“There is much for government and society, in general, to reflect on and learn in relation to the policies and practices that produced the Stolen Generations - the Apology, the *Bringing Them Home Report* and the establishment of the Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme were all important steps; but they are but small steps on the road to Reconciliation; the intergenerational impacts are profound and need sustained and culturally sensitive attention.”

*Hon John Hill*
Independent Assessor
Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme
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I struggled for some time with how to write this report. Clearly, in order to satisfy the need for accountability and transparency, the report has to outline the processes undertaken and summarise the findings. But to report only in this way would produce a fairly bland document. On the other hand, for me to attempt to tell the story of the Stolen Generations after only two years of involvement would be arrogant and disrespectful.

My report attempts, therefore, to document, as faithfully as I can, what happened during the term of my appointment as Independent Assessor and describe what I learnt.

I have also included statements made by some of the applicants (with their permission) so that they, rather than I, tell their stories. Fortunately, many of the Stolen Generations have already documented their stories in writing and both orally and visually - and no doubt more will do so.

A key consideration is how to describe the Stolen Generations: as I report, the impact of the policies and practices of forced removal by governments on generations of Aboriginal people has been devastating. It is very easy therefore to adopt the attitude and language of ‘victimhood’ to describe what happened to Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme applicants and their families. Certainly, most of the applicants do not see themselves in this light and often refer to themselves as survivors.

When battle-wearied soldiers returned from the two great wars, having experienced loss, privation, torture and/or injury, Australia welcomed them home - not just as survivors but as heroes. They were celebrated and honoured. Like the heroes of World Wars I and II some Stolen Generations applicants have flourished, while others have suffered the not unpredictable effects of post-traumatic stress disorder: addiction, mental illness, domestic violence, family breakdown, unemployment and suicide.

There is much for government and society, in general, to reflect on and learn in relation to the policies and practices that produced the Stolen Generations - the Apology, the Bringing Them Home Report and the establishment of the Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme were all important steps; but they are but small steps on the road to Reconciliation; the intergenerational impacts are profound and need sustained and culturally sensitive attention.

Hon John Hill
Independent Assessor
Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme

July 2018
Applicant A was born in 1958 and has undertaken considerable research into the circumstances of her removal. This is her story:

**The first time the authorities visited my mother’s home I was aged 5 months.**

I have a copy of the diary entry of that visit…

*Clean…Yes  Healthy…Yes  Clothing…suitably clad  Treatment…satisfactory  General impression of home…Clean  Appearance of mother…clean*

The inspector who signed off on the diary was R…

I have multiple … diary entries of authorities visiting my mother’s home. The next one is dated 26/3/59 - so I was now 10 months of age. It states…

*Clean…Yes  Healthy…Yes  Treatment…very satisfactory  General impression of home…Clean and tidy  Appearance of mother…clean and tidy*

This was signed off by a different inspector S…

The next one is dated 2/12/59, so I am now 14 months old; it details…

*Clean…yes Healthy…yes  Clothing…adequate  Treatment…kindly*

**I have a diary entry dated 3/5/60 which states child placed at Kate Cox Babies Home.** So I was removed from my mother’s home - age 16 months. I was removed with my sister and I was told they returned the next day and took the 2 week old baby - so my mother was breast feeding at the time.

My mother told me she was bullied into relinquishing her youngest 3 children under the threat of losing the four older ones. When my mother was stolen her mother was similarly told ‘Give us the girl and we will let you keep the two boys.’

My birth mother informed me that she requested many times to visit me at Kate Cox Babies Home but permission was never granted.

19/1/61 A diary entry stating that a full investigation be conducted. My mother told me she suspected her Doctor was conspiring with the child removal authorities against her.

Diary entry. Authorities visit my mother’s home – 15/2/61, itemising all contents within home:

*All the children have separate drawers in various dressing tables and the clothing therein was clean, neatly folded and ironed.*

My birth mother told me that when the authorities visited my home my mother was informed she was never going to see me again, so she might as well sign relinquishing papers or I would spend my entire life in an orphanage.

Relinquish papers signed - (age 2yrs 7mths) – 26/05/1961.

At this stage I had been removed from my mother’s home for over twelve months.

I have spoken with one of my sisters who was raised by my mother. The signature on the relinquishing document was so beautifully signed with eloquent hand writing and loops and scrolls; but, my sister stated that could not possibly be my mother’s hand writing as our mother only went to grade 4 in her schooling.

**I have a diary entry stating child placed with Mr & Mrs P. - (Age 3 yrs 2 mths) – 21/12/1961, a document that states…**

*Mr & Mrs P. inspected for “Regulation 21” - 12/01/1962  
Mr & Mrs P. make application to adopt - 12/01/1962*
Diary entry:

Mrs P. will forward money - 21/03/1962

So, money changed hands!

Diary entry:

Mrs P. phoned anxious to proceed - 10/05/1962

Report of Inspector - 16/05/1962

Adoption - (Age 3 yrs 9 mths) - 4/07/1962

New birth certificate issued … 6/08/1962

Adoptive parents separated - (Age 10 years) - 1968

Adoptive mother admitted to Glenside Psychiatric Hospital (SAME DAY OF SEPARATION).

For a period, while Mrs P. was recovering the four children of the P. family were sent away to adoptive relatives, in itself a traumatic experience. On her discharge Mrs P. had the children returned to her.

I had bonded with Mr P. who was a man of the cloth, a Minister and Sundays were spent sitting in the front row of church while he preached from the pulpit. Then he ran away with his secretary leaving his childhood sweetheart to raise three adopted Aboriginal children and their own natural child.

The favouritism shown towards the young Arrente boy who had dyslexia and the young white natural child was very confronting, very obvious and extremely hurtful. I was also dealing with my own grief of losing my adopted father to whom I had grown a very strong attachment after just 6 short years.

Adopted mother was now prone to fits of rage and violent outbursts - emotional and physical abuse - no affection or words or any demonstration of love. Mrs P. would smash plates of food from fridge over floor in fits of rage - smashed reel to reel tape player repeatedly over my knees.

*It became a horror story which only got worse, as I was then removed (aged 10) and placed in an orphanage - the Salvation Army Fullarton Children’s Home - along with 50 other children.*

Emotional abuse at Fullarton Children’s Home - told multiple times every day by adult staff members (addressed as Auntie):

‘Your mother doesn’t love you’

‘Nobody loves you’

‘Nobody wants you’

‘Hang your head you filthy black’

‘You should be ashamed’

‘Tell no one you are Aboriginal’

I felt like these staff members had only contempt and disgust for me and I grew up feeling hated and despised. And at times I was frightened and intimidated, but the worst part was the sick to your stomach, depression, hopelessness and despair that I felt and witnessed living with the overwhelming sadness and fear in the children around me.

I knew I was Aboriginal but didn’t know why I wasn’t with my birth mother or my Aboriginal family. All I knew was what I had been told repeatedly every day that ‘my mother didn’t love me, nobody wanted me.’

Because I was a child I believed them and grew up believing that I WAS UNLOVEABLE!

I was brainwashed and reprogrammed.

Fullarton Children’s Home was run by two women, dressed every day in white uniforms. The one in charge was called Matron - so everyone addressed her as ‘Matron’ - she was a captain in the Salvation Army.
She was a big woman and had red flakey patches on her skin - she was very scary and I felt intimidated and frightened by her. The second in charge was a dark haired smaller woman, who was a lieutenant in the Salvation Army and everyone addressed her as ‘Lieutenant’. All the other staff dressed in civilian clothes and were addressed as ‘Auntie’.

The cook was a very scary woman also, who would yell and hit children as they peeled massive pots of potatoes or who worked in the scullery washing endless pots and pans after dinner.

There were fifty children in Fullarton - ranging in ages from two years old to 15 - but not one single toy.

The boys got kicked out at age 10, I think and went to Kent Town Boys Home - and then siblings only saw each other once a year at the Town Hall at the Lord Mayor’s Christmas Party - but then it was only from a distance as the hall was full of trestle tables.

Every child had work duties at Fullarton - some had to vacuum, others polish the balustrade. My work duty was to care for four small children - ranging in ages from about two years old to eight - and referred to as my charges. Every day the Aunties would repeatedly say to me ‘Where are your charges?’

I would lie awake at night in my squeaky wire sprung bed and would listen to the squeaks coming from all over the orphanage and hear the sound of sobbing and whimpering of children’s voices of all different ages coming from the four different dormitories.

I would wake in the morning, have to make my bed, then wake my four charges (I think the youngest might have been two or three years of age), get them out of their wet beds and into a bath, then pull the wet sheets off the beds, get them into the washing machine, get clean sheets out and make up the beds, then get my charges out of the bath, dry them and have them dressed and lined up outside the dining room before the bell went for breakfast.

After breakfast I would take my charges to the ‘bowl room’, a massive bathroom that had about 40, I thought, wash bowls, help them wash their faces and clean their teeth and have them lined up out at the bus to go to pre-school, day care - I don’t even know what. Then I would walk to the local school. Everyone at the local school knew that we were ‘Home’ kids - so we didn’t get talked to and were treated like outcasts.

Every week new children turned up, fresh from the desert and very dark skinned - the Aunties would say to us ‘They are here for an education’ - but us children, young as we were, we knew that the only education they wanted was hunting and gathering.

On one occasion I came across two tiny children two and three years of age who had just arrived from the desert. They were cowering and sobbing in the corner of the huge dominating foyer with massive staircase and balustrade. I was only young myself, 11 or 12. I got down on my hands and knees and stretched out my hand to them to try and coax them out of the corner. They were named B. and B. - and seeing them cowering there, terrified, has haunted me my whole life.

One evening around 7.30 pm I was walking down a long corridor and came across one of my charges - a little boy of about four years of age. He was obviously being punished and had been told to stand in the corridor facing the corner - he was dressed in summer pyjamas, short sleeved and shorts - he turned his tear streaked face to me and as I reached out a hand towards him, an Auntie caught us and screamed at me ‘Don’t you touch him - nobody loves him - nobody loves you - hang your head you filthy black!’

I sobbed myself to sleep - yet again.

Moved to Salvation Army Orphanage, Kent Street Mitcham, aged 14 - 1972.

Kent Street was run by a married couple who were very stern and strict and the husband was particularly intimidating and threatening.

I would catch two buses to high school each way. I would look into the crowded bus and imagine that I was recognising family members. I would think: ‘You look like me - are you my sister or brother? Should I get off at the same stop as you? Should I follow you to your house and try and see if my mother is there?’ My despair was overwhelming!
Emotional and physical abuse:

1. Beaten over the shoulders with hockey stick.
2. Beaten about the head with wooden spoon more times than I care to remember.
3. On two separate times stabbed in the hand with a knife - nicked an artery, no first aid or stitches applied.
4. Dinner plate smashed over my head - causing blood to run through my hair.

One morning I was running late for school and as my adoptive mother placed the toast on the table I shoved the last spoonful of cereal into my mouth and as I reached for the toast, my adoptive mother brought the knife down into the back of my hand and the blade hit between two veins puncturing both of them. As the blood gushed out I stared in horror, speechless - and she growled at me “What are you crying about?”

I couldn’t believe it - that she even needed to ask the question - as through my tears I watched the blood spurt out. It was my right hand and I was given no first aid or stitches but had to wrap it in some clothing and head to school. The scar is still visible on the back of my right hand today. The other knife scar is also still visible inside of my right hand, below the thumb.

One cold winter’s rainy day I came back to my adopted mother’s home soaked through to the skin having played a hockey game for school. I sat shivering in the lounge room, huddled over a heater. My adoptive mother came in, turned off the heater and said: ‘You know the heater doesn’t go on until 6pm.’ So I asked if I could have a bath (showers weren’t allowed); she replied ‘No, you know the little ones get the bath water first’ - then we were allowed to bathe.

I said ‘It’s not fair!’ and she, who was standing next to my chair, with a plate in her hand, said ‘No, it never is’ and brought the plate down and smashed it over my head. I had a deep gash in my scalp and blood still through my hair the next day, when I went to school. I went to the school office the next day, asking for Panadol and trying to get some help, either emotional support or some protection, but no one was interested in helping or listening to me.

On another occasion I was seated at the kitchen table and for some reason my adopted mother flew into a rage and started heading towards me with a wooden spoon clenched in her fist and I knew I was about to get another beating about the head. In panic I just clutched at the nearest thing and flung it in her direction trying to ward of the attack. To my absolute horror it was her sewing shears (scissors); one blade pierced her right bicep and it stood there sticking out of her arm. It was just unspeakable - the horror I felt.

I had no idea it was scissors that I had grabbed and I had NO intention to wound or harm her - I was just trying to defend myself - but there it was, imbedded in her arm, sticking out. I didn’t get a beating that day - but the emotions I felt were far worse than any beating and I had some terrible ones. There had been lumps on my head that were so sore that I couldn’t brush my hair, or had trouble lying on a pillow at night.

I felt terrible and sick in my stomach for hurting her like that. I was disgusted with myself for hurting her like that. I was disgusted with myself, I despised myself. No child should have to endure that horror.

I started feeling suicidal and made my first attempt to kill myself.

I started running away from home. I turned to drugs and alcohol to numb the pain. My adopted mother would not allow me to finish high school - told me that I had to bring money into the house. So I enrolled in night school but couldn’t compete with the housewives and their command of the English language.

Kicked out of home.

I knew I was black, yet I had been raised white - so I wasn’t black - but I wasn’t white either! I reasoned that I had two sets of parents, one set black and one set white and it seemed to my young perspective that I had
blown it both times - so therefore I reasoned: 'Clearly I was unloveable'. The only solution I could think of was to use drugs and alcohol every day to numb the pain.

I wasn’t stupid - even as a child, long before I had ever heard of the Stolen Generation or found out I was stolen - I STILL knew that I was supposed to be with... live with... And grow up with... my mother and my family.

I kept imagining strangers looked like me or might be members of my blood family; because of this I had to leave Adelaide - I had to run away - I couldn’t stand the pain - so I took off towards Perth.

My drug use spiralled out of control - by now I was using everything I could get my hands on - speed, cocaine, heroin, marijuana, alcohol - I was a drug addict and a junkie - shooting up zombie-ing through life. Living on the streets and surviving through my wits and my fists. I lived on the streets of Adelaide, Perth, Canberra and Brisbane - slept in parks, park benches, halfway houses or cars.

I was diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and I have had many admissions to the mental health ward and told that I had PTSD my entire life - from the moment I was stolen.

... As a result of my addiction to alcohol I have developed pancreatitis and have had countless hospitalisations. I developed drug induced psychosis as a result of illicit drugs - but still battle with my addiction to alcohol, despite my pancreatic lipase reaching 1700 - normal pancreatic lipase is between 50 to 70 - a lipase count above 2000 may see you in intensive care.

... I have been medicated for in excess of 20 years to try to control my PTSD and have been on a Disability Support Pension for possibly more than 10 years.

... All my life I wasn’t allowed to be Aboriginal; but I wanted so badly to be Aboriginal, so I decided to take an Aboriginal name...

But I wouldn’t enrol and vote - I refused to watch the news or read newspapers - because I did not want to participate in a society that had been so cruel to me!

I heard about the Stolen Generation some years ago and wondered if I was one of the stolen ones. I had heard about Link Up, so I went to their office in Brisbane but I felt too ashamed, humiliated and embarrassed to walk in - so I drove away; but then I got the courage to ring them - that was easier than doing it face to face!

**As it turned out I WAS one of the Stolen Ones and all the records still existed and Link Up found my mother.**

My mother and I started to have phone calls - but she was very angry at times and loving at other times; so I found it confusing and difficult to predict her responses to my phone calls.

Link Up Brisbane facilitated my reunion with my birth mother along with the assistance of Link Up Adelaide.

Words can’t describe how it felt seeing my mother’s face for the first time! I wanted to gaze at her face; absorb every little mannerism; memorise every flicker of an eyelash; soak in every crease of her smile; wipe away her tears.

As it turned out, she was Stolen herself, then had her youngest three removed due to enormous pressure from the authorities.

... My mother informed me that she lived in fear of the authorities and dreaded the inspections as she believed they were aiming to remove all her children so not only us younger three, but the four older ones as well.
My mother … informed me that we are of the Narungga people of Point Pearce and I have documentation which traces my family back four generations and I have been told that I am the fourth generation to be stolen. So my mother, my mother’s mother and her mother were all forcibly removed.

After I was stolen, my mother had two more children to a white man…but was allowed to keep them - I guess because their father was white.

BUT I WANTED TO BE RAISED BY HER.
I WANTED TO HEAR HER VOICE AS I LAY IN BED AT NIGHT AS A SMALL CHILD.
I WANTED TO SEE HER FACE EACH MORNING WHEN I WOKE.
I WANTED TO SMELL HER PERFUME AND
FEEL HER SOFT STOMACH AS SHE HELD ME TIGHT.
NO ONE IN MY ENTIRE CHILDHOOD EVER SAID ‘I LOVE YOU’ OR ‘YOU LOOK PRETTY TODAY’.
NO ONE EVER GAVE ME A HUG.
NO ONE EVER ASKED ME ‘HOW WAS SCHOOL TODAY?’
BECAUSE NO ONE CARED!

I WANTED TO KNOW WHO I WAS AND
WHAT MY REAL NAME WAS.
WHO MY FAMILY WAS.
AND WHERE I BELONGED AND WHERE I FITTED IN THIS GREAT UNIVERSE.
AND ALL OF THIS WAS TAKEN AWAY FROM ME.

I was at ATSICET (Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Corp. for Education and Training) one day and discovered that Point Pearce, where my family is from, had a school. I just broke down sobbing - as I knew that was the school I should have gone to.

I daily live with the intense pressure of being stolen and having PTSD.

I have two speeds - flat out and full stop. I can’t stay still - I have to be busy and have a project on the go. But, I go until exhausted and then collapse - and then the depression hits. I constantly struggle with suicidal ideation - low self esteem and a perpetual fear that the world will at any moment point an accusing finger at me and say: ‘See, told ya, she’s nothing but a filthy black!’ Or walk past my house and say: ‘See, filthy blacks live there.’

The pressure each day to perform and try to be as close to perfect as possible exhausts me. And when the pressure overwhelms me, insanity kicks in and I lose my ability to speak; sometimes I lose the ability to even see. My poor brain becomes so overloaded that it can take in no more fresh information - it can’t even cope with new images - so it shuts down. So, I slump to the floor and close my eyes - it may be 30 minutes before I can see again and much longer before I can string words together and I am able to start making sentences again.

When my children were little, these episodes would see me transported to the psych ward. Now that my children are older, they know how to care for me. Partners have yelled at me to ‘get help’, but when I talk about this I just get very mentally sick. I call these breakdowns ‘a shutdown’ - ‘cos my mind shuts down and won’t work, no matter how much I want it to!

In the middle of these mental crises if you ask me a question that requires a one word answer and IF I can speak then my mind will allow a one word answer. ‘Do you want a drink?’ - I can reply ‘Yes’. But if you ask me a multiple choice question - for example “Would you like a hot drink or a cold drink?” - my mind will go completely insane because I don’t know the right answer and the confusion traps me in internal terror and insanity! It is a very dark and bad place to be - but I have no control and lose the power to function.

My children know how to help me through these episodes to support me as I slowly and gradually return to more normal function.

Needless to say I am having to be very careful about my mental health as I document this and obviously I have had to do this in many stages as the pain is still strong, very real and at times overcomes me. I don’t know if the grieving will ever end.
I have some amnesia around some of the physical abuse that I suffered, as a young child, in the care of the state. I can remember a blow to the top of my skull and a male with his hand on my throat attempting to drown me in a bathtub full of water. To this day I have a depression in my skull and I have fear of water and although I can swim, I can never put my head under water or dive. I have no recollection of who that male was.

My children all have different fathers - four children, four different men.

I used to feel ashamed about that and judged myself harshly; but now I attribute it to the fact that because I had my roots ripped out from underneath me at a young age, when I was stolen; the impact destabilised me to the point that, as an adult, it is impossible for me to form lasting relationships. Consequently, I had to raise each of my children single handedly - without any benefit of good, healthy or loving role modelling and without any support of family or extended kinship.

My children, also, to this day, are profoundly affected by my enforced removal from my mother’s home and separation from my family. As a result I and my children have no connection with grandparents, uncles, aunts or cousins and essentially we are islands in the sea of humanity.

I feel that I lack stability, everything I attempt is short lived.

AND I STILL FEEL THAT I AM UNLOVEABLE.

AND I STILL FEEL LIKE I DON'T BELONG

AND I FEEL COMPLETELY CAUGHT BETWEEN TWO CULTURES.

And I have trouble comprehending how or why my children would even love me.

I really have trouble understanding the concept of love.
Establishment of the Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme

Ministerial Statement

On 19 November 2015, the Honourable Kyam Maher MP, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation announced the establishment of the scheme in a Ministerial Statement to the Legislative Council [see Appendix 1 for the full statement].

Minister Maher said, in part:

…it is essential that we acknowledge the effect that forced removal of Aboriginal children have had, not only on the individuals, families and communities who suffered, but on the whole Australian community. Whether we accept it readily or stubbornly deny it, forced removal policies are a glaring stain on our national identity, and the suffering caused by these policies is far from being limited to the individuals who were directly affected - whole, entire communities were devastated.

…We cannot change our history but we can face up to it and we can do what is within our power to both change the way our history is regarded and to ensure that we create a better future, especially for the Aboriginal South Australians who were affected by forced removals, and for their children and their children’s children.

Over the past couple of decades, as a society we have taken many steps in the direction of taking responsibility for the wrongs of the past. Twenty-three years ago next month, the then prime minister Paul Keating acknowledged this is the Redfern speech. He said:

We took the traditional lands and smashed the traditional way of life. We brought the diseases. The alcohol. We committed the murders. We took the children from their mothers.

Prime minister Keating then established the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Straight Children from Their Families. Two days after the Bringing Them Home report was tabled in federal parliament in May 1997, the then South Australian minister for Aboriginal affairs, Dean Brown, led this parliament in saying sorry. He said:

To the children who were taken from their mothers and fathers, to the mothers and fathers who watched in pain as their babies and children were taken from their side or from their schools. To these people we apologise.

More than a decade passed before the federal parliament did the same thing. Kevin Rudd, on behalf of the nation, in recognising this said:

The hurt, the humiliation, the degradation and the sheer brutality of the act of physically separating a mother from her children is a deep assault on our senses and on our most elemental humanity.

…Today we take another step in the direction of facing up to past wrongs. The state government has today announced a Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme…
In 2011 The South Australian Legislative Council referred the Stolen Generations Reparations Tribunal Bill 2010, introduced by Hon. Tammy Franks MLC to the Aboriginal Lands Parliamentary Standing Committee. While the Committee found the proposed legislation ‘too broad, making it difficult to cost and administer’ it did support ‘a simplified framework to make ex gratia payments to South Australian Aboriginal people who were removed (stolen) from their families as children, based on the Stolen Generations of Aboriginal Children Act 2006 (Tasmania).’

The Committee heard evidence that ‘up to 300 Aboriginal people could receive an ex gratia payment’.

Tasmania passed legislation in 2006 to introduce Australia’s first reparation scheme. A former Premier of Tasmania The Hon. Ray Groom, was appointed the Stolen Generations Assessor.

Following his Ministerial Statement on 19 November 2015, Minister Maher issued a news release [see Appendix 3 for the full statement] which, in part, said:

…Today we launch a reparations scheme enabling us to compensate South Australian members of the Stolen Generations without the need for litigation, and taking into account the loss of documents, witnesses, and memories over time.

Importantly, the scheme will also allow members of the Stolen Generations to tell their stories, which the 1997 Bringing Them Home report found was a critical part of the healing process.

Minister Maher says individual reparations will be recommended by an independent assessor.
"The assessor’s primary role will be to determine whether an applicant is eligible for an ex gratia payment, and if so, assess what level of harm has been caused," he says.

“As part of the process, the assessor will be able to hear the personal stories of applicants, and speak with family members and people connected with the removal.

“Based on the assessor’s recommendations, the Minister will decide the amount of the payment. The scheme allows for payments of up to $50,000.

“The reparations scheme will begin on March 31 next year, and the application process will remain open for 12 months.’

In addition, the minister announced that the government would provide individuals who received an offer with $1,000 for legal advice.

Appointment of Independent Assessor and support staff

I was appointed formally to the position of Independent Assessor on 29 April 2016; such position to terminate on 30 June 2018.

Application form and guide to applicants

See Appendices 4 and 5 for the forms, which were distributed as widely as possible via Aboriginal controlled and other service providers in South Australia and more broadly, backed up by a modest media campaign, especially through Aboriginal media.

The Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement and Relationships Australia were provided with funding to assist applicants complete their forms. Both organisations were very helpful to both the applicants and to our small SGRS team.

Change in Assessor’s role

Following discussions with individuals and groups advocating for the Stolen Generations I came to the view that my role of assessing the level of harm that had been caused to individuals - and by extension the level of reparation to be offered - was problematic, and ought to be changed. I was pleased that the Minister accepted my advice.

Many Stolen Generations advocates were of the view that a likely outcome of the original procedure would create disharmony in families and in the community generally. I also felt, that as the judgements that I would need to make would necessarily be subjective, there was a significant risk of unfairness.

In addition, there were impossible questions to consider, for example: Is it more painful to have been taken as a baby and know nothing of your family, country and language or to have been taken as an eight year old with memories of family, country and language fading over time?

Finally, I was concerned that the process of having to prove the level of harm would be in itself harmful to applicants.

As a consequence of the decision to make the change to treat all successful applicants equally, all were offered the same amount, i.e. $20,000. While there was some criticism that $50,000 was no longer available it should be noted that if the original arrangements had stayed in place, while some applicants may have been offered $50,000 many would have been offered a lot less - in fact, quite a bit less than the $20,000 that was offered.
The SGRS criteria

a. Applicant must be Aboriginal

It was clear from available records that all but two of the applicants were Aboriginal. In fact, the Aboriginality of the applicants was generally the factor which brought them and their families to the attention of authorities in the first place.

b. Removed from family

This criterion was in many ways the most difficult to understand, to establish and to explain. It is my view that the overwhelming number of applicants identified as Stolen Generation; for example, they believed they were removed from their families by the direct or indirect actions of the State and its agents.

This belief was not always justified by the circumstances: in a small number of cases children were relinquished by their parents and placed with other family members, foster carers or in institutions without any government involvement. These were purely private arrangements.

In a larger number of cases children, shortly after birth, were given up for adoption by their mothers who signed adoption forms; in some cases fathers were also signatories. There is no doubt that single women, especially young single women, regardless of race, were often pressured to give up their babies for adoption. Over much of the period that the SGRS covered there was often little support for unmarried mothers and much social stigma - so that pressure was very real.

In a small number of the adoption cases, where there was clear evidence that the decision to adopt was not made willingly or even knowingly, I recommended those applicants for offers of reparation.

In most adoption cases my recommendations were that offers not be made. It gave me no pleasure to make these recommendations, as often those who had experienced adoption seemed amongst the saddest of the applicants. It is not hard to imagine that growing up feeling rejected could be as bad as growing up having been ‘stolen’ by the government.

In any event my recommendations were consistent with the criteria and with The Bringing Them Home Report:

…Throughout this report … we refer to ‘forcible removal’. The term contrasts the removals which are the subject of this inquiry with removals which are truly voluntary, at least on the part of parents who relinquished their children, or where the child was orphaned and there was no alternative indigenous carer to step in.

c. Prior to 31 December 1975

This date was chosen as this was the year that the Commonwealth Government passed the Racial Discrimination Act 1975. This was also the date used by the Tasmanian Government in its scheme.

A small number of applicants were born after 1975 and were consequently not eligible for consideration.
d. Without a court order

The original application form specified that to be eligible applicants had to have been removed from their families ‘without a court order’. The thinking was that this distinguished those applicants who were removed ‘unfairly’ pursuant to administrative fiat and those who were removed ‘fairly’ with due legal process.

These latter cases were conducted under legislation which was supposed to be applied regardless of race. The removals thus undertaken (for reasons of neglect, abuse etc) were done using procedural fairness – i.e. a court process where parents had a right to be heard by an impartial court.

These contrasted with removals that were undertaken via a law specifically directed at Aboriginal people and that provided for removals to be undertaken administratively – i.e. based on the discretion of public servants without reference to a court.

As we considered the records of individual removals under the welfare laws, and in particular the background reports of welfare officers and others that led to these removals, it became clear that the way in which the law (i.e. the *Maintenance Act* and similar in the Territory) was administered, both by public servants and the courts, was not necessarily as fair in relation to Aboriginal families as non-Aboriginal families.

This was because of a range of historical, economic and cultural factors, the effect of which can be summarised as significant material disadvantage and prejudice experienced by Aboriginal families daily.

It appeared from the records and from the personal accounts of applicants that they were very often the subject of different and greater scrutiny and judgement by welfare officers. They were often already struggling both materially and psychologically, because of a history of dislocation from their traditional lands and ways of living to enforced lives on reserves and missions. They were often for cultural reasons at a clear disadvantage in their ability to answer or challenge the legal proceedings.

Having considered the vast bulk of the applications, I formed the view that to exclude the group of applicants removed subject to court orders would be wrong.

Certainly, it was very clear to me that the means by which children were removed was not determinative of their experiences in foster care or institutional care.

It was also very clear to me the overwhelming majority of applicants to the Scheme strongly identified as Stolen Generation. How they were removed was often unknown to them - they were usually babies or young children at the time of their removal. The fact that they were removed from family, culture, land and language is only too well known to them and on the basis of that knowledge they identify with others as being of the Stolen Generations.

To reject their applications would be seen by many applicants as a cruel denial of their identity as Stolen Generation and would be tantamount to another ‘removal’ by government.

This thinking is reinforced by *The Bringing Them Home Report*:

**Compulsion**

…*It encompasses both the officially authorised use of force or coercion and illegally exercised force or coercion. It clearly extends to the removal of a child by a government delegate such as a protector or police officer pursuant to legislative powers… The term clearly extends to removal of a child on a court order.* [my emphasis] Indeed a court is the ultimate power which can ‘compel’ the removal of children from their families.
At time of removal usual place of residence was SA; or they were removed by South Australian authorities

During discussions with Aboriginal people in South Australia, prior to the establishment of the criteria, a strong argument was made that not only should the scheme include Aboriginal people removed within South Australia but it should include Aboriginal people from the Northern Territory, removed as children from their families and then transferred [often much later] to South Australian institutions or foster families, where there was the participation of a South Australian government agency.

As mentioned in the section of this Report dealing with the laws of the Northern Territory, the Australian Government from 1911 was responsible for legislation which permitted removals of Aboriginal children from their families. This is despite a commonly held view that because the Territory had once been the responsibility of South Australia, the South Australian Government continued to exercise authority in relation to Aboriginal people living in the Northern Territory.

So why did the South Australian Government decide to include children removed in the Territory?

The National Archives Research Guide states;

By 1941 the (Commonwealth) Government had decided that the care of half-caste children should be handed over to the missions. Catholic children were sent to Garden Point on Melville Island, Methodist children to Croker Island, and Church of England children to other locations. Other children were adopted out to white families in southern States.

The main references in the Bringing Them Home Report to the taking of Aboriginal children from the Northern Territory to South Australia are the following:

The bombing of Darwin in February 1942 forced the evacuation of the missions in the Northern Territory. The children were taken to ‘homes, rented rural housing and disgraceful makeshift camps’ (Austin 1993 page 215) in South Australia, new South Wales and Victoria. They lived there for several years, far from their families and communities. In 1946 some but not all of these children returned to the Territory. Some went ‘missing’. Others were refused financial assistance by either Commonwealth or State governments to return to the Territory.

In 1955 the Commonwealth Government decided that Aboriginal children would have greater opportunities if they left the Territory and lived in a foster home, boarding school or other educational institution in one of the southern States. This scheme continued until the late 1960s.

Perhaps the most positive step taken by the government in regard to part-aborigines has been to transfer where practicable, part-aboriginal children from the Territory environment, and give them a chance to develop normally in southern States. …Since this scheme began in 1956, 63 children have been transferred to foster homes and institutions in southern States where they are attending technical colleges and high schools, and undertaking apprenticeships, nursing and other courses; as at 30th June, 1961, 47 of these children were being maintained under the Scheme. (Progress towards Assimilation 1960 page 22).

It is not hard to imagine how difficult it may have been for, possibly illiterate, with English as a second or third language, Aboriginal parents to obtain justice in a magistrate’s court, where those giving evidence and those deciding were white.

I was pleased that the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation [Hon. Kyam Maher MP] accepted my recommendation and that this criterion was removed.
Reverend Bernie Clarke, who worked at the Croker Island mission, described the selection of foster families in South Australia.

There was an active program of fostering children in which the government elicited the support of the churches... The churches would provide the Northern Territory Welfare Department with lists of names of people willing to be foster parents. Children from the age of four upwards would then be placed in a foster placement here in South Australia... It was a direct arrangement between the church and the Welfare Department in the Northern Territory. In my experience, nearly every foster arrangement resulted in those children going back to search for their roots - nearly everyone tried to find out (evidence 119).

As mentioned, the removal of Aboriginal children in the Northern Territory without a court order under the welfare legislation was the work of the Commonwealth Government which administered the Northern Territory from 1911 until 1978. How was a child removed under the authority of the Northern Territory Chief Protector or Director of Native Affairs taken to live in South Australia? What role did the South Australian Government have in this?

It seems likely that transfers from the Territory were an arrangement between the Northern Territory Administration, the relevant churches in the Territory and their counterpart offices and facilities in South Australia. This fits with the statement in the National Archives Research Guide, referred to above.

There was nothing in the Ordinances to provide for a formal transfer of the guardianship of an Aboriginal child, for example, from the Chief Protector/Director of Native Affairs/Director of Welfare to a relevant government authority in another state.

The following example illustrates what may have occurred:

A child in the 1950s was removed from their mother in the Northern Territory and subsequently transferred to South Australia. It appears that following the transfer the guardianship remained with the Protector/Director in the Territory, but that the South Australian Director of Social Services was consulted about the transfer and placement of the child and thereafter effectively acted as the Commonwealth’s agent in monitoring the child’s arrangements.

In this particular case, the child was in the care of the Catholic Church’s Garden Point Mission in Darwin. The applicant’s records include a copy of a letter from the Bishop of Darwin to the NT Director of Welfare dated July 195-. In it, the Bishop proposes moving the child to Adelaide to live with a foster family. He then states:

I am not able to provide further information at this stage. However, you have assured me that such act is in accordance with the policy of your department, and I feel sure that the way is now clear to have made the necessary investigations by the Social Service people in Adelaide.

In his reply, the Director of Welfare confirms that he has written to the Director of Social Services in South Australia requesting an investigation of, and a report concerning the proposed home for the child.

Whether the State of South Australia was involved in each transfer cannot be determined. In any event, considerations of fairness to those transferred from the Territory as children and who have lived all their subsequent lives in South Australia, meant that they were included in the SA scheme. One way of looking at this inclusion is to extend the ‘stolen’ metaphor - the children may have been ‘stolen’ in the Northern Territory but they were ‘received’ in South Australia.
Before 1975 there were several legal provisions operational in SA, sometimes overlapping, which are relevant to the SGRS.

**Maintenance Act 1926 - 1937**

The Act made provision for the welfare and maintenance of children and destitute persons, the protection of married women, and the assistance of women to maintain their children. It established the Children’s Welfare and Public Relief Board (CWPRB) as an administrative body for the purposes of the Act.

Part IV of the Act was concerned with destitute and neglected children (including Aboriginal children). It allowed any constable to lay an information or a complaint alleging a child was destitute or neglected and bring them before the court for the matter to be heard; in other words, the child was charged with being neglected or destitute. Importantly, the Act required that the guardians (parents) of the child had to be given the opportunity to be heard by the court before the Crown took any action regarding the child’s welfare.

**Children’s Protection Act 1936**

This Act created offences with respect to the ill-treatment, neglect, abandonment and endangerment of children, and enabled orders to be made for the removal of a child where there was reasonable cause to suspect the child was being ill-treated etc.

The courts could authorise a police officer or a member of the CWPRB to remove a child (for their protection) and place the child in the institution until they could be brought to court. Again the question of the removal of the child was reviewed by the court.

**Aborigines Act 1911**

The purposes of this Act were the ‘protection, care and control’ of Aboriginal people. The ‘control’ purpose was given effect through provisions aimed at the separation, and separate treatment, of Aboriginal people from the general population. The Aborigines Department was established, and the responsible Minister was given power to appoint a Chief Protector and district Protectors.

Of particular relevance, section 10 provided that the Child Protector was the ‘legal guardian’ of all Aboriginal children (whether or not the child had a parent or other relative living) unless that child had been made a State child, i.e. under the general child welfare legislation; and that the district Protectors were the local guardians of the Aboriginal children in their districts.

Section 38 enabled the Governor to make regulations for various purposes, including:

- [enabling any aboriginal or half-caste child to be sent to and detained in an aboriginal institution or industrial school and ](for the control, care and education of aboriginals or half-castes in aboriginal institutions and for the supervision of such institutions.

It appears that no regulations were made under the 1911 Act. Moreover, the Act itself did not provide any clear, express power to enable a child to be removed from their parents without the consent of their parents or a court order.
Aborigines (Training of Children) Act 1923

This was the first law in South Australia providing a process for the removal of children from their parents without a court order - but only Aboriginal children.

The Act applied to legitimate Aboriginal children of 14 years or more who had attained a certain certificate under the Education Act 1915; and to illegitimate Aboriginal children of any age who were:

*in the opinion of the Chief Protector and the State Children’s Council, neglected or otherwise proper persons to be dealt with under this Act.*

Section 6 enabled the Protector, subject to the approval of the State Children’s Council, to commit such children to any institution within the meaning of the State Children Act 1895 under the control of the Council, by means of a Transfer of Control. The child would thereby become a State child within the meaning of the State Children Act.

Aborigines Act 1934 -1939

This Act consolidated the 1911 and 1923 Acts.

In 1939, amendments were made that replaced the Chief Protector of Aborigines with the Aborigines Protection Board (APB). The APB comprised the Minister and six others appointed by the Governor. The work of the APB was carried out by officers of the Department and ‘protectors of Aborigines’ appointed by the Minister, while the APB succeeded the Chief Protector as the ‘legal guardian’ of all Aboriginal children.

Section 10 was essentially the same as s.10 of the Aborigines Act 1911, with the APB replacing the Chief Protector as ‘legal guardian’.

