

**IN THE MATTER OF
THE BOARD OF INQUIRY
INTO HISTORICAL CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE IN BEAUMARIS PRIMARY SCHOOL
AND CERTAIN OTHER GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS**

**Witness Statement of Vicki Bella Stagoll
Executive Director, Conduct and Integrity**

I, Vicki Bella Stagoll, Executive Director, Conduct and Integrity, Department of Education (**DoE**), say as follows in response to the Notice to Produce a Statement issued by the Board of Inquiry and dated 16 October 2023:

A. CURRENT ROLE

1. In my role as Executive Director, Conduct and Integrity, I am responsible for the branch which provides advice and support to school principals and other people managers on managing employee conduct and performance. This includes:
 - (a) advice on management of complaints, concerns or allegations of misconduct, fraud or corruption or unsatisfactory performance;
 - (b) undertaking investigations and making recommendations to decision-makers about disciplinary outcomes;
 - (c) pre-employment screening, criminal record checking and advice on Working with Children checks (**WWC Checks**); and
 - (d) discharging relevant department obligations to oversight bodies, including notifications to the Commission for Children and Young People (**CCYP**) under the Reportable Conduct Scheme, notifications of suspected corrupt conduct to the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission and notifications to the Victorian Institute of Teaching (**VIT**) of actions taken in respect of registered teachers related to serious misconduct or other matters related to fitness to teach.

B. WORK HISTORY

2. My work history at DoE is set out in attachment **BS-1** to this statement.

C. CONTEMPORARY CHILD SAFETY PRACTICES

Qu. 14 What legislative framework and child safety policies and practices are in place as at the date of this notice in government schools, including:

- (a) **what Relevant Policies and Practices are in place to respond to allegations or incidents of child sexual abuse in government schools;**
- (b) **what Relevant Policies and Practices are in place to respond to allegations or incidents of historical child sexual abuse in government schools;**

Legislative Framework

3. The legislative framework for managing allegations of employee misconduct (including allegations of child sexual abuse, whether these are historical or contemporary) is set out in the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (**ETRA**) and the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (**CWS Act**).

Education and Training Reform Act 2006

4. Teaching and other school-based staff may be employed:
- (a) by the Secretary as part of the 'teaching service' under Part 2.4 of ETRA; or
- (b) by a School Council under s 2.3.8 of ETRA.
5. There are also some staff who are employed under the *Public Administration Act 2004* who may be based in schools or may visit regularly and have contact with students, such as student support services (including psychologists, speech pathologists and social workers).
6. The majority of school-based staff are employed by the Secretary. The number of staff employed directly by School Councils is relatively small. My role, and that of the Employment Conduct Branch (**ECB**), is to advise in relation to all school employees. This statement focuses on the policies and practices with respect to teaching service staff.

7. In respect of staff who are employed by the Secretary, Division 10 of Part 2.4 of ETRA:
- (a) gives the Secretary power to, after investigation, take action against an employee, including for misconduct, a criminal offence or other listed reasons;
 - (b) provides for an inquiry to be conducted where there are alleged grounds for action, and sets out possible disciplinary consequences, including termination of employment;
 - (c) requires that the Secretary establishes procedures for investigation and determination of an inquiry; and
 - (d) gives the Secretary the power to suspend from duty members of the teaching service.
8. These processes apply to on-going and temporary employees, but only apply in relation to individuals who are employed by the Secretary at the time an allegation is raised. Accordingly, the process governs DoE's response to allegations or incidents of child sexual abuse in Government Schools if the alleged perpetrator is an employee of the Secretary at the time the allegation is raised. If an employee were to resign during the course of the investigation and the allegations involved child sexual abuse (which is also reportable conduct under CWS Act), the investigation would continue, despite the alleged perpetrator no longer being employed by DoE.

Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005

9. The CWS Act establishes a Reportable Conduct Scheme, which requires schools and other entities to have a system in place for preventing the commission of 'reportable conduct' (which includes sexual misconduct and sexual offences), for notifying the head of the entity and the CCYP of a reportable conduct allegation and for investigating reportable conduct.
10. The Reportable Conduct Scheme is focussed on the conduct of employees, contractors and volunteers, and how organisations investigate and respond to allegations of child abuse.

11. For the purposes of the Reportable Conduct Scheme, 'current employee' also includes contractors or volunteers working in schools, and also any person who was an employee, contractor or volunteer after the commencement of the Reportable Conduct Scheme on 1 July 2017 (even if they are no longer employed or engaged on the date that the allegations are made).

