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## Police to talk to Brethren man over sex claims

The Nelson Mail | Wednesday, 2 May 2007

**Nelson police investigating historic sexual abuse complaints from five former Exclusive Brethren women say they hope to speak to the elderly Nelson man at the centre of the allegations within a couple of weeks.**

Tasman police district commander Superintendent Grant O'Fee said police initially received three complaints from women allegedly abused by an Exclusive Brethren member in Nelson between the early 1950s and the early 1980s.

He said two more women came forward with complaints late last week, and that all five were now being investigated.

He said the fourth complaint had been laid in Auckland, and related to alleged offending when the woman was around 10 years old and living in the Nelson area.

He said there was no suggestion of further complaints being made by other women.

Mr O'Fee said investigations into historic complaints often took a considerable amount of time, as it was harder to contact everyone involved.

But he said police hoped to speak to the man the complaints had been made against in the next two weeks.

Police were still in the early stages of investigating the most recent complaint.

Australian-based Exclusive Brethren spokesman Tony McCorkell said he was prepared to come to New Zealand and help police with their inquiries.

When Mr McCorkell was in New Zealand last month, he spoke to the man at the centre of the allegations, and said the church would not pay for, or assist with, the man's legal needs.

"I understand he is seeking his own legal advice," Mr McCorkell said.

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