 things get automatically reported to the police or the 23 local authority.</p> <p>24 MR CORBETT: And in that case, what is done 25 ecclesiastically, as you said a few minutes ago, really</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 136</p>

<p>1 doesn't matter. As long as the crime has been handled, 2 Jehovah's Witnesses have religious freedom like 3 everybody else, they can handle ecclesiastical matters 4 however they like. They have that right. But children 5 have a right, too, to be protected, and where one right 6 impinges on the other, then surely it's part of 7 the responsibility of the law to protect the right of 8 the child to their childhood innocence, which 9 effectively is stolen from them.</p> <p>10 One of the sad consequences of the two-witness rule 11 is, effectively, you're condemning a second child to be 12 abused in order to be able to take some action. Again, 13 the analysis from the Australian Royal Commission found 14 that, of those 108 appointed men, 53 of them were 15 responsible for abuse of children outside of their 16 family, and there were 131 victims of those 53 abusers.</p> <p>17 So, clearly, many of them had abused more than one 18 victim before something was done about the crime.</p> <p>19 MS SCOLDING: I think, if one looks at the case of PR-A5, 20 that's obviously an example of that having taken place 21 in this context, in the English context, of there being 22 a situation, at the very least one situation, where that 23 has been the case.</p> <p>24 If somebody is subject of ecclesiastical 25 jurisdiction and then is disfellowshipped, which</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 137</p>	<p>1 I understand is one of the consequences, is asked to 2 leave, does the congregation know why that is or is it 3 simply announced that they're no longer part of 4 the congregation?</p> <p>5 MR CORBETT: There is a single standard announcement which 6 says the name of the person is no longer one of 7 Jehovah's Witnesses. I know personally of a case of 8 a man who was abused as a child and the congregation 9 believed that his abuser had been imprisoned for fraud. 10 So even in the case where the abuser was found guilty in 11 a criminal court and sent to prison, the congregation 12 did not know what the reason was.</p> <p>13 MS SCOLDING: As a consequence, obviously, of reporting 14 allegations of abuse, you could be disfellowshipped, but 15 you've all talked, in all of your witness statements, 16 about the idea that you could be the subject of 17 disfellowshipping or dissociation if you made 18 allegations of abuse but they weren't proven, so to 19 speak, and that that can cause significant harm to those 20 who are the subject of it. I don't know which one of 21 you -- Mr Lloyd Evans, maybe if I could ask you about 22 that.</p> <p>23 MR LLOYD EVANS: I haven't given evidence that you can be 24 disfellowshipped for reporting child sexual abuse. It 25 used to be the case that -- we heard anecdotally that</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 138</p>
<p>1 victims of abuse were told that if they were to go to 2 the authorities, they would be liable for being 3 disfellowshipped on grounds of slander. That's no 4 longer the practice. In fact, there's explicit guidance 5 in the current Shepherd book that that's not to happen. 6 However, in the testimony of PR-A42, her testimony to 7 the inquiry, her evidence indicates that slander does 8 play at least some role in silencing victims and making 9 them feel -- at least making elders feel they can't 10 report.</p> <p>11 MS SCOLDING: I will come on to discuss with Mr Gillies 12 there's been a case of Mr Whiteley where some of 13 the elders were concerned --</p> <p>14 MR LLOYD EVANS: Indeed.</p> <p>15 MS SCOLDING: -- if they reported it to the police, there 16 would be those issues.</p> <p>17 MR LLOYD EVANS: Indeed.</p> <p>18 MS SCOLDING: Mr Corbett, your hand is firmly up.</p> <p>19 MR CORBETT: I think, to be accurate, we would have to say 20 that disfellowshipping, dissociation or shunning can be 21 associated with making accusations of child abuse, even 22 though not necessarily a direct consequence. PR-A39 is 23 a case in point. PR-A39 --</p> <p>24 MS SCOLDING: Maybe it would be sensible for us to bring 25 this up. This is JWA000002, behind tab B18, chair and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 139</p>	<p>1 panel. It is paragraphs 11, 12 and 15 which is _003. 2 She says: 3 "... I made the decision to go to the police. It 4 was a tortured decision ... The perpetrator was 5 supported in court ... whilst I received no support 6 whatsoever. This in and of itself ... the culture ... 7 "In the end ... I was shunned by my father and my 8 children. As a result, I have missed countless events 9 of great importance to a mother ... 10 "... 11 "This no doubt affects the safety ... now ... If 12 they do not report ... 13 "I have seen this work in practice ... the risk of 14 being shunned by their ... friends." 15 This isn't a practice which is condoned by the 16 Jehovah's Witnesses. In fact, they expressly say, as 17 Mr Lloyd Evans identifies, in their most recent Shepherd 18 the Flock of God, that this shouldn't happen. But is 19 this culturally what can take place in some communities? 20 Mr Lloyd Evans?</p> <p>21 MR LLOYD EVANS: It's very, very important to note that 22 there are different types of shunning that might be 23 thought of as formal or informal. Formal shunning will 24 take place if someone is disfellowshipped or 25 dissociated, but you can still be informally shunned if</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 140</p>

