

MEDIA RELEASE ON BEHALF OF ORDO TEMPLI ORIENTIS

1. We are pleased to announce that we have signed public terms of settlement in our religious vilification proceedings against Reina Michaelson and CSAPP.
2. This matter has had a long history.
3. It dates back to 2004 when OTO member David Bottrill was innocently surfing the net looking for the OTO website and suddenly found mention of his organisation's details being linked to a couple of bizarre websites and the CSAPP website.
4. A document was thrown up which made scurrilous suggestions and innuendo about the OTO. The document made suggestions of a widespread conspiracy of silence in Victoria involving high profile Australian citizens, a major television network, police and authorities and the education department around the issue of satanic and/or organised ritual sexual abuse of children.
5. OTO absolutely refute and deny any such imputations against its members.
6. To the best of OTO's knowledge neither Reina Michaelson nor CSAPP ever made contact with the OTO or its members to check any facts behind these scurrilous imputations. David Bottrill personally believes that Reina Michaelson picked on a small religious organisation about which she had very little knowledge in order to attempt to add an air of veracity to some outlandish claims.
7. The OTO was therefore obliged to take religious vilification proceedings to correct any public misconceptions which may have resulted from this sensationalist document.
8. Reina Michaelson has finally admitted being the author of the document.
9. Unfortunately Reina Michaelson saw fit to provide a copy of the document to a notorious world conspiracy theorist David Icke whose website speaks for itself. It was a short step for the document then to find its way irretrievably into cyberspace.
10. This proceeding derives from the Victorian Racial and Religious Tolerance Act and as such was directed to the actions of CSAPP and Reina Michaelson within that context and in particular the publication of the document on what purported to be the CSAPP official website.
11. However we have now been told by CSAPP and Reina Michaelson that it was never meant to have been posted on their website and that they lost control over the site's webmaster who had donated the site to them and whose true identity they have been unable able to verify.
12. We are very pleased that Reina Michaelson, the Executive Director of CSAPP and CSAPP Inc have publicly acknowledged that no proof has ever been produced to support the allegations which led to this complaint and that the release of the document containing the allegations caused serious offence to OTO members.

13. As David Bottrill testified during the proceeding, like all right thinking members of the community OTO members find child abuse and sexual abuse to be totally abhorrent. Any such abuse is completely contrary to the practice and teachings of the OTO religion.
 14. On behalf of OTO I would like to thank DLA Phillips Fox together with counsel Ms Jane Dixon and Ms Rachel Ellyard, as well as Tabitha Lovett and the Public Interest Law Clearing House (PILCH) for arranging legal representation for this important case on a pro bono basis. I would also like to thank religion expert Rowan Ireland and to commend VCAT Senior Member Davis who conducted the proceedings with dignity and fairness.
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