



ACAN Welcomes Legislation for Commonwealth Anti-slavery Commissioner

1 December, 2023 – The Australian Catholic Anti-slavery Network (ACAN) welcomes the introduction of legislation by Attorney General The Hon Mark Dreyfus KC MP yesterday. The Modern Slavery Amendment (Australian Anti-Slavery Commissioner) Bill 2023 amends the Modern Slavery Act 2018 to establish the core functions of an Anti-Slavery Commissioner. The Commissioner’s functions will include engaging and supporting victims and survivors of modern slavery and supporting business to address risks of modern slavery practices in their operations and supply chains. A budget of \$8 million over four years has been allocated to support the establishment of the role. “ACAN welcomes this major step forward in progressing the government’s anti-slavery commitments. The role of a national Anti-slavery Commissioner has been overwhelmingly supported by business, civil society and the political spectrum. ACAN supports the legislation and looks forward to working with whomever is eventually appointed to the role,” said Alison Rahill, Executive Officer of ACAN.

The bill confers a number of important functions on the Commissioner.

The Commissioner will play a key role in educating and raising awareness of modern slavery in Australia. This includes delivering education and community-awareness-raising initiatives to highlight modern slavery risks and how those risks may be addressed across all sectors.

The Commissioner will support victims of modern slavery by providing information about government and non-government resources, programs and services. Importantly, the commissioner will engage with victims and survivors of modern slavery to ensure their voices inform the design of measures to address modern slavery.

The Commissioner will work to support business to address risks of modern slavery practices in their operations and supply chains.

The Commissioner will also have an important role in promoting and harnessing research capabilities, to support evidence-based responses.

The bill provides the Commissioner will be appointed through a merit based and transparent selection process, on a full-time basis for a term of up to five years.

The bill provides that the Commissioner will have discretion in performing or exercising their functions, and will not be subject to direction.

[Media Release by Attorney General](#)

[Modern Slavery Amendment Bill 2023](#)

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