



# Department of Justice and Community Safety

Secretary

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Our ref: EBC 24065303  
Your ref: COR 2020 6382

Coroner Audrey Jamieson  
Coroners Court of Victoria  
65 Kavanagh Street  
SOUTHBANK VIC 3006

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

Dear Coroner Jamieson

I refer to your findings and recommendations made on 29 April 2024 regarding the death of Mr A, who died between 21 and 22 November 2020. Mr A was subject to a Community Correction Order (CCO) which commenced on 17 November 2020. Mr A was subject to supervision by Community Correctional Services (CCS) at the time of his passing.

You made two recommendations directed to both the Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS) and the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH). The department's response to the recommendations is outlined below.

## **Recommendation 1**

*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 Mr A's death, including the lack of family violence risk assessment and management surrounding his release to an address across the road from Ms B, when updating these protocols.*

## **Department's response**

An alternative to the Coroner's recommendation will be implemented.

It is accepted that the 'Protocol between Community Correctional Services, Corrections Victoria and Child Protection, Department of Human Services' dated 2013 (protocol) requires updating.

Representatives from DJCS and DFFH met on 12 June 2024 to discuss the findings. The parties agreed to explore rescinding the protocol on the basis of legislative reform and significant reforms that have been implemented since its publication, including the

Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM) Framework and Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS). DJCS acknowledges these reforms have superseded the specific information sharing arrangements established in the protocol.

DJCS is an Information Sharing Entity (ISE) within the FVISS and is therefore a prescribed organisation to facilitate confidential information exchange. However, its primary role does not involve conducting comprehensive family violence risk assessments. Being an ISE requires CCS to play a crucial role in information sharing related to individuals subject to community-based dispositions and their circumstances. CCS is not directly involved in assessing family violence risks as comprehensively as Risk Assessment Entities (RAEs) under the MARAM framework. It is expected that MARAM adequately captures the intent of the updates to the protocol that the recommendation contemplates.

It is proposed that, in place of the protocol, DJCS will work with DFFH to develop and strengthen practice guidance and training for its respective workforces. This will strengthen each agency's ongoing alignment to MARAM and provide clear guidance for practitioners on the use of reciprocal sharing of family violence risk related information between CCS and Child Protection practitioners.

### **Recommendation 2**

*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.*

### **Department's response**

An alternative to the Coroner's recommendation will be implemented.

This recommendation will be implemented through the work described in response to Recommendation 1 and in line with CCS' obligations as an ISE under the MARAM Framework and FVISS. The work proposed with DFFH would aim to strengthen this new practice guidance and training.

For completeness, I note your findings and recommendations have also been provided to DFFH, who will provide a response separately.

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact Jenny Roberts, Executive Director, Community Operations and Parole, DJCS [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely



**Kate Houghton PSM**

Secretary  
21/07/2024