

## *MEDIA RELEASE – 29.05.2014*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Future of the Royal Commission in doubt**

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The AASW is deeply concerned about the future of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (the Commission) following the resignation of CEO Janette Dines and subsequent revelations that the Federal government has diverted \$6.7 million from the Commission to the pink batts inquiry.

Professor Karen Healy, AASW National President, said that “the Commission is a ‘once-in-a-lifetime’ opportunity to deal with the scourge of child sexual abuse in our Institutions. It is important that the Government honour its commitment to the Australian public and continue to support the Commission’s work.”

Over the past year, the Commission has been overwhelmed with the number of people coming forward to report abuse within Australian institutions. This demonstrates what child sexual abuse campaigners have long known – the devastation of child sexual abuse is widespread and has been hidden for decades. Indeed, Justice Peter McClellan has requested that the Commission be extended for two years to allow them to meet their Terms of Reference and hear the volume of cases. The Commission needs more, not less, funding and support from government.

The AASW calls on the Federal government to immediately make clear its intentions with regard to the future of the Commission; to return the \$6.7 million of funding; and to formally respond to Justice McClellan’s call for a two year extension.

The AASW represents 7800 professional social workers. Social workers are recognised throughout the world as the core professional group in child protection policy, management and practice. Many of our members work with victim / survivors of child sexual abuse and their families.

The AASW is heavily engaged in the work on the Commission having made four substantial submissions on a range of issues with a fifth, on redress schemes, due next week. Our submissions can be found [here](#).

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