

MEDIA RELEASE



Commission announces final public hearings including three week Catholic wrap up in February 2017

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The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse has announced its final schedule of public hearings including a three week examination of Catholic Church authorities which have been the subject of past case studies.

The hearings will inquire into the current policies and procedures in relation to child protection and child-safe standards, including responding to allegations of child sexual abuse.

The Catholic component of the hearings, Case study 50, will start on 6 February and is expected to end on 24 February 2017.

Other institutions which will be examined over five weeks during December, February and March include: YMCA NSW; Scouts NSW; The Salvation Army; Commonwealth, State and Territory governments; Anglican Church authorities in Australia; Yeshivah Melbourne and Yeshiva Bondi; Jehovah's Witnesses and Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia Ltd; Australian Christian Churches and affiliated Pentecostal churches; and the Uniting Church in Australia.

Francis Sullivan, CEO of the Catholic Church's Truth Justice and Healing Council, said the final hearing for the Catholic Church would be gruelling.

"It will be a three-week examination that will see many church leaders give evidence about how their dioceses and orders have responded following their evidence in earlier public hearings.

"It will also go very deeply into the 'why' question: why was child sex abuse so prominent in the Catholic Church? What is it about our culture and environments that saw such massive abuse take place?"

Catholic Authorities and their agencies have been involved in 17 of the 45 Royal Commission's case studies so far. Of these, 14 focused specifically on the Catholic Church.

In a media statement the Royal Commission said the purpose of the public hearings is not to inquire into individual sets of facts or particular events as has occurred in previous Royal Commission case studies.

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The Truth Justice and Healing Council is engaging with the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse on behalf of the Catholic Church in Australia.

For more information on the Truth Justice and Healing Council go to: www.tjhcouncil.org.au

For more information on the Royal Commission go to:
<http://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx>

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