

**ENGENDER EQUALITY  
ADVOCATES FOR CHANGE PROGRAM DISCUSSION PAPER LAUNCH  
REMARKS BY  
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC  
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA  
GOVERNMENT HOUSE, THURSDAY 2 MARCH 2023**

Good afternoon. I warmly welcome you all to this Engender Equality Advocates for Change Program research discussion paper launch.

I pay my respects to the traditional and original owners of this land: the palawa people. I acknowledge the contemporary Tasmanian Aboriginal community and recognise their continued connection to land, sea, and waters. I acknowledge the impacts of colonisation upon our First People and commit to a future that listens to and respects Aboriginal stories, culture and history.

I shall be brief in my remarks as we have a number of speakers who will discuss aspects of this research discussion paper.

I am pleased that Government House is the venue for this launch. My predecessor Professor the Honourable Kate Warner worked closely with you as your Patron under your former title, SHE – Support Help Empowerment.

In my time as a judge of the Federal Circuit Court of Australia, and before that as a legal practitioner, I specialised in family law and relationship matters. In those roles, I was and continue to be, acutely aware of the prevalence and issues about family violence and wherever I can, I try to raise awareness about its devastating impact on victims and their families.

This discussion paper was instigated by Alina Thomas “as part of supporting (Erin’s) research dissertation and an emerging opportunity for broader discussion in the family violence sector to explore the issue of misidentification in Tasmania.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Misidentification of the Predominant Aggressor in Tasmania: Practitioner perspectives from Engender Equality Research Discussion Paper: December 2022, Background Summary page 4.

Erin Deverell points out in her paper that despite legislators and advocates being aware of the issue of misidentification of victim-survivors for some time, misidentification has only recently entered the published literature.

Erin's paper details "a collection of qualitative unstructured interviews conducted by her..." and "...a collection of case studies prepared by (family violence) practitioners which explored the experiences of four clients who had lived experience of misidentification."<sup>2</sup>

In raising the issue of misidentification of the main aggressor by police, Erin makes recommendations, including: collaboration between police officers and family violence specialist services; specialist family violence training for police to explore the issue of misidentification; and further research to explore misidentification across the wider service systems.

This paper is a reminder of the importance of Engender Equality's work in raising issues of complexity in respect of family violence.

Thank you all for attending this launch. I shall hand over to David now.

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid page 4.