

Rockliff govt's 'weak' transparency reforms slammed

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Critics of the state government's record on transparency say Right to Information (RTI) law reforms are late and don't go far enough.

The government said it would accept or give in-principle support for 32 of the 43 recommendations of the Independent Review of Tasmania's Right to Information Framework.

Premier Jeremy Rockliff said among the reforms the government would look into releasing cabinet documents after 20 years.

But Independent MLC Meg Webb said the long-awaited response to the long-awaited review was underwhelming.

"This is another example of the Rockliff government being dragged kicking and screaming towards implementing necess-

ary transparency and integrity reforms due to ongoing pressure from Independent MPs and the crossbench," she said.

"The government's response to the RTI report is three months overdue, yet without explanation or apology for its lateness, it finally appears, and sadly, it is disappointing.

"Only 17 of the report's 43 recommendations have received a clear acceptance and

support by the government. That is less than 40 per cent of the total recommendations the Government intends to prioritise implementing.

"A further 15 recommendations have in-principle support, but given the government's commentary regarding complexity, it is safe to assume we won't see action on those items anytime soon. The final 11 recommendations have merely

been noted with no commitment to action. This is simply not good enough."

Greens MLC Cassy O'Connor said the review had found a culture of secrecy within the Liberal government.

"In the wake of these serious findings, the Greens expected all recommendations would be accepted by the government in full," she said.

"Among reforms not support-

ed by the Rockliff government is increasing funding to the Ombudsman and the proactive release of cabinet papers."

Independent MLC for Elwick Bec Thomas said that if the government wanted to prove to Tasmanians how transparent it was, it could give a straightforward answer to her questions about how much senior public servants were being paid.