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## ACTION TO AVOID UNNECESSARY ACNC RED TAPE WELCOMED

Non-government schools across Australia, including Catholic schools, stand to benefit from the Commonwealth Government's announcement today that the transitional arrangements for non-government school financial reporting to the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) will be extended by two years, the National Catholic Education Commission has said.

Since the ACNC was established, non-government schools' existing reporting mechanisms have been accepted as fulfilling the reporting requirements under the ACNC legislation. The transition was originally scheduled to end in 2016, but the Government's announcement has seen that transition period extended to include the 2016 and 2017 school years.

"Catholic schools are highly accountable through a range of reporting requirements with the Australian Government, state and territory governments, educational authorities, the My School website and through other public documentation and reports," NCEC executive director Ross Fox said.

"This action by the Government will avoid unnecessary red tape for Catholic schools and system authorities. There should now be no duplication of reporting for at least the next two school years."

Mr Fox said Assistant Treasurer Kelly O'Dwyer's announcement was a sensible decision and recognises the robust reporting processes that Catholic schools have had in place for many years. He also thanked the ACNC for working constructively and collaboratively with Catholic education authorities to achieve this outcome.

"We value the collaborative relationship that exists between the ACNC and Catholic education, which is built on a shared recognition of the importance of accountability and transparency for Catholic schools and other charitable organisations balanced with a sensible approach to avoiding duplication and minimising red tape," Mr Fox said.

"Catholic education will continue to work with the ACNC, the Assistant Treasurer and the Department of Education and Training in the Australian Government to realise a permanent solution that will ensure duplication and red tape will not be imposed when the transitional arrangements end."

Mr Fox said the ACNC has consistently supported the view that charities should operate under the principle of "report once, use often", and with the Coalition Government committed to reducing red tape, that permanent solution should be achievable.

"There is a shared view that the ACNC legislation shouldn't have a negative effect on the operation of schools, so finding a mutually-beneficial, long-term approach to reporting requirements for non-government schools will ensure teaching and learning is not affected by red tape and unnecessary paperwork," Mr Fox concluded.