

Truth Justice and Healing Council

Reform agenda



Four pillars of reform:

One: Zero tolerance:

- Pope Francis has made it plain that the Church must adopt zero tolerance culture. Bishops and religious leaders must get with this program;

Two: A new approach

- Reengineering of practices, procedures and accountabilities to reflect transparently a victim's first approach;

Three: Greater oversight and transparency

- Establish an entity with broad organisational authority over all dioceses and religious orders when dealing with sexual abuse issues;

Four: Commitment to change

- The capacity and the resolve to implement change regardless of impact on careers and loyalties and consistent with an approach that provides compassion and justice for victims.

Key reform proposals recommended by TJHC so far:

Church related only recommendations include:

- Church authority facing a civil claim to provide a responsible entity against which proceedings may be brought;
- An independent national corporate Church backed entity to develop and administer national child protection standards. It would monitor adherence to these standards and publicly report on compliance;
- More lay and independent experts to strengthen the Church's National Committee of Professional Standards.

Broader recommendations include:

- A national statutory redress framework for abuse survivors: independent authority to investigate and determine redress payments paid by the institution responsible;
- A national watchdog to ensure governments, churches and other institutions are following child-safe practices;
- Mandatory accreditation and data collection by an independent national body, to cover all institutions working with children;
- A national approach to screening people who work with children: better protection, increase transparency, consistency across jurisdictions and help close loopholes.