

RAAF INVESTIGATION: Teen told to get breast reduction

by [Emma Clarke](#) 6th Apr 2018 11:00 AM

WITNESSES to the sexual and physical abuse of minors at four Australian Defence Force locations, including Amberley as early as 1950 are needed to form part of an ongoing investigation.

Porters Lawyers want to speak to any former Defence Force personnel or former recruits who were posted to multiple bases to gather further evidence of knowledge of abuse and to aid in legal action against the Commonwealth of Australia.

A public notice calling for witnesses published on Monday, March 26 reveals Laverton and Williams RAAF bases in Victoria are also included as well as Wagga Wagga, NSW as well as Amberley.

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Porters Lawyers' Taso Nicolaidis said the investigation covered dates between the late 1950s and 1985.

"This is about the ADF not caring for or providing sufficient care for minors they were engaging at the time," he said.

"It was in an environment where abuse was allowed to happen and they are seeking compensation for the impact of that abuse.

"We have not seen an independent review of what happened at the air force, especially during these training phases and during the time they engaged minors into apprenticeship and junior recruitment schemes.

"They treated these children as adults and had no adolescent emotional and physical welfare.

Mr Nicolaidis said in one particular case that related to RAAF Base Amberley, a teenage woman was harassed.

He said she was harassed at Laverton in Victoria and Wagga Wagga in NSW prior to Amberley when she was between 17 and 18 during the 1980s.

"She went onto Amberley and she complained of being harassed about the size of her breasts and that males were making unwanted advances," Mr Nicolaidis said.

"When she complained, an air force physician saw her and said she should undergo breast reduction rather than deal with all that she was experiencing.

"The distress and the name calling, it never stopped.

"They engineered this response to blame her."

Porters Lawyers acts for a large number of former members of the Australian Defence Force who they claim suffered abuse during their recruit (or 'training') phase within the Australian Army, Royal Australia Navy and Royal Australian Air Force.

In a statement on their website, the firm is taking action against the Commonwealth of Australia on behalf of their clients for "injuries they sustained following horrific sexual and physical abuse perpetrated upon them by fellow recruits, ordinary members and even officers of the Australian Defence Force".

The Defence Abuse Response Taskforce (DART) was established in November 2012 as part of the Australian Government's response to a review into allegations of abuse in the Australian Defence Forces.

The complaints raised countless allegations of sexual abuse, sexual harassment, physical abuse, bullying and harassment by other junior recruits and members of the Australian Defence Force, Porters Lawyers claim.

Anyone with information that may be able to assist should contact Porters Lawyers on 02 6247 3477 or email lawyers@porterslawyers.com.au.

A spokesperson for the Australian Defence Force says the department is cooperating with the recent Royal Commission.

"Defence does not comment on individual complaints but has fully cooperated with the recent Royal Commission and continues to support its objectives to safeguard children," the spokesperson said.

"Defence remains committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all youth that come into contact with the organisation, be they ADF members, ADF Cadets, or participants in work experience and youth engagement programs."