



# Truth, Healing and Reconciliation Taskforce

## Truth, Healing and Reconciliation Taskforce

December 2021

### COMMUNIQUE

The second half of 2021, saw the Truth, Healing and Reconciliation Taskforce (the Taskforce) meet four times, including a meeting out-of-session to discuss the recommendations of the Final report of the Second year review of the National Redress Scheme. Taskforce members were supportive of the recommendations and provided their advice to the Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs.

#### **Statewide 'Listening Tour'**

This year has seen the Taskforce hold forums across the state at the Gold Coast, Townsville, Cairns, the Sunshine Coast and Rockhampton, with over 300 people attending. It is through these forums that the Taskforce hears the views of people with lived experience of institutional child abuse, their supports and service providers. These forums are delivered with the support of knowmore Legal Services and Lotus Place (Redress Support Service), who have assisted in delivering key messages on the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (the Royal Commission) and the National Redress Scheme. The Taskforce have received consistent positive feedback on these community forums and are thankful for the support of those who attend and provide their thoughts and experiences.

#### **Update on the National Redress Scheme**

The Taskforce receives an update at each meeting on the Queensland Government's participation in the Scheme. As at 12 November 2021, the Scheme had received 12,612 applications, made 7,882 decisions, issued 7,623 outcomes, finalised 6,965 applications, totaling approximately \$575.3 million. The Scheme had also made 620 offers of redress and processed 5,236 applications at this time.

Amendments to the *National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse Act 2018* came into effect on 3 December 2021. Specifically the amendments expanded how institutions could fall into the category of Funder of Last Resort. Additionally, amendments were made to allow the naming of institutions who decline to join the Scheme.

In line with the recommendations of the Second Year Review, Funder of Last Resort arrangements now include:

- institutions which no longer operate and there is no other parent institution to take responsibility, and;

- when government does not share responsibility for abuse at the institution.

These arrangements now also capture existing institutions which were unable to join the Scheme, allowing for more people with lived experience to access redress.

### **Joint Select Committee**

On 23 November 2021, the Joint Select Committee on Implementation of the National Redress Scheme tabled its Second Interim Report on the Scheme. Taskforce members have reviewed the recommendations, which mostly align with those of the Second Year Review, and are supportive of the additional recommendation relating to the establishment of a First Nations panel.

A copy of the report can be found here: [Second Interim Report of the Joint Select Committee on Implementation of the National Redress Scheme, November 2021 – Parliament of Australia \(aph.gov.au\)](https://aph.gov.au/parliamentary_business/committees/select_committees/joint_select_committee_on_implementation_of_the_national_redress_scheme/second_interim_report).

### **National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children**

The Commonwealth released the National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children in November 2021. The framework is a long-term strategy aimed to improve the lives of children, young people and families experiencing or at risk of abuse and neglect. The framework will be delivered over two, five year plans. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples will have their own action plan across every aspect of the framework.

A copy of the Framework can be found here: [The National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children 2021 2031 | Department of Social Services, Australian Government \(dss.gov.au\)](https://dss.gov.au/australias-children-2021-2031).

### **The National Centre for The Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse (the National Centre)**

The Taskforce welcomes the announcement by the Commonwealth on the successful tenders for the National Centre. As chair, Mr Atkinson, wrote on behalf of the Taskforce to The Healing Foundation, Australian Childhood Foundation and Blue Knot Foundation congratulating them and offering the assistance of the Taskforce. The Taskforce looks forward to working with them in 2022.

### **Griffith University presentation - Professor Clare Tilbury**

At the October meeting, Professor Clare Tilbury from Griffith University presented an overview of the Queensland Child Protection System, including historical trends and how the out-of-home care system has changed over previous decades.

The Taskforce heard that there is approximately 46,000 children and young people within the child protection system across Australia. Professor Tilbury highlighted that the amount of children entering the child protection system has decreased, however the exit rate of children returning home remains stable.

Professor Tilbury highlighted that there is a focus on preventing children from entering the child protection system, however suggested that further work could be focused on reunification of children with families. Professor Tilbury’s final message to the Taskforce was



on the importance for children to have connections to adults, whether that is to family or other supports.

### **Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce**

The Honourable Margaret McMurdo, Chair, Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, Department of Justice and Attorney-General, attended the Taskforce meeting in October, to provide an overview on the work of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce.

Information was provided on the Terms of Reference, which outline for the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce to examine coercive control and review the need for *a specific offence of commit domestic violence*, and to hear the experiences of women from across the criminal justice system.

The Honourable Margaret McMurdo shared with the Taskforce her experiences in hearing directly from women who have experienced domestic violence and how their views and experiences will be outlined in the Hear her voice – Report one – Addressing coercive control and domestic and family violence in Queensland.

### **Getting in touch with the Taskforce**

To contact the Truth, Healing and Reconciliation Taskforce please email [taskforce.secretariat@cyjma.qld.gov.au](mailto:taskforce.secretariat@cyjma.qld.gov.au) or visit [www.cyjma.qld.gov.au](http://www.cyjma.qld.gov.au).