

THE INDEPENDENT INQUIRY INTO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

Witness Statement of the International Association of former Child Migrants and their Families (IAFCM&F)

I, Norman Johnston, will say as follows:-

1. My full name is Norman Johnston and I am the President of the International Association of former Child Migrants and their Families. I am a former child migrant, sent to Australia in 1950 at the age of seven.
2. This statement has been prepared by myself and Desmond McDaid, Secretary of IAFCM&F (the Association) and former child migrant sent to Australia in 1953, aged eight. We have been assisted by fellow committee members Marcelle O'Brien (former child migrant sent to Australia in 1949, aged five) and Tony Costa (former child migrant sent to Australia in 1953, aged eleven). We have consulted a wide range of former child migrants regarding their concerns and priorities.
3. The Association's origins were initially as the client advisory group to the Child Migrants Trust (CMT). The Association's wider agenda developed from the long term campaigning work of Harold Haig, the Association's founder Secretary who worked tirelessly, often daily, as a volunteer until his death in 2012.
4. Whilst CMT provides vital, specialist services to restore our families and identities and help our recovery from childhood institutional abuse, our campaign for justice required an allied but separate organisation to pursue goals of recognition, justice and reparation for all former child migrants. The Association was established in October, 1997.
5. The Association's objectives are to promote the interests of former UK child migrants and members of their families, particularly by seeking justice, professional, independent specialist services and redress from those Governments and agencies involved in child migration schemes, and by promoting greater public awareness of the devastating consequences of childhood deportation on our lives.