<p>1 you are considered bad association. That was the case 2 with PR-A42. PR-A42's evidence gives evidence of being 3 ostracised by members of the congregation even though 4 she was never disfellowshipped. So just because there's 5 a formal police investigation ongoing and the report has 6 been made, she wasn't necessarily disfellowshipped, but 7 she did find herself being given what might be called 8 the cold shoulder treatment. 9 MS SCOLDING: Obviously that's possible within the context 10 of any small religious organisation. We heard in the 11 Anglican investigation, for example, about 12 a congregation which mounted sort of a sustained 13 campaign against two individuals who had made 14 a complaint of child sexual abuse against their priest. 15 That priest was subsequently convicted but then, even 16 after conviction, the congregation, in effect, turned 17 against those individuals and felt that they had behaved 18 unfairly. 19 MR LLOYD EVANS: The fact that it happens doesn't mean that 20 it's right, and in PR-A42's case, it seems that some of 21 the most obnoxious behaviour or the behaviour that made 22 her feel most intimidated was being performed by the 23 elders themselves. She gives evidence of being 24 intimidated at a Kingdom Hall simply for attending her 25 friend's wedding.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 141</p>	<p>1 MS SCOLDING: For attending the wedding, PR-A42 being the 2 person in the Whiteley case. I will come on to talk 3 about that with Mr Gillies. 4 Mr Corbett, do you agree with Mr Lloyd Evans' 5 analysis that there's a difference between disfellowship 6 and dissociation and what might be called giving someone 7 the cold shoulder in terms of people not finding you 8 terribly attractive? Mr Corbett -- we seem to have lost 9 both Mr Corbett and Ms Davies. I don't know what's 10 happened. 11 MS DAVIES: I'm here. 12 MS SCOLDING: Ms Davies, perhaps you could help us with 13 that. 14 MS DAVIES: I absolutely agree with what Lloyd said, that 15 when you either dissociate yourself or you are 16 disfellowshipped, shunning is a practice that's widely 17 used and accepted within the JW community. I give the 18 example of myself. I am neither disfellowshipped nor 19 dissociated, yet I am shunned within the community 20 because I no longer attend the meetings and specifically 21 since I have reported formally sexual abuse. I don't 22 believe that is just the case of giving the cold 23 shoulder. People will deliberately cross the street to 24 avoid you if they see you, and they have been part of 25 your former congregation. It is a deliberate act of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 142</p>
<p>1 shunning. 2 MS SCOLDING: Mr Corbett, do you have anything else you'd 3 like to add about this, if you are there? It appears 4 that we may well have lost Mr Corbett, at least 5 temporarily. I will therefore move on to you, 6 Ms Davies. 7 There are three recommendations you make, one of 8 which we have talked about with Mr Corbett, which is 9 mandatory reporting. The second of which is, you 10 consider that there should be an offence created of 11 a failure to protect a child from a substantial risk of 12 sexual harm. Could you tell us a little bit about why 13 you think that would be useful? 14 MS DAVIES: I think, going back to the examples given, where 15 somebody is accused and then there's no second witness 16 and therefore no Judicial Committee is formed, that 17 actually, in order to protect those children, there 18 isn't anything formal within that religion or within the 19 current law that allows them to have that protection 20 because information isn't shared and it isn't felt that 21 authorities should be brought in in order to protect 22 that child. 23 MS SCOLDING: You also identify that there needed to be an 24 independent safeguarding body. That was one of 25 the recommendations you identify within your first</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 143</p>	<p>1 witness statement, and you say that that should be 2 independent of any religious organisation. Can you tell 3 us a little bit about why you and your group, which 4 obviously includes Mr Corbett, have reached that 5 conclusion? 6 MS DAVIES: Given the insular nature of the JWs and the 7 familial culture within that organisation, it is felt 8 that anything dealt with in the organisation is not -- 9 there's nobody -- they're kind of marking their own 10 homework, in a sense. They feel like they're getting it 11 right. They are misguided by the fact that they are led 12 by God's Holy Spirit. They are not trained in these 13 specific areas of sexual abuse, and even in terms of 14 supporting survivors. 15 So, in terms of making improvements, making 16 adjustments, it really does need the expertise and the 17 specialism of somebody outside of that that don't have 18 the same engrained indoctrination and beliefs that the 19 JWs have. 20 MS SCOLDING: I understand that Mr Corbett's internet may 21 well have gone down and that's why we don't have him. 22 It may well be that we might need to take a break in 23 a moment, but I am going to ask Mr Lloyd Evans. 24 Mr Lloyd Evans, are there any recommendations you would 25 like the panel to make in respect of the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 144</p>

<p>1 Jehovah's Witness or in respect of religious 2 organisations generally on the basis of the evidence 3 that you have given, other than mandatory reporting, the 4 implementation of a criminal offence of failure to 5 protect and an independent safeguarding body? 6 MR LLOYD EVANS: I echo the sentiments of the ex-JW 7 Advocates group and, indeed, the evidence that we heard 8 earlier from PR-A5. This is a group that feels that 9 they are answerable only to God. This is a group that 10 reaches all of its decisions from America. They don't 11 feel as though they need to yield to any regulations 12 that are imposed on them. So not only do I advocate for 13 mandatory reporting, but I advocate for this group to be 14 regulated scrupulously so that all potential loopholes 15 are closed off. 16 MS SCOLDING: Thank you. I believe Mr Corbett's internet 17 has gone down, so I don't have the opportunity to ask 18 him that question. I may well ask for him to be 19 interposed, madam, at some convenient moment so we can 20 make sure we have any recommendations from him. 21 Madam, unless there is anything further, those are 22 my questions. Please, Ms Davies and Mr Lloyd Evans, if 23 you would like to wait here, the chair and panel may 24 well have questions for you. Thank you. 25 THE CHAIR: Thank you, Ms Scolding. I have no questions,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 145</p>	<p>1 but I will ask my colleagues if they have questions. 