



Our Ref: O HO 0227

STATEMENT FROM THE CHRISTIAN BROTHERS OCEANIA

- 3RD UPDATE ON ROYAL COMMISSION UNDERTAKINGS TO RE-EXAMINE SETTLED MATTERS

22 December 2014

The Christian Brothers Oceania today announced that significant progress has been made in the re-examination of previously settled matters in Western Australia, in line with commitments given to the *Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse* in May this year.

Fourteen (14) re-examinations have now been concluded and new settlements reached as of 19th December 2014 and work continues on addressing matters on a case by case basis.

Following the release of the final report of the *Royal Commission into Case Study 11*, the Christian Brothers renewed their apology to abuse victims.

“On behalf of all Christian Brothers across the Oceania Province, I reiterate our apology to those children who were deserving of absolute protection and yet suffered unimaginable trauma”, said Brother Peter Clinch, Province Leader of the Christian Brothers Oceania.

“The failures of the past cannot be undone however we can continue our work, and those of many across the community, to help bring healing and renewal to lives that have been damaged.

“Words are only as strong as the actions that support them.

“To that end, I am pleased today to announce that the Christian Brothers Oceania have made significant progress on the commitments given to these men at the end of the public hearings in Perth.

“At that time the Oceania Province undertook to re-examine cases that had been *“settled on demonstrably unjust and unreasonably low terms”*.

“This is our third update on the status of those commitments and as of the 19th December 2014 the following have been achieved:

- The Christian Brothers Oceania had initiated or responded to requests for re-examination of 80 cases relating to the Western Australian institutions that were the subject of Case Study 11 of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse
- Meetings and mediations in at least 20 matters have been occurring in the weeks leading up to Christmas
- Most matters are the subject of negotiations with all parties being supported by legal advisers
- To date **14** re-examinations have been concluded and new settlements have been reached
- Additional counselling and support services, including legal assistance, have been provided





“Much has been achieved since the end of the Perth public hearings in May 2014 however we also know we have much more work ahead.

“I am confident that, as we move into 2015, we will see more matters successfully concluded”, Brother Clinch said.

The commitments made by the Christian Brothers at the Royal Commission in Perth were:

1. *Providing survivors of abuse suffered at facilities operated by the Christian Brothers with ongoing professional psychological counselling, for life if needed.*
2. *Being open to re-examining cases that have been settled on demonstrably unjust and unreasonably low terms.*

Any person seeking to take up these offers can do so by contacting the Professional Standards Office of the Christian Brothers on (03) 8359 0134.

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