Relevant Policies and Practices

12. The relevant DoE policies for responding to allegations from an employment perspective, and to operationalise the legislative requirements are:
- (a) Guidelines for Managing Complaints, Misconduct and Unsatisfactory Performance - Teaching Service (**Guidelines**) (attachment **BS-2** to my statement);
 - (b) Reportable Conduct Policy (attachment **BS-3** to my statement); and
 - (c) Employment Limitation Policy (attachment **BS-4** to my statement).

Complaints, Misconduct and Unsatisfactory Performance - Teaching Service Policy

13. The Guidelines are established as the procedure (as required by ETRA) for responding to allegations of misconduct against school-based employees of the Secretary. The Guidelines set out how complaints against employees, and unsatisfactory performance and misconduct involving employees, are dealt with. The Guidelines require principals to contact ECB if a matter may involve misconduct or reportable conduct, (which includes allegations or incidents of child sexual abuse). Where allegations or incidents of child sexual abuse involve a current teacher, those allegations or incidents are investigated in accordance with the process set out in the Guidelines. ECB appoints an independent investigator to investigate allegations of child sexual abuse. . ECB liaises with Victoria Police before any investigation is commenced, to ensure that the DoE investigation does not interfere with any criminal investigation or proceeding. Once the investigation is complete, the relevant decision maker determines whether the allegations are substantiated and, if so, what disciplinary action should be taken. ECB provides advice and guidance to the decision-maker. The decision-maker for misconduct inquiries related to principals is the Deputy Secretary, Schools and Regional Services. The decision-maker for misconduct inquiries related to all other school staff is

the relevant Regional Director. If allegations of child sexual abuse are substantiated, the likely disciplinary action is termination of employment. I provide further information about termination in my response to question 16(f) below.

14. I am informed by ECB staff that substantially similar practices are followed in respect of allegations of misconduct against staff employed by School Councils, modified in accordance with the legislative framework that governs the particular employee.

Reportable Conduct Policy

15. The purpose of the Reportable Conduct Policy is to ensure all DoE employees (including all school-based employees) and school councils notify the relevant departmental officer where there is an allegation of reportable conduct.
16. An 'allegation of reportable conduct' means a person has a reasonable belief that there has been, relevantly:
- (a) a sexual offence;
 - (b) sexual misconduct or physical violence committed against with or in the presence of a child;
 - (c) behaviour causing significant emotional or psychological harm to a child; or
 - (d) significant neglect of a child, or misconduct involving any of the above.
17. ECB has responsibility for notifying all allegations of reportable conduct to the CCYP, on behalf of the employing entity, i.e. the Secretary and School Councils.
18. Principals and Victorian Public Service (**VPS**) managers are required to notify ECB as soon as possible after becoming aware of an allegation of reportable conduct, so ECB can assess the allegations and notify the CCYP, if appropriate.
19. Under the policy, School Councils are not required to notify the CCYP directly, but are advised to instruct the principal, as the executive officer of the school council, to notify ECB as soon as possible after becoming aware of a

reportable allegation about a School Council employee, so that ECB can assess the allegations and report them to the CCYP, if appropriate.

20. The Reportable Conduct Scheme covers employees, contractors and volunteers, as described in paragraph 11 above. The Reportable Conduct Scheme does not currently apply to casual relief teachers (**CRT**) who are engaged via third party CRT labour hire agencies. However, legislation was passed earlier this year to amend the definition of ‘employee’ in the CWS Act so that CRTs engaged by schools via CRT labour hire agencies will fall within the scope of DoE’s obligations under the Reportable Conduct Scheme. This amendment is scheduled to come into effect from 1 July 2024. Currently ECB deals with matters relating to agency CRTs by notifying the Executive Director of Schools HR (as the contract owner for CRT labour hire agency contracts) who is requested to notify contracted agencies that a particular individual is not to be placed in government schools. Principals are also advised to contact the CRT labour hire agency directly to inform them of the allegations raised and that the teacher is not to return to their school. Principals are also advised to notify Victoria Police of allegations.