2 Ms Sharpling? 3 MS SHARPLING: No, thank you, chair. 4 THE CHAIR: Mr Frank? 5 MR FRANK: No, thank you. 6 THE CHAIR: Sir Malcolm? 7 PROF SIR MALCOLM EVANS: No, thank you, chair. 8 THE CHAIR: That being the case, I would like to thank all 9 of the witnesses very much. I appreciate it has been 10 a long day for you. Your evidence has assisted the 11 inquiry and has been very informative. Thank you very 12 much. 13 MS SCOLDING: Thank you both very much. Once we have 14 Mr Corbett back, I may well ask, possibly at the end of 15 today, or try to stop slightly earlier than 4.15 pm, if 16 we can get him back, just in case there are any final 17 words he would like to say to you, as obviously the 18 technology has rather defeated us this afternoon. Thank 19 you all very much. 20 (The witness withdrew) 21 MS SCOLDING: Chair and panel, I would now like to call 22 Mr Paul Gillies from the Christian Congregation of 23 Jehovah's Witnesses. 24 25</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 146</p>
<p>1 MR PAUL STUART GILLIES (sworn) 2 Examination by MS SCOLDING 3 MS SCOLDING: Mr Gillies, I appreciate, and thank you again 4 for your patience, you have been called slightly later 5 than we had anticipated this afternoon. I thank you 6 very much for that. 7 A few introductory matters. Firstly, this isn't 8 a test of memory. Please feel free to refer to your 9 witness statement, exhibits or any notes. You should 10 have two very large files with you containing both your 11 witness statements and a bundle of various documents 12 which I know you and others have prepared together. 13 Secondly, you will be giving evidence for 14 approximately 20 or 30 minutes this afternoon. We can 15 have a break during that period of time if you need to 16 do so. Your evidence will also go on into tomorrow, so 17 in case I forget at the end, please do not discuss your 18 evidence with any member of your team or anyone else, as 19 you are now officially under oath. 20 At various points, as you will have seen, I will ask 21 the poor unfortunate gentleman called Danny to bring 22 various documents up and, if the technology works, they 23 will appear. If there are any references you wish to 24 bring up, you will have seen this if you have watched 25 the evidence today, it is always possible to bring</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 147</p>	<p>1 documentation up if you need it. 2 We have a number of witness statements from you, but 3 before I take you to them, please could you give your 4 full name and confirm your role within the Christian 5 Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, whom I will, for 6 brevity, simply call the JW's or the Witnesses after this 7 point in time. 8 A. My full name is Paul Stuart Gillies. I am associated 9 with the Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, 10 having served here in Britain for many years at the 11 branch office. 12 Q. You have provided four statements to the inquiry. Your 13 first statement is behind tab A1. It is 28 pages long 14 and it is dated 2 December 2019. Can you confirm that 15 you signed this? 16 A. Yes. 17 Q. Is it true, to the best of your knowledge and belief? 18 A. Yes. 19 Q. Next, your second statement is 19 pages long, dated 20 19 February 2020. I have it -- no, it is not 19 pages 21 long, it is approximately five pages long. It is dated 22 19 February. Again, can I ask you to check, did you 23 sign that document? 24 A. Yes. 25 Q. Is it true, to the best of your knowledge and belief?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 148</p>

<p>1 A. Yes.</p> <p>2 Q. Your third statement is behind tab A3. Again, this is</p> <p>3 13 pages long and it is dated 11 March 2020. Again, did</p> <p>4 you sign that?</p> <p>5 A. Yes.</p> <p>6 Q. Is it true, to the best of your knowledge and belief?</p> <p>7 A. Yes.</p> <p>8 Q. One then has your last witness statement, which is</p> <p>9 behind tab 4, and, again, this is five pages long and it</p> <p>10 is dated 7 July 2020. Again, did you sign that witness</p> <p>11 statement?</p> <p>12 A. Yes.</p> <p>13 Q. Is it true, to the best of your knowledge and belief?</p> <p>14 A. Yes.</p> <p>15 Q. You indicated that you worked in the Britain branch</p> <p>16 office for a number of years. We will come on to talk</p> <p>17 about that in a moment. But you were appointed as</p> <p>18 Director of the Office of Public Information of</p> <p>19 the Jehovah's Witnesses in 2018. Could you explain to</p> <p>20 us what that means your role currently is?</p> <p>21 A. Well, the Office of Public Information shares accurate</p> <p>22 information about our beliefs and practices with the</p> <p>23 various outlets, including the news media, academia and</p> <p>24 also government officials.</p> <p>25 Q. So you are based, or at the very least you work for,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 149</p>	<p>1 what I am going to call the US organisation, which is</p> <p>2 the central overarching body; is that right?</p> <p>3 A. I'm based at the World Headquarters of</p> <p>4 Jehovah's Witnesses in Warwick, upstate New York.</p> <p>5 Q. My understanding, and please confirm if I have got this</p> <p>6 wrong, is that guidance, information and spiritual</p> <p>7 teaching comes from the head office. That's then</p> <p>8 co-ordinated and disseminated to branches around the</p> <p>9 world. There is a Britain branch which then</p> <p>10 disseminates the information to the individual</p> <p>11 congregations. Is that right?</p> <p>12 A. Yes, although much of our information now is directly</p> <p>13 available on our website, jw.org.</p> <p>14 Q. So although you're not -- you have no hierarchy in terms</p> <p>15 of you have no ordained ministers, there aren't bishops</p> <p>16 or anything like that, you operate a fairly centralised</p> <p>17 system, in terms of things are disseminated from the</p> <p>18 centre out to the periphery?</p> <p>19 A. Yes.</p> <p>20 Q. It cascades down, so to speak; is that an appropriate</p> <p>21 way to describe how your organisation works?</p> <p>22 A. Yes, I would say that, when you look at our structure,</p> <p>23 we model ourselves on first century Christianity.</p> <p>24 Q. Your governing body provides direction and guidance, as</p> <p>25 I understand it, principally through publications, and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 150</p>
