



VICTORIA POLICE

Shane Patton APM
Chief Commissioner of Police

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Coroner Simon McGregor
Coroner's Court of Victoria
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By email only: cpuresponses@coronerscourt.vic.gov.au

Subject: Investigation into the death of XY – Response to Recommendations
Court reference: COR 2021 003810
Date of finding: 19 June 2024

Dear Coroner McGregor

This letter provides the response to your recommendations to Victoria Police arising from the Finding into the death of XY, dated 19 June 2024 (as amended on 29 July 2024).

Recommendations

You have made the following recommendations directed towards Victoria Police:

8(a) *Victoria Police make every effort to increase the number and availability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people it employs.*

8(b) *Victoria Police make every effort to employ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in SOCITs.*

8(c) *Victoria Police increase the number and availability of Aboriginal liaison staff in its dealings with young Aboriginal sexual assault complainants.*

8(d) *Victoria Police, as a matter of policy, when dealing with female Aboriginal sexual assault complainants, make available a female police officer to conduct VAREs and lead contact with the complainant, unless the complainant requests otherwise or it is not practicable.*

8(e) *Victoria Police improve its cultural awareness training in dealing with female Aboriginal sexual assault victims, including by reference to 'cultural humility' as described by Dr Krakouer.*

Response to Recommendations

Recommendation 8(a)

The Chief Commissioner accepts this recommendation as it is consistent with Victoria Police's present objectives.

Recommendation 8(b)

The Chief Commissioner accepts this recommendation as it is consistent with Victoria Police's present objectives.

Recommendation 8(c)

The Chief Commissioner supports the substance of this recommendation.

The Chief Commissioner embraces the need for Aboriginal liaison staff to be made available for young Aboriginal sexual assault complainants. Section 6.1.1 of the current Code of Practice for the Investigation of Sexual Crime already requires that police are to involve the services of an Aboriginal cultural liaison officer where available.

Victoria Police will make every effort to increase the number and availability of Aboriginal liaison staff in its dealings with young Aboriginal sexual assault complainants. However, it is noted that Victoria Police's ability to increase the number and availability of Aboriginal liaison staff at SOCIT locations across Victoria will depend on the availability of persons suitably qualified and willing to take on the role.

Recommendation 8(d)

The Chief Commissioner supports the intent of this recommendation and considers that it is acquitted through direction provided at section 2.5 of the Victoria Police Manual – Sexual offence investigations which states that *"unless the victim requests otherwise, a SOCIT member of the same sex should, where practicable, conduct the interview and take a full statement."*

Recommendation 8(e)

The Chief Commissioner accepts this recommendation.

Victoria Police will include training of this nature in the next tranche of Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training for the workforce commencing in mid-2025.

Yours sincerely,


Shane Patton APM
Chief Commissioner

17/9/24