

Annual Report pursuant to Recommendation 17.3 of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (“Royal Commission”)

Section 1 - Introduction

This report is prepared on behalf of Yeshivah Centre Melbourne. At the outset, we consider that it is useful to clarify the entities encompassed by Yeshivah Centre in Melbourne, and how those entities operate and interact so as to clarify the distinction in these responses.

At the Royal Commission, entities under the general banner of ‘Yeshivah Centre Melbourne’ were subject to the Royal Commission’s institutional review hearings. These entities were Yeshivah-Beth Rivkah Schools Limited (**YBRSL**), formerly Yeshivah Beth Rivkah Colleges Inc., Chabad Institutions of Victoria Limited (**CIVL**), formerly Chabad Institutions of Australia Inc. and Yeshivah Centre Limited (**YCL**), formerly Chabad Properties of Australia Inc.

YBRSL operates the Yeshivah and Beth Rivkah Schools, whilst CIVL operates other ‘non-school’ community activities for both children and adults, including Chabad Youth (**CY**), which runs learning programs, out of hours child care, youth camps and a variety of other operations and is the main division of CIVL involved in the care of children and young people. Where YBRSL provides religious studies to its students, the instructors for those studies are sourced from, and employed by, CIVL. Any religious instructors engaged under these arrangements are subject to the policies and procedures of YBRSL. Yeshivah Centre Limited is a property holding company and does not employ staff.

Whilst called to the Royal Commission jointly under the banner of Yeshivah Centre Melbourne, YBRSL and CIVL are separate legal entities with separate boards of governance. The entities are co-operative as they serve and operate within the same community and certain of their functions overlap. Where appropriate, this report is structured so as to account for the distinction between the two entities. A diagram depicting the structure of the organizations is attached herein:

Yeshivah Beth Rivkah Schools Limited	Chabad Institutions of Victoria Limited	Yeshivah Centre Limited
<p>Company Limited by guarantee</p> <p>Operations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secular School <p>Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a person who has a Child enrolled at any one of Yeshivah Primary, Yeshivah Secondary, Beth Rivkah Primary, Beth Rivkah Secondary, Gurewicz Early Learning Centre, Yeshivah Brighton Kindergarten, Yeshivah Crèche and any other crèche or kinder that the Company may operate and is financially up-to-date with their fees. 	<p>Company Limited by guarantee</p> <p>Operations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Learning Centres • Hebrew school • Accredited tertiary education for men and women in advanced Jewish Studies • Centre for Adult Education • Synagogues • Youth Group (Chabad Youth) • Outreach and Welfare Programs <p>Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • paid up seat holder of various synagogues; • Chabad Adherent supported by written confirmation from a practising vocational Chabad Rabbi who have paid their membership fee 	<p>Company Limited by guarantee</p> <p>Operations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property Holding Company; and • Provision of Business Services <p>Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yeshivah Beth Rivkah Schools Limited & Chabad Institutions of Victoria Limited

Section 2 – Report on the implementation of General Recommendations

GENERAL

Yeshivah Centre began taking steps towards redress and addressing matters relating to child safety as soon as it was aware of the need and able to do so. As early as December 2016 (and prior to the implementation of the national redress scheme) Yeshivah Centre launched its own redress scheme that covered both CIVL and YBRSL. The program was accessible to victims of child abuse, as the need was felt to commence the process of redress as soon as practicable. The initial redress scheme was run independently from Yeshivah Centre, YBRSL and CIVL in order to ensure confidentiality and impartiality.

CIVL

Since the release of the Final Report by the Royal Commission in December 2017, CIVL (including CY) has striven not simply to implement strategies and policies arising out of the Royal Commission’s recommendations, but to take steps to drive genuine cultural change as regards the safety of children in the community. A conscious decision has been taken by CIVL to focus on employing an approach that will facilitate long term change, as opposed to a ‘check box’ approach. In order for the policies and procedures implemented by any institution to have real impact, it is the view of CIVL that there must be an education process (by way of open discussion and discourse) of members of the community.

One of the first challenges has been building a relationship of trust and open communication with the victims of child abuse, so that their concerns and views can be taken into account in the formulation and implementation of various measures in order to give effect to the recommendations of the Royal Commission.

Because of this, the measures that have been implemented are works in progress, which will be refined and formalized with the input of victims (for example, a formal process for the provision of feedback on policies or procedures that are in place or being developed by members of the CIVL and CY community).

CIVL has recently made progress in its communications with past victims, and it is hoped anticipated that present policies and procedures will be refined or formalized in writing with the benefit of input from those victims. However, before this takes place, CIVL is working with a representative of victims to put trust building processes in place.

Pre December 2018

Since the recommendations were handed down, CIVL has approached a number of experts and victim support groups who work in the area of child sexual abuse. CIVL is engaged in communications with these persons or groups as to the level of support and assistance they can provide to drive and facilitate changes to various policies and procedures in place at CIVL.

