



Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety

Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2022-2023

ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

Asked by Mr Peter Cain MLA on 17 November 2023: Mr Aaron Hughes, Public Trustee and Guardian, took on notice the following questions:

Reference: Hansard [uncorrected] proof transcript 17 November 2023 [page no 2-3]

In relation to: Estate Settlement length

THE CHAIR: Have estates ever taken ten years or more to settle?

Mr A Hughes: Depends on—in terms of the bulk of the estate, no, but there are—I am aware there are circumstances where, for example, we are not able to locate beneficiaries of an estate, and so can take a longer period of time. I am quite happy to take it on notice as to whether we have had other instances of an estate taking that long, but not to my knowledge.

THE CHAIR: That would be useful and perhaps the reasons it has taken so long.

Mr A Hughes: Yes. Happy to do that, happy to take that on notice.

THE CHAIR: And any other details you are able to provide given privacy considerations.

Public Trustee and Guardian: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:—

As at 23 November 2023, the Public Trustee and Guardian's systems have identified one estate administration that has taken more than 10 years. This estate involves:

- A lengthy and complicated land and real property matter
- Complex taxation issues, and
- The requirement for a Deed of Family arrangement as the beneficiaries wished for the estate to be distributed differently than stipulated in the Will.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Aaron Hughes', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Signature:

Date: 27 November 2023

By the Public Trustee and Guardian, Mr Aaron Hughes