



Review of the Queensland Charter of Victims' Rights – Stage 2

Submission to the Office of
the Victims' Commissioner

27 March 2026

Acknowledgement of Country

Knowmore acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters across Australia upon which we live and work.

We pay our deep respects to Elders past and present for their ongoing leadership and advocacy.

Content note

This submission discusses experiences of trauma, including child abuse.

If you need to talk to someone, support is available.

13 YARN – 13 92 76

Blue Knot Helpline – 1300 657 380

1800 RESPECT – 1800 737 732

Lifeline – 13 11 14

Suicide Call Back Service – 1300 659 467

Knowmore provides legal help and related support for victims and survivors of child sexual abuse. You can call Knowmore on 1800 605 762.

Summary of Knowmore's submission

- Knowmore's contributions to both stage 1 and stage 2 of the review of Queensland's Charter of Victims' Rights (the Charter) draw on our extensive experience supporting victims and survivors of child abuse to navigate their redress and justice-making options.
- Knowmore strongly supports improving the Charter, as we believe it can play a crucial role in ensuring that legal systems and processes are survivor-focused, trauma-informed and culturally safe for victims and survivors of child abuse.
- In our view, the lack of legally enforceable victims' rights is the most significant limitation of the Charter, undermining its ability to deliver meaningful and substantive benefits for victims and survivors.
- Knowmore believes that strengthening the legal enforceability of the rights of victims and survivors in Queensland should be a critical priority. We have outlined key principles to guide the review's approach to this issue (see page 7).
- We support reforming both the Charter and the *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld) to strengthen the enforceability of victims' rights in Queensland.
- Our submission also includes a table, outlining our responses to specific consultation questions for stage 2 of the review. These responses focus on improving the awareness, accessibility and enforceability of the Charter for victims and survivors of child abuse (see pages 10 to 33).

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Introduction

Knowmore's overall approach to stage 2 of the review

In October 2025, Knowmore made a submission to stage 1 of the review of Queensland's Charter of Victims' Rights (the Charter),¹ informed by our extensive experience supporting victims and survivors of child abuse in Queensland and throughout Australia.

Our submission to stage 1 outlined our overall approach to the review,² which remains relevant here. In summary, we consider that legal systems too often fail victims and survivors of child abuse. We strongly support improving the Charter as we believe it can play a crucial role in addressing these experiences and ensuring that legal processes are survivor-focused, trauma-informed and culturally safe.

In this submission, we make further comments about the key issues identified for stage 2 of the review, focusing in particular on the accessibility and enforceability of the Charter. The following sections address:

- the need for legally enforceable victims' rights
- our responses to the consultation questions for stage 2 of the review.

The need for legally enforceable victims' rights

Despite the language adopted by the Charter, it does not provide victims and survivors with legally enforceable rights. Rather, the rights contained in the Charter do not affect the validity or give grounds for review of actions or decisions made or not made, which may contravene them.³

¹ Knowmore, *Submission to the review of the Queensland Charter of Victims' Rights (stage 1)*, 17 October 2025, <<https://knowmore.org.au/resource/submission-to-the-review-of-the-queensland-charter-of-victims-rights-stage-1/>>.

² Knowmore, *Submission to the review of the Queensland Charter of Victims' Rights (stage 1)*, pp 5–6.

³ See *Victims' Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board Act 2024* (Qld), section 43, <www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/whole/html/asmade/act-2024-021>.

In Knowmore's view, this is the most significant and systemic limitation of the current Charter, undermining its ability to deliver meaningful and substantive benefits for victims and survivors. While we acknowledge that victims and survivors have the option to make a complaint under the Charter, the effectiveness of this option is limited by the lack of enforceable remedies following a complaint.

In our experience, the lack of legally enforceable victims' rights contributes to the difficulty victims and survivors face in identifying and understanding their rights while navigating legal systems. It also presents challenges for services in providing trauma-informed support to victims and survivors, when faced with a contradiction between rights on paper and the lack of enforceability in practice.

It is important to reflect on the harmful impact that these limitations can have on victims and survivors who may be told by key actors within Queensland's legal systems about their rights under the Charter, only to later find out that these rights may not be rights at all. This is likely to exacerbate the sense of powerlessness, exclusion and distress that many victims and survivors already experience when seeking justice for the harm they experienced. In our view, this is unacceptable, particularly in the context of the alarming rates of child abuse within our communities,⁴ and the critical need to ensure that our legal systems are effective at responding to child abuse and preventing further harm.

