

41ST PARLIAMENT



Community Development and Justice Standing Committee

Report 7

ANNUAL REPORT 2023–24

Presented by
Dr D.J. Honey, MLA
September 2024

Committee Members

Chair	Dr D.J. Honey, MLA Member for Cottesloe
Deputy Chair	Mr M.J. Folkard, MLA Member for Burns Beach
Members	Hon D.J. Kelly, MLA Member for Bassendean
	Dr K. Stratton, MLA Member for Nedlands
	Ms C.M. Tonkin, MLA Member for Churchlands (From 9 August 2023)

Committee Staff

Principal Research Officer	Dr Alan Charlton
Research Officers	Ms Lisa Peterson (From 5 February 2024)
	Dr Sam Hutchinson (Until 16 February 2024)

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Laid on the Table of the Legislative Assembly on 19 September 2024

Chair's Foreword

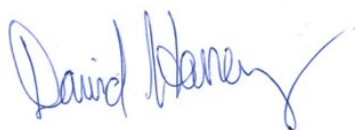
The Community Development and Justice Standing Committee focused its attentions during this financial reporting period on its inquiry into the options available to survivors of institutional child sexual abuse in Western Australia seeking justice. As I wrote in our last annual report, the Committee is fortunate to have extensive experience in our ranks relating to the subject matter of our inquiry. The collective experience of the Committee has greatly facilitated our ability to focus on key subjects and to identify appropriate and important witnesses. I would like to thank all of my Committee members for their excellent contributions during the inquiry – Dr Katrina Stratton, Hon Dave Kelly, Ms Christine Tonkin and Mr Mark Folkard.

On 30 November 2023 the Committee tabled its first report from this inquiry. In 2023 the Committee held 11 hearings with 27 witnesses, in addition to receiving 49 submissions from individuals and organisations. The Report made 12 recommendations and 11 findings, and dealt in the main with legislative and high-level administrative matters to improve survivor access to civil litigation. The Committee resolved to report in two volumes to allow Government time to address legislative changes that might be needed before the end of the current Parliament.

Throughout 2024 the Committee continued its hearing program and tabled its final report on 15 August 2024, in order to allow Government time to respond before Parliament rises in December. As this report was tabled in the financial year 2024-25, it will be covered in next year's Annual Report. Suffice to say that the report inquiry made important findings and recommendations, this time focusing on the National Redress Scheme and how effectively State Government and religious institutions support survivors through those claims.

On behalf of the Committee, I thank our secretariat, Dr Alan Charlton and Lisa Peterson, and Lisa's predecessor Dr Sam Hutchinson, for their excellent guidance, research and facilitation of the inquiry and the Committee's general work. I also thank my fellow Committee members for their good company and good work during the year and wish them well in 2025.

Dr Charlton is retiring from parliament at the end of this week. I thank him for his distinguished record of service to the Parliament and, especially, to our committee. His wise council, intellect, calm demeanour and good work have been key to the outcomes of our current inquiry.



DR D.J. HONEY, MLA
CHAIR

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Chapter 1

Committee Activities

Introduction

During this reporting period, the Committee:

- conducted one inquiry;
- tabled two reports;
- held 27 deliberative meetings; and
- took evidence from 44 people.

This year was predominantly concerned with the Committee’s inquiry into the opportunities for survivors of institutional child sexual abuse seeking justice in Western Australia, which was launched on 22 June 2023. A new member joined the Committee at the beginning of August 2023, as the Committee planned its initial hearings.

On November 30, 2023 the Committee tabled its first report resulting from its inquiry.

As the financial year closed the Committee was preparing its second report, which it planned to table on 15 August 2024. The Committee intended that this would complete its formal reporting program for the inquiry, although it had resolved to continue seeking particular evidence that it had not yet received, with the aim of making that information public.

Table 1.1: Summary of the activities of the Committee, 1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024

Description	Activity
Deliberative meetings	27
Formal evidence hearings	21
Witnesses appearing	44
Reports tabled	2
Report findings tabled	11
Report recommendations tabled	12

Portfolios

This Committee is charged by the Speaker with responsibility for the following portfolios:

- Aboriginal Affairs
- Child Protection
- Climate Action
- Corrective Services
- Disability Services
- Attorney General
- Citizenship and Multicultural Interests
- Community Services
- Culture and the Arts
- Electoral Affairs

- Emergency Services
- Local Government
- Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence
- Seniors and Ageing
- Veterans Issues
- Women’s Interests
- Environment
- Police
- Road Safety
- Sport and Recreation
- Volunteering
- Youth.

Public Hearings

Pursuant to Assembly Standing Order 264, the Committee has power to send for persons, papers and records. During the period 1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024, the Committee conducted 21 public hearings, taking evidence from 44 witnesses to assist with its investigations (Table 1.2).

