

Media Release

The Hon Ben Carroll MP
Minister for Crime Prevention
Minister for Corrections
Minister for Youth Justice
Minister for Victim Support



Tuesday, 7 April 2020

FORMER COMMISSIONER APPOINTED TO REPRESENT VICTIMS

The Andrews Labor Government has appointed former Commissioner of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, the Hon. Jennifer Coate AO as the new Chair of the Victims of Crime Consultative Committee.

Minister for Victim Support Ben Carroll today announced the appointment of the Hon. Jennifer Coate AO and acknowledged her significant contribution to the justice system and the rights of victims throughout her career, particularly those who suffered institutional child sex abuse.

With a legal career spanning 35 years across five court jurisdictions, Justice Coate has a deep understanding of the legal system and its impact on victims of crime.

Throughout her career, Justice Coate has volunteered and contributed to a range of legal causes and reforms, including sexual assault, family violence, youth justice and children's rights.

She was appointed as a Magistrate in 1992, working in the areas of general crime, family violence, committals, civil and family law, and also heard matters before the (then) Crimes Compensation Tribunal.

In 1995 Justice Coate was appointed as the Senior Magistrate of the Children's Court and as Deputy Chief Magistrate of the Magistrates' Court one year later. She was appointed as a judge of the County Court and made the first President of the Children's Court in 2000 before taking on the role of State Coroner in 2007.

In 2013 Justice Coate was made a Justice of Family Court of Australia and appointed as a Commissioner to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse where she presided over public and private hearings with victims during the course of the five-year inquiry.

Justice Coate will begin her role as Chair from 17 April 2020 - following retired Supreme Court Justice the Hon. Bernard Teague AO, who has served as Chair of the Victims of Crime Consultative Committee since 2015.

The Victims of Crime Consultative Committee brings together victim representatives, the Victims of Crime Commissioner, Victoria Police, the Office of Public Prosecutions, the judiciary, the Adult Parole Board, and victim service agencies.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Victim Support Ben Carroll

"Justice Coate brings a deep understanding of the challenges victims face when navigating the justice system – I look forward to working together to ensure voices of victims are heard, particularly children."

"I want to thank and acknowledge the contribution of Justice Teague, who has guided the work of the Committee as Chair for the past five years."

Quotes attributable to Attorney-General Jill Hennessy

"Justice Coate has a long and distinguished legal career – she brings unique insights into both the state and federal justice systems and will be a strong voice for victims of crime."

"I would also like to thank Justice Teague for his considerable work on the Committee during his time as Chair and for his contribution to the Victorian justice system over many years."

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