

Witness Name: Paul S. Gillies
Statement No.: 5
Dated: 28 August 2020

THE INDEPENDENT INQUIRY INTO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

Fourth Supplementary Witness Statement of Paul Stuart Gillies

I, **Paul Stuart Gillies**, make this fourth supplementary statement on behalf of Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses of Britain (CCJW). This witness statement is in response to a Rule 9 request, received on 14 August 2020.

1. The Inquiry's Rule 9 request refers to the conclusion of my live-stream video testimony on 11 August 2020 where panel member Mr Ivor Frank asked me a series of questions on a records management presentation, conducted by an individual from another country, which occurred in 2017 at the Britain Branch Office of Jehovah's Witnesses (Britain Branch Office). Neither Mr Frank nor the Inquiry informed me in advance that I would be questioned on this matter. CCJW informs me that they also were not given advance notice by the Inquiry of this line of questioning.

2. I attended a records management presentation at the Britain Branch Office sometime in 2017. I do not recall the date of the presentation, did not take notes of the presentation, and do not have any other record of the presentation. I do not recall the presenter using the words mentioned by Mr Frank. I understand that the same presentation was held later that same week with members of other departments (e.g. mechanical maintenance) which I did not attend. I have inquired of the Britain Branch Office and they inform me that they do not have any recording of the presentation.

3. I recall that the subject of the presentation was implementation of a branch-wide document retention policy, in compliance with data protection legislation, and which would be progressively implemented beginning in late 2017 or early 2018. I also recall that the presentation emphasised that standard document retentions were to be followed unless there was a legal or other requirement for the documents to be kept for a longer period. The

presentation did not discuss records pertaining to allegations of child sexual abuse. This was not surprising to me. As explained in my 2 December 2019 witness statement (paras 78-79), it has long been the policy of Jehovah's Witnesses that information concerning allegations of child sexual abuse are marked "Do Not Destroy" and are kept "indefinitely". This is so that children can be safeguarded and alleged perpetrators monitored.

4. I am informed by CCJW that on 6 April 2018 their legal representatives informed the Inquiry by letter that the Britain Branch Office was "currently undertaking a branch-wide records management project, which is separate and apart from and unconnected" to any records relating to allegations of child sexual abuse (emphasis added).

5. I am also informed by CCJW that on 5 March 2020, the Inquiry confirmed that the Britain Branch Office was the only religious entity involved in the current investigation that had provided the Inquiry with records relating to allegations of child sexual abuse.

6. *In other words, there was and is no substance whatsoever to the impression left by Mr Frank's live-stream questioning that the Britain Branch Office has destroyed records relating to allegations of child sexual abuse. The Inquiry and Mr Frank are well aware that such an assertion is false and that Jehovah's Witnesses are the only religious organisation in this investigation that has provided the Inquiry with records relating to allegations of child sexual abuse.*

Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true. I understand that proceedings for contempt of court may be brought against anyone who makes, or causes to be made, a false statement in a document verified by a statement of truth without an honest belief in its truth.

Signed

DPA

Paul Stuart Gillies

Dated: 28 August 2020