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STATEMENT

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Tough prison time essential for child sexual assault crimes

This afternoon Scouts Australia NSW appeared before the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into the Sentencing of Child Sexual Assault Offenders.

Steven Larkins, former head of the Hunter Aboriginal Children's Service who was a Scout leader during the 1990s, was released from prison yesterday. Larkins spent fifteen months in prison for falsifying documents and for child pornography offences.

Larkins did NOT spend a single day in prison for his two crimes of aggravated indecent assault involving a child.

"Scouts is appalled that Larkins only received a three year good behaviour bond for the assault crimes," said Graham Bargwanna, Chief Executive Scouts Australia NSW. "We call upon the NSW Government to ensure offenders are put in prison and that this never occurs again."

"Sex offences relating to children as especially serious, and these crimes must attract sentences far harsher than those imposed for crimes such as larceny, drug dealing or forgery.

"Strong sentences show that the NSW courts will take strong action against offenders and this helps to encourage reporting.

"Strong sentences also officially recognise the extent of victims' pain, trauma and huge impact of these crimes. There should always be a long black mark against the name of offenders. Good behaviour bonds are completely unacceptable for this crime," Mr Bargwanna said.

Please contact the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry media office for any further information, as they are coordinating the release of all information regarding their proceedings.

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For more information please contact:

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