

Queensland Protection Bill Commission 2026

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Mr Nigel Hutton MP
Chair
Education, Arts and Communities Committee
Queensland Parliament

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Dear Mr Hutton,

Queensland Protection Commission Bill 2026

The *Queensland Protection Commission Bill 2026* (the bill) raises important issues affecting the safety of children. It is precisely because these issues are so important that we must take care to ensure that the bill is sound. In Knowmore's view, the bill proposes some positive reforms, but requires amendments before it is fit to be passed.

This submission reflects our perspective as a community legal centre assisting victims and survivors of child abuse in all states and territories, including Queensland. We have a significant client base in Queensland – more than 1 in 4 (26%) of our clients reside in the state. 2 in 5 clients (40%) of Knowmore's clients identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.

For many of our clients, contributing to systemic change is an important part of their healing journey. Many of our clients are motivated to come forward because they do not want anyone else to experience the same harm. Advocating for systemic change to keep children safe from harm is therefore an important part of standing with our clients and honouring their experiences.

Knowmore recognises that the experiences and perspectives of children, victims and survivors are diverse. In relation to this, we emphasise the importance of an intersectional approach to child safety. An intersectional approach recognises that individuals may experience multiple forms of marginalisation, and that these experiences may overlap to create additional barriers to safety, justice and support.¹

Our comments below address the following matters:

- the positive reforms proposed by the bill
- the amendments required before the bill is fit to be passed
- the name of the proposed Queensland Protection Commission.

We have no concerns about our submission being published.

Positive reforms

Knowmore supports the parts of the bill that would do the following things:

- integrate child safeguarding functions under a single commissioner, the proposed Queensland Protection Commissioner²
- empower the proposed Queensland Protection Commissioner to use information they hold for one function for the purpose of the Commissioner's other functions³

¹ See for example, United Nations Network on Racial Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, *Guidance note on intersectionality, racial discrimination and protection of minorities*, September 2022, p 3, <www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/minorities/30th-anniversary/2022-%2009-22/GuidanceNoteonIntersectionality.pdf>.

² *Queensland Protection Commission Bill 2026: explanatory notes* (explanatory notes), pp 5–6.

³ Explanatory notes, p 8.

- facilitate Queensland's participation in a pilot of the National Continuous Checking Capability (NCCC), which will provide continuous monitoring of relevant policing information across jurisdictions for the purpose of working-with-children checks⁴
- expand the offences that automatically disqualify a person from holding a blue card or that require a person to undergo a risk assessment in order to meet the nationally agreed baseline.⁵

We will refer to these as the positive reforms proposed by the bill to improve information sharing and working-with-children checks.

As the explanatory notes highlight,⁶ these proposed reforms reflect recommendations of the Child Death Review Board's *In plain sight* report⁷ and priority actions of the Standing Council of Attorneys-General's *Agreement to deliver national working with children check reform* (SCAG Agreement).⁸ They also broadly reflect recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (Royal Commission).⁹

The Royal Commission summarised Australia's complex laws about information sharing, highlighting how these laws hinder efforts to prevent and respond to child sexual abuse:

⁴ Explanatory notes, p 9.

⁵ Explanatory notes, pp 9–10.

⁶ Explanatory notes, pp 1–4.

⁷ Child Death Review Board, *In plain sight: review into system responses to child sexual abuse*, December 2025, pp 297–298 and 472–473, transformational recommendations 4 and 9, <www.qfcc.qld.gov.au/publication/in-plain-sight>.

⁸ Standing Council of Attorneys-General, *Agreement to deliver national working with children check reform*, November 2025, pp 3–4 and 6–7, priority actions 2 and 5, <www.ag.gov.au/sites/default/files/2025-11/scag-agreement-to-deliver-national-working-with-children-check-reform.PDF>.

