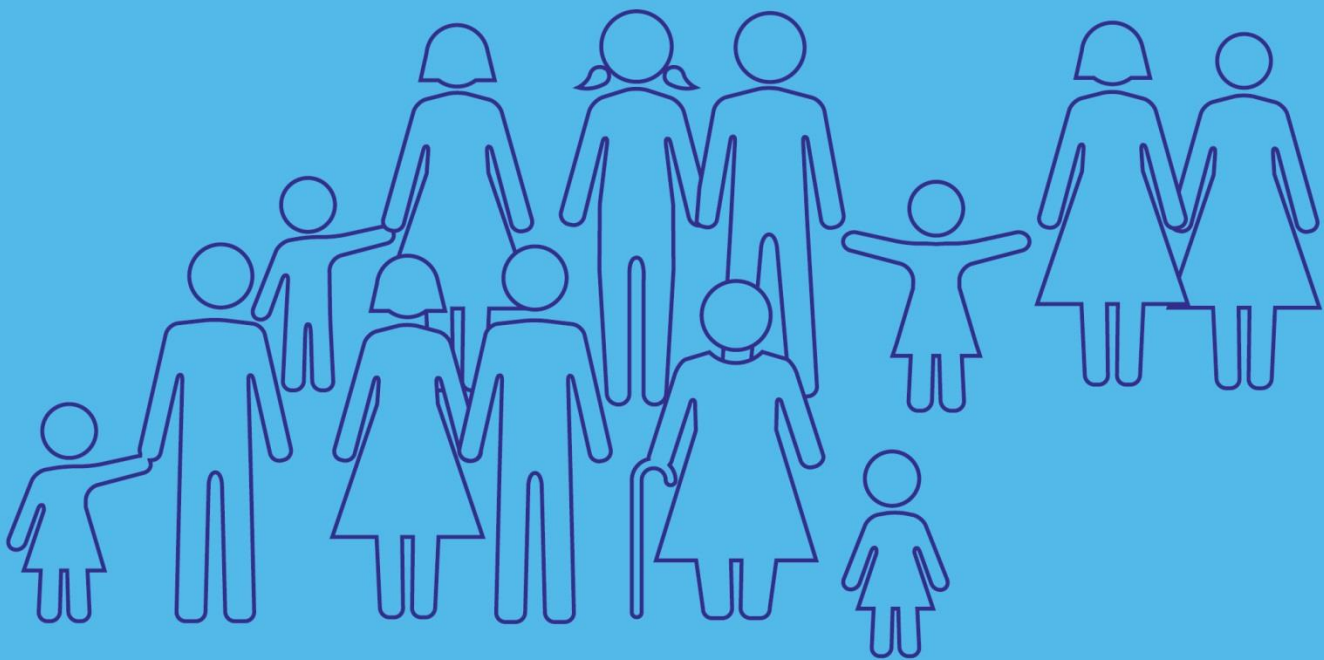


2015–16 Annual Progress Report

Second Action Plan 2013–16, Moving Ahead

All Australian governments are strongly committed to working together to achieve a significant and sustained reduction in violence against woman and their children.



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Foreword

The *2015–16 Annual Progress Report* is the last progress report of the *Second Action Plan 2013–2016, Moving Ahead*, under the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–2022*.

The Second Action Plan builds on the efforts and foundations of the First Action Plan — strengthening existing infrastructure and services to trial and forge new paths ahead.

This report outlines the significant efforts of the Australian, state and territory governments to reduce violence against women and their children.

It describes activities undertaken between July 2015 and June 2016 that are advancing the 26 practical actions under the Second Action Plan, including joint initiatives.

The report also reinforces the commitment of all governments to work together, learn from combined experience, and continue to reduce violence against women and their children.

