

INQUIRY INTO CHILD MIGRATION
SUBMISSION BY THE CHILD MIGRANTS' SENDING AGENCIES GROUP

INTRODUCTION - THE CHILD MIGRANTS' SENDING AGENCIES GROUP

The Child Migrants' Sending Agencies Group consists of the following agencies and representatives:

AGENCY	REPRESENTATIVE	JOB TITLE
BARNARDOS	Collette Bradford Anne Newill	Head of After-Care Social Worker.
CATHOLIC CHILD WELFARE COUNCIL	Patricia McGrogan	Chief Executive Family Care Society N.I.
THE CHILDREN'S SOCIETY	Julia Feast Ian Wakeling	Project Leader Archivist & Records Manager
NCH	Joan Kerry	Child Migrant Adviser
CATHOLIC CHILDREN'S SOCIETY (WESTMINTSER) AND CATHOLIC CHILD WELFARE COUNCIL	Rosemary Keenan (Convenor)	Deputy Director Catholic Childrens Society (Westminster)
SALVATION ARMY	Major Florence Jenkins	Quality Assurance Officer
FEGAN'S CHILD & FAMILY WELFARE	David Waller	Assistant Director
MIDDLEMORE HOMES	Teresa Soden	General Secretary
FAIRBRIDGE	Bernadette Ganley	Administrator

The Child Migrants' Sending Agencies Group was established in 1997 following the Western Australian Inquiry into Child Migration. It had been suggested by members of the Inquiry that the Sending Agencies should consider meeting as a group to further develop services.

Although this submission to the Inquiry is by the Child Migrants Sending Agencies' Group, Fegan's Child & Family Welfare are not part of this

submission as they did not migrate children to Australia. Fairbridge have already contacted the Inquiry and are not part of this submission. Whilst agencies may make their own response to the Inquiry, we felt it appropriate to indicate the joint aim of the Sending Agencies to further the development of professional services to former child migrants and their families. The objectives of the group are as follows:

1. To provide a forum for the development and professional good practice relating to work with former child migrants and their families.
2. To share information on the keeping of records and the use of IT.
3. To develop working relationships with other agencies and organisations, both in the UK and overseas, currently involved in addressing the needs of former child migrants and their families.
4. To provide a professional support network for those individuals employed by sending agencies and working with former child migrants.
5. To further the development of policy links with the governments involved in child migration and the funding of services.

The Sending Agencies' Group has always been keen to look towards future developments in practice and services to former child migrants and their families, so that working together; we may maximise the use of resources and benefits to former child migrants and their families.

THE INQUIRY INTO CHILD MIGRATION

- The Child Migrants' Sending Agencies Group welcomes the Australian Senate References Committee Inquiry into Child Migration.
- All agencies acknowledge the significant contribution of the Child Migrant Trust in bringing to prominence the needs of former child migrants and their families. However, it is important that former child migrants and their families exercise choice in whom they work with, especially those who either identify with a particular organisation as "family" or because of a particular faith allegiance. We believe that former child migrants and their

families have a right to choose which agencies they turn to for the provision of services.

- Members of the Sending Agencies Group have been involved in varying degrees since child migration began in responding to requests from former child migrants and their families for information and assistance, providing details on family background, search for family and reunification.
- Following the Inquiry into the Welfare of Former Child Migrants by the House of Commons Health Committee in the UK, the Sending Agencies, excluding NCH who decided to set up their own services for Former Child Migrants, made a joint submission to the Department of Health for funding the development of new services. The project was to be a Former Child Migrants' Co-ordinating, Counselling and Tracing Project. As funding was not granted, we were unable to further our plans on this joint initiative.
- All of the agencies in the group would wish to develop closer working relationships with other agencies and individuals working within the field of child migration. We also believe that in working with others we need to establish confidence based upon a common understanding of professional issues, such as confidentiality, codes of practice and an agreed approach to historical abuse. Acknowledging that a number of children were abused, some of our agencies have been involved in looking at the development of principles and standards relating to historical abuse. These principles and standards now act as a framework when working with former child migrants who have suffered physical and sexual abuse.
- We are very aware that the British Government's Travel Scheme for former child migrants is only of three years' duration. Funding is needed well beyond this to assist former child migrants to be reunited with family in the UK. We would very much hope that the Australian Senate would give consideration to this funding issue.

- Whilst our agencies have established contact with a number of organisations and agencies in Commonwealth countries, we have been very aware that professional work in the field of child migration has seen minimal sharing of professional practice and research. The Sending Agencies' Group would welcome such professional sharing and development. We believe that an International Conference organised and funded by the Commonwealth Governments involved in child migration is needed. We were in the process of organising a Conference for 2001 but these plans have been put on hold as we understand that the Child Migrants Trust are holding a conference in the same year. It is to be regretted that the conference arranged by the Child Migrants Trust and the International Association of Former Child Migrants and their Families will be held in North America and not in Australia, Canada or New Zealand, the countries to which the majority of child migrants went. We believe that the conference will not engage governments in the funding and facilitation of professional development.
- The Sending Agencies' Group are committed to providing good quality services for former child migrants and their relatives. We have worked closely with the Department of Health to develop a code of practice and have assisted with the provision of a computerised Index so that records can be located more easily.

The Sending Agencies' Group is enthusiastic to work with all those involved in working with former child migrants and their families.

NAME	SIGNATURE	ORGANISATION	APPROVED BY
COLLETTE BRADFORD		BARNARDOS	BOB COOK PRINCIPAL MANAGER OPERATIONS
PATRICIA MCGROGAN		CATHOLIC CHILD WELFARE COUNCIL	MARY GANDY GENERAL SECRETARY CATHOLIC CHILD WELFARE COUNCIL
JULIA FEAST		THE CHILDREN'S SOCIETY	IAN SPARKS CHIEF EXECUTIVE
JOAN KERRY		NCH	CAROLINE ABRAHAMS DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC POLICY
ROSEMARY KEENAN		CATHOLIC CHILDREN'S SOCIETY (WESTMINSTER) AND CATHOLIC CHILD WELFARE COUNCIL	JIM RICHARDS DIRECTOR
MAJOR FLORENCE JENKINS		THE SALVATION ARMY	COLONEL DEREK ELVIN DIRECTOR OF THE SALVATION ARMY TRUSTEE COMPANY
TERESA SODEN		MIDDLEMORE HOMES	INGA BULMAN, CHAIR OF TRUSTEES.

