

UCA Redress Limited

Annual report: 2023 – 2024



Trigger warning

Please be aware this document contains reference to accounts of child sexual abuse which may be distressing for some people. We recognise the significance of survivor stories and acknowledge the strength and resilience shown by survivors to bravely share their stories.

For support, please contact 000 (for emergencies), Lifeline 13 11 14 or Blue Knot Foundation 1300 657 380.

Acknowledgements

We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this nation.

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands on which our company is located and where we conduct our business in locations across the country. We pay our respects to ancestors and Elders, past and present.

We are committed to honouring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas and their rich contribution to society.

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children entrusted to the care of the Church did not always receive the care they deserved, and we acknowledge the enduring impact of those traumas that were experienced.

We acknowledge the ongoing trauma caused by the separation of children from families and communities.

We acknowledge the terrible breaches of trust which were experienced by individuals and communities and commit to learning from past mistakes to create a culture of safety in all settings of our organisation.

Contact us

ucaredress.org.au

info@redress.uca.org.au

ABN 31 628 672 597



Our commitment



We will hear and keep
the **stories**



We will **apologise**



We will make **change**

Through redress, we acknowledge and address past wrongs and bring change for our future through truth, justice and healing.

Redress takes us forward to...

- » a place of reconciliation with those who have suffered
- » a place where relationships are rebuilt and trust is restored in our Church, its leaders and agencies
- » a place where all can thrive as we learn from – and never forget – the past.

Who we are

UCA Redress Limited responds to and supports survivors of child sexual abuse suffered through the Uniting Church or its institutions, including by participation in a nationally consistent equitable redress scheme.

We are a national body and a company limited by guarantee established by the Uniting Church in Australia.

Our team of National Director and Administrator are advised by a five-member board of Church and independent representatives.

We work to principles of good redress - being restorative, survivor focused, trauma-informed and culturally safe and appropriate.

Justice is part of our DNA, permeating our practice and lived out through our actions.

The Uniting Church in Australia commenced participation in the National Redress Scheme in March 2019.

The Scheme acknowledges that many children were sexually abused in Australian institutions. It holds institutions accountable for this abuse and helps people who have experienced institutional child sexual abuse gain access to counselling, a direct personal response and a redress payment.

What we do

Our work includes:

- Facilitating the Church's participation in the National Redress Scheme
- Supporting Synods and institutions in providing direct personal response to survivors
- Contributing to awareness and understanding about redress, abuse and child safety
- Informing policy and decision making through data and learnings
- Evolving to meet the needs of Synods, the Assembly and other institutions of the Church, including national consistent practice.

A message from our board



The Board of UCA Redress Ltd is pleased to present the FY24 Annual Report to our stakeholders. FY24 has been another year of proactive participation in the National Redress Scheme, working internally in the Uniting Church in Australia to continuously improve trauma informed responses to survivors of abuse, working with our redress contacts across the Uniting Church in supporting people to manage vicarious trauma and engaging with our external stakeholders on matters relating to redress.

We continue to advocate so that the lessons learned from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse are never forgotten. We take every application for redress seriously and recognise and respect individual survivors as they tell us their story through their application. Not only do we want to respond well to that survivor, but we also want to keep improving our processes and our connections with those in the Church who are still working with children.

The Board of UCA Redress Ltd is deeply grateful for our committed small team who have been with UCA Redress Ltd since operations commenced in March 2019. Our National Director and Administrator have again showed their ongoing commitment to supporting survivors and meeting the needs of our stakeholders across the Church. The Board takes staff well being very seriously and has proactively instigated vicarious trauma management processes and set about creating an organisational culture where wellbeing is prioritised. We thank Annette and Sarah for their ongoing work.

