



Tuesday, 09 March 2021 | FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Redfern Legal Centre calls on NSW Police to release Alleged Sexual Assault Investigation Guidelines

In response to comments made by NSW Police Commissioner Mick Fuller on ABC Radio National this week, Redfern Legal Centre (RLC) is calling on NSW Police to release internal operating procedures that guide police on the steps to apply when commencing an investigation into an alleged sexual assault.

RLC Police Accountability solicitor Samantha Lee states, "Redfern Legal Centre often advises women who have reported an alleged sexual assault to NSW Police in situations where police have decided not to investigate.

"These women are often upset and frustrated because they are not informed about how police came to the decision to not take their matter any further."

Over the recent weeks, there has been much needed discussion about police investigations into alleged sexual assaults.

RLC says the release of guidelines that assist police to come to a decision where there is 'insufficient admissible evidence' to prosecute a sexual assault allegation is particularly critical.

"The journey through the justice system begins with police. Police are the first port of call. What happens at the beginning of that journey can greatly impact where that journey leads," Ms Lee said.

Ms Lee further states, "Redfern Legal Centre is of the view that greater transparency is required to inform the public about the steps NSW Police should take to gather evidence, especially at the initial reporting stage, to ensure there is sufficient evidence to seek the Department of Public Prosecutions' advice."

"To ensure a safe and dignified pathway for women and men to report such allegations, it is critical for NSW Police to provide the public with a clear understanding about the internal procedures and process that NSW Police follow to determine whether to commence investigations into an alleged sexual assault.

"Greater transparency of policing practices can go a long way to improving trust in policing, especially for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people," Ms Lee said.

Samantha Lee, RLC Police Accountability Solicitor is available for interview. Contact Finn O'Keefe, RLC Communications Manager: 0424 548 019 | media@rlc.org.au.

