Laurel House

To: Robert Benjamin AM KC, Implementation Monitor

July 2025

We appreciate invitation for submissions to help inform independent oversight of monitored CoI recommendations from victims and survivors and their supporters and the intent to collaborate with our sector and victim-survivors. We are keen to work with you in this space. We understand your office is working towards the development of a stakeholder communications and engagement plan and we look forward to that resource supporting meaningful engagement.

Regarding the scope and format of this invited submission process, however, we have some early feedback which once implemented will enable us and the victim-survivors we support to engage with the OIM more effectively and efficiently and ideally will support better practice engagement with victims and survivors and their supporters.

From an organisational perspective, Laurel House would like to see that future consultation of this type be supported by specific consultation questions that would allow us to focus our efforts and ensuring that the feedback we give is both useful to you and a meaningful use of our resources. We suggest that consultation documents provide:

- specific consultation questions,
- summaries of the relevant information under each question,
- templates for submission formats, and
- additional information within each section relevant to each question.

We would also recommend that, in future, the framing and documentation that supports the submission process should include acknowledgement and reference to previous consultations in the CoI space that have invited similar contributions.

We appreciate the statement on the website that indicates “The Implementation Monitor does not wish to re-traumatise victims and survivors by re-telling of their

stories. If you have made a submission through the COI Joint Scrutiny Committee or directly to the Monitor already, you do not need to re-submit these."

It would be fruitful to go one step further and to acknowledge a summary of such previous consultations relevant to the current process so that victim-survivors feel heard. This could include, for example, a summary of what was heard in the recent Joint Sessional Committee consultation process. We have seen this done well elsewhere when consultations frame their invitation around:

- here's what we heard from you (via past inquiries/reports);
- here's how that informed outcomes (or not); and
- did we hear you right/what else might you add?

This approach demonstrates that all efforts had been taken to review and draw from the evidence and experiences people have already shared.

We note that in order to support effective engagement with victim-survivors as part of this process, Laurel House would need to be clear on the purpose of the consultation, what the OIM seeks to learn that is both new and not able to be gleaned from all the previous evidence and experiences shared, specific questions of interest, a clear value add for victim survivors in sharing their experiences (again), and with the provision of simple and accessible resources to support the consultation.

On this last point, we note that while the audience of this submission process indicates a target of victim-survivors, the format of engagement is relatively inaccessible considering the diverse range of victim-survivors and varying levels of digital and functional literacy, disability, trauma, and access needs. While we appreciate the video with Robert on the submission website, there are many other resources that would support and enable accessible engagement that appear to be missing.

For example, the submission format section on the website states: *Your contribution can take the form of a letter, a short summary paper or a longer research document. You can include relevant data in appendices or incorporate in the main the body of the text. It is important that the structure, argument and conclusions of your submission are clear.*

This indicates that only written submissions are welcome which excludes 50% of Tasmanians who have low literacy. We note that plain-English Fact Sheets and easy-read Fact Sheets are not available and no avenues for verbal input or input in alternative formats (e.g., video submissions) are made available.

For guidance on some good practices which would be fruitfully applied in this context, we direct you the letter we submitted in February 2025 to the Joint Sessional Committee which outlines our recommended trauma-informed approaches to engaging victim-survivors in this space.

This work could happen supported by or in partnership with specialist services, like Laurel House, with appropriate funding to ensure we are not detracting from our service delivery requirements. Laurel House could fruitfully support the OIM in this work through, for example, designing or conducting engagements with or on behalf of the OIM and supporting victim-survivors before, during, and after engagements.

We appreciate your time and consideration of these issues and would welcome future conversations where useful.

Warm regards,

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