Sections 37-40 made the same provisions for the removal of Aboriginal children into institutions under the control of the CWPRB as the Aborigines (Training of Children) Act. Section 39 provided that, upon execution of a ‘transfer of control’, the child became a State child within the meaning of the Maintenance Act 1926.

Administrative removal of Aboriginal children

From 1923 onwards the decision to remove an Aboriginal child could be made administratively; the decision required the written agreement of the Chief Protector/APB and the CWPRB in the form of a Transfer Order.

The only conditions imposed by the legislation to remove a child were that:

- the child must be Aboriginal
- and, if legitimate, they must be at least 14 or must have attained a qualifying certificate under the Education Act 1915
- or, if the child were illegitimate, the Chief Protector/APB and the CWPRB must be of the opinion that the child was neglected or otherwise a proper person to be dealt with under the Act.

There was little in the Act to limit the basis on which an opinion could properly be formed that a child was a ‘proper person’ to be subject to removal, and there was no provision for the review of such decisions, or for appeal to a court.
The role of the Protector, figures quite prominently in many applicant stories. For an excellent history of this role see *The Last Protector* by Cameron Raynes, published by Wakefield Press in 2009. In his foreword to the book Julian Burnside QC describes how the role worked:

> in South Australia the power to remove was ultimately quite narrowly circumscribed. The Aborigines Protection Board (APB) had to gain the agreement of the Children’s Welfare and Public Relief Board (CWPRB) in order to take an Aboriginal child into care. The alternative was a court order, on proof the child was neglected…

The CWPRB was not willing to lend itself to a program of removals driven by a policy of assimilation rather than welfare concerns. The APB did not want the ignominy of court orders, which, of necessity, would be predicated on the board’s own failure to discharge its obligations as guardian. William Richard Penhall was last Chief Protector of Aborigines in South Australia, and was secretary of the APB from 1940 until 1953. He drove a system under which the APB, lacking legal power to remove Aboriginal children, simply removed children as the opportunity arose.

Penhall was, it seems, willing to give effect to the government’s wishes regardless of the law; he was willing to treat Aboriginal people with astonishing harshness, despite the ostensibly beneficial purposes of the legislation he administered. He was an early example of that brand of public servant who conceives it his duty to implement government policy, rather than to administer the laws made by parliament. And he added a dash of his own hard, punitive personality to the mix. He was prepared to deny food to Aboriginal parents if they did not agree to give up their children; he authorised the removal of children if they did not agree to give up their children; he authorised the removal of children in full knowledge that to do so was beyond the APB’s legal power; he facilitated the illegal detention of Aboriginal children in mission stations run by church bodies and helped conceal the illegality from the children and their parents alike…

> It is inconceivable that Penhall could have conducted the affairs of the APB for so long in this manner if he did not have the tacit support of the government and a majority of the population. But the legislation did not authorise what was done…

**Aboriginal Affairs Act 1962**

On 28 February 1963 this Act came into operation repealing the *Aborigines Act 1934-1939*. From this time, Aboriginal people and their children were subject theoretically to the same laws as all other South Australians.

It put an end to a law that for forty years had allowed Aboriginal children and their parents to be treated differently from others. This was for the somewhat vaguely expressed purposes of ‘protection’ and ‘control’; and was very clearly based on considerations of race. More particularly, the *Aboriginal Affairs Act 1962* ensured that from then on any proposal by the State to remove an Aboriginal child from custody, care and control of its parents was a matter for judicial decision, and a court process that enabled parents to be heard.

Although the legislation had changed, and it is clear from welfare records of the time that attitudes were starting to change, it is not clear that there was an immediate change in the way the welfare law was administered, nor, perhaps, could this be expected given the systemic nature of the prejudicial treatment of Aboriginal families by decades of government administrators and by the community at large. For this reason removals of Aboriginal children under general welfare laws, even after the repeal of the *Aborigines Act 1934-1939*, were considered by the SGRS as potentially eligible. However a clear line was drawn at enactment of the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975*, which explicitly outlawed the prejudicial treatment of any person based on race.
Adoption of Children Act 1925-1965

This Act introduced a formal process for the adoption of children, requiring application to the Court by a person who met the eligibility criteria set out in the Act.

The Act required that, before making an order for adoption the Court must take evidence, from witnesses in person or by affidavit, concerning the matters required by the Act. The Court had to be satisfied of certain matters, including that the child was under the age of fifteen and that the applicant was a fit and proper person to have the care and custody of the child; and the Court must receive the written consent of both parents to the adoption except in certain specified circumstances.

The Act was amended on a number of occasions and replaced by the Adoption of Children Act 1967; however a court process, including consideration of the evidence as to the eligibility of the applicant and the consent of the parents, remained key requirements for the legal adoption of any child.

A court order for adoption should be distinguished from a court order for the ‘removal’ of a child; that is, it is not made for the purpose of, and does not authorise, the removal of a child from the care and control of its parents into the care and control of the State.

Current judicial authority

It is important to bear in mind that the SGRS was a purely administrative scheme. This meant that eligibility was not dependent on the application of laws and rules of evidence. Nonetheless, it is appropriate to recognise developments in the law about the removal of Aboriginal children in the past and, in particular, the seminal decision of the Full Court of the Supreme Court in *The State of South Australia v Lampard-Trevorrow* [2010] SASC 56.

Although concerned with the specific facts and circumstances of the case, and the way in which the plaintiff, Mr Bruce Trevorrow, was removed from his parents when he was a young child, this decision provides a critical interpretation of key aspects of the *Aborigines Protection Act 1934-1939*.

The Act appointed the Board as the ‘guardian’ of every Aboriginal child in the State. The Full Court in *Trevorrow* found that while this meant that the Board was responsible for watching over and making certain provisions for the welfare of Aboriginal children across the States and for intervening where necessary to ensure a child’s welfare, it did not abrogate from the common law rights of parents to the custody and control of their children, including the right to decide whether or not to relinquish that care and control.

The Court found that Mr Trevorrow was placed in hospital as a very young child, and from there into foster care, by government officials acting by or with the authority of the Aborigines Protection Board. The Court found that Mr Trevorrow’s parents were entitled to be consulted or heard about the decisions resulting in their son being fostered, but were not given that opportunity. The resulting long separation of the plaintiff from his natural family as a child had a devastating effect on his life.

Current judicial authority highlights that for much of the 20th century, not only were there laws enabling administrators to remove Aboriginal children from their parents using administrative processes, without the involvement of the courts as required in relation to non-Aboriginal families, but the ways in which those laws were administered were not necessarily fair or legal.
**Northern Territory Law**

**South Australian government of the Northern Territory 1863 - 1911**

In 1863 Letters Patent were signed by Queen Victoria with the effect of formally annexing to South Australia the area of land that now comprises the Northern Territory. It was referred to as ‘the Northern Territory of South Australia’ and came under the jurisdiction of the South Australian Government.

The SA Government set up a number of administrative agencies in the Territory, and sought to develop the land through various initiatives including land sales and the construction of the overland telegraph from Adelaide to Palmerston (now Darwin). However, the planned development did not occur as hoped, and a lack of financial return to offset the high cost of administration meant the State incurred financial losses over several decades.

With federation in 1901, the Commonwealth gained control of customs and immigration in the Territory. South Australia proposed that the Commonwealth take over financial and legislative responsibility for the Territory as well; in December 1907 the two governments signed an agreement for this to occur. South Australia enacted the *Northern Territory Surrender Act 1908*, and the Commonwealth enacted the *Northern Territory (Administration) Act 1910*. The transfer was finally effected when the *Northern Territory (Administration) Act 1910* (NTAA) became operative on 1 January 1911.

**Commonwealth government of the Northern Territory 1911 - 1978**

The NTAA was the chief instrument for the administration of the Territory.

Section 4 provided for the appointment of the Administrator, who was subject to the instructions of the Commonwealth Minister of State for External Affairs; and enabled the Governor-General to make laws in the form of ‘ordinances’ for the Northern Territory.

*The Northern Territory Acceptance Act 1910* provided that, at the time of acceptance, South Australian laws: shall continue in force, but may be altered or repealed by or under any law of the Commonwealth (section 7(1)).

Where a South Australian law operating in the Territory at the time of acceptance vested any power or function in the governor of South Australia, or any authority of that State, that function or power became vested in the Governor-General or the authority exercising similar powers and functions under the Commonwealth (section 7(3)).

The Commonwealth Government continued its administration of the Northern Territory until self-government was conferred by the Commonwealth’s *Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act 1978*.

**The removal of Aboriginal children in the Northern Territory**

Prior to 1910 there were no specific laws applying to Aboriginal children in the Northern Territory and no legal mechanism for removing them from their families other than under the relevant welfare legislation applying to all children in South Australia and its Northern Territory; i.e. the *State Children’s Act 1895* (SA) and *Children’s Protection Act 1899* (SA).

The first laws specifically providing for the different treatment of Aboriginal people, including children, were contained in the *Northern Territory Aboriginals Act 1910*, enacted by the South Australian Parliament while the Northern Territory was still governed by South Australia.

This Act provided for the establishment of a Northern Territory Aboriginals Department ‘charged with the duty of controlling and promoting the welfare of the aboriginals’ (s.4); for the appointment of a Chief Protector
of Aboriginals for the Northern Territory (s.7) to be responsible for administering the Department, under
the minister, and executing the provisions of the Act, and for the appointment of local Protectors to be
responsible for Aboriginal people within specified districts.

Relevantly, section 9 of the Act provided that:

The Chief Protector shall be the legal guardian of every aboriginal and half-caste child, notwithstanding that any
such child has a parent or other relative living, until such child attains that age of eighteen years, except while
such child is a State child within the meaning of “The State Children Act, 1895”…

The 1910 Act made no clear or specific provision for the removal of children from their families, but section 49 provided that regulations could be made by the Governor on a number of matters, including:

(b) Providing for the care, custody, and education of the children of aboriginals and half-castes:

(c) Enabling any aboriginal or half-caste child to be sent to and detained in an aboriginal institution or industrial
school:

(d) For the control, care, and education of aboriginals or half-castes in aboriginal institutions and for the
supervision of such institutions:

No regulations were made by the South Australian Governor before the Commonwealth Government took
over the legal and administrative control of the Northern Territory in 1911.

Shortly after the transfer of the Territory to the Commonwealth, the Governor-General made the
Aboriginals Ordinance 1911. This incorporated, and was to be read as one with the Northern Territory
Aboriginals Act 1910, but also contained some new, additional provisions. In particular, the following new
provision clearly enabled the removal of Aboriginal children on the basis of an administrative decision by the
Chief Protector:

3.-(1) Without limiting or affecting any other powers conferred upon him by the Act, the Chief Protector shall be
entitled at any time to undertake the care, custody or control of any aboriginal or half-caste if in his opinion
it is necessary or desirable in the interests of the aboriginal or half-caste for him to do so.

The Ordinance (and the Act) was replaced by the Aboriginals Ordinance 1918, but its provisions were largely
the same, and there was no material difference in relation to the power to remove children. Multiple
changes to the Ordinance over time were made without material changes to the statutory powers which
supported the practices of removing Aboriginal and half-caste children, although the 1939 Ordinance
abolished the role of Chief Protector and replaced it with the Director of Native Affairs.

The Welfare Ordinance 1953 repealed the Aboriginals Ordinance, and abolished the various special functions
and powers expressly applying to Aboriginal people only. The Native Affairs Branch of the Northern
Territory Administration was replaced by the Welfare Branch, and the Director of Native Affairs was replaced
by the Director of Welfare. However, the focus of this legislation was hardly different from the earlier scheme.

The Director of Welfare was given a wide range of powers in relation to any person whom the
Administrator declared to be a ‘ward’ on the basis that the person ‘stands in need of special care and
assistance’ due to the person’s ‘manner of living’; ‘inability, without assistance, adequately to manage his
own affairs’; standard of social habits and behaviour’; or ‘personal associations’. The Director of Welfare was
made the guardian of all persons declared to be ‘wards’.

Although the Welfare Ordinance was not expressed to apply to any particular group or class of persons,
it provided that no adult person entitled to vote could be declared a ‘ward’. Obviously, that put non-
Aboriginal adults beyond scope. However, up to this point, non-Aboriginal children could only be removed
from their families via a court process under the State Children’s Act 1895 and Children’s Protection Act 1899.

That the Welfare Ordinance 1953 was intended to apply only to Aboriginal people was made clear when the
separate Child Welfare Ordinance 1958 was made, providing for the removal of non-Aboriginal children only
upon a finding of neglect or destitution by a court.

The Welfare Ordinance 1953 was repealed and replaced by the Social Welfare Ordinance 1964, which was in
turn replaced by the Community Welfare Act 1983 after the Territory gained self-government.
Commonwealth Government responsibility

It is clear that between 1911 and 1978 the Commonwealth was responsible for the laws providing for the ‘protection’ and ‘control’ of Aboriginal people in the northern Territory and for administering those laws. Any removals of Aboriginal children during this period were the direct responsibility of, and were undertaken by or with the authority of, the Chief Protector, the Director of Native Affairs or the Director of Welfare.

As the Commonwealth Government’s National Archives Research Guide states:

The practice of taking children from their families and for perceived neglect had begun early in the Commonwealth era. This was the genesis of the policy that would affect many Aboriginal families both then and in later years, and create a group of people known today as the ‘Stolen Generations’.

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Applicant B

One man’s story: I spoke German, Dutch, French and Latin - but not a word of my people’s language

This is an edited version of the recording of a conversation with Applicant B made in Darwin in September 2016.

I was born on Bathurst Island...February 1951 and arrived on Garden Point mission...one month after I was born.

I found the story out later that Mum had me for three weeks, nurturing me, and then the word got out and Welfare found out about me. And Auntie G. (she practised midwifery throughout the Island, she delivered the babies - she’s also Stolen Generation)...hid me in the bush the fourth week for five days straight and then Welfare found us...so on 13 March I arrived at the Mission.

My father was an Irish Catholic priest...I found out when I was 20 years of age, in 1971.

Applicant B explained how he found out about his father in 1971, in Adelaide:

This Welfare Officer Mark H., a top bloke, he looked after all of us Territorians, that was his job and I asked him. Well, he was asking me about my mother and father and Tiwi Islands. (I was writing back to the nuns all the time, Sister N., Sister M. and Sister A. and they kept writing back 'just accept your heritage as it is.' They used those words and I didn’t know what that meant.) ...He found out within five days, he said ‘You had better sit down. Did you know that your father was a Catholic priest?’

I was strict Catholic, even going to church every Sunday - and that was it, I threw religion out the door, on the spot.

After almost eight years at Garden Point Mission on Melville Island Applicant B was moved, first to Darwin:

There were three weeks left of the third term...I went to St Mary’s Catholic Primary School, in Smith St (Darwin). I remember, I think it was the second day after school - you kick the footy around and I was hungry...I knew where the kitchen was, because I could smell the cooking and I knew that they had domestics, Aboriginal domestics there and I asked this Aboriginal lady ‘I’m hungry, can I have a sandwich?’...and I still remember it was marmalade.

I love marmalade, just the one slice and I had two bites out of it and the nun came in and she started yelling and she knocked it out of my hand and told the Aboriginal woman off and said ‘You stay there’, she went off and came back a couple of minutes later with pills and I got it every second day or so, so for the next three weeks I was on the toilet...She gave me laxatives, for punishment, for asking for a piece of bread.

They treated me so bad. I didn’t have a bedroom. I slept on the balcony on a cane bed, but the way they treated me, they scorned me. And every time I’d say ‘Hello sister’, they were ratten to me.
Soon as I found out …that my father was an Irish Catholic priest I thought straight back to those nuns, and ‘Oh, that’s why they treated me so bad.’ They took it out on me.

I asked if he had ever seen his mother while he was on the Mission:

No, no, but they told me, ‘Your mother’s on the next island, at Bathurst Island.’ …Never saw her, I wasn’t allowed to see her. I remember catching the plane and then we stopped at Nguiu, where I was born, on Bathurst Island, to pick up a couple of passengers and the mail and I remember one lady accompanying me to Darwin. She said, ‘Your mother there, she lived in that house there’ and I just stared.

Obviously you want to meet your mother, and I still don’t know why I was taken away. That Sister N., who was in charge there, she showed me a lot of newsreels and documentaries on Adelaide, of parks, and fountains, and everything. And I thought I’m going to Disneyland. But they had to find me first… I was hiding, the plane just waited over there. All I knew is that I didn’t want to go.

They said ‘Oh no there’s Mr and Mrs V.’ and that’s all. Said they were Dutch…

There was a home and of course there were people, families all around Australia…don’t know where there was a so-called half-caste problem, as they called them (It’s all in the National Archives, which I access every day). It’s amazing the amount of people who wanted to adopt Aboriginal kids.

The moment I set foot …on the tarmac of the South Australian airport, they took over, the South Australian Government took over.

I asked him what was it like living with the V. family in Adelaide.

I was only seven years of age. I was abused for years and years and years, well actually after stepping off the plane, within an hour, I was abused.

Mum, I hadn’t even unpacked my bags, Mum, you don’t forget these things, Mum put me in the shower, and I was pretty black… Mum got the brush, you know that big hard scrubbing brush that you’d see on the Endeavour, the decks of the Endeavour, started getting the colour off me.

I didn’t understand. She did that for two years.

Applicant B lived with the V. family for 11 years; there were two other adopted white children as well. I asked if he ever felt safe with this family.

No, no that’s why I played every sport available: soccer, rugby union - because I didn’t want to come home - basketball, swimming, football, cricket, everything, I was involved with all sports, so I didn’t have to come home.

I lost all contact 37 years ago. Mum and Dad went back to Holland because they knew that something was going to happen about the abuse. She wrote me a five-page letter, apologiseing for what they did to us. My foster mother wrote it from Amsterdam, and I kept it for years, and I’ve lost it. We shifted around so many times and I lost it.

I asked if this abuse had been reported.

No, I didn’t. I just accepted it. But after a year and a half it just hit me and I remember sitting on the piano stool very depressed. Mum walked in and said ‘What’s wrong son?’ I wouldn’t answer her and then after a while I said ‘I’m sad’. She said ‘Do you want to go back to the Island?’ That’s word for word. I waited for about a minute. I didn’t want to upset her and say ‘Of course I want to go back to my friends.’ I didn’t want to upset her, so I said ‘No’, reluctantly. And that was it.

Her and Dad abused me sexually, physically, yes and psychologically. They ended up calling me an ape, chimpanzee, orang-utan, but he abused me sexually for years. I dropped him when I was 16 - I knocked him out.

But what broke the camel’s back was that when I was eight, I soiled my underpants, twice. What Mum did was kneeled me in the corner, my face right up against the corner on the hard cement floor on my knees for hours, then she got the underpants and put them on my head and got all my friends in the neighbourhood, brought them in and made fun of me,did that twice, and that did it, that ruined my life.
There are worse things they did, that I won’t say, and they were my protectors.

I went to … [Catholic] College… I was the only other Aboriginal person [there]. … It was too expensive for Aboriginal people. … my father was a Catholic priest so obviously, I assume, part was paid for by them, which is what they did.

I asked if he was treated well at school:

All good yes, … I had no problems. … [At first College] … they were toffs. … [The second College] was the complete opposite, a mob of mongrels, but good blokes. … I always made friends. I had mates in the neighbourhood. But a lot of them had never met Aboriginal people. … That’s the way I am, that’s my nature, I get on with anyone.