Employment Limitation Policy

21. The Employment Limitation Policy enables DoE to maintain proper standards of performance and conduct for employees and to protect and provide for the welfare of students and other employees by deeming some employees unsuitable for employment.
22. The Employment Limitation Policy applies to employees of the Secretary and School Councils.
23. ETRA enables the Minister for Education to make Ministerial Orders to give effect to the Act including any matters relating to employment in the teaching service or by school councils. Ministerial Order 1388 contains the current provisions dealing with employment in the teaching service and Ministerial Order 1389 contains the current provisions dealing with employment by school councils.
24. I have attached copies of these orders to my statement:
- (a) Ministerial Order 1388 – **BS-5**; and

- (b) Ministerial Order 1389 – **BS-6**.
25. Clauses 3.1.5 of both Orders provide that the Secretary may determine that a person's eligibility for employment is subject to an employment limitation. The clauses also provide that the Secretary may establish criteria and procedures for imposing an employment limitation on a person, including the grounds for a review of an employment limitation.
26. The Employment Limitation Policy sets out the circumstances in which DoE can impose a limitation on a former employee's eligibility for employment with DoE or a School Council and the process for imposing a limitation and seeking a review of that decision.
27. The policy provides that decisions regarding the application of employment limitations are made by the Manager of ECB at his or her discretion as delegate. Some situations in which an employment limitation may be applied are listed in the policy. These include that an employment limitation may be applied:
- (a) following a misconduct disciplinary process;
 - (b) on expiry of a period of fixed term employment or probationary period during the course of an investigation; and
 - (c) where an employee resigns during the course of an investigation, or where there are unresolved issues about his or her performance or conduct.
28. An employment limitation may also be applied where DoE becomes aware of an allegation that a former employee engaged in conduct during their employment, which, had it been known during their employment, would have constituted grounds for an investigation. This includes where allegations of child sexual abuse by a former employee are made after the employee has ceased employment.

Other internal guidance materials

29. ECB also has a number of other internal guidance documents relating to responding to allegations or incidents of child sexual abuse, specifically:

- (a) Guidance to Employee Conduct Branch, which provides guidance to Employee Conduct advisers on the steps for initial management of incidents or allegations of sexualised conduct, sexual misconduct or sexual offences (attachment **BS-7** to my statement);
- (b) a Sexual Harm Matters - Internal Protocol for Information Sharing setting out the steps, roles and responsibilities for actions and notifications between central teams within DoE to respond to child sexual abuse allegations and charges (attachment **BS-8** to my statement); and
- (c) a Process for Employee Conduct which outlines the process to notify the Sexual Harms Response Unit of relevant new matters (attachment **BS-9** to my statement).

Qu. 15 How does the Department liaise with other government departments or agencies as at the date of this notice, to manage and respond to child sexual abuse, including historical child sexual abuse, in government schools?

Commission for Children and Young People

- 30. Under the Reportable Conduct Policy, ECB notifies the CCYP of allegations that fall within one of the categories of harm under the Reportable Conduct Scheme.
- 31. When ECB becomes aware of a reportable allegation, ECB provides information to the CCYP about the allegation as follows:
 - (a) within 3 business days, initial advice including the nature of the allegation and identity of the respondent;
 - (b) within 30 calendar days, an update on the investigation of the allegation including details of the allegation and investigation process; and
 - (c) on request from the CCYP.
- 32. A report is provided to the CCYP by ECB at the finalisation of an investigation into allegations of reportable conduct. The information in the report includes whether the allegations of reportable conduct have been substantiated,

reasons for the findings, details about any disciplinary or other action and reasons for taking or not taking any action.

33. The CCYP is also able to receive direct notifications of reportable allegations from members of the public. Where the CCYP receives a direct notification from a member of the public that relates to DoE or government schools, the CCYP refers the allegation to ECB for action (assessment, notification and investigation).

Victorian Institute of Teaching

34. ECB notifies VIT of the outcome of disciplinary inquiries taken against teachers. Section 2.6.30 of ETRA requires an employer of a registered teacher to notify VIT in certain circumstances, including if any action is taken against the registered teacher in response to allegations of serious misconduct.
35. ECB also shares information with VIT about:
 - (a) the outcomes of reportable conduct investigations relating to DoE employees with VIT registration (teachers or principals);
 - (b) where criminal charges are laid, or are likely to be laid in relation to a teacher or principal; and
 - (c) when an employment limitation is put in place by DoE.
36. VIT shares information with ECB about suspension of teaching registration and decisions to cancel or not to renew registration.

Police

37. ECB liaises with Victoria Police, Federal Police and police in other jurisdictions in relation to allegations of child sexual abuse by persons connected to Victorian Government schools. This includes by reporting allegations to police, assisting police with their inquiries and investigations and ensuring that any steps taken by DoE do not interfere with police operations.

