

## COMMONWEALTH ANTI-SLAVERY COMMISSIONER APPOINTED

**11 November 2024** - The Australian Catholic Anti-slavery Network (ACAN) welcomes the historic appointment of Australia's first national Anti-Slavery Commissioner, Mr Chris Evans.

"This is a great day for all who have advocated for an independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner and the Labor Government that has fulfilled its pre-election commitment to establish and appoint this role," ACAN Program Manager Alison Rahill said.

"As the largest anti-slavery collaboration in Australia, ACAN looks forward to engaging with Mr Evans on the important work he has ahead of him."

Mr Evans was a member of the Australian Senate for 20 years, serving in senior Cabinet roles such as Minister for Immigration and Citizenship. From 2007 to 2013 he was Leader of the Government in the Senate. After leaving politics, Mr Evans worked as the Strategic Engagement Lead for Walk Free, the international organisation that produces the benchmark Global Slavery Index.

The Anti-Slavery Commissioner will strengthen the work undertaken across government, business and civil society to prevent and respond to modern slavery by supporting victims and survivors, raising community awareness, and helping business address the risk of modern slavery practices in their operations and supply chains.

"In his new and foundational role, Mr Evans will need to draw on his formidable experience in government and the private sector to make a difference to the estimated 41,000 people experiencing modern slavery right here in Australia and 50 million people worldwide."

"This must include examining economic, migration, corporate governance, social and trade policies settings that currently undermine Australia's anti-slavery ambitions." Ms Rahill said.

The appointment is for a term of five years.

ACAN has established the Domus 8.7 Remediation Service, is represented on the Australian Government's Modern Slavery Act Expert Advisory Group and National Roundtable Against People Trafficking and Slavery.

Data published in the 4<sup>th</sup> Compendium of Catholic Modern Slavery Statements highlights that ACAN entities spent \$4.5 billion with 45,534 suppliers across 13 categories at high-risk for modern slavery.

The ACAN Modern Slavery Risk Management program provides Catholic organisations with expertise, tools and resources to assess, address and report annually in compliance with the Modern Slavery Act 2018.

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