



Abuse in Care

Royal Commission of Inquiry

Survivors, advocates and experts to speak at public hearing

An outline of who will speak and when at the Contextual hearing next week has now been released by the Abuse in Care Royal Commission of Inquiry.

The Contextual hearing, beginning on 29 October at the Rydges Hotel in Auckland, will be the first time the Inquiry will hear from survivors in a public hearing.

Survivors, their advocates, academics and experts will speak at the two-week hearing and cover a huge range of issues and topics. It will set the scene for the rest of the Inquiry.

The Commission is determined to provide witnesses with the full support they need to give evidence at the hearing and is hopeful the public will also support them. All those who give evidence will have the full protection of the law when they do so.

Commissioners will hear evidence from nearly 30 witnesses including:

- **Judge Carolyn Henwood** former Chair of the Confidential Listening and Assistance Service (CLAS) which facilitated counselling and assistance for people who experienced abuse in State care before 1992;
- **Arthur Taylor** who was violently removed from his family aged 11, suffered abuse in State care and spent 40 of his 63 years in prison. He will describe his three stints in Eponi Boys' Home and the abuse he endured and witnessed there, his incarceration in a psychiatric facility as a teenager, and the road he took from State care to prison;
- **Dr Rawiri Waretini-Karena** (Ngāti Māhanga, Ngāti Māhuta, Ngāti Hine, Ngāti Kāhu, Te Rarawa) is a lecturer and Postdoctoral Research Fellow at Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiarangi. He will talk about the experiences and impacts of intergeneration trauma stemming from colonisation, arising in early legislation and policy in Aotearoa;
- **Fa'afete Taito's** abuse in State care in the 1970s led to him becoming a fully patched gang member and a life of crime. He left that behind in 2009 to study and now holds a BA with a double major in Sociology and Māori. Mr Taito will talk

about the broader experience of Pacific communities in New Zealand in the 1970s and 1980s, and draw on his own experience to explain the long-lasting impacts of his time in care as a ward of the State;

- **Mary O’Hagan**, an international mental health leader with lived experience, will provide historical context of abuse in the psychiatric system, relative to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the survivor movement;
- **Mike Ledingham** will give evidence about the abuse he and his two brothers suffered as students at St Joseph’s Catholic School in Onehunga. He will outline the effects on him and his brothers, the impacts on his life, choices and opportunities and the response of the Catholic Church when they were notified of the abuse in 2002;
- **Dr Anne Else**, a writer, researcher and editor will give evidence about the growth of adoption and the State’s involvement in closed stranger adoption since the 1955 Adoption Act.

The hearing is open to the public and will be livestreamed, with NZSL interpreters, on the Inquiry's website for the duration of the hearing. A recording of the full hearing will be available to watch on the website after the event.

Venue

Contextual Hearing
Kingston Room
Level 1
Rydges Hotel
59 Federal Street
Auckland

The hearing will start at 10am Monday to Friday unless specified otherwise. There is seating available for members of the public but this is limited.



Commissioner communications

During public hearings, Commissioners will hear from survivors, witnesses and representatives of Crown agencies and faith-based institutions. This is a process that is open to challenge if it is not conducted fairly and properly.

It is essential the Inquiry remains independent and free from undue influence or bias. To ensure it remains that way Commissioners will be exercising caution when speaking - either in a personal or professional sense - to anyone about the Inquiry outside of hearings or private sessions.

This does *not* mean survivors cannot talk to the Commission. We want to hear from as many survivors as possible. It just means inquiries need to come through staff at the Royal Commission. We have many staff at the Royal Commission talking to survivors and other interested parties. Please call us on 0800 222 727 to talk to our team.

This is a hugely important Inquiry; there is much at stake. We want to be absolutely certain when we present our recommendations to the Government in 2023 that the integrity of the Inquiry is not compromised in any way and that it cannot be challenged.



Survivor advocate Allison Pascoe speaks out

Survivor advocate Allison Pascoe never wants the kind of abuse she suffered in care to happen to anyone else ever again.

Allison's abuse occurred in psychiatric hospitals where she was first sent as an eight year old child and where she spent the next 50 years of her life. Allison shares her heartbreaking story on our website. She encourages people to be brave and speak out.

Between now and Christmas, the Inquiry will be conducting additional private sessions for very sick or older people who may be running out of time to share their experiences of abuse.

