



Government of **Western Australia**
 Department for **Child Protection**
 and **Family Support**

Our ref: 2017/4609
 Enquiries: REDACTED

Ms Gail Furness
 Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse
 GPO Box 5283
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Ms Furness

ROYAL COMMISSION INTO INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSES TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE PUBLIC HEARING – CASE STUDY 51 – RECORDING OF PSYCHOLOGISTS AS REFERRAL SOURCES FOR CHILD PROTECTION NOTIFICATIONS

The Department for Child Protection and Family Support (the Department) has received the *Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse's* (the Royal Commission's) request for additional information in relation to the availability of psychologist mandatory reporting data. This request was generated from a statement made by the Department's Director General at a hearing on 8 March 2017 for Case Study 51 (hearing transcript - 26407:4-17).

The Department's submission in relation to this request is as follows:

- In Western Australia, under the *Children and Community Services Act 2004* (the Act), Part 4 Division 9A, mandatory reports of child sexual abuse can be received from teachers, police officers, doctors, nurses, midwives and boarding facility supervisors.
- There are two main ways that referrers can submit a child protection report (including a mandatory report):
 - using the online *Mandatory Reporting Information System*; or
 - directly to the Department.
- If a psychologist does report a concern for a child using the online system they would select 'Other' under the list of professions within the system. The report would be considered as a 'non-mandatory report'. As the selection of 'Other' would also be used for a range of other professionals, the Department cannot specifically identify the number of psychologists who attempted to make a mandatory report.
- When a psychologist refers a concern for a child directly to the Department they are recorded as either a 'Social Welfare Professional' or 'Other Health Professional'. Therefore, as above, the Department is unable to identify the number of psychologists who made a direct report.
- The Department will consider into the future having a dedicated psychologist category available within both its referral, and referral recording, processes.
- The Department will also consider the inclusion of psychologists to the list of mandatory reporters under the regular review of the Act.

Office of the Director General
 189 Royal Street, East Perth WA 6004 (PO Box 6334, East Perth WA 6892)
 Tel REDACTED Fax REDACTED

Thank you for your inquiry. If you have any further questions, please contact Ms Kate Glancy, Deputy State Solicitor, on 08 9264 1895 or k.glancy@sso.wa.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emma White', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

EMMA WHITE
DIRECTOR GENERAL

31st March 2017