<p>1 these days through videos and YouTube and new media</p> <p>2 communications, if one puts it that way, and you have</p> <p>3 a number of documents, some of which we have already</p> <p>4 looked at, some of which are designed for the general</p> <p>5 public and others of which are designed to be studied</p> <p>6 and used by congregations; is that right?</p> <p>7 A. Yes, except we don't use YouTube. We have our own</p> <p>8 JW Broadcasting at jw.org.</p> <p>9 Q. Fine. I don't want to get that wrong. For 12 years,</p> <p>10 you were a member of the Branch Committee. But, as</p> <p>11 I understand it, the Branch Committee is the central</p> <p>12 body in the UK which gives direction and organisation to</p> <p>13 local congregations. Again, is that right?</p> <p>14 A. Yes, that's correct.</p> <p>15 Q. You oversaw the activity of both what's called the</p> <p>16 service department and the legal department?</p> <p>17 A. Yes.</p> <p>18 Q. What do the service department and the legal department</p> <p>19 do?</p> <p>20 A. In relation to child abuse or just generally?</p> <p>21 Q. Well, maybe just a little bit generally, but largely in</p> <p>22 relation to dealing with and managing child sexual</p> <p>23 abuse?</p> <p>24 A. So the service department cares for communications with</p> <p>25 our congregations, so you have mentioned a few things</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 151</p>	<p>1 there -- disseminating matters that come from our world</p> <p>2 headquarters. They also organise our conventions, they</p> <p>3 organise our schools, they organise our public ministry,</p> <p>4 they organise the care of our Kingdom Halls, and so</p> <p>5 forth. The legal department cares for, well, legal</p> <p>6 matters, which could be all sorts of things -- property</p> <p>7 matters and so forth -- but with regard to child sexual</p> <p>8 abuse matters, they give direction about the law, how</p> <p>9 the law relates to the subject.</p> <p>10 Q. We will look in a bit more detail about the role of</p> <p>11 those departments, but in brief summary, the service</p> <p>12 department and the legal department are responsible for</p> <p>13 the supervision and oversight of responses of child</p> <p>14 sexual abuse and information about child sexual abuse</p> <p>15 which are reported to them; is that right?</p> <p>16 A. Yes.</p> <p>17 Q. As we have identified in the document we have already</p> <p>18 seen, they should be reported to the central branch;</p> <p>19 that's right, isn't it?</p> <p>20 A. Yes. So when the elders first have an allegation of</p> <p>21 child abuse, two elders will phone our central office.</p> <p>22 They are based now in Chelmsford. They will talk to the</p> <p>23 legal department and get any legal advice. Then the</p> <p>24 call goes through to the service department, who gives</p> <p>25 further instructions.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 152</p>

<p>1 Q. Thank you very much. That's very helpful. Just some 2 further helpful background, I understand, and you say 3 this in your first witness statement, there are around 4 130,000 members of the Jehovah's Witnesses in England 5 and Wales. Is a member a baptised person or simply 6 somebody who goes regularly to a Kingdom Hall? 7 A. Well, that figure is those who are either qualified as 8 unbaptised publishers or baptised individuals. It 9 doesn't necessarily include children. 10 Q. When you say "publisher", perhaps you'd like to explain 11 what you mean by someone who is a publisher? 12 A. Yes. I need to clarify that, don't I? It is somebody 13 who, having studied the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses 14 for a period of time, maybe several years, makes 15 a request to the elders that they would like to 16 participate in our public ministry. So if they give 17 evidence that they qualify to share in our public 18 ministry, then they become what's called an unbaptised 19 publisher. It is an interim step before an individual 20 gets baptised. 21 Q. Can I just identify, can both men and women become 22 baptised and can both men and women become publishers? 23 A. Yes. 24 Q. You say there are roughly 1,500 congregations, as 25 I understand it, in England and Wales. Is your</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 153</p>	<p>1 organisation growing or diminishing in the 21st century 2 in the UK? 3 A. Well, worldwide, we had 300,000 newly baptised ones last 4 year, just over. In the UK, it is growing, but I don't 5 have the exact figure. Several thousand, that would be. 6 Q. There were around 8.6 million congregants, as 7 I understand, again from your witness evidence, 8 worldwide? 9 A. Yes. 10 Q. Again, as we have already seen when we had a quick look 11 at The Watchtower with the individuals who just gave 12 evidence and as you have already identified, the model 13 for your organisation is first or early second century 14 Christianity, and, unlike some other Christian religious 15 denominations, you use extensive quotations from the 16 Bible and scriptural assistance to guide the way that 17 you run your organisation; is that right? 18 A. Yes, we view the Bible as our constitution. 19 Q. So we have talked briefly about the structure. I'd like 20 to just focus now upon the branch office. We have 21 talked a little bit about the fact there's a service 22 department and a legal department. Who staffs those 23 departments? Are they Jehovah's Witnesses or 24 individuals whom you employ who have professional 25 expertise or both?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 154</p>
