

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO
2016-2017 Additional Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: 2.1 Families and Communities

Question No: SQ17-000048

Topic: National Redress Scheme

Hansard page: Written

Senator Rachel Siewert asked:

Please provide an update on the development of the National Redress Scheme.

Answer:

On 4 November 2016, the Government announced the establishment of a Commonwealth Redress Scheme (the Scheme) for survivors of child sexual abuse in Commonwealth institutions. The Scheme is expected to be established in 2018, and be available for 10 years. It will offer a direct personal response for those eligible survivors who seek it; options to receive psychological counselling; and a monetary payment.

On 16 December 2016, the Government announced the membership of the Independent Advisory Council on Redress, which brings together expertise from a range of backgrounds including institutional abuse survivors, support organisations, legal and psychological experts and Indigenous and disability organisations.

The Redress Taskforce in the Department of Social Services has been working with the Independent Advisory Council and other key stakeholders on the many complex issues involved in the establishment, operation and implementation of the Scheme. The key focus of this work includes mapping the end-to-end journey of a survivor through the process, ensuring the needs of survivors are at the forefront of the Scheme's design. The Taskforce is also focused on encouraging consistent, fair and equitable access to redress for all survivors across Australia as soon as possible.

The Advisory Council has met three times to discuss a range of design elements for the Scheme. The Taskforce has incorporated the Advisory Council's feedback into its advice to the Minister for Social Services, and will continue to do so as the Scheme design progresses.

The Taskforce is also working with the states, territories and non-government institutions on a variety of issues relating to the Scheme, particularly the opting in process. As part of this process, the Taskforce has held Inter-Jurisdictional Committee meetings, comprised of state and territory representatives, the latest being 23 March 2016 in Canberra.