

Legislative Council

Hansard

Wednesday 12 August 2026

The President, Mr Farrell, took the Chair at 11 a.m., acknowledged the Traditional People and read Prayers.

[excerpt...]

QUESTIONS

RA Rodda Museum of Pathology - Update

Ms WEBB question to LEADER for the GOVERNMENT in the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, Ms RATTRAY

[3.02 p.m.]

I note the formal apology delivered in parliament on 19 May 2026 to all individuals and families affected by the 177 human organs and tissue samples stolen by forensic and hospital pathologists employed by the Department of Health. These samples were provided to the Rodda Museum between 1966 and 1991. In his apology, the minister advised the parliament that, following further investigative work undertaken by the Health Department, the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) had been advised of five individuals who had been identified as likely involved, additional to the previously identified Dr Cummings. Can the government please provide an update on the following:

- (1) Of the additional five individuals identified, does it remain a fact that only four have been fully identified? Noting two of which are deceased, has there been any progress on fully identifying the fifth individual?
- (2) Whether the government has received any advice from the DPP regarding the likelihood of any potential prosecutions of any identified individuals involved and, if so, please detail that advice;
- (3) Any further actions undertaken by the government to provide ongoing support to affected individuals and their families following the delivery of the parliamentary apology

ANSWER

Mr President, the answer to the honourable member's questions:

- (1) The Department of Health (DoH) conducted further investigations and identified:
 - (a) two additional individuals, in addition to Dr Royal Cummings, who contributed to a significant number of cases and are now confirmed to be deceased; and
 - (b) a further seven individuals whose identities were not fully established due to historical limitations in available records. Of the seven individuals, DoH has been able to partially identify:
 - None are identified as employed by DoH;

- Births, Deaths and Marriages Tasmania have advised that there are no registered deaths for these individuals in Tasmania; and
 - These individuals are not recorded on the register of practitioners maintained by the Australian Health Practitioner Agency.
- (2) The Department of Health has received advice from the Director of Public Prosecutions which indicates that Tasmania Police have assessed the matter and they will not be conducting any further investigations.
- (3) Following the delivery of the parliamentary apology on 19 May 2026, the DoH in partnership with the Department of Justice and the University of Tasmania, have established a Direct Personal Response (DPR) model for those affected. Participation in this process is voluntary and is intended to provide a respectful and supported way for individuals and families to share their experience, ask questions, and receive a direct personal response, including acknowledgement and, where appropriate, an apology.

A significant number of questions were raised during the pre-apology information session and following the apology, and many of these are specific to individual circumstances. The DPR process has been identified as the most appropriate mechanism to ensure that these questions can be considered and addressed in a careful, accurate and tailored way. Known families and individuals have been contacted by letter advising them of the availability of the DPR process.

In addition to the information on the availability of the DPR process, affected individuals and families have been provided with the following information and avenues for engagement:

- Review of the Coroners Act 1995, information on the Tasmania Law Reform Institute's review, including how individuals and families can contribute to inform potential legislative reform
- access to information and records
- contact details of the University of Tasmania to support inquiries relating to remains, records and associated processes
- memorialisation information that work is underway to consider appropriate and respectful options for a memorial informed by the views of those affected, and
- support services - details of available counselling and support services to assist individuals and families both following the apology and also as part of their participation in the DPR process.