

**Submission  
No 4**

**INQUIRY INTO INCLUSION OF DONOR DETAILS ON  
THE REGISTER OF BIRTHS**

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## Legislative Assembly Committee on Law and Safety

### Inquiry into Inclusion of donor details on the register of births

There is a need to consider the implications associated with the word "donor".

It can be legitimately applied to three different persons in a particular situation.

There is the person who donates the sperm

The person who donates the egg

The person who donates their womb as the surrogate mother.

Additionally, there will be the details of the mother and father, or

the mother and mother, or

the father and father.

This then produces the details of five persons on the birth certificate with only two having a genetic relationship with the child.

However, there are further possibilities of additional different situations where one of the persons in the mother father partnership or the mother mother partnership or the father father partnership is the donor of the egg or sperm. It would be expected that all such situations could be provided for on the certificate.

As the knowledge of genes and genetic influences is increasing rapidly, it can be validly claimed by children that they have a right to know the full details of those involved in their creation by the various means now being accepted.



This has wide implications from a health perspective, particularly, since incestuous relationships are likely to occur. It is conceivable that donors could unwittingly develop a relationship with persons who are their direct descendants, e.g. their own child.

Further, a person could develop a relationship with their half brother or half sister. It is not unknown for family members to become donors for other family members on a confidential basis.

Already, there have been studies (and court cases) which indicate that extra-marital affairs are producing children without the knowledge of one of the partners so these children may be establishing relationships with their half sister or brother. The registration of these children at birth does not include the valid name of the father for obvious reasons.

With IVF embryos being frozen and used later, it is possible that a person conceived through IVF could subsequently use IVF with one of these embryos to become the mother of their own brother or sister.

While it is highly desirable that all details of all persons involved in producing a child be recorded, the system breaks down unless there is a strict identification routine followed to ensure only valid information is provided for inclusion. Names can be legitimately changed and donors who wish to have some level of anonymity may change their name several times. Women who marry often maintain both their maiden name and their married name. The situation of adopting a common name in same sex relationships would also have to be considered. The current 100 points system could be a guide.

There would need to be a strict routine established to verify and validate the specific details being provided else there is a risk of the person providing the information omitting information or nominating persons who were not involved. Each person nominating themselves or being nominated as being involved should be required personally to specifically confirm their involvement with supporting evidence.



The need for accuracy is paramount in this proposal. My experience to date with the accuracy of information recorded by the Register is not very encouraging. Some examples of where incorrect information was recorded and subsequent review did confirm that the correct information had been supplied initially to the Registry:

My mothers first name was not the name provided

My son's first name was not the name provided

My son's wife's name was not the name provided for the marriage certificate

When this was corrected, the marriage celebrant entered on the corrected certificate was not only a person of the opposite gender but also it was not the name of the person who performed the marriage

On my mother-in-law's death certificate, she was shown as married to a man whose name was not the name of her husband

My father's death certificate showed his own name instead of his father's name in the entry section for entering the deceased person's father's name.

My Father's death certificate had the wrong name of the Religious minister witnessing the funeral

Other people have indicated to me that they also have had to have errors corrected.