



**Centre for Excellence  
in Child and Family Welfare Inc.**

## **Media release**

*Monday 28 February 2011– for immediate release*

### **More time needed for response to child protection inquiry**

Today's first public sitting of the Protecting Victoria's Vulnerable Children Inquiry heard a positive response to the terms of reference, but also a broad-based call from child and family services to extend the submission deadline to allow a thorough and comprehensive response from the sector.

"Given the breadth of the terms of reference and planned consultation, time for organisations with vital insights into the system to inform solutions ensuring the best outcomes for vulnerable children is critical," said Dr Lynette Buoy, chief executive of the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare, today.

Written submissions are due by 15 April 2011. Inquiry chair, former Supreme Court Judge the Hon. Philip Cummins, acknowledged the challenge for organisations, which in some cases are taking on staff to focus on the inquiry, adding to the pressure to respond meaningfully within a short timeline.

Organisations seeking to ensure that children's voices were included faced the additional challenge of arranging consultations with them to inform their submissions, Dr Buoy said.

"The measure of this inquiry will be the response of government and the outcomes for vulnerable children. These depend on real consultation with the sector to inform the inquiry's findings, and that can't happen effectively if timelines are too restrictive," Dr Buoy said.

"As a peak organisation representing Victoria's child and family services, the Centre will be striving to ensure a coordinated response from the sector, and a focus on recurrent issues in the system that might otherwise be lost among the very broad terms of reference for this inquiry," Dr Buoy commented.

Further information on the inquiry is at [www.childprotectioninquiry.vic.gov.au](http://www.childprotectioninquiry.vic.gov.au)

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