

News Release

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ANZ takes action on Royal Commission recommendations

ANZ today announced it would take immediate steps to implement the first phase of its response to the recommendations from the Royal Commission into Misconduct in the Banking, Superannuation and Financial Services Industry.

From today, ANZ will be implementing 16 initiatives to improve the treatment of retail customers, small businesses and farmers in Australia as well as publicly reporting on the remediation of existing failures.

Highlights:

- Providing farmers with early access to farm debt mediation as well as favouring 'work-outs' over either enforcement or appointing external managers
- Not charging farmers default interest in areas hit by drought or other natural disasters
- Creating a dedicated phone service and easier account identification options for Indigenous customers
- Proactively contacting customers paying little off persistent credit card debt to encourage them to move to lower cost options
- Removing overdrawn and dishonour fees from our Pensioner Advantage accounts
- Engaging as a 'model-litigant' in situations where ANZ is involved in a court process with individual retail or small business customers
- Committing to the Australian Financial Complaints Authority's "look back" under its new limits

These commitments pick up on work already undertaken or started in Australia as well as adding new reforms to past initiatives such as improvements to ANZ Financial Planning announced in May 2018.

ANZ Chief Executive Officer Shayne Elliott said: "The Royal Commission - including the Final Report - has led us to reflect more broadly on the issues we face in reshaping our bank. This includes how we govern the bank, how we pay our staff, how we hold people to account, our products and how we provide them.

"We are not treating our response to the Royal Commission as a compliance exercise. Rather, we are taking action now to respond to many of Commissioner Hayne's recommendations that directly impact customers as well as the spirit of his final report. I'm confident these initial reforms will provide our customers with a fairer banking service.

"This is only the first step and I acknowledge that the cultural changes we need to make will take several years. However, we will continue to make the investments needed to improve our bank and we will also move quickly to implement the recommendations requiring legislative change once those new laws come into effect.

"We will also cooperate with Government, the regulators and industry on turning the broader set of Commissioner Hayne's recommendations into effective protections for our customers."

The full set of commitments is included in the accompanying table. ANZ will provide a further update on its response to the Royal Commission at its Interim Result in May and will report against public targets biannually.

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