At age 18 Applicant B left home.

All the Dutch people knew what was going on - they had a pretty good idea what was going on - and they were just crying out ‘You can come here, you can come here.’, so I spent a few months with them until I got a place on my own, a private home, a private boarding home for the next four or five years.

After school Applicant B got a job in the South Australian Public Service.

The Community Welfare Department, believe it or not…. I started off in the record section and then within a year and a half I was a maintenance officer. … I had my own secretary, writing letters.

In December 1988, aged 38, Applicant B decided to return to the Northern Territory.

I finally met up with Mum and my people. … She knew it was coming, up here, you know Aboriginal people up here they know the ‘bush telegraph’. She scrubbed the whole house and she gave me her bedroom. I said ‘Mum, no, no, you’re not sleeping out in the lounge…’ If they offer you something you’re not able to refuse, it’s an insult.

Two weeks. I met all the family. I had four brothers and a sister and they took me around the entire community and introduced me to everybody. … There are only three of us left now.

Applicant B stayed in the Territory, where he worked in a variety of senior positions.

I was going to retire, but I’m a workaholic…. But all that happened to me in Adelaide, I started drinking and smoking in 1967…. I love my beer. I’m only on light now. … I’m a heavy smoker. … It’s just the abuse I went through. Obviously you think ‘Who’s going to pay?’, because I’ll never be the same…

I’ve got three kids… I couldn’t hug them, I couldn’t love them, oh they knew I loved them, but I couldn’t kiss them or hug them or anything and I thought that that was mean and I started to talk to the older people - most of them have passed away now - and they said exactly the same thing. I can’t hug my kids, grandchildren different… it’s completely different. I thought it was me and I’m still asking the older generation - there are still a few left - and they went through the exact same thing because of what’s happened, they couldn’t hug and love their kids openly.

Applicant B showed me a photo of his father, in priestly robes, given to him by one of the nuns from Our Lady of Sacred Heart at Enfield. They never met.

Apparently he died in the early 1980s… his name is Tom and he’s Irish…. To all the old people ‘You’re a spitting image’. I look at him and go ‘No, I don’t look a bit like him’.

I asked if his birth mother had told him anything about his father.

No, never, that was a no-no… she could have been raped for all I know. Like a lot of women were, domestics… I think she was like excommunicated from the community there.

I came up here [to Darwin] from Adelaide, where I spent exactly 30 years, completely assimilated…. I spoke German, Dutch, French, Latin and to this day I can’t speak a word of my Tiwi language… I can’t speak a word of my people’s language.
Conduct of the SGRS

The applications

Applications arrived a little slowly to begin with and with a bit of a rush towards the end over the 12-month period from 31 March 2016. Applicants were supported through the process by telephone and email contact, as required, by members of the team and by occasional newsletters [see Appendices 6, 7 and 8]. Once applications were received a search of government records was undertaken - principally Aboriginal, welfare, police, health, and courts. From these records as well as the written information provided by applicants a preliminary assessment was made against the published criteria.

Meetings with applicants

All applicants were offered a chance to meet with me as the Independent Assessor or another member of the team if the applicant preferred to meet with a woman or an Aboriginal person. In practice, all but two or three people who wished to have a meeting agreed to meet with me - in all but a few cases I was accompanied by another person, generally an Aboriginal woman. In two cases, for practical reasons, the applicants were not met by me, but by other members of the team.

Not all applicants chose to meet with us - some didn’t want to revisit the issues, others accepted and then did not attend perhaps because of the trauma associated with telling their stories; and some we were unable to contact, despite multiple attempts. A few applicants, because of logistics, were offered and accepted telephone meetings.

Where possible the meetings were held as close as possible to where the applicants lived. Meetings were held in multiple locations within South Australia and also in Darwin, Alice Springs, Melbourne and Sydney. One meeting was held in northern Queensland by a team member on annual leave.

We chose venues that were safe, comfortable, easily accessible and where possible, Aboriginal controlled. Frequently, the meetings were held in the homes of the applicants.

A list of venues is included at Appendix 9.

Applicants attended by themselves or with a support person or persons, usually family members, but sometimes professionals and sometimes two or more applicants chose to tell their stories together. These were either birth siblings or applicants who were not biologically related but had grown up together.

The meetings with applicants generally followed a similar pattern - after the applicant had been welcomed I would outline the nature of the scheme and what the criteria were. I would emphasise that this was an administrative or non-legal scheme and that they could pursue their interests through the legal system if they so chose. I would also mention, if appropriate, other compensation schemes that might be applicable to their circumstances.

I would also emphasise that the meeting with me was not a hearing and that I was not gathering evidence about their applications [unless they should say something that might be helpful to them], my role at the meeting was to listen to their stories and to try and understand, in their terms, what had happened to them.

I also asked if they were happy for the meeting to be recorded on a digital recorder. I explained that they would have control over how the recording might be stored and used. Most, but not all, of the applicants with whom I met agreed to have their conversation with me recorded.

The meetings generally lasted between 30 and 60 minutes - some were briefer and a few longer.
Consideration of applications

Following initial work by the CSO representative on the team, I assessed, against the criteria, each applicant’s written application, along with material gathered from searches of government records and information garnered at meetings with those applicants who chose to meet with me and made recommendations to the Minister. This work and the meetings were completed, largely, by the end of November 2017, which enabled the Minister to consider the recommendations, make his decisions and then make offers before Christmas 2017.

In a number of cases, where for reasons of illness or age, there was a request for priority the application was fast-tracked and the Minister granted an interim payment of $5,000. As the Scheme had a fixed amount ($6m) for allocation it was not possible until all applications were assessed to determine the final amount per successful applicant. As it turned out the Minister allocated additional funds to ensure that the share per successful applicant was $20,000.

Recordings

Each applicant, who agreed to their story being recorded was subsequently written to and asked whether they gave permission for their recording to be kept in perpetuity within State Records, with whatever conditions they determined (see Appendix 10). This collection will be a powerful way for the voices of applicants to the Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme to be heard and understood by future generations of their families and the broader community.
Summary of applications

The applicants

There were 449 applicants in total, of whom 267 were female and 182 were male. Applications came from most Australian states, both territories and overseas.

There were 363 South Australian applicants, 25 from the Northern Territory, 21 from Victoria, 17 from New South Wales, eight from Queensland, five from Western Australia, one from the Australian Capital Territory, one from New Zealand and one from the United States.

The South Australian applications came from all parts of the state:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Number of Applications</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northern Adelaide</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Far North</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Adelaide</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murray and Mallee</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Adelaide</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Adelaide</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yorke and Mid North</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adelaide Hills</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fleurieu and Kangaroo Island</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limestone Coast</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barossa, Light and Lower North</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two of the applicants were born in the 1920s, 25 in the 1930s, 77 in the 1940s, 180 in the 1950s, 146 in the 1960s, 18 in the 1970s and one in the 1990s.

Applicants could seek support in compiling their applications and around 62% of applicants did so; 261 used the Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement (ALRM); eight the Public Trustee; seven Relationships Australia and two were assisted by others; 171 applicants (38%) did not use any identified assistance.

352 of the applicants met with the Independent Assessor1 - sometimes in family groupings of applicants and sometimes with supporters.

267 of the meetings with applicants were recorded by agreement with each of the applicants or groups of applicants in a number of cases; altogether the stories of 310 applicants were recorded.

Six applicants died after their applications were submitted; these applications were assessed along with all of the other applications.

Eligible applicants

I recommended 343 applicants to the Minister as having satisfied the criteria. 28 of these applicants were removed from their families in the Northern Territory and subsequently brought to South Australia.

53 of the eligible applicants were given interim payments [$5k] by approval of the Minister which were later topped up to $20k.

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1 On a few occasions because of choice or circumstance, the applicant met with another member of the SGRS team.
Stories of removal

Applicant C

…The baby is considered by Sister M. of the Aborigines Department to be 1/4 caste and is described as a very fair child; it would be hard to tell that he had dark blood…

[Children’s Welfare and Public Relief Department memo 1953]

Applicant D

One of four siblings placed in the United Aborigines Mission Home at Oodnadatta in 1955. In 1958 one of the Missionaries, Miss K., planned to marry and decided that she wished to foster the siblings.

In a letter to the Oodnadatta Police, the Secretary of the APB describes the potential fostering as a ‘splendid opportunity’. The Secretary went on to explain [my emphasis]:

I do not quite remember the circumstances of the admission of these children to the United Aborigines Mission home at Oodnadatta, but from memory I think your predecessor persuaded the father and mother that it would be greatly to the children’s advantage if they were removed from the environment of the camp life they were leading and placed in the home at Oodnadatta.

It is usual in such circumstances, for the United Aborigines Mission to obtain the written consent of the parents. Whether this did occur in regard to these children, could you please check from Miss B.

There is no question or doubt that it would be greatly to the advantage of these children if they could be removed to the care of a private home as suggested. However, you are probably aware that legally the Aborigines Protection Board has no authority to remove an aboriginal child from its parents, except by transfer to the Children’s Welfare and Public Relief Board. Unfortunately, the Children’s Welfare and Public Relief Board will not consent to the transfer of such children whether neglected or not.

In all such cases: the most that can be done is to persuade the parents that it is to the children’s advantage that they should be removed and in order that there should be no confusion or disturbance at a later date, the parents are in all cases requested to agree in writing that the children be placed in the care and custody of the Aborigines Protection Board until such time as they attain the age of eight years.

If the parents of these children have not already consented in writing…I suggest that you endeavour to obtain the consent of the parents on the forms enclosed.

In confidence, you will certainly realise that in any case this consent form is not a legal document, and should it be that the parents remove the children from the care of the Mission or the Board, no legal action could be taken to regain control of the children.

There are copies in the records of ‘consent forms’ signed by the Applicant’s parents. The applicant and her three siblings moved with their foster parents to Adelaide and she lived with them until she was 17. She states:

When we were in the children’s home, our mum would come and see us, but when we were moved to Adelaide, that’s when it stopped. She kept on trying to see us, but they just told her no.
Applicant E

This Applicant was removed on two occasions. First, in 1942, aged just under four months, he was evacuated with his family from Katherine in the Northern Territory to Peterborough in South Australia, because of the bombing of Darwin. In 1945 he returned with his mother and three children to Darwin. His mother was Aboriginal and his father was white.

My father and grandfather (my mother’s father) passed away in Peterborough. So she came back with no husband and three kids and I guess it all started from there. I moved around from Darwin to Katherine, Pine Creek and ended up staying with Mum. My elder brother was out on cattle stations for Mum to earn money, to look after the kids. So, we stayed with her older brother… and his wife…, an Aboriginal woman. They never had any kids. So they and my Grandmother, (my Mother’s mother)… we all lived together, up until the point we were taken away.

This second removal occurred in 1954.

My sister and I just came out of the school gate and were put in a paddy wagon [by] a policeman. … Just the two of us. We were brought up into Darwin and delivered to the Methodist manse… we would have arrived in Darwin at about half past six or seven o’clock. We were given something to eat, but no bed… so my sister and I just sat on a soap box under the house the whole night.

Obviously we were pretty upset. … So that didn’t set the pattern too well, when you realise you were taken away without a word. And just treated like dogs. And then as I recall we ended up at Retta Dixon Home… for seven months and then we were both sent to Croker Island, Methodist Overseas Mission… I stayed there for three years, until 1957 and then I was sent down to a boys’ home in Adelaide, Lentara on Magill Road.

Of course we were high school age by then. They showed me a map of Australia and said ‘Where do you want to go to high school?’ and I said ‘Darwin’ and they said ‘No, you’re not allowed to go back to Darwin, you can’t go to school anywhere in the Northern Territory.’ What crime did I commit? And I’m staring at the map and they said ‘You can go anywhere you like’.

I only knew Pine Creek and Darwin and a little bit about Peterborough. … And then the only reason why I picked South Australia was because a South Australian teacher was teaching on Croker Island, at the time and I thought, well at least I know somebody. So just said ‘I’ll go to South Australia’ and the next thing I’m living in Lentara.

Applicant F

The Applicant lived with her parents at Finniss Springs Mission (run by the United Aborigines Mission - UAM) in the early 1950s. The Applicant states that she was removed from her parents, without their consent by the Mission Superintendent Mr V. and his wife to live with them at the Mission when she was aged about 11 or 12 years. Eventually she was sent to Adelaide where she was fostered.

In her interview with me the Applicant, in tears and shaking, recounted to me the fear and trauma of being removed from her family - against their wishes - and placed in the custody of the Superintendent and his wife. She reported how she had been locked up, sexually abused and beaten by the Superintendent from the time he was appointed as teacher at the Mission school in 1955 and over the next six or seven years. The Applicant recounted to me how Mr V. pursued her to Adelaide, visited her and continued to sexually abuse her while she was in the care of UAM Reverend M. and at other foster homes.

The Applicant says that the Mission Superintendent Mr V., Police and Welfare authorities were all responsible for her removal.

In October 1957 the Superintendent, Mr V. wrote to the Secretary of the Aborigines Protection Board seeking custody of the Applicant:
Urgent attention to this matter will be a great help to this teenager as to whether her future will be ruined or used beneficially.

We desire to have custody, care and control of [Applicant] as from the day her schooling ceases…or earlier if possible.

The bulk of the letter denigrates the characters of both of the Applicant’s parents and makes accusations of neglect.

The APB responded to the Superintendent, Mr V. in the following terms:

I…regret that I have no legal authority to remove this child, but I am forwarding consent forms for Fostering until the age of 18 years, and if you are able to persuade the parents to sign, giving you control of this girl until she has attained the age of 18 years, I feel that she will indeed benefit from the help you can give her.

A Welfare Officer report dated 18 December 1957 to the APB stated:

[Mr and Mrs V.] have taken a particular interest in the child particularly over the last 12 months…they have had the girl assisting in the shop and have taken her into their home…

[They] were so impressed with the child that they had planned to foster her in order to give her a secondary education in the South at their own expense. [Mr V.] suggested this to [Applicant’s father] and gave him a fostering form to sign, but [Applicant’s father] refused to sign it. This probably suggested to the parents’ minds that the [Superintendent and his wife] were trying to rob them of their child and gave weight to the mother’s objection regarding the girl going holidaying with them.

…[Applicant’s mother] came on the scene and attempted to forcefully remove [Applicant] from inside the house and was resisted by [Mrs V].

…Considerable feelings had been aroused in the camp over the affair, many of the natives having delayed their departure from the Mission in order to lend moral support to the stand the [Applicant’s parents] had taken and [Mr and Mrs V.] were subject to abuse and hostile threats.

…After much discussion, during which time both parents were most affected, they made their decision to allow the girl to be in the care of the Department for the duration of her High School education.

…The fact of the parents losing face if they reversed their decision was a big obstacle, but by devious ways S. [another officer] and I eventually made the [Applicant’s parents] see reason and they finally gave their permission for [Applicant] to go with the [Mr & Mrs V.] until such time as the Department arranged for her accommodation and schooling.

…Mr V. then revealed that had the parents refused to allow the girl to go, he would have taken it upon himself to leave by night with his wife and child and [Applicant] for Adelaide where he hoped some agreement could have been reached.

…S. and I related to the old men and relatives what had been decided for the girl, and stressed that she would be in the care of the Department during the time of her schooling… and the grandfather began to make allegations against [Mr & Mrs V.]. We appealed for all incriminations to cease.

…Notwithstanding his professed intention to escape with the girl… I feel that Mr V. must be commended for his tactful handling of an ugly situation… [My emphases]

The Applicant says that she was then taken on holiday by Mr V. and his wife and was further sexually abused while on that holiday. She further says that she did not report the abuse as Mr V. was friends with the welfare officers and the local Police and she did not believe that anything would be done to help her.

Correspondence between the UAM and APB, dated February 1958 confirms that the applicant was transferred to Adelaide where she was to live with Reverend and Mrs M.

A Welfare Officer memo to the APB, written towards the end of 1958, states the following in regard to the dispute between the Superintendent and his wife and the applicant’s parents:
Although no unlawful relations took place, it is established that Mr V. has acted very indiscreetly and foolishly in allowing his affection for the girl to get the better of him.

The matter became much talked about on the Mission, and beyond, and it was with a great deal of relief to the United Aborigines Mission that the girl was sent to attend High School this year.

However, Mr V. continues to write to [Applicant] frequently and his letters have a disturbing effect…

…It is because of this situation that Pastor S. is not keen to permit [Applicant] to return to her home for the Christmas holidays and I can quite appreciate the point. To do so would certainly cause more trouble. [As an alternative the APB subsequently made arrangements for the Applicant’s parents to travel to Adelaide to see her].

It is almost incredible to me that Mr V. could be so foolish, as in every other respect he is able and hard working missionary. I had previously heard something of this matter, but I did not know the extent of it.

In December 1958 a further investigation was conducted into Mr V.’s behaviour and relationship with the Applicant. On 17 December 1958 the Reverend M. with whom the Applicant was living was interviewed; it was put to him:

I have received certain information that there was some sort of marital rift between Mr V. and his wife over Mr. V.’s association with [Applicant]

The Reverend M. has nothing incriminating to say about the relationship; he is asked:

Well, have you seen anything yourself which might make you believe that something unlawful might have occurred between [Applicant] and Mr V.?

He responds:

No. I have seen nothing of that nature. Of course [Applicant] is a very secretive, close mouth type of girl, who would not likely talk of or on any such subject.

The APB investigator concludes:

I feel that no good purpose would be served at this stage in proceeding any further with any investigation on this matter.

The Applicant says that the sexual abuse continued until the Finniss Springs Mission closed in around 1960.

The Applicant’s legal advisor has informed me that:

In 2007 Mr V. pled guilty to six counts of Carnal Knowledge by a teacher and one count of Carnal Knowledge of a female 13 years of age and under 17 years of age. On 26 March 2007 Mr V. was sentenced to six years imprisonment for the offences he committed against the Applicant.

The applicant states:

I have carried my removal from my family and the sexual abuse that I suffered with me for my entire life. I did not talk about what happened to me for many years and I still struggle to talk about what happened to this day. My innocence as a child, my family and my culture were taken away from me when I was removed from my family and as a result of the significant sexual abuse that I suffered. I feel that the Welfare Officers, the Police, the Aborigines Protection Board and the State failed to protect me.

The applicant was found to have met the criteria established under the SGRS but did not receive financial reparation as she had previously reached a settlement with government.
Applicant G

The applicant was born in Point Pearce in the 1940s and she was removed aged about ten years. She was living with her father and other relatives at Point Pearce when she was removed. Her mother had died in child birth a few years earlier.

In her application she says:

There were 17 children in my family, but I only knew 10 of them…

I was put on a bus from Point Pearce to Adelaide, but I do not remember who arranged this. I do remember that I was met in Adelaide near the Royal Adelaide Hospital by Sister M. and Mrs A. of the Aborigines Department. One of them caught a tram with me to the Fullarton Road Salvation Army Girls' Home. I was never given any reasons why I was taken away. We weren't starving or anything, they would just travel around Point Pearce and look for kids to pick up.

The foster placements arranged for us were mostly just holiday placements, meant to test us out for longer term arrangements. I stayed with the L. family over the Christmas period in 195-. While I was there the older son took advantage of me…I spent Christmas with a blind lady at Semaphore one year. She was probably the best that I remember.