<p>1 A. Those particular departments are staffed by elders, but 2 also elders who may be solicitors, who are solicitors. 3 And in the service department, we have the service desk. 4 They are all elders as well, and they are individuals 5 who have built up a degree of experience as elders over 6 a number of years. They could be circuit overseers, as 7 we will talk about, who have come to the branch office 8 and are now filling that role. 9 Q. These individuals, are they remunerated for their 10 services or do they do this on a voluntary basis? 11 A. We do all this on a voluntary basis. We are members of 12 the worldwide order of special full-time servants which 13 means we get remuneration at the branch office for 14 living expenses and so forth, but we are not paid, not 15 salary paid. 16 Q. So it is a full-time occupation, but not one that's 17 salaried. You said everyone is an elder. Can 18 I identify, all those individuals who were both staff of 19 the service department and legal department would all be 20 men? 21 A. Yes. We have women in those departments, but they don't 22 take any of the roles that we are discussing in 23 connection with child sexual abuse. For example, in the 24 legal department, just to clarify, we will have some of 25 our women workers who deal with property matters.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 155</p>	<p>1 Q. The branch office is run by the Branch Committee. Who 2 appoints the Branch Committee? Is that something -- do 3 you have an election, for example, at your annual 4 convention, or how do you become -- how do you occupy 5 the role you occupied? 6 A. Well, you have to have years of experience in being an 7 elder. Now we have the arrangements where individuals 8 go to our training school, which is based in New York, 9 and go through a five-month course. After they have 10 been through that course, the governing body of 11 Jehovah's Witnesses will decide whether to appoint them 12 as a Branch Committee member, either back in their home 13 country or in another country. 14 Q. Again, they are all elders, so they will all be men? 15 A. Yes. 16 Q. As I understand it, they would be considered to be 17 spiritually qualified, mature brothers. I believe 18 that's the terminology you use? 19 A. Correct. 20 Q. You say that they all go on a five-month course. Does 21 part of that course -- does any of that course involve 22 looking at allegations of child sexual abuse or issues 23 around child protection? 24 A. Well, what it does deal with is how to be a good 25 shepherd, and that is the bulk of our work in connection</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 156</p>

<p>1 with dealing with child protection issues, how to be 2 a shepherd or how to provide pastoral care, you might 3 express it, so that's a very important facet of 4 the training. And they will be given information 5 that's -- to familiarise themselves with, say, the 6 running of a branch office and also policies that have 7 been referred to in our shepherding handbook, as an 8 example.</p> <p>9 Q. The people in the service department or the legal 10 department that might receive telephone calls, would any 11 of them have received any specific training in child 12 protection?</p> <p>13 A. When you say "specific training", they are given 14 specific training as far as our policies and 15 familiarising themselves with our policies and how to 16 deal with telephone calls that come in from either 17 distressed victims or from elders who choose to call in. 18 So they get that kind of training. We have individuals 19 who have gained experience maybe over decades and they 20 may train our newer ones, newer ones in the sense of 21 newer to that particular assignment. They will sit in 22 on weekly meetings in order to discuss specific matters, 23 perhaps specific cases, if there is any, and that way 24 they gain experience.</p> <p>25 Q. I suppose what I mean by that is, do you have maybe</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 157</p>	<p>1 somebody who is either a Jehovah's Witness or comes 2 externally from, for example, the National Society for 3 the Prevention of Cruelty to Children or from the local 4 authority or from other organisations who specialise in 5 child protection to provide you with any advice or 6 assistance or is it all something which is managed 7 internally?</p> <p>8 A. Yes, that's correct, it's managed internally because the 9 training is for what we do as a religious organisation. 10 I think it has been pointed out, and as I say in my 11 statement, we don't really organise things where 12 children are separated from their parents. We don't 13 have the activities such as Sunday schools and going off 14 on outings and so forth that's supervised by the 15 congregation. So it is very much a religious 16 application of Bible principles. So that's why we don't 17 have outside training -- for example, how to assist 18 victims of child abuse. So that's very much focused on 19 the use of the scriptures to be able to do that.</p> <p>20 MS SCOLDING: So you don't have -- some other religious 21 organisations that we have had evidence from, they will 22 have a sort of child protection department that will 23 often be staffed by people who may share the same 24 religious beliefs but who will have outside expertise in 25 social work, usually social work, the Probation Service,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 158</p>
