

Unresolved issues: recordkeeping recommendations arising from Australian commissions of inquiry into the welfare of children in out-of-home care, 1997–2012

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Since the late 1990s, a significant number of commissions of inquiry have been conducted by the Commonwealth Government of Australia, individual states and territories in Australia, and internationally, into the treatment of children in out-of-home care. This paper traces the most significant of these inquiries and the recommendations arising regarding records, with the purpose of highlighting some of the recurring themes identified by each inquiry. An overview is also given of some of the positive changes to aspects of recordkeeping as a direct consequence of the landmark inquiries. Lastly, this overview hopes to raise some questions surrounding the role of the profession in promoting awareness of recordkeeping issues that have emerged through these inquiries.

Keywords: inquiries; out-of-home care; private sector; recordkeeping recommendations; royal commissions

Introduction and background

In 2013, letters patent were issued by the Australian Government for a Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.¹ Commissions of inquiry can be seen as public scrutiny of historic and/or current practice and procedure; with appropriate terms of reference, an inquiry has the capacity to examine matters in both the public and private sectors.

In the early twenty-first century, cultural and social norms place high value on children as special members of any society, and the vast majority of citizens regard the care and protection of children as being of the utmost importance. This has not always been so. By the time the 2013 Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse was announced, there had been at least 80 inquiries into various aspects of the welfare of children in the 24 years prior.² The terms of reference for this latest commission of inquiry were very similar to many preceding it, the commissioners being given a mandate to consider ‘changes to laws, policies, practices and systems that have improved over time, the ability of institutions and governments to better protect against and respond to child sexual abuse and related matters in institutional contexts’.³ Child abuse, then, has been the subject of many commissions of inquiry. By contrast, records and recordkeeping have been the specific subject of only two state-based inquiries in

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Australia.⁴ In general, records have not featured prominently in the terms of reference of many commissions of inquiry. Despite this, owing to their evidentiary nature, records have been at the centre of a number of landmark investigations into abuse of children while in state care: records provide evidence of identity, and corroborate testimony of unrecorded events which occurred many years ago. Ironically, it has been the absence of records which has proved most problematic, both for inquirers and the would-be subjects of those records.

Taking the pretext that children are the most valued members of society, one might assume that any recommendations arising from inquiries into their welfare would have a better than reasonable chance of being implemented. Three inquiries conducted in Australia between 1997 and 2004⁵ examined the reasons why the subject children were not in the care of their parents, and investigated the treatment of the children once they were in out-of-home care. The findings on these aspects of the inquiries were (and remain) heartbreaking, and led to a number of recommendations and subsequent actions such as reparations, formal apologies and the provision of ongoing support, counselling and welfare services. The same inquiries resulted in a number of recommendations concerning recordkeeping. While child abuse is an undoubtedly challenging and important subject matter, this paper will focus only on issues related to recordkeeping which have been highlighted by the inquiries. This paper traces the recommendations concerning recordkeeping arising from a selection of the 80 inquiries conducted since 1989.

Each of the inquiries under consideration was instituted by government (state or national) under relevant legislation, and carried out by a public body or person with appropriate investigative powers such as a Senate Committee, a Royal Commission or an Ombudsman, each supported by a secretariat and research personnel. Each inquiry was publicly funded. The earliest report was released in 1997 and the most recent in 2012, providing a time span of at least 15 years.

Narrowing the field

Of the 80 reports referenced by the 2013 Royal Commission, 68 were available online at the time research for this paper was conducted; this facilitated desktop research. Additionally, a Victorian government inquiry not listed by the Royal Commission was brought to my attention,⁶ and has been added to the overall tally, making 69 reports in total. All relate to and/or arise from jurisdictions within Australia, and all reports were complete and made publicly available by June 2014. Similar inquiries have been conducted in other English-speaking nations over a similar time period, notably in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. While their findings in one case prompted an Australian inquiry,⁷ and largely mirror those of Australian inquiries, they will not be discussed at length in this paper.

As Figure 1 illustrates, inquiries within Commonwealth jurisdiction, and those arising from state-specific issues in NSW or Victoria, are the highest numerically (14, 12 and 11 respectively). The two states account for 33% of the total number of inquiries conducted and subsequent reports available online.

