



DERRYN HINCH'S  
**JUSTICE  
PARTY**

## Child Sex Offender Limited Disclosure Scheme and Online Grooming Education Recommended by Committee

7 September 2021

Derryn Hinch's Justice Party MPs Stuart Grimley and Tania Maxwell have welcomed the Inquiry into the Management of Sex Offender Information report that was handed down today by the Legal and Social Issues Committee. The Party was disappointed, however, that it did not recommend the establishment of a public child sex offender register.

The report featured two particular recommendations, including:

1. That the Victorian Government refers to the Victorian Law Reform Commission an inquiry into the circumstances in which a limited public disclosure scheme for registered sex offenders could be trialled; and
2. That the Department of Education and Training develops best practice guidelines for the provision of education aimed at preventing child sexual abuse in all its forms, including online grooming.

The national leader of Derryn Hinch's Justice Party took issue with some of the report's findings and recommendations and echoed Stuart Grimley's disappointment that nowhere did it advocate a public register of convicted sex offenders – a founding issue for the Justice Party. 'The public, parents, have a right to know when, and where, convicted paedophiles are in their community'.

### Leader of the Party, Derryn Hinch, also said:

'The overall theme in the report seems to pay as much, if not more, attention to the rehabilitation of a paedophile than to the innocent victims. I do not believe a child sex offender can be rehabilitated. And I say to those who do "would you let a convicted child molester babysit your child".'

As for the argument that a public register would send offenders underground, he says; 'They already are'.

**The recommendation to trial a limited disclosure scheme** was based upon evidence the inquiry heard regarding the United Kingdom's Disclosure Scheme. This scheme allows a parent to formally ask the police whether someone who has contact with their child or children has a record for child sexual offences or poses a risk to the child or children for some other reason, if they have adequate reason. This is commonly referred to as 'Sarah's Law' in memory of 8-year-old Sarah Payne who was abducted, sexually assaulted and murdered in 2000 in the UK.

**In relation to the recommendation for online grooming education:** The report recommends that a 'best practice model' for online grooming education is developed for Victorian schools. The Party welcomes this with open arms as Mr Grimley had called for such a scheme in the past in response to the Government's rollout of laptops and iPads to every child in the state: with this should come great responsibility, including mandating online grooming education.

A further point of interest raised during the Inquiry was from Robert Jones from the UK's National Crime Agency, who spoke about the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre App. ClickCEOP is designed to keep kids safe on social networks and free from exploitation by providing a reporting tool for such behaviour. Mr Jones [stated](#) that in 2020–21 there were 1,245 children safeguarded as a result of that reporting tool. This is a fantastic result with over 1200 children kept safe from sexual abuse.

The Party was not surprised that the Western Australian disclosure scheme rebutted the argument about public child sex offender registers inciting vigilantism, with only three people charged with vigilante offences since the program's inception in 2012; a rate of 0.000075% against the number of times it has been accessed.



DERRYN HINCH'S  
**JUSTICE  
PARTY**

Among other evidence given to the Inquiry was Dr Karen Gelb in her submission who spoke of an Australian study which examined the perceptions of sex offenders which found that around 73% of participants supported access to sex offender registers by parents or carers of children.

The inquiry heard from victim-survivors, previous offenders, academics, local and international justice agencies, and advocates for child safety.

A National Child Sex Offender Register is formal Federal Government policy - one of Derryn Hinch's biggest achievements.

### **Quotes Attributable to Stuart Grimley MP:**

"I am disappointed the report doesn't recommend a public child sex offender register, despite a number of witnesses supporting it.

Our Party is all about putting children first, above the rights of convicted sex offenders and we will not stop advocating for the rights of all sex abuse victims and all those who are vulnerable to the exploits of these hideous creatures.

Sexual abuse against children continues. Sexual predators are out there, grooming those whose innocence is being exploited and waiting to strike. They are out there, and you are kidding yourselves if you think otherwise.

I'm pleased to see the Committee has recommended a referral to the VLRC to investigate how a trial for a Limited Child Sex Offender Disclosure Scheme could be implemented in Victoria and the development of a best practice model for online grooming education. I look forward to working with the Government to implement these changes."

### **Quotes Attributable to Tania Maxwell MP:**

"Our party has never wavered. Mechanisms that strengthen protections for our children from sexual predators remain our priority. It's imperative that these are robust, defensible and entirely centred on our kids."

#### **Office of Stuart Grimley Media Contact:**

Callum Whitehead / 0437 096 982 / [callum.whitehead@parliament.vic.gov.au](mailto:callum.whitehead@parliament.vic.gov.au)

#### **Office of Tania Maxwell Media Contact:**

Jamie Kronborg / 0409 912 967 / [Jamie.kronborg@parliament.vic.gov.au](mailto:Jamie.kronborg@parliament.vic.gov.au)