<p>1 education sometimes, sometimes the law. You don't have 2 that kind of department or that kind of arrangement?</p> <p>3 A. Not in that organised way, no, simply because we don't 4 feel it relates to what we do as a religion.</p> <p>5 Q. So we have heard a little bit about what happens at 6 national level. At local level, we obviously have 7 congregations which meet at a Kingdom Hall. We have 8 heard about that. And the body of elders ministers to 9 them. Can you summarise, from your perspective, what 10 the elders do in respect of every congregation? What's 11 their job?</p> <p>12 A. So their assignment involves taking the lead in 13 teaching, taking the lead in shepherding those who need 14 individual encouragement. They take the lead in our key 15 activity, which is what they are well known for, 16 evangelising work, so the elders take the lead in -- 17 those are the three principal areas. But they will also 18 meet, as a body of elders, from time to time to discuss 19 the spiritual needs of the congregation or to put into 20 operation maybe some needs that are applicable locally. 21 I think, for example, of the COVID-19. Now, we have -- 22 the branch office has given specific instructions about 23 the use of Kingdom Halls, which are all closed at the 24 moment, and the fact that we have stopped our 25 evangelising activity from door to door during this</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 159</p>	<p>1 crisis. So these are times when a body of elders will 2 implement the decisions -- the instructions they receive 3 from the branch office.</p> <p>4 Q. Again, appointment of an elder is based upon, in effect, 5 being, shall we say, an appropriate man within your 6 community? I think one of the citations from Titus is: 7 "A man free from accusation, a husband of one's 8 wife, having belief in children who are not accused of 9 debauchery or rebelliousness. An overseer must be free 10 from accusation, not self-willed, not quick tempered." 11 So the assessment of suitability is based upon the 12 scriptural demands as they're set out within Timothy and 13 Titus, which I think are both books of the New 14 Testament, if that is right?</p> <p>15 A. Yes, you cited first Timothy 3 and Titus, chapter 1. If 16 I could mention one other qualification that's 17 considered, it's verse 9 of Titus 1, which says: 18 "... holding firmly to the faithful word ..." 19 Which is the Bible: 20 "... as respects his art of teaching, so that he may 21 be able both to encourage by the teaching that is 22 wholesome and to reprove those who contradict." 23 Basically, before someone is appointed as an elder, 24 they have to show that they love the Bible, they have to 25 show that they have a good understanding of the Bible</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 160</p>

<p>1 and they have the ability to teach well, as far as our 2 teachings are concerned. 3 Q. But they don't have to have any qualifications, training 4 or experience at managing, shall we say, 5 intracongregational problems, such as, for example, 6 dealing with child protection? 7 A. Well, you mentioned earlier the role of ministerial 8 servants, so a ministerial servant is appointed. First, 9 again, the qualifications are spiritual qualifications 10 in the Bible. Once a ministerial servant has served for 11 a period of time -- it could be years -- then the elders 12 look at that individual and say, "Is he showing the 13 aptitude for being an elder in the congregation?". So 14 at that point, they might start to introduce some 15 training in the areas that I just mentioned to you, such 16 as in teaching, or they may have ministerial servants 17 accompany them to visit people who have asked for some 18 shepherding help, although that wouldn't be in the 19 context of child safeguarding matters at that stage of 20 their training. 21 Q. Again, those elders wouldn't have any specific training 22 in dealing with allegations of child sexual abuse; they 23 might have spiritual training in terms of scriptural 24 advice, support and assistance, but there wouldn't be 25 any sort of practical training necessarily. Am</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 161</p>	<p>1 I correct in thinking that? 2 A. Well, the practical training is basically reviewing the 3 material -- reviewing our policies on child abuse, such 4 as has been mentioned, they get the Shepherding All the 5 Flock handbook that's given to elders. They would go 6 through that, which is giving them specific instructions 7 about how to handle such matters. So we do train our 8 elders according to our guidelines and our ways of 9 handling allegations of child abuse. 10 Q. We have already mentioned the ministerial servant. 11 I think there has been some description of them as 12 having some roles and responsibilities, largely 13 administrative or moving things around, making sure 14 everything is clean, but they are, in a way, sort of 15 elders in -- would I be wrong to describe them as elders 16 in waiting, in that they are given that appointment and 17 then, in a way, they are sort of half trained-up or they 18 look and see whether or not they are capable of being 19 elders; is that right? 20 A. Well, I commend you for doing your research. Yes, 21 indeed. Ministerial servant -- elders are appointed 22 from ministerial servants. So the ministerial servant 23 may be a ministerial servant throughout his life and 24 never be appointed as an elder. It is not as if you 25 serve for X amount of years and then you are appointed</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 162</p>
