

## Minister's address at the Forgotten Australian's memorial unveiling

To those of you who were abused as children whilst in State care, my hope for you today, that you and the child within, can walk around this memorial and know that others acknowledge and recognise that what happened to you, was a disgrace – a disgraceful chapter in our history.

This memorial is for you.

It stands here as a testament to your strength and your courage for how much it takes to live with that terror of past abuse.

May the spirits of those who have gone before us also know that they too now have a place, and may it give some peace to their families.

This memorial now marks a place to reflect and to have some quiet time, and to know that others care.

And may the cold wind that swirls around you at times be a little warmer for you when you stand in front of this memorial.

I would like to take this opportunity to formally acknowledge the members of the Forgotten Australians Committee.

You have all played a critical role in bringing today's ceremony to fruition and I thank you.

To our artist Judith Forrest, please accept my gratitude.

This sculpture has deep meaning and it is a fitting tribute to the lives and contributions of our Forgotten Australians.

The artwork was developed in collaboration with author Terry-Anne White, and a workshop was held with representatives from the Forgotten Australians to develop words to engrave on the surface of this sculpture.

I have no doubt that today's ceremony will retain a very special place in the heart and minds and memories of everyone here.

You will soon hear from a number of respected speakers and I will leave that up to Dr Rosser to tell you more about them.

Before we do, it is my very great honour to invite His Excellency Dr Ken Michael, Governor of Western Australia to the lectern.

Bless you all on such a beautiful day.

### Contact Redress WA

**Office hours:** 9.00 – 4.30pm, Monday – Friday

**Freecall:** 1800 617 233 (charges apply from mobiles)

**Telephone:** 61 8 6217 8720 (standard call charges apply)

**Mobile:** 0418 911 042 (available for text message only)

**Email:** [info@redress.wa.gov.au](mailto:info@redress.wa.gov.au)

**Post:** Locked Bag 6, WEST PERTH WA 6872

**Website:** [www.redress.wa.gov.au](http://www.redress.wa.gov.au)

## Monument to Remember Forgotten Australians

Late last year, Child Protection Minister Robyn McSweeney and the Governor of Western Australia, His Excellency, Dr Ken Michael AC, unveiled Western Australia's first official monument to the State's Forgotten Australians.

The unveiling of the monument in Northbridge symbolised the formal acknowledgement of abuse and neglect suffered by many care leavers in State care.

Minister McSweeney said the monument was an acknowledgement of the neglect and suffering experienced during the last century by thousands of West Australians, who spent their childhood or adolescence in out-of-home care.

"It also recognises the subsequent significant contribution you all made to the community despite your childhood hardships," Mrs McSweeney said.

"During the last century, more than 56,000 West Australians through no fault of their own found themselves in orphanages, hostels or other out-of-home care. Sadly, in many cases, the care they received fell short in providing a safe and nurturing environment, leaving many with physical and emotional scars.

"Today's event is part of this process. By acknowledging the past, we also recognise those who overcame adversity."

Jointly funded by the Western Australian and Federal governments, the memorial was created by local artist Judith Forrest, in collaboration with author Terri-ann White.



*Child Protection Minister Robyn McSweeney and the Governor of Western Australia, His Excellency, Dr Ken Michael AC. To read the Minister's address at the Forgotten Australian's Memorial Unveiling please turn to the back page of this newsletter.*

"I urge those who come to view this memorial to take the time to reflect on the many Forgotten Australians who were left vulnerable and alone," the Minister said.

"And to the Forgotten Australians - you are not alone. You have a community ready to understand and support you as you continue to heal and grow."

## Your Questions Answered

The Redress Helpdesk answers about 600 enquiries per week. On average the helpdesk responds to about 500 phone calls, 100 email enquiries and some 20 text messages each week. While many of the questions asked are only related to an individual application there are some common questions relevant to all applicants. For this reason we have listed the most frequently asked questions and the answers which you may find useful.

### 1. How can I be sure my application is ready for assessment?

To be assessed for an *ex-gratia* payment offer, your application must be signed and

- Include some information under the "Statement of abuse or neglect".
- Include a verified ID.
- Include proof of your current name, if it has changed since being in State care.

If you think you did not include some of the required information contact the Redress WA Helpdesk on 1800 617 233 (charges apply from mobiles) or (08) 6217 8720 (standard call charges apply).

### 2. When can I expect my application to be assessed?

It is planned to complete all application assessments by 30 June 2011. Redress WA takes the job of assessing an application very seriously. We want to be sure each applicant is addressed with the care and sensitivity they deserve and each application receives due attention. For this reason assessment of applications can be complex and time consuming.

Redress WA will contact you, or your nominated representative, when your application is due for assessment. This will give you a final opportunity to add or clarify any details to further support your claim.

### 3. How can I speed up the assessment of my application?

The time taken to assess an application will very much depend upon whether the applicant has provided all the relevant information. It is also important that applicants provide their current contact information and that Redress WA is advised of changes of address or phone numbers so that Redress Officers can contact you easily

when the time comes for your application to be assessed. When your application is due for assessment Redress WA will contact you, or your nominated representative, and give you a final opportunity to add or clarify any details to further support your claim.

