



CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE
OF MELBOURNE

media release

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Victims still coming forward to Catholic Church pastoral processes

Victims of child sexual and physical abuse continued to come forward to the Catholic Church pastoral processes during the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into child abuse, the Church announced today.

Church spokesperson, Father Shane Mackinlay, said that in the 12 months to 30 June 2013, 53 complaints were received in Victoria by the *Melbourne Response* and *Towards Healing* that were relevant to the Inquiry.

Eighteen complaints were received by the *Melbourne Response*, with 13 upheld so far, and 35 complaints were received by *Towards Healing*, with 15 upheld to date.

The remaining five complaints to the *Melbourne Response*, and the 20 to *Towards Healing*, are still to be determined and are ongoing.

Seven of the *Towards Healing* complainants have chosen to go to the police and their cases will not resume until police actions are completed.

In addition to complaints received by the *Melbourne Response* and *Towards Healing*, a further 42 complaints were made directly to the Church entities that appeared in person at the Inquiry.

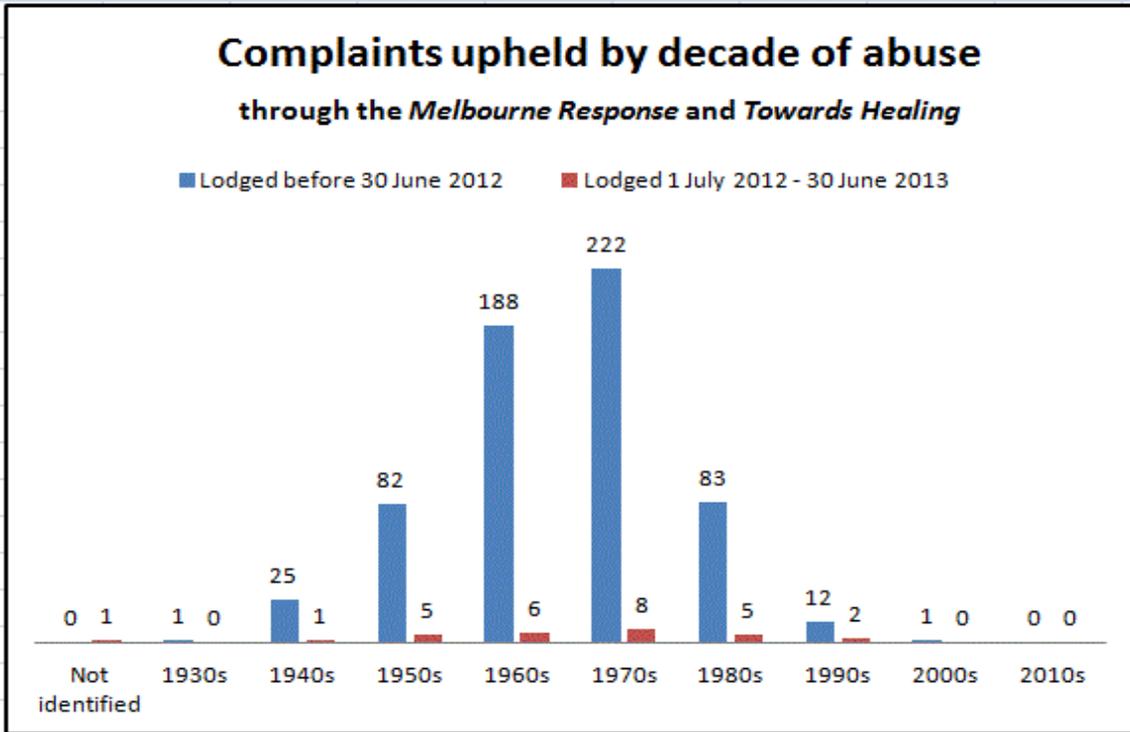
Of these, 15 have so far been upheld. The remaining 27 are still to be determined and are ongoing. They are being dealt with through legal or other dispute resolution processes at the instigation of the complainant.

Father Mackinlay said: "While there was much discussion of the *Melbourne Response* and *Towards Healing* at the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry, it is clear that many victims still want the Church to make available a non-adversarial process for providing support and compensation alongside the other processes available to victims."

The abuse occurred across the same historical spread – from the 1940s to the 1990s – as the cases upheld to June 2012, as illustrated in the following chart, which covers complaints processed by the *Melbourne Response* or *Towards Healing*.

Father Mackinlay said: "The abuse may be historical, but the long term suffering of victims and their families continues. That is why it is so important to keep providing care and support, and to keep our community informed about all we are doing.

"In each of these cases, the victims have come forward as adults. They were all abused when they were children – often decades ago."



Father Mackinlay said: “The fact that the new victims are reporting historical rather than current events is a further indication that the changes we have made since the 1980s have helped prevent the appalling abuse that had occurred up to then.”

(ends)

For further information, please contact James O’Farrell on 0437 661 030 (no SMS).