⁹ Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (Royal Commission), *Final report: volume 8, recordkeeping and information sharing*, December 2017, p 239, recommendations 8.6–8.7, <www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/recordkeeping-and-information-sharing>; Royal Commission, *Working with children checks report*, August 2015, pp 83 and 110, recommendations 16 and 31, <www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/working-children-checks>.

The sharing of personal and sensitive information is restricted by obligations under privacy legislation, confidentiality or secrecy provisions in legislation governing the provision of services for children, and other laws. While all jurisdictions have some form of legislative or administrative arrangements to enable information sharing to protect children, these arrangements are limited in a number of ways, especially with respect to information exchange across state and territory borders.

Even where information sharing is legally permitted or required, there may be reluctance to share. Concerns about privacy, confidentiality and defamation, and confusion about the application of complex and inconsistent laws, can create anxiety and inhibit information sharing. Institutional culture, poor leadership and weak or unclear governance arrangements may also inhibit information sharing and, as a result, undermine the safety of children.¹⁰

Recognising the importance of information sharing for child safety, the Royal Commission recommended that federal, state and territory governments establish a national information exchange scheme to enable information related to the safety and wellbeing of children to be shared in and across Australian jurisdictions.¹¹

In 2018, the Queensland Government accepted this recommendation in principle, committing to ‘prioritise collaboration with other jurisdictions to promote legislative and administrative arrangements for information sharing’.¹² However, there has not yet been the necessary collaboration between governments to establish a national information exchange scheme of the type envisioned by the Royal Commission. We consider that the bill would take steps in the right direction in relation to information-

¹⁰ Royal Commission, *Final report: volume 8, recordkeeping and information sharing*, pp 138–139.

¹¹ Royal Commission, *Final report: volume 8, recordkeeping and information sharing*, p 239, recommendation 8.6.

¹² Queensland Government, *Response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse*, June 2018, p 32, <www.families.qld.gov.au/media/documents/about-us/reviews-inquiries/qld-gov-response/rc-child-sexual-abuse-response.pdf>.

sharing, improving arrangements within Queensland, while laying the groundwork for further collaboration at the national level.

We note that, under the SCAG Agreement, all Australian governments have committed to ensuring the following outcome by early 2027:

*Legislative and administrative arrangements are in place to allow for and facilitate the sharing of all required information about WWCC applicants and holders between relevant entities within and across jurisdictions, including the Commonwealth.*¹³

The *In plain sight* report highlights the importance of the bill's proposed reforms to improve information sharing and working-with-children checks in the specific context of Queensland. The Child Death Review Board summarised the findings of the report in the following terms:

*These findings demonstrate systemic weaknesses: siloed information, fragmented responsibilities, insufficient thresholds for action, and a lack of coordinated safeguarding architecture. The effect is that risks are routinely identified but remain unmitigated, while families and victim-survivors are left without redress until catastrophic harm is undeniable.*¹⁴

Of particular relevance to the bill, the Child Death Review Board commented that:

*Without a central entity to lead, coordinate, and hold accountability for the protection of all children from sexual abuse, our initiatives to prevent, detect, and respond to threats risk being applied unevenly across sectors, and their impact will be diluted.*¹⁵

¹³ Standing Council of Attorneys-General, *Agreement to deliver national working with children check reform* (SCAG Agreement), November 2025, p 5, priority action 4, <www.ag.gov.au/sites/default/files/2025-11/scag-agreement-to-deliver-national-working-with-children-check-reform.PDF>.

¹⁴ Child Death Review Board, *In plain sight: review into system responses to child sexual abuse*, December 2025, p 18, <www.qfcc.qld.gov.au/publication/in-plain-sight>.

¹⁵ Child Death Review Board, *In plain sight: review into system responses to child sexual abuse*, pp 297–298 and 472–473, transformational recommendations 4 and 9.

This resonates with our experience assisting victims and survivors, who have been repeatedly let down by the systems that were supposed to support them.¹⁶

Given the importance of the bill's proposed reforms to improve information sharing and working-with-children checks in Queensland, we hope that the Queensland Government will promptly make the amendments needed to make the bill fit to be passed. We make further comments about this below.

