

## STANDING COMMITTEE ON LAW AND JUSTICE

### INQUIRY INTO SECURITY CLASSIFICATION AND MANAGEMENT OF INMATES SENTENCED TO LIFE IMPRISONMENT

Supplementary questions: Homicide Victims' Support Group (Australia) Inc

Answers are to be returned to the Committee secretariat by Friday 18 December 2015.

1. Were you involved in the recent August 2015 workshop with Corrective Services NSW to improve communication between victims and Corrective Services NSW? If so, how productive was this event?

*Answer - Yes I was involved in the workshop that was hosted by the Commissioner of Corrective Services, Mr Peter Severin and Dr Anne Marie Martin, of Assistant Commissioner, Offender Management and Policy within Corrective Services New South Wales, the staff from the Victims Register and Restorative Justice as well as the manager of classifications within prisons in NSW.*

*I found the workshop to be very helpful in many areas for the family members of homicide that attended, the staff of the Homicide Victims' Support Group and myself.*

*The issues that I felt were resolved by this communication avenue were -*

- *The Commissioner and his team could explain the classification system.*
- *What it means to re-classify an inmate?*
- *What the benefits are to the inmate and the prison environment?*
- *How communication with victims or crime or family members of homicide can be improved.*
- *Greater time and assistance being given to family members to prepare and submit submissions to the SPA and SORC - more explanations will be given.*
- *The Victims Register held by Corrective Services should encompass the register that is held with the Mental Health Review Tribunal and Juvenile Justice - there should be only one central point of contact with family members - it is onerous for family members to be registered on all three and having to deal with three different Government Departments - there is way too much inconsistency and confusion.*
- *Bi-annual meetings will be held with the Commissioner and his staff inviting family members who are interested and want to be engaged in the process of giving feedback and hearing updates from the Commissioner.*
- *An information booklet/and other forms of communication will be worked on to provide an explanation of security classification systems, what they mean and what programs are available.*
- *More improvement needs to be made with exchanging information across the justice sector, being courts, police, juvenile justice, corrective services, victims services and victim support groups.*
- *Consistency of information given to family members will be streamlined. Family members will be asked about their needs. The form to register for the Victims Register has been amended since we met.*

*I found the meeting to be very well run. The Commissioner, Dr Anne Marie Martin and their staff were honest, sincere and came with a view to listen, learn and to change a system that can be improved.*

*I am very grateful on behalf of the members of the Homicide Victims' Support Group (Aust) Inc. for the time given to the family members and more so for the commitment from the Victims' Register staff who work very hard in a very caring and respectful way.*

*In kindness*

*Martha Jabour  
Executive Director*