Working with Children Check Victoria

38. Working with Children Check Victoria notifies DoE in writing if a DoE employee or volunteer who has a WWC Check has their WWC Check suspended or revoked, or is issued with a WWC Check exclusion. Teachers are not required to have WWC Checks because of the requirement that they hold VIT registration, so WWC Checks are most relevant to non-teaching staff in schools.
39. DoE does not provide information directly to Working with Children Check Victoria.

Victorian Disability Workers Commission

40. If an allegation relates to a 'disability worker' within the meaning of the *Disability Service Safeguards Act 2018 (Vic)*, then notification to the Victorian Disability Workers Commission (**VDWC**) may also be required. A 'disability worker' is defined as a person providing a disability service to a person with a disability, for example an education support worker providing support to a student or students with disability. Teachers are not covered by the VDWC.
41. A matter is reportable to the VDWC if, relevantly, a disability worker engages in sexual misconduct or in a manner that departs from professional standards.
42. ECB has responsibility for assessing allegations to consider whether notification to the VDWC is required.

Qu. 16 What are the Department's policies and practices as at the date of this notice in relation to the:**(a) employment or engagement (including pre-employment vetting and reference checks) of teaching and other staff in government schools?**

43. For the purposes of responding to the Notice, the following relevant policies were identified by the Schools Human Resources Division as relating to the employment and engagement of teaching and other staff in Victorian Government schools:
- (a) Recruitment in Schools Policy (**BS-10** to my statement); and
- (b) School Council Employment Policy (**BS-11** to my statement).

It is not the role of ECB to provide advice in relation to the application of these policies, or the employment or engagement of teaching and other staff in government schools, except in relation to suitability for employment as set out at paragraphs 45 and 46 below.

44. DoE policy regarding employment or engagement is contained in the 'Pre-employment Checks' section of the Recruitment in Schools Policy. The policy sets out the steps which a principal is required to take, and the matters about which a principal must be satisfied before a person commences employment in the teaching service. This includes that the person is a fit and proper person and is suitable for child-connected work, is registered with VIT (if employed as an assistant principal or teacher), and has a current WWC Check if employed as an education support class employee.
45. The Recruitment in Schools Policy also requires that a principal check whether a person is suitable for employment by:
 - (a) checking whether there is an employment limitation in place relating to the person; and
 - (b) by asking questions of the person's current or immediate past employer relating to how the person has behaved and conducted themselves when working with children.

Where there is an employment limitation in place, or where a principal has a concern in relation to suitability for employment, a principal must contact ECB for advice.

46. DoE also has a Suitability for Employment Checks Policy (attachment **BS-12** to my statement). That policy applies to school-based staff engaged by the Secretary and by school councils. It sets out when an employee, contractor or volunteer is required to have a WWC Check, VIT registration or criminal record check. This aligns with the requirements for pre-employment checks in the Recruitment in Schools Policy.
47. Employment of staff by School Councils is governed by Ministerial Order 1389 (attachment **BS-6**) and the School Council Employment Policy (attachment **BS-11**).

(b) performance review and promotion of teaching and other staff in government schools?

48. For the purposes of responding to the Notice, the relevant policies were identified by the Schools Human Resources Division. Those policies are:
- (a) Performance and Development for Principal Class Employees Policy (attachment **BS-13** to my statement);
 - (b) Performance and Development for Teacher Class Employees Policy (attachment **BS-14** to my statement);
 - (c) Performance and Development for Education Support Class Employees Policy (attachment **BS-15** to my statement); and
 - (d) the “Transfer or promotion of an ongoing employee” section of the Recruitment in Schools Policy (attachment **BS-10** to my statement).
49. It is not the role of ECB to advise school principals, School Councils or VPS managers in relation to performance review and promotion.

(c) disciplinary actions or procedures of teaching and other staff in government schools?

50. As discussed in my response to Qn. 14 above, ETRA sets the framework for disciplinary action relating to staff in government schools and the Guidelines set out how complaints against employees, and unsatisfactory performance and misconduct involving employees, may be dealt with by DoE. The Guidelines ensure that any disciplinary process is conducted in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness and is done so consistently with the legislation.
51. An employee who is the subject of an investigation may be issued with directions about what they may or may not do during the course of the investigation (for example a direction not to attend the school or contact any former or current students, staff or members of the school community, via any means, including inside or outside school or via phone, email or social media).

(d) stand down or suspension of teaching and other staff in government schools?