In our submission to stage 1 of the consultation, we made the following statement:⁵

⁴ See for example, Australian Child Maltreatment Study, *The prevalence and impact of child maltreatment in Australia: findings from the Australian Child Maltreatment Study: brief report*, 2023, p 17, <<http://www.acms.au/resources/the-prevalence-and-impact-of-child-maltreatment-in-australia-findings-from-the-australian-child-maltreatment-study-2023-brief-report/>>.

⁵ Knowmore, *Submission to the review of the Queensland Charter of Victims' Rights (stage 1)*, p 7.

While we believe it is nevertheless important to strengthen the existing Charter, the Charter will continue to lack meaning and effectiveness for victims and survivors until their rights are legally enforceable and they are provided with effective remedies when their rights are breached.

Knowmore believes that improving the legal enforceability of the rights of victims and survivors in Queensland should be a critical priority for the current review. We suggest that the following principles should guide the review's approach to this issue:

- victims' rights should be recognised as human rights and afforded equal status to other human rights
- victims' rights should apply across the legal system broadly and not be limited to the criminal legal system, which many victims and survivors will never engage with
- to the extent possible, victims' rights should be accessible to victims and survivors, including the language used to articulate rights
- victims and survivors should have access to independent, trauma-informed and culturally safe services to support them to understand and enforce their rights while engaging with what are often complex, harmful and retraumatising legal systems
- victims and survivors should have access to effective remedies when their rights are breached.

In line with these principles, Knowmore supports reforming both the Charter and the *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld) to strengthen the enforceability of victims' rights.

In our submission to the independent review of the *Human Rights Act 2019*, Knowmore highlighted the need to:

- improve how existing rights under Queensland's Human Rights Act work for victims and survivors
- introduce specific, enforceable protection of victims' rights in Queensland's Human Rights Act, consistent with international human rights standards

- ensure that amendments to Queensland's Human Rights Act are consistent with a recommendation of the Victorian Law Reform Commission relating to the recognition of victims' rights
- ensure that Queensland's Human Rights Act adequately recognises the right of victims and survivors to redress for the harm they experienced.⁶

Incorporating victims' rights in Queensland's Human Rights Act would ensure that public entities are required to consider victims' rights when making decisions that affect them and act compatibly with their rights. It would also enable victims and survivors to enforce their rights through the Queensland Human Rights Commission or legal proceedings.⁷

The independent review of the *Human Rights Act 2019* concluded in September 2024. Significantly, the final report included the following recommendations:

- a new right should be incorporated into the *Human Rights Act 2019* that recognises victims' rights
- victims and survivors should be provided with a complaint pathway to the Queensland Human Rights Commission to enforce their rights, without needing to make a complaint to the relevant justice sector agency first.⁸

Knowmore welcomes these recommendations. We acknowledge the benefits of a coherent legal framework for considering human rights issues and support the inclusion of victims' rights in the *Human Rights Act 2019*, as well as a complaint pathway for breaches of victims' rights to the Queensland Human Rights Commission.

⁶ See further discussion of these and other relevant issues raised in our submission at Knowmore, *Submission to the independent review of Queensland's Human Rights Act*, 26 June 2024, pp 15-18, <<https://knowmore.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/submission-independent-review-human-rights-act-qld.pdf>>.

⁷ Knowmore, *Submission to the independent review of Queensland's Human Rights Act*, p 18.

⁸ Professor Susan Harris Rimmer, *Placing People at the Heart of Policy: First independent review of the Human Rights Act 2019, Final report*, 30 September 2024, <www.parliament.qld.gov.au/Work-of-the-Assembly/Tabled-Papers/docs/5825T0232/5825t232.pdf>.

We are therefore disappointed that the Queensland Government has refused to implement these recommendations and remain unclear about the Government's reasons for this decision, beyond brief comments tabled in Parliament by the Attorney-General.⁹

We note the Attorney-General's comments that the independent review's recommendations relating to victims' rights do not have regard to the current Government's "positive agenda on victims' rights".¹⁰ However, we consider that the review's recommendations would have contributed to better recognition, protection and enforcement of victims' rights in Queensland. In rejecting these recommendations, the Queensland Government has effectively denied victims and survivors the ability to legally enforce their rights, prevented victims' rights from being given equal status to other human rights under Queensland law, and symbolised to victims and survivors that their rights are less important.