The key document that CIVIL has developed is a Code of Conduct, which defines various types of conduct and identifies what conduct by employees is or isn't acceptable. This document grounds the other policies developed by CIVL, including a grievance policy and a procedure for the investigation and appropriate reporting of any incidents which are reported. CY has a similar Code of Conduct in place. These codes are intended to be the backbone of the measures taken by CIVL to ensure child safety.

For reference, the relevant policies and procedures maintained by CIVL, including CY, include:

- Code of Conduct (CIVL/CY)
- Child Safety Policy (CY)
- Grievance Policy (CIVL/CY)
- Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy Statement (CY)
- Chabad Youth Policies and Procedures Review (CY)

- Chabad Youth Practice and Behavior Guidelines (CY)
- Recruitment and Screening Requirements – Chabad Youth (CY)
- Safeguarding Policy Review (CY)
- Responding to Incidents – Four Critical Actions (CY)
- Incident Management Policy (CY)
- Child Protection Reporting Overview (CY)
- Responding to Child Abuse Reports and Allegations (CY)
- Safeguarding Children Guidelines for Parent (CY)

Copies of all CY policies can be provided on request, or are available on the CY website. CIVL policies can be made available on request.

These policies were updated and amended following the Royal Commission, and are reviewed annually (as well as periodically when appropriate). For example, it has recently come to the attention of CIVL that there are persons in the community who are not comfortable with the currently appointed Grievance Officer, and so steps are being taken to appoint additional Grievance Officers of both genders which will increase and improve the accessibility to the grievance reporting process for the community.

CIVL, including CY, maintains a high level of transparency. The policies are (where appropriate) displayed around the CY building. The policies are openly available at the CY office and the CY website. The policies are also discussed with children at the beginning of youth camps (in an age appropriate manner) so that the input of children can also be incorporated into the policies. CY has also become accredited with the Australian Childhood Foundation (**ACF**).

In addition to these key documents, there are a number of ancillary documents which set out recruitment questions and reference check questions, as well as reporting forms for any incidents which may arise. To date, no incidents have been reported at CY.

At the time staff are recruited to CIVL, they are given induction training in the relevant policies and procedures, and sign a statement confirming their commitment to those guidelines. Training is then provided on a regularly and ongoing basis.

In addition to the above, there are steps being taken to perform a review of the CIVL Constitution, to ensure that the governance of the organization is in line with the updated policies and the recommendations made by the Royal Commission.

Post December 2018

CIVL is dedicated to the ongoing documentation and improvement of the policies set out above, and to introducing new measures as and when necessary. CIVL is in the process of formalizing a number of its policies following engagement with victims and relevant experts in childhood psychology and safety.

In addition, CIVL is considering or pursuing the following prospective actions:

Redress Scheme – CIVL has agreed to become a participating institution in the National Redress Scheme and is in the final stages of becoming a participant in the scheme. This process requires further input from CIVL's insurers, however it is anticipated that CIVL will soon be approved as a member of the scheme.

Restorative Justice Process – CIVL is enthusiastic about this initiative, which seeks to provide a platform for victims or survivors of child abuse to come forward and facilitate victim impact discussions, with a view to enabling the personal needs or concerns of past victims to be met, whilst informing best procedures for the protection of children moving forward. The long term aim of this program is to appoint a 'survivor' liaison officer who is able to work with victims to facilitate open discussions. This program has required funding to get underway, and has now started to be implemented. It is intended that this will work hand in hand with the redress scheme.

Extension of CIVL policies – CIVL is developing a program with the input of victim support groups to improve its policies, particularly with reference to the Synagogues.

YBRSL

Similarly to CIVL, YBRSL has driven real cultural change and education as regards the safety of children in the community so that its child safety and protection policies have a real and meaningful impact. YBRSL is aware that this cultural change and understanding is something that will take time and commitment, and will be an ongoing process for years to come.

YBRSL is dedicated to achieving this long term goal.

Pre December 2018

YBRSL had, prior to the commencement of the Royal Commission, a number of policies in place regarding child safety. It had also started the process of obtaining accreditation from ACF, which accreditation was obtained in March 2016.

Following the Royal Commission, and as a part of its accreditation with the Australian Childhood Foundation, YBRSL has engaged in a thorough review of its policies as regards the safety and protection of children, updating them to ensure that they are and remain in compliance with all relevant guidelines and regulations and best practice. For example, given the nature of child abuse complaints, it is the view of YBRSL that it is crucial to maintain impartiality in addressing any complaints and this is reflected in its policies and procedures.

YBRSL has placed each of its policies on a review cycle to ensure that policies are properly documented and updated as appropriate.

For reference, the relevant policies and procedures maintained by YBRSL include:

- Code of Conduct
- Child Protection Policy and Procedure, including Commitment Statement
- Child Abuse Reporting Policy
- Employment Policy
- Volunteer Conduct Policy
- Grievance Policy

These policies were updated and amended following the Royal Commission, and again on the introduction of Ministerial Order 870 (in which the Department of Education sets out the actions registered schools must take to maintain child safety standards and is attached at the end of this report), and are reviewed annually (as well as periodically when appropriate).

