

Minister for Children and Youth
Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing
Minister for Community Services
Minister for Finance

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13 NOV 2024

Hon Dr Andrew Leigh MP
Assistant Minister for Competition, Charities and Treasury
andrew.leigh@aph.gov.au

Dear Dr Leigh

I am writing as the Minister for Community Services, with responsibility for encouraging the inclusion, respect and dignity of LGBTIQ+ Tasmanians.

The Tasmanian Government is committed to implementing the Australian Bureau of Statistics Standards for Sex, Gender, Variations of Sex Characteristics and Sexual Orientation Variables (the ABS Standards). All Tasmanian Government agencies are developing two-year action plans to implement the ABS Standards, with the work being driven through the Gender, Sex, Variations of Sex Characteristics and Sexual Orientation Reform (GSVS) Steering Committee.

Ideally, collection of Tasmanian data on sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics should have corresponding national data for Tasmanian Government agencies, social services and businesses to access and compare against. Population-based health and wellbeing data can help inform the Tasmanian Government's strategic priorities and responses.

Representatives from Tasmanian LGBTIQ+ communities have shared with me their welcoming of the Australian Government's decision to include a new topic of sexual orientation and gender in the 2026 Census.

I encourage you to listen to LGBTIQ+ representatives and advocates as they share their concerns that the 2026 Census will not count intersex Australians and their wishes for the Australian Government to work as hard as possible to enable the inclusion of a question, noting the technical complexity.

LGBTIQ+ Tasmanians have also raised their concerns that the new sexual orientation and gender question will only be asked of people aged 16 and over. They have shared their wish for the Australian Government to consider lowering the age of respondents to 15 as consistent with the ABS Standards.

Our Government is working with LGBTIQ+ representatives to develop a new Tasmanian LGBTIQ+ Framework and Action Plan. We look forward to continuing to work alongside the Commonwealth Government to encourage equality for LGBTIQ+ communities.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "R. Jaensch", written over a light blue circular scribble.

Hon Roger Jaensch MP
Minister for Community Services

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