While we acknowledge the scope of the current review, we believe that reforms to both the Charter and Queensland's Human Rights Act are necessary to ensure that victims' rights are adequately protected and enforced, and that victims and survivors are provided with effective remedies when their rights are breached.

⁹ See a letter signed by the Honourable Deb Frecklington MP, Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Integrity, tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 26 March 2025, <<https://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/Work-of-the-Assembly/Tabled-Papers/docs/5825T0231/5825t231.pdf>>.

¹⁰ Letter signed by the Honourable Deb Frecklington MP, Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Integrity, tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 26 March 2025.

Knowmore's responses to the consultation questions for stage 2

In this section, we provide our responses to the consultation questions for stage 2 of the review of Queensland's Charter of Victims' Rights.¹¹ We have prioritised the consultation questions that reflect our focus as a nation-wide community legal centre assisting victims and survivors of child abuse.

Question number	Question	Knowmore's response
1	What is the current awareness and understanding of the Charter of Victims' Rights amongst: • affected victims? • entities with Charter obligations?	• Our experiences are consistent with the reflections outlined in the detailed paper – including that there is limited awareness of the Charter among victims and survivors, and in particular, survivors experiencing heightened marginalisation. • There is also a lack of understanding among victims and survivors about their option to make a complaint when their Charter rights are breached,

¹¹ Office of the Victims' Commissioner, *Review of the Queensland Charter of Victims' Rights: Stage 2 detailed paper*, January 2026, <www.victimskommissioner.qld.gov.au/media/documents/our-work/review-of-the-charter-of-victims-rights-stage-2/OVC_Charter-review-stage-2_detailed-paper.pdf>.

Question number	Question	Knowmore's response
	the general Queensland community?	as well as relevant processes for making a complaint. We emphasise the critical need for victims and survivors to be provided with meaningful, specific, and accessible information about the Charter throughout their engagement in legal and justice-making processes, including at the point of first contact and at key stages thereafter.
2	Are there factors that impact awareness and understanding of the Charter?	- We recognise that there are many, often intersecting, factors which may impact awareness and understanding of the Charter among victims and survivors. These factors may include: - gaps in legal literacy among some victims and survivors, including survivors who may be engaging with the legal system for the first time¹²

¹² See for example, With You We Can, *What No One Told Us: How critical gaps in legal literacy shape poor responses to sexual assault in Australia, and the way forward*, November 2025, <https://irp.cdn-website.com/86042b7c/files/uploaded/WYWC_What+No+One+Told+Us_Report.pdf>.

Question number	Question	Knowmore's response
		▪ gaps in the provision of consistent, meaningful, timely and accessible information about the Charter ▪ in relation to the criminal legal system, the lack of access to appropriate, dedicated and independent support for victims and survivors throughout their engagement with the criminal legal system¹³ ▪ the ongoing impacts of abuse which may be exacerbated by a survivors' participation in complex and potentially retraumatising legal processes.
4	How could government entities strengthen awareness, understanding and compliance with the Charter amongst their staff?	• We reiterate that a lack of compliance with the Charter by key agencies can have significant and harmful impacts on victims and survivors and can

¹³ For further discussion see Knowmore, *Submission to the Australian Law Reform Commission: Inquiry into justice responses to sexual violence*, 7 June 2024, p 31, <<https://knowmore.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/submission-justice-responses-to-sexual-violence-cth.pdf>>.

Question number	Question	Knowmore's response
		affect their willingness and ability to maintain engagement with legal processes. • We particularly highlight the need for mandatory and consistent training across government, improved resources for staff and for victims and survivors who engage with relevant agencies, and enhanced accountability and enforcement mechanisms.
5	How could victims' rights be championed across the Queensland public sector?	• As outlined above, Knowmore supports the recognition of victims' rights within Queensland's Human Rights Act (see pages 7-9). • In our view, this would enhance compliance with the Charter among all public service agencies by requiring them to properly consider victims' rights when making decisions and to act compatibility with victims' rights.
6	How could non-government entities strengthen awareness and	• We recommend that the Office of the Victims' Commissioner develop and deliver a recurring training module for staff in non-government

