

**Submission  
No 32**

**INQUIRY INTO HIGH LEVEL OF FIRST NATIONS  
PEOPLE IN CUSTODY AND OVERSIGHT AND REVIEW OF  
DEATHS IN CUSTODY**

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RACISM by Police seems to be the number one reason why there are so many Aboriginal people getting arrested and put in jail. POVERTY is another - ie., not being able to pay traffic/driving fines.

It is concerning that Indigenous groups say that hardly any of the 330 recommendations put forward by the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADC) have been put into place, many of which might stop Indigenous people come into contact with Police in the first place, and ultimately prison. why haven't they been put in place?

Aboriginal people are targeted for just hanging out in parks or in shopping centres, are provoked by Police until they shout or swear and then they are arrested. In the Royal Commission into Deaths in Custody these arrests are acknowledged as the 'trifecta' and racism is also acknowledged as playing a part. The Police commissioners and all who are under them, in every state, need to stop this blatant racism and killing of Indigenous people.

Indigenous people face serious penalties for offences which their non-Aboriginal peers would receive only a warning. All of this contributes to overrepresentation of First Nations people in prisons.

Not a single police officer or prison officer has ever been held responsible for one of the more than 435 deaths in custody since the Royal Commission, or the thousands of deaths before that time.

Viewing cctv footage of 6 or more policeman sitting on top of an Indigenous person whilst another officer is savagely punching him, or reading stories where perfectly healthy Indigenous people have died at the hands of Police, is sickening.

One death that springs to mind is that of Mr Ward, left to 'cook to death' in the back of a paddy wagon and John Pat, 16 years old, who died in Police Custody of MASSIVE head injuries. Ms Dhu, who was in jail because she couldn't pay a fine, didn't come out alive. I am finding it harder and harder to swallow the explanation that healthy many Indigenous people died of 'natural causes' in police custody after viewing socctv footage of the way Police treat Indigenous people.

Families deserve to know that if their loved one dies in prison they will be heard and a proper independent investigation will occur – including inspection of where their family member died, interviews of all witnesses including fellow inmates, and that they will be told of the progress of this inquiry. It seems there are coverups within this procedure to protect those guilty of murder within the justice system.

Stop the Police from harassing indigenous children. Raise the age of children being incarcerated. It is common knowledge the world over that jail for young children keeps them in that system.

Don't employ racist officers in the juvenile detention centres or tear gas, like at the Don Dale Youth Detention Centre. the cctv footage of those officers' remarks against children is sickening and appalling. So is the NSW Police Commissioner's idea that strip searching children is a good thing to do - more emotional scarring and 'slow strips' points to paedophilic tendencies.

It seems all the Police forces in every state need a watchdog to watch over them for racism, paedophilic tendencies, and hold them accountable, by jail time, for deaths in custody.