In order to conduct a thorough analysis of the recommendations concerning recordkeeping, the number of reports needed to be reduced to a workable number: 69 is too many. The 2013 Royal Commission list of relevant reports reveals a broad range of issues related to the welfare of children. Excluding inquiries identified as having a focus on abuse of young people while training with the defence forces, violence and abuse within families, matters regarding possible reforms to laws which regulate the prosecution of

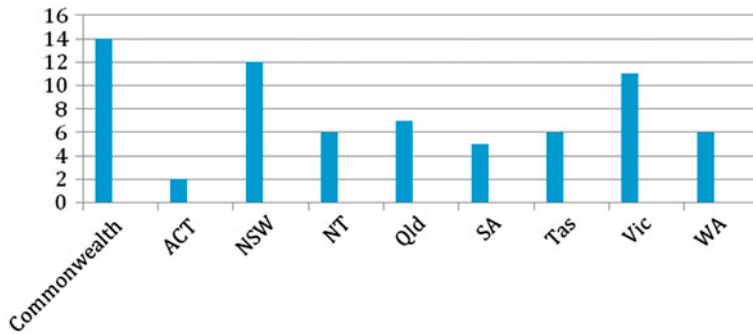


Figure 1. Commissions of inquiry conducted between 1995 and 2013 into the welfare of children, by jurisdiction.

offenders and incidents involving a single person or single institution, one is left with the reports of 47 different reviews, of which 13 relate to the provision of care to children in out-of-home situations and/or are landmark reports in and of themselves. In order to avoid unnecessary overlap in any one jurisdiction, this number has been reduced to eight (including one review of earlier recommendations) and they are:

- *Bringing Them Home*⁸ (1997) Commonwealth;
- *Forde Report*⁹;
- *Lost Innocents*¹⁰ (2001) Commonwealth;
- *Forgotten Australians*¹¹ (2004) Commonwealth;
- *Report on Allegations Concerning the Treatment of Children ... in Residential Care*¹² (2006) WA;
- *Mullighan Report*¹³ (2008) SA;
- *Lost Innocents and Forgotten Australians Revisited*¹⁴ (2009) Commonwealth;
- *Ward Records*¹⁵ (2012) Vic.

Terms of reference

With the exception of *Ward Records*, the terms of reference for the inquiries examined in this paper omit direct mention of recordkeeping matters. All refer in general terms to the adequacy of existing policies, practices and procedures, or ask for a review of ‘systemic factors’, a phrase which can be interpreted as including the relevance of records to the overall matter under investigation. As will be seen, it might be more accurate to say that commissioners have been confronted with the centrality of records to their inquiries, and that a *lack* of records has been the most critical factor leading to recommendations concerning recordkeeping in both public and private sectors.

Recommendations arising from eight inquiries

The recordkeeping recommendations arising from the inquiries under discussion fall into a number of broad categories which archivists would recognise as access, retention and disposal, preservation (or storage) and, overwhelmingly, the need for finding aids or guides to records. Table 1 organises the recommendations into these recurring themes; it can be seen that every category was addressed more than once by different

Table 1. Categorisation of recordkeeping recommendations from eight different inquiries.¹⁶

