

Question Without Notice

Tuesday, 11 June 2024

I (*Ms Webb*) tomorrow to ask the Honourable Leader of the Government —

Regarding the Ashley Youth Detention Centre (AYDC) and any investigations of alleged abuse by AYDC staff arising from the *Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Response to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings*, can the government please advise the following:

- 1) The number of Ashley Youth Detention Centre staff who were stood down pending investigation of child sex abuse allegations, and of those previously stood down in relation to child sexual abuse allegations how many have been cleared to return to work?;
- 2) How many of these AYDC employees formerly stood down pending investigations of child sex abuse allegation have been cleared to return to work at AYDC in the past two months?; and
- 3) How many of these formerly stood down AYDC staff have returned to work at AYDC?

Response

Question 1

All allegations of child sexual abuse result in the employee being removed from the workplace and stood down followed by suspension from duty, and all notifications are made to regulatory bodies including Tasmania Police.

Since November 2020 and as at 20 June 2024, a total of 17 employees have been stood down (with formal suspension following) pending investigation of allegations of historical child sexual abuse alleged to have occurred whilst they were employed at Ashley Youth Detention Centre.

As at 20 June 2024, a total of 6 employees have been found to have not breached the State Service Code of Conduct following the outcome of an Employment Direction No.5 (ED5) investigation. However, 5 of these employees are subject to new ED5 investigations and are suspended from duty.

Each ED5 investigation is based on certain allegations at a point in time and are determined on the available evidence. This does not preclude a new investigation commencing (for the same employee) based on new information or additional allegations that were not known at the time of the original determination.

Of the 17 employees, two resigned prior to the completion of an investigation.

None of these employees are currently in the workplace at AYDC.

It is noted that in July 2024, the Head of the State Service has appointed respected Tasmanian barrister, Ms Regina Weiss, to provide practical and strategic advice on the

establishment of the Shared Capability and Centralised Investigations Unit which will have a focus on improving the timeliness and capability of ED5 investigations in the Tasmanian State Service. Ms Weiss will also provide expert advice to assist in the finalisation of COI related assessments and investigations, with an initial focus on matters involving current and former employees of Ashley Youth Detention Centre.

Question 2

In the past two months and as at 20 June 2024, a total of 3 employees have been found to have not breached the Code of Conduct following an ED5 investigation based on the available evidence; and

Subsequently, those 3 employees have been subject to a new ED5 investigation relating to historical matters and have been suspended from duty.

None of the 3 employees referenced above are currently in the workplace.

Question 3

As at 20 June 2024, one employee returned to work at AYDC following the conclusion of an ED5 investigation for a short period of time. That ED5 has been re-opened and the employee has been suspended from duty.

No employee referenced in these questions that has been suspended or had their ED5 investigation concluded with no breach or ceased, is currently in the workplace.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jeremy Rockliff'.

Jeremy Rockliff MP
Premier

Date: 30 July 2024