



In pursuit of Justice

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MEDIA RELEASE

Royal Commission Case Study 22 into Yeshivah: Report released

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Waller Legal welcomes the release today of the Royal Commission's Report of Case Study No. 22 into the response of Yeshiva Bondi and Yeshivah Melbourne to allegations of child sexual abuse made against people associated with those institutions.

Waller Legal acted for three survivor witnesses and three related witnesses in this case study, including Manny Waks and his father Zephaniah Waks, AVA and AVR.

The Royal Commission has found that repeated reports of child sexual abuse were made to senior figures within Yeshivah Melbourne between 1984 and 2000 and that those who made the complaints were assured that action would be taken. Critically, the Royal Commission has found that there was no evidence before it that any action was taken on the part of Yeshivah Melbourne in response to these reports.

In relation to the response of Rabbi Groner in particular, the Royal Commission has found that:

The evidence before us establishes that Rabbi Groner's response to reported incidents of child sexual abuse was wholly inadequate. The nature and frequency of reports to Rabbi Groner strongly suggest a pattern of total inaction.

The Royal Commission has also found that "mixed messages" by the leadership of Yeshivah Melbourne "were likely to have produced inaction" in relation to child sexual abuse. The Royal Commission has reported that:

If the Yeshivah Melbourne, the Committee of Management and Rabbi Telsner had shown leadership, survivors of sexual abuse and their families and supporters might have received a very different response from the members of the Yeshivah Melbourne community.

Waller Legal has resolved compensation claims on behalf of several survivors who were sexually abused in connection with Yeshivah Melbourne. We are currently pursuing compensation claims on behalf of several others.

"We encourage any person how has suffered abuse to seek assistance and independent legal advice" said Dr Waller. "The Yeshivah has presided over a terrible history of turning a blind eye to the abuse of children. This had the effect of facilitating ongoing child abuse under its roof. Those who had the courage to speak out were shunned and excluded, often compounding their trauma. Action was not taken. Those responsible for this inaction should be held to account."

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