Amendments required

Knowmore considers that the bill requires the following amendments before it is fit to be passed:

- amendments to protect the independence of the proposed Queensland Protection Commissioner
- amendments to restore the role of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Commissioner.

We note that these issues have received media attention.¹⁷ Our comments below address each of these issues.

¹⁶ See Knowmore, *Submission to the Australian Law Reform Commission's inquiry into justice responses to sexual violence*, June 2024, pp 11–13, <knowmore.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/submission-justice-responses-to-sexual-violence-cth.pdf>.

¹⁷ See, for example, Matt Dennien, *The Crisafulli government's watered-down (and leashed) child watchdog*, Brisbane Times, 31 August 2026, <www.smh.com.au/national/queensland/the-crisafulli-government-s-watered-down-and-leashed-child-watchdog-20260803-p60l2w.html>.

Protecting the independence of the Queensland Protection Commissioner

[The changes in the bill] alter the character of the office from an independent statutory oversight function to one substantially more answerable, in structure as well as in practice, to the government whose agencies it is meant to hold to account.

Reflections of Natalie Lewis, former Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Commissioner

See Matt Dennien, *The Crisafulli government's watered-down (and leashed) child watchdog*, Brisbane Times, 31 August 2026, <www.smh.com.au/national/queensland/the-crisafulli-government-s-watered-down-and-leashed-child-watchdog-20260803-p60l2w.html>

We note that the explanatory speech refers to the proposed Queensland Protection Commissioner as 'an independent statutory head responsible for a range of critical child safeguarding and oversight functions'.¹⁸ However, we are concerned that the bill contains inadequate protection of the independence of the proposed Queensland Protection Commissioner, threatening the ability of any future commissioner to frankly and fearlessly advocate for the safety of children and hold government agencies accountable when necessary.

Before discussing this issue in detail, we emphasise that our comments address the design of the role, not the integrity of any particular person or government. We consider that appropriate design of the role would prioritise child safety, requiring strong protections for the independence of the proposed Queensland Protection Commissioner, while also ensuring that a person can be removed from the role if necessary.

In this respect, we are particularly concerned by provisions of the bill that would allow the Queensland Government to remove the Queensland Protection Commissioner from the role 'for any reason or none'.¹⁹ This would

¹⁸ Queensland Parliament, *Record of proceedings*, 26 August 2026, p 2546, <documents.parliament.qld.gov.au/events/han/2026/2026_08_26_WEEKLY.pdf#page=44>.

¹⁹ *Queensland Protection Commission Bill 2026* (Qld), section 17(3).

leave any future commissioner at risk of being removed from the role if they upset the government of the day – for example, by drawing attention to child safety issues that may be politically inconvenient. We are concerned that the mere possibility of removal ‘for any reason or none’ would place inappropriate pressure on future commissioners, who may temper their advocacy for child safety to avoid controversy with the government of the day. We are also concerned that these factors may weaken public trust in the role of the proposed Queensland Protection Commissioner, as community members may perceive the role to be insufficiently independent.²⁰

In allowing the Queensland Government to remove the proposed Queensland Protection Commissioner ‘for any reason or none’, the bill would effectively abolish the protection that currently applies to commissioners of the Queensland Family and Child Commission (QFCC). Commissioners of the QFCC may only be removed if the Minister is satisfied that the commissioner:

- has been guilty of misconduct, or
- is incapable of performing their duties, or
- has neglected their duties or performed them incompetently.²¹

In Knowmore’s view, this is a more appropriate standard for removing a commissioner than ‘for any reason or none’.

We note that similar issues arise in relation to removing a deputy commissioner of the proposed Queensland Protection Commission.²² Knowmore recommends that the Queensland Government amend the bill to adopt a standard no weaker than that of the *Family and Child Commission Act 2014* (QFCC Act) for removing the proposed Queensland Protection Commissioner or deputy commissioners from the role.

