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Using sources

Stolen Generation compensation long overdue**Thursday, 2 August 2007****Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission
(now the Australian Human Rights Commission)**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner Tom Calma has warmly congratulated Bruce Trevorrow on being the first person from the Stolen Generations to secure compensation after a long hard struggle through the courts.

“Mr Trevorrow’s win in South Australia represents a watershed moment for all members of the Stolen Generation. It sends a powerful message to other states and territories that compensation is rightfully owed to the victims of these policies which were in place across Australia for most of the 20th century, and impacted badly on generations of Indigenous Australians,” Mr Calma said.

“The significant size of Mr Trevorrow’s compensation appropriately recognises the seriousness of the harm and suffering these removal policies caused – no matter how well intentioned they may have been.

“The fact that Mr Trevorrow was the only child to be removed from his family allows us to make the stark comparison between his tragic life history of lost identity and opportunity, with that of his siblings. It is also a poignant reminder of the arbitrary way in which governments implemented their child removal policies.”

Last year Commissioner Calma congratulated Tasmania for being the first jurisdiction in Australia to legislate to provide compensation to the Stolen Generations and their families. It legislated to create a \$5 million fund to provide payments to eligible members of the Stolen Generations and their children.

“The Tasmanian Government’s actions put out the challenge to other governments across the country to follow suit – to deal with this aspect of Australia’s unfinished business in a fair and just manner,” Mr Calma said.

HREOC’s 1997 *Bringing them home* Report found that the forcible removal of Indigenous children was a gross violation of their human rights. It recommended that a national compensation fund be established so people would not have to go to the courts to be compensated for the wrongs done to them.

In this, the 10th anniversary year of the release of the Report, HREOC reiterates its call for reparations and compensation to the Stolen Generations and their families.

“I would urge the Ministerial Council for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs (MCATSIA) to continue its work monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the report’s recommendations and to collegiately establish a national reparations and compensation scheme,” Mr Calma said.

“Australian governments have cherry-picked recommendations from the Report, but we are still waiting for an accessible, fair and just national compensation scheme, as well as the all-important, and long-overdue, national apology from the Australian Parliament.”

Focus questions

1. Is Mr Treverrow's case the first case in regards to forced removals to be heard in Australian courts?

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2. Does the outcome of this case mean that Aboriginal people who were forcibly removed as children will be compensated in South Australia? Why/ Why not?

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3. Were the laws around removal of Aboriginal children the same or different in the various states and territories of Australia? (You may need to research this answer).

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