

Legislative Council



MEDIA RELEASE

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Environment and Public Affairs Committee: Inquiry into past forced adoptive policies and practices

On 22 February 2023, in its Report No. 61, the Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs announced the commencement of an Inquiry into past forced adoptive policies and practices. The terms of reference for the Inquiry are:

To inquire into the past adoptive policies and practices of the twentieth century, notably the years between 1939 and 1980.

In particular, the Committee will seek to:

1. understand the lived experiences of those affected by historical forced adoption practices
2. examine the role of the State Government, health services and private institutions in these practices
3. identify what measures are currently available to assist persons experiencing distress, their effectiveness, and how those persons may be supported further
4. consider any other matter that arises during the course of the inquiry deemed to be relevant by the Committee.

A well-publicised call for submissions was made. By the closing date of 16 June, 101 submissions had been received. A further 15 have been received and accepted since.

Chair of the Committee, Hon Peter Foster MLC, said:

The Committee has been satisfied with the number of the submissions received so far and they have been very helpful in informing the Committee. The Committee has made it clear that late submissions would be considered. Members have been aware from the beginning of this process that people affected by past forced adoptive policies and practices might find it difficult to make a written submission to the inquiry by that closing date of 16 June 2023. Further, the Committee have been made aware that some potential submitters have experienced delays in obtaining relevant documentation relevant to their

past. I want to assure anyone who would like to submit to the inquiry that they can do so.

The Committee will now begin processing the submissions received, and will commence hearings with witnesses who elected to appear before the Committee in the near future.

For media inquiries, contact Hon Peter Foster, Chair on 0412 459 454.

Other inquiries to Ms Kate Keegan, Committee Clerk on (08) 9222 7231.

Further information regarding the Committee and the Inquiry is available at [Committee Details \(parliament.wa.gov.au\)](http://parliament.wa.gov.au)

Hon Peter Foster
Chair