



FAMILY AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

MEDIA RELEASE

From Committee Chair, Ms Georgie Crozier, MP

18 February 2013

Child abuse Inquiry reporting deadline extended

Committee Chair, Ms Georgie Crozier, MP said a request to extend the reporting deadline for the Inquiry into the handling of child abuse by religious and other organisations has been granted.

The announcement was made by Ms Crozier in an opening statement at public hearings in Geelong on Friday 15 February.

As you are aware, our Inquiry is making significant progress and is continuing with visiting different parts of Victoria, hearing the testimony of victims and other interested parties. These are in addition to the hearings we are conducting in Melbourne. We are pleased that the work we have done in our Inquiry has been a major contributing factor to the establishment of the Royal Commission and we look forward to working collaboratively with them.

*We have yet to hear - in public sessions - from representatives from several organisations. We will do so over the coming months and after further investigations are completed. This leads us to the issue of timing and our existing April 30 reporting date. **I have always said that our Committee was focused on conducting a thorough Inquiry, not a hasty one, and I'm pleased to announce that our request to extend our reporting deadline to September 30 has been granted.***

We have a strong team working in the Secretariat to support the Committee. To date we have had more than 60 people give evidence at public hearings, others have been heard in camera. We have received 370 submissions - over 80 of which are now published on the website - with many more (both public and confidential) being analysed. Our research, investigations and information gathering continues behind the scenes and the parallel processes we have set up also continue to operate. Victoria Police's Taskforce Sano, set up during the course of this Inquiry, made several arrests last week.

We are all making progress and I'd like to take the opportunity to thank those of you who have had the courage to come forward and share your story - your commitment to seek change and accountability on this issue has played a big role in this Inquiry. Thank you for your determination.

- **Ms Georgie Crozier, MP, Committee Chair**

Next hearings are scheduled today in Melbourne and in Ballarat on Thursday 28 February.

Further assistance:

- *For further information regarding the Inquiry, please see the Committee website at <http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/fcdc/inquiry/340> or phone (03) 8682 2843*
- *Help for victims - including support in preparing for and attending a public hearing and linking people to local support groups and services - is available through the Victims of Crime Helpline on 1800 819 817*
- *For media queries by journalists, please contact Amanda Kennedy on 0409 890 658*