



NEW SOUTH WALES  
BAR ASSOCIATION

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
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## **Legal aid needs support for abuse victims**

The President of the New South Wales Bar Association, Phillip Boulten SC, today expressed concerns regarding the recent announcement by Legal Aid NSW confirming their policies do not cover compensation claims by victims of sexual abuse.

“The NSW Bar regrets the Legal Aid NSW announcement, which has clearly been made as a result of the scant resources available for legal aid. We recognise that scarce legal aid funds have not been available for these kinds of cases for some time due to the ongoing failure of Commonwealth and State Governments to adequately resource civil legal aid” Mr Boulten said.

“At a time when the newly formed Royal Commission into Institutional Child Sexual Abuse is expected to uncover cases of such abuse, many victims will be denied proper compensation for the assaults they have endured” he said.

“We of course recognise Legal Aid NSW is in dire need of proper funding and that neither State nor Territory Governments have the will to ensure proper legal representation for those who cannot afford it”.

The Legal Aid NSW announcement follows the State Government’s recent decision to introduce legislation proposing drastic reductions in victim’s compensation – especially for victims of historic sexual assaults.

At the same time, the Commonwealth Government has failed to establish any kind of scheme to provide legal assistance to victims who come forward to the Royal Commission and have rights to compensation.

“We call on both Commonwealth and State Governments to make resources available to victims so that they can be adequately compensated for the serious damage that stems from abuse”.

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