

Abuse allegations see 17 AYDC staff suspended

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Seventeen staff at the Ashley Youth Detention Centre are currently suspended after being accused of child sexual abuse – with some the subject of multiple investigations, it has been revealed.

A government response to a question on notice from independent MLC for Nelson Meg Webb revealed for the first time the number of those accused at the youth justice facility near Deloraine, which was a particular focus of the Com-

mission of Inquiry.

Signed by Premier Jeremy Rockliff, the document reveals six of those accused have so far been cleared, although five were stood down again after new investigations.

“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,” the response

said. “As at 20 June 2024, a total of six 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, five of these employees are subject to new ED5 investigations and are suspended from duty.

“Of the 17 employees, two resigned prior to the completion of an investigation. None of these employees are currently in the workplace at AYDC.”

In June, the state government agreed to pay \$75m to 129 former detainees to settle a class action over abuse they had suffered at Ashley in the decades since 1960.

In 2021, the government pledged to close the centre by the end of 2024, but it continues to operate.

An Auditor General’s report tabled in state parliament on Tuesday found the management of Ashley Youth Detention Centre was keeping sentenced detainees in custody for the right amount of time.

But the report also noted the use of outdated training materials and work instructions; outdated or undocumented policies, procedures and guidelines; inconsistent methods for recording the actual release date; and an over-reliance on paper files and manual processes.

The report contained five recommendations including an urgent update to policies, procedures and guidance that relate to the admission and release of young people.

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