

12 December 2011

# Media Release



## CatholicCare Statement: response to allegations of misconduct in LETS program

CatholicCare Sydney denies there has been any deliberate or planned attempt to rort, defraud or dupe the Tax Office through its job seekers scheme as reported in today's Sydney Morning Herald (SMH) article "Catholic Church accused of duping Tax Office in multibillion-dollar jobs scheme" (12 December 2011).

CatholicCare Sydney, the Catholic Church's welfare agency in the Archdiocese of Sydney, treats allegations of fraudulent behaviour very seriously and does not tolerate behaviours of any misconduct.

CatholicCare, a not for-profit organisation which has a long history of supporting the disadvantaged, is committed to assisting job seekers find employment through its LETS program.

CatholicCare regularly undertakes audits and other reviews of its systems and programs. An audit of its LETS program in March last year did not reveal any systemic problems involving job seekers.

The only instance in which CatholicCare was made aware of fraudulent activity in its LETS program was referred to Police and the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR). This resulted in the individual in question being charged and convicted, an outcome not included in the SMH story this morning.

CatholicCare is aware of recent allegations of misconduct and has twice informed the SMH that a full, independent investigation was already underway into those allegations. DEEWR was made aware of the allegations and we are keeping them advised of the progress of the investigation.

Until this investigation is completed, and without having details of all the allegations, which could be inaccurate and non representative, we are unable to make any detailed comment at this time.

We have asked the SMH to make accessible any credible information which may assist in the external and independent investigation.

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**Media enquiries:** Bernadette Bain  
Manager, Communications & Community Relations, CatholicCare Sydney  
Direct: (02) 9390 5311 or 0418 261 136