



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES 2022-2023

Mr James Milligan MLA (Chair), Mr Andrew Braddock MLA (Deputy Chair),
Dr Marisa Paterson MLA

**ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE
DURING PUBLIC HEARINGS**

Asked by Peter Cain MLA on 1 September 2022: ACT Human Rights President, Dr Helen Watchirs took on notice the following question(s):

[Ref: Hansard Transcript 1 September 2022 [PAGE 1099]]

In relation to:

Q319: Has the government been doing enough to ensure that the ACT has adopted all the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse?

Dr Helen Watchirs: The answer to the Member's question is as follows: –

For the most part, the Commission has been pleased with the progress by the ACT Government in responding to the recommendations from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The Commission recognises that the circumstances of the last two years have impacted progress on the implementation of a Child Safe Standards Scheme in the ACT and appreciates being kept engaged in the design and development of the Scheme. Regardless, however, the Commission remains concerned that the Scheme continues to be deferred.

Child Safe Standards are an important component of an effective system for protecting children and young people in that they establish the grounds for proactive and preventative action by organisations. Having strong and effective preventative systems within organisations supports organisations to establish a culture that enables children and young people to not only 'be' safe but also to 'feel' safe. By ensuring that all the systems and processes of organisations are developed in a child-/youth-centric way, children and young people feel empowered to speak up, knowing that they will be believed, and that action will be taken to respond to the concerns they have raised.

The Commission remains committed to working with the ACT Government to establish and implement a Child Safe Standards Scheme that effectively protects children and young people from all forms of abuse. To this end, the Commission is keen to ensure that sufficient funding is provided to enable: the Children and Young People Commissioner to undertake the capacity building work that will be required to support those services and sectors that will need to comply with the Scheme; and the Disability and Community Services Commissioner to respond to those that don't.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2022-2023

Signature:

Date: 7 September 2022

By the ACT Human Rights President, Dr Helen Watchirs

