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MAPS19/6879

Mr David Blunt
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Dear Mr Blunt

Petition – TJ Hickey

I refer to the petition presented by Mr David Shoebridge MLC in the Legislative Council on 22 October 2019 by the Hickey family and the Indigenous Social Justice Association requesting a parliamentary inquiry into the death of Thomas “TJ” Hickey and a review of the coronial inquiry, including a review of the police response to the incident.

The death of TJ Hickey on 15 February 2004 was a tragedy for his family, friends and the wider community. I acknowledge the distress this incident continues to cause.

Oversight of the police response

The interactions police had with TJ Hickey on the day of his death were explored in the coronial inquest by the then State Coroner John Abernathy in 2004.

I am also advised that in 2004, the NSW Ombudsman monitored an investigation in relation to the officers involved in the critical incident. The complaint matter was not sustained.

In 2004 the Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social Issues held an inquiry into issues relating to Redfern and Waterloo. The terms of reference included policing strategies and resources in the Redfern/Waterloo areas and services and programs by government and non-government providers to meet the needs of local Indigenous and non-Indigenous members of the community.

I am advised that the matter was considered by the United Nations Human Rights Committee, which found in 2014 that claims made against the Australian Government for violations against the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights were not sufficiently substantiated.

Coroner's Inquest

I am advised the Coroner's inquest was thorough and explored all the issues surrounding the death of TJ Hickey. The State Coroner's findings are available on the State Coroner's website.

Section 85 of the *Coroners Act 2009* provides that any person may apply to the Supreme Court for an order that an inquest that has been held be quashed and that a new inquest be held. The petitioners may wish to obtain independent legal advice about commencing an application for a new inquest to be held.

I regret the grief TJ's death continues to cause his family. Whether a Parliamentary Inquiry should be held is a matter for each House of the Parliament.

The NSW Government is committed to delivering an effective, appropriate and trusted police and justice response to Indigenous communities across NSW.


I thank the petitioners for taking the time to raise this important issue.

Yours sincerely



Mark Speakman

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on behalf of
The Clerk of the Parliament