



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Royal Commission hearings conclude

The Royal Commission into Family Violence concludes its four weeks of hearings today.

Since 13 July 2015, the Commission has heard from eight lay witnesses who, through their personal stories, shared their experiences of family violence and how the current system may have helped or failed them.

The Commission also heard from over 160 other witnesses, including representatives from specialist family violence services, mainstream health and community services, government departments/agencies, peak bodies and the private sector, as well as advocates and researchers. Some 19 witnesses travelled from overseas or interstate, or gave evidence via video to offer perspectives from other jurisdictions. Several judicial officers also provided information through the hearings.

Each of the 20 days of hearings focused on a specific theme, covering topics like: causes and contributing factors, financial abuse, alcohol and drugs, children, housing and homelessness, mental health, risk assessment and management, police and criminal justice response, diversity of experiences, and integration and information sharing.

Several witnesses participated in 'panels', where two or more witnesses gave evidence and discussed issues from different perspectives. The panel discussions provided a forum for exploring different, and sometimes divergent, views and approaches in a constructive and respectful way.

The public hearings were well-attended by members of the public, service providers, government representatives, and students. An estimated 13,000 unique visitors from around the globe watched the hearings live via web-stream.

Over the next two months, the breadth of evidence heard during the hearings will be closely reviewed and analysed, alongside the information gathered through submissions and consultations.

The Commission expects to hold a series of private stakeholder and expert roundtables in September 2015. The Commission also anticipates holding a limited number of hearings in mid-October 2015.

Quotes attributed to Commissioner Marcia Neave:

*'We are grateful to all the witnesses for generously sharing their expertise, experience and time.'*

*'We are especially struck by the courage of the lay witnesses who appeared. We commend them for their fortitude and thank them for assisting us to understand the very real impacts of the policy and system-wide matters we are exploring.'*

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