

Ministers to be grilled for child abuse response

David Killick

The ministers responsible for implementing the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry into Tasmanian Government's responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings will face two days of grilling before a special session of parliament this week.

The two days of scrutiny of the government's response to the 191 recommendations will take place over in hearings on Tuesday and Wednesday.

The Premier, Health Minister, Education, Children and Youth Minister, Attorney-General and Police, Fire and

Emergency Management Minister will all face the House of Assembly committee.

The government last week released its formal response, Titled Keeping Children Safe and Rebuilding Trust, and includes a signed statement of commitment from every government minister and the secretaries of every government department.

Greens leader Rosalie Woodruff said it was important parliament held the government to account for delivering the Commission's recommendations.

"It's a mammoth complex, massive undertaking respond-

ing to the 191 recommendations, we will be undertaking scrutiny of the government's response in good faith, trying to look at issues of timelines, funding and the government's approach," Dr Woodruff said.

"We've got some concerns that the timelines that have been proposed by the Commission of Inquiry, in some instances, appear to have been extended by the government. And we'll be asking questions about that, as well as the amount of funding that will go towards making sure children are kept safe today, as well as into the future."

Independent MLC Meg

Webb said she was still waiting on a response.

"I was promised on the 14th of November that before parliament rose for the year, I would receive formal answers to my five Commission of Inquiry-related Questions on Notice, yet three weeks later I am still waiting," she said.

"The ongoing silence, despite promises, can only be interpreted that the answers will expose the government's continued failure to address the concerns raised by the Commissioners themselves and by victims and others since. My parliamentary questions attempt to get to the heart of who

in government knew what when, regarding the Commission's concerns about the Act and other impediments preventing the Commission from it doing its job.

"Victims and their supporters deserve to know when the Premier, the Attorney-General, their political offices, and their respective departments were first informed of the Commission's concerns regarding impediments to its work, given the critical accountability gaps in the final report."

The Legislative Council will scrutinise the government's response in March 2024.