Arrangements can be made for Commissioners to speak to those people somewhere that suits them, for instance in their own homes. If you know of anyone this may apply to, please encourage and/or help them to contact us on 0800 222 727.

For anyone else wanting a private session with the Inquiry, please tell us if you wish to be heard with family members – brothers and sisters or parents for instance. We can organise this but we need to know in advance so we can make sure the space is suitable.

Inquiry formalises arrangement to refer abuse to Police

A formal agreement between the Royal Commission and the Police paves the way for survivors to seek justice for the abuse they suffered while in State or faith-based care.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by the Royal Commission and the Police last week enables survivors to ask Commissioners to refer their abuse to Police for investigation. It also enables the Inquiry to report to Police any themes of abuse or similar allegations that emerge from survivors.

“This MOU formalises an arrangement we have had in place with Police since April 2019 to refer incidents to the Police for investigation. The MOU contains a set of key principles that will guide how the Inquiry and Police will work together,” Inquiry Chair Sir Anand Satyanand said.

Referrals to the Police from Inquiries in other countries have led to arrests.

All private sessions will remain confidential unless the participant consents to information being released to Police or other exceptional circumstances as set out in the MOU.

More than 1400 people have so far registered to share their experiences of abuse in care in private sessions with Commissioners.

Survivors in prisons share their experiences of abuse in care

Registrations from survivors in prison have grown significantly since the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Department of Corrections in June this year.

Private sessions have been held with survivors at four prisons so far and more are planned.

Privacy and confidentiality are key things we offer survivors in prison who choose to share their experiences of abuse with the Inquiry. Calls to the Inquiry's 0800 number are not monitored or recorded like other phone calls in and out of prisons. Mail from the Royal Commission is sent through an approved process to survivors and is not read by Corrections staff, and survivors are able to share their experience in a private face-to-face session with a Commissioner.

Survivors in prison have welcomed the opportunity to be part of the biggest Inquiry in New Zealand history. For many it is the first time they have been able to share their experiences of abuse without being judged. They are talking on their terms about what abuse has happened in their lives, the impact it has had on them, and what they would like to see done in the future.

Sessions presenting information about the Inquiry, and ways people in prison can be part of it, are also being rolled out across prisons.

For more information about how people in prison can engage with the Inquiry please call us on 0800 222 727.

Catholic Church lifts confidentiality requirement

The Bishops and Congregational Leaders of the Catholic Church have agreed to the Royal Commission's request to lift confidentiality obligations for some survivors of abuse in the care of the Catholic Church.

The waiver applies to settlements with:

- The Roman Catholic Bishops of the Dioceses of Wellington, Auckland, Christchurch, Dunedin, Hamilton and Palmerston North.
- Religious congregations: Capuchin Friars, Cenacle Sisters, Christian Brothers, Congregation of Our Lady of the Missions, Nga Whaea Atawhai o Aotearoa (Sisters of Mercy), Daughters of our Lady of Compassion, Dominican Sisters, Little Company of Mary, Sisters of the Good Shepherd, Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart, Rosminians, Sisters of St Brigid, Marist Sisters, Missionary Sisters of the Society of Mary, Marist Brothers, Society of Mary, Assumptionists, Sisters of St Joseph of Cluny, Hospitaller Brothers of St John of God, Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Society of the Sacred Heart, Sister Disciples of the Divine Master, Columban Mission, Discalced Carmelite Nuns (Auckland & Christchurch),

Divine Word Missionaries, Sisters of Nazareth and Dominican Friars, De La Salle Brothers, Salesians of Don Bosco, Little Sisters of the Poor, Sisters of the Holy Faith, Redemptorists, Missionaries of Faith and Mill Hill Missionaries.

The Inquiry's Counsel Assisting Simon Mount QC says the waiver means survivors of abuse in the Catholic Church can now engage freely with the Commission, even if they have entered into confidential settlements in the past with one of the Catholic entities listed.

"We welcome the move by the Catholic Church. It will enable survivors to express themselves freely without worrying that they may be breaking any confidentiality agreements. We expect all faith-based institutions, and in fact any other institutions within the scope of the Inquiry, to do the same," says Simon.

Similar waivers were granted by the Crown for State-based entities in August, and the Salvation Army last month.



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0800 222 727
Monday to Friday
10am – 4pm