



Julia Gillard

Prime Minister of Australia

Nicola Roxon

Attorney-General

Jenny Macklin

Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

Good afternoon

We are very pleased to announce that on our advice the Governor-General has now appointed six Commissioners for the Royal Commission into institutional responses to child sexual abuse. We have also today released the Terms of Reference that will guide their inquiry.

The Commissioners have been selected because of their broad skills, knowledge and expertise.

- The Royal Commission will be led by Justice Peter McClellan AM, a Supreme Court Judge from New South Wales who brings a wealth of experience as a Judge and as an inquirer. Justice McClellan has been the Chief Judge at Common Law of the Supreme Court of New South Wales since 2005. He has also been Chief Judge of the Land and Environment Court of New South Wales, Chairman of the Sydney Water Inquiry and Assistant Commissioner at the Independent Commission Against Corruption.
- Bob Atkinson, the former Queensland Police Commissioner, brings over 40 years of policing experience to the Royal Commission, including 12 years as Police Commissioner.
- Justice Jennifer Coate has served for twenty years as a magistrate and county court judge in Victoria, including five years as President of the Children's Court and five years as the Victorian Coroner. Justice Coate has also now been appointed to the Family Court of Australia.
- Robert Fitzgerald has served as a Commissioner in the Productivity Commission since 2004. He has experience in commerce, law, public policy and community services, including as Community and Disability Services Commissioner and Deputy Ombudsman in New South Wales.
- Professor Helen Milroy is a Director of the Centre for Aboriginal Medical and Dental Health at the University of Western Australia and a Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist with the Specialist Aboriginal Mental Health Service. She brings extensive experience in child and adolescent mental health and Aboriginal health and mental health.
- Former Senator for Western Australia Andrew Murray brings a tremendous background as a legislator and as a campaigner for those who have spent time in institutional care as children.

We have asked the Commissioners to submit an initial report by June 2014, so that we can start acting on early recommendations as quickly as possible. We have asked the Commissioners to aim to finish their inquiry by the end of 2015, but this date will be subject to advice from the Commissioners in their interim report.

The Commissioners will now work on setting up processes for hearing and collecting evidence, including arrangements for people who have special needs. They will also consider what services are needed to support witnesses to the Commission. And in doing so, they will be informed by the experiences of survivors.

An investigative unit within the Royal Commission will ensure the timely referral and criminal investigation of allegations of child sexual abuse that come before the Commission, should victims seek such action.

We received input from more than 800 individuals and organisations on the terms of reference, which has been invaluable in helping shape the scope of the Royal Commission and in selecting Commissioners.

We also worked closely with the state and territory governments in developing the Terms of Reference, and we are pleased that they all support this inquiry.

The Government is committed to do everything we can to make sure that we fix the system for the future. We also want to help survivors of past abuse receive support and justice.

You will find attached an explanation of the Terms of Reference, a general fact sheet on royal commissions and their powers, and a list of support services.

The full Terms of Reference are contained in Letters Patent, which are the formal instructions from the Governor-General to the Commissioners.

For more information, including a copy of the full Letters Patent go to www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au. Or you can call 1800 099 340.

Warm regards

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