

**Media Release:**

**IGFF Responds to National Redress Scheme Two-Year Review**

IGFF welcomes many of the recommendations made by the federal government's two-year review into the National Redress Scheme.

While the survivor community digests the detail found in the review, one thing is clear – the National Redress Scheme is currently too hard to access and can come at a great personal cost.

The review highlights many important areas where meaningful change is needed to improve survivors' interactions with the Scheme – particularly the need for additional trauma-informed staffing models, more clarity surrounding Independent Decision Makers and to extend further support services to survivors.

We are very encouraged by the clear focus to provide more resources beyond traditional counselling, so that survivors can access services such as caseworkers and financial counselling.

Many in the survivor community are rightfully disappointed that the government has chosen, at this stage, to note rather than support the recommendation to review the "one strike" provision which only allows for a survivor to make one application to the scheme.

The Review notes how difficult, complex and confronting the application process can be. There are simply too many heartbreaking instances of survivors missing out on redress, because of what are essentially bureaucratic tick-boxes, rather than the veracity of their claim.

Closing this avenue after just one attempt, is counter to almost every other aspect highlighted by the Review.

Nobody should have to go "one time, all in" for the chance to receive justice. Especially not those who are vulnerable and experiencing trauma.

We will continue to advocate and to lobby the government to reconsider reviewing the "one strike" process and other recommendations not supported, but acknowledge the many positive steps outlined in the Review.

IGFF will continue to work with survivors, advocates and the federal government to ensure that the National Redress Scheme is accessible and designed to minimise rather than exacerbate harm.

Survivors of institutional sexual abuse often already live with horrific trauma, so we must act swiftly to implement these recommendations as soon as possible, to help lessen the burden on their journey to justice – it is the least they are owed for what they have endured.

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*Clare Leaney is CEO of In Good Faith Foundation, a national charity and support service providing advocacy services to individuals, families and communities impacted by institutional abuse for over twenty years.*

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