



Media release

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TASMANIA LEADING THE WAY TO IMPLEMENT HUMAN RIGHTS TREATY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY

Tasmania's National Preventive Mechanism (NPM), Richard Connock, has welcomed the [State Government's response](#) to OPCAT recommendations in the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (Disability Royal Commission).

"It is pleasing that the State Government is leading the way in relation to the implementation of Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT*)," Mr Connock said.

"Tasmania was the first state to pass dedicated OPCAT legislation, in 2021, and to fund my office to comprehensively scope its implementation. This includes funding for my office to undertake implementation planning related to health and social care settings, particularly in relation to residential aged care and disability support.

"These implementation recommendations will be released within the next few months, and – subject to government funding to facilitate the NPM office undertaking this important work – are intended to give effect to the Disability Royal Commission recommendations in these areas, in particular under [Recommendations 11.6 – 11.11](#)."

Mr Connock said the input of Tasmanians with disability and those that work in the sector to the Royal Commission was vital in identifying opportunities to provide better outcomes.

“I know that participating in the Disability Royal Commission would have been a challenging experience for many people, and I sincerely thank them for their time and courage to speak up.”

He said initiatives were already underway to ensure the Tasmanian NPM was inclusive.

“The national OPCAT Symposium, which was held in Hobart earlier this year and open to all people including nominated NPMs, comprehensively discussed a disability inclusive approach to implementing OPCAT,” he said.

“I have recently established a Civil Society Advisory Council, a key recommendation in my 2023 Implementation Report: *Preventing Torture and ill-treatment in Tasmania*, which includes representation of people with disability; and I am currently developing essential working materials in codesign with representative and advocacy organisations of persons with disability, which will be a first for Australia.

“I also continue to engage proactively with the Commonwealth Ombudsman in relation to coordination of activities and capacity building, and I call on all Australian Governments to engage cooperatively to fully implement Australia’s NPM in compliance with its international obligations.”

Inquiries to Paula Catchpole - 0472 832 514. Please note the Tasmanian NPM is unable to make further comment on this release.

* OPCAT is a new type of international human rights agreement aimed at strengthening the protection of people deprived of their liberty.

^ The NPM is a visiting body established for the purpose of preventing torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. The NPM’s primary function is undertaking preventive monitoring of places of detention.