

TASMANIA POLICE

Office of the Commissioner

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Our Ref: A23/48364

6 March 2023

Honourable Marcia Neave AO
Commissioner
Commission of Inquiry
GPO Box 229
HOBART TAS 7001

Dear Commissioner

COMMISSION OF INQUIRY DRAFT CHAPTER – CRIMINAL JUSTICE RESPONSES

On 27 February 2023, General Counsel, Jared Heath, provided Tasmania Police with the Commission of Inquiry draft chapter in relation to Criminal Justice Responses. It was requested that Tasmania Police review the draft and provide any submissions it may have. I have assessed the draft chapter proposed and request that the Commission consider the following:

Page 7, Paragraph 1.

'The Tasmanian Government also announced on 26 February 2021 the establishment of an Historic Complaints Review Process within Tasmania Police.²¹ A new police team, the Child Sexual Abuse Joint Review Team, is conducting a multi-agency review to identify potential perpetrators of child sexual abuse where there may be unlinked reports or references across agencies.'

The Child Sexual Abuse Joint Review Team, concluded its review in January 2022. As such, the current language of the paragraph is past tense. Tasmania Police submits that the paragraph should be altered, for example to *'The Child Sexual Abuse Joint Review Team, a multi-agency review team, conducted an examination to identify potential perpetrators of child sexual abuse where there may have been unlinked reports or references across agencies.'*

Page 20, Recommendation X, Paragraph 1.

'Tasmania Police should establish and fund specialist police units to investigate child sexual abuse based on the Victorian Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Investigation Teams model, with three locations (Hobart, Launceston and the North West).'

Tasmania Police submits that it is the responsibility of Government to fund such initiatives, as such, it is requested that the funding component within this recommendation, be listed as *'The Tasmanian Government should fund.'*

Page 26, Paragraph 4.

'Staff from the ODPP told us that they consider the quality of police interviews to be 'variable and to have dropped in recent years compared to the better quality they observed following a significant boost in training some time ago. The DPP also told us that the standard of these interviews varies and there is a clear difference when the interviewing officer is experienced in conducting vulnerable witness interviews.'

Tasmania Police submits that it is not clear as to what type of offending is being referred to when the 'staff' of the ODPP 'told us that they consider the quality of police interviews to be 'variable and to have dropped in recent years compared to the better quality they observed following a significant boost in training some time ago.' The preceding paragraph refers to interviewing child witnesses, which, within Tasmania Police is carried out by those who have undertaken specialist interview training. The DPP comment 'that the standard of these interviews varies and there is a clear difference when the interviewing officer is experienced in conducting vulnerable witness interviews,' would be consistent with interviews of children and vulnerable people are of a higher standard than other types of offending. Without clear context of what interviews are being referred to by the ODPP in line one, the reader would believe it is a follow on from the previous paragraph relating to child interviews. It is requested that context around what types of interviews 'have dropped' be including if such a statement is to be included.

Page 36, Paragraph 5.

'Commissioner Hine said that a number of steps are taken to ensure that the Professional Standards investigation is done independently from the area where the officer is based, and that there is oversight from the Integrity Commission, although he did not provide more detail about these steps. It is not clear to us that this process is sufficiently transparent to make victim-survivors aware of how to report sexual abuse by a police officer. We also consider that the police investigation needs to be more independent than being overseen by the Deputy Commissioner.'

Tasmania Police submits that the fact that it was not clear to the Commission, is a result of this topic not being explored in evidence, as such, the clarity of the issue should not be seen as a failing by Tasmania Police. Additionally, the *Commissioner's Directions for Conduct and Complaint management, and Compliance Review* is a publicly available document available at [Abacus: Police Conduct & Complaint Management - Tasmania Police](#).

Page 37, Recommendation X (b)

Tasmania Police should:

- a.
- b. *expand the domestic violence review panel to cover child sexual abuse and ensure independence in investigations when a police officer is alleged to have been involved in child sexual abuse.'*

Tasmania Police acknowledges this recommendation and can advise that planning is well advanced for the *Family and Sexual Violence Involving Police Review Committee*, chaired by an independent person, to also review all matters of sexual violence, involving police.