About two years later, another girl came to me planning to run away. I went with her, but only got down the street before I saw a dog and ran back. I was blamed, and as a result was sent to the Bridge Home on Gilbert Street.

A Welfare Officer reported that Applicant was at Gilbert St Salvation Army:

Matron reports that she is a good worker but needs a lot of watching.

When I was about 16 I was taken out of the Bridge Home on Gilbert St to live with my brother and his wife and child…[in T-]

An Aborigines Department Welfare Officer reported that the applicant, then

‘…a fifteen year old half-caste, (or less) lass who has been at T-Hotel employed as a domestic for the last ten months or so, is to finish work there on Saturday, and has nowhere to go. She is originally from Pt. Pearce, and as far as I can ascertain she has spent most of her life in one of the Homes in Adelaide…her employer at T- has informed me this morning that [Applicant] is not a particularly keen worker, but that she has the ability to do quite a good job of work. She is rather boy mad…It is quite out of the question to permit her to go to Koonibba or to the Duckponds, so I have made arrangements…[for her to be sent by bus to Adelaide].

In Adelaide, the applicant was accommodated at a home in Sussex Street, but after she was picked up on the street (without money) by the police, Sussex Street refused to readmit her.

A Report to the Chief Welfare Officer advises that Mrs Y. from Sussex St refused to admit the applicant, and suggested that she be returned to her sister.

…It is quite impossible for Mrs. Y. to control girls such as [Applicant] with the facilities which are available at Sussex Street. Unless there is a suitable room in which these girls may be locked up during the night, they will continue to break out.

The Welfare Officer writing the report concluded:

If it is not possible to obtain evidence with which we can commit these girls to the Children’s Welfare, I feel that they should be confined to a Reserve and forced to undertake some form of employment as provided for under the regulations which govern aboriginal Stations.

Shortly afterwards the Secretary of the Aborigines Protection Board wrote a memo to the Board Chairman:
I am of the opinion that it would be in the best interest if [Applicant] should be returned to the guardianship of her father at Point Pearce, and it is recommended that the Board make an order in the terms of Section 17(1) of the Aborigines Act that [Applicant] be kept within the boundaries of the Point Pearce Aboriginal Reserve.

The Chairman approved the recommendation. A note from the Point Pearce Superintendent dated the following year indicated that her father was not on the Reserve, but was living at Murray Bridge.

The applicant returned to Point Pearce where she gained employment, and a year later she, still a teenager, opened a credit account at John Martin’s Department Store. This caused the Secretary of the Aborigines Protection Board to write to the Superintendent at Point Pearce:

…I have today seen Mr C. the Credit Manager at John Martins with regards to two accounts opened during March by the [Applicant]

The outstanding amounts are as follows:-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Radiogram and records</td>
<td>£66-15-3d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing &amp; Linen</td>
<td>£50-12-8d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£117-7-11d</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mr C. has agreed to pool these accounts and will accept the sum of £1-10-0d per week to be remitted from this Department…

It appears that [Applicant] opened an account for £5-19-10d earlier in the year and this was satisfactorily paid and she was therefore considered a suitable customer…

The applicant eventually left Point Pearce and began work in Adelaide in the late 1960s. Now in her mid twenties, she requested a pass be issued to her to allow her to visit Point Pearce; the departmental file note records:

It was explained to her that because she is in regular employment her request could not be considered.

The applicant concludes her application with these words:

I did not see my father again until I was an adult…Although I saw my sister…once along the River Torrens, I was told by the Salvation Army sisters to treat her as a friend, not as a sister. I was not reunited with the rest of my brothers and sisters until a long time later, when I was an adult….

I feel a strong resentment toward the Salvation Army for what they did in taking me away and how they treated me in the homes. Looking at them just brings back bitter memory. The treatment at the Bridge Home was particularly cruel - I remember there was one lieutenant who would beat me with a strap, throw me a round like a little rag doll and otherwise physically abuse me. On one occasions she gave me bruises that lasted for the better part of a year and were only spotted by the matron long after she gave them to me. Nothing was done about it even then, and I can still picture her face; it was frightening.

I also feel as though I have lost my right to a good education - I still blame the Aborigines Department because I never got to finish my schooling… I was not allowed to attend Unley High School so my education ended. I wasn’t allowed to do correspondence like the white people.

I was also sexually assaulted during my time in State care…
Applicant H

The applicant was born in Oodnadatta, South Australia in 1929. In around 1934/35 she was walking in the desert, near Ross River in the Northern Territory with siblings and her grandmother, though at the time she thought she was with her mother. I talked with her in her Darwin garden in September 2016.

We were on walkabout; we were going to Western Australia… I remember them taking me, this policeman… I think his name was Sergeant K… and he grabbed me… and I was naked! You know that’s how they found out that I was half-caste because my skin… wasn’t black, you know. So he grabbed me and I grabbed my mother and I wouldn’t let go. And they couldn’t get me in the car, so they threw my mother in with me.

And I must have fallen off to sleep. I don’t know how I got to the Bungalow… when I got up in the morning I looked around to see where I was, I was in a dormitory with a lot of little half-caste girls, kids…

The applicant stayed in the Bungalow at Alice Springs until she was about 12; I asked her if she saw her mother during this time.

Yes, I’ll tell you now, I’ll never forget my mother. I didn’t know I had a black mother … these black parents weren’t allowed to see their half-caste kids - only the coloured mothers had to see their kids. And we were playing outside… under the peppercorn tree and I could see a black face peeping through the rock - a few black faces peeping through the rock - and they say ‘… your mother there, she’s asking after you.’ When I looked at this black face, you now, looking and watching us kids play. And they were hiding in the hills. But they knew who their children were, and they said ‘That one mine’ and … they said ‘Your mother there!’ I looked, ‘No!’ I said ‘That’s not my mother, I didn’t have black mother!’ That’s what I said. And isn’t it cruel when I think about it, what I said?’

I asked if the girls went up and talked to their mothers.

We weren’t allowed, but we went and they had all the bush tucker for us.

At the Bungalow, at Alice Springs… until the war started in ’41, when we were under the Government rule, the South Australian rule before. Then when the war started the Government said they couldn’t look after the half-caste children in the institutions… the churches offered to take us all, so there was Catholic Church, Church of England and Methodists. So they put us in three groups - we didn’t go - they pushed us into three groups… I went to the Methodist Overseas Mission, which was Croker Island.

The applicant didn’t see her mother again until 1967.

At that time, I was married to an army fellow and he was discharged from the army and was working as a Native Affairs Officer at Barunga Station… And they told him… ‘There’s a woman in Alice Springs there asking for your wife.’ And he says ‘Oh I don’t think that’s her mother because her mother is dead’. Well I thought my mother was dead and they told me and said ‘Oh well I might go and have a look’…”

I met her there at Oodnadatta for the first time, I’ll tell you it was a shock. I never seen people like that before… it was like a rubbish dump… As soon as I got off the bus a few old people remembered me… they started throwing themselves on the ground, in the dust. I started crying, I didn’t know what was going on. I was frightened… This old lady told me who was who then; my own mother was J., she said ‘My girl, you can’t stay here.’… So I did book in at the hotel. I stayed there for two weeks at the hotel.
Applicant I

The applicant, who was born in 1955 in the Northern Territory was removed from her parents by a court order in 1961 and lived for most of the next five years at Garden Point Mission in the Territory. In July 1966 the Director of Child Welfare (NT) wrote to the NT Welfare Officer in Adelaide:

As requested to you verbally would you please seek a suitable foster home for [Applicant]...a State Child who has been in the care of this Branch since 1961 but who during the past year has lived in the care of her mother and her mother’s de facto husband. Home conditions have deteriorated and it is now recommended that [she] be placed elsewhere. Both [Applicant] and her mother will be willing for such action to be taken.

There are no parental consents on file for this transfer to country South Australia; nonetheless in August 1966 Applicant was placed into the care of foster parents in South Australia.

In her meeting with me in May 2017 Applicant described life with her foster parents, Mr and Mrs P.

They all thought that I lived in really good house, but behind closed doors they didn’t know what was happening. I’d get beaten constantly and my hair ripped out, spat in my face, and that in winter time, you know, you’d just be freezing cold. …She was a very evil person. She always bad-mouthed my culture. Aboriginal people…were just nothing and God should never have invented them.

The applicant was befriended by her school teacher, Mrs O.; she and her husband were aware of the applicant’s difficult circumstances

They were stationed there for two years…they lived behind the police station. And every day I’d go next door and do some reading with them…I think they grew fond of me…they wrote to the South Australian Education Department and asked if there was something that they could do [about Applicant’s mistreatment].

[Mr and Mrs O. asked] if they could take me under their care because they were leaving.

And Mrs P. kicked up a big fuss about it, and said that…they were gossiping and that was not allowed. She went and saw Mr S. who was the headmaster…Mr S. said - and it states in my file - it was a personal matter and wasn’t to do with the Education [Department]…I got another hiding for that.

I ended up running away when I was fifteen and a half.

The applicant describes how her foster mother’s sister-in-law eventually tracked her down.

She came and visited me at home…she was saying to me that she was really sorry that she couldn’t do anything for me because she knew that there was a lot of friction in the household and she didn’t like the way Mrs P. treated me. …She did go to the Department [of Welfare] and made complaints that fell on deaf ears. …There was nothing she could do about it…there’s two people…that tried to ask for my removal from Mrs P. but it just fell on deaf ears.
General observations

It has been an incredible honour and privilege to have been given the role of Independent Assessor of the SGRS. Meeting with so many of the applicants and hearing their stories was deeply moving and while often very disturbing and heart-breaking - it was, strangely enough, life-affirming.

At the beginning of my appointment I met with a number of groups of Stolen Generations advocates and what struck me most from those meetings was how much concern they expressed for me and how worried they were about how I would deal with the emotional strain of listening to so many difficult stories.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people I met, throughout the course of my appointment, almost without exception, exhibited this same generosity of spirit and strength of character. While many carry grief and indeed deep anger, most were forward looking - focussed on their children and grandchildren. Wanting, to the extent that that is possible, to make sure that the next generations could connect to culture and family.

The applicants who chose to tell their stories to me were unbelievably honest and direct. Often applicants would tell me things which were potentially damaging to their case but without fear or guile they would tell their story as it happened - warts and all. For many of the applicants this was the first time that they had told anyone what had truly happened to them and one could tell that it often came as a great release. Many, many of the applicants cried as they went through their life history and very often, too, there was laughter.

It became clear to me early on that how an applicant was treated after removal bore no relationship at all to the reasons for or method of removal. Children were removed as early as a few days old through to the teens; they were removed with court orders, without court orders, by adoption or by informal fostering arrangements. None of these pathways seem to have produced, in and of themselves, better outcomes. Children were variously placed in (usually) church-run institutions, either on reserves or in the city, placed in foster care or on occasions adopted.

If they were lucky, they would experience kindness, security and love, regardless of where they were placed or why they were placed there. But, even these lucky ones usually were denied access to family, forbidden to speak language and sometimes were not even aware of their Aboriginality.

The unlucky - the majority - had horrible, even barbaric experiences. The care at best was often indifferent, perfunctory and authoritarian - within both institutions and families. Many children were told that they had been abandoned or that their parents were dead; many in family care were treated as little more than domestic servants; if there were other children in the family they were often the second class citizens, made to eat later with smaller portions, given few new clothes and toys. There is no doubt that some foster carers exploited the welfare payments for Aboriginal foster children to support their own lifestyle.

Institutional care was often accompanied by fierce physical and emotional punishment; long hours of duty as carers or cleaners and, in too many instances, sexual abuse by both carers and other older children. This also occurred within foster care, and in both institutional and foster care bed wetting was common and often treated with humiliation; while speaking language was eliminated by punishments such as mouth washing with soap. Siblings were often denied access to each other - even within the same institution; and racial abuse was prevalent in institutions and family settings.

What astonishes me is how little due diligence was given, by any of the authorities charged with looking after removed Aboriginal children, to their ultimate placements. There are some in our community who argue that the State had to intervene in Aboriginal families to provide better opportunities for these children; even if this were true and that the authorities were operating from the most noble of intentions, why did they remove children only to place them in circumstances, which in many cases were so much worse?
There seems to have been a compact between church and state which assumed that because a person or institution wore the Christian label all would be well. No wonder so many of the applicants I met were virulent in their dislike of religion - for along with the mistreatment they were often force-fed with an overdose of old style religion. On the other hand, many of the applicants, despite these experiences have maintained a strong adherence to Christianity.

Not all of the applicants satisfied the criteria for this SGRS, nonetheless the experiences of those who did not were, by and large, similar to those who did and I regret that their pain cannot be addressed by financial reparation through this scheme; I hope, however, that the telling of their stories was of some assistance to them.

This scheme, the second such state-based scheme, which enjoyed multi-partisan support, was a great step for government to take in dealing with the sins of the past; but it is really just the tip of the iceberg.

Some of the parents of children who were removed are still alive – it is hard to imagine the sense of loss and heartache that the mothers who had children taken would have suffered and must continue to suffer.

We must remember too, the families, especially the children and grandchildren of the Stolen Generations and how their lives have been and continue to be affected by the trauma of their partner, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt or cousin.

Just as our returned soldiers are recognised, the Stolen Generations need to be shown continued care and understanding by the community generally, and by government in particular. Access to specialised counselling and health services, services such as Link-Up which help make reconnections and education, training and childcare all need to be made easily available.
Thanks

My thanks firstly to the former Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, Hon. Kyam Maher MLC for appointing me, and to him and his staff for their easy access and amenability to my suggestions for changes to the operations of the Scheme.

I also thank sincerely the other full-time members of the SGRS team: Maria Atkins, Senior Aboriginal Community Consultant who was the main point of contact with applicants and who joined me in most of the individual meetings with applicants; and Sarah Avey, a Senior Solicitor from the Crown Solicitor’s Office, who brought together all of the documentation relating to each application in a coherent way, provided ongoing sage professional advice and joined in many of the individual meetings. They are both wonderful human beings and it was pleasure to work so closely with both of them over the course of this project.

I also thank sincerely Marc Bowden, who joined us and provided much needed professional back up as we reached the busiest part of our work.

I extend thanks to the Office of Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, particularly Tess Mitsoulis and Tom Rich, the former Department of State Development, the Department for Child Protection and the State Records of South Australia.

In preparation for this role I and other members of our small SGRS team met regularly with the South Australian Stolen Generations Aboriginal Corporation and we benefited greatly from the advice of its committee. Unfortunately, their recommendations to include the parents and children of Stolen Generations applicants could not be taken up by this Scheme.

We also met with The Circle of Hope group whose advice we also valued.

At the very beginning of the project we met with some members of the team which ran the Tasmanian scheme and I was very grateful to them and especially to the Hon. Ray Groom, the former Tasmanian Stolen Generations Assessor for giving me the benefit of his experience, which helped me greatly in the performance of my role.

On two occasions, I reported to the South Australian Aboriginal Lands Parliamentary Standing Committee on progress and issues of interest to them. I was grateful for these opportunities and welcomed their interest and support.

I especially thank the Australian Human Rights Commission for granting permission to include Chapter 8 [which deals with South Australia] of the Bringing Them Home Report at Appendix 2. I also acknowledge that any information in that chapter which contains cultural heritage (e.g. confidential submissions and evidence) is the Cultural Heritage of the Stolen Generations.

I extend the team’s gratitude to the many institutions which assisted our operations by the provision of safe spaces for private meetings with applicants (see Appendix 9).

Finally, to all of the people who made submissions, particularly those who met with me and told their stories, thank you sincerely.
Applicant J
The Voice of the Children - A story of two siblings

**Who are we?**

**Where are we?**

As we (sisters) stood at the front of the largest doors ever seen in our young lives, sadness in our hearts, tears swelling in our eyes, our lives were to be changed forever.

The doors of our newly allocated home opened, a person appeared dressed in black, stern and angry. Inside, so many children, staring quiet, no play.

This was the beginning of our separation from all that was important: Mother, family, community, country, culture and identity. It was the beginning of a life without warmth and love. A life that would challenge all that we were. All before us was foreign.

We clung to each other. We still had each other, this however was to change as we were quickly separated. The sibling bond, soon to become distant memory.

The children so strong, so versatile in times of adversity playing and working throughout the days, at night the muffled sounds of crying for home, scared and alone with no hope no voice.

Children grieving, waiting for scheduled family visits. Some lucky, some not. Sadness prevailed, hope diminished each time.

Rules and punishment replaced freedom, learning and independence. How were we to grow void of a place in family, community, culture and identity?

Mother, Mother where are you, why have you left us, what did we do wrong?

Mother visits on scheduled days. My sister appears, strangers are present, Mother is distant, sad and then she leaves, my grieving starts anew, take us home, take us home, again all is hopeless.

Weeks go by, visits become less as out tears and pleas are not seen or heard and separation becomes more difficult. We ask is it easier to not see family, is it better to forget.

Slowly we learn that we are not going home.

**We are Aboriginal First Nation**

**We are Narungga**
A person’s place in the world – where they’ve come from, their heritage and their culture – is one of the most fundamental aspects of the human identity. It gives us a sense of belonging that informs the very foundations of who we are and how we see ourselves.

For many Aboriginal Australians, cultural identity can stretch back for hundreds, even thousands of generations.

For members of the oldest living culture on the planet, it is possible to place yourself in a context that stretches back further than most of us can imagine.

But there are many Aboriginal Australians who know little of where they came from… because they have been denied the opportunity to know.

Forced removals of Aboriginal children from their families, which occurred for many decades of our history in every state and territory of our nation, broke apart thousands of important legacies of history and culture.

This is not even to mention the unspeakable human tragedy that forced removals wrought upon Aboriginal people.

For those who are parents, merely imagining the loss of your child is capable of reducing you to tears.

But you don’t have to be a parent to have a tremendous amount of empathy for anyone who loses a child to a tragedy – to an illness, or to an accident.

I’d venture to say that we’ve all known someone, or heard the story of someone, who has experienced the unthinkable suffering of losing a child. And, imagining ourselves in their place, we easily get a sense of the unbearable grief that it would cause. Even just a hint of that profound sense of loss is painful.

It is that loss and grief that too many Aboriginal families have endured.

The brutality of that act – of stealing a child away from their family – is almost too great to comprehend. It goes against our most fundamental human values. It is, quite simply, unthinkable.

Knowing that past governments were not only complicit but in many cases were the direct perpetrators of cruel acts that ripped Aboriginal families apart, often never to be reunited…

Knowing what this has done to families, to entire communities, to an entire people…

Knowing that we as a nation robbed thousands of children of the fundamental human right to grow up in an environment of love and belonging…

Knowing that we as a nation desecrated and denigrated tens of thousands of years of Aboriginal history by denying those children the opportunity to know their cultures, their languages and their identities…

Knowing that we as a nation condemned them to lives of hardship and deprivation in the institutions in which they were taken to…

Knowing that we as a nation deprived them of the freedom to live their own lives, instead forcing them to live the lives that were chosen for them…

And most disturbingly of all, knowing that successive governments in our nation were capable of endorsing the act of ripping crying children out of their crying mothers’ arms… and leaving them with absolutely no power to do anything about it.
It’s a disturbing part of our history that shouldn’t be forgotten.

