


Helena Griggs



29 March 2023

Simon Scott

Committee Secretary

Legislative Council Administration Committee 'B'

Parliament House

HOBART TAS 7000

Dear Mr Scott,

Inquiry into Tasmanian Adult Imprisonment and Youth Detention Matters

I would like to submit my views on Terms of Reference 1 and 2 for this Inquiry:

1. Factors influencing increases in Tasmania's prisoner population and associated costs.

For a number of years I have been monitoring the case of Susan Neill-Fraser and sadly this has led me to really question what is happening with our justice system in Tasmania.

I use Sue's case as an example, but it would appear that the problems with the justice system are widespread. Sue has a loyal band of family, friends and supporters who have been able to raise the profile of her case, but it is clear that there are many people who don't have that support, but who are also the victims of unsound convictions.

In any proper justice system there should be safeguards in place right through the process so that people do not end up wrongly charged and wrongly convicted. In Sue's case those safeguards did not exist.

The police investigation was deeply flawed – where was the oversight, where was the scrutiny? Why were TAS Police able to ignore important witnesses and other possible suspects?

In court why was the prosecutor allowed to speculate about what had happened to Bob Chappell?

Why was a forensic officer allowed to give sworn evidence in court, which was incorrect?

Having been greatly shocked at the lack of correct processes, I now find myself asking how many other cases have been as flawed as this one?

It is quite clear that there is reasonable doubt with regards to the conviction of Sue Neill-Fraser and NO-ONE should be convicted when there is doubt. The knowledge I now have of the Sue Neill-Fraser case leaves me with grave concerns that there must be other people in prison in Tasmania who are innocent.

The Tasmanian police must have spent millions of dollars in the case of Sue Neill-Fraser, they have seemingly 'gone after' people who have tried to speak out about this injustice. What scrutiny has there been about how much money has been spent on tapping phones and surveillance of people who were trying to highlight what was wrong with this case? If this has happened in Sue's case, it is likely to have happened in other cases.

Is Tasmania's prison population increasing and costs escalating because innocent people are being sent to prison?

2. The use of evidence-based strategies to reduce contact with the justice system and recidivism.

I am really concerned that in Sue's case, evidence-based strategies have been missing at all levels.

The police investigation was not evidence based. Within a couple of days, a witness had come forward with a story that Sue had plotted to kill Bob Chappell, the police then appeared to hone in on Sue Neill-Fraser being the only suspect, and they then looked for the evidence that backed up their theory, rather than keeping an open mind and looking at all possible scenarios.

Evidence-based theory was also missing during the court case, where speculation and inadmissible evidence was allowed.

There has been serious mismanagement at all levels with this case – it is a case that has gained huge attention over many years, but how many other similar cases have there been, which have not been exposed?

Yours sincerely,

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of Helena Griggs.

Helena Griggs