



fresh hope

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## MEDIA STATEMENT

The Conference of Churches of Christ in NSW (**Churches of Christ in NSW & ACT**) is committed to fair and just outcomes for survivors of child sexual abuse in its institutional settings.

Churches of Christ in NSW & ACT is opting in to the National Redress Scheme following a decision by Conference Executive to join the National Redress Scheme at its meeting on 25 October 2018.

Churches of Christ in NSW & ACT is a movement of affiliated churches and agencies who exist in relationship with each other. We have been investigating various models to ensure we can proceed to opt-in to the National Redress Scheme in a manner which maximises the participation of Churches of Christ in NSW & ACT affiliated entities. We intend to finalise our proposed opt-in model with the Department of Social Services (**DSS**) in early January. We have proactively completed the on-boarding training with DSS in readiness for when our participating group structure is ready.

Since the final report from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse was delivered in December 2017, Churches of Christ in NSW & ACT has been proactive in addressing and improving our systems, processes and safe guards towards child safety.

We have:

- Committed to fully adopt, or adopt-in-principle, all 27 relevant recommendations from the Royal Commission (Recommendations 16.31 – 16.58);
- Written a completely new Code of Conduct for our ministering persons (clergy, chaplains, youth workers etc), with much greater clarity and accountability regarding abuse towards children;
- Commenced the delivery of our own Safe Church program in conjunction with the NSW/ACT Baptist Association;
- Commenced equipping 6 trainers to deliver these Safe Church workshops across NSW and the ACT; and
- Spear-headed some of the discussions with other religious denominations in regards to the Royal Commission recommendations and networked broadly to ensure best practice.

We are currently working on creating a list of current and defunct institutions to include in our participating group and will continue to prioritise our work towards opting-in, and anticipate being in position for the Minister for Families and Social Services to make a declaration in relation to our participation in the National Redress Scheme shortly.

Fresh Hope are fully committed to this process and take seriously our responsibilities to protect children across the movement we help serve.

Dr Andrew Ball  
Executive Ministry Director

Ross Stewart  
Safe Ministry Practices Leader

Transforming  
communities and lives  
with fresh hope

Fresh Hope is  
an initiative of  
Churches of Christ  
in NSW