52. The Guidelines set out circumstances in which it may be appropriate for an employee to be removed from duty while an investigation is being conducted into allegations of inappropriate conduct or misconduct. Removal from duty may involve suspension from duty (with or without pay) or allocating alternative duties.
53. It may be appropriate for an employee to be removed from duty where:
- (a) there is a potential risk to the health and safety of students or other employees;
 - (b) there is a potential that the employee may interfere with the investigation;
 - (c) there is a risk that the alleged conduct may continue or be repeated; and
 - (d) the conduct alleged is an act of misconduct and the continuing presence of the employee in the workplace is not consistent with the ongoing employment relationship.

Suspension

54. The power to suspend an employee from duty with or without pay is set out in Part 2.4, Divisions 9 and 10 of ETRA. This power has been delegated by the Secretary to the Deputy Secretary, Schools and Regional Services. An employee may be suspended with or without pay where the employee has had his or her registration as a teacher refused, suspended or cancelled, been charged with a criminal offence punishable by imprisonment or a fine, or where there may be grounds for action against the employee under Division 10 of ETRA (misconduct).
55. ECB provides advice to the Deputy Secretary, Schools and Regional Services about suspension from duty where serious allegations or concerns exist against an employee.
56. Where an employee is charged with a child sexual offence or is under police investigation (and police have provided clearance to suspend), it is DoE's practice for the employee to be suspended from duty.

Allocation of Alternative duties within school

57. Division 2 of Part 11 of Ministerial Order 1388 sets out the duties that a principal is responsible for. This includes, under 11.2.2(5), the allocation of teaching and other duties to employees at the school. A principal can use this power to reallocate duties where conduct-related allegations are raised. This is done in consultation with ECB.

(e) transfer to another Government School or within the Department of teaching and other staff in government schools?

58. I have explained below the general powers to transfer or reassign an employee to other schools.

59. However, transfer to another government school or elsewhere e.g. to a regional office, is not one of the measures used in a disciplinary process.

Assignment of duties (including at other schools)

60. Section 2.4.3(3)(d) of ETRA provides that the Secretary may assign work to employees in the teaching service. This power to assign duties has been delegated to the Deputy Secretary SRS, Executive Director, School Human Resources Division, Regional Directors, school principals and any other Deputy Secretary who employs a teaching service employee.

61. The Deputy Secretary SRS has the power to assign duties to an employee at a school or workplace other than the employee's place of work. The Executive Director Schools HR can only assign duties to an employee at another school with the agreement of the principal of that school. Regional Directors can only assign duties to an employee in schools in their Region, but only with the agreement of the principal of the school. Principals can only assign duties within their school.

62. The power to assign to other duties at a different location is not used during investigation of allegations of child sexual abuse.

Transfer to other duties within the Teaching Service

63. Section 2.4.3(3)(h) of ETRA provides that the Secretary may transfer employees to other duties in the teaching service. This power has been delegated to the Deputy Secretary SRS, Executive Director, School Human Resources Division, Regional Directors, school principals and any other

Deputy Secretary who employs a teaching service employee, with some limitations as set out in the Instrument of Delegation.

64. ECB's role does not include advising in relation to transfer. For the purposes of responding to the Notice, the relevant policy was identified by the Schools Human Resources Division. That policy is the 'Transfer or promotion of an ongoing employee' section of the Recruitment in Schools Policy (attachment **BS-10** to my statement).
65. The power to transfer to other duties is not used during investigation of allegations of child sexual abuse or other misconduct. Further, it is not one of the disciplinary outcomes available under ETRA where one of the grounds for action (set out in paragraph 68 below) are established.

(f) termination of teaching and other staff in government schools?

66. Under ETRA, the Secretary, DoE, is, on behalf of the Crown, the employer of teachers and other school staff in government schools and has employment powers in respect of those employees. ETRA gives the Secretary power to, amongst other things, terminate the employment of employees.
67. This response focuses on termination of employment for misconduct, serious misconduct, failure by teaching staff to maintain registration with VIT or failure by other school staff to maintain a WWC Check clearance. Under ETRA, there are also powers to terminate employment for other reasons, such as incapacity, unsatisfactory performance or annulment during a probationary period.
68. Under section 2.4.60 of ETRA, the Secretary, after investigation, may take action against an employee where one of the listed grounds are established. The grounds for action include where an employee:
- (a) conducts himself or herself in a disgraceful, improper or unbecoming manner in an official capacity or otherwise;
 - (b) commits an act of misconduct;
 - (c) during his or her period of service is convicted or found guilty of a criminal offence punishable by imprisonment or a fine;

