



2024

Joint Sessional Committee

Commission of Inquiry Recommendations Scrutiny Committee

INTERIM REPORT

Members of the Committee:

Legislative Council

Hon Ruth Forrest MLC (Chair)
Hon Sarah Lovell MLC
Hon Kerry Vincent MLC
Hon Meg Webb MLC

House of Assembly

Ms Rebekah Pentland MP
Hon Jacquie Petrusma MP
Ms Cecily Rosol MP
Ms Rebecca White MP

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This brief Interim Report has been prepared to ensure timely reporting and updates on the work of the Joint Sessional Committee into the Government's response to Recommendations made in the Final Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Response to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings.

The Committee considered it appropriate to release an Interim Report to summarise activity of the Committee to date, noting a more detailed report will not be able to be completed this calendar year.

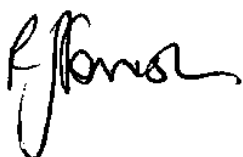
The Inquiry remains ongoing, and the Committee intends to release further reports outlining progress made against the recommendations of the Final Report of the Commission of Inquiry in early 2025.

One scheduled hearing with the Hon Guy Barnett MP, Minister for Health and Mental Health and Wellbeing, was deferred as a result of storms impacting health facilities in the North and North-West of the State in August 2024. This hearing has been rescheduled to November 2024.

Scrutiny of both the Premier, the Hon Jeremy Rockliff MP, and the Hon Roger Jaensch MP, Minister for Children and Youth in the time allocated was insufficient to enable full scrutiny and further hearings are being scheduled.

The Premier has committed to quarterly public reporting on the status of all recommendations through the Keeping Children Safe website, including an outline of, and a detailed update on the status of each recommendation. The first quarterly report is expected in mid-November 2024.

The Committee will continue to publish Hansard and public documents provided to the Committee in a timely manner.



Hon Ruth Forrest MLC
Committee Chair
22 October 2024

CONDUCT OF THE INQUIRY

1. On Thursday, 13 June 2024 and Tuesday, 18 June 2024 respectively, the House of Assembly and the Legislative Council resolved that a Joint Sessional Committee be appointed, with power to send for persons and papers, with leave to sit during any adjournment of both Houses, and with leave to adjourn from place to place to inquire into and report upon matters related to the Recommendations made in the Final Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Response to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings, including:
 - a) the Tasmanian Government's response and plan to implement the Recommendations;
 - b) the Tasmanian Government's progress in implementing the Recommendations;
 - c) outcomes related to implementation of the Recommendations, both partially and fully implemented;
 - d) monitoring progress reports provided to Parliament, as provided for by Recommendation 22.1 by the independent Child Safety Reform Implementation Monitor (when appointed);
 - e) overseeing the performance and proper execution of functions of the Commission for Children and Young People, as provided for by Recommendation 18.9;
 - f) any other relevant matters that either House may refer to the Sessional Committee; and
 - g) any other matters incidental thereto.
2. The Membership of the Committee is as follows:

Legislative Council

Hon Ruth Forrest MLC (Chair)

Hon Sarah Lovell MLC

Hon Kerry Vincent MLC

Hon Meg Webb MLC

House of Assembly

Rebekah Pentland MP

Hon Jacquie Petrusma MP

Cecily Rosol MP

Rebecca White MP

3. Public hearings were held in Hobart on 19 and 29 August and 2 September 2024.
4. The Hansard transcripts of these hearings are available via the Inquiry webpage at: <https://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/committees/joint-committees/sessional-committees/recommendations-of-final-report-of-the-commission-of-inquiry>. The transcripts should be read in conjunction with this report.
5. The Committee considered it appropriate to release an Interim Report to summarise activity of the Committee to date, noting a more detailed report will not be able to be completed this calendar year.
6. It is noted that the Inquiry is ongoing, and the Committee intends to release further reports outlining progress made against the recommendations of the Final Report of the Commission of Inquiry in early 2025.
7. Given the complexity and level of detail of evidence received, the Committee invites interested parties to review evidence relating to specific recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry at the links provided in this Report.

