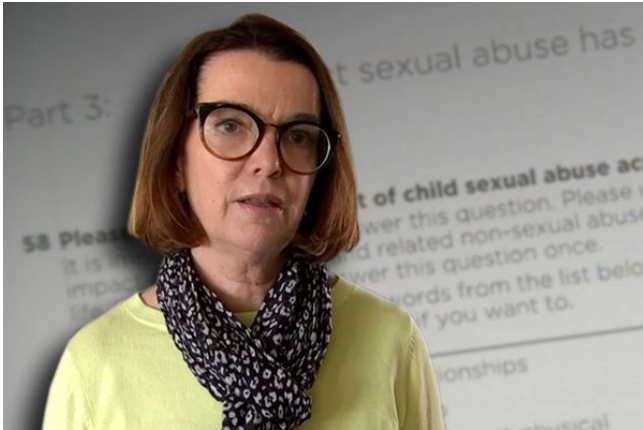


National Redress Scheme is the final insult

By *Duncan Storrar*

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For all its good intentions, the National Redress Scheme doesn't come close to repairing the damage done to victims of abuse, writes [Duncan Storrar](#).

IT HAS BEEN a long time since I have written, but this morning I woke to SA Minister for Families and Social Services [Anne Ruston](#) saying the truth about the [National Redress Scheme](#).

Urging six organisations to consider the consequences of not joining the scheme, [Ruston said](#):

“...you still refuse to accept your moral obligation and responsibility to come forward and allow these people the small thing of a bit of redress and a small amount of money to acknowledge that they actually have had wrongs committed against them.”

I ask not to think about the gist of her

comment, but where she said “a small amount of money” as this is the main point of the Redress Scheme — to minimise payments to the abused.

A lot has changed in my life since I last wrote. For the last five years, I was pursuing my redress from the state of Victoria and the [Sisters of Mercy](#). In the final days before court, we settled and this gave me enough money to buy a home in the bush, to have security and a form of happiness. Redress can never deliver secure housing income or security for the people that go through it.

Now, this is more a personal letter to Anne Ruston and Prime Minister [Scott Morrison](#) from an independent advocate who tried so hard with so many others just like me, after two years of the Redress Scheme working on the ground

Seven years ago, governments both state and federal (due to great work by people like [Peter Fox](#) and many others) were dragged kicking and screaming to address the pain of institutionalised sexual abuse, deliberately leaving out so many other forms of abuse. We came forward and laid our abuse out for all to see — some of us had never told a soul. Others had been yelling our story to the world and nobody wanted to hear.

We did this so many children today would be safe and to demand our redress. We really had hope.

I do not think the public understand what

redress looks like.

We thought we were going to get it, but received this instead:

Amount of redress payment

The amount of redress payment a person can receive depends on a person's individual circumstances, specifically the kind of abuse the person experienced. The table below, from the Scheme's Assessment Framework, provides a guide on how a person's redress payment is determined.

The Operator, or an Independent Decision Maker, will determine the amount of Redress Payment that a person may receive by applying the NRS Assessment Framework.

The Operator, or an Independent Decision Maker, will assess the kind of abuse a person experienced to determine the recognition of abuse payment for the person from column 2. If more than one of the kinds of abuse was experienced, the Operator, or an Independent Decision Maker, will use the kind with the highest monetary payment to determine the recognition of abuse payment.

The recognition of impact payment in column 3, if applied, will also be aligned with the kind of abuse the person has experienced and added to the monetary payment.

Column 4 is a payment of \$5,000, which can be applied if there is related non-sexual abuse. This can be applied if the person experienced any kind of sexual abuse.

Column 5 is a payment of \$5,000, which can be applied if the person's living arrangements made them more vulnerable to abuse. This can be applied if the person experienced any kind of sexual abuse.

Column 6 is a payment of \$50,000, which can be applied if the Operator, or an Independent Decision Maker, considers that there were extreme circumstances. This can only be applied if the person experienced penetrative abuse.

The maximum redress payment a person can receive is \$250,000.

Column 1 Kind of sexual abuse of the person	Column 2 Recognition of sexual abuse	Column 3 Recognition of impact of sexual abuse	Column 4 Recognition of related non-sexual abuse	Column 5 Recognition person was institutionally vulnerable	Column 6 Recognition of extreme circumstances of sexual abuse
1 Penetrative abuse	\$70,000	\$20,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$50,000
2 Contact abuse	\$30,000	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	Nil
3 Exposure abuse	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	Nil

Note 1: Only one item of each column from the table can be relevant to a person because an item covers all of the sexual abuse of the person that a participating institution is responsible for that is within the scope of the Scheme.

Note 2: The amount of redress payment is also affected by section 30 of the NRS Act and the NRS Rules made for the purposes of that section.

could start by giving special pension to all ex-state wards and using the tools of government to house them. They could be making all ex-state wards exempt from mutual obligations. Have we not been punished enough as children by our governments?

Redress is a complete insult to the people that take part in it.

I really need the public to understand this — for a failure in this is also the public failing us.

(Screenshot supplied)

For my lifetime of dysfunction, mental pain and poverty, society hands us \$75,000. That would have been my payout under this. Everybody's redress is different, but this is the Melbourne response. [George Pell](#) had a major seat at the table, so you can see how we got this response for redress.

The Morrison Government can talk about organisations not signing up to the redress scheme, but from the perspective of an abuse survivor, is the scheme itself not more of an abuse than people not signing?

I went to Civil Court and what I'm about to write is not bragging — I am being open to show the difference between what true redress is and that evil table above.

I settled out of court for \$650,000, but taking the cost of the other side and their share of legal fees, it tops a \$1 million law settlement.

With this, I have a home, furniture, I live on a bush block away from people, I'm free to learn, I take photos of birds and butterflies and I have security.

This is what redress truly looks like. Money can't fix us, but money can buy security and that security is redress.

If Parliament wants to give true redress, they

[Duncan Storrar](#) is an anti-poverty advocate and has started an advocacy service for children in care and their families. You can follow Duncan on [Twitter @indica2007](#).