

Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse
GPO Box 5283
Sydney NSW 2001

By email: solicitor@childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au

Statutory Victims of Crime Compensation Schemes Issues Paper

Dear Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission about statutory victims of crime compensation schemes.

Prompt handling of claims for victims compensation is a vital part of the effectiveness of any scheme to deliver redress. This is particularly so in New South Wales, given the emphasis in the *Victims Rights and Support Act 2013* on the provision of services to address the immediate needs of victims.

As part of our role in scrutinising the child protection system in NSW, in recent years we have identified significant deficiencies in the arrangements for handling victims compensation claims on behalf of children and young people in statutory out of home care. Shortcomings have included significant delays in the identification of relevant claims and lodgement of claims; and a failure to lodge claims for certain young people before they leave care.

As discussed in our April 2014 report – *Review of the NSW Child Protection System: Are things improving?* – access to victims compensation for children and young people in statutory care continues to be a significant unresolved practice issue (copy attached, pages 16,17).

To inform the Commission's deliberations in this area, I have also attached two other reports about related investigation and review work over the past five years. These reports are titled:

- *The need to support children and young people in statutory care who have been victims of crime, June 2010*
- *The continuing need to better support young people leaving care, August 2013*

If you have any queries about the information provided, or require further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact Steve Kinmond, Deputy Ombudsman and Community and Disability Services Commissioner, on (02) 9286 0987.

Yours sincerely



Bruce Barbour
Ombudsman

16/6/14