Question number	Question	Knowmore's response
	understanding of the Charter amongst their staff?	entities, to strengthen their awareness and understanding of the Charter. • In our view, this would ensure that all staff within non-government entities receive consistent and accurate information about the Charter, victims' rights, and relevant complaints processes. • We consider that it is appropriate for this training to be provided by the Office of the Victims' Commissioner given the under-resourcing of many non-government entities. • We also consider that non-government entities should be encouraged to consider whether and how the Charter can be reflected in their internal policies and procedures.
7	What resources, materials, guidance and support do non-government entities require to inform victims of their rights?	• Knowmore supports further resources being developed to improve the accessibility of the Charter for victims and survivors experiencing heightened marginalisation, in recognition of their diverse experiences and needs.

Question number	Question	Knowmore's response
		• In our view, these resources should be developed by the Office of the Victims' Commissioner, in partnership with victims, survivors and support services, to ensure that all victims and survivors in Queensland receive consistent, accessible and meaningful information about their rights. • Non-government entities should be encouraged to share these resources directly with their clients and where appropriate, to publish information and links to the resources on their websites.
8	Should the Charter of Victims' Rights continue to be located in the <i>Victims' Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board Act 2024</i>? If not, where should it be located?	• We recognise the current inaccessibility of the Charter for many victims and survivors and that this likely contributes to the lack of awareness and understanding of the Charter among victims and survivors. • We question the lack of cohesion in the current legislative approach. For example, victims' rights are treated differently to other human rights under Queensland law.

Question number	Question	Knowmore's response
		• We recognise in particular that the current exclusion of victims' rights from Queensland's Human Rights Act may contribute to a perception that victims' rights are secondary rights. We also note that this exclusion acts as a barrier to victims and survivors being able to legally enforce their rights. • As discussed above on page xx, we recommend that reforms should be made to the <i>Human Rights Act 2019</i> (Qld) to better recognise and protect victims' rights.
9	In what ways could the current format of the Charter be improved to enhance its accessibility for different groups?	• We question why Charter rights are set out in Schedule 1 of the <i>Victims' Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board Act 2024</i>, but critical provisions impacting the operation of the Charter and relevant complaints processes are located elsewhere in the Act, making it difficult to navigate.

Question number	Question	Knowmore's response
		- As stated above in response to question seven, Knowmore supports further resources being developed to improve the accessibility of the Charter for victims and survivors experiencing heightened marginalisation, including children. - These resources should be developed in partnership with victims, survivors and support services and be provided in a range formats, including visual and video formats. They should also be accompanied by an adequately funded community awareness campaign.
10	Should the name 'Charter of Victims' Rights' be retained? If not, what should it be called?	We reiterate the critical importance of a nationally consistent approach to victims' rights and believe that recommendations relating to the name of the Charter should be informed by the approach adopted in other Australian jurisdictions.
11	Should there be any changes to terminology, wording or expressions to make the Charter more accessible	We reiterate our support for the use of plain language and accessible terminology throughout

Question number	Question	Knowmore's response
	and understandable to victims? Can you provide any examples?	the Charter, including in describing who the Charter applies to.¹⁴ • We also reiterate the importance of victims and survivors having access to information about the Charter in a range of languages and formats that meet their diverse needs.
12	Are there any other improvements that could be made to make the Charter more accessible for victims?	• We note the critical role that independent, trauma-informed and culturally safe legal and multidisciplinary support can play in helping victims and survivors to understand and enforce their rights throughout their engagement with complex legal processes, including the criminal legal process. • The Charter of Victims' Rights inherently recognises this, by providing victims and survivors

¹⁴ For further discussion see Knowmore, *Submission on the Victims' Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board Bill 2024*, 15 March 2024, p 4, <<https://knowmore.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/submission-victims-commissioner-and-sexual-violence-review-board-bill-2024-qld.pdf>>.

