1. On 6 June 2022, the Queensland Government announced the Commission of Inquiry into Forensic DNA Testing in Queensland (Commission of Inquiry). The Commission of Inquiry released its Final Report on 13 December 2022, which highlighted organisational and individual staff deficiencies and found that, in some cases, the methods, systems and processes used by the Queensland forensic DNA laboratory were not best practice.
2. The Final Report made 123 recommendations ranging from remedial technical (laboratory) activities, through to major systematic changes in operations and structure, including establishment of a new forensic science institute, under statute, within the justice portfolio.
3. On 15 December 2022, the Queensland Government accepted all 123 recommendations in principle as part of the interim Government response and approved a funding package of
$95.05 million to support their implementation.
4. As part of the immediate Queensland Government response, Queensland Health is establishing a new interim organisational structure for the delivery of forensic DNA services, to be known as ‘Forensic Science Queensland’ (FSQ). An interim Chief Executive Officer has been appointed to lead FSQ.
5. An Advisory Board will provide strategic oversight from a whole-of-sector perspective to support the establishment and operations of FSQ and ensure accountability, transparency, and strong governance. The Board will comprise 12 to 14 members, representing a broad cross section of criminal justice stakeholders, including relevant government agencies, legal and scientific professionals, and victim advocacy.
6. An Interim Advisory Board will be headed by independent Co-Chairs with significant knowledge and experience in the criminal justice system. Mr Walter Sofronoff KC, a former President of the Court of Appeal (and the Commissioner who conducted the Commission of Inquiry) and Ms Julie Dick, a former Children’s Court of Queensland President are considered to be appointed to the Co-Chair roles.
7. In addition to the immediate organisational and governance actions outlined above, an overarching framework has been developed to guide the ongoing implementation of all Final Report recommendations toward the permanent establishment of FSQ.
8. Cabinet noted the *Final Report – Commission of Inquiry into Forensic DNA Testing in Queensland.*
9. Cabinet noted that, as part of the initial response to the Final Report, an Interim Advisory Board be established to oversee forensic DNA services in Queensland, which will be jointly responsible to both the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services and the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence.
10. Cabinet endorsed the appointment of Mr Walter Sofronoff KC and Ms Julie Dick SC as Co-Chairs of the Forensic Science Queensland Interim Advisory Board.
11. Cabinet noted an overarching Implementation Framework has been developed to guide the further and ongoing implementation of the Final Report recommendations.
12. *Attachments*:
* [Final Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Forensic DNA Testing in Queensland](https://dpcqld.sharepoint.com/sites/DPC-CABINETSERVICES/Shared%20Documents/General/Proactive%20Release/ToBeProcessed/2023/Jan/ForensicDNA/Attachments/Report.PDF)