

17<sup>th</sup> October 2025

Committee Secretary  
Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit  
PO Box 6021  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

## Inquiry into the procurement of mandated national support and advocacy services for victims of child sexual abuse

I am pleased to be able to make this submission to the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit. My comments are brief, relating primarily to the regard given (or lack thereof) by Government systems and decision-makers to those most affected by the impacts of child sexual abuse.

I am a qualified social worker (MA Social Work, 2010) with over 15 years' experience in child protection in both the UK and Australia. I identify as a Survivor of child sexual abuse.

The issues raised by the audit has highlighted more than practical limitations in auditing processes. While the commitment to the services was made by the Morrison Government in 2021, the lack of action by the Labor Government in its first term is demonstrative of a wider malaise when it comes to practical implementation of policies and services in the context of child sexual abuse.

The identification that departmental records do not document how budgeted funding amounts for services were arrived at, is a classic example of governance provision being guided by wanting to be seen to be doing something, rather than engaging with the practical consideration of *how* doing something will be undertaken. It is lip service to the concerns of supporting non-abusing parents, as well as seeking to find effective ways to mitigate risk.

I do hold questions for how the Government will implement the recommendations it agreed to, and also what lessons they have drawn from these in terms of attitude, not simply auditing.

The lack of qualitative tenders, many with missing information, illustrates the degree to which the government should exercise rigour in its processes. This means applying a higher standard to drive sincerity of service. It is not simply functional failures, but one of mentality where the priority of Victim-Survivors, and the safety and wellbeing of children, is not a driver of improved behaviours and conduct.

It is difficult to disregard the plausible possibility that tenderers left out critical pieces of information because they did not anticipate a satisfactory level of interrogation of their applications. This lack of regard undermines wider trust in externally provided services, because it looks like corner cutting for the financial benefit of providing a service in name,

but not having to sustain a suitable level of delivery in the process. Government should role-model best practice, not hope that external services do it for them.

My submission is short, but I wish to reinforce the deep dissatisfaction at seeing what should be *basic* service provision and preventative measures being given lip-service, at best, by those that should be acting with more urgency. This underlines the importance of the Government giving reasonable and satisfactory insight into the mentality behind their failings, and I hope that the Committee will examine the issues here beyond the practical aspects of the audit findings themselves.

I thank the Committee for its time and consideration of this submission.

Yours faithfully,

Jack Davenport,

Tasmania