

CHILDREN IN STATE CARE COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

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## **Chapter 2 Statistics**

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### Evidence and information to the Inquiry

There were 1920 people who provided evidence or information to the Inquiry about child sexual abuse and the child protection system. These people included alleged child sexual abuse victims, people who spoke about the sexual abuse of other children, expert witnesses, carers, government and non-government organisations, the police, the department and its current and former employees and other interested individuals.

### Allegations of child sexual abuse

A total of 792 people told the Inquiry they were victims of child sexual abuse. Some people made allegations against more than one perpetrator, and one allegation of an act of child sexual abuse could involve more than one perpetrator. In total, 1592 allegations of child sexual abuse were made to the Inquiry against 1733 alleged perpetrators. Some of the alleged victims did not know the identity of the alleged perpetrators.

Of the 792 people who made allegations of child sexual abuse:

- 406 were male
- 386 were female
- the age distribution was –

0–18 years	51
19–30	119
31–40	167
41–50	206
51–60	165
61 or over	84

- 152 were of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent
- 22 were elderly (aged 70 or over)
- 44 were people with a disability
- 76 were prisoners when giving evidence.

A further 460 people who were allegedly sexually abused as children did not come forward but came to the Inquiry's attention via other sources:

- Some of the people who were alleged victims of child sexual abuse and came forward identified 82 other children they said were victims of child sexual abuse.
- Disability SA identified 199 people who were alleged child sexual abuse victims.
- Other sources such as police operations records, general records researched by the Inquiry and expert or general witnesses identified 179 other alleged child sexual abuse victims.

### Allegations of child sexual abuse made by children in State care

Following investigations by the Inquiry, available records confirmed that 242 people were children in State care at the time of the sexual abuse. Of those people:

- 124 were male
- 118 were female
- the age distribution was –

0–18 years	16
19–30	35
31–40	42
41–50	62
51–60	62
61 or over	25

- 44 were of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent
- 6 were elderly (aged 70 or over)
- 22 were people with a disability
- 20 were prisoners when giving evidence.

The allegations of child sexual abuse of children in State care cover the period from the 1940s to 2004.

From the 242 people who were children in State care at the time of the alleged sexual abuse, there were 826 allegations of child sexual abuse and 922 alleged perpetrators. One allegation of an act of child sexual abuse could involve more than one perpetrator.

## Evidence

The Commissioner conducted hearings with 496 people who alleged they were victims of child sexual abuse.

The Inquiry also heard evidence from 224 general or expert witnesses (see Appendix C). Some of these witnesses gave evidence on more than one occasion.

More than 40 people had two or more hearings.

In total, the Commissioner conducted 809 hearings, which resulted in 46,500 pages of transcript.

In addition, 448 individuals and organisations corresponded with the Inquiry or made a written submission, but did not have a hearing.

The 714 individuals and organisations who gave general or expert evidence, corresponded with the Inquiry or made a submission, included:

- current and former public servants
- Department for Families and Communities and Department of Health members of staff
- current and former police officers
- members of the Aboriginal community
- members of support groups for victims and survivors of sexual abuse
- members of alcohol and drug agencies
- expert witnesses including psychiatrists, psychologists, doctors, community health nurses and counsellors
- current and former child advocates
- administrators of non-government organisations including church organisations involved in the care of children
- academics in Australia and overseas
- current and former public servants
- foster carers and other residential carers of children
- directors of child protection facilities
- sexual offenders
- people involved in an inquiry about sexual abuse of children in children's homes in Nova Scotia, Canada

- people involved in the provision or management of child protection services in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia and Tasmania
- people involved in Queensland inquiries into abuse of children in institutions and foster care.

The Inquiry has also received 35 written submissions from various organisations and individuals, in response to the *Issues upon which the Commission seeks submissions* paper issued by the Inquiry in February 2007 (Issues paper). As part of the formal submission received by the department, more than 90 department staff members gave oral evidence in support of the written submission (see Appendix D for a list of submissions).

## Referrals to the police

The Inquiry referred allegations from 170 people to the police. Some of those people made multiple allegations against single perpetrators or multiple perpetrators.

## Referrals for counselling

There were 448 people who came forward to the Inquiry and said they were victims of child sexual abuse who received counselling. There were 172 referrals to Respond SA, 39 to private psychologists or psychiatrists, 41 to other counselling service providers and 196 were provided with in-house counselling and support (see Appendix E for a list of witness support services).

## Deaths of children in State care

From different sources, the Inquiry received a list of 924 names of children who may have died in State care. After requesting and reading available records, the Inquiry determined that there were 479 children who had been in State care. Of those, 421 came from departmental lists and an additional 58 from witnesses who came forward. The Inquiry determined that 86 of the 479 deaths occurred after the child was released from State care. Of the remaining 393 deaths of children in State care, the Inquiry confirmed 391 and was unable to verify two alleged deaths.

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There were 171 deaths of children while placed in institutions; 124 while in foster care or similar placements; 21 when the children had absconded from their placement and 77 when the children were on probation to their parents.

There were 15 allegations of criminal conduct as the substantial cause of death, which were investigated by the Inquiry.

### Records

The Inquiry made 5880 records requests to more than 38 government agencies (including the department, South Australia Police, the Courts Administration Authority, the Coroner and other government agencies); eight private and religious organisations; and 130 individuals. The Inquiry received 33,300 files and other records for inspection and the investigation of allegations. Internally, the Inquiry created about 4000 files to manage this information.

### Staff

The Inquiry employed 57 staff over the three-year period (see Appendix F for a list of staff categories and numbers).