

# Webb: Don't cut final report

## MLC says it's not government's place to redact parts of document

**David Killick**

The government should recuse itself from making any redactions from the Commission of Inquiry's final report, an independent MLC says.

Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings is due to hand its final report to Governor Barbara Baker on August 31

Member for Nelson Meg Webb has written to Premier Jeremy Rockliff saying the possibility that any of the report might be redacted by the Governor on the advice of the



**Meg Webb.**

government should be ruled out.

"Premier, we know that for many victims-survivors, their families and supporters, the Commission of Inquiry process, despite being welcome, risked further pain and trauma

as past horrific and life altering experiences were revisited," she wrote. "However, in good faith they were prepared to endure that reopening of deep traumatic wounds on the hope and expectation they could trust the process due to its independence from government.

"I am now gravely disturbed that people's distress and concerns raised regarding the potential omissions or redactions made to the independent Commission's report seriously risks undermining and jeopardising that crucial trust.

"Specifically, a cause of distress is the perception that state self interest may drive, or

inadvertently cloud, any assessment of potential redactions of the report."

Ms Webb called on the government to recuse itself from redacting any part of the report and place the job in the hands of independent lawyers. She has not yet received a reply.

Mr Rockliff told parliament parts of the report could be redacted – but only under a limited range of circumstances.

"Acting on the advice of the Executive Council, the Governor may decide to omit part of the report if the public interest in its disclosure is outweighed by another consideration including public security, privacy

of personal or financial affairs or the right of any person to a fair trial," he said. "Any omission will be clearly marked in the report."

A government spokeswoman said the process would not be used to obscure uncomfortable truths.

"This government established this Commission to find, examine and expose the failings that have caused and contributed to the appalling abuse of children," she said in a statement. "This government will not use omissions as a shield to hide the truth or obscure the failings of the state.

"We want all Tasmanians,

and especially victim-survivors, to know that we will treat this report with the solemnity, care and respect that it deserves.

"Any omissions must be clearly marked on the tabled version of the report.

"In the interests of transparency and maintaining public confidence, we will also be asking for the tabled version to include an indication as to why an omission has been made."

Amanda Duncan, who gave evidence to the Commission about abuse suffered by her late sister Zoe and who runs the Two Sisters Campaign, has also written to the Premier.