Question number	Question	Knowmore's response
		with a right be informed about services available to them. • However, in our experience, there are significant gaps in the availability of support services for victims and survivors engaging with legal processes, including the criminal legal process. The current need and demand for services appears to far outweigh the capacity of the current support system. • This undermines both the accessibility of the Charter for victims and survivors who require support to understand their rights and also undermines the meaningfulness and practical benefits of the right to be informed of support services, given that many victims and survivors will not be able to access existing services.
13	Should there be: • Specific rights for children in the Charter of Victims' Rights,	• Knowmore emphasises that children are rights-bearers in their own right and that existing Charter rights apply to them. We support reforms to the

Question number	Question	Knowmore's response
	and if so, what rights should be included? • a separate Children's Charter of Victims' Rights which contains specific rights for children and young people; or do the Child Safe Standards sufficiently recognise their different needs and protect their interests? • A child-friendly version of the Charter of Victims' Rights?	Charter to explicitly recognise this and where needed, further articulation of how existing rights apply to children. • We also recognise that children who experience harm have unique needs that must be prioritised. We therefore support the inclusion of specific rights for children in the Charter (see our submission to stage 1 of the review). • In addition, we recognise the need for child-sensitive and appropriate complaints processes, and appropriate legal and multidisciplinary support for children engaging in these processes. • We further support the development of child-friendly and accessible Charter resources for child victims and survivors. • Finally, we note that the Child Safe Standards serve a distinct legal and regulatory purpose and should not be confused or conflated with victims' rights. For example, the Child Safe Standards are primarily focused on enhancing child safety and

Question number	Question	Knowmore's response
		preventing child abuse within institutional environments, whereas the Charter is primarily focused on articulating the rights victims and survivors should expect when seeking justice for the harm they experienced.
14	Is there a need to improve the enforcement of rights of affected victims and eligible persons? If so, why is improvement needed and how should the rights be enforced differently?	• We provided extensive comments above about the need to improve the enforcement of victims' rights and guiding principles to inform these reforms (see pages 5-10). • In our view, improving the legal enforceability of victims' rights should be a critical priority of the current review. • We emphasise that ongoing, systemic failings within legal systems responding to child abuse, including but not limited to the criminal legal system, demonstrate the importance of better upholding and enforcing victims' rights. • We reiterate our view that victims' rights should be afforded equal status with other human rights

Question number	Question	Knowmore's response
		recognised in Queensland law and should be considered in all decisions impacting victims and survivors.
15, 16 and 17	Should the Charter of Victims' Rights include timeframes for resolution of victims' complaints to prescribed persons? If yes, should this align with other complaints resolution timeframes, such as in the <i>Human Rights Act 2019</i> (Qld) (45 days) or should alternative timeframes be considered? Are there any other impacts (positive or negative) of having a legislated timeframe?	• We support the inclusion of timeframes for resolution of victims' complaints by relevant agencies and generally, alignment of these timeframes with the <i>Human Rights Act 2019</i> (Qld). • However, consideration should be given to whether more timely resolution of victims' complaints is required where the outcome of the complaint is critical to ongoing legal proceedings. • For example, if a survivor is not informed of a "major decision" made about the prosecution of the person responsible for the harm they experienced, the relevant complaints process should be flexible to respond to this in a timely and sensitive manner, in order to meaningfully improve the survivors' experience of the criminal

Question number	Question	Knowmore's response
		legal process and support their ongoing and safe participation in that process. • We also support reforms to provide victims and survivors with access to complaints and other enforcement mechanisms under the <i>Human Rights Act 2019</i> (Qld), in addition to existing complaints processes under the Charter (see pages 7-9).
18	Are current Charter complaint pathways in prescribed entities accessible? If not, why not? If yes, what makes them accessible?	• We emphasise the current burden placed on victims and survivors to make a complaint when their rights are breached, often at a time when they are experiencing significant stress due to their involvement in complex and potentially harmful legal processes, including criminal legal proceedings. • We recognise that these barriers can be exacerbated for victims and survivors experiencing heightened marginalisation, including for example, children, First Nations

Question number	Question	Knowmore's response
		survivors, survivors with disability, survivors in prison, culturally and racially marginalised survivors, and survivors experiencing homelessness. • We emphasise the importance of all victims and survivors having access to independent, trauma-informed and culturally safe legal assistance and wraparound support to navigate complaint processes under the Charter, and for this support to be adequately funded.
19 and 20	What would be the impact of requiring government agencies to have consistent mechanisms for receiving complaints from victims about their Charter rights? What mechanisms could strengthen victims' trust in Charter complaints systems?	• In-principle, we support government agencies having consistent mechanisms to receive complaints from victims about their Charter rights. In our view, this may contribute to greater awareness and understanding among victims and survivors about the process for making a complaint under the Charter. • In addition to making complaints processes more consistent, we also emphasise the need to ensure

