

Obj file ref: A8767327

The Hon Helen Dalton MLA
Chair, Committee on Children and Young People
NSW Parliament
Macquarie Street SYDNEY NSW 2000

By email: childrenyoungpeople@parliament.nsw.gov.au

20 May 2024

Dear Ms Dalton

2024 Review of the Annual Reports and other matters of the Office of the Advocate for Children and Young People and the Office of the Children's Guardian

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before the Committee on Children and Young People at its recent hearing as part of the 2024 review of the annual reports and other matters of the Office of the Advocate for Children and Young People and the Office of the Children's Guardian.

Please find below clarifications of some mistakes of fact.

Corrections of errors in Steve Gholab's evidence:

Mistakes of fact in Steve Gholab's evidence are corrected below, in tracked changes.

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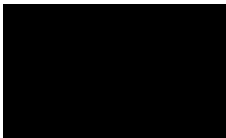
“Thank you for the question. Previously when we met with the Committee, the formal application process was that you had to be in Australia. An aspect of that is now you can – working with children, you're allowed to renew and can renew online and you can be overseas or interstate. That reduces ~~or supports~~ the time taken ~~and/or~~ delays for ~~communities and~~ regional and remote communities to be able to apply online and that includes people overseas. We are also working with Service NSW to look at how we extend that digital online application process to new applications but also maintain the integrity around the application process – fraud, identity fraud – ~~but also and~~ to protect children. An aspect of that is a renewal application can now be done online to support teachers, people who are overseas who are about to come to Australia or working overseas as well, for example.

In terms of the international records, it is, ~~again~~, a gap. It is a gap that has been highlighted by the Royal Commission as to how do we bridge that. We're working through a process to progress amendment legislation that was passed by the NSW Parliament but yet to be proclaimed. ~~to~~ When proclaimed a section of the Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 ~~to allow~~ will require individuals to self-disclose any relevant criminal history information when they apply for a Working with Children Check. However, it is a self-disclose process and it's also information that is readily accessible ~~and~~ similarly to what is required by incoming travellers – by the Australian Border Force who rely on ~~these~~ individuals to disclose such information when they come to Australia.

~~The self-disclosure~~ will ~~allow us another element~~ provide us with further information for our review and assessment requirements. Such information we will be seeking is translated police and or Court information. ~~to gain that information and to have individuals share police records that is translated in a translated format that we can access.~~ If that information, however, is lacking or limited between our international colleagues and the Commonwealth, then that information will be limited to us. Through the Children's Guardian we are making representations to be part of a group of individuals-government officials to try to bridge ~~that~~that the gap of information sharing. How do we try to access international information in a seamless manner ~~that information is a work in progress, and it is something we are doing with other government colleagues. that is something that greater knowledge and insight to~~ held with our Commonwealth buddies who are accessing information internationally. It is a work in progress.”

Please do not hesitate to contact me if we can provide any further information in relation to the above issues.

Yours sincerely



Steve Gholab
Director, Working with Children Check