

Guy Barnett MP

Minister for Health
Minister for Energy and Renewables
Minister for Veterans' Affairs
Liberal Member for Lyons



Tasmanian Government **Media Release**

Guy Barnett, Attorney-General

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Rockliff Liberal Government announces two reviews following COI recommendations

The Rockliff Liberal Government has announced two important independent reviews arising from the Commission of Inquiry (COI) into the Tasmanian Government's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings.

Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Guy Barnett MP, has made a referral to the Tasmania Law Reform Institute to review the statutory framework applying to commissions of inquiry.

He has also asked his Department to establish an independent review into whether Public Officers who received a grant of legal assistance during the COI acted in good faith, and if not, whether they should be required to reimburse the Crown for expenses incurred.

"A suitably qualified and independent person will be appointed to undertake the review," Attorney-General Barnett said.

"The Rockliff Government has committed to all 191 recommendations from the COI, and these two reviews are an important part of our commitment.

"The safety of our children and young people is our absolute priority and we are focused on building a culture that ensures the failings in our systems and institutions highlighted by the COI will never be repeated."

Subject to the Board's approval, the Tasmania Law Reform Institute has been asked to examine and report on the operation of the *Commissions of Inquiry Act 1995*, and section 194K of the *Evidence Act 2001* (Tas) and whether there is a need for an extension of the powers of a Commission of Inquiry.

It will also investigate any statutory limitations identified by the Commission of Inquiry's final report – specifically the appropriateness of sections 18 and 19 of the *Commissions of Inquiry Act 1995* – and make recommendations for any necessary legislative change.

Along with the new reviews, Attorney General Barnett emphasised the importance of keeping the Tasmanian people informed about the Government's response to the Commission of Inquiry Report.

“We’ve established a Keeping Children Safe website - KeepingChildrenSafe.tas.gov.au – with information on supports available to people impacted by abuse, how to report if you believe a child is at risk of harm, and the actions already underway to improve how we protect children in our care.”

The Commission of Inquiry Report may evoke strong emotions. If you need assistance please contact:

Lifeline

- * 24/7 Crisis support: 13 11 14
- * Tasmanian Lifeline - 8am-8pm, 365 days a year: 1800 98 44 34

Sexual Assault Support Service / Laurel House

- * 24/7 Support provided by specialist counsellors: 1800 697 877 (1800 MY SUPPORT)

Relationships Australia Tasmania

- * Counselling, wellbeing information and referral
- * 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday: 1300 364 277