



Department of Justice and Community Safety

Secretary

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Our ref: 25053720

His Honour Judge John Cain
State Coroner
Coroners Court of Victoria
65 Kavanagh Street
SOUTHBANK VIC 3006

By email: cpuresponses@coronerscourt.vic.gov.au

Dear Judge Cain

Finding into death without inquest – CFT – COR 2020 004205

I refer to your findings and recommendations delivered on 26 February 2025 into the passing of CFT at Monash Medical Centre on 4 August 2020.

The Department of Justice and Community Safety (the Department) acknowledges the distressing circumstances leading up to the death of CFT, outlined in your report, and I thank you for your comprehensive investigation.

As the Office of the Public Advocate (OPA) is a business unit of the Department, I write to respond to recommendation 3 – **That the Victorian Government make available appropriate funding to the Office of the Public Advocate to enable it to implement all of the recommendations from the VAGO report.**

The Victorian-Auditor General's Office (VAGO) report *Guardianship and Decision-making for Vulnerable Adults (May)* was tabled on 29 May 2024 (the VAGO report). The report examined if OPA provides guardianship and investigation services that promote and protect the rights and interests of vulnerable adults. It found that OPA provides crucial guardianship and investigation services for thousands of vulnerable adults each year in complex and challenging circumstances, but that it could do more to protect and promote their interests.

The report made 10 recommendations directed towards OPA about: improving its documentation; how it engages with clients; its training and guidance for staff; how it collects and uses data; and its planning and oversight. It also made 3 recommendations to both the Department and OPA about improving their planning and recruitment processes and performance measures. The recommendations have been accepted or accepted in principle by OPA and the Department and implementation is underway.

The Victorian Government supports this work through its funding of OPA's guardianship, investigation and Independent Third Person programs, supporting OPA to promote and safeguard the human rights and interests of Victorians with disability.

Given the implementation of some recommendations of the VAGO report directed to OPA may require government investment above existing levels, support for recommendation 3 is subject to further funding consideration by government as part of future budget processes.

I note that the OPA and Department of Families Fairness and Housing will each respond separately to the other recommendations in your report.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kate', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kate Houghton PSM
Secretary

05/06/2025

Cc:

Jeremy Moule
Secretary, Department of Premier and Cabinet

Peta McCammon
Secretary, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing