



29 June 2017

The Hon George Brandis  
Commonwealth Attorney General

The Hon Mark Speakman  
Attorney-General of NSW

Martin Pakula  
Attorney-General of Victoria

**Re: extradition arrangements with Vatican City**

Dear Attorneys,

As you are no doubt aware, Australia does not currently have an extradition treaty with Vatican City (the Holy See).

We note that the Victorian Police have now charged Cardinal George Pell with historic child sex offences.

While Cardinal Pell deserves the presumption of innocence, the case raises a matter of significant public concern.

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse recently released a report on the 4,444 incidences of abuse that were raised with it between January 1980 and February 2015. It found that 60 per cent of survivors who attended those Royal Commission sessions reported sexual abuse at faith-based organisations.

Almost two-thirds of those who reported abuse in faith-based institutions reported abuse at Catholic institutions. Of the 1,880 alleged perpetrators within the Catholic Church, 572 were priests.

Given the lack of an extradition treaty with the Vatican (Holy See), if police lay charges against any person resident there, there would be no way of ensuring that they would return to Australia for hearing and trial. This is a significant and ongoing challenge for justice for victims of this abuse and is a matter of concern for the broader public.

We call on the Attorneys General of Australia and all Australian states to urgently commit to obtain a bilateral extradition treaty or a non-treaty extradition arrangement with the Vatican. In the absence of such a treaty then Australian diplomatic recognition granted to the Vatican in 1972 must be rescinded.



No Australian Government should be complicit, either by act or neglect, with the shielding of any perpetrators of child sexual abuse.

We are of course available to discuss at any time.

Senator Rachel Siewert  
Australian Greens spokesperson on Family and Community Services

Colleen Hartland  
VIC Greens MP

Sue Pennecik  
VIC Greens MP and Justice Spokesperson

David Shoebridge  
Greens NSW MP and Justice Spokesperson

Nina Springle  
VIC Greens MP and Family and Community Services spokesperson