

VICTORIAN CHILD DEATH REVIEW COMMITTEE

MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday May 29, 2008

The 13th Annual Report of the Victorian Child Death Review Committee was tabled in Parliament today.

The Victorian Child Death Review Committee is an independent body that reviews the deaths of all Victorian children known to the Child Protection system.

A total of 15 children known to Child Protection died in 2007.

“In 2007, 4 children died from acquired/congenital illness, 8 from reasons unknown or yet to be determined, one from non-accidental trauma, one from suicide and one from accident.”

Ms Carol Reeves, Chair of the Committee also said that the VCDRC had reviewed 16 child deaths during the 2007-08 reporting period. These deaths occurred over the previous two year period: 12 from 2006 and 4 from 2007.

“The majority of child deaths reviewed related to children who died from acquired or congenital illness” said Ms Reeves.

“The children predominately came from families with multiple and complex needs which reinforces the necessity for a wide range of services to work collaboratively.

“The prevalence and co-existence of mental illness, substance abuse and family violence present particular challenges for how adult focused and child focused services can work together.”

On behalf of the VCDRC, Ms Reeves extended sympathy to the families of all the children whose deaths were considered.

She also thanked the individual professionals and agencies who contributed to the reviews for their ability to critically reflect on service delivery.

Media Contact:

Loula Dounias, Executive Officer, VCDRC, 8601 5294 or 0424 030 150