



## Secretary

Department of Families, Fairness and Housing

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BAC-BR-26413

Olivia Collings  
Coroner's Registrar  
Coroners Court of Victoria

By email: [cpuresponses@coronerscourt.vic.gov.au](mailto:cpuresponses@coronerscourt.vic.gov.au)

Dear Ms Collings

### Investigation into the passing of [REDACTED] (Mr A, pseudonym) – COR 2020 006382

I write in response to your letter, dated 29 April 2024, which enclosed a copy of Coroner Jamieson's findings into the passing of [REDACTED] Mr A (pseudonym), and recommendations made to the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (the department) and the Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS).

I provide the following responses to each recommendation on behalf of the department.

#### **Recommendation one**

*With the aim of improvements to the administration of justice and preventing like deaths, I recommend that the **Department of Justice and Community Safety** and the **Department of Families, Fairness and Housing** review and update existing protocols between Justice Services and Child Protection to ensure that MARAM aligned information sharing, risk assessment and risk management activities take place prior to the release of offenders who are imprisoned for family violence related offenses and who pose a risk to children who have pre-existing engagement with Child Protection. The departments should consider the circumstances of [REDACTED] death, including the lack of family violence risk assessment and management surrounding his release to an address across the road from [REDACTED] when updating these protocols.*

The department will implement an alternative to the Coroner's recommendation. The department accepts the intent of the recommendation and will work with DJCS to give effect to this intent via an alternative approach.

The department acknowledges the *Protocol between Community Correctional Services, Corrections Victoria and Child Protection* (2013) (Protocol) is outdated and does not reflect recent reforms in family violence, including the introduction of the Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM) Framework and the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS). The department also acknowledges the Protocol doesn't provide guidance regarding the exchange of information prior to the release of offenders who are imprisoned for family violence related offences.

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To provide clear guidance to the Child Protection and Community Corrections Services workforces, the department proposes to work alongside DJCS to support the development of practice guidelines and agreed principles for working together, which will replace the Protocol. The information sharing guidelines in the MARAM Framework and requirements of the FVISS support this, noting:

- both DFFH and DJCS, to the extent DJCS performs functions on behalf of its Secretary, or assists with the performance of functions, under the *Corrections Act 1986*, are MARAM Framework Organisations with responsibilities to align their policies, procedures and practices to the MARAM Framework;
- both Child Protection and Community Correctional Services are information sharing entities (ISEs) under the FVISS with the ability to share information to manage family violence risks; and
- Child Protection is also a risk assessment entity (RAE) under the FVISS with the ability to request and receive information to assess family violence risks.

The practice guidelines and principles will clarify the requirements and practicalities of exchanging information and working collaboratively to assess and manage risk prior to the release of offenders who are imprisoned for family violence offences and who pose a risk to children involved with Child Protection.

Consistent with the Coroner's recommendation, the circumstances of [REDACTED] death will be considered by both departments as part of the development of this work.

### **Recommendation two**

*With the aim of improvements to the administration of justice and preventing like deaths, I recommend that the **Department of Justice and Community Safety** also review the above existing protocols with the **Department of Families, Fairness and Housing** to ensure that other relevant frontline services including Victoria Police and the Orange Door are notified to proactively share risk information and provide additional supports to affected family members.*

The department will implement an alternative to the recommendation. The department accepts the intent of the recommendation and will implement it through the work described in response to recommendation one.

Victoria Police and The Orange Door are MARAM Framework Organisations and ISEs and RAEs under the FVISS with the ability to share information for the purpose of managing and assessing family violence risks.

The development of practice guidelines, as outlined in response to recommendation one, will also consider the inclusion of Victoria Police and The Orange Door, to strengthen current practices. Should you have any queries in relation to the department's response, please contact David Atkinson, Executive Director, Children and Families Division in the department [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely



**Peta McCammon**  
Secretary

26 / 07 / 2024