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		that they are accessible, responsive to the diverse needs of victims and survivors, supportive, timely, transparent and effective for victims and survivors.
21	Are there any issues with the legislative complaints framework that impact upon the enforceability of the Charter? If yes, please provide further information.	• We reiterate that Charter rights remain legally unenforceable and the need for comprehensive reforms to address this.
23	Should prescribed entities have an obligation to respond to the Victims' Commissioner's recommendations within particular timeframes? Why/why not? If yes, what would a reasonable timeframe be?	• We support the introduction of an obligation for prescribed entities to respond to the Victims' Commissioner's recommendations with a prescribed timeframe, and consideration should be given to recent reforms introduced in NSW (as summarised in the detailed paper for this consultation). • We also support greater transparency about how prescribed entities are responding to the Victims'

Question number	Question	Knowmore's response
		Commissioner's recommendations and the effectiveness of these responses.
24	Should the Victims' Commissioner have broader regulatory powers to address non-compliance with the Charter? What additional regulatory tools might be appropriate?	• In-principle, we support the reforms outlined in the detailed paper for this consultation, which would establish clear consequences for non-compliance with the Charter and provide the OVC with more regulatory tools.
25	Would assigning specific agencies with responsibility to uphold particular Charter rights assist in building accountability and responsibility? If yes, how could it be achieved? For example, by creating categories of agencies such as 'prosecution agencies', 'investigative agencies' or 'support service agencies'? What are the risks of this approach?	• Knowmore considers that the responsibility to uphold Charter rights is a whole-of-government responsibility and we do not support changes which could diminish this approach or dilute Charter rights. • However, we acknowledge the potential benefits of designating lead agencies with particular responsibility to uphold Charter rights that are specific to their functions. If this approach is adopted.

Question number	Question	Knowmore's response
26	Are the current reporting requirements for government entities clear? If not, how can they be improved to ensure data is reported consistently and accurately?	• We acknowledge reforms introduced in response to the recommendations of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, to strengthen reporting requirements for government entities and to increase transparency and accountability in relation to their complaints processes and responses. • We also agree with the reflection in the detailed paper for this consultation, which acknowledges that these changes are only meaningful for victims and survivors if government entities have effective complaints management procedures in place. We would add that complaints processes and procedures must be accessible, survivor-focused, trauma-informed and culturally safe to encourage victims and survivors to report complaints.
27	What tools could be used to ensure government entities continue to	• We support the development of consistent standards and procedures for complaints

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	improve their complaints management procedures and reporting practices?	management within government entities, informed by lived experience.
28	What information about prescribed entity compliance with the Charter of Victims' Rights should the OVC be required to report on in its Annual Report?	• We support reforms to strengthen the OVC's annual reporting practices and consider that these reforms should aim to promote greater national consistency and align with national best practice. For example, particular consideration should be given to whether the relevant recommendations of the recent Victorian Charter Review are appropriate to replicate in the Queensland context. • We also emphasise the importance of analysis of complaints at a systemic level, and for this information to be made publicly available.
29	Do the accountability mechanisms for the Victims' Commissioner's performance of functions relating to	• The accountability mechanisms for the Victims' Commissioner's performance of functions relating to the Charter require strengthening. In particular, the <i>Victims' Commissioner and Sexual Violence</i>

Question number	Question	Knowmore's response
	the Charter of Victims' Rights require strengthening? If so, how?	<i>Review Board Act 2024</i> should be amended to provide the Victims' Commissioner with clear functions in relation to individual cases, consistent with the recommendations of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce. ¹⁵ For further comments about this, we refer to our submission on the <i>Queensland Victims' Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board Bill 2024</i> . ¹⁶
30	What innovative approaches to upholding victims' rights, and responding to victims' needs would improve victim-survivor experiences?	We note that the detailed paper for this consultation refers to training of personnel in the criminal legal system, technological innovation, process innovation, and victim advocates,

¹⁵ Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, *Hear her voice: report two, volume one*, 2022, p 139, recommendation 18, <www.publications.qld.gov.au/dataset/8a9488b5-65a3-4d8c-bea6-202bab63eb55/resource/5b70727a-cc0e-4e08-8eda-e1434e6e0814/download/wsyt-hear-her-voice-report-2-volume-1.pdf>.