Access (in general terms)	
LI 14	All agencies (public and private) to open all records as required
LI 16	Provide access to descendants of child migrants
FA 11	Open all files for a Royal Commission
Access (standardisation of)	
BTH 25	Develop minimum access standards
F 35	All aspects of recordkeeping to be standardised, including access
LI 10	Establish uniform access protocols
FA 16	Standardised guidelines that underpin access to all classes of records, by all who need to see/use them, in all jurisdictions
<i>R – FA 16</i>	<i>Implementation reviewed in 2009</i>
Barriers presented by distinctions between public and private agencies (removal of)	
BTH 38	Transfer records held by private agencies to public custodianship
BTH 39	All private agencies to adopt the standards of public agencies
F 3	Queensland Government willing to be custodian of all records, whether public or private in origin
W 5	Standardise all recordkeeping and records management protocols across public and private sector
Barriers extant in state/Commonwealth legislation (removal of)	
BTH 24	Develop inter-jurisdictional memorandums of understanding (MOUs) to remove state to state anomalies
BTH 26	Introduce freedom of information (FOI) in Northern Territory
LI 16	Provide access to descendants – that is, over-ride privacy laws
FA 18	Review all FOI regimes
<i>R – FA 18</i>	<i>Implementation reviewed in 2009</i>
Cease destruction	
BTH 21	No records of or about indigenous people to be destroyed
F 35	All aspects of recordkeeping (including retention and disposal) to be standardised
FA 13	Cease destruction of all relevant records
WA 13	Review retention periods to avoid undue destruction
M 52	Extend retention period to 105 years ('permanent' retention/nil destruction)
<i>R – FA 13</i>	<i>Implementation reviewed in 2009</i>
Discovery – the concept of listing all records, creating indexes and/or compiling a directory to assist care leavers (and inquiry personnel) to find relevant records	
BTH 22a	Allocate funding to develop an index to relevant records
BTH 22b	Structure the index to allow discovery but protect privacy
F 2	Create a comprehensive guide to location and extent of records
LI 1	States to develop 'signposts' or indexes of all records held
LI 8	Development of a national index
LI 9	Development of directories (finding aids)
FA 12	Develop program to identify and preserve relevant records
FA 14	Establish service(s) to locate records, and compile directory to those records
M 49	Develop a central database
W 2	Identify and list records that might be at risk or needed soon for prosecution
W 3	Develop a program to discover extent and location of unknown records
<i>R – LI 8</i>	<i>Implementation reviewed in 2009</i>
<i>R – LI 9</i>	<i>Implementation reviewed in 2009</i>
<i>R – FA 14</i>	<i>Implementation reviewed in 2009</i>

(Continued)

Funding

- BTH 22a Allocate funding to preserve and index records
 LI 11 Provide funding to National Archives of Australia (NAA) to preserve and manage records

Improve records management systems

- F 4 Develop a comprehensive information system
 WA 13 Improve all aspects of recordkeeping practice
 M 49 Develop a central database
 M 50 Create a physical file (in certain cases)
 M 53 Implement an electronic document and records management system (EDRMS)
 W 1 Tackle backlog of unprocessed records
 W 5 Standardise protocols for records management

‘One-stop-shop’ – the concept of a single location and/or suite of services that incorporates discovery of records, facilitates access and provides counselling or support once contents of records have been viewed

- BTH 27 Develop a ‘one-stop-shop’ for discovery, access and counselling
 F 40 Develop a ‘one-stop-shop’ for discovery, access and counselling
 FA 15 Develop a ‘one-stop-shop’ for discovery, access and counselling
 FA 17 Provide counselling for records users
 R – FA 15 *Implementation reviewed in 2009*
 R – FA 17 *Implementation reviewed in 2009*

Preservation

- BTH 22a Provide funding to index and preserve relevant records
 LI 11 Ensure NAA has funding to preserve all relevant records
 FA 12 Implement programs to identify and preserve relevant records
 W 4 Relocate records to suitable premises to aid preservation
 R – FA 12 *Implementation reviewed in 2009*

Other

- BTH 23 Develop a records task force in each state to have carriage of all matters related to indigenous records and recordkeeping
 BTH 28 Train indigenous archivists and information professionals
 BTH 29 Investigate the feasibility of establishing indigenous repositories
 F3 Queensland Government willing to be custodian of all records, whether public or private in origin
 LI 12 NAA to liaise with professional counterparts in Canada to learn from their experiences
 LI 15 Give original documents held by any agency back to the record subject
 W 3 Communicate discovery of more/missing/lost records
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inquiries, over a significant period of time, 1997 to 2013. The categories are discussed in further detail under each heading.

Discovery

Issues relating to initial ‘discovery’ of records received by far the greatest attention from the commissioners, with 14 recommendations arising from seven of the eight inquiries analysed. Expressed in terms such as creation of indexes, and the need for directories, databases and lists, the recommendations reveal the difficulties encountered by both the investigators and the subjects of the inquiries (care leavers) in finding the extent and location of records relevant to them. Some reports discussed the difficulties of finding records when they were spread across different jurisdictions (for example,

Victoria and New South Wales) or spread between government agencies and private service providers (such as the Western Australia Department for Family and Children's Services, Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, and the Christian Brothers, as detailed in *Lost Innocents*).¹⁷ Care leavers and investigators simply did not know where to start looking for records that might be relevant. Another report highlighted a different roadblock to discovery – the existence of records in boxes crammed into inadequate storage; the boxes were unlisted and their contents were not listed: not knowing what is in a repository is as obstructive as not knowing which repository to search.

