

**From the Office of the Acting Commissioner**

Our ref: CD/23/110933

4 September 2023

Coroner David Ryan  
Coroners Court of Victoria

Via email: [cpuresponses@coronerscourt.vic.gov.au](mailto:cpuresponses@coronerscourt.vic.gov.au)

Dear Coroner Ryan

**COR 2022 0357 – Investigation into the death of Ms Amanda Stapledon**

I refer to your findings into the death of Amanda Stapledon dated 6 June 2023 (**Findings**).

The purpose of this letter is to provide a statement of action in respect of your recommendation:

*That IBAC review the operation of its legislation, and amend its policies, and procedures, where appropriate to ensure that there is no impediment in appropriate circumstances to advising witnesses as early as possible after a decision has been made, that their conduct is not under contemplation for the purpose of prosecution.*

IBAC accepts the recommendation.

Following receipt of the Findings, IBAC established an internal working group which has been tasked with implementing the recommendation. This working group is led by an IBAC Deputy Commissioner and the Executive Director of Legal, Assessment & Review and Compliance, with other representatives from Legal, Investigations, Witness Liaison, and Prevention, Policy and Research forming part of the working group. The make-up of the working group is designed to ensure that all relevant parts of IBAC have oversight and input into considering whether legislative change or amendments to policies and procedures are appropriate.

To date, the working group has:

- commenced a review of the *Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Act 2011* (Vic) (**IBAC Act**) to identify legislative impediments (if any) to your recommendation and to inform the development of new policies and procedures or amendments to existing policies or procedures;

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- commenced a review of all existing investigation-related policies and procedures to identify where amendments may be required to implement your recommendation; and
- commenced identifying the risks and opportunities (to both IBAC and witnesses) associated with communicating prosecutorial decisions to witnesses, to ensure any new policies, procedures or legislative change are responsive to these risks and opportunities.

The working group meets monthly to ensure IBAC's implementation of your recommendation remains on track. IBAC anticipates that its initial review of existing investigation policies and procedures will be completed by the end of 2023, following which any appropriate amendments to policy and procedure can be made.

As indicated in your findings, should legislative reform be considered necessary, the Department of Justice and Community Safety is the department responsible for managing amendments to the IBAC Act and making regulations under the Act. To the extent that legislative change is considered necessary by the working group, IBAC will liaise with DJCS accordingly.

Outside of the working group, IBAC has taken a new organisational approach to witness wellbeing management, to ensure that all staff who have direct or indirect involvement with witnesses consider, at the earliest possible opportunity, what information can be disclosed to witnesses to alleviate any stress and anxiety associated with their involvement in an investigation. The actions of the working group will continue to build on this new organisational approach.

IBAC understands that being involved in an investigation can be stressful and may create a range of emotions, and we again express our sincere condolences to Ms Stapledon's family, friends and colleagues for their loss. Witness wellbeing remains an organisational priority for IBAC, and IBAC will continue to regularly review its practices to ensure risks to witnesses are minimised. We otherwise thank you for your thorough examination and considered findings.

Yours sincerely



**Stephen Farrow**  
Acting Commissioner