



Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

MEDIA RELEASE

PRIVATE SESSIONS

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse will commence an important phase of its operations next week with survivors of child sexual abuse in institutions being given the opportunity to relate their experiences directly to Commissioners in face to face private sessions.

The Chief Executive Officer of the Commission, Ms Janette Dines, said today that private sessions will not only assist the Commission to deepen its understanding of the circumstances of abuse in institutions but more importantly, are a chance for individuals to tell their story. "These sessions will be conducted in complete privacy. The information a person provides will be kept confidential unless they agree to it being made public," said Ms Dines. Ms Dines stressed that private sessions are very informal and people do not need a lawyer. People can however bring a support person with them.

The Royal Commission will travel around Australia conducting private sessions in capital cities and regional locations. The private sessions commence in Sydney on 7 May 2013 and are likely to run for many months. The Royal Commission is also hoping to hold private sessions in Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth in the coming months. "As soon as we have enough people registered in a particular location we will make arrangements to travel to that place" Ms Dines said. "I particularly encourage people in Brisbane and Adelaide to get in touch with us". Details of private sessions in other States will be released soon.

Ms Dines said that many people have already come forward to register their interest in telling the Royal Commission of their experiences and Royal Commission officers are working hard to call all of those people back as quickly as possible. "I want to assure people who have already called that we will get back to them".

Individuals and organisations on behalf of one or more individuals who wish to tell the Royal Commission of their experiences of child sexual abuse in an institutional context are invited to register their interest in doing so by

- a. Telephoning 1800 099 340
- b. Writing to GPO Box 5283, Sydney NSW 2001
- c. Emailing registerinterest@childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au

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