Access

Issues relating to access fall into two different categories: general calls for openness (that is, open all files to anyone who needs to see them) and calls for standardisation of protocols underpinning access regulation. The latter particularly indicates the disparity of access regimes between jurisdictions – Commonwealth to state, state to state and between all levels of government and the private sector. Eight recommendations regarding access were produced from four inquiries; all are expressed in remarkably similar language, most comprehensively expressed in Recommendation 16 of *Forgotten Australians*, which recommends the establishment of standardised guidelines for all classes of records that assist all who need to see or use them, in all jurisdictions.

Barriers – legislation and the public–private sector divide

Both of the above issues (discovery and access) highlight the complexity of arrangements under which records were created, have been maintained and are now being managed. Archivists familiar with the complications arising from changing administrative arrangements would be able to follow a trail of records about one person between different institutions and possibly between different states; a non-archivist (such as a care leaver or commissioner) would find this challenging. Add to this roadblocks along the way such as privacy legislation, inconsistent freedom of information (FOI) regimes between jurisdictions and an uneven application of either or both in the private sector: the result is a high level of frustration felt by care leavers, often compounding the original abuse they suffered as children. Five inquiries proposed nine recommendations between them concerning the removal of barriers – legislative, regulatory, and in relation to uneven adoption of recordkeeping standards across public and private sectors.

Preservation and destruction

Six recommendations concerning the destruction of records came from six inquiries; all demanding that unauthorised destruction of records cease, or that retention periods be extended to prevent early destruction. Five inquiries recommended that funding be allocated to aid preservation of records, a term which the author has read in the context of the reports to mean provision of adequate storage as an alternative to destruction.

'One-stop-shop'

Three inquiries revealed the emotional and psychological impact of the content of records on an individual or family, particularly when tracing identity or piecing together

an incomplete personal history. Consequently, recommendations were made concerning the establishment of a single point of contact – a ‘one-stop-shop’ – that would provide a suite of services including discovery and research, overcoming barriers to enable access, and to provide counselling once the records – and their contents – had been revealed. *Bringing Them Home*, the *Forde Report* and *Forgotten Australians* each urged the creation of such facilities.

Improvements in records management systems and processes

Four inquiries proposed that the solution to issues posed by inadequate records was to improve records management systems and processes. Seven recommendations resulted, ranging from the creation of a physical file to the implementation of an electronic document and records management system,¹⁸ from improving all aspects of recordkeeping practice¹⁹ to developing a comprehensive information system,²⁰ and finally tackling a backlog of unprocessed records.²¹ On the one hand, such recommendations are helpful in urging the agency involved to improve one aspect of its administrative practice; on the other, they are so grand and sweeping (with the exception of tackling the backlog) that the lack of specificity could be construed as grounds for inaction.

Other (one-offs)

A number of recommendations arose which are unique to each inquiry. *Bringing Them Home* (Stolen Generations) made reference to the establishment of indigenous repositories and recommended the training of indigenous information professionals. The *Forde Report* suggested that the Queensland Government should be willing to act as custodian of all records relating to children in care, even if the records originated from and belonged to private entities. *Lost Innocents* suggested that National Archives of Australia should liaise with their professional counterparts in Canada to learn how that former British Dominion had managed the records of child migration.

Overall comments

Taken together, the eight inquiries resulted in 273 recommendations, of which 55 relate directly to existing recordkeeping practice. Four of the inquiries made 26 further recommendations which, if implemented, had the potential to result in new classes of records. It is clear that several themes emerge through the recommendations. Access, particularly the right of the subject of records (or his or her relations) to see the content of records created about him or her, has been shown to be key in these inquiries. Given the nature of the matters under investigation – that is, the treatment of children while in out-of-home-care – this is not surprising, as questions about identity, disrupted connections to family and truncated personal histories are at the heart of some of the abuse the children suffered while in care. Discovery – that is, where to start, how to be certain that all relevant records are known and found – is the strongest theme of all. Even after the passage of time since the reports have been published – some 16 years since *Bringing Them Home* in 1997 – there is certainly much for the profession to take heed of in these reports. The role of archivists is discussed further elsewhere in this paper. See Figure 2, which illustrates the number of records-related recommendations arising from eight inquiries.

