

National Redress Scheme

For people who have experienced institutional child sexual abuse

INDEPENDENT DECISION MAKERS

Ms Ruth Baker

Ms Baker has had over 27 years of experience in working with individuals who have experienced child abuse in New Zealand, the United Kingdom and Australia. She has worked as a social worker, a plaintiff lawyer for individuals and recently completed a four year term with the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse as a Commission Officer and Acting Team Leader. Ms Baker worked with the Commissioners of the Royal Commission in the private sessions and was involved in drafting, analysing and assessing systemic issues to assist in the preparation for the Public Hearings and Case Study Reports.

Dr Peter Frost

Dr Frost has had substantial leadership experience in public administration, education, and international development. For ten years, he worked at the Victorian Auditor-General's Office, becoming successively, Chief Executive, Deputy Auditor-General and for three years, Acting Auditor-General. Dr Frost also had extensive experience in the Victorian public service, including as Deputy Secretary in the Department of Premier and Cabinet. A highlight in Dr Frost's career was his humanitarian work in Sri Lanka, where, as Director of Tsunami Reconstruction, he delivered new houses for 100 families, a school for 3000 pupils, two operating theatres and emergency care training for nurses and doctors and a fishnet factory in Jaffna, employing up to 200 widows.

Mr John Hinchey PSM

Mr Hinchey has thirty years of experience working with offenders and victims in the ACT criminal justice system. He managed the ACT Sentence Administration Board and the ACT Victims Register. He established the ACT restorative justice scheme, which facilitates conferences between victims and offenders. Mr Hinchey was appointed as the ACT's first Victims of Crime Commissioner, an independent statutory position and the ACT's most senior victim advocate. Mr Hinchey has also been a Board member of the ACT Domestic Violence Crisis Service and the ACT Victims Advisory Board, a Council Member on the Domestic Violence Prevention Council and chair of the ACT Family Violence Intervention Program Coordinating Committee.

Ms Helen Lac

Ms Lac has worked as an assessor and senior assessor at New South Wales Victim Services in the Department of Justice. She has over five years' experience in considering sensitive applications from victims of crime. Ms Lac has undertaken extensive training on therapeutic and trauma-informed practices as part of her work with victims of crime. Additionally, Ms Lac has chaired discussions on non-disclosure in child sexual abuse cases, the impact of childhood trauma, and legislative and policy responses to childhood sexual abuse at the International Victimology Symposium. Ms Lac also has experience working with Indigenous community groups and organisations in the Northern Territory and regional New South Wales, having assisted those who have experienced institutional child sexual abuse through the Strong Aboriginal Women's Conferences. Before working in public and community service, Ms Lac worked as a solicitor dealing with workers compensation, product liability, professional indemnity, migration and administrative law.

Julie Dixon

Ms Dixon has over 30 years' experience as a social worker in child and family welfare. Ms Dixon initially worked in child protection, followed by positions in women's health and as a manager in the West Australian Family and Domestic Violence Unit. Much of Ms Dixon's experience has focused on policy and across government responses to child and family wellbeing, working with the Commissioner for Children and Young People and in Indigenous affairs. Most recently Ms Dixon has held senior government roles overseeing the design, development and funding of early intervention programs to create strong families and prevent children entering out of home care. She has also initiated research to identify and improve outcomes for young people who have left care.

Kay Benham

Ms Benham has expertise and extensive knowledge of the impacts of child sexual abuse gained throughout her career as a social worker, manager, policy maker and senior executive in a range of roles within the Western Australian (WA) Public Service. She is an experienced practitioner and worked in a range of child protection roles for over 25 years. Her experience includes working with victims of crime and child witnesses, providing counselling and specialist support to adults and children who are required to give evidence in sexual abuse and other criminal matters. During her time with the WA Public Service Ms Benham also worked in the Family Court and gave evidence to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse on several occasions. She has post graduate qualifications in Social Work and a Master of Business Administration.

John Schrader

Mr Schrader completed a 38 year career with the South Australia Police where he held specialist investigation and senior management positions. He was the inaugural manager of the department's e-crime section and developed its capacity to conduct investigations and safely retrieve and store digital evidence, including child exploitation material. Mr Schrader also managed police prosecution operations and headed the South Coast Criminal Investigation Branch where he managed investigations of serious crimes including child abuse and family violence. He has worked closely with victims, including those of sexual assault and abuse, and led projects aligned with victim and justice agencies to improve support and prosecution outcomes for victims. Mr Schrader recently managed a South Australian government agency's response to issues identified in the Child Protection Systems Royal Commission. He has qualifications in law and psychology and was admitted as a Barrister and Solicitor of the Supreme Court of South Australia in 2010.

Bernard Dwyer

Mr Dwyer has over 40 years' experience working in the areas of mental health, and alcohol and other drugs in both the government and non-government sectors. He has had years of experience as a counsellor working directly with clients in the community, health and forensic settings. He has held a range of appointments to boards and reference groups in the areas of social welfare, guardianship, alcohol, drugs and gambling. Mr Dwyer has worked in the Northern Territory for over 30 years, providing services to communities in Darwin, Alice Springs and remote areas.

Peter Crouch

Mr Crouch has over 42 years of experience working within the South Australian criminal justice system as a Police Officer. He worked for 30 of those years as a Detective across a wide range of specialist investigations. He has a strong investigative and senior supervisory background in the investigation of sexual offences, homicide, anti-corruption, financial investigations and the overall case management of serious crime investigations. His experience as a practitioner and a Senior Manager at a high level has given him pronounced understanding of the sensitivity of cases and the needs of victims. As a senior manager in charge of South Australian criminal investigations training, he oversaw the implementation of a number of recommendations from the Royal Commission Into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, improving the focus on the needs of victims.

Melanie Bartlett

Ms Bartlett has over 40 years of experience as a lawyer in both private practice and as a magistrate, in which she dealt with a range of child protection matters, including child sexual abuse. She has sat on a number of legal tribunals and boards, including as a member of the Guardianship and Administration Board. She was a Commissioner for the Legal Aid Commission of Tasmania and a member of the Mental Health Tribunal. She was previously a Victims of Crime Commissioner and a representative on the North West Domestic Violence Advisory Committee.