

# QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE

## Legislative Council

**ASKED BY:** The Hon Ruth Forrest MLC, Member for Murchison

**ANSWERED BY:** Leader of Government Business

### QUESTION:

With regard to the independent investigation and Inquiry into the NWRH COVID-19 outbreak:

1. How will the terms of reference for the Inquiry be determined and set;
2. When will the terms of reference for the Inquiry be determined and set;
3. Will State Service employees be empowered to provide evidence to the Inquiry without fear of retribution or sanction under the *State Services Act 2000* or any other mechanism; and
4. When does the Premier intend to actively progress this Inquiry?

### ANSWER:

#### Question 1

Tasmania has a history of proactively commissioning external independent reviews demonstrating a culture of seeking to learn from major events.

The Department of Premier and Cabinet will provide a draft set of terms of reference to the Premier for his consideration.

In drafting a terms of reference, consideration will be given to the scope of the inquiry and the process for submissions, as well as the make-up of the Independent Review Panel heading the inquiry.

#### Question 2

Developing a robust and well specified terms of reference will support the Independent Review Panel in undertaking a high-quality review and evaluation.

The Premier has announced the inquiry will be appropriately resourced and will take place at an appropriate time. This means we have the time to get this right.

It is expected a draft terms of reference will be provided to, and settled by, the Premier by the end of June 2020, and this work is underway.

**Question 3**

The Independent Review Panel will provide advice to the Premier on how evidence will be treated.

Without pre-empting the advice of the Independent Review Panel, it is anticipated that contributions and submissions made by State Service employees will be welcomed and confidential. The purpose of the inquiry is to learn from the situation and to make recommendations for improvement.

**Question 4**

The Premier has publicly stated he hopes that we will be in a position well before the end of the COVID-19 pandemic to progress the inquiry, noting the immediate focus is on managing the State of Emergency and keeping Tasmanians safe.

APPROVED/NOT APPROVED

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Peter Gutwein MP  
**Premier**

Date: 21.5.20