

APPOINTMENT OF MR JEFFERY GLEESON SC AS AN INDEPENDENT COMMISSIONER UNDER THE MELBOURNE RESPONSE

"I am pleased to announce the appointment of Mr Jeffery J Gleeson SC as an Independent Commissioner under the Melbourne Response" stated Archbishop of Melbourne, Archbishop Denis Hart.

Mr Gleeson will take up his appointment in July 2012.

Mr Peter O'Callaghan QC will continue as an Independent Commissioner. Mr Gleeson's appointment is made following the announcement by the Victorian Government of a Parliamentary Inquiry into child abuse, and will ensure that the Melbourne Response can continue to operate efficiently and effectively while the Inquiry is underway.

Mr Gleeson will act under the same terms and conditions as Mr O'Callaghan and which are contained in the *Appointment of Independent Commissioner to Enquire into Sexual and Other Abuse* at

<http://www.cam.org.au/Portals/0/Documents/Melbourne-Response-Appointment-of-Independent-Commissioner.pdf>

When the Melbourne Response was introduced in 1996, it had been thought that the Office of Independent Commissioner and Mr O'Callaghan's tenure as Independent Commissioner would be short. This has not been the case and sadly there is still a steady flow of complaints for the Melbourne Response to deal with.

Mr Gleeson was admitted to practice as a barrister and solicitor of the Supreme Court of Victoria in May 1989, came to the Bar in 1992 and was appointed Senior Counsel in November 2007. Mr Gleeson practises extensively in the Supreme Court of Victoria, and the Federal Court of Australia and also appears in the High Court.

Mr Gleeson is currently Senior Counsel Assisting the AFL Tribunal and is Chairman of the Insurance Committee of the Victorian Bar. Since 1997, Mr Gleeson has acted as Counsel Assisting the Independent Commissioner, and is therefore very familiar with the practices and procedures of the Commission and the Melbourne Response.

"Due to his extensive experience as a barrister and his work as Counsel Assisting the Independent Commissioner, he is very well qualified and experienced to act as Independent Commissioner" Archbishop Hart said.

"In announcing the appointment of Mr Gleeson, I acknowledge the commitment and dedication which Mr O'Callaghan has displayed during his nearly 16 years as Independent Commissioner. He has dealt with over 320 complaints in this time with compassion and understanding for all of the victims he has met" said Archbishop Hart.

Under the Melbourne Response, the Independent Commissioner is the first point of contact for people wishing to make allegations or complaints, seek counselling or obtain information about compensation. The Independent Commissioner receives complaints and enquires into allegations of sexual abuse by priests, lay people and religious who are or were under the auspices of the Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne. When the Commissioner is satisfied that the abuse occurred, the Commissioner notifies the Archbishop and refers the victim to Carelink for counselling and to the Compensation Panel to determine the amount of compensation to be paid.

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More about the Melbourne Response

The Melbourne Response was established in 1996 by the Archdiocese of Melbourne to help victims of sexual abuse within the Archdiocese. It offers an alternative to those who do not wish to proceed through protracted and public court proceedings. The Melbourne Response responds in a timely manner to victims' complaints and when established provides victims with a formal apology in writing from the Archbishop, access to compensation, free counselling, treatment and support. Further details are available at <http://www.cam.org.au/Melbourne-Response/Melbourne-Response.aspx>