We thank the Nominations Committee Chair, Paul Linossier, and member, Reverend David de Kock, for their significant contributions to the work and good governance of the Company this year. With Reverend de Kock finishing up on the Nominations Committee in May, we thank him for his service and wish him well. We acknowledge that Colleen Geyer completed her time on the Board on 31 December 2023 when she finished up as the Assembly General Secretary. Colleen had been a key leader in the team that was involved in the establishment of UCA Redress Ltd in 2018. As an original transitional Board member and in her six years of service on the Board as the Assembly nominee director, her contribution to the work of UCA Redress Ltd has been invaluable. We are very grateful to have had her wisdom and compassion to guide our work.

As Chair, I am deeply grateful to my fellow Board members Peter Roach, Robert Watson and Rue Masunungure. The deep consideration you give to our work, your support to the team and your commitment to the needs of survivors is evident in all you do. Thanks to the Members and Member Representatives of UCA Redress Ltd for their support of the work of the Company and to the compassionate way you go about leadership of responses to abuse in the Church.

With only three years remaining for applications to be made to the National Redress Scheme (due 30 June 2027) we encourage all those who may be eligible to turn their minds to whether they want to make an application. That time will pass quickly and the Scheme provides a sound process for having abuse acknowledged and responded to. We encourage those who work in community services, aged care, disability services and First Nations health and community services to make sure people know about the Scheme.

We restate our commitment to redress, reconciliation and restoration of individuals, relationships and communities through our work.



Anne Cross AM, Chair

Colleen Geyer, Assembly General Secretary (until 31 December 2023)

Peter Roach, Synod member director

Robert Watson, Synod member director

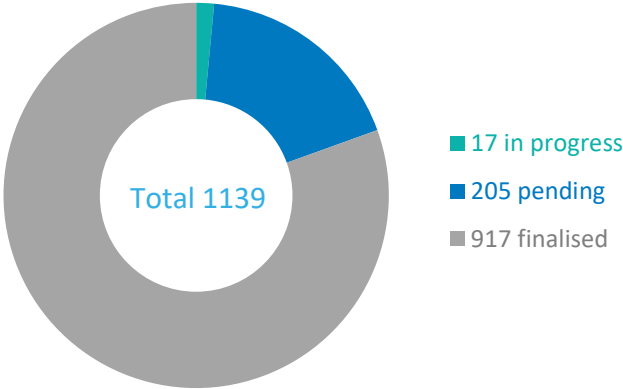
Rue Masunungure, Board appointed director

The people we support

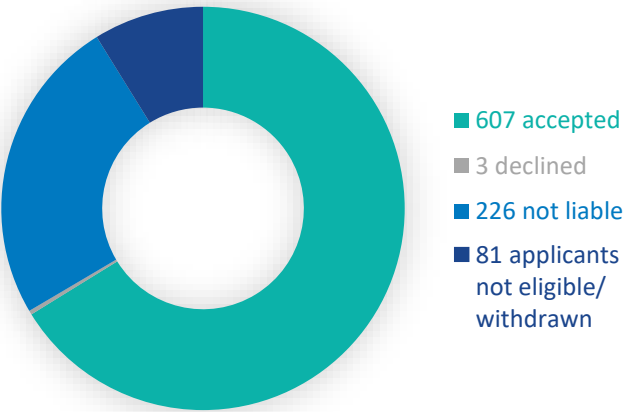


UCA Redress Limited Status Report as at 30 June 2024

Requests for Information (RFI)



Completed applications for redress



Data above is cumulative since commencement in National Redress Scheme in March 2019.

The work we have done



Work of the Company in FY24 has included

- **Delivering a rolling program of training** for the UCA for those involved in redress processes including: Overview of the National Redress Scheme, Overview of Trauma Informed Practice, Managing Vicarious Trauma and Direct Personal Response in the UCA
- **Continuous improvement in processes** for Direct Personal Responses (DPR) and coordinating DPR reporting
- **Supporting the UCA in acknowledging the Anniversary of Apology** to Survivors of Institutional Child Sexual Abuse with a Liturgy (October each year)
- **Engagement with internal and external stakeholders** and continuing to learn from survivors and their supporters and from other institutions to ensure best practice
- **Engaging with the Parliamentary Joint Standing Committee** on the Implementation of the National Redress Scheme
- **Engaging with the Non-Government Institutions Committee** convened by the National Redress Scheme

