

Australian Council of Social Service

30 October 2020

Families and Communities, Redress Division
Department of Social Services
GPO Box 9820
Canberra ACT 2601

Via email: RedressPolicy@dss.gov.au

Submission – Whole of government grant policy for institutions that do not join the National Redress Scheme for institutional child sex abuse

The Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) is a national voice in support of people affected by poverty, disadvantage and inequality, and the peak body for the community services and civil society sector. Our vision is an end to poverty in all its forms; economies that are fair, sustainable and resilient; and communities that are just, peaceful and inclusive. ACOSS consists of a network of approximately 4000 organisations and individuals across Australia in metro, regional and remote areas.

ACOSS welcomes the opportunity to contribute to this process, noting our strong support for the National Redress Scheme. The Scheme plays a crucial role providing a measure of justice for survivors of institutional child sex abuse and accountability for institutions that perpetrated abuse. Relevant members of ACOSS have (or will shortly) become Participating Institutions in the Scheme, in acknowledgement of the past and enduring suffering of people abused as children when in their care, and a deep commitment to ensuring children in their care today are safe from abuse.

ACOSS supports the proposal to publicly name institutions and remove their access to future government grant funding, should they fail to join the Scheme within 6 months of receiving notification of being named in an application. This would be an important financial lever to encourage institutions to uphold their moral obligation to survivors.

If the Department has any questions regarding this submission, the ACOSS contact person is Senior Advisor Dr John Mikelsons, on 02 9310 6212 or john@acoss.org.au.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Edwina MacDonald', is positioned above the printed name.

Edwina MacDonald
Deputy CEO, ACOSS