

Telephone: 07 3900 6000  
Reference: TFX/XXX – DXX/XXXX

Jenny Wilkinson PSM  
Secretary to the Australian Treasury  
The Treasury

Via email: XXX@treasury.gov.au

Dear Ms Wilkinson PSM,

The Queensland Family and Child Commission (the Commission) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Australian Government's draft legislation to enable victim-survivors of child sexual abuse to access a convicted offender's superannuation to satisfy unpaid court-ordered compensation.

As Chair of Queensland's Child Death Review Board (the Board), I recently delivered the Board's *In Plain Sight* report – a systemic review into institutional and cross-system responses to child sexual abuse, commissioned by the Queensland Government. Using the offending of Ashley Paul Griffith as a case study, the review examined systemic responses over a 20-year period, spanning early childhood education and care, state and federal policing, and the Working with Children Check system.

*In Plain Sight* represents the most comprehensive examination of Australia's safeguarding architecture since the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse almost a decade ago. Its central finding is that those who harm children often operate openly within communities, visible to institutions and systems but not recognised or acted upon. The report identifies structural limitations across safeguarding, accountability and redress frameworks that impede effective protection and long-term healing for victim-survivors.

The draft legislation is directly relevant to these systemic themes, particularly in addressing longstanding barriers to meaningful accountability and compensation for victim-survivors.

While grounded in Queensland systems, the findings of *In Plain Sight* reflect national and international challenges, including fragmented safeguarding responsibilities, limitations in existing accountability mechanisms, and structural barriers to redress. The report makes 28 recommendations, including ten directed to the Australian Government, reflecting the Commonwealth's critical role in shaping national safeguarding architecture.

The Board's report found that many victim-survivors face significant structural and procedural barriers in accessing compensation and specialist support services, especially where abuse has occurred outside institutional settings.

Operational Recommendation 12 specifically calls for improved access to trauma-informed specialist services and for reduced procedural burdens on victim-survivors navigating justice and redress systems. The Recommendation states:

*The Queensland Government undertake a review of its current investment in sexual abuse counselling and support services, and establish a centrally coordinated, dedicated funding allocation specifically for responding to child sexual abuse. This funding should ensure:*

- *Trauma counselling is available to children and parents at the point of disclosure and throughout court processes.*
- *Adolescent mental health support is accessible for children as they transition into adolescence.*
- *Adult survivors of child sexual abuse have access to ongoing therapy and support across their life-course in acknowledgement that the impacts of abuse may re-emerge at key life stages.*
- *Eligibility criteria and service coverage are equitable, removing postcode, age, or relational barriers that currently limit access.*
- *Investment is strategically coordinated across agencies to create a seamless, statewide network of trauma-informed services, replacing the current fragmented patchwork.*

*This approach will embed lifelong, consistent support for victim-survivors and their families, and strengthen Queensland's overall child safeguarding framework.*

The Commission considers that legislative reforms which strengthen enforcement of compensation orders, including access to superannuation assets, are consistent with the intent of this recommendation, particularly in reducing barriers to meaningful recognition, accountability and long-term healing for victim-survivors.

I support the intent of the proposed legislation. In particular, enabling access to superannuation assets to satisfy unpaid compensation orders has the potential to close a significant accountability gap that has allowed perpetrators to shield assets and avoid fulfilling court-ordered obligations. This reform reinforces community expectations that offenders are held financially accountable for the harm they have caused and strengthens the integrity and enforceability of compensation orders.

However, implementation must be carefully designed to avoid placing additional procedural, financial, or emotional burdens on victim-survivors. Requiring victim-survivors to initiate and navigate enforcement processes may involve renewed or protracted engagement with justice systems, legal costs, and risks of re-traumatisation.

The Commission also notes that access to superannuation should not be viewed as a substitute for comprehensive redress and support mechanisms, including the National Redress Scheme and specialist trauma-informed services. Rather, this reform should be understood as one component of a broader, integrated national approach to accountability, recognition and long-term healing for victim-survivors.

The Commission welcomes reforms that strengthen accountability and improve outcomes for victim-survivors. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss the findings of *In Plain Sight* and their relevance to the proposed legislation.

If you would like to discuss this matter further, please don't hesitate to contact me directly on XXXX XXX XXX or via email at XXXX@qfcc.qld.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

**Luke Twyford**

Principal Commissioner

Queensland Family and Child Commission

February 2026