



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON VOLUNTARY ASSISTED DYING BILL

Ms Suzanne Orr MLA (Chair), Ms Leanne Castley (Deputy Chair),

Mr Andrew Braddock MLA, Mr Ed Cocks MLA, Dr Marisa Paterson MLA

Submission Cover Sheet

Inquiry into the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2023

Submission Number: 070.2

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**ACT
Policing**

Our Reference: EC23-000254

Thursday, 25 January 2024

Ms Suzanne Orr MLA
Chair of the Select Committee of the Inquiry into the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2023
The Legislative Assembly of the ACT
GPO Box 1020
Canberra ACT 2601

By email:
LACommitteeVAD@parliament.act.gov.au

Dear Ms Orr

ACT Policing's response to statements in Submission 70 to the Inquiry into the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2023

Thank you for your letter dated 21 December 2023 regarding Submission 70 provided by Ms Corrine Vale and Mr Jim Williams. Please be assured your correspondence was treated in confidence and with the upmost respect. I appreciate the opportunity to provide a response to the statements made in the extract of Submission 70, and those claims levelled at ACT Policing.

Please be advised that the matter of Ms Ros Williams' death is currently before the Coroner and is therefore subject to an ongoing police investigation on behalf of the Coroner. Given this, I am not able to respond to the statements made regarding Ms Williams death on 27 April 2023, or the events following. Any questions the Committee may have in relation to the investigation should be directed to the Coroner.

I am at liberty to respond to the statements made regarding the check welfare conducted by ACT Policing on the evening of 24 April 2023. ACT Policing's officers have an obligation to the community and duty of care to physically check the welfare of a person if a concern is reported to police. ACT Policing can confirm that police responded to such a request made by Ms Williams' palliative care Doctor who expressed concerns for the welfare of her patient. ACT Policing's records indicate two police officers and one team leader attended Ms Williams' place of residence to conduct the check welfare. The three officers identified the sensitive nature of the situation and adjusted their response in a manner that was appropriate under the circumstances. It is usual practice and proportionate to the reported circumstances for a team leader to attend a check welfare in which a person has threatened to take their own life.

Business area

/ Postal or physical address

/ Email: Name.FamilyName@afp.gov.au

I can also advise that the Australian Federal Police's (AFP) Professional Standards function have not received any complaint in relation to police conduct or interactions during the incidents outlined in the extract of Submission 70. We would like to advise Ms Vale and Mr Williams that should they be dissatisfied with any conduct by ACT Policing, they are able to report concerns to the AFP's Workplace Issues and Complaints Resolution Team (Resolution Team). The Resolution Team has primary responsibility for reviewing complaints against the Australian Federal Police (AFP) and its appointees relating to misconduct or AFP practices and procedures.

The AFP has a transparent complaint management framework, which adopts the principles of best practice for complaint management as promoted by the Commonwealth Ombudsman.

To lodge a complaint, Ms Vale and Mr Williams can:

- Visit the ACT Policing complaints web page and complete the online form, which can be found at <https://www.afp.gov.au/about-us/contact-us/complaints-and-feedback/complaints>
- Phone the WICR Team answering service on (02) 5126 8323, available 7 days a week, and leave a message requesting a call back
- In person at any ACT Policing station
- Or write to:

Workplace Issues and Complaints Resolution Team
GPO Box 401
Canberra City ACT 2601

Should you wish to discuss any element of this response I encourage you to reach out to my office. Thank you once again for the opportunity to engage on this matter.

Yours sincerely,



Deputy Commissioner Neil Gaughan APM
Chief Police Officer for the ACT

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