²⁰ See Matt Dennien, *The Crisafulli government’s watered-down (and leashed) child watchdog*.

²¹ *Family and Child Commission Act 2014* (Qld), sub-sections 15(2)–(3).

²² See *Queensland Protection Commission Bill 2026* (Qld), sub-section 17(3).

Recommendation 1

The Queensland Government should amend the *Queensland Protection Commission Bill 2026* to adopt a standard no weaker than that of the *Family and Child Commission Act 2014* for removing the proposed Queensland Protection Commissioner or a deputy commissioner from their role.

Knowmore is also concerned that the bill would require the proposed Queensland Protection Commissioner to comply with directions given by the Minister in relation to almost all of the commissioner's functions.²³ We acknowledge that this requirement is largely replicated from the QFCC Act,²⁴ which underpins the QFCC. However, we consider that the requirement inappropriately infringes the independence of commissioners of the QFCC. The bill provides an opportunity to strengthen the independence of the proposed Queensland Protection Commissioner by removing this problematic requirement.

We recommend that the Queensland Government amend the bill to remove the requirement for the proposed Queensland Protection Commissioner to comply with directions given by the Minister.

Recommendation 2

The Queensland Government should amend the *Queensland Protection Commission Bill 2026* to remove the requirement for the proposed Queensland Protection Commissioner to comply with directions given by the Minister.

²³ *Queensland Protection Commission Bill 2026* (Qld), section 28.

²⁴ *Family and Child Commission Act 2014* (Qld), section 22.

Restoring the role of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Commissioner

Whether First Nations children and young people are visible, valued and protected should not be subject to the discretion, benevolence or otherwise of a non-Indigenous Commissioner ... Our children are entitled to focused, unapologetic advocacy and accountability for the promotion and protection of their rights.

Reflections of Natalie Lewis, former Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Commissioner

See Heather Ferris, *A fierce advocate for change, Natalie Lewis talks about accountability and reform*, Proctor, 9 June 2026,

<www.qlsproctor.com.au/2026/06/a-fierce-advocate-for-change-natalie-lewis-talks-accountability-and-reform/>.

Knowmore is extremely concerned that the bill effectively abolishes the role of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Commissioner, held by Natalie Lewis until the recent conclusion of her term. Instead, the Queensland Protection Commission would have deputy commissioners, at least one of whom must either 'be an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person' or 'have demonstrated ability or experience in working with Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children'.²⁵ We share Ms Lewis' concern that this change would remove 'the only guaranteed avenue to co-equal Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander leadership of the State's child protection oversight body',²⁶ placing First Nations children in Queensland at increased risk of harm.

The role of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Commissioner is underpinned by section 11 of the QFCC Act, which was introduced by the Hon Jarrod Bleijie MP in 2014.²⁷ Section 11 of the QFCC Act

²⁵ *Queensland Protection Commission Bill 2026* (Qld), section 12.

²⁶ Matt Dennien, *The Crisafulli government's watered-down (and leashed) child watchdog*.

²⁷ Queensland Parliament, *Record of proceedings*, 20 March 2014, p 826, <documents.parliament.qld.gov.au/events/han/2014/2014_03_20_WEEKLY.PDF>.

requires that the QFCC have 2 commissioners,²⁸ at least one of whom must be an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person.²⁹

In outlining the importance of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Commissioner, the explanatory notes to the QFCC Bill express concern about the over-representation of First Nations children in Queensland's child protection system.³⁰ The over-representation of First Nations children in Queensland's child protection system remains a pressing concern. In May 2026, Queensland's Child Safety Commission of Inquiry (Child Safety Commission) reported that:

*Since the Carmody inquiry [in 2012–13], over-representation has continued unabated on an upward trajectory ... The headline figure is that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children represent approximately half of the children in state care.*³¹

This is grossly disproportionate, given that 5% of the population of Queensland identify as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin.³² The over-representation of First Nations children in out-of-home care has implications for a range of rights recognised by Queensland's *Human Rights Act*, including:

- the right to self-determination³³
- the right to protection for children and families³⁴
- the cultural rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.³⁵

In addition, Queensland is not on-track to meet the relevant target under the Closing the Gap Agreement. This target requires Australian

²⁸ *Family and Child Commission Act 2014* (Qld), sub-section 11(1).