Records in terms of reference lead to chapters on records

Two of the eight reports analysed included entire chapters devoted to issues concerning records. In both cases, records were specifically mentioned in the terms of reference.

The terms of reference for *Bringing Them Home* included the need to examine ‘the adequacy of ... current laws practices and policies relating to access to individual and family records ...’²² Chapter 16 of the subsequent report addressed issues such as destruction of records, location of records, access by right, no right of access to non-government records, cost and delay, distressing information, and derogatory language. It also outlined the five essential features of what were termed ‘complying access provisions’ – that is, an access regime that would fit the needs of children removed from their families to find and access their records:

- information about the availability of records should be widely spread throughout Indigenous communities;
- access to one’s own records, and those of family, should be available as a right;
- access procedures should be simple, straightforward and cheap;
- all records must be thoroughly indexed to ensure they are identifiable, regardless of location or ownership; and,
- provision of counselling and support is essential at time records are read.²³

These findings were distilled into specific recommendations. Mullighan (2008) responded to specific mention in the terms of reference to the matter of records. Clause 2C provided the mandate to ‘determine and report on whether appropriate and adequate records were kept ... and ... whether any records ... have been destroyed or otherwise disposed of’.²⁴ The subsequent report detailed the issues encountered throughout the investigation, including the inability of the responsible department to provide a comprehensive list of the children who had died while in state care. While care was provided by both public and private agencies, ultimate oversight remained with the department. Further, the department had no records at all of 16 children who had died while in state care; evidence of the existence and subsequent deaths of the children was provided by witnesses or was uncovered by research of unrelated records on other matters.

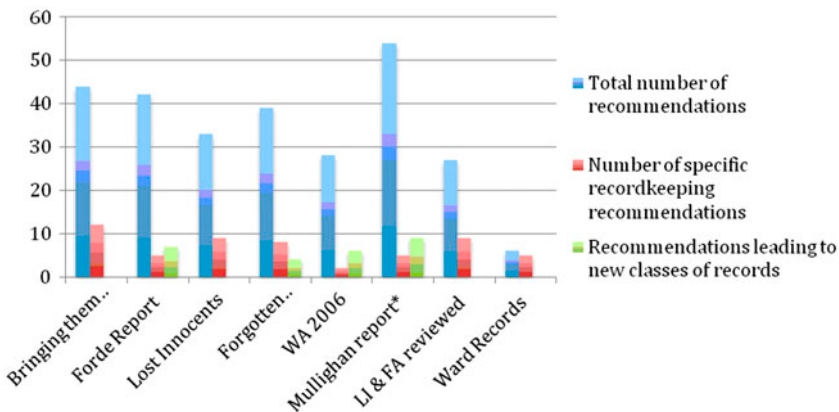


Figure 2. Recommendations of eight commissions of inquiry showing total number of recommendations arising (273), number of records-specific recommendations (55) and additional recommendations which might lead to new classes of records (26).

Mullighan's finding was that his investigation was severely hampered by inadequate records: they were either not created in the first instance, or had been lost or destroyed in the interval between the events under investigation and his inquiry. He also noted that, prior to the introduction of the *State Records Act 1997* (SA), there 'were no comprehensive legislative guidelines for agencies to manage records'.²⁵ Mullighan also traced a phenomenon of which archivists are aware: the consequences of multiple changes to recordkeeping procedures, especially as administrative practice responded to technological change during the late 1960s, 1970s and 1980s.²⁶

Specific inclusion of 'records' in the terms of reference of any inquiry compels investigation: the results and consequences of this are adequately seen in *Bringing Them Home* and the *Mullighan Report*. The inference is that recordkeeping professionals might want to consider submitting an issues paper at the time an inquiry is announced, before the terms of reference are drawn up and decided upon. There is no guarantee that the submission will be accepted or acted upon, however such action might raise awareness of the centrality of records to any issue under investigation, and would open the door for subsequent submissions on specific matters as and when they are uncovered throughout the investigation.

