



Submission to the Community Development And Justice Standing Committee Committee

INQUIRY INTO THE OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO SURVIVORS OF INSTITUTIONAL CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA WHO ARE SEEKING JUSTICE

Introduction

Thank you for your request to provide specific information about claims of child sexual abuse in WA made against Catholic Education Western Australia Ltd (CEWA). CEWA honours the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference August 2018 Response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. CEWA supports just and compassionate redress for all those who have been victims of child sexual abuse within the Church.

Background

Catholic schools have operated in Western Australia since 1843, with tens of thousands of religious and lay staff educating hundreds of thousands of Catholic and non-Catholic children and young people in the 180 years since. In 1971, Catholic schools came under the governance of the Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia (CECWA), and in June 2019, CEWA was incorporated. CEWA is responsible for the Catholic Education System in accordance with Part 4 of the *School Education Act 1999 (WA)*. The System is composed of 149 schools with CEWA as the sole governing body and 10 schools with a governing body other than CEWA. CEWA actively participated in the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in the form of written submissions detailing claims against schools, and its Executive Director appearing in person. All are available on the Royal Commission's website.

The National Redress Scheme

CEWA participates in the National Redress Scheme (NRS) via the WA Catholic bishops' membership of the Australian Catholic Redress Participating Group. The Group is represented by Australian Catholic Redress Limited (ACR).

An application to the NRS naming a CEWA school is served on the ACR, which in turn may seek information from CEWA via the relevant bishop, confirming student enrolment details and other particulars. CEWA is not involved in the assessment, response, or determination process, both of which are confidentially administered by the ACR.

Civil claims

CEWA forwards all civil claims arising from the operation of its schools to its insurer for assessment and resolution. As stated above, CEWA seeks a just and compassionate outcome for victims of abuse and their families.

Contacts and further information

For further information, please contact Debra Sayce, Executive Director, Catholic Education Western Australia, at [REDACTED]