



**AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC ANTI-SLAVERY NETWORK RELEASE
PROGRESS, PRAISE AND PRIORITIES IN MODERN SLAVERY RESPONSE**

"I am proud to be part of the Catholic response to modern slavery. Thanks to ACAN, I've been able to advocate for people with lived experience in places I couldn't have imagined."

**Moe Turaga
Survivor advocate**

The Catholic Archdiocese of Perth and the West Australian Catholic Migrant & Refugee Office hosted survivor advocate Mr Moe Turaga at an event in partnership Australian Catholic Anti-Slavery Network (ACAN) at St Mary's Cathedral on 11th September.

Representatives from six Catholic organisations participating in the ACAN Program attended the event, including the Archdiocese of Perth, The University of Notre Dame Australia, St John of God Health Care, Southern Cross Care WA, MercyCare and Catholic Education WA.

Praise for progress and preparedness

Survivor advocate Mr Moe Turaga and Domus 8.7 remediation service advisor Ms Ruth Furber praised the work of Catholic organisations in assessing and addressing modern slavery in their operations and supply chains.

"Catholic organisations participating in the ACAN Program are prepared for the day they find people with indicators of modern slavery because they have access to Domus 8.7 remediation service," Mr Turaga said.

Ms Furber, a global supply chain expert in the mining and energy sector for the last 17 years, commended several initiatives of the ACAN Program.

"ACAN's Pre-qualified Supplier Directory and, most importantly, an independent remediation service in Domus 8.7 – are worthy of applause," Ms Furber said.

Both speakers also flagged more work ahead.

Call for a Catholic Safe House

Mr Turaga shared his personal story of modern slavery and called on Catholic organisations to set their sights on improving remedy pathways for people living in modern slavery.

"For people leaving a situation of modern slavery, you need support immediately. You will need case management, welfare and accommodation," Mr Turaga said.

"Domus 8.7 remediation service already provides independent advice and has case management systems in place. However, there is still only one safe house dedicated to modern slavery victim-survivors in Australia – which is run by the Salvation Army.



“We need a Catholic response to address accommodation needs of victims – similar to Bakhita House run by Caritas in the UK.”

Focus on high risk spend

A continuing challenge for Catholic organisations is to implement risk management protocols with suppliers in spend categories with a high risk of modern slavery.

The ACAN Program reports aggregated spend data across Catholic organisations of \$4.5 billion with 45,000 suppliers across 13 categories with high risk of modern slavery.

The four largest potentially high risk spend categories are: Building and Construction; Medical Devices and Supplies; Facility management and property maintenance; and Finance, Investment and Portfolio Positions.

Ms Furber said all large organisations are grappling with the same challenges.

“We all have a long road ahead of us to transform the procurement eco-system, where purchasing decisions are driven mostly by cost, quality and quick turn-around,” Ms Furber said.

“From a corporate perspective, I can assure you that the Church and all organisations represented here today can be proud of the reputation of the ACAN Program and Domus 8.7 remediation service.”

“Workers in our operations and in our supply chains are depending on us, especially those impacted by labour exploitation.

The Compendium launch was hosted by Director of the WA Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office, Deacon Greg Lowe.

Deacon Lowe shared the endorsement message of the Archbishop of Perth, the Most Rev Timothy Costelloe SDB, in his capacity as President of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference.

“The 2023 Compendium of Modern Slavery Statements reiterates the commitment of each Catholic entity to proactively respecting and upholding the infinite dignity of every human being, a principle that compels each of us to stand resolutely against all forms of modern slavery and human exploitation.”

“We openly embrace the call to upholding the dignity of every person as we recommit ourselves to being bearers of God’s love and justice in the world through the communities we serve across our nation.”

The ACAN Compendium of Catholic Modern Slavery Statements

The Perth event launched the Compendium of Catholic Modern Slavery Statements, published annually by ACAN.



The Compendium details \$8.5 billion in procurement spending across a wide range of Catholic organisations for the 2023 calendar year.

“From hospitals and aged care, to schools and universities, dioceses, social and community services, even finance and investment entities, the Compendium gives an annual overview of the scale and significance of the Catholic response to modern slavery,” ACAN Executive Officer Alison Rahill said.

“What this year’s Compendium shows is that Catholic organisations are growing more mature in the way they manage modern slavery risk. We’ve seen our first social audits of suppliers and more than 220 corrective actions. These are trends that we expect to continue to grow across Catholic organisations.”

The Compendium is available [here](#) on the ACAN website www.acan.org.au

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