

14 April 2025

Mr Philip Donato, MP
Committee Chair
Committee on the Ombudsman, Law Enforcement Conduct Commission and Crime Commission

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

Dear Mr Donato

2024 Review of Annual and Other Reports of Oversighted Bodies

Please see below my response to the questions taken on notice at the Committee hearing on 21 March 2025 for the Child Death Review Team.

Question

Mr TRI VO: How many staff of the Ombudsman's office are involved in the day-to-day of the CDRT? We know that the team of NSW Ombudsman staff manage the day-to-day work of the CDRT. Earlier we were given the figures of 250 or 260 people involved in the NSW Ombudsman. Out of that figure, how many of the Ombudsman's staff are involved in the day-to-day of the CDRT?

Answer

There are 19 non-executive roles in the team responsible for the NSW Ombudsman's functions under Parts 5A (supporting the CDRT) and 6 (relating to reviewable deaths) of the *Community Services (Complaints, Reviews and Monitoring) Act 1993*.

Question

Mr TRI VO: Thanks. You mentioned before that the child suicide rate for 2022 was something like—was it 50-something?

PAUL MILLER: Yes, I think there were 58.

Mr TRI VO: And in 2023 it went down to 40-something.

PAUL MILLER: According to the monitoring service, at the moment it's 47.

Mr TRI VO: It's gone down. What about the year before that, 2021? You may not have that figure.

HELEN WODAK: No, but that's the combined figure.

PAUL MILLER: Sorry. These are two-year periods. It was 58 over the—

Mr TRI VO: Oh, I see, sorry.

PAUL MILLER: For 2020 and 2021 is 58, and 2022 and 2023 combined is currently, according to the monitoring service, 47.

Mr TRI VO: Would the figures for, say, 2018-19 be higher than those figures?

PAUL MILLER: Higher than the 47?

Mr TRI VO: Yes, higher than the 47.

PAUL MILLER: I might have to take that on notice.

Answer

In the [Biennial report of the deaths of children in New South Wales: 2018 and 2019](#), the CDRT reported 51 children and young people aged 10-17 years died by suicide in 2018 and 2019 (see page 73).

Question

The CHAIR: I'm interested in finding out about geographical or environmental factors in relation to youth suicides. I was just having a look at your latest annual report. You talk about drownings, you talk about transport, homicide, suicide, and other natural causes. But have you observed a pattern or a trend in relation to the location of where suicides seem to be more problematic than others? Is it higher in regional areas as opposed to the metropolitan areas, or are you in a position to give any comment on that? Are you able to advise the Committee, in terms of those statistics that you have, that you know about through the register, a breakdown, geographically?

Answer

In the [Biennial report of the deaths of children in New South Wales: 2020 and 2021](#), the CDRT reported that the period 2020-2021, the rate for young people (10 – 17 years) was:

- 1.7 times higher for those living in remote and rural areas than for those in major cities
- 1.3 times higher for those in the most disadvantaged areas than for those in the least disadvantaged areas (see page 90)

The CDRT also reported that for the 15 year period (2007-2021) (see page 92):

Remoteness

- The rate for young people living in major cities increased from 2.0 deaths per 100,000 in 2007 to 2.7 in 2021, and for young people living in regional and remote areas increased from 2.8 deaths in 2007 to 6.3 in 2021.
- On average, the rate was higher for young people living in regional and remote areas than for those in major cities.

Socioeconomic areas

- The rate for young people living in the least disadvantaged areas varied with no change overall (range 1.4 to 4.2 deaths per 100,000).
- The rate for those living in the most disadvantaged areas increased from 1.9 in 2007 to 5.6 in 2016. In the following period 2017 to 2021, there was no overall change.
- As rates over the 15 years, there was no overall difference in rates between the least and most disadvantaged areas.

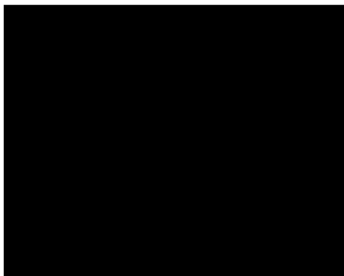
The Report noted there is likely overlap among some demographic groups.

The forthcoming *Biennial report for the deaths of children in NSW 2022 and 2023* will contain demographic information about remoteness and socioeconomic areas for the 2 year (2022-23) and 15 year periods (2009-2023).

I confirm that we are happy for the above information provided to be made publicly available.

If you have any questions in relation to this material, or would like further information please contact Christie Allan, Executive Strategy Officer at [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely



Paul Miller
NSW Ombudsman