¹⁶ Knowmore, *Submission on Queensland's Victims' Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board Bill 2024*, March 2024, pp 1-2, <knowmore.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/submission-victims-commissioner-and-sexual-violence-review-board-bill-2024-qld.pdf>.

Question number	Question	Knowmore's response
		navigators and legal representation.¹⁷ Knowmore supports further exploration in these areas. • We emphasise that the purpose of innovation must be to improve victims' and survivors' experiences of the legal system, not to cut costs at the expense of victims and survivors. Innovation must therefore take place in partnership with victims, survivors and support services, and involve rigorous consultation, monitoring and evaluation of changes. • We note that the detailed paper refers to the online portal introduced by Victim Assist Queensland to enable victims, survivors and support services to check the status of financial assistance applications. We acknowledge the benefits of technological innovations of this nature for victims and survivors, particularly in providing increased transparency and accountability

¹⁷ Office of the Victims' Commissioner, *Review of the Queensland Charter of Victims' rights: stage 2 detailed paper*, January 2026, pp 40–44.

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		throughout a survivor's engagement with redress or justice-making processes. • We also note the discussion in the detailed paper about victims' registers, and comments supporting the introduction of an opt-out process under the <i>Corrective Services Act 2006</i> (Qld). While Knowmore acknowledges the benefits of victims' registers, we do not support the introduction of opt-out processes, which we consider to be inconsistent with a trauma-informed approach which prioritises the choice and empowerment of victims and survivors. We also note a recent review of victims' registers in NSW and that following consultation with victims, survivors and support services, the NSW

Question number	Question	Knowmore's response
		Government abandoned their proposal to introduce opt-out processes. ¹⁸
31	What role should victim advocates, victim navigators or victim legal representatives have with respect to victims' rights?	• The Queensland Government should ensure that victims and survivors of child abuse have access to free, independent and trauma-informed legal assistance and wraparound support in relation to the comprehensive range of legal issues that victims and survivors experience. As a nation-wide community legal centre with extensive experience assisting victims and survivors of child abuse, Knowmore would be well-placed to provide this support with appropriate funding. • Knowmore welcomes the Queensland Government's intention to establish a Victims Advocate Service.¹⁹ We look forward to receiving

¹⁸ See NSW Government, *Ministerial media release: Victims Register reforms start today to provide more support for victim-survivors of serious crime*, 1 September 2025, <www.nsw.gov.au/ministerial-releases/victims-register-reforms-start-today-to-provide-more-support-for-victim-survivors-of-serious-crime>.

¹⁹ Office of the Victims' Commissioner, *Review of the Queensland Charter of Victims' rights: stage 2 detailed paper*, January 2026, p 43.

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		further information about the nature and scope of this service. • For further comments about the importance of legal assistance and wraparound support for victims and survivors of child abuse, we refer to our submission to the Australian Law Reform Commission's inquiry into justice responses to sexual violence.²⁰

²⁰ Knowmore, *Submission to the Australian Law Reform Commission's inquiry into justice responses to sexual violence*, June 2024, pp 14-18, <knowmore.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/submission-justice-responses-to-sexual-violence-cth.pdf>.

Appendix 1: about Knowmore

Our service

Knowmore legal service (Knowmore) is a nation-wide, free and independent community legal centre providing legal information, advice, representation and referrals, education and systemic advocacy for victims and survivors of child abuse. Our vision is a community that is accountable to survivors and free of child abuse. Our aim is to facilitate access to justice for victims and survivors of child abuse and to work with survivors and their supporters to stop child abuse.

From 2013 to 2018, our service assisted people who were engaging with or considering engaging with the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (the Royal Commission). From 1 July 2018, Knowmore has delivered legal support services to assist survivors of institutional child sexual abuse to access their redress options, including under the National Redress Scheme (NRS). Knowmore also delivers financial counselling services to people participating in the NRS, and works with other services in the NRS support network to support and build their capability. Since 2022, Knowmore has also been assisting survivors who experienced child sexual abuse in non-institutional settings, and providing legal and financial counselling support to people engaging with the Territories Stolen Generations Redress Scheme (Territories Redress Scheme).

Knowmore uses a multidisciplinary model to provide trauma-informed, client-centred and culturally safe legal assistance to clients. Knowmore has offices in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth, Adelaide and Darwin. Our service model brings together lawyers, social workers and counsellors, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement advisors and financial counsellors to provide coordinated support to clients.

