



Independent Review into Paul Reynolds

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Background

The Tasmanian Government announced a Commission of Inquiry (COI) in 2021 into Tasmanian Government Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings.

In support of the COI Tasmania Police initiated the provision of information relating to allegations about Paul Reynolds to the Commission of Inquiry

This was a proactive disclosure on the part of Tasmania Police to be transparent, accountable and support the purpose of the COI.

The COI presented a case study on Paul Reynolds and made findings relevant to their review of the material provided and witness statements.

The Commission recommended (Recommendation 16.7) that Tasmania Police should:

- a) establish a clear, publicly accessible process for reporting and responding to allegations of child sexual abuse against a member of Tasmania Police, including the ability to report to an entity independent of police such as the Integrity Commission
- b) expand the domestic violence review panel to cover child sexual abuse and ensure independence in investigations when a member is alleged to have been involved in child sexual abuse.

It's critical that Tasmania Police learn from past failings and put every possible protection in place to ensure this can never happen again.

Key issues

>> Decision to provide a police funeral

The Tasmania Police Manual (TPM) provides guidance regarding when a police funeral will be held.

It is within the sole discretion of the Commissioner of Police of the day to authorise or not authorise a police funeral.

Tasmania Police acknowledges that the decision to hold a police funeral for Paul Reynolds was wrong and should not have occurred.

Commissioner Donna Adams sincerely apologises to all victim survivors for this decision.

The TPM will be amended to include a requirement that the Commissioner of the day consider any current Professional Standards matters as part of the decision-making process to authorise a police funeral.

>> 2008 Report and investigation

The 2008 investigation was not managed to the standard expected by the community. The Commission found that the approach to the investigation was inadequate, and Tasmania Police agrees with this.

The COI made a specific recommendation (R16.7) linked to failings of this investigation.

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

Tasmania Police is expanding the Professional Standards Family and Sexual Violence Involving Police Review Committee to include oversight of all sexual assault and child sexual abuse allegations involving police members, reflecting our shift to become more trauma informed in how we respond to victims. Tasmania Police has already commenced this work.

The matter involving Paul Reynolds did not have independent oversight as is required of current investigations that are now reported to the Integrity Commission. The *Integrity Commission Act* came into force in 2009, and reports with regard to commissioned officers that are investigated are now required to be notified at the commencement of an investigation and the Integrity Commission must be informed of the outcome. Furthermore, the Integrity Commission can monitor or audit any police Professional Standards investigations.

Tasmania Police and the Integrity Commission have developed a Letter of Understanding that requires Tasmania Police to advise the Integrity Commission in writing whenever it reasonably suspected that a police officer has engaged in serious misconduct (which includes child sexual abuse or other criminal behaviour) or whenever a Commissioned Officer is the subject of any complaint of any type.

In 2020, Tasmania Police developed a comprehensive procedure known as Abacus for investigating complaints against police. This procedure was endorsed by the Integrity Commission.

>> 2018 Report and investigation

In 2018 another police officer made a report in relation to Paul Reynolds and his potential illegal behaviour. The investigation was thorough and appropriate and would have resulted in charges against Paul Reynolds.

Before charges could be laid against Paul Reynolds, he took his own life.

>> Role as a police officer and any undue influence on police matters

Given Paul Reynolds was a police officer for almost 40 years, there is a reason for community concern with regard to the possible involvement of him unduly or improperly influencing police investigations over this period of time.

It is appropriate to conduct a thorough review of the matters that Paul Reynolds investigated or had influence over during his career with particular focus on his tenure at the Deloraine Division and Prosecution Services.

>> Members of the community who may have information regarding Paul Reynolds

There will be a mechanism for members of the community to come forward with any information regarding any behaviour by Paul Reynolds which may include grooming and criminal misconduct. The process for receiving reports will be trauma-informed and information will be handled confidentially unless a victim-survivor chooses otherwise.

Objectives

- To assess the actions of Paul Reynolds whilst a serving police officer to determine if there has been criminal misconduct in his handling of matters reported to him or investigated by him during the course of his career.
- To enable victim-survivors or members of the community to report concerns regarding the behaviour of Paul Reynolds.
- To identify whether Paul Reynolds used his position as a police officer to groom young people and commit child sexual abuse.
- To provide appropriate support to any victim-survivor that chooses to come forward.
- To identify if there has been any misconduct by police officers involved in the investigation of any allegations against Paul Reynolds.
- To identify organisational learnings.

Approach

The Commissioner of Police has determined to engage an independent reviewer to undertake this matter. Tasmania Police will provide all assistance and information requested by the reviewer, including all information proactively disclosed to the COI.

Individuals seeking to provide information regarding Paul Reynolds will be provided with an opportunity to provide a written or oral submission. Oral submissions will be taken in private. All submissions will be treated as confidential, unless otherwise agreed.

Deliverables

At the conclusion of the review, a report will be prepared by the reviewer to the Commissioner of Police which outlines the outcomes of the review, including any misconduct findings and any recommendations regarding policy and practise reform for Tasmania Police. This report will be made public.