

Thursday, 15 March 2018

## Remaining states and territories urged to opt-in to national redress scheme as matter of priority

The Law Council of Australia is urging all states and territories to follow the lead set by New South Wales and Victoria to opt-in to the Commonwealth's redress scheme for sexual abuse survivors without further delay.

The Royal Commission has explicitly stated that:

*"A single national redress scheme would achieve better outcomes than those that could be achieved from separate state and territory schemes and far better outcomes than those that could be achieved if non-government institutions are left without government leadership to try to implement effective redress schemes on their own."*

Law Council of Australia President, Morry Bailes, commended the Attorney-General and Social Services Minister for their leadership to make this crucial redress scheme a reality and urged remaining states and territories to get onboard.

"Survivors of institutional child sexual abuse around Australia should not have to wait a moment longer for access to justice and redress," Mr Bailes said.

"The commitment from New South Wales and Victoria to opt-in to the Commonwealth scheme was an incredibly important development and it needs to be replicated across Australia.

"As the Royal Commission has noted, only a single national redress scheme will achieve decent outcomes for survivors.

"It's time for state and territory governments to ensure that the scheme is effective by opting-in. If we get all of these governments opting-in it will undoubtedly pave the way for non-government institutions in those jurisdictions to also opt-in.

"Survivors have suffered injuries that are often uniquely severe and long lasting. At the very least, they deserve access to the national redress scheme as soon as possible."

While acknowledging the additional funding for legal support services announced by the Attorney-General last month, Mr Bailes noted additional resources would likely be necessary.

"The Attorney-General's announcement that \$37.9 million over three years would be provided to 'knowmore', the legal advice service that supported the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, is certainly welcome," Mr Bailes said.

"However, it is also vital that provision be made for additional funding for legal aid commissions, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander legal services, and appropriate community legal services to assist applicants in navigating the redress scheme."

---

**Patrick Pantano: Public Affairs**

P 02 6246 3715

E Patrick.Pantano@lawcouncil.asn.au

**Sonia Byrnes: Communications**

P 0437 078 850

E Sonia.Byrnes@lawcouncil.asn.au

*The Law Council of Australia is the national voice of the legal profession, promoting justice and the rule of law.*