

STATEMENT FROM CARDINAL GEORGE PELL IN ROME

Speaking from Rome, Cardinal Pell welcomed the decision of the Royal Commission to hear his evidence by way of video link from Rome . He once again repeated that he was keen to respond to the issues that have been raised in recent hearings, including responding once more to specific allegations that have been made against him.

"I have always expressed my willingness to assist the Royal Commission in its work. I have appeared on two previous occasions and many months ago made it clear I was willing to appear again." Cardinal Pell said.

"While my plans were always to make the journey home to appear in person, my doctors have made it very clear that at the present time my health prevents me from undertaking long haul travel. I wished things were different however I am pleased after receiving the latest medical reports last week, the Commission has now decided to agree to hear my evidence via video link from a professional conference facility in Rome."

The Cardinal expressed his concern that survivors from Ballarat and Melbourne have already had to wait to hear evidence and was pleased firm arrangements were now in place.

"Survivors and the general public deserve a complete response and should not be subjected to further delays, in the hearing of evidence and I look forward to showing my continued support for all victims, especially those from my home town of Ballarat," he said.