A medical report confirming that an applicant has a terminal illness or life threatening illness is the only way an application will be considered for priority processing.

### 4. How long will it take to get my payment once I accept the offer?

Once an applicant receives the offer of payment letter they are required to complete and sign the acceptance form, provide a copy of a bank statement or complete and sign the bank details form and send these documents back to Redress WA.

All Redress applicants eligible for an *ex-gratia* payment will receive a payment based on their assessment.

It is very important that Redress WA receives this information within 28 days from the date of the offer. Once Redress WA receives the information requested, your *ex-gratia* payment will be paid to your account within 28 days. If Redress WA does not receive the information within this timeframe we will be unable to progress your application and your application will be placed on hold.

## Individual Counselling Funded by Redress WA

Redress WA applicants have access to up to three hours of individual counselling, free of charge and more can be arranged on request. The Redress WA funded sessions are offered by the service providers listed below including new service providers located in Bunbury, Western Australia and Camberwell, Victoria.

For further information please contact the agencies directly or call the Redress WA Helpdesk on Freecall 1800 617 233 (charges apply from mobiles) or 08 6217 8720 (standard call charges apply).

#### ACACIA Support Centre

South Hedland – (08) 9172 5022

#### Centacare Family Services

Geraldton – (08) 9921 1433

#### Centacare Family Services

Carnarvon – (08) 9941 4070

#### Care Leavers Australia Network

Bankstown, NSW, Freecall 1800 008 774 (charges apply from mobiles) or (02) 9709 4520

#### CBERS Redress Service

Fremantle – (08) 9433 3644

#### Child Migrant Trust

Victoria Park – (08) 9472 7582  
Carlton, VIC – (03) 9815 2022

#### ConnectGroups (online counselling only)

– call ConnectGroups on Freecall 1800 195 575 (charges apply from mobiles) or (08) 9228 4488 or visit their website: [www.connectgroups.org.au](http://www.connectgroups.org.au) and say that you are a Redress WA applicant.

#### Dumbartung Aboriginal Corporation

Waterford – (08) 9451 4977

#### Goldfields Community Legal Centre

Kalgoorlie – (08) 9021 1888

#### Kimberley Stolen Generation Aboriginal Corporation

Broome – (08) 9193 6502

#### Kinway (Anglicare WA)

Broome – (08) 9194 2400

#### Kinway (Anglicare WA)

Kununurra – (08) 9166 5000

#### Kim Uildriks

NSW – 0409 566 380

#### Ord Valley Aboriginal Health Service

Kununurra – (08) 9168 1288

#### Relationships Australia

West Leederville – (08) 9489 6300

#### Regional Counselling and Mentoring Service Inc.

Albany – (08) 9842 9699

#### The Cairnmillar Institute

Camberwell, VIC – (03) 9813 3400

#### Waratah Support Centre

Bunbury – (08) 9791 2884

#### Yuri Yungi Aboriginal Medical Service

Halls Creek – (08) 9168 6266

WA Helpdesk on Freecall 1800 617 233 (charges apply from mobiles) or 08 6217 8720 (standard call charges apply).

## Redress WA on Target

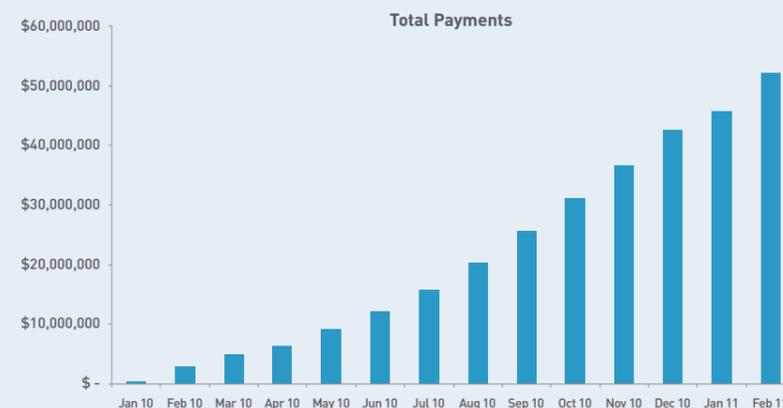
Redress WA has now committed more than \$50 million in *ex-gratia* payments and is on track to have all applications assessed by the 30 June 2011. Minister for Child Protection, Robyn McSweeney, said she was pleased with the progress to date and reaffirmed her commitment to process the applications as quickly as possible.

"While we don't want to keep anyone waiting it is important each applicant is assessed with the care and consideration they deserve," Mrs McSweeney said.

"This can take some time and I thank applicants for their patience."

Mrs McSweeney also recognised the applicants for the courage they demonstrated in completing their applications.

"It can be sad and distressing for applicants to revisit some painful memories and I sincerely hope the *ex-gratia* payment goes some way towards assisting applicants to heal."



Graph refers to Redress WA on Target article.

For further information please contact the agencies directly or call the Redress