

Your Ref:
Our Ref:

14th February 2025

Inquiry Chair
Joint Sessional Committee –
Commission of Inquiry Recommendations Scrutiny Committee
Parliament House

Via email: coir@parliament.tas.gov.au

Dear Inquiry Chair,

**RE: Submission to Joint Sessional Committee, Commission of Inquiry
Recommendations Scrutiny Committee**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the current implementation of recommendations of the *Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings* (Commission of Inquiry). I am pleased that a parliamentary mechanism such as this is in place to guide the ongoing work needed to implement such large-scale reform for children and young people in this state. The Office of the Commissioner for Children and Young People is currently both impacted by and contributing to the implementation of several key recommendations.

For example, in December of last year, I provided a submission in response to the Tasmanian Government's public consultation on its draft Commission for Children and Young People Bill 2024 which is relevant to implementation of recommendation 18.6 (and several related recommendations).¹ As my submission makes clear, there is a need for thorough and thoughtful design and planning to ensure that the new Commission for Children and Young People realises the intent of the Commission of Inquiry's recommendations and promotes the rights, interests and needs of children

¹ Interim Commissioner for Children and Young People, Submission - Consultation Draft Commission for Children and Young People Bill 2024, December 2024, available at:
<https://childcomm.tas.gov.au/resource/commission-for-children-and-young-people-bill-2024/>

and young people in Tasmania. I continue to advocate for deliberative design and decision-making in the further development of the Bill.

I will shortly publish a report highlighting what I heard from almost 700 children and young people about their views and ideas for their new Commission. I would welcome the opportunity to provide the Committee with a copy of this report, once published, to assist in further deepening the connection between the implementation of the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry and the hopes, aspirations and experiences of young Tasmanians.

On a related point, during 2024, this Office established the Voices for Tasmanian Youth Consultative Council (VTY) to provide a mechanism through which children and young people could inform the development of the Tasmanian Government's draft *Change for Children Strategy* (recommendation 19.1). The VTY members have been supported by this Office to devise a range of outputs including a report titled *Speaking Out for a Safer Tomorrow: Our Messages for Change*² and subsequent companion piece, *Messages for Change: Our Perspective on Change for Children*³. The most recent publication of the VTY is a checklist for more effective communication with children and young people, titled *Communicate with us, not at us!*⁴ For further information about the VTY's work, I encourage members to visit: <https://childcomm.tas.gov.au/young-people/the-voices-for-tasmanian-youth/>

I also take this opportunity to draw to your attention my observation that important legislative reforms arising from the Commission of Inquiry's recommendation regarding raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility (rec.12.11) should be ascribed far greater prioritisation than is evident currently. This is important to ensure that other reforms proposed by government (e.g. regarding police powers and responsibilities) are in line with and indeed advance the government's unequivocal commitment to implementing non-criminalising and individualised therapeutic responses for the small number of children who come to the attention of police - thereby making lasting change for young Tasmanians and our broader community. I

² Commissioner for Children and Young People, The Voices for Tasmanian Youth – *Speaking out for A Safer Tomorrow: Our Messages for Change*, 2024, available at: <https://childcomm.tas.gov.au/young-people/the-voices-for-tasmanian-youth/>

³ Commissioner for Children and Young People, The Voices for Tasmanian Youth – *Messages for Change: Our Perspective on Change for Children*, 2024, available at: <https://childcomm.tas.gov.au/young-people/the-voices-for-tasmanian-youth/>

⁴ Commissioner for Children and Young People, The Voices for Tasmanian Youth – *Communicate with us, not at us!*, 2025, available at: <https://childcomm.tas.gov.au/young-people/the-voices-for-tasmanian-youth/>

would be pleased to discuss my observations in further detail should this be of assistance to the Committee.

Yours sincerely,



Isabelle Crompton

Interim Commissioner for Children and Young People