Imagine that you can’t speak English, and some strangers show up with a truck and take your child with no court order, giving no explanation that you can understand and leaving you with no documentation of what they’ve done… leaving you with no trace of the children that only moments before, were a crucial part of your family and the future history of your ancient culture. Now they’re gone, and you have no idea where.

You don’t have a phone, and even if you had one, you wouldn’t know who to call. Even if you knew who to call… you might not speak English, so you wouldn’t be able to talk to anyone.

This is how powerless many Aboriginal mothers were when their children were ripped away from them.

In today’s society, the bare fact that it all happened boggles the mind.

But it happened… it happened in our State, and all across our nation, not even so long ago. Well within the lifetimes of honourable members in this place.

It is essential that we acknowledge the effect that forced removals of Aboriginal children have had, not only on the individuals, families and communities who suffered directly, but on the whole Australian community.

Whether we accept it readily or deny it stubbornly, forced removal policies are a glaring stain on our national identity.

And the suffering caused by these policies is far from being limited to the individuals who were directly affected – whole communities were affected.

The life of a nation is much longer than the lives of its generations.

Long after the last person who was forcibly removed from their family as a child has passed away, the harmful effects of these policies on our community will remain.

The suffering caused by forced removals manifests itself in many ways in our shared social life – in ways that we can prove, and in ways that we cannot prove. The damage to Aboriginal culture as a whole is in many ways untraceable… but it is undeniable.

We cannot change our history, but we can face up to it, and we can do what is within our power both to change the way that our history is regarded and to ensure that we create a better future – especially for the Aboriginal South Australians who were affected by forced removals, and for their children, and their children’s children.

Over the past couple of decades, we as a society have taken many steps in the direction of taking responsibility for the grave wrongs of the past.

23 years ago next month, Prime Minister Paul Keating acknowledged this in his Redfern speech:

“We took the traditional lands and smashed the traditional way of life.

We brought the diseases. The alcohol.

We committed the murders.

We took the children from their mothers.”

Prime Minister Keating then established the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families.

Two days after this “Bringing Them Home Report” was tabled in May 1997, the then South Australian Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Dean Brown, led this parliament in saying sorry. He said:

“To the children who were taken from their mothers and fathers, to the mothers and fathers who watched in pain as their babies and children were taken from their side or from their schools. To those people, we apologise.”

More than a decade passed before Federal Parliament did the same thing.
Kevin Rudd said on behalf of a nation in recognising - “The hurt, the humiliation, the degradation and the sheer brutality of the act of physically separating a mother from her children is a deep assault on our senses and on our most elemental humanity.”

That apology had a profound impact of properly acknowledging and recognising the immense pain that these wrongs have caused for those who have suffered, and those who continue to suffer.

Today we take another step in the direction of facing up to past wrongs.

The State Government has today announced a Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme including ex gratia payments for South Australian Members of the Stolen Generations.

I wish to acknowledge members in this Chamber, particularly those who serve on the Aboriginal Lands Parliamentary Standing Committee, who have championed a Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme.

I want to thank the Shadow Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, the Member for Morphett Dr Duncan McFetridge.

On this, and a range of issues, we’ve worked very closely together and in constructive way that I think most people would hope and expect the political process to work.

Most of all though, I want thank members of South Australia’s Stolen Generations who have patiently shared their stories, hopes and visions with me this year.

Meetings facilitated by the ALRM, meetings with small groups, and meetings with individuals have been difficult and emotional this year but extremely helpful in guiding the development of this scheme.

This scheme encompasses some elements found in a Bill that the Liberal Party has previously included but also incorporates elements of the reparations scheme Tasmania introduced.

The scheme

Under the "Next Steps – Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme" South Australian members of the Stolen Generations who were forcibly removed from their parents will be eligible for an ex gratia payment of up to $50k.

An application will be made to an Independent Assessor and individuals will be able to meet with and speak directly to the Independent Assessor about their experiences. Many have told me of the importance of recognition for what happened.

The Independent Assessor will provide advice to the government about making a payment and the level of payment. Any individual who receives an offer will be provided with $1000 to seek legal advice about whether to accept the offer. If the offer is not accepted, an individual can still pursue legal action through the courts.

The scheme will commence operation on 31 March 2016 and individuals will have 12 months to apply. The government has set aside up to $6m for individual reparations.

The second part of the scheme will extend to the broader Aboriginal community, with a $5m whole-of-community reparations fund.

Many members of the Stolen Generations have made it clear to me that while individual compensation is important, it’s not the only – or most important – element of the next steps.

Although a number of ideas have been put forward already, we will continue to listen to the community on what and how we can best recognise the grief, the loss and the pain whole communities have endured.

No amount of money will ever be enough to undo the wrongs of the past but it’s an offer we will be making to those members of our community stolen from their families by past governments as recognition of these wrongs.

We have said sorry. Now it is time to take the next steps.

The next steps to recognising the pain and loss that were caused.

The next steps to making South Australia a more inclusive place.

The next steps on from saying sorry.
Appendix 2
Bringing Them Home Report

Chapter 8 South Australia

The general opinion of station people is that it is a mistake to take these children out of the bush. They say that the aboriginal mothers are fond of their children and in their own way look after them and provide for them and that when they grow up they are more easily absorbed and employed than those who have been taken out of their natural environment and removed to towns.

The Mission Representatives say that if the girls are left in the bush they only became the prey of white men and become mothers at a very early age. My experience has been that removing them to towns and to institutions does not overcome this trouble and only accentuates and increases it (Chief Protector of Aboriginals to Commissioner of Public Works, 27 August 1932, documents provided by United Aborigines Mission evidence 264).

Early policies and practices

In 1836, just two years after South Australia was founded as a ‘free colony’ unlike the penal settlements of New South Wales or Van Dieman’s Land, the Governor issued a proclamation promising to protect Aborigines ‘who are to be considered as much under the safeguard of the law as the Colonists themselves, and equally entitled to the Privileges of British Subjects’. In the same proclamation the Governor also said he would promote ‘their conversion to the Christian faith’ (quoted by Gale 1964 on page 64).

A Protector was appointed soon after and land was reserved for Indigenous people. Under the Aboriginal Orphans Ordinance 1844 the Protector was appointed legal guardian of ‘every half-caste and other unprotected Aboriginal child whose parents are dead or unknown’. The same law allowed for the apprenticing of Indigenous children ‘of a suitable age’ with parental consent. It was used to place a number of teenage boys attending the Aboriginal School in Adelaide as apprentices with the Harbours Department, the Colonial Engineers Department, a tannery and a bricklayer and as messengers for the Governor. Aboriginal girls were placed in domestic service. However, in most cases the children left the apprenticeships to return to their families and the law fell into disuse.

In 1839 the ‘Native Location’ School for Aboriginal children was established, followed by several more such schools in the 1840s. All became boarding schools so as to maximise control over the children.

The children’s attendance is procured in various ways - some will come into the School because they prefer a regular supply of food to an irregular one and especially in the winter season; others are sent by the parents on condition that they receive a blanket for three months’ attendance and others again are sent by the police if found begging about town. No healthy adult is entitled to receive a blanket on the Queen’s Birthday unless he have a child in school (quoted by Mattingley and Hampton 1992 on page 100).

Despite the early attempts at protectionism, the pattern elsewhere of violence and dispossession of Indigenous people repeated itself in South Australia. Matthew Moorhouse, Protector from 1839 until 1856, himself presided over a massacre of 30 Indigenous people in 1841. In 1856 the office of protector was abolished and by 1860 35 of the 42 reserves set aside for Aborigines had been leased to settlers.

From then until 1881 when another Protector was appointed, the protection of Indigenous people was left entirely to missionaries. The lack of government intervention gave the missionaries independence from the government but meant also that they received little contribution from it, apart from limited rations (primarily for the sick and old) and an annual ration of blankets. (Rowley 1970 page 205). In this period no action was taken to control the depredations of pastoralists who removed children from their families and brutally put them into service as stockmen and servants.

The Government effectively condoned the forcible removal of Aboriginal children from their families by its inaction (SA Government interim submission page 9).
Missions - 1850-1908

In the nineteenth century missionary activity was mainly concerned with establishing settled farming communities near the coast and in the fertile inland areas on reserved land: Poonindie, Point McLeay, Point Pearce and Koonibba. Schooling on these missions was designed to distance Indigenous children from their family and community influences.

The reason why it is desirable to have boarders at all is, to withdraw the youth of the tribes from the contaminating and demoralizing influence of the vile practices carried on at the wurleys (George Taplin, Point McLeay, 1860, quoted by Mattingley and Hampton 1992 on page 100).

Protection 1908-1939

In 1908 the government appointed Senior Constable W G South to the position of Protector. From the following year the general child welfare law, the State Children’s Act 1895, was used to remove Indigenous children on the ground of ‘destitution’ or ‘neglect’. A child could be deemed ‘neglected’ if he or she ‘sleeps in the open air, and does not satisfy the Justices that he or she has a home or a settled place of abode’ and ‘destitute’ if he or she has ‘no sufficient means of subsistence ... and whose relations are ... in indigent circumstances and unable to support such a child’.

These definitions could easily be applied to children whose parents were nomadic, involved in seasonal (and therefore necessarily shifting) work or impoverished through loss of their land.

... children should be committed to the care of the State Children’s Council where they will be educated and trained to useful trades and occupations, and prevented from acquiring the habits and customs of the aborigines, and I feel sure they will as a rule, grow up useful, self-supporting members of the community, instead of developing into worse than useless dependants (Protector South, 1909, quoted by Mattingley and Hampton 1992 on page 157).

South lobbied for the power to remove Aboriginal children without a court hearing because the courts sometimes refused to accept that the children were neglected or destitute. In South's view all children of mixed descent should be treated as neglected.

The government responded by enacting the Aborigines Act 1911 making the Chief Protector the legal guardian of every Aboriginal and ‘half-caste’ child with additional wide-ranging powers to remove Indigenous people to and from reserves. Under the Act family members could be separated from each other for disciplinary reasons.

The [Aborigines Act 1911] ratified institutionalization as a way of life and confirmed the status of Nungas as ‘inmates’ whose affairs and families were to be controlled in every respect. It supported vested economic interests by developing reserves as enclaves of slave labour and provided a hidden subsidy to rural employers (Mattingley and Hampton 1992 page 45).

South did not use his new powers immediately. He continued instead to use the State Children’s Act 1895 because it allowed him to send Indigenous children to children’s homes where the emphasis was on training them to be sent out to work from the age of 14 years. He was scathing in his criticism of missions which he believed were creating dependence upon charity as well as ignoring the needs of residents.

South argued that the policy should be to ‘look after and feed the full blooded Aborigines and train the half castes and quadroons’ (quoted by SA Government final submission on page 9).

Royal Commission 1913

A Royal Commission was established in 1913 ‘to inquire into and report upon the control, organisation and management of institutions ... set aside for the benefit of Aborigines’.

There was discussion about the appropriate age at which children of mixed descent should be taken from their families. The Secretary of the State Children’s Council argued that they should be taken away as soon as they are born. ‘If they are in the wurley for a week it is bad for them, but it is fatal for them to remain there a year’ (quoted by Mattingley and Hampton 1992 on page 160).
Professor Stirling from the University of Adelaide, on the other hand, argued that the best time to take Aboriginal children was when they were about two years old.

_The more of those half-caste children you can take away from their parents and place under the care of the State the better... When they are a couple of years of age they do not require so much attention and they are young enough to be attractive. I am quite aware that you are depriving the mothers of their children, and the mothers are very fond of their children; but I think it must be the rising generation who have to be considered. They are the people who are going to live on_ (quoted by Mattingley and Hampton 1992 on page 160).

The Royal Commission also heard protests against forcible removals.

_In regard to the taking of our children in hand by the State to learn trades etc., our people would gladly embrace the opportunity of betterment... but to be subjected to complete alienation from our children is to say the least an unequalled act of injustice, and no parent worthy of the name would either yield to or urge such a measure_ (Matthew Kropinyeri quoted by Mattingley and Hampton 1992 on page 119).

The Royal Commission’s final position favoured ‘assimilation’, as it later became known, in preference to segregation, at least for people of mixed descent.

_... with the gradual disappearance of full blood blacks, the mingling of the black and white races and the great increase in the number of half castes and quadroons, the problem is now one of assisting and training the native to become a useful member of the community, not dependent on charity, but upon his own efforts_ (quoted by SA Government final submission on page 9).

As recommended by the Royal Commission the government took control of the missions at Point Pearce and Point McLeay. A decade later the Aborigines (Training of Children) Act 1923 was enacted specifically to allow Indigenous children to be ‘trained’ in a children’s institution and sent out to work. Any Indigenous child could be committed to any child welfare institution and once committed could be dealt with as if ‘neglected’ under the State Children’s Act 1895, which meant that the child could be apprenticed. The removal of a non-Indigenous child required a court finding of ‘neglect’ or ‘destitution’. The 1923 Act dispensed with this requirement for Indigenous children. This was justified on the basis that it was less traumatic for Indigenous children.

_The procedure is very simple, and is in no way analogous to the judicial proceeding whereby neglected or convicted children are put under the control of the State Children’s Council. There is no publicity in the proceeding under the Bill, merely the execution of a document after an agreement has been reached between the Protector and the Council as to the transfer of the particular child_ (second reading speech, Hansard 17 October 1923 page 902, quoted by SA Government final submission on page 13).

The 1923 Act was vehemently opposed by Aboriginal families who petitioned the government. In 1924 a magazine editor condemned the practice of child removal.

_There is not and never should be occasion for the Children to be taken away from their parents and farmed out among white people_ (J C Genders, editor of Daylight (magazine), 1924, quoted by Mattingley and Hampton 1992 on page 187).

The protests met with some success. The operation of the Act was suspended in 1924. The South Australian Government told the inquiry that it has been unable to confirm whether the Act was subsequently revived, although indications are that it was (SA Government final submission on page 12). The administrative removal power in the 1923 Act was re-enacted in the Aborigines Act 1934.

In 1936 David Unaipon spoke on the steps of the SA Parliament House and was quoted in the News.

_We have been for nearly a century under a Chief Protector. Some of the men who have held that office have acted as ‘protector’ of the Government_ (quoted by Mattingley and Hampton 1992 on page 57).
Missions

In the 1920s a ‘second wave’ of missionary activity began in South Australia. In 1924 the United Aborigines Mission (UAM) opened its first mission at Oodnadatta. The mission incorporated a school and a cottage for children. In 1926 the mission moved to Quorn where it became known as the Colebrook Children’s Home. The UAM went on to establish missions at Swan Reach (which was later moved to Gerard and taken over by the Government in 1961-2), Nepabunna, Ooldea and Finniss Springs.

The children taken into Colebrook included some who were placed there by their traditional mothers or non-Indigenous fathers because that parent was unable to care for them, those who had been taken from their families by non-Indigenous people to work for them and then ejected when their services were no longer wanted and children who were forcibly removed by government officials. In 1944 the Colebrook Home moved to Adelaide where it remained until it closed in 1981. From shortly after it opened until 1952 it was managed by Matron Ruby Hyde and Sister Rutter. ‘They were Colebrook. Those kids went through hell on earth after they had gone’ (quoted by Mattingley and Hampton 1992 on page 216).

The UAM reviewed the role of Colebrook in a submission to the Inquiry.

I don’t believe that mission personnel were involved in the forceful removal of children from their homes or in any way sought to bring pressure to bear on the parents … The people who established this home were single lady missionaries … They tell us they saw a desperate need and they responded to it without government funding or support. They sought to provide love, care and shelter and in some cases refuge to children who they saw as being vulnerable to harm … When the very persons who were their only recourse to protection brought Aboriginal children to them, they were hardly in a position to refuse to take them in.

The missionaries who worked in this home over the years sought to provide Aboriginal children with an education and with the skills they felt the children would need to make their own way in an ever-expanding society dominated by non-Aboriginal culture. Some will say they were wrong in doing this but we believe it must be acknowledged that their desire was to do good and not harm (evidence 264 pages 228-9).

Assimilation 1936-1962

The definition of an Aboriginal person was broadened in 1939 to include anyone ‘descended from the original inhabitants of Australia’. An exemption system was introduced at the same time to allow Indigenous people, who ‘by reason of their character, standard of intelligence, and development are considered to be capable of living in the general community without supervision’, to escape the application of the Act and the control of the Aborigines’ Protection Board.

An exemption certificate entitled the holder to open a bank account, receive certain Commonwealth social service benefits, own land and purchase alcohol. All of these were denied to Indigenous people under the Act. On the other hand, holders of exemption certificates were not allowed to live with their families on reserves and even had to apply for permission to visit them. People could be stopped at any time by the police and required to show their certificates as proof of their ‘status’. Exempt families remained vulnerable to the removal of their children, although for them a court hearing was necessary under general child welfare legislation.

Dad and Mum moved down to town. When they moved down to Adelaide things seemed to go wrong … The inevitable come when Mum and Dad split up and Mum went back to her Homelands. But because we were light-skinned kids [the manager] told Mum she had to leave [the mission at Point McLeay known as ’Raukken’] and take us with her. I was about 5 or 6, something like that. Sooner or later you got caught up with [the welfare] because we didn’t have anywhere else to go. But they made it that Mum had to leave Raukken with us. When she went back to town, there was no support of any sort. So she was told to take us to the courthouse. We had to appear in court. That was their job, to take light-skinned kids. Actually they told Mum to come back on a day to the courthouse when it was going to be heard and I think they told her 2 days wrong. When she come back we had already been committed as wards of the State. Same as they stamp on everyone - neglect.

Confidential submission 284, South Australia: woman removed in the early 1940s along with her two sisters.
The system put Aboriginal families in a double-bind. If they wanted to receive Commonwealth social security benefits to assist them care for their children, they had to leave their homes and extended family on the missions.

‘Assimilation’ was not formally adopted as a policy by the Aborigines Protection Board until 1951. From the 1940s, however, assimilation was practised in all but name. It took the form of dispersal, moving people off the reserves where they had lived regulated lives to cities and towns. Dispersal had high social costs. Indigenous people who moved from the reserves found themselves financially struggling, isolated and discriminated against. Families found every aspect of their lives monitored and assessed against non-Indigenous standards that discriminated against them. People who were under the control of the Board (non-exempt) were regularly visited by Board officials. Those who were exempt ran up against the Board whenever they sought contact with their non-exempt families. With this ever-present level of intrusion, the numbers of children removed from their families as ‘neglected’ or ‘destitute’ increased.

They reckon we were starving which was not true because my mother never drink in her life. She had to stay with us and looked after us, feed and wash us. Just because Mum was not married, they wanted to take us away. Really we were taken away for nothing.

Confidential submission 112, South Australia: man removed in the 1950s along with 3 siblings and 4 cousins after welfare determined they were neglected. In 1956 the relationship between the Aborigines Protection Board and the Children’s Welfare and Public Relief Board was redefined.

a. The part Aboriginal, whether exempted or not, who is living a fully independent life, earning and paying taxes, should be accepted into our community life. Neglected or destitute children from this group should be subject to the same court orders as other children and should continued to be placed, when necessary, in our departmental institutions with white children.

b. All other destitute or neglected Aboriginal or part Aboriginal children should continue to be the responsibility of the Aborigines Protection Board. In some cases, eg myall Aborigines living a tribal life etc it would be unthinkable to remove the children from their parents. In others, it seems hardly right to expect this Department to admit these children into departmental institutions when it has no power or authority in the matter of improving their usual living conditions (quoted by SA Government final submission on page 19).

