

**Response for Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse  
Case Study 17 – the Retta Dixon Home – Q17a**

There are no existing, established reports for 'conviction rates for allegations of child sexual abuse' in the Northern Territory.

The Department of Attorney-General and Justice, Criminal Justice Research and Statistics Unit have previously reported on Court outcome status for sexual assault and related offences known to have been committed against children for which persons were charged in the Northern Territory. That work was developed for the former Northern Territory Emergency Response progress reports, and now included in the Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory progress reports.

Due to the structure of the Integrated Justice Information System, which does not record victim details, there is no way to report definitive numbers of offences and convictions for child sexual abuse. Instead, the same process used for reporting for Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory is used as a proxy to answer the request (at question 17 a) from the Royal Commission. However, it should be noted that the SFNT report is only interested in child sexual assault and therefore 'Non-assaultive sexual offences against a child' and 'Child pornography offences' are not included.

Relevant offences ('child sexual assault and related') in the attached report have been identified based on:

1. A selection of offences within the Australian and New Zealand Standard Offence Classification (ANZSOC) Subdivision 031 – Sexual Assault (see attached list). These offences were selected as the offence wording indicates that the victim of the offence was a child;
2. Related sexual offences within the Australian and New Zealand Standard Offence Classification (ANZSOC) subdivisions, where the classification is explicitly directed to offences of a sexual nature against children. These ANZSOC subdivisions are:  
0321 – Non-assaultive sexual offences against a child  
0322 – Child pornography offences

Two tables of results have been provided. One is *offence* based, the other is *person* based (one person may be charged with multiple charges).

The limitation of this report is that other offences within the following ANZSOC subdivisions may be committed against children, but the specific offence wording does not indicate that the victim was a child:

- 0311 – Aggravated sexual assault
- 0312 – Non-aggravated sexual assault
- 0323 – Sexual servitude offences
- 0329 – Non-assaultive sexual offences

As no victim demographic information is contained within the Integrated Justice Information System (IJIS), it is therefore impossible to limit the Court outcome results of the above 4 groups to only offences involving children. Additionally, no interface exists between the Police Real-time Online Management Information System (PROMIS) - which does contain victim demographic data - and IJIS, to enable such linkages to be readily made. **Hence, the data supplied are the known minimum numbers of sexual offences against children and persons charged with such offences: the full numbers are unknown, but are greater than the numbers included in the tables.**

The request referred to 'current' conviction rates. The report provides data for three financial years. The financial year indicates the date that the Apprehension Report (the document required to initiate the charges) was created (as opposed to the date the offence was alleged to have been committed, or the date when the offence was finalised in court). Many persons charged in one year will be finalised in a different year. The tables are based on the year in which charges were initiated against the person (Apprehension Report creation date), even if their case was finalised in a different year. For example, if a relevant charge is initiated during 2011/12 and a conviction is recorded in 2012/13, the event will be recorded as a conviction under the 2011/12 category.

One element within the data to note is the prevalence of offences coded to 0322 – Child pornography offences. The majority of these offences will relate to *possessing* (as opposed to producing) child abuse material. The indirect relationship of a person *possessing* child abuse material to the allegations of child sexual abuse (as requested by the Royal Commission) should be borne in mind.

Another aspect with Court outcome data to note is the time that a matter takes to finalise through from charging to Court outcome. Consequently, the 2013/14 period has higher percentages of offences and persons charged with a status of 'Proceeded but not yet finalised' than previous periods.