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# Royal Commission into Historical Abuse scope adjusted to avoid timeline delay



HON JAN TINETTI(/MINISTER/HON-JAN-TINETTI)

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“The Government continues to honour our commitment to survivors which we made when the Royal Commission was established in 2018, and has refined the Terms of Reference to make sure the Commission delivers its final report in 2023,” says Minister of Internal Affairs, Jan Tinetti.

In December 2020, the Royal Commission estimated that it will require an additional two and a half years (to June 2025) to complete the work.

“I am conscious that survivors have been waiting a long time for their stories to be heard, and a report of this nature to be completed. Many survivors are also elderly or are in ill health. Extending the timeframe further increases the risk that some survivors may not be here when the Royal Commission completes its work - and that is not acceptable to this Government,” Jan Tinetti said.

“This Royal Commission is already the largest and most complex inquiry in New Zealand’s history. Under the current process, it risks being overly drawn out and legalistic – which does not benefit survivors.

“I reflected on what the Royal Commission was originally tasked with and whether that scope remains appropriate. And in doing so, it became clear that some adjustments are necessary, so the Royal Commission can complete its job by 2023.

“Since the Royal Commission was established, there have been a number of reviews and investigations into contemporary State care issues, which have significant overlaps and risk duplication with the Royal Commission’s work.”

Cabinet has adjusted the Royal Commission’s terms of reference by:

- Allowing the Royal Commission a small extension of up to five months to give it time to complete its final report back by June 2023,
- Moving the due date forward to October 2021 for its report on redress for survivors of historical abuse and how the redress process can be improved, so Government can move more quickly to make improvements, and
- Narrowing the Royal Commission’s scope by removing the requirement for it to look at modern-day care policy settings to avoid duplication with other reviews already underway, and so it can focus on the causes, extent and nature of historical abuse in care.

“Without these refinements, we could end up with more time and energy spent on the Commission than on providing meaningful redress to survivors within a reasonable timeframe.

“The Government is keen to progress redress for survivors. Bringing forward the report date for redress will allow this Government to make meaningful progress for survivors.

“We know abuse in state care has affected not only those individuals, but their families, whānau and wider communities too.

“I am extremely grateful for the ongoing commitment of the Commissioners and kaimahi supporting the Inquiry, and thankful to the many brave survivors, witnesses and researchers who have shared their personal stories with the Commission to date,” says Jan Tinetti.



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