

MEDIA RELEASE

Truth Justice and Healing Council releases Activity Report



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The Catholic Church's Truth Justice and Healing Council has today released a major report detailing its activities over the past two years.

The Council was established in early 2013 to take charge of the Church's engagement with the child sex abuse Royal Commission and develop its reform agenda.

The report documents the Council's engagement with the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sex Abuse in its public hearings and its policy and research processes.

It examines the eight public hearings involving Catholic Church institutions. It draws from the hearings and from wider engagement with the Catholic and broader community emerging issues about the way the Church has responded to the abuse of children in its institutions and to survivors.

The report identifies problems experienced by many survivors as they try to access justice, the pastoral responses of the Church, the way the Church approaches civil claims, the inconsistent applications of Church redress and child protection policies, the influence of cultural issues and failures in accountability and transparency.

Importantly, the report provides a comprehensive review of the Church's reform agenda including the way it approaches civil litigation and redress. It outlines plans for a new national entity to set, monitor and publicly report on child protection standards in Catholic institutions.

Council CEO, Francis Sullivan said the report is an important document which demonstrates how far the Church leadership has come over the past two years.

"When the Commission was announced towards the end of 2012 most people expected the Catholic Church would be a major focus of its work.

"What has transpired over the past two years has shocked, certainly most Catholics, and gone beyond even the worst expectations of many.

"The public hearings have exposed the failings within the Church to understand the extent of the crisis and, certainly in the early years, to put in place a pathway for survivors of abuse to be heard and to access justice.

"What we have seen however over the past two years, and what is recorded in this report, is the willingness of the Church leadership to tackle the emerging issues head-on, to understand the need for change and for a new approach to the survivors.

Report at: http://www.tjhcouncil.org.au/media/89932/TJHC-Activity-Statement_FINAL-02-web-Medium.pdf

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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/>

Truth Justice and Healing Council

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