People removed remember a less cautious and less progressive approach.

I came into welfare care at 6 weeks of age when an officer of the [Department of Child Welfare] deemed my mother physically abusive towards me due to the fact of bruising on my body. This was not bruising it is what is known - and little known at that - as mongolian black spots. Many non-caucasian babies have this birthmarking ... In fact nothing was wrong with me I was not malnourished, unhappy, retarded or unclean ... I was back and forth from my mother to welfare until I was about 3 ... I was relinquished by my natural mother at 6 years old to be adopted by my foster family.

Confidential submission 851, South Australia.

I grew up Oodnadatta area...with my grandmother and she would see the missionary coming ... she would run away with me. She would keep running away and the police ... would come sometimes and shoot the dogs and that and my grandmother would run in the creek and hide me away till about really dark and come back home ... I might [have] been about 10 or 11 years ... we seen one missionary coming ... one of my auntie roll me up like a swag sort of thing, you know, and hid me away...but I must have moved and he got me out and he said to me ‘I’ll give you a lolly and we’ll go for a ride, go to Oodnadatta’ ... they put me on a train and my grandmother was following the train - she was running behind the train, singing out for me ... then I was singing out ‘I’ll be back’, I thought I was going for a holiday or something.

Confidential evidence 382, South Australia: woman removed from her grandmother’s care in the 1960s. She was never informed of the grounds for her removal.
The 1951 Commonwealth-State conference at which the assimilation policy was further articulated spurred the South Australian Government to take action aimed at assimilation. State schools were opened to Aboriginal children and Aboriginal parents were urged to send their children to secondary schools. In many cases the children had to live away from home to attend secondary school, often in children’s homes in Adelaide.

In 1954 the Aborigines’ Protection Board began placing Indigenous children in non-Indigenous foster homes in preference to institutional care. Some of these children came from reserves such as Point McLeay and Point Pearce, others from the ‘shanty towns’ in country areas and the remaining few were from traditional communities in the far north or west of the State (Gale 1968 page 8).

‘The welfare’

The Board’s guardianship of all Indigenous children was repealed by the Aboriginal Affairs Act 1962. However, the numbers of Indigenous children being removed for reasons of lifestyle and poverty under the general child welfare law did not decrease (SA Government interim submission page 18).

The new Department of Aboriginal Affairs favoured placement of removed children in hostels and institutions ‘for the development of a positive Aboriginal identity’ (SA Government interim submission on page 12). It was not until 1967 that Indigenous children were fostered with Indigenous families. In that year 157 Indigenous children were in non-Indigenous foster homes, 123 in hostels or institutions, 29 with Indigenous families and 6 in ‘medical facilities’ (SA Government interim submission page 18). Many were adopted by non-Aboriginal people.

In 1972 the Community Welfare Act established the Department of Community Welfare and the separate legislation relating to Indigenous people was repealed. Despite the policy emphasis of the department on promoting the family relationship, a disproportionate number of Indigenous children continued to be removed from their families as ‘neglected’.

Professional and organisational attitudes were at times slow to change. It was still possible for an Aboriginal child to be removed from his or her home because there was insufficient food in the house. Prevailing attitudes did not allow the provision of food, money and other material assistance as a family support measure to help prevent the removal of children (SA Government interim submission page 14).

After the Federal Government took responsibility for Aboriginal affairs in 1973, the State welfare department functioned as the regional office of the federal Department of Aboriginal Affairs while retaining responsibility for providing welfare services to Aboriginal people.

Role of AICCA

In 1978 the South Australian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (‘ACCA’) was established ‘to have an input into issues surrounding Aboriginal child welfare and to attempt to redress the injustices that were occurring within the government welfare field’ (ACCA submission 347 page 10). Of particular concern was the provision of culturally appropriate (and preferably Indigenous) alternative care. At the same time the department tried to place all Indigenous children who were unable to live with their own family with other Indigenous families and to de-institutionalise its care programs (SA Government interim submission on page 14).

In the Community Welfare Amendment Act 1982 cultural considerations were explicitly mentioned for the first time.

... in recognition of the fact that this State has a multi-cultural community, the Minister and the Department shall, in administering this Act, take into consideration the different customs, attitudes and religious beliefs of the ethnic groups within the community (section 10(4)).

In 1983 the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle became the official policy of the welfare department. However, in the same year there were still more Indigenous children in non-Indigenous foster placements than in Indigenous placements (SA Government interim submission page 19). The Principle was incorporated in the Adoption Act 1988 and the Children’s Protection Act 1993.
Fiona

1936 it was. I would have been five. We went visiting Ernabella the day the police came. Our great-uncle Sid was leasing Ernabella from the government at that time so we went there.

We had been playing all together, just a happy community and the air was filled with screams because the police came and mothers tried to hide their children and blacken their children’s faces and tried to hide them in caves. We three, Essie, Brenda and me together with our three cousins ... the six of us were put on my old truck and taken to Oodnadatta which was hundreds of miles away and then we got there in the darkness.

My mother had to come with us. She had already lost her eldest daughter down to the Children’s Hospital because she had infantile paralysis, polio, and now there was the prospect of losing her three other children, all the children she had. I remember that she came in the truck with us curled up in the foetal position. Who can understand that, the trauma of knowing that you’re going to lose all your children? We talk about it from the point of view of our trauma but - our mother - to understand what she went through, I don’t think anyone can really understand that.

It was 1936 and we went to the United Aborigines Mission in Oodnadatta. We got there in the dark and then we didn’t see our mother again. She just kind of disappeared into the darkness. I’ve since found out in the intervening years that there was a place they called the natives’ camp and obviously my mother would have been whisked to the natives’ camp. There was no time given to us to say goodbye to our mothers.

From there we had to learn to eat new food, have our heads shaved. So one day not long after we got there my cousin and I ... we tried to run back to Ernabella. We came across the train. We’d never seen a train before and it frightened the hell out of us with the steam shooting out. So we ran back to the mission because that was the only place of safety that we knew. She was only four and I was only five.

Then we had to learn to sleep in a house. We’d only ever slept in our wilchas and always had the stars there and the embers of the fire and the closeness of the family. And all of a sudden we had high beds and that was very frightening. You just thought you were going to fall out and to be separated. There was a corridor and our cousins were in another room. We’d never been separated before. And the awful part was we had to get into that train later on with one little grey blanket and go down to Colebrook ... a matter of weeks after. From that time until 1968 I didn’t see [my mother]. Thirty-two years it was.

[I stayed at Colebrook] till 1946 [when] I was fourteen or fifteen. We were trained to go into people’s home and clean and look after other people’s children. I went to a doctor and his wife. They were beautiful people. I stayed with them a couple of years.

I guess the most traumatic thing for me is that, though I don’t like missionaries being criticised - the only criticism that I have is that you forbade us to speak our own language and we had no communication with our family. We just seemed to be getting further and further away from our people, we went to Oodnadatta first, then to Quorn next, then when there was a drought there we went to Adelaide and went out to Eden Hills and that’s where we stayed till we went out to work and did whatever we had to do.

I realised later how much I’d missed of my culture ...

I realised later how much I’d missed of my culture and how much I’d been devastated. Up until this point of time I can’t communicate with my family, can’t hold a conversation. I can’t go to my uncle and ask him anything because we don’t have that language ...

You hear lots and lots of the criticisms of the missionaries but we only learnt from being brought up by missionaries. They took some of that grief away in teaching us another way to overcome the grief and the hurt and the pain and the suffering. So I’m very thankful from that point of view and I believe that nothing comes without a purpose. You knew that in those days there was no possibility of going back because cars were so few and far between and the train took forever to get anywhere so how could a five year old get back to the people.
I guess the government didn’t mean it as something bad but our mothers weren’t treated as people having feelings. Naturally a mother’s got a heart for her children and for them to be taken away, no-one can ever know the heartache. She was still grieving when I met her in 1968.

When me and my little family stood there - my husband and me and my two little children - and all my family was there, there wasn’t a word we could say to each other. All the years that you wanted to ask this and ask that, there was no way we could ever regain that. It was like somebody came and stabbed me with a knife. I couldn’t communicate with my family because I had no way of communicating with them any longer. Once that language was taken away, we lost a part of that very soul. It meant our culture was gone, our family was gone, everything that was dear to us was gone.

When I finally met [my mother] through an interpreter she said that because my name had been changed she had heard about the other children but she’d never heard about me. And every morning as the sun came up the whole family would wail. They did that for 32 years until they saw me again. Who can imagine what a mother went through?

But you have to learn to forgive.

Confidential evidence 305, South Australia.
News Release

Minister Kyam Maher
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation

Thursday, 19 November, 2015

Reparations scheme for SA’s Stolen Generations

The State Government will establish an $11 million Stolen Generations reparations fund.

The Next Steps - Stolen Generations Reparation Scheme will involve a fund of up to $6 million for ex gratia payments for those members of the state’s Aboriginal communities removed from their families, and whose usual place of residence was South Australia at the time of the separation.

Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Minister Kyam Maher says the reparations scheme is a significant step in South Australia’s reconciliation journey.

“The South Australian Parliament became one of the first in Australia to apologise to the Stolen Generations in 1997, with former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd and the Federal Parliament apologising in 2008.” he says

“Since our apology, South Australia has developed a range of policies and initiatives with a focus on Reconciliation and the wellbeing of Aboriginal people.

“Today we launch a reparations scheme enabling us to compensate South Australian members of the Stolen Generations without the need for litigation, and taking into account the loss of documents, witnesses, and memories over time.

“Importantly, the scheme will also allow members of the Stolen Generations to tell their stories, which the 1997 Bringing Them Home report found was a critical part of the healing process.”

Minister Maher says individual reparations will be recommended by an independent assessor.

“The assessor’s primary role will be to determine whether an applicant is eligible for an ex gratia payment, and if so, assess what level of harm has been caused,” he says.

“As part of the process, the assessor will be able to hear the personal stories of applicants, and speak with family members and people connected with the removal.

“Based on the assessor’s recommendations, the Minister will decide the amount of the payment. The scheme allows for payments of up to $50,000.

“The reparations scheme will begin on March 31 next year, and the application process will remain open for 12 months.”

The Minister says the scheme will also feature a $5 million fund for whole-of-community reparations, which will be finalised in consultation with Aboriginal leaders and communities.

“Whole-of-community reparations might include places of memorial, education scholarships and programs, counselling and support services, and exhibitions telling the stories of the Stolen Generations,” he says.

www.premier.sa.gov.au    Twitter: @sa_press_sec
Application form

Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme (SGRS)

This is the form you need to complete to have your request for a reparation payment assessed. Before completing this form, please read the Guide to Applicants. The Guide provides more information about how the SGRS will work and how to answer the questions below.

If you need more space when filling out this form, please attach any additional pages you need.

We understand that the questions asked in this form are very sensitive and may raise difficult issues for you.

Please see the website [www.statedevelopment.sa.gov.au/stolengenerationsscheme](http://www.statedevelopment.sa.gov.au/stolengenerationsscheme) for details of organisations you can contact for counselling and support.

Applications must be received by 31 March 2017.

Please send your application and any supporting documents by post or email to:

greparation@sa.gov.au or Independent Assessor
Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme
GPO Box 2954
ADELAIDE SA 5001

PART 1 - YOUR DETAILS

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<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Middle Name</th>
<th>Surname</th>
<th>Any other names you have been known by</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Date of birth, if known</th>
<th>Place of birth, if known</th>
<th>Current residential Address</th>
<th>Postal address (if different from residential address)</th>
<th>Email address</th>
<th>Phone number(s)</th>
<th>Preferred method of contact</th>
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<th>If you have any urgent or serious health problems that require your application to be prioritised, please provide details</th>
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### PART 2 - YOUR FAMILY

<table>
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<th>Birth family</th>
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<td>Full names of parents (if known)</td>
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| Full names of siblings (if known) |

### PART 3 - YOUR REMOVAL FROM YOUR FAMILY

Please include as much information as you can about your removal from your family.

If you have any documents to support this part of your application, please attach copies.

However, do not worry if you do not have any records as we will carry out a search of government records on your behalf (please note that it will help if you sign the authority at the end of this form).

<table>
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<tr>
<th>On (or around) what date were you removed (if known)?</th>
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| From where were you removed (if known)? |

<p>| Who removed you (if known) e.g. Government, Church? |</p>
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<tr>
<th>Were you adopted?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Yes ☐ No ☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>If yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date of adoption (if known)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adoptive parents’ full names (if known)</td>
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<td>Adoptive siblings full names (if known)</td>
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<th>Were you fostered?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Yes ☐ No ☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>If yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of being fostered (if known)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Foster parents’ full names (if known)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster siblings full names (if known)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What reasons were you given (if known)?

Please provide any other details about the circumstances of your removal.

If you have any documents to show what the authority/reasons for your removal may have been, please provide copies, for example Court order; any other kind of order/direction/letter from a Government authority or officer; letters to or from parents/other relatives.

If there are any witnesses you would like the Independent Assessor to speak to in assessing this element of your application, please include their names and contact details.
Were you placed into institutional care?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes

What was the name of the institution? (if known)

Date (if known)

For all applicants

Were you returned to, or reunited with your family? If so, when did that happen?

PART 4 - OTHER INFORMATION

Have you ever made a legal claim for compensation from the State or other person or organisation in relation to your removal?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, please provide details of the claim, including whether it has been finalised and if so, the outcome?

Do you have any debts owing to the State? (for example, court fines, State taxes etc.)

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, please provide details of amounts owed and to which Government agency?
PART 5 – YOUR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND CONSENT TO FURTHER STEPS

In making this application, I acknowledge that the Independent Assessor may need to obtain the following personal information about me, and I consent to the Independent Assessor doing so for the purposes of assessing my application under the Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme only:

• Records held by Government agencies, Churches and other organisations relating to my removal from my family as a child
• Any records of criminal convictions in my name in Australia
• Any records of outstanding debts owed by me to the State of South Australia.

In making this application, I understand that if I am offered a reparations payment and I wish to accept, I will be required to sign a Deed in which I agree not to make any other claim for compensation from the State in relation to my removal. I also understand that I will be given the opportunity to obtain independent legal advice about the Deed (with funding support from the Government).

I have read and understood these acknowledgments and requests for consent.

Signed: ________________________________ Date: _____ / _____ / _____

Name of applicant: ________________________________

PART 6 – CHECKLIST

☐ Completed application form

☐ Certified copies of each of personal identification document (Part 1)

A ‘certified copy’ is a copy of a document, which has been certified as being a true copy of the original document by a Justice of the Peace or other person authorised to witness a statutory declaration. The two documents must match by reference to a name and current address.

• One form of photographic identification, for example:
  - Current driver’s licence (copy of both sides)
  - Current concession card (Centrelink, Department of Veterans’ Affairs)
  - Current passport

• One other official document containing your name and current address, for example:
  - Bank statement
  - Utility accounts (gas, electricity, water, etc.)

• If your name has changed since you were removed, please provide a certified copy of the document(s) verifying your name change:
  - Marriage certificate
  - Registration of name change/deed poll
  - Any other official document verifying your change of name.

☐ Copies of any documents about your removal (Parts 2 & 3)

We understand that the questions asked in this form are very sensitive and may raise difficult issues for you.

Please see the website www.statedevelopment.sa.gov.au/stolengenerationsscheme for details of organisations you can contact for counselling and support.
Appendix 4 - Application form
continued >
Appendix 5
Guide to applicants

Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme (SGRS)

Purpose of the scheme
The Government has established the Next Steps – Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme (SGRS) to acknowledge the hurt experienced by members of the Stolen Generations, and to help with process of recovery.

Under the SGRS, the Government is providing the opportunity, as an alternative to legal action, for individual members of the Stolen Generations to apply to have their story heard and to receive a reparation payment.

Nature of the scheme
The SGRS reparation payments are voluntary payments by the Government. They are not required by any law and are not a part of any court claim.

Because the payments are discretionary only, there is no process for review of any decision under the SGRS, and no reasons will be provided.

The SGRS does not involve any formal rules or procedures.

It is intended that the SGRS process will be as informal, sensitive and fair as possible.

If you decide to apply, your application will be assessed on:
• The information you provide in your application form and supporting documents;
• Your interview with the Independent Assessor if you choose to have one; and
• Any other information that the Independent Assessor thinks would assist and that you agree to him obtaining.

Who should apply?
You may be eligible if:
• You are an Aboriginal person; and
• You were removed from your family as a child prior to 31 December 1975 without a court order; and
• When you were removed your normal place of residence was South Australia; or you were removed by South Australian authorities.

How can I apply and what is the process for assessment?

1. Application

You should complete the application form and send it to the SGRS Independent Assessor, together with the supporting documents listed in the application form.

If you would like assistance and support in preparing your application, some organisations that can help are listed on the website at: www.statedevelopment.sa.gov.au/stolengenerationsscheme

Parts 1-3

Please answer the questions on the form as far as you can, but we understand that you may not have all the information the Independent Assessor will need. That is why, in Part 5 of the form, you are asked to give your consent to the Independent Assessor obtaining any additional information he may need to assess your application (for example, by obtaining any documents containing your personal details that may be held by Government departments, Churches or other Institutions and/or by speaking to any people you mention in your application).

All your personal information will be treated confidentially in the SGRS process, and will be used only for the purpose of assessing your application. Copies of your personal information obtained in this way and used in the assessment process, may be provided to you on request.

Part 4

In this part, you are asked about any legal or other kinds of claims you have made for the payment of compensation by the State in relation to your removal. This is to ensure fair treatment between people who may have already received some compensation, and those who have not. It does not mean that if you have already received some compensation you will not be eligible under the SGRS, but any previous payment does need to be taken into account in the overall assessment of how much any SGRS payment should be.

Part 5

In Part 5 of the form, your consent is also required to allow the Independent Assessor to undertake a check of any criminal history, because any serious offending may be taken into account in the final decision of the Minister. Also, your consent is required to obtain details of any debts you may have owing to the State Government so that these can be settled by being deducted from any SGRS payment.

2. Assessment by the Independent Assessor

The Independent Assessor, the Hon. John Hill, is a former senior government Minister. His role is to:

- Receive and review your Application and supporting documents
- Contact you to let you know whether you may be eligible and, if so, offer you a personal meeting to enable you to tell your story
- Listen to your story (if you wish to tell it)
- Make notes of the interview to assist with the assessment and, if you wish, make an audio recording
- Seek any further information he thinks would assist, including from witnesses and any available records held by government departments, churches or other institutions
- Make an assessment as to your eligibility under the scheme
- Seek information about any serious criminal convictions and any outstanding state debts
- Provide a recommendation to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation about your eligibility for a payment.
3. Decision by the Minister

The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation will receive your application and the recommendations of the Independent Assessor, and will make a final decision about whether you are eligible and, if so, offer you a reparation payment. The Minister’s will make the final decision on eligibility on a case by case basis, taking into account any record of serious criminal offending.

The amount, which may be up to $50,000, will be determined by the Minister after all applications are received, and will be the same flat rate for all eligible applicants.

If an offer is made to you, you do not have to accept it, but the decision is final and there is no process for review or appeal.

If you wish to accept an offer you will be required to sign a Deed of Agreement with the Minister in which you acknowledge receiving the payment as reparation for your removal, and you discharge and release the Government from any future legal liability in relation to your removal.

