

30 June 2022

Desmond Blurton  
Seamus Doherty

By email: [wallyupfreo@gmail.com](mailto:wallyupfreo@gmail.com)

Dear Mr Blurton and Mr Doherty,

## DEATHS IN CUSTODY WATCH COMMITTEE WA

I refer to your appeal to the Law Society of Western Australia.

We thank you for your letter seeking support from the Law Society regarding matters pertaining to the rights of the Aboriginal people, specifically; 'prisoner, incarceration, their welfare and livelihood'.

Your correspondence refers to several specific concerns including:

- The low numbers of Aboriginal people serving on juries
- Police training and personnel issues
- Police harassment of First Nations people
- Changes to procedures following a death in custody to include Elders participating in an investigations
- No incarceration for defaulting on fines and infringements

The Law Society acknowledges your concerns, many of which may be more appropriately addressed via direct contact with relevant government authorities, including the West Australian Police Force and Department of Justice to advocate for specific law reform initiatives.

The Law Society is committed to continuing support of law reform initiatives that investigate and recommend therapeutic and preventative approaches to improve interactions Aboriginal and / or Torres Strait Islander people have with the legal system, by:

- Promoting the rights of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples to empowerment, identity and culture; and
- Promoting review and amendment of legislation, policies and other practices that discriminate against Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The Law Society recognises the importance of diversity on juries and is committed to supporting any government or community initiative that would assist Aboriginal people in being able to regularly serve on juries.

If you have any queries please contact Mary Woodford, General Manager Advocacy and Professional Development on (08) 9324 8646 or [mwoodford@lawsocietywa.asn.au](mailto:mwoodford@lawsocietywa.asn.au)

Yours sincerely



Rebecca Lee  
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