

## *MEDIA RELEASE – 03.07.14*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Don't let thousands of sexual abuse victims be condemned into silence**

The AASW today supported the Royal Commission into Institutional Child Sexual Abuse in its request for more time and money to help ensure the tragedy of institutionalised sexual abuse will never reoccur.

Thousands of child sexual abuse survivors are coming forward, many for the very first time, to give evidence. If allowed to fulfil its task, the Commission will hold 7000 private sessions by the end of 2017. Currently it has funding only to hear about 4000 of those stories.

Professor Karen Healy, president of the AASW, said; “The Commission has found that on average it has taken the victims of child sexual abuse 22 years to break their silence and tell their story. It would be a sorry day for Australia if they could not be afforded just two more years. We must not condemn thousands of people to silence”.

The Interim Report, released on 30 June, outlines the extent of previously hidden sexual abuse occurring in Australian institutions, and reveals the particular victimisation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with a disability and inmates.

The calls for more money and time to the government follow controversy earlier this year when it was revealed that \$6.7 million was diverted from the Royal Commission to help fund an inquiry into the Home Insulation Scheme. The AASW is also concerned about the resignation of Royal Commission CEO Janette Dines and its impact on survivors who have placed their confidence in the Royal Commission.

The Royal Commission is a ‘once-in-a-lifetime’ opportunity to uncover systemic abuses, give voice to victims of abuse and ultimately challenge the systems that have fostered such widespread abuse of children in the very institutions designed to care for them.

The AASW calls on the Federal government to extend the Commission and provide the additional funding requested.

---

**Media Contact:**

Laura Edwards  
Media and Communications Officer  
P: (02) 6232 3911 or 0400 613 516

---