

# MEDIA RELEASE

## Truth Justice Healing Council supports legal service for access to Royal Commission

16 July 2013



Francis Sullivan, CEO of the Truth Justice and Healing Council, has welcomed the announcement today by Attorney-General, Mark Dreyfus QC, that the Federal Government will establish a legal service to help people attend the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

The service, called **knowmore**, will be run through the National Association of Community Legal Centres and will provide answers to questions and support for people wanting to go to the Royal Commission.

Mr Sullivan said it is important that access to the Royal Commission is made as easy as possible for victims and survivors of child sexual abuse.

“Along with the funding the Government has provided for counselling services this money for legal services is recognition of the very real emotional and financial challenges victims face as they tell their stories to the Commission,” Mr Sullivan said.

Examples of the types of assistance **knowmore** provides include:

- information about the Royal Commission, its legal powers and procedures, the roles of the Commissioners and others involved, rights of representation before it and the Commission’s guidelines and statements about how it intends to proceed
- legal advice for people considering providing information to the Royal Commission about their options and what they may mean, and on a range of other legal issues including witness and informant protections, the availability of compensation or other forms of action or redress, and the effect of confidentiality agreements in past proceedings
- linking people with specialist counselling and support services and victims’ support groups
- preparation of statements and assistance with preparing submissions about needed reforms.

**Knowmore** can be accessed via national free phone call: 1800 605 762 or online: [www.knowmore.org.au](http://www.knowmore.org.au)

The Truth Justice and Healing Council has been established by the Catholic Church to coordinate the Catholic Church response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

Its role is to oversee the Church's engagement with the Commission and to provide independent advice on the development of new policies to protect young people and to ensure the Catholic Church responds to any future sexual abuse complaints appropriately with justice, putting the needs of victims first.

For more information on the Truth Justice and Healing Council go to: [www.tjhcouncil.org.au](http://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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