Review of recommendations

Seven years after tabling *Lost Innocents* in the Australian parliament, the Commonwealth launched a review to ascertain progress on the recommendations arising from both *Lost Innocents* (2001) and *Forgotten Australians* (2004), both of which dealt with the treatment of children in institutional care.²⁷ Such a review is not a common occurrence: of the 69 inquiries noted by this paper, to date only four have been reviewed.²⁸ While public agencies are obliged to respond to reviews and questions by Senate committees, there is no similar mechanism by which private agencies can be called to account.

The 2009 review revisited all of the recommendations of the two inquiries with a special focus on issues grouped into two categories:

- (1) apologies, redress and judicial inquiries;
- (2) services, records and support groups.

Where it was deemed necessary, new recommendations were issued. Of the 27 recommendations reviewed under category 2 (that is, services, records and support groups, which became chapter 3 of the subsequent report), nine related to records; after considerable discussion and input from various agencies, it was concluded that there was no need for further recommendations concerning recordkeeping to be made. The response – or lack thereof – to questions about implementation of recommendations by private and public agencies is revealing. Jurisdictional boundaries between the Commonwealth and states, between individual states, and between government and non-government agencies are cited repeatedly as credible reasons for not being able to fully implement sensible recommendations such as:

That government and non-government agencies holding records relating to care leavers, implement and fund ... programs to find, identify and preserve records.²⁹

The Commonwealth response was:

This is a matter for state and territory governments, churches and agencies to consider. The Australian Government strongly supports the proposal in principle.³⁰

Most states reported on the progress being made in their jurisdictions concerning public records. None of the ‘churches and agencies’ referred to by the Commonwealth responded. Of the nine recommendations regarding records from *Lost Innocents* and *Forgotten Australians* that were reviewed, each had responses very similar to the one cited above. The question is: has strong ‘in principle support’ translated into practical and lasting change or improvement of recordkeeping practice?

What changes have occurred?

Bringing Them Home, published in 1997, heralded a suite of changes to recordkeeping predominantly with, by and for Indigenous Australians.³¹ Several government records agencies, including State Records New South Wales, also established specialised indigenous records units. Other responses since then have largely addressed the issues of discovery and ‘one-stop-shops’. Several initiatives have been undertaken throughout Australia to address the problems associated with discovering the location and extent of relevant records. Some landmark finding aids have been created and published by government agencies, notably *Connecting Kin*³² and *Missing Pieces*.³³ The Catholic Religious Orders have together produced *A Piece of the Story*.³⁴ The website of the Christian Brothers Ex-Residents and Students Services hosts PHInd (which stands for Personal History Index), a confidential index of names of former child migrants or their nominated representatives.³⁵ It is understood that the index also has information about which organisation holds the records, and where they might be located. Mary MacKillop Family Services is a joint initiative of the Christian Brothers, the Sisters of Mercy and the Sisters of St Joseph. Established in 1997 as a support service for care leavers, one of its services is assistance with finding and accessing records.³⁶

The *Find & Connect*³⁷ website provides an overview of government and non-government agencies historically involved in care provision, their locations and the types of records likely to be available. One of the contributors to the site has also created and made available online basic records training services and a self-assessment tool for ‘community service organisations’.³⁸

What changes are yet to be made?

Access, the need for standardisation, the removal of legislative barriers and the lack of consistency between the private and public sectors are yet to be fully addressed. A submission in 1996 to the *Bringing Them Home* inquiry noted:

... there is no single piece of legislation across Australia governing access to ... records [so] there is no consistency in terms of practice or policies.³⁹

These comments are generally still applicable, some 16 years later, especially in the non-government sector. Changes to privacy legislation came into effect in 2001, which extended the reach of privacy protection into the private sector. This further complicated access to records, particularly in instances where the searcher was looking for information about someone other than him or herself, such as a sibling, cousin or other relative. FOI legislation has only limited effect in the private sector, and so continues to be of limited use to searchers wishing to access records held by non-government agencies.