The year ahead

Our work will include:

- **Reporting to the Triennial Assembly** of the Uniting Church in Australia
- **Ongoing engagement with the Parliamentary committee** inquiry into the National Redress Scheme
- **Monitoring the flow of applications** to the Scheme and preparing to scale UCA Redress operations as required
- **Supporting increased take up of Direct Personal Responses** and ongoing support across UCA
- **Considering issues that will arise** in the final years of the operation of the National Redress Scheme
- **Ongoing training to staff** across the UCA

Governance



Our board

Anne Cross AM **Board Chair**

Bachelor of Social Work, Masters of Social Work, FAICD

Anne is an independent company director having concluded her executive career as Chief Executive of UnitingCare Queensland, late in 2017. In addition to her role as Chair of UCA Redress Ltd, Anne currently serves on the boards of St Vincent's Health Australia and Levande and is a member of the University of Queensland Senate. She is a fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and deputy Chair of the AICD Board. She received recognition in the Queen's Birthday 2018 Honours List for significant service to the community through social welfare organisations, and to women. She was named Telstra's National Business Woman of the Year in 2014 and awarded the University of Queensland's Alumni Excellence Award in 2016.

Appointed 29 November 2018. Term ends 30 November 2026

Colleen Geyer **Assembly Director**

Bachelor of Theology, Graduate Certificate Executive Leadership, Diploma in Teaching, Cert IV WTA

Colleen was the General Secretary (CEO) of the Uniting Church in Australia Assembly until 31 December 2024. She has worked in executive leadership roles across the community services of the Uniting Church for more than 10 years; and in leadership within the Uniting Church at state and national levels for 20 years, including on the Councils of the Church and numerous governance groups. Colleen has served on local and national boards. She has extensive experience in organisational strategy, leadership development, innovation, ethics and environmental sustainability, building programs for culture change and engagement.

Appointed 7 September 2018. Term ended 31 December 2023

Peter Roach **Synod member director**

Bachelor of Commerce, Master of Business Administration, Master of Letters, FAICD

Peter is a non-executive director of several trustee companies, not-for-profit foundations and private family groups. He was previously Chief Executive Officer of the Fairfax Family Office, Cambooya Pty Ltd. He is a chartered accountant and fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Peter has served as a board member of the Knox Grammar School Council and was Chair from 2013 to 2018. He is currently Chairman of Ravenswood School for Girls and is a board member of the Southern Highlands Community Foundation.

Appointed 23 October 2019. Term ends 23 October 2025

Robert Watson
Synod member director

Bachelor of Social Work, units in Business (Economics, Management and Accounting), Divinity, AICD Company Directors Course

Robert has held leadership roles in the Uniting Church, its agencies and other community services agencies for over 40 years. With a background in social work and business, he is strongly committed to child protection, social justice, robust governance and the community work of the Church. As a former Moderator of the Synod of Western Australia and a lay preacher, Robert has a deep connection to the Church and his local community. He was a member of the Uniting Church's National Task Group to respond to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and participated in decisions about the Church's participation in the National Redress Scheme and the establishment of UCA Redress Ltd.

Appointed 23 October 2019. Term ends 23 October 2025

Rue Masunungure

Bachelor of Laws, Master of Laws, Graduate Diploma Legal Practice, GAICD, FGIA

Rue is a seasoned governance professional and lawyer, with over 20 years' experience. Her career spans across multiple sectors including private legal practice, human and community services, social justice, international development and indigenous affairs. Throughout her career, she has been driven by a deep sense of calling to use her legal and governance skills to contribute to organisations whose purpose puts vulnerable and marginalised people at the centre of their existence.

She is currently the Executive Director of Governance and Company Secretary of a large charity where she leads practices that ensure good governance, risk management, ethics and integrity, client safeguarding, regulatory compliance, among others.