YBRSL has a detailed recruitment and employment policy, with the schools' commitment to child protection and safety being paramount in that process. YBRSL also sets out the requirement for training of new staff in child safety procedures at their induction, and as part of their ongoing professional development.

The policies are openly available at the YBRSL office and on the YBRSL website.

Alternatively, copies can be provided by request. The School also regularly runs workshops

and education for the students in association with these policies, and has involved students with an opportunity to add their voices to the development of the policies.

Following the publishing of the Final Report, YBRSL also committed resources to bolstering and building its Welfare Committee by way of additional members and training. This committee in turn provide training and support to other staff members in the organization.

YBRSL has worked closely with Department of Health and Human Services (Child Services), as well as other victim support groups, and also receives professional expert support in the development and implementation of its policies.

Post December 2018

As indicated above, YBRSL understands that true cultural change will come with time, and is dedicated to the ongoing documentation and improvement of its policies and to introducing new measures as and when necessary.

In addition, YBRSL is considering or pursuing the following prospective actions:

Redress Scheme – YBRSL intends to become a participating institution in the National Redress Scheme and is applying to become a participant in the scheme. It is anticipated that YBRSL will be approved as a member of the scheme shortly.

External Compliance Manager – YBRSL is looking to hire an external compliance manager to manage the preparation and implementation of all of its policies, including those which relate to child safety and protection. YBRSL considers that this initiative would further enhance its surety that policies are up to date and compliant, and would most importantly further improve the implementation of those policies in an equal and transparent manner.

Section 3 – Report on the implementation of Specific Recommendations

Yeshivah Centre is able to report on the following key themes arising out of the Royal Commission's specific recommendations as follows.

Inclusion and implementation of recommendations into policies and procedures

YBRSL and CIVL have taken care in the creation and implementation of their updated policies and procedures to ensure that the Royal Commission's recommendations are given

effect. In addition, YBRSL has ensured that all of its policies are in line with Ministerial Order 870 and all other relevant regulatory guidelines.

YBRSL's Child Protection policies specifically state that Jewish Law accords with Ministerial Order 870. YBRSL's policies also clearly state the school supports not only victims but also reporters of abuse/allegations of abuse.

YBRSL staff and school religious instructors employed by CIVL, receive copies of the policies and regular training in their implementation, regardless of their roles, gender, or religious affiliation.

YBRSL has ensured that its Child Abuse Reporting Policy caters for any potential conflict of interest YBRSL's Senior Management and Welfare Teams, who deal with reporting of allegations, are made up of numerous people of different demographics and gender to ensure the process is accessible to all.

Accountability – Regulatory and Expert engagement

YBRSL is subject to relevant school regulatory bodies and accountable to them (such as the VRQA and VIT). In addition, YBRSL's policies state that it will work with the relevant government and external agencies in regards to implementation and compliance. Both CY and YBRSL are accredited with ACF and subject to annual reviews by the ACF to ensure the entities are up to date with relevant legislation and other guidelines.

YBRSL regularly seeks and receives support from ACF, in addition to working with The South Eastern Centre against Sexual Assault & Family Violence (SECASA) and Child Wise, as well as others, in the implementation of its child safety policies. YBRSL regularly seeks external legal support and has worked closely with DHHS (Child Protection) and CCYP. CIVL has participated in discussions with relevant experts and support groups to ensure that impartial, professional guidance forms a part of its policy development. Internally, YBRSL has developed its Child Safe Policies to protect students enrolled in the school. The YBRSL Board is responsible for implementation of the policies, and has delegated the day to day implementation to the Principal. In turn, the Principal has empowered the Senior Staff and Welfare Committee members to act where appropriate. The Principal also reports back to the YBRSL Board on a regular basis. YBRSL's Employment Policy requires that staff will be allocated a member of Senior Management or Faculty head to monitor,

mentor and review staff performance, including in areas of duty of care and child safety. In addition, formal and informal staff performance appraisals regularly occur.

Training and education of staff, students and religious leaders

All new staff to CY and YBRSL receive induction training regarding the entities' relevant child safe practices as part of their regular induction. All ongoing staff receive regular training in Child Safety and have signed a commitment safety.

The school (YBRSL) runs numerous workshops annually for students in these areas. In addition it provides workshops for parents and has developed and included child safe educational programs for students as part of its curriculum. CY provides regular training for its staff, and engages children in education about child safety as a discussion at the start of the child or youth camps it runs.

YBRSL, via the Principal or Welfare Committee Members, provides annual internal review and training in Child Safe policies and procedures which are supported or supplemented by external workshops or presenters on varying age appropriate aspects of child safety.

Staff of YBRSL and CY must sign a document confirming that they have access to and will adhere to all relevant Child Safe policies including reporting, and Code of Conduct.