- (d) contravenes a provision of this Act or a Ministerial Order made for the purposes of ETRA Chapter 2 – School Education;
 - (e) without reasonable excuse, contravenes or fails to comply with a lawful direction given to the employee by a person with authority to give the direction; or
 - (f) is unfit on account of character or conduct to discharge his or her duties.
69. If the Secretary is satisfied on an inquiry under Division 10 of Part 2.4 of ETRA that there are one or more grounds for taking action against an employee, the Secretary may take action, including termination of employment. Under section 2.4.51A, the Secretary may terminate employment summarily (without notice or payment in lieu of notice) if an employee has engaged in serious misconduct.
70. ETRA also provides that:
- (a) the Secretary must dismiss an employee if the employee has at any time been convicted or found guilty of a category A offence in Victoria as defined in ETRA (or equivalent offence elsewhere), or has been given a WWC Check exclusion; and
 - (b) the employment of a person ceases if an employee is refused registration as a teacher or has his or her registration suspended or cancelled, and remains unregistered for a continuous period of 12 months.
71. Ministerial Order 1388 provides that the employment of an employee who surrenders a WWC clearance or who receives a WWC exclusion under the *Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic)* ceases upon the employee's surrender of the WWC clearance or the employee's receipt of the WWC exclusion.
72. The Secretary has delegated the powers to terminate employment to Regional Directors and to the Deputy Secretary, Schools and Regional Services (the specific delegation level depending on the relevant section of ETRA).

- 73. The Guidelines set out the procedure that applies to investigations of misconduct that may result in termination of employment.
- 74. ECB provides advice to Regional Directors and the Deputy Secretary, Schools and Regional Services about misconduct allegations, investigations and disciplinary outcomes.

Qu. 21 What is the process at the date of this notice for responding to allegations or incidents of historical child sexual abuse which are notified to the Department? Does this involve:

(a) a consideration of any current or ongoing risk to students or children and, if so, what are these considerations?

- 75. The primary role of ECB is to provide advice in relation to the Guidelines and Reportable Conduct. Consideration of current child safety risk is a key consideration in providing that advice.
- 76. In providing this advice and guidance, ECB advisers consider any current or ongoing risks to students or children and provide advice to relevant decision-makers based on this assessment of risk. This includes considering the nature of the allegations, the current role and duties of the individual, any action being taken by Victoria Police, and any steps already taken.
- 77. When an allegation of historical child sexual abuse is received, ECB establishes whether the allegation relates to a current employee or a former employee within scope of the Reportable Conduct Scheme (see paragraph 11 above).
- 78. If the allegation is against an individual who is a current employee or an employee within the scope of the Reportable Conduct Scheme, steps are taken to assess whether the allegation or allegations meet the criteria for notification to the CCYP under the Reportable Conduct Scheme. If the allegations meet this criteria, a notification is made.
- 79. For former employees, ECB checks to see whether the person is still registered with VIT and, if so, informs VIT of the allegation.
- 80. ECB also consider whether the person is subject to another registration scheme and whether the allegation meets the criteria for that scheme, in

which case a report would be made to the relevant authority, for example the VDWC.

(b) referral to law enforcement;

81. On receipt of allegations that might involve criminal conduct, ECB advisers are required to establish whether the allegations have been reported to Victoria Police. If they have not yet been reported, the ECB adviser must take steps to ensure a report is made to a Victoria Police Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Investigations Team. This is the approach taken for allegations relating to current and former employees.

Qu. 22 What reforms have been made to improve Relevant Policies and Practices in government schools since the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into Abuse in Religious and Non- Government Organisations?

82. The Reportable Conduct Scheme came into operation for DoE on 1 July 2017 pursuant to the CWS Act. The Reportable Conduct Scheme was introduced in response to a recommendation 18.1 from the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into the handling of child abuse allegations by religious and other non-government organisations in 2012 and 2013.
83. Under the Reportable Conduct Scheme, DoE is required to have a system in place for preventing the commission of 'reportable conduct' (which includes sexual misconduct and sexual offences), for notifying the head of the entity and the CCYP of a reportable conduct allegation, and for investigating reportable conduct. DoE has a Reportable Conduct Policy (see 15 to 20 above).

Signature:



Printed name:

Vicki Bella Stagoll

Date:

3 November 2023