

Apology to the victims of abuse at St Andrew's Hostel, Katanning, Government of Western Australia

19 September 2012 – 19 September 2012

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Details

On 19 September 2012, the report from the Special Inquiry into St Andrew's Hostel, Katanning was tabled in the Western Australian parliament. Its report documented the failure of public officers to act on reports of abuse at St Andrew's Hostel in the years 1973 to 1990. Allegations of abuse at St Christopher's Hostel and Adamson House in Northam, Hardie House in South Hedland, Craig House in Bunbury and Narrogin Hostel also surfaced during the Inquiry. The government accepted all recommendations from the Inquiry and established an ex gratia payment scheme to assist victims.

As part of the report tabling, the Hon Colin Barnett MLA, Premier of Western Australia, offered the following apology to those people who had been abused in St Andrew's Hostel, Katanning, and their families:

On behalf of the government of Western Australia, I apologise to the victims and their families for the abuse that was able to continue at St Andrew's over such a long time. I am sorry that the system of which the hostel was a part was unable to protect them against that harm. For those who are no longer here, I also acknowledge their struggle and pain and the impact that it has had on those who remain.

In response, the Leader of the Opposition, Mark McGowan MLA referred to St Andrew's, St Christopher's (Northam), Hardie House (South Hedland), Craig House (Bunbury) and Narrogin Hostel and said:

On behalf of Western Australian Labor, I offer our apology to the Western Australians abused while in the care of the state at those hostels. I express my sympathy for what they suffered while in these government-run hostels that were supposed to protect them. I acknowledge the courage of survivors to speak out about the abuse and to honour those whose lives have ended early because of the circumstances of their past. I hope that the findings of the St Andrew's Hostel inquiry will bring some comfort and ease some of the pain they have endured.

The member for Albany, Peter Watson MLA, who initially raised the issue in Parliament in 2011, also spoke. He praised the courage of the abuse survivors who had come forward to press for an inquiry and the importance of apologies from people in authority, which he said was "a big part of the grieving process for these men".

Gallery



Celebrating the release of the Blaxell report

Description: This is a copy of an image that was published with an article on ABC News, with the caption: 'Mike Hilder, Kim Daniels, Maggie Dawkins, Darryl Stephens, and Todd Jefferis on the steps of the WA parliament celebrate the release of the Blaxell report'.

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