Page 39, Paragraph 4

'In 2012, Inspector Reynolds was demoted to the rank of Senior Sergeant following concerns about his poor work performance, which coincided with a depression diagnosis.'

Tasmania Police submits that Inspector Reynolds was not 'demoted.' Records show that he elected to revert to the rank of Senior Sergeant. As such, Tasmania Police submits that referencing to demoted be removed and changes to reverted to the rank of.

Pages 39 - 40, Paragraph 6

'Senior Sergeant Reynolds received a police funeral following his death, at which now former Commissioner Hine spoke of his significant achievements over his 38-year career, referring to him by his nickname 'Beau.'

Tasmania Police submits that the terms 'significant achievements' and 'referring to him by his nickname Beau' are emotive terms, drawing the reader to react, without context being provided. To assist in providing context, as to what then Commissioner Hine said at the funeral, I have included at the end of this letter, a copy of the eulogy provided by then Commissioner Hine. It is submitted, that the eulogy outlined a chronological summary of Paul Reynolds career and the term 'significant' was not used, and is a misrepresentation of what was said.

Regarding the use of the term 'Beau', Tasmania Police submits that this is a further emotive term intended to draw the reader to a personal relationship between the then Commissioner and Paul Reynolds. Paul Reynolds, to my knowledge, has always been referred to in both policing and personal settings as 'Beau.' Although this was a nickname, to most, he was known as Beau, like a substitute first name. As such, Tasmania Police submits that this reference should be removed.

It is unfortunate that then Commissioner Hine was not afforded an opportunity to respond to this issue during his evidence.

Thank you for the opportunity to review this chapter, if you require any further clarification, please feel free to contact Inspector John Toohey on s.36(1) or via aco@police.tas.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



A P BODNAR

Assistant Commissioner – Operations

Eulogy for Senior Sergeant Paul (Beau) Reynolds No. 1466

I stand here today, not only as Commissioner of Police, but as an officer who worked alongside Beau for the first two years of our careers.

Beau joined Tasmania Police in February 1980 aged 16 years as a cadet. We were both members of Course 10 of that year.

He was posted to Burnie Uniform in 1982 as a probationary constable and had his appointment confirmed in 1983. During that time his supervisors commented that he carried out his duties in an enthusiastic and capable manner.

It is reported that he recognised there was a drug problem in his local area and as a result applied for, and successfully completed, the Drug Investigation Course in 1983.

He spent the early part of his career in secondments to then 'drug bureaus' as well as the west coast stations of Tullah, Waratah and Savage River. Beau was posted all over the state during his 38 year career.

Beau was promoted to sergeant in 1995 and inspector in 2003, he chose, for personal reasons, to revert in rank to senior sergeant in 2012.

Early in his career – as a cadet - his compassion and caring for others was noted when he assisted a defendant in court to negotiate the steps from the witness box. He did this without prompting, his actions so impressed a sergeant there on the day that he wrote a complimentary report on the matter. This is typical of correspondence and feedback received about Beau throughout his career.

He was described on one of these training course reports as quick witted with a keen sense of humour, an understatement for those who knew Beau.

He was recognised for his efforts after the Port Arthur shootings in 1996 where one of his primary concerns was for the welfare of the police officers at the various scenes. Beau received a Commendation for this work during this difficult time.

He was also Commended by the Commissioner for his exemplary performance as the officer in charge of managing police activities during the rescue of miners s.36(1) and the recovery of the s.36(1) at Beaconsfield in 2006. Beau activated an Emergency Coordination Centre and a Media Management Centre in response to the large media contingent which descend on the town. Throughout, Beau was the public face of Tasmania Police.

During his career Beau was also awarded the Commissioner's Medal for Diligent & Ethical Service (up to his 30 year clasp), the National Medal and the National Police Service Medal.

He was a larger than life character who was widely known and respected within policing circles with his focus always on others before himself.

Our heartfelt condolences to Beau's wife s.36(1) his daughter s.36(1) and her partner s.36(1) and his son s.36(1) and his partner s.36(1)

His loss will be deeply felt across Tasmania Police, and our thoughts and prayers are with you at this difficult time.