

4 June 2026

Kristy Bourne
Secretary
Department of Justice
GPO Box 825
HOBART TAS 7001
By email to: legislation.development@justice.tas.gov.au

Dear Secretary,

re: Consultation regarding Commission of Inquiry (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill 2026

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the draft Commission of Inquiry (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill 2026 (the draft Bill).

I strongly support all efforts to increase the safety and wellbeing of Tasmanian children and young people. The draft Bill advances this aim by implementing several recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings (the COI), as well as recommendations made through Peter Woolcott's independent review.

The following comments are not exhaustive and relate to Parts of the draft Bill I consider worthy of particular mention.

Part 5 of the draft Bill replaces interim regulations and enshrines, in the *Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023*, the requirement that Tasmania Police is subject to the Reportable Conduct Scheme and Child Safety Standards set out in this Act, with retrospective effect from 1 January 2024.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child makes clear that 'in all actions concerning children ... the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration'¹ and that 'every child deprived of liberty shall be treated with humanity and respect for the inherent dignity of the human person, and in a manner which takes into account the needs of persons of his or her age'.² Part 5 provides welcome clarity, removing any doubt that Tasmania Police - an organisation granted coercive powers to deprive members of the community of their liberty while they are being arrested or detained - is required to meet Tasmania's Child Safety Standards.

Part 6 of the draft Bill sets out welcome improvements to the *Personal Information Protection Act 2004*, broadening provisions for personal information custodians under this Act to share information that is reasonably believed will lessen or prevent behaviour that poses a risk of harm, whether by reason of neglect, abuse or other conduct, or to report such behaviours to relevant authorities.

¹ [United Nations, Convention on the Rights of the Child \(1989\) Article 3](#)

² [Ibid. Article 37b](#)





Children and young people are better served, and their safety is more assured, where legislation empowers responsible adults to appropriately share information. Part 6 seeks to achieve improvements in this respect, reflecting the clear message heard during the COI that child safety is inextricably linked with robust information sharing provisions.

I also welcome the amendments detailed in **Part 7** of the draft Bill, setting out changes to the State Service Code of Conduct embedded within the *State Service Act 2000*. It is only right that the key document outlining behavioural standards for Tasmania's 35,907 public servants³ clearly articulates expectations regarding child safety. The Tasmanian Government, and everyone in its employment, must lead by example to realise a safer Tasmania where the rights, safety and wellbeing of all children and young people are upheld, respected, and protected.

Thank you again for providing this opportunity to comment on the draft Bill, and for your ongoing work to prepare legislative responses that respond to the recommendations of the COI and related reviews.

Yours sincerely,

Ros Cornish AM

Interim Commissioner for Children and Young People

cc: The Hon Guy Barnett MP, Attorney-General
The Hon Jo Palmer MLC, Minister for Children and Youth

³ [Department of Premier and Cabinet \(Tasmanian Government\), *State Service Workforce Report No. 1 of 2026*](#)