

Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly appointed to inquire into the condition of the Fremantle and Whitby Falls Lunatic Asylums, Colony of Western Australia

17 October 1900 – 21 November 1900

Other Names: • Vosper Committee

Details

The Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly appointed to inquire into the condition of the Fremantle and Whitby Falls Lunatic Asylums found that the Fremantle Asylum 'was so unfitted for its purpose that its defects could not be remedied, and that there must be an entirely new building'. Whitby Falls was useful as a 'labour colony, but for nothing else'.

Named for its chairman, the Vosper Committee made five recommendations, none of which were targeted at improving the outcomes for children or young people in the asylums:

- Demolish the Fremantle Asylum
- Build a new asylum on a suitable site, easily accessible from Perth and Fremantle
- Staff the new asylum with people experienced in the 'management of the insane'
- Immediately appoint a full time medical officer to the Fremantle Asylum
- Attach 'reception houses' to police stations so that people of 'doubtful sanity could be detained until their fitness for release could be ascertained'.

When Parliament was prorogued without debating the report, Vosper 'urged on the Government, in the name of humanity and in the name of Christianity, the necessity of bringing about a reform of those institutions' (*Hansard* 5 December 1900, p.2138).

More info

Related Entries

Related Organisations

- [Fremantle Asylum \(1857 - 1909\)](#)
- [Whitby Falls Hospital \(1897 - 1972\)](#)

Resources

- *Report of the Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly appointed to inquire into the Condition of the Fremantle and Whitby Falls Lunatic Asylums*, Western Australia: Votes and Proceedings, 1900
 - Swain, Shurlee, [*History of Australian inquiries reviewing institutions providing care for children*](#), October 2014
-

You can view this page online by visiting <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/entity/select-committee-of-the-legislative-assembly-appointed-to-inquire-into-the-condition-of-the-fremantle-and-whitby-falls-lunatic-asylums/>