

ALBANESE GOVERNMENT TO CRIMINALISE MODERN SLAVERY ACT NON-COMPLIANCE

The Australian Catholic Anti-Slavery Network has warmly welcomed new measures to strengthen compliance with Australia's *Modern Slavery Act*.

Federal Attorney General Michelle Rowland has [announced plans for a new criminal offence](#) for companies who are supposed to report under the Act but fail to prevent modern slavery in their supply chains. Civil penalties for non-compliance with the Act will also be introduced.

ACAN Executive Officer Alison Rahill said the new measures are an affirmation of the hard work of Catholic member organisations in ACAN, who have been diligent in managing modern slavery risk.

"For the last seven years, Catholic organisations have done the heavy lifting with suppliers in our operations and supply chains," Ms Rahill said. "Together we have engaged with over 45,000 suppliers to assess risk and put in place action plans. We have conducted due diligence, built capacity through e-learning and monthly webinars, demonstrated continuous improvement and much more."

"Our modern slavery risk management activities are recorded and published in more than 150 Catholic Modern Slavery Statements on the Australian Modern Slavery Statement Register. We have also set up the Domus 8.7 modern slavery remediation service with a 24/7 careline to address the requirement for remedy set out in the Act.

"Importantly, we do this work, not just because we want to comply with Act, but because we are committed to upholding human dignity, consistent with Catholic Social Teaching," Ms Rahill said.

ACAN Lived Experience Program Manager Moe Turaga said he expected the new laws would lead to increased identification of people in modern slavery.

"I applaud the introduction of penalties for businesses who choose not to comply with the Act. These new measures are timely and much needed," Mr Turaga said.

"The Modern Slavery Act has been in place for seven years - long enough to establish a culture of compliance. While many companies have engaged with the Act in good faith, some large companies in high-risk sectors have ignored the risks to workers.

"Given the terrible effect modern slavery has on impacted people, I will be advocating for non-compliance with the Act to attract very high penalties."

The Federal Government will begin consultations with stakeholders on draft legislation shortly.

17 July 2026

Contact: Alison Rahill, Executive Officer, ACAN/Domus 8.7

Mob 0439 482 290 www.acan.org.au www.domus87.org.au