Appointed 7 April 2023. Term ends 7 April 2026

Leadership



Sarah Lim **National Director (2019 to current)**

Bachelor of Arts/Laws (Hons), Graduate Diploma Legal Practice, Master of Laws, GAICD, Graduate Certificate Leadership

Following a career in social policy and legislation review and development in the Queensland Government, Sarah commenced with UnitingCare Queensland in 2013. Her role included monitoring and understanding the lessons coming out of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and their impact across the breadth of UnitingCare Queensland services. During this time, Sarah worked with many survivors of abuse seeking to engage with UnitingCare Queensland. Sarah has been National Director of UCA Redress Ltd since March 2019.

Sarah is Chair of the Forde Foundation Board of Advice, a charitable trust established by the Queensland Government to provide micro-grants to Forgotten Australians and care leavers to assist them with their needs. Sarah is deeply committed to the needs of survivors of institutional abuse and restoration of relationships for survivors, the Church and the broader community.

Annette Fuller **Administrator (2019 to current)**

Bachelor of Arts, Master of Human Services, Certificate in Governance Practice

Annette has worked extensively in the human services sector in both service delivery and strategic policy roles. Annette provided direct services in the disability and domestic and family violence sectors and her work in strategic policy was undertaken in State government and with UnitingCare Queensland. Her role with UnitingCare Queensland involved contributing to UnitingCare Queensland's analysis and responses to the work of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and she was also responsible for locating records and responding to former out-of-home care residents seeking access to information about their time in care. Annette commenced her role with UCA Redress Ltd in April 2019 and is committed to supporting survivor focused outcomes by ensuring efficient and effective processing of applications for redress from the National Redress Scheme related to Uniting Church in Australia institutions.

Governance statement

Board composition

The UCA Redress Limited constitution requires the company to have five directors, comprising:

- Chair appointed by members
- One director appointed by the Assembly Member
- Two directors elected collectively by the Synod members
- One person appointed by the Board.

Board operations

The Board is committed to delivering excellence in governance and prioritises high standards of accountability, transparency and integrity. They guide and monitor the management of the company and are responsible for approving the company's strategic direction and governance.

The National Director provides the Board with updates in relation to:

- the strategic plan and financial reports
- progress against the strategic and operational plans
- participation of the Uniting Church in Australia in the National Redress Scheme.

The Board meets regularly in scheduled meetings, with strategic planning and continuing education sessions undertaken at additional sessions.

Nominations Committee

The Board established this committee as required by the UCA Redress Limited constitution. This committee has terms of reference which set out the authority delegated to it by the Board and its operations. The Committee is focused on the composition and performance of the Board.

The Committee comprises of three people; two, including the Chair, must be independent of the company. Members of the Committee, including the Chair, are appointed and removed by the Board.

Anne Cross AM continues as the Board's nominee to the Nominations Committee, with Paul Lionssier (Chair). Rev David de Kock served on the Committee from August 2022 until May 2024. Work is ongoing to identify a suitable new appointee.

National Director

This is a Board appointed position and is subject to an annual performance review by the Board. The National Director leads UCA Redress Limited, recommends strategic and policy direction for Board approval, and provides business and operational plans to deliver agreed outcomes.

Board attendance and remuneration

	Eligible to attend	Attended	Fees
Anne Cross	5	5	\$30,410.90
Colleen Geyer	3	2*	0
Peter Roach	5	5	\$15,205.58
Robert Watson	5	5	\$15,205.58
Rue Masunungure	5	5	\$15,205.84

*unable to attend one meeting due to leave

Fees paid are inclusive of superannuation.

Employees of the Uniting Church in Australia are not paid Board fees.

Funding arrangements and financial statement

UCA Redress Limited is funded for its operations by contributions from its members. Participating institutions within a member's geographical or corporate area of responsibility contribute to this cost.

Payments made under the National Redress Scheme are passed to the Synods/Assembly, with cost recovery arrangements agreed locally.

UCA Redress Limited audited accounts are available on the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission website: <https://www.acnc.gov.au/charity/charities/4f58548c-4b33-e911-a979-000d3ad05e15/profile>

