

## We agree with you Minister – Pru Goward on ABC Radio on 13 June 2018 “I have to go”

Pru Goward said “I have to go” when she decided to terminate an interview on ABC radio after the questions about the Tune Report became too probing – see link [HERE](#).

The PSA agrees with you Minister that you do indeed “have to go”; from the Family and Community Services portfolio for the following reasons:

1. You and your government refused to release the Tune Report and now you’re blaming everyone but yourself and your Ministerial colleagues;
2. You preside over a child protection system that fails the very children and young people the system is supposed to protect – in the words of Mr Tune, it is not client-centred, does not improve outcomes for children and families with complex needs and the current out-of-home-care system is unsustainable;
3. You failed to properly resource the NSW child protection system;
4. You abrogated your responsibility to Aboriginal children in care;
5. Your blind ideologically driven decision on the privatisation of out-of-home-care has seen the costs increase for a child in the care of an NGO to \$41,000 per annum compared with \$27,000 in the care of FACS.
6. You proceeded to implement ChildStory which is a \$120 million disaster against advice from the PSA that it was not ready to Go Live;
7. You preside over a Department obsessed with secrecy and driven by productivity measures and unit costs rather than what is best for vulnerable children and young people – but despite chronic underfunding FACS caseworkers still managed to restore more than twice as many children to their parents compared to those in outsourced services.
8. You and your Department allow caseworkers to carry excessive and unsafe caseloads placing their own health at risk as a result;
9. You and your Department have done nothing to assist caseworkers experiencing vicarious and secondary trauma as a result of the demanding work they do; and
10. You and your Department consistently fail to consult with stakeholders whether that is key Aboriginal organisations such as AbSec or the PSA.

It could have been different if you and your government had released the Tune Report and entered into genuine consultation to drive whole-of-system reform, so that vulnerable children and young people are front and centre of every decision made by you and the FACS executive. You failed this critical test and now it is time to take your own advice and go.

We don’t agree with all aspects of the Tune Report – certainly not proposals which indicate a NDIS approach to the child protection services.



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We’ve seen from the roll-out of the NDIS that undertaking actuarial studies to determine lifetime costs of care was good in theory but flawed in terms of delivery when we are now seeing so many examples of individuals with complex needs missing out on vital services.

The PSA also fundamentally opposes the Tune report’s recommendation that child protection and OOHC should operate in a competitive market. The report states “over time, it is envisaged that a competitive market would evolve to deliver high quality, evidence based, and efficient services” (page 39) for children at risk of harm and children in OOHC.

This is privatisation and outsourcing at its extreme and absolutely not what we want for child protection services.

Minister, your actions have made the PSA more determined than ever to fight to keep child protection in the safe hands of a well-resourced public sector and we will challenge all political parties to reform the child protection system in the lead up to next year’s state election.

The Tune Report is available at [www.psa.asn.au/tunereport](http://www.psa.asn.au/tunereport).