Table 1.2: Public Hearings of the Committee, 1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024

Date	Witness	Position	Organisation
30 August 2023	Ms Sarah Nielsen-Harvey	Lawyer	Bradley Bayly Legal
	Mrs Kirsty Pratt OAM	Abuse Client Consultant	
	Miss Rosemary Littlefair	Lawyer	
	Mr Andrew Ponnambalam	Lawyer	
30 August 2023	Mr Hugo Seymour	Lawyer	Maurice Blackburn Lawyers
	Mr John Rule	Principal Lawyer	
1 September 2023	Mr Nick Hudson	A/CEO	knowmore Legal Service
	Mr Simon Bruck	Principal Lawyer	
	Ms Lauren Hancock	Manager Law Reform	
	Ms Richa Malaviya	Managing Lawyer	
11 September 2023	The Most Reverend Timothy Costelloe SBD DD	Roman Catholic Archbishop of Perth	Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Perth
	Mr Daniel Lynch	Executive Director – Office of the Archbishop of Perth	
11 September 2023	Dr Graham Hill	State Solicitor	State Solicitor’s Office
	Mr Craig Bydder	Deputy State Solicitor	
	Ms Sonya Lomma	A/Deputy State Solicitor	

13 September 2023	Ms Anna Liscia	Lawyer	Irdi Legal
13 September 2023	Mr Graham Droppert	Former National President	Australian Lawyers Alliance
	Ms Sara Connor-Stead	ALA Abuse Law Group member	
	Ms Eleanor Scarff	ALA WA Committee member	
20 September 2023	Dr Philippa White	Director	Tuart Place
	Ms Susy Vaughan	Clinical Manager	
	Ms Jan Newman	Social Worker	
20 September 2023	Ms Abigail Davies	Lawyer	Slater and Gordon Lawyers
22 September 2023	The Most Reverend Kay Goldsworthy AO	Archbishop of Perth	Anglican Diocese of Perth
	Mr Keith Stephens	Diocesan Secretary and Executive Officer	
22 September 2023	Her Honour Judge Julie Wager	Chief Judge	District Court of Western Australia
21 February 2024	Ms Kati Kraszlan	Commissioner for Victims of Crime	Department of Justice
	Mr Michael Martin	Coordinator, Redress Coordination Unit	
21 February 2024	Mr Terry Martino	Chairperson/Advocate	Survivors of Child Abuse
	Mr Jarrod Luscombe	Co-founder	
7 March 2024	Mr Craig Hughes-Cashmore	Chief Executive Officer	Survivors and Mates Support Network
	Ms Prue Gregory OAM	Policy, Advocacy and Stakeholder Relations Manager	
13 March 2024	Mr Michael Rowe	Director General	Department of Communities
	Ms Caron Irwin	Assistant Director, Strategy and Partnerships	
	Mr Glenn Mace	Executive Director, Service Delivery	
	Ms Nicole Byrne	Director, Corporate Information	
	Mr Steven Bradford	Claims Manager	
13 March 2024	Mrs Kylie Dunjey	Executive Manager, Clinical Services	Relationships Australia WA

	Mr Camillo Tatasciore	Service Promotion and Engagement Officer	
	Mrs Lisa Bailey	Coordinator, Redress Support Services	
20 March 2024	Dr Philippa White	Director	Tuart Place
	Ms Susan Vaughan	Clinical Manager	
	Ms Jan Newman	Social Worker	
4 April 2024	Brother Peter Carroll	Provincial Leader	Marist Brothers, Star of the Sea Province
17 April 2024	Ms Louise Lamont	Chief Executive Officer	Phoenix Support and Advocacy Service
17 April 2024	Archbishop Timothy Costelloe	Roman Catholic Archbishop of Perth	Catholic Archdiocese of Perth
	Ms Margaret Tannock	In-house Counsel	
8 May 2024	Mr Chris Twomey	Leader Policy and Research	Western Australian Council of Social Service

Reports Tabled

The Committee tabled two reports during the period 1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024:

- On 19 October 2023 the Committee tabled its [Annual Report for 2022-23](#).
- On 30 November 2023 the Committee tabled the first report from its inquiry, entitled [Seeking justice: Improving options for survivors of institutional child abuse – Volume 1: Legislative and high-level administrative matters](#). The report was built on evidence received from 44 witnesses in 11 hearings, and from 49 formal submissions from individuals and organisations. The Report made 11 Findings and 12 Recommendations, predominantly aimed at increasing survivor access to legal courses of action. The recommendations included increasing the scope of ‘abuse’ for personal injury claims in line with other Australian jurisdictions, to include ‘physical’ and ‘associated psychological or emotional abuse’ as well as ‘child sexual abuse’. The Committee also recommended that civil liability legislation be amended to ensure any organisation is presumed to have breached its duty of care about child abuse by anyone associated with that organisation unless it could show that it took reasonable precautions to prevent that abuse. The Report also recommended that legislation be changed so that civil litigation on matters of child abuse can be carried on by the estate of the plaintiff. The Attorney General tabled the [Government’s response](#) to the Report on 12 March 2024.

Chapter 2

Financial Statement

The Committee does not have its own formal budget and is funded out of the budget of the Legislative Assembly. Approval for major expenditures is required on a case-by-case basis and is entirely at the discretion of the Speaker.

The Committee's expenditure for the financial year 1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024 (in accordance with Standing Order 276) is detailed below:

Table 2.1: Expenditure items of the Committee, 1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024

Expenditure Item	Amount (\$)
Advertising	3,081
Consultants	14,400
Printing	843
Staff/member amenities	217
TOTAL	18,541

Notes:

- Salaries of committee staff are not included.
- Costs of shared administrative expenses, including lease costs for committee accommodation, not included.



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CHAIR



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