Recordkeeping standards such as AS ISO 15489⁴⁰ and descriptive standards such as ISAD-G⁴¹ have contributed to an awareness among all archives professionals of the need to consistently manage all aspects of the archival endeavour to a recognised standard; they are also tools to assist and encourage ‘best practice’. Statements on the principles of appraisal⁴² have also contributed to the debate about retention and disposal among archivists working with both public and private collections. However, application of such standards is voluntary, as is the employment of trained archives professionals in the private sector. Without further impetus of some kind – either legislative or policy driven – there is little prospect of standardisation of practice across every archival institution in Australia.

While some of the private agencies involved in these inquiries have expressed a desire to meet all obligations regarding records which have already been created (for example, in the areas of access and storage), the reality is that a number of these private collections are still held in multiple locations, under widely varying access regimes, and the care of the collections is often left to untrained volunteers.⁴³

Conclusion: role of the profession

One of the challenges encountered through this analysis has been to decipher recommendations written by non-records professionals; a number of recommendations relate simultaneously to multiple strands of accepted archival practice, and/or indicate a lack of awareness of provenance, original order or the reasoning behind closed or restricted access. Perhaps this is less of an indictment of the commissioners and more an indication that archivists have failed to develop even a passing understanding among non-archivists about the basics of archival theory and practice. Perhaps archivists did not contribute submissions to these inquiries, or if they did, the content was not well understood by those making the recommendations. Perhaps, given that recordkeeping was only one strand of many under investigation in each of the inquiries, there was neither time, scope nor inclination among the commissioners to elaborate on the recordkeeping recommendations. Whatever the case may be, there is enough evidence in these eight reports, which pre-date the findings and final report of the 2013 Royal Commission, to indicate a strong need for advocacy about and for records and recordkeeping.

State and national records authorities have provided submissions to a number of the inquiries examined in this paper.⁴⁴ In some cases, representatives of the private sector agencies involved have also made submissions, some of which address recordkeeping.⁴⁵ However, there is a discernable lack of submissions by professional associations; RIMPA provided a detailed submission to the recent Victoria-based inquiry which resulted in the 2013 report entitled *Betrayal of Trust*⁴⁶ (which is not included among the eight reports analysed in depth in this article). It is hard to find the voice of the Australian Society of Archivists in these inquiries over the past 15 years. While archivists may not have any influence over the prevalence of the multiple forms of child abuse, we can – and should – influence the way records are made, kept and used about the most vulnerable members of our community.

Endnotes

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 15. *Ward Records*.
 16. Key to Table 1: each separate recommendation is identified by the report in which it was raised, and the number assigned by the author(s) of the report, for example F 3 is the Forde Report, Recommendation 3.

Abbreviations:

BTH	<i>Bringing Them Home</i> 1997
F	<i>Forde Report</i> 1999
LI	<i>Lost Innocents</i> 2001