²⁹ *Family and Child Commission Act 2014* (Qld), sub-section 11(5).

³⁰ *Family and Child Commission Act 2014: explanatory notes*, March 2014, p 4.

³¹ Queensland Child Safety Commission of Inquiry, *From pressure to purpose: reforming child protection in Queensland*, May 2026, p 72, <www.justice.qld.gov.au/initiatives/commission-of-inquiry-into-child-safety-system>.

³² Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Queensland: 2021 Census Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people QuickStats*, accessed 15 September 2026, <www.abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/IQS3>.

³³ *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld), preamble, paragraph 6.

³⁴ *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld), section 26.

³⁵ *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld), section 28.

governments to 'reduce the rate of over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care by 45 per cent' by 2031.³⁶

Given the focus of our work, we are particularly concerned about the heightened risk of abuse experienced by children in out-of-home care. Knowmore assists many victims and survivors who experienced child abuse in out-of-home care in Queensland. The Royal Commission made detailed comments about contemporary out-of-home care in volume 12 of its final report, highlighting that:

*All children in out-of-home care face heightened risk of child sexual abuse. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, who are already over-represented in out-of-home care, are likely to face more risk factors and less protective factors than non-Indigenous children.*³⁷

The Child Safety Commission similarly observed that:

*There is no shortage of evidence of the vulnerability of children in care, particularly girls, to such predators [that is, perpetrators of abuse], as well as in cognate environments such as schools and childcare centres. Children in care are more vulnerable because they are living in the home (residential or family-based care) of their abusers. This is a round-the-clock opportunity for abuse.*³⁸

The role of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Commissioner ensures that there is a dedicated focus on the safety of First Nations children in Queensland, including in relation to out-of-home care.³⁹

³⁶ Closing the Gap, *Closing the Gap targets and outcomes*, target 12, <www.closingthegap.gov.au/national-agreement/targets>.

³⁷ Royal Commission, *Final report: volume 12, contemporary out-of-home care*, December 2017, p 217, <www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/contemporary-out-home-care>.

³⁸ Queensland Child Safety Commission of Inquiry, *From pressure to purpose: reforming child protection in Queensland*, p 16.

³⁹ See, for example, Queensland Family and Child Commission, *Principle focus: a continued commitment to systemic accountability for the safety and wellbeing of Queensland's First Nations children*, May 2026, <www.qfcc.qld.gov.au/news/queenslands-child-protection-system-failing-reduce-over-representation-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-children>.

In Knowmore's view, this is an essential part of broader efforts to address the unacceptable rates of removal and abuse experienced by First Nations children.

The explanatory notes for the QFCC Act also connect the role of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Commissioner to the requirements for the QFCC to 'ensure the interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are adequately and appropriately represented'.⁴⁰ From our perspective as a nation-wide service, we consider that this is an area in which Queensland is falling behind, particularly following the abolition of the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry and the Path to Treaty in 2024.⁴¹ We note that:

- In addition to the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Commissioner,⁴² Victoria, South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory all have dedicated commissioners for First Nations children.⁴³
- Tasmania legislated for a Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People in December 2025,⁴⁴ and the Tasmanian Government remains committed to establishing the role.⁴⁵

⁴⁰ *Family and Child Commission Act 2014* (Qld), sub-section 23(1)(b); *Family and Child Commission Act 2014: explanatory notes*, March 2014, p 4.

⁴¹ Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry, *Final statement from the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry*, November 2024, <www.truth-telling-qld.com.au/final-statement-truth-telling-and-healing-inquiry>.

