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Strategic Legislation and Policy  
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16 May 2019

**Re: Section 194K Evidence Act 2001 - publication of details in sexual offence proceedings**

To whom it may concern,

Thank-you for the opportunity to comment on proposed changes to Section 194K of the Evidence Act 2001 (Tas), concerning restrictions on the publication of details in sexual offence proceedings.

Australian Women Against Violence Alliance (AWAVA) is one of the six National Women's Alliances funded by the Australian Government to bring together women's organisations and individuals across Australia to share information, identify issues and contribute to solutions. AWAVA's focus is on responding to and preventing violence against women and their children. AWAVA's role is to ensure that women's voices and particularly marginalised women's voices are heard by government, and to amplify the work of its member organisations and Friends and Supporters. AWAVA's members include organisations from every State and Territory in Australia, representing domestic and family violence services, sexual assault services, services for women in the sex industry and women's legal services, as well as organisations representing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, young women, women educators and other groups. AWAVA's contract manager is the Women's Services Network (WESNET).

AWAVA's view is that people who are complainants in sexual offence proceedings should have the right to speak publicly about their experiences and to identify themselves, subject to reasonable limitations.

We agree with both EROC and the Sexual Assault Support Service that people should be able to exercise this right as long as they are over 18 years of age and are capable of giving informed consent, and as long as publicising their name and/or details would not identify or be likely to identify other complainants or alleged victims in the same or other sexual offence proceedings, where those other people have not given consent, are not able to give informed consent or are under 18 years of age.

We acknowledge that there are different views about the processes that may be put in place to authorise self-identification. Here we simply wish to emphasise that as long as the conditions noted above have been met, the right to choose should sit with the person who has been subjected to sexual violence.

Thank-you once again for the opportunity to provide input to your consultation. Please contact me via the details below if you would like to discuss our comments further.

Yours faithfully,



Dr Merrindah Andrew  
Program Manager  
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