- FA *Forgotten Australians* 2004
 WA *Western Australia Report* 2006
 M *Mullighan* 2008
 W *Ward Records* 2012
17. *Lost Innocents*, chapter 2.
 18. *Mullighan*, Recommendations 50 and 53.
 19. *WA*, Recommendation 13.
 20. *Forde*, Recommendation 4.
 21. *Ward Records*, Recommendation 1.
 22. *Bringing Them Home*, Terms of Reference article (b) page 1.
 23. *ibid.*, chapter 16 (report not paginated).
 24. *Mullighan*, Terms of Reference 2C, p. IX.
 25. *ibid.*, p. 536.
 26. *ibid.*, pp. 538–40.
 27. Australian Senate, *Lost Innocents and Forgotten Australians Revisited: Report on the Progress with the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Lost Innocents and Forgotten Australians Reports*, 2009, available at <http://www.aph.gov.au/~media/wopapub/senate/committee/clac_ctte/completed_inquiries/2008_10/recs_lost_innocents_forgotten_aust_rpts/report/report_pdf.ashx>.
 28. The four reports are: *Lost Innocents*, 2001; *Forgotten Australians*, 2004; Commissioner for Children Tasmania, *Who is listening to the children now? Response to recommendations 8 and 9 of the Tasmanian Ombudsman's Report: 'Listen to the children, review of claims of abuse from adults in State care as children'*, 2006, Hobart; and, the *Review of Vulnerable witness Legislation Report*, 2011, available at <http://www.nt.gov.au/justice/documents/depart/review_of_vulnerable_witness_legislation.pdf>.
 29. *Forgotten Australians*, Recommendation 12, p. 285; referred to in *Australian Senate, Lost Innocents and Forgotten Australians Revisited*, chapter 3, p. 29.
 30. *ibid.*, pp. 26–37.
 31. See K Thorpe, 'Indigenous Records: How Far Have We Come in Bringing History Back Home?', *Archives and Manuscripts*, vol. 29, no. 2, pp. 10–31.
 32. New South Wales Department of Community Services, *Connecting Kin: Guide to Records. A Guide to Help People Separated from Their Families Search for Their Records*, 1998, available at <http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/DOCSWR/_assets/main/documents/connect_kin_guide.pdf>.
 33. Queensland Department of Families, *Missing Pieces: Information to Assist Former Residents of Children's Institutions to Access Records*, 2001, available at <<http://www.clan.org.au/perch/resources/missingpieces.pdf>>.
 34. Australian Conference of Leaders of Religious Institutes, *A Piece of the Story: National Directory of Records of Catholic Organisations Caring for Children Separated from Families*, 1999, available at <<http://www.cssa.org.au/storage/A%20Piece%20of%20the%20Story.pdf>>.
 35. CBERS, <<http://www.cbears.org/archive/phind>>, accessed 17 April 2014. This is a joint service supported by the Christian Brothers, the Sisters of Mercy and the Poor Sisters of Nazareth. The most recent activity appears to have been in 2005. PHInd was the subject of an article by J Mathers, 'Providing Access to Sensitive Records: The Personal History Index (PHIND)', *Archives & Manuscripts*, vol. 28, no. 2, November 2000, pp. 58–70.
 36. MacKillop Family Services, <<http://www.mackillop.org.au>>, accessed 15 April 2014.
 37. Find & Connect, <<http://www.findandconnect.gov.au>>, accessed 11 February 2014.
 38. M Downing, M Jones, C Humphreys, G McCarthy, C O'Neill and R Tropea, 'An Educative Intervention: Assisting in the Self Assessment of Archival Practice in 12 Community Service Organisations', *Archives & Manuscripts*, vol. 41, no. 2, July 2013, pp. 116–28. See also the Find & Connect website.
 39. *Bringing Them Home*, chapter 16 (report not paginated).
 40. International Standards Organisation and Standards Australia, *AS ISO Australian Standard on Records Management*, 2002, available at <<http://www.saiglobal.com/pdftemp/previews/osh/as/as10000/15000/154891.pdf>>.

41. International Council on Archives, *ISAD(G) General International Standard Archival Description*, 2nd ed., 1999.
42. The Australian Society of Archivists issued a *Statement on the Principles of Appraisal* in 2008. It is no longer available on the Society's website. Author's own copy.
43. The author has first-hand experience of this: a survey conducted among members of the New South Wales-based group Archivists of Religious Institutions (ARI) indicated that only 9 of 57 members of the group were eligible for individual membership of the Australian Society of Archivists. This included the associate category, which does not require formal archival qualifications. Further, over half of the respondents did not belong to any professional network (where they might seek professional advice on archival and recordkeeping issues) other than the ARI. Private survey; results held by ARI. Author's own copy.
44. For example, National Archives of Australia and Queensland State Archives provided submissions to the *Bringing Them Home* inquiry; State Records South Australia provided a submission to the *Mullighan* inquiry.
45. For example, Sisters of St Joseph, South Australia Province provided a submission to the *Mullighan* inquiry; the Lutheran Church South Australia provided a submission to *Bringing Them Home*.
46. Records and Information Management Professionals Australasia (RIMPA) provided a submission which was quoted extensively to the Victorian inquiry into the handling of child abuse by religious and other non-government organisations, see Parliament of Victoria, *Betrayal of Trust: Inquiry into the handling of child abuse by religious and other non-government organisations*, vol. 1, part C, chapter 7, 2013, available at <<http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/fcdc/article/1788>>.