

NATIONAL REDRESS SCHEME — FOI APPLICATIONS

1046. Hon NICK GOIRAN to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Child Protection:

I refer to the minister's answers to my questions prior to the 2021–22 budget estimates hearings regarding the extraordinary wait times being experienced by applicants making FOI applications for their National Redress Scheme applications.

- (1) Why are FOI applications in relation to the National Redress Scheme not prioritised?
- (2) Of the approximately 300 FOI applications in relation to the National Redress Scheme received by the department during 2020–21, how many remain to be processed?
- (3) How many such FOI applications have been received in the current financial year?
- (4) Of the number in (3), how many have been processed?
- (5) What indicative period of time are such FOI applicants given of how long the processing of their application may take?
- (6) For how many days has the oldest application been waiting to be processed?

Hon KYLE MCGINN replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question. I provide this answer on behalf of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Child Protection. The following answer has been provided by the Minister for Child Protection.

- (1) FOI applications are dealt with in order of receipt to ensure equity for all applicants wishing to access documents of the Department of Communities.
- (2) The volume of applications identified as relating to the National Redress Scheme is an estimate only and based on applications explicitly referring to the National Redress Scheme. Only an estimated number of applications can be provided as it is not mandatory for applicants to use a standard application form, nor are applicants required to provide the reason for making an application under the Freedom of Information Act 1992. Approximately 35 applications relating to the National Redress Scheme received in 2020–21 remain to be processed.
- (3) Approximately 100 applications relating to the National Redress Scheme have been received since 1 July 2021.
- (4) Approximately 30 of those applications relating to the National Redress Scheme received in the current financial year have been processed.
- (5) Applicants are advised that applications may take up to nine months to process as some may require a manual review of physical records. Those suffering illness or elderly applicants can be expedited upon request.
- (6) It is 258 days. This application has been progressed and is almost complete.