Knowmore is funded by the Commonwealth Government, represented by the Departments of Attorney-General and Social Services and the National Indigenous Australians Agency.

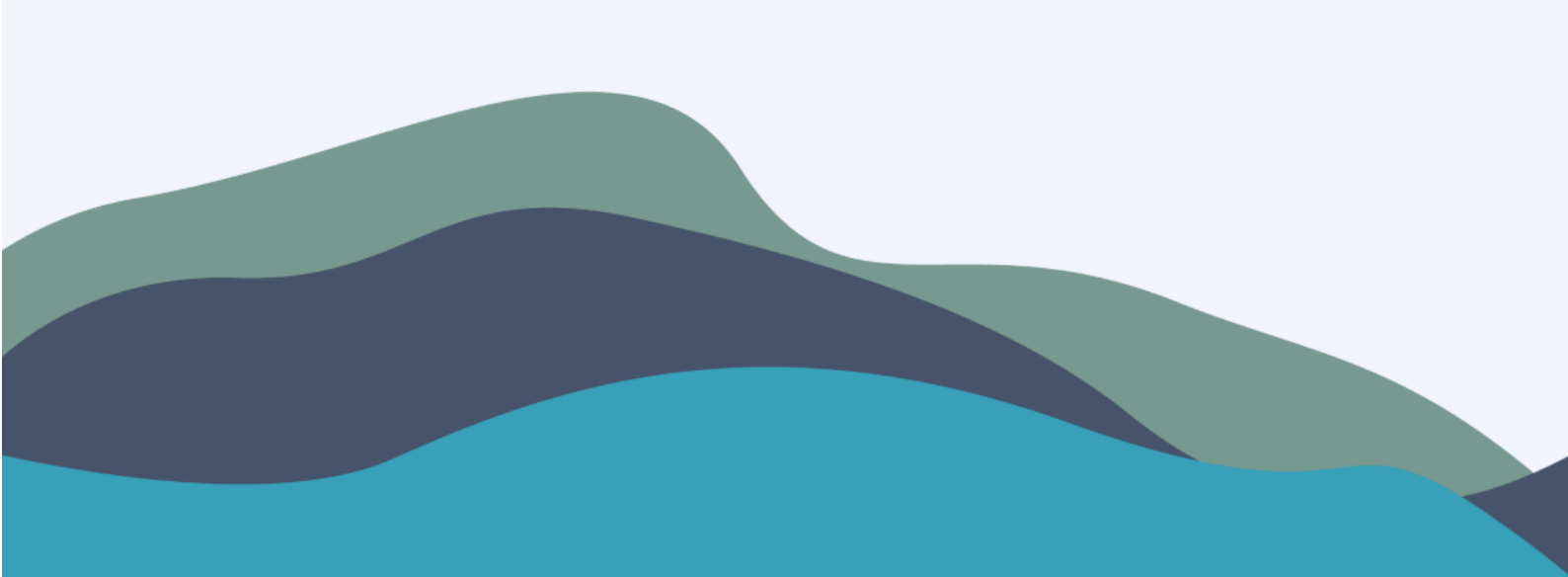
Our clients

In our Royal Commission-related work, from July 2013 to the end of March 2018, Knowmore assisted 8,954 individual clients. The majority of those clients were survivors of institutional child sexual abuse. Almost a quarter (24%) of the clients assisted during our Royal Commission work identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Since the commencement of the National Redress Scheme for survivors of institutional child sexual abuse on 1 July 2018 to 31 December 2025, Knowmore has received 240,405 calls to its 1800 telephone line and has completed intake processes for, and has assisted or is currently assisting, 25,055 clients. Almost 2 in 5 clients (39%) identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples. About 1 in 10 clients (9%) are classified as priority clients due to advanced age and/or immediate and serious health concerns including terminal cancer or other life-limiting illness.

Our clients in Queensland

Knowmore has a significant client base in Queensland – 26% per cent of our clients reside in the state. We therefore have a strong interest in ensuring that the rights of victims and survivors of child abuse in Queensland are recognised and respected, that victims and survivors are supported to understand and exercise their rights, and that victims and survivors have access to effective remedies for breaches of their rights.



Knowmore

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