EVIDENCE

Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management

8. The Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Management, the Hon Felix Ellis MP appeared before the Committee on 19 August 2024.
9. The Minister was accompanied by:
 - Donna Adams, Commissioner for Police
 - Jonathan Higgins, Deputy Commissioner
 - Robert Blackwood, Assistant Commissioner
10. The transcript of evidence can be found via the inquiry webpage:
https://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0026/84455/JSC-COIR-transcript-19-August-2024_redacted.pdf (see pages 1-39).

Department of Justice

11. The Attorney-General, the Hon Guy Barnett MP, appeared before the Committee on 19 August 2024.
12. The Minister was accompanied by:
 - Kristy Bourne, Acting Secretary of the Department of Justice
 - Oliver Hinss, Former Solicitor for the State in the Commission of Inquiry and current Director of the COI Taskforce, Department of Justice
 - Bruce Paterson, Director, Office of Strategic Legislation and Policy
13. The transcript of evidence can be found via the inquiry webpage:
https://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0026/84455/JSC-COIR-transcript-19-August-2024_redacted.pdf (see pages 40-104).

Department of Premier and Cabinet

14. The Premier, the Hon Jeremy Rockliff MP, appeared before the Committee on 29 August 2024.

15. The Premier was accompanied by:

- Kathrine Morgan-Wicks, Secretary, Department of Premier and Cabinet
- Courtney Hurworth, Executive Director, Department of Premier and Cabinet
- Mathew Healey, Acting Deputy Secretary, Department of Premier and Cabinet

16. The transcript of evidence can be found via the inquiry webpage:
https://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0027/84456/JSC-COIR-29-August-2024-Transcript-Part-1-Premier.pdf

17. The Committee resolved to invite the Premier to attend a second session in November 2024 in order to complete scrutiny of recommendations 19.1 – 22.1. Further communication with the Premier indicated his inability to appear at that time. A future hearing is to be confirmed.

Department of Children and Youth

18. The Minister for Children and Youth, the Hon Roger Jaensch MP, appeared before the Committee on 29 August 2024.

19. The Minister was accompanied by:

Department for Education, Children and Young People

- Tim Bullard, Secretary
- Jenny Burgess, Associate Secretary
- Claire Lovell, Executive Director Children and Families
- Sue McKerracher, Acting Deputy Secretary Children and Families

Minister Jaensch's Office

- Lauryn Smith, Chief of Staff
- Sarah Davidson, Senior Advisor
- Kristie Trambas, Senior Adviser, Child and Youth Services

- Marinda Trembath, Senior Adviser, Aboriginal Affairs

Department of Premier and Cabinet

- Courtney Hurworth, Keeping Children Safe Reform Lead
- Kathrine Morgan-Wicks, Secretary and Head of the State Service

20. The transcript of evidence can be found via the inquiry webpage:
https://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/84620/JSC-COIR-29-August-2024-Transcript-Part-2-Jaensch.pdf.

21. The Committee has invited the Minister to attend a second session on 22 November 2024 in order to complete scrutiny of recommendations from 12.6 onwards. The Minister is yet to confirm his appearance.

Department of Education

22. The Minister for Education, the Hon Jo Palmer MLC, appeared before the Committee on 2 September 2024.

23. The Minister was accompanied by:

- Tim Bullard, Secretary
- Jenny Burgess, Associate Secretary

24. The transcript of evidence can be found via the inquiry webpage:
https://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0030/85485/JSC-COIR-2-September-2024-Transcript.pdf

Department of Health

25. The Minister for Health and Mental Health and Wellbeing, the Hon Guy Barnett MP, was scheduled to appear before the Committee on 2 September 2024. Unfortunately, due to the significant weather event impacting on health facilities in the North and North-West of the State, the hearing was postponed.

26. The Minister is scheduled to appear before the Committee on 14 November 2024. The soon to be appointed Ministers for Health and Mental Health and Wellbeing will be invited to appear on this date.