

# Inquiry into the handling of child abuse by religious and other organisations, State of Victoria

17 April 2012 – 2013

URL: <https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/get-involved/inquiries/inquiry-into-the-handling-of-child-abuse-by-religious-and-other-organisations/>

## Details

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On 17 April 2012 the Victorian Government announced the establishment of a Parliamentary inquiry into 'matters relating to the handling of alleged child abuse by religious and other organisations'. In response to Recommendation 48 of the Cummins Inquiry, the Family and Community Development Committee is requested 'to inquire into, consider and report to the Parliament on the processes by which religious and other non-government organisations respond to the criminal abuse of children by personnel within their organisations'.

The terms of reference include:

1. the practices, policies and protocols in such organisations for the handling of allegations of criminal abuse of children, including measures put in place by various organisations in response to concerns about such abuse within the organisation or the potential for such abuse to occur.
2. whether there are systemic practices in such organisations that operate to preclude or discourage the reporting of suspected criminal abuse of children to state authorities; and
3. whether changes to law or to practices, policies and protocols in such organisations are required to help prevent criminal abuse of children by personnel in such organisations and to deal with allegations of such abuse.

Members of the Committee include four members of the Liberal Party; Mrs Donna Bauer MLA, Mrs Andrea Coote MLC, Ms Georgie Crozier MLC, and Mr Nick Wakeling MLA, and two members of the Australian Labor Party; Ms Bronwyn Halfpenny MLA, and Mr Frank McGuire MLA.

On Wednesday 13 November 2013 the Committee tabled its report in Parliament for the Inquiry into the Handling of Child Abuse by Religious and other Non-Government Organisations. The Report noted:

*This Report may appear to emphasise offences that occurred in the Catholic Church and the homes and orphanages operated by the Salvation Army. This is an inevitable product of the volume and content of the evidence the Committee received and the information it secured. More than 80 per cent of public submissions to the Committee were about abuse by members of Catholic religious orders, covering a period spanning more than 70 years. When both the public and confidential submissions are considered, a substantial portion of evidence to the Inquiry contained complaints of abuse in Salvation Army institutions.*

The Report also highlighted particular institutions which had been regularly mentioned:

The Committee received submissions from victims who had attended a number of institutions. Many of the accounts related to experiences of growing up in institutions or orphanages operated by the Salvation Army including Bayswater Boys Home and Box Hill Boys Home. Individuals also related experiences of being placed in the care of the Christian Brothers at St Vincent de Paul Boys Home in South Melbourne, St Augustine's Boys Home in Geelong or the Franciscan Brothers at Morning Star in Mt Eliza.

## Gallery

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### A woman demonstrates outside the Victorian parliament

**Description:** This is a copy of an image that illustrated an article in the Guardian following the release of the Betrayal of Trust report. Caption: ' A woman demonstrates outside the Victorian parliament during a rally of hope on Wednesday. The rally coincided with the release of Betrayal of Trust, the report into child abuse.'

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## More info

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### Related Entries

#### Related Events

- [Protecting Victoria's Vulnerable Children Inquiry, State of Victoria \(31 January 2011 - 27 January 2012\)](#)

#### Related Organisations

- [St Augustine's Boys' Home \(1966 - 1988\)](#)
- [Bayswater Boys' Homes \(1897 - 1987\)](#)
- [Box Hill Boys' Home \(1913 - 1984\)](#)
- [Morning Star Boys' Home \(c. 1936 - 1975\)](#)
- [St Vincent de Paul Boys' Home \(1967 - 1997\)](#)

### Resources

- Cummins, Philip, Scott, Dorothy and Scales, Bill, [Report of the Protecting Victoria's Vulnerable Children Inquiry](#), 27 January 2012
- Zwartz, Barney, [Search boys' homes for corpses: ex-ward](#), The Age, 5 February 2013
- Care Leavers Australia Network, [Transcript of Care Leavers Australia Network presentation to the Family and Community Development Committee: Inquiry into the handling of child abuse by religious and other organisations](#), 17 December 2012
- Care Leavers Australia Network, ['Our Child Welfare Ideas are Medieval': A Submission by Care Leavers Australia Network \(CLAN\) to the Inquiry into the handling of child abuse by religious and other organisations](#), 2012
- Rintoul, Stuart, [Priest blasts church's response to child abuse](#), The Australian, 16 February 2013
- Zwartz, Barney, [Prison better than homes: abused boys](#), The Age, 17 December 2012
- Zwartz, Barney, [Life at boys' home was 'torture'](#), The Age, 25 March 2013
- Cherrie, Bryan, [Bryan Cherrie Submission to Inquiry into the handling of child abuse by religious and other organisations](#), 4 February 2013
- Saric, Joseph, [Transcript of Joseph Saric's presentation to the Family and Community Development Committee: Inquiry into the handling of child abuse by religious and other organisations](#), 2013
- Davis, Wayne, [Transcript of Wayne Davis's presentation to the Family and Community Development Committee: Inquiry into the handling of child abuse by religious and other organisations](#), 25 March 2013

- McGowan, Hugh, [\*Transcript of Hugh McGowan's presentation to the Family and Community Development Committee: Inquiry into the handling of child abuse by religious and other organisations\*](#), 4 February 2013
  - Johnson, Max, [\*Transcript of Max Johnson's presentation to the Family and Community Development Committee: Inquiry into the handling of child abuse by religious and other organisations\*](#), 15 February 2013
  - Walker, Alan Charlie, [\*Transcript of Alan Charlie Walker's presentation to the Family and Community Development Committee: Inquiry into the handling of child abuse by religious and other organisations\*](#), 18 February 2013
  - Ryan, Anne, [\*Transcript of Anne Ryan's presentation to the Family and Community Development Committee: Inquiry into the handling of child abuse by religious and other organisations\*](#), 28 February 2013
  - Blenkiron, Peter and Group, [\*Transcript of Peter Blenkiron and group's presentation to the Family and Community Development Committee: Inquiry into the handling of child abuse by religious and other organisations\*](#), 28 February 2013
  - Komiazyk, Peter, [\*Transcript of Peter Komiazyk's presentation to the Family and Community Development Committee: Inquiry into the handling of child abuse by religious and other organisations\*](#), 1 March 2013
  - Paul, Tony, [\*Transcript of Tony Paul's presentation to the Family and Community Development Committee: Inquiry into the handling of child abuse by religious and other organisations\*](#), 4 March 2013
  - Doyle, Gary and Mary, [\*Transcript of Gary and Mary Doyle's presentation to the Family and Community Development Committee: Inquiry into the handling of child abuse by religious and other organisations\*](#), 15 March 2013
  - O'Neill, Cate; Humphreys, Cathy; McCarthy, Gavan, and Swain, Shurlee, [\*Submission to the Victorian Inquiry into the handling of child abuse by religious and other organisations\*](#), September 2012
  - Family and Community Development Committee, [\*Betrayal of Trust: Inquiry into the Handling of Child Abuse by Religious and Other Non-Government Organisations\*](#), November 2013
  - Victorian Government, [\*Victorian Government Response to the report of the Family And Community Development Inquiry into the Handling of Child Abuse by Religious and Other Non-Government Organisations 'Betrayal of Trust'\*](#), May 2014
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