⁴² National Commission for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, *Meet the National Commissioner*, accessed 15 September 2026, <www.ncatsicyp.gov.au/about-us/meet-national-commissioner>.

⁴³ Victorian Commission for Children and Young People, *Our commissioners*, accessed 15 September 2026, <ccyp.vic.gov.au/about-us/our-commissioners/>; SA Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People, *About us*, accessed 15 September 2026, <cacyp.com.au/about-us/>; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People Commissioner ACT, *About*, accessed 15 September 2026, <aboriginalandtorresstraitislandercypc.com.au/about/>.

⁴⁴ *Commission for Children and Young People Act 2025* (Tas), section 14,

⁴⁵ Tasmanian Department of Justice, *Establishing a new Commission for Children and Young People*, updated 15 September 2026, <www.justice.tas.gov.au/about-us/projects-and-initiatives/commission-for-children-and-young-people-project>.

We recommend that the Queensland Government amend the bill to restore the role of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Commissioner. Recognising the human right of First Nations peoples to self-determination, and the importance of lived experience, the bill should require the role to be held by an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person, as is currently the case under the QFCC Act.

Recommendation 3

The Queensland Government should amend the *Queensland Protection Commission Bill 2026* to restore the role of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Commissioner. The bill should require the role to be held by an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person, as is currently the case under the *Family and Child Commission Act 2014*.

The name of the proposed Queensland Protection Commission

In Knowmore's view, the name of the proposed Queensland Protection Commission is inappropriate. It has echoes of protectionist laws and policies towards First Nations peoples, such as the *Aboriginal Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act 1987* (Qld). This Act 'gave the Chief Protector of Aboriginals, as well as the individual Protectors, enormous control over almost all aspects of the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland'.⁴⁶ It was associated with a range of abuses of First Nations peoples in Queensland, including forced removals of First Nations peoples onto missions and reserves.⁴⁷ We consider that the name of the Queensland Protection Commission is not culturally safe and may impact public trust in the Commission, particularly among First Nations peoples.

We recommend that the Queensland Government amend the bill to provide a more appropriate name for the proposed Queensland Protection

⁴⁶ State Library of Queensland, *Community history*, accessed 18 September 2026, <www.slq.qld.gov.au/discover/first-nations-cultures/community-history>.

⁴⁷ State Library of Queensland, *Community history*.

Commission. We suggest the 'Queensland Child Safety Commission' as an option.

Recommendation 4

The Queensland Government should amend the *Queensland Protection Commission Bill 2026* to provide a more appropriate name for the proposed Queensland Protection Commission. We suggest the 'Queensland Child Safety Commission' as an option.

Should we be able to provide any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me on (03) 8663 7400 or at



Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J Mead'.

JACKIE MEAD

Chief Executive Officer

ENCL.

- About Knowmore

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. Since 2022, Knowmore has assisted survivors who experienced child sexual abuse in non-institutional settings, and provided legal and financial counselling support to people engaging with the Territories Stolen Generations Redress Scheme. Knowmore has also been providing legal and financial counselling support to people who have received a redress offer from the Western Australian Stolen Generations Redress Scheme, which commenced in 2025.

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, and the Western Australian Government.

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 July 2026, Knowmore has received 260,000 calls to its 1800 telephone line and has completed intake processes for, and has assisted or is currently assisting, 27,538 clients. 2 in 5 clients (40%) identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples. Almost 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.

100% of clients we assist with the Territories Stolen Generations Redress Scheme identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Our clients in Queensland

Knowmore has a significant client base in Queensland – more than 1 in 4 (26%) of our clients reside in the state. We therefore have a strong interest in laws, policies and practices relevant to children and victims and survivors of child abuse in Queensland.

For many of our clients, contributing to systemic change is an important part of their healing journey. Our clients do not want current or future generations of children to have the same experiences of abuse that they did. Advocating for systemic change to prevent child sexual abuse is an important part of standing with our clients and honouring their experiences.