

## **Working Group for the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and future Royal Commissions**

### **Terms of Reference**

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse Working Group (Working Group) was established in 2014 as a working group of the Council of Australasian Archives and Records Authorities (CAARA).

The Working Group was formed to identify custody and ownership issues, and work with the Royal Commission on their recordkeeping requirements. Its original objectives are at Attachment A.

In 2018 the terms of reference of the Working Group were expanded to cover recordkeeping issues relating to:

- former and future joint Royal Commissions
- working collaboratively on recordkeeping related recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and future joint Royal Commissions as applicable
- sharing information on single jurisdiction Royal Commissions, which may extend to collaborating as needed.

### **The objectives of the Working Group are to:**

- consider and make recommendations to CAARA on record custody, disposal and access issues in relation to joint royal commissions
- upon request, provide advice on recordkeeping matters to joint royal commissions
- collaborate to support members in addressing recordkeeping recommendations of joint royal commissions
- share information about single jurisdiction royal commissions in order to assist each other.

### **Scope of Activity**

The Working Group will be responsible for the following activities in relation to joint Royal Commissions:

- Liaising with joint Royal Commissions in respect to recordkeeping issues, including management, disposal, and eventual transfer of archival material.
- Identifying, considering and reaching consensus on issues relating to Royal Commission records in order to make recommendations to CAARA; and
- Regularly reporting to CAARA.

### **Mode of Operation**

- The Working Group will communicate via email and teleconference meetings.
- The frequency of meetings will be determined by the Group on an as needed basis.
- If a member is unable to attend a Working Group meeting, the member will, where practical, nominate an alternative representative to take their place.
- Members of the Working Group who have contact with the Royal Commission in their jurisdiction will inform other members of the issues discussed and outcomes.

- The Working Group will report regularly to CAARA.
- The Working Group will remain in existence for as long as needed.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

National Archives will take a lead role in establishing and organising the Working Group. This will involve organising teleconference meetings, documenting issues, decisions and action items, and developing products and reports as required. The Working Group members will undertake the business of the Group as outlined in the Terms of Reference, and contribute to products and reports as required.

The Working Group will consist of all CAARA members involved in the Joint Royal Commission (excluding Archives New Zealand). Working Group members will identify and discuss issues and develop recommended courses of action for CAARA.

### **2014 objectives of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse**

#### **Objectives**

The objectives of the Working Group are to:

- work through the issues and complexities in relation to Royal Commission records and to obtain CAARA member consensus on:
  - a primary custodian for Royal Commission records, eg NAA (subject to Ministerial authorisation under subsection 22(3) of the *Archives Act 1983*);
  - disposal coverage including authorisation, disposal freezes, government contact with variations in disposal coverage in different jurisdictions, including authorisations, disposal freezes, and government contact with NGOs;
  - records and archival standards including digitisation and management of digital records
  - approaches to legislated access regimes; and
  - potential for changes in ownership where Royal Commission gathered materials are passed on to State/Territory/Commonwealth authorities for further investigation.
- Work with the Royal Commission on their recordkeeping requirements
- Report to CAARA on these issues and on the Working Group's recommended course of action.