

Question Without Notice

Submitted by the Hon Meg Webb MLC

11 June 2026

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

1. Regarding the TasVOCAL service, which provides legal advice and support services around options for the National Redress Scheme, civil litigation, victims of crime compensation, police contacts and therapeutic options for survivors of institutional child sexual abuse in Tasmania, can the government please detail:
2. Whether survivors had been advised TasVOCAL would be available as part of Tasmania's response to the Commission of Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings?
3. Whether TasVOCAL's resourcing is reliant on a sole legal practitioner, or multiple?
4. The current status of any TasVOCAL legal practitioners available to provide services and:
 - a) whether any practitioners are on leave as of 11 June 2026?
 - b) The dates leave commenced and ended, or are expected to end, for any legal practitioners since, and including, 1 January 2025;
5. Whether there are any contingency plans in place should any or all TasVOCAL's legal practitioners take leave, and if so please provide the details of any such contingency plans?;
6. Any efforts made to track whether survivors have been impacted by the lack of available TasVOCAL legal services, either by data collection recording requests for assistance unable to be provided, or other means;
7. Current efforts being taken by the government to ensure survivors currently have access to independent legal advice; and
8. Whether and how the government considers the current resourcing and focus of the TasVOCAL services delivers on its undertakings to fully implement the Commission of Inquiry recommendations, and in accordance with the intent of those recommendations?

Government response

1. **Regarding the TasVOCAL service, which provides legal advice and support services around options for the National Redress Scheme, civil litigation, victims of crime compensation, police contacts and therapeutic options for survivors of institutional child sexual abuse in Tasmania, can the government please detail:**
2. **Whether survivors had been advised TasVOCAL would be available as part of Tasmania's response to the Commission of Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings?**

Yes.

TasVOCAL was launched on 21 August 2024 as part of the Tasmanian Government's response to the Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings.

TasVOCAL is delivered through Tasmania Legal Aid and provides free, independent and confidential legal advice.

3. **Whether TasVOCAL's resourcing is reliant on a sole legal practitioner, or multiple?**

The TasVOCAL service has one dedicated legal practitioner.

4. **The current status of any TasVOCAL legal practitioners available to provide services and:**
 - a) **whether any practitioners are on leave as of 11 June 2026?**
 - b) **The dates leave commenced and ended, or are expected to end, for any legal practitioners since, and including, 1 January 2025;**

The Government does not provide personal information in relation to the leave arrangements of individual State Servants.

5. **Whether there are any contingency plans in place should any or all TasVOCAL's legal practitioners take leave, and if so please provide the details of any such contingency plans?;**

Yes. During periods of TasVOCAL practitioner absence, individuals seeking assistance are referred to the Knowmore Legal Service, a nationally funded specialist legal service for victim-survivors of child abuse.

Tasmania Legal Aid also has a range of other services and access points that can be used to ensure people seeking assistance are not left without a pathway to legal information, advice or referral. These include:

- Tasmania Legal Aid's Legal Help telephone service, which provides free and confidential legal information on 1300 366 611, Monday to Friday, 8.45 am to 5.00 pm
- online Legal Chat through the Tasmania Legal Aid website, available Monday to Friday during business hours, where members of the public can ask legal questions and receive written responses
- an online request-a-call-back function, through which people can ask Tasmania Legal Aid to contact them at a suitable time
- in-person legal help through Tasmania Legal Aid's Hobart, Launceston, Devonport and Burnie offices
- Tasmania Legal Aid's legal information resources, including TasVOCAL self-help materials about the National Redress Scheme, civil claims, compensation options, victims support schemes, access to documents and reporting child sexual abuse to police
- referral to other appropriate services or lawyers where Tasmania Legal Aid or TasVOCAL cannot assist
- where relevant, access to other specialist Tasmania Legal Aid services, including Safe at Home legal services for victim-survivors of family violence.

6. Any efforts made to track whether survivors have been impacted by the lack of available TasVOCAL legal services, either by data collection recording requests for assistance unable to be provided, or other means;

There is no formal data collection mechanism to track unmet demand or instances where services could not be provided.

7. Current efforts being taken by the government to ensure survivors currently have access to independent legal advice; and

The Government remains committed to ensuring survivors have access to independent legal advice at all times.

In addition to TasVOCAL and the broader services offered by Tasmania Legal Aid, there are a range of other legal services and options for people seeking assistance with legal pathways such as civil litigation, the National Redress Scheme, and engagement with law enforcement agencies. Such services include the Women's Legal Service Tasmania, Community Legal Centres, and the Tasmanian Aboriginal Legal Service. Furthermore, major civil law firms offer no win no fee arrangements for individuals, including victim-survivors of child sexual abuse; and the Knowmore Legal Service provides free, confidential legal support nationally.

8. Whether and how the government considers the current resourcing and focus of the TasVOCAL services delivers on its undertakings to fully implement the Commission of Inquiry recommendations, and in accordance with the intent of those recommendations?

The Government considers that the design of TasVOCAL is consistent with the intent of the Commission of Inquiry's recommendations.

Key principles reflected in the service include:

- Independence of legal advice
- Accessibility and no-cost service provision
- Trauma-informed, survivor-centred approaches
- Integration with broader redress, justice, and support systems.

The Government will continue to monitor the delivery of TASVOCAL through Tasmanian Legal Aid to ensure it is delivering on the intent of the COI recommendations.

Yours sincerely



Hon Guy Barnett MP
Deputy Premier
Attorney-General
Minister for Justice, Corrections and Rehabilitation
Minister for Small Business, Trade and Consumer Affairs
Minister for the Environment and Climate Change

Date: 19 June 2026