You will be given the opportunity to obtain legal advice about the offer and the Deed to assist you in deciding whether to accept and agree.

4. Timing

Applications will be received between 31 March 2016 and 31 March 2017.

The Independent Assessor will begin the assessment process during that period. However, the Minister’s decisions about payments, and the offers to applicants, will not be made until all applications are received i.e. after 31 March 2017.

However, if you have a serious urgent medical condition, you should mention this in your application (see Part 1) as the Independent Assessor may be able to process your application more quickly.

We understand that the questions asked in this form are very sensitive and may raise difficult issues for you. Please see the website www.statedevelopment.sa.gov.au/stolengenerationsscheme for details of organisations you can contact for counselling and support.

“The introduction of the scheme is a significant step in South Australia’s Reconciliation journey – one which allows for compensation but also allows members to tell their stories, a critical part of the healing process.”

Kyam Maher MLC
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation
Hello everyone, we are now at the half way mark for applications to the Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme (SGRS).

So far we have received more than 100 applications; those who have yet to apply have until March 31 next year to do so.

I want to thank those who have already put in applications - I know that for many, this has been a very difficult thing to do.

I am writing to let you know what will happen to your application and to give you a sense of the timeline for the scheme.

Kind regards

John Hill
Independent Assessor

What will happen to your application?

When we receive your application, we register it and make sure all sections are completed as fully as possible. Then we look across government departments for any files or documents that might relate to your circumstances. When we have as much information as we can gather, as the Independent Assessor, will see if the application meets the criteria set by the Government.

What criteria do you need to satisfy?

As set out in the scheme’s Guidelines, you may be eligible if:

• You are an Aboriginal person; and
• You were removed from your family as a child prior to 31 December 1975 without a court order; and
• When you were removed your normal place of residence was South Australia; or you were removed by South Australian authorities.

What if your application does not satisfy the criteria?

If for some reason your application does not meet the three criteria, you will be given an opportunity to provide further information, either in writing or when meeting with me.

There may be some people who genuinely identify as Stolen Generation who do not satisfy the criteria, because for example, they may have been removed, as a result of a court process. As they were children at the time they are very unlikely to have any memory of this. While this scheme may not be able to assist them there may be other reparations schemes which they could apply to.

Unsuccessful applicants of the SGRS should seek advice about other options.

When will you have an opportunity to meet with me to tell your story?

Once we have all the information and I have had a chance to read and thoroughly consider your application you will be offered a time to meet with me (or another member of our team, should you prefer to talk to an Aboriginal person or a woman.) This will be a time when your story is told in your words and recorded (if you wish) to be made available to you for you to do with as you choose.

How long will the process take?

My appointment as Independent Assessor finishes in 2018, by then all applications will have been received and considered, all applicants who wish to talk to me will have had that opportunity, and my recommendations will have been given to the Minister.

If you are eligible when will you be made an offer?

As all applicants are to be offered the same amount, we won’t be able to make offers until we know how many eligible applicants there are.

That won’t be until after applications have closed on 31 March 2017 and all applicants who have had a chance to meet me, have their applications considered by me and then considered by the Minister.

This process cannot be rushed and may take up to a year.
Next steps

The SGRS team is in the process of gathering information from government agencies and considering applications.

We are meeting with applicants who wish to talk to me, or another member of the team.

Our intention is to hold meetings with individual applicants in places that are safe, comfortable and, as far as possible, convenient for them. These may be community centres, health centres or their own homes.

Who do you contact for further information or to add something to your file?

If you have any questions or you wish to add to your application in any way, please contact Maria Atkins:

Phone (08) 8463 6533
Mobile 0466 451 651
Email sgreparation@sa.gov.au

Exceptional circumstances

We have been advised by a number of applicants who are unwell that they would like their applications considered as a priority. We are trying to meet these requests, but the processes listed above still need to be followed. In certain cases recommendations have been made to the Minister, who has issued offers of interim payments.

Applications will still be considered if the applicant passes away after submitting their application but before it has been assessed.

It would help us if the applicant provides clear written, signed instructions about who should receive their payment if their application is granted.

Support

The questions asked in the application form may raise difficult issues. For counselling and support, please contact the following organisations:

• Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Agency, Nunkuwarrin Yunti of South Australia
  Phone (08) 8406 1600

• Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement
  Phone 1800 643 222, Email info@alrm.org.au

• Relationships Australia SA
  Phone 1800 188 118

• Watto Purrunna Aboriginal Primary Health Care Service:
  - Muna Raendi, corner Mark and Oldham Roads, Elizabeth Vale SA 5112
    Phone (08) 8182 9206
  - Maringga Turtpandi, GP Plus Super Clinic, 1 Gilles Crescent, Hillcrest SA 5086
    Phone (08) 7425 8900
  - Wonggangga Turtpandi, corner Church and Dale Street, Port Adelaide SA 5015
    Phone (08) 9240 9611
  - Kanggawodli, 16-22 Clements Street, Dudley Park SA 2250
    Phone (08) 8342 2250
Darwin trip
I was pleased to visit Darwin in September with other members of the team and meet with Aboriginal organisations to let them know about the scheme and to encourage them to let potential applicants know how to apply.
While there I met with five applicants and heard and recorded their stories. It was a real privilege to meet these people and hear their stories. Each story was different and deeply moving.

SGRS Community Fund – consultation now open
As you may be aware the Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme also has a Community Fund.
The people managing this fund have asked me to pass on this information:
A $5 million Community Fund is available to support projects that promote healing among members of the Stolen Generations, their families and descendants.
A community consultation process is now underway to seek ideas about the types of projects that could be supported by this fund.
Possible projects may include recording personal histories, family history research, exhibitions, artistic works, cultural activities, healing programs, memorials and educational awards.

We would love to hear your ideas. Please complete a short survey https://surveys.statedevelopment.sa.gov.au/StolenGenerationsCommunity2016.survey and let us know what projects your community is interested in.
Consultation and information sessions will be held, with details available on the website www.statedevelopment.sa.gov.au/stolengenerationsscheme.
Once the consultation is finished, people and organisations will be encouraged to submit their project proposals for funding.
To find out more about the Community Fund:
Call (08) 8463 6519 or 0466 501 132
Email sgreparation@sa.gov.au

Hello everyone and welcome to the second edition of this newsletter. I am writing again to let you know what is happening to your application and also to let you know where we are at overall.

Kind regards

John Hill
Independent Assessor
Can you still apply?
Applications are still open, closing on 31 March, 2017. We don’t need a lot of information to get the ball rolling so please encourage family and friends to fill in the application with whatever details they have. Once we receive a signed application form we can start the search of state government records to get a more complete picture.

To date, we have received more than 300 applications.

Can you get help filling in the application?
Yes. The Government had funded the Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement (ALRM) and Relationships Australia to assist.
• Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement 1800 643 222, info@alrm.org.au
• Relationships Australia SA 1800 188 118

What criteria do you need to satisfy to be recommended for reparation?
As set out on the application form, successful applicants must be:
  a. Aboriginal
  b. Resident of South Australia at the time of removal or if not a South Australian resident, removed by a South Australian government agency (most usually this would apply to people who were living in the Northern Territory)
  c. Removed from family without a court process.

When will you be told if you are to be offered reparation?
I hope that by the end of this year I will have been able to consider all the applications, meet with all applicants who wish to meet with me, and make recommendations to the Minister.

Before I can consider your application we have to wait while a thorough search of your government records can be undertaken. This can be time-consuming as there will be well over 300 searches that will need to be made. I am optimistic though that this can be done by the end of this year.

When will you have an opportunity to meet with me to tell you my story?
An important part of this process of reparation is for members of the Stolen Generations to tell their stories to me, as a representative of the State Government. I had hoped to hold these meetings after reading each applicant’s records. Unfortunately, this has not been possible given the numbers of people involved and the practicalities of setting up appointments. I do apologise to you for this necessary change.

So far, I and other members of our team have met with more than 80 applicants, either by themselves or with other applicants (usually a brother or sister) or other family members or supporters. We try and meet with people as close as possible to where they live and in comfortable and unthreatening environments and with whomever they wish to bring with them.

It is hard to describe adequately the experience of listening to so many members of the Stolen Generations. All I can say is that it has been one of the great honours of my life to have met and listened to such extraordinary survivors. Without doubt everyone I have met has experienced considerable pain and trauma.

I thank everyone who has met with me so far - I know it has often been very tough for people to talk about their experiences, memories and feelings but I hope, to some degree at least, that the process of being listened to has been helpful.
What if you are unwell?

We have been advised by a number of applicants who are unwell that they would like their applications considered as a priority. We will try to meet these requests, given the processes listed above still need to be followed. In some cases, recommendations may be made to the Minister who may issue early part-payments.

Applications will still be considered if the applicant passes away after the application has been received and before it has been assessed.

Who do you contact for further information or to add something to your file?

If you have any questions or you wish to add to your application in any way, please contact Maria Atkins:

Phone (08) 8463 6533
Mobile 0466 451 651
Email sgpreparation@sa.gov.au

Support

The questions asked in the application form may raise difficult issues. For counselling and support, please visit the following organisations:

- Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Agency, Nunkuwarrin Yunti of South Australia
  Phone (08) 8406 1600

- Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement
  Phone 1800 643 222, Email info@alrm.org.au

- Relationships Australia SA
  Phone 1800 188 118

- Watto Purrunna Aboriginal Primary Health Care Service:
  - Muna Paiendi, corner Mark and Oldham Roads, Elizabeth Vale SA 5112
    Phone (08) 8182 9206
  - Maringga Turtpandi, GP Plus Super Clinic, 1 Gilles Crescent, Hillcrest SA 5086
    Phone (08) 7425 8900
  - Wonggangga Turtpandi, corner Church and Dale Street, Port Adelaide SA 5015
    Phone (08) 9240 9611
  - Kanggawodli, 16-22 Clements Street, Dudley Park SA 2250
    Phone (08) 8342 2250

Thank you to those who participated in the recent public consultation process to seek the views and voices of Aboriginal and other South Australians about the types of projects you would like to see supported through the $5m Stolen Generations Community Reparations Fund.

A summary of the consultations is now available on the website, under the Community Fund section.

Expressions of Interest are now open for Aboriginal community organisations and their project partners to apply for funding to support projects or programs that will promote healing for members of the Stolen Generations, their families and the wider community. Funding of up to $100,000 is available per project.


Please contact Brendan Moran on (08) 8463 6519 or 0466 501 132 or brendan.moran2@sa.gov.au
Hello everyone and welcome to the latest edition of the Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme newsletter.

The purpose of this newsletter is to keep you up-to-date about the progress of the scheme, and the steps we need to take as we consider your application.

Applications for the Individual Reparations Scheme closed at the end of March and in total we received 447 applications from all over South Australia and many other parts of Australia.

The graphics on the following page indicate the gender breakdown and locations of applicants.

Kind regards

John Hill
Independent Assessor

When will you be told if you are to be offered reparation?

We are currently considering all applications, checking available government records and arranging times to meet with those applicants who want to.

This is progressing well but given the number of applications it is taking time.

Once we have done this work, we can make recommendations to Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Minister Kyam Maher who will advise you.

What if you are unwell?

We have been advised by a number of applicants who are unwell that they would like their applications considered as a priority. We are trying to meet these requests, but the processes listed above still need to be followed. In certain cases recommendations have been made to the Minister who has issued early part-payments.

Applications will still be considered if an applicant passes away after their application has been received and before it has been assessed.

When will you have an opportunity to meet with me to tell you my story?

An important part of this process of reparation is for members of the Stolen Generations to tell their stories to me, as a representative of the State Government.

I and other members of our team have met with more than 200 applicants, either by themselves or with other applicants (usually a brother or sister), or other family members or supporters. We try and meet with people as close as possible to where they live and in comfortable and unthreatening environments and with whomever they wish to bring with them.

To those people I have met with, I know it has been very tough for you to talk about your experiences, memories and feelings and I hope, to some degree at least, that the process of being listened to has been helpful.

Gender breakdown

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<th>Gender</th>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
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Location summary

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<th>Number</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northern Adelaide</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Far North</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Adelaide</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eyre and Western</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murray and Mallee</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Adelaide</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Adelaide</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yorke and Mid North</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown (no fixed address or address not provided)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fleurieu and Kangaroo Island</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limestone Coast</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adelaide Hills</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barossa, Light and Lower North</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Territory</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
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<td>New South Wales</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overseas</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Support

The questions asked in the application form may raise difficult issues. For counselling and support, please visit the following organisations:

- Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Agency, Nunkuwarrin Yunti of South Australia
  Phone (08) 8406 1600
- Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement
  Phone 1800 643 222, Email info@alrm.org.au
- Relationships Australia SA
  Phone 1800 188 118
- Watto Purrunna Aboriginal Primary Health Care Service:
  - Muna Paiendi, corner Mark and Oldham Roads, Elizabeth Vale SA 5112
  Phone (08) 8182 9206
- Maringga Turtpandi, GP Plus Super Clinic, 1 Gilles Crescent, Hillcrest SA 5086
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- Wonggangga Turtpandi, corner Church and Dale Street, Port Adelaide SA 5015
  Phone (08) 9240 9611
- Kanggawodli, 16-22 Clements Street, Dudley Park SA 2250
  Phone (08) 8342 2250

Who do you contact for further information or to add something to your file?

If you have any questions or you wish to add to your application in any way, please contact Maria Atkins:
Phone (08) 8463 6533  Mobile 0466 451 651  Email sgreparation@sa.gov.au

Message from Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Minister Kyam Maher

I would like to thank all the applicants who have undertaken this journey, which is part of this government’s commitment to righting some of the wrongs of the past and walking together towards Reconciliation.

It’s not enough to say sorry – we must listen and understand what happened to you, and determine how best we can recognise the grief, loss and pain inflicted on whole communities.

Thank you for your bravery in coming forward.

SGRS Community Fund – update

The first round of the Community Reparations Fund has now closed.

We received more than 70 expressions of interest to support projects or programs that will promote healing for members of the Stolen Generations, their families and the wider community.

We are now considering the proposals and the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation will make an announcement soon about the first projects that will be supported by the Fund.

Appendix 9
Meeting places and dates

Aboriginal Elders Village, Davoren Park
28/8/17

Adelaide Town Hall Reconciliation Room
23/1/17, 24/1/17, 20/2/17, 1/3/17, 17/3/17, 9/5/17,
29/5/17, 5/6/17, 6/6/17, 9/6/17, 13/6/17, 14/6/17,
27/7/17, 28/7/17, 18/8/17, 19/9/17

Canterbury Close Aged Care Facility
19/4/17, 20/4/17

Carlton City Council Library
27/5/17, 28/5/17, 4/10/17

Ceduna Koonibba Health Service, Ceduna
14/3/17, 15/3/17

Congress Aboriginal Health Services, Alice Springs
3/10/16, 6/9/17

Coober Pedy Council Office
12/10/17

Office of Jon Gee (Member for Napier), Smithfield
25/5/17, 26/5/17, 11/8/17, 28/8/17

Kadina Library, Kadina
16/11/17

Kuro Yerlo Community Centre, Largs Bay
2/12/16

Mara Dreaming Office, Salisbury
7/11/16

Mount Gambier Health Service
11/9/17

Murray Bridge Aboriginal Health Corporation
30/8/17, 31/8/17

Onkaparinga Council Hall, Happy Valley
9/1/17

Pika Wiya Health Service, Port Augusta
16/02/17, 17/2/17, 11/4/17, 12/4/17, 21/8/17, 22/8/17,
23/8/17, 24/8/17

Port Lincoln Aboriginal Health Service
16/5/17, 17/5/17

Redfern Town Hall
6/1/16

Redfern Community Hall
3/9/17

Relationships Australia Office, Adelaide
19/4/17, 22/5/2017, 31/5/17

Relationships Australia Office, Berri
1/11/17, 2/11/17

Salvation Army Hall, Marion
2/8/17

Stolen Generation Aboriginal Corporation, Darwin
2/5/17, 3/5/17

Tauondi College, Port Adelaide
28/3/17, 29/3/17, 11/5/17, 12/5/17, 2/6/17

Department of State Development, Adelaide
8/12/16 (In Person), 7/8/17 (In Person I/V), 14/11/17
(Phone), 15/11/17 (Phone), 20/11/17 (Phone), 15/1/18
(In Person)

Whyalla City Council Offices, Whyalla
5/12/16, 6/12/16, 15/5/17, 16/5/17

Wami Kata Old Folks Home
24/8/2017

Mobilong Prison
2/11/2017

Cadell Training Centre
8/5/2017

18 visits to private homes
Appendix 10
Letter and consent form regarding recordings

Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme
11 Waymouth Street, Adelaide SA 5000
P: (08) 8226 8900 | E: sgreparation@sa.gov.au

31 May 2018

Title, First name, Last name
Address
Suburb State Postcode

Dear [Title Last name]

I am writing about the meeting we had following your application to the Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme.

All together we received 449 applications to the Scheme and I met in person or by telephone with 352 of the applicants. You were among the 310 applicants who agreed to have their meeting recorded.

I sincerely thank you for sharing your story and for agreeing to it being recorded. I consider myself incredibly privileged to have heard so many compelling and deeply personal stories.

As promised, I now enclose a copy of the recording made during our meeting. This copy is for you to keep and use as you wish.

You may recall that at our meeting I said that you could decide whether the original recording of our meeting could be held permanently for the benefit of future generations. I am now seeking your views about that.

I have enclosed a consent form for you to fill in to let us know what you wish to happen. Could you please fill in the form as soon as possible and return it using the Reply-paid envelope, which is also enclosed for your convenience.

Please note that if we do not receive a response from you it will be assumed that you do not object to your recording being kept – and that no access will be granted within your lifetime.

Should you require any further information regarding this matter, please contact the Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme on (08) 8226 8900.

Yours sincerely

Hon John Hill
Independent Assessor

Enc.
1. CD audio recording
2. Consent form
3. Reply-paid envelope
Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme
Consent to Retain Audio Recording

Section A:
I, the undersigned, consent to a copy of the recording, made during my meeting with the Independent Assessor, Mr. John Hill, being retained by the South Australian Government under the State Records Act 1997, for future generations, under the protection of Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

☐ Yes. [Proceed to Section B]
☐ No, I would like my recording destroyed. [Proceed to Section C]

NB. If your recording contains the voices of other applicants, it would be appreciated if you and the other applicants could discuss and agree on a collective view prior to completing your forms.

Section B:
I want the following conditions to apply during my lifetime:

i. Limited access:
   ☐ I want my recording to be available to my immediate family.
   
   And/or
   ☐ I consent to my recording being used for educational or research purposes (for example, researchers and educational institutions).

ii. Unrestricted access:
   ☐ I consent to my recording being used for any purpose by any individual/organisation authorised by the Executive Director, Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, and that the recording may be used without any further notification. I understand that my name may be used in conjunction with any use of the recording.

iii. No access:
   ☐ I do not consent to anyone accessing my recording during my lifetime.

iv. Other specific conditions:
   
   ____________________________________________

Section C:
Signature: [Name] ______________________________ Date ___ / ___ / 2018

Please make a copy of this form for your own records, and return the original copy in the reply paid envelope, enclosed. If you have questions, please call 08 8226 8900.

Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme
GPO Box 2954, Adelaide SA 5001
sgreparation@sa.gov.au