<p>1 as an elder. They have to meet the qualifications. 2 Q. Again, do any of the elders do it on a full-time basis 3 or is this a part-time, voluntary position? 4 A. The elder is a part-time position. Those of us we 5 mentioned that work at our branch office, we do that 6 activity full time. But as far as elders are concerned, 7 there is no clergy/laity class in Jehovah's Witnesses, 8 there is no salaried individuals who are elders in the 9 congregations. We have circuit overseers who will 10 travel from one congregation to another and, like those 11 who work at the branch, they will be reimbursed for some 12 of their expenses by the congregations as they visit, 13 (inaudible) paid a salary (inaudible). 14 Q. The last kind of role I wanted to talk to you about is 15 the circuit overseer, so, as I understand it, 16 20 congregations make up a circuit. We are used to 17 hearing about circuits, as Methodists and lots of other 18 non-conformist organisations also use that, group 19 themselves in a similar manner. There is somebody 20 called a circuit overseer. Who appoints circuit 21 overseers and do they have any particular roles and 22 responsibility in respect of child protection? 23 A. So they are appointed by the branch. They go through 24 training. We have our School for Kingdom Evangelisers 25 and they have to have gone through that school. It is</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 163</p>	<p>1 a two-month course. It's not specifically designed, of 2 course, to deal with child safeguarding matters, but, 3 again, they are people who are well versed in our 4 policies on those matters, so if they're asked questions 5 about our policies when they meet with a body of elders 6 during the course of a visit, then they are able to 7 explain our policies. 8 Q. I think we have got lots of examples of your policies 9 and practices. We will talk a bit later about some of 10 the individual policies you have in respect of child 11 protection. But, generally, elders are meant to follow 12 those practices and stick to them with quite strict 13 adherence. Is that right? So things which are issued 14 should be followed. They are not, you know, "You can do 15 this if you want. You don't have to"? 16 A. That's when it comes to organisational procedures. If 17 you are talking about helping people on a personal 18 level, you know, we try to help individuals through 19 reason on Bible principles. It is not as if elders give 20 instructions as to how a person should live their lives. 21 If a person is looking for guidance in the congregation, 22 we educate our elders to understand the principles that 23 are involved and to share those principles with 24 individuals so they can make good decisions in their 25 life.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 164</p>

<p>1 Q. Can I just double-check, we have talked about there not 2 being any sort of child protection department centrally 3 or locally, because it sounds as if you don't have an 4 elder who is in charge of child protection, for example? 5 A. We feel that any elder can be approached for child 6 safeguarding matters. Any congregant can feel free to 7 talk to an elder about their concerns. 8 Q. Again, circuit overseers don't have any particular 9 responsibility for child protection; is that right? 10 A. Well, as they visit congregations, they don't get 11 involved with matters with individuals in the 12 congregation because they are only there for a week, and 13 usually with helping for a victim, well, that's 14 a shepherding that may have to go on for some period of 15 time. But they are well versed and well experienced in 16 our principles to be able to give advice if the elders 17 have questions about a matter or their understanding of 18 a policy. 19 Q. So do circuit overseers undertake any kind of auditing 20 function? Are the congregations ever audited in any way 21 or monitored either by the overseer or by the central 22 branch, either by the overseer's visit which, as you 23 have said, takes place twice a year or by somebody from 24 the branch coming in to say, you know, "You're doing 25 a good job" or "You're not doing a good job" or "I think</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 165</p>	<p>1 you need to improve this". Are there any of those kinds 2 of oversight or auditing or monitoring facilities 3 available? 4 A. Well, there's auditing as to how financial matters are 5 handled in the congregation; there's an example. Their 6 main purpose is to go and spend a week encouraging the 7 congregation, so they take the lead in speaking from the 8 public platform. They will take the lead in doing the 9 evangelising work during that week. But they will also 10 make themselves available if there's an individual in 11 the congregation that wants to talk to them about 12 a personal matter. So they will be accompanied usually 13 by one of the elders and talk to the individual. 14 Q. But there won't be a sort of checklist? Sometimes, in 15 some other religious organisations, we have seen they 16 will go in with a checklist and ask, "Have you done 17 this? Have you done that? Are your policies up to 18 date?", you know, various things from the sublime to the 19 ridiculous. You don't have any process like that? 20 A. Yes, we do. Yes, we do have a checklist that we give to 21 the circuit overseers. 22 Q. Does that involve anything to do with examining or 23 auditing child protection or is it more about other 24 matters? 25 A. They don't really audit child safeguarding matters, no.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 166</p>
<p>1 MS SCOLDING: Thank you. 2 I think -- I note the time, chair. I am also 3 conscious that Mr Corbett, I believe, has returned from 4 the technologically dead, so to speak, so if I may ask 5 if I may leave it there with Mr Gillies and thank him 6 very much for the evidence he's given to date. 7 Chair, with your permission, may I revive Mr Corbett 8 and ask whether or not he has any final words he would 9 like to say and if you have any questions for him? 10 Mr Gillies, I just remind you you're under oath, but 11 thank you very much. I will see you tomorrow morning. 12 A. Thank you very much. 13 (The witness withdrew) 14 MR DUNCAN JAMES CORBETT (continued) 15 Examination by MS SCOLDING (continued) 16 MS SCOLDING: Mr Corbett, I don't know if you are out in the 17 technological ether. If so, please would you unmute 18 yourself and show yourself on video, please. 19 MR CORBETT: I am glad to be resurrected. 