



VICTORIA  
POLICE FORCE



Shane Patton APM  
Chief Commissioner of Police

Our Ref: FF- 185647

Coroner Jacqui Hawkins  
Coroners Court of Victoria  
65 Kavanagh Street  
SOUTHBANK VIC 3006

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**Subject:** [REDACTED] – Finding into death without inquest  
**Court reference:** COR 2019 3862  
**Date of Recommendation:** 28 September 2020

Dear Coroner Hawkins,

**Victoria Police response to recommendations arising from findings into death without inquest of [REDACTED]**

I refer to correspondence received from the Coroner’s Court dated 28 September 2020 enclosing your recommendations (recommendations 1 and 2) arising from the findings without inquest into the death of [REDACTED] in Skye on 23 July 2019. While Victoria Police was initially requested to provide a response within three months, I understand a revised deadline of 18 February 2021 was negotiated with your office. The position of Victoria Police in response to these recommendations is outlined as follows:-

**Recommendation One**

*I recommend that Victoria Police amend the Code of Practice for the Investigation of Family Violence to include guidelines about police-initiated intervention order applications against children and young people, and ensure police are aware of appropriate referral pathways for families experiencing adolescent violence in the home, including alternative accommodation options. The Code of Practice should prioritise cautions and diversions where appropriate.*

Victoria Police supports the Coroner’s recommendation in principle, noting recent reforms to our family violence policy documents.

As part of work to strengthen our operational policies, the Victoria Police Manual (VPM) Family Violence will be revised and repositioned in early 2021.

The VPM Family Violence is the primary policy document governing police responses to family violence. The republished version will require that police members confirm accommodation for children and young people when seeking exclusion conditions on interim intervention orders.

In addition to this, under the Children and Young People Rolling Action Plan 2021, Family Violence Command will review and amend policies and practice guides for police responses to young people who are involved in family violence. This review will incorporate the Coroner’s recommendation and align with proposals for introduction as part of the new *Youth Justice Act*. These include

developing guidance on police-initiated intervention order applications against children and young people, issuing cautions and diversions, appropriate referral pathways for families experiencing adolescent violence in the home and alternative accommodation options.

The current Code of Practice for the Investigation of Family Violence (the Code) will continue to be reviewed to ensure information is tailored for victim survivors and service providers, and aligns with the revised VPM Family Violence.

**Recommendation Two**

*I recommend that the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services and Victoria Police conduct a joint review on the incidence and numbers of youths that are issued with a FVIO and require emergency and short-term accommodation, to identify any areas in Victoria that may be in need of these additional resources. The review should inform funding decisions by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to provide additional youth crisis accommodation in targeted areas where the demand has been identified.*

Victoria Police supports the Coroner's recommendation.

Victoria Police will work with the Department of Health and Human Services in conducting a review, providing information to assist decision-making regarding funding and placement of youth crisis accommodation.

Yours sincerely



Shane Patton APM  
Chief Commissioner

15/2/21