

Additional Submission by Catholic Women's League Tas. Inc. in response to

Working with Children and Other Vulnerable People, Checking System for Tasmania Consultation Report 2010

Catholic Women's League has valued the opportunity to submit responses to the Discussion Paper on this matter, released in February 2010.

However we regard some matters we raised as having been dealt with inadequately in the subsequent Report.

Our concerns focus the following statement in the Executive Summary which we consider to be too vague:

- concern that screening needs to be one of a number of strategies to ensure safe environments for vulnerable people, and a desire for the screening unit to have broader responsibilities including building capacity in organisations to minimise risk.

1)

We believe that the Report should call for more measures to screen people who apply to work with children and other vulnerable people.

In order to make an informed decision about whether to employ a person, we see the need to have not only screening for criminal records, but mandatory screening of previous employment records and associations.

Whilst this may seem intrusive, it is justifiable to enable employers to comply with duty of care responsibilities. For example, previous behaviour or associations might designate a person as suitable in a particular self help group, but not in a childcare centre.

2)

A person may be employed and subsequently demonstrate abusive behaviour or lack of respect towards children and other vulnerable people. This may become apparent to fellow workers, family or others.

In the event that concerns are not responded to by management, there should be provision of an alternative avenue for independent assessment.

These are two strategies which we believe should be among those to come into effect, as foreshadowed in the Executive Summary.