20 MS SCOLDING: Thank you very much. I'm so sorry, but there 21 were obviously technological difficulties which led to 22 you falling off the call before the opportunity to end 23 your evidence. We are very glad to be able to get you 24 back now. 25 The questions that I asked the other witnesses</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 167</p>	<p>1 whilst you were offline, so to speak, were about 2 recommendations. We talked about an independent 3 safeguarding body; we spoke about the need for mandatory 4 reporting; and we spoke about the need for a criminal 5 offence of failing to, in effect, pass on allegations of 6 child sexual abuse or concealing such. 7 Do you have any other recommendations, or is there 8 anything you would like to say about those 9 recommendations to the chair and panel? 10 MR CORBETT: Yes. Could I just clarify what I was in the 11 middle of saying when I was cut off? 12 MS SCOLDING: Yes. 13 MR CORBETT: It was about the aspect of shunning, and what 14 I was trying to clarify was that, in the example of 15 PR-A39, which I happen to know well, this person left 16 the organisation as a result of being abused as a child. 17 When she finally took her abuser to court because it 18 wasn't dealt with by the congregation, her father 19 refused to support her at the court case, and said, "Why 20 do you not leave it alone? Why do you have to bring 21 this up?", because he felt it was bringing the 22 congregation into disrepute. 23 He now has hardly anything to do with her, unless it 24 is a case of something he needs which no member of 25 the congregation is able to supply for him, and then</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 168</p>

<p>1 she's last resort. 2 So is she shunned because she reported child abuse? 3 Well, not strictly. Did she leave Jehovah's Witnesses 4 because of child abuse? Yes, she did. Is she shunned 5 because she left Jehovah's Witnesses? Yes, she is. So 6 there's a direct link, although you could argue the 7 semantics of being shunned because of reporting 8 child abuse. 9 And this sort of case is not uncommon where somebody 10 chooses to leave because they can't live with the 11 organisation that did this to them, and then, as 12 a result of leaving, and perhaps being outspoken about 13 what happened to them particularly, they get shunned, 14 and in this case the person is not disfellowshipped or 15 dissociated but is still shunned by members of her 16 family as a result of having left. 17 On to recommendations, yes, mandatory reporting, for 18 the reasons we talked about, because it takes the 19 decision making out of the hands of amateurs and puts it 20 in the hands of professionals who can deal with it. It 21 does exactly what CCJW suggest that they wish to do, 22 which is to separate the crime and the sin: let the 23 religion handle the sin, let the police handle the 24 crime. It seems very sensible. 25 With regard to publishing of figures and auditing of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 169</p>	<p>1 those figures, I think advice that CCJW themselves 2 published is very good. There's an Awake! article which 3 is referenced in one of their elders' training letters. 4 Strangely, it's missing from the list of references that 5 they sent to the inquiry, because it deals directly with 6 child abuse. I'll just read you one paragraph, if 7 I may. This is from the Awake! of 8 April 1999. It 8 says: 9 "Think of the heartbreak of parents who have 10 discovered too late that their children have been abused 11 by trusted clergymen, teachers or even close family 12 members. It would be good for you, as a parent, to ask 13 yourself, 'Does my church tolerate or cover up 14 child abuse? Is my religion holding firmly to high 15 moral principles?' Answers to such questions could help 16 you to make wise choices in protecting your children." 17 I think those are exactly the questions parents 18 should be asking themselves. The problem is, without 19 external reporting, how do I know whether my church is 20 tolerating child abuse? If there are no figures 21 available to me as a member of the church, how do 22 I know? If there are figures but they're not audited 23 externally, how can I tell the difference between 24 a church that is not tolerating child abuse and one that 25 is just very good at covering it up? Without external</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 170</p>
<p>1 auditing, there is no way of telling the difference. 2 So I would say, this advice, which comes from CCJW 3 themselves, is excellent. If parents want to do this, 4 then they should have at their fingertips the 5 information they need to be able to assess the risk 6 posed by a particular church to their children, and that 7 would require all churches, including CCJW, to publish 8 publicly the statistics -- how many cases are reported, 9 how many those are against people in positions, how many 10 of those were reported to the police, what was the 11 outcome of the cases. All of this should be available 12 to anybody who is a prospective member of that church. 13 MS SCOLDING: Thank you very much, Mr Corbett. Chair and 14 panel, I don't know whether you have any questions for 15 Mr Corbett? 16 THE CHAIR: I have no questions, and I don't believe my 17 colleagues have any questions. I assume that's the end 18 of today's evidence? 19 MS SCOLDING: Yes, it is, chair. It is the end of today's 20 evidence. 21 (The witness withdrew) 22 MS SCOLDING: With your permission, if we may resume again 23 at 10.30 am tomorrow? 24 THE CHAIR: Yes, thank you, Ms Scolding. 25 (4.15 pm)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 171</p>	<p>1 (The hearing was adjourned to 2 Tuesday, 11 August 2020 at 10.30 am) 3 4 5 I N D E X 6 7 Opening remarks by MS SCOLDING4 8 WITNESS PR-A512 9 Examination by MR TAHZIB12 10 MS SARAH DAVIES (affirmed)41 11 MR DUNCAN JAMES CORBETT (affirmed)41 12 MR JAMES LLOYD EVANS (affirmed)41 13 Examination by MS SCOLDING41 14 MR PAUL STUART GILLIES (sworn)147 15 Examination by MS SCOLDING147 16 MR DUNCAN JAMES CORBETT (continued)167 17 Examination by MS SCOLDING (continued)167 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 172</p>

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