Signatories

The Hon Christian Porter MP

Minister for Social Services

Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash

Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Public Service, Minister for Women and Minister for Employment, Australian Government

The Hon Yvette Berry MLA

Minister for Housing, Community Services and Social Inclusion, Minister for Multicultural and Youth Affairs, Minister for Sport and Recreation, Minister for Women, Australian Capital Territory

The Hon Prudence (Pru) Goward MP

Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Medical Research, Assistant Minister for Health, Minister for Women, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, New South Wales

The Hon Dale Wakefield MLA

Minister for Territory Families, Northern Territory

The Hon Shannon Fentiman MP

Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, Queensland

The Hon Zoe Bettison MP

Minister for Communities and Social Inclusion, Minister for Social Housing, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Ageing, Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Minister for Youth, Minister for Volunteers, South Australia

The Hon Jacquie Petrusma MP

Minister for Human Services, Minister for Women, Tasmania

The Hon Fiona Richardson MP

Minister for Women, Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence, Victoria

The Hon Andrea Mitchell MLA

Minister for Mental Health; Child Protection, Western Australia

Introduction

Australia is approaching the mid-point of implementing the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–2022* and we have achieved a great deal.

We envisaged that by this point, cultural change would be advancing and more victims of domestic and family violence would have the confidence to come forward.

This is now a reality.

In 2015–16 there has been unprecedented media attention and community focus on violence against women and their children.

There has also been an intensifying national conversation about how we can stop violence against women from occurring in the first place.

In 2015 the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreed to take urgent and collective action to reduce violence against women and their children. Following this agreement, there have been significant achievements by all levels of government in advancing the COAG priorities of:

- *a Model Law Framework for Domestic Violence Orders*: where domestic violence orders (DVOs) will be automatically recognised and enforceable in any state or territory of Australia
- *a national information sharing system*: that will support the model law framework and enable courts and police in different states and territories to share information on active DVOs
- *National Perpetrator Standards*: to ensure perpetrators of violence against women are held to account consistently across Australia
- *a national campaign*: to galvanise the community to change the attitudes of young people to violence — this campaign builds on the latest research and efforts already underway by states and territories
- *better targeting technology*: including actions to limit the increased use of technology to facilitate abuse against women.

The COAG Advisory Panel on Reducing Violence against Women and their Children was established in 2015 to support this national work. The third and final report of the Advisory Panel was provided to COAG on 1 April 2016.

COAG has given its in-principle support for the areas of focus identified by the panel and has also agreed that its recommendations be considered as part of the development of the Third Action Plan to be launched in 2016.

There have also been significant advances and efforts in all jurisdictions above and beyond their COAG commitments, including unprecedented funding commitments to improve the safety of women and their children.

This report outlines the activities and accomplishments of the Australian, state and territory governments under the following five national priority areas of the Second Action Plan:

1. drive whole-of-community action to prevent violence
2. understand diverse experiences of violence
3. support innovative services and integrated systems
4. improve perpetrator interventions
5. continue to build the evidence base.

Second Action Plan national priorities

This section of the report summarises actions under each national priority of the Second Action Plan. Cross-jurisdictional initiatives are listed first, followed by state and territory contributions (in alphabetical order) and then Australian Government initiatives.

National priority one

Driving whole-of-community action to prevent violence

Violence against women and their children is an issue that impacts the whole community. There is strong momentum in the community to reject inequality and violence, and to drive a change in attitudes and behaviour to ensure women and their children are safe.

The National Plan aims to prevent violence and sexual assault by raising awareness, engaging the community and building respectful relationships. The Second Action Plan has continued to build on national services that will drive primary prevention over the life of the National Plan.

National priority one actions:

1. Support communities to prevent, respond to and speak out against violence, through local government, businesses, community and sporting groups, schools and key institutions.
2. Improve media engagement on violence against women and their children, and the representation of women experiencing violence, at a national and local level.
3. Take the next step to reduce violence against women and their children by promoting gender equality across a range of spheres, including women's economic independence and leadership.
4. Support young people through *The Line* campaign and by addressing issues relating to the sexualisation of children.

-
5. Build on the findings of the respectful relationships evaluation, to strengthen the design and delivery of respectful relationship programs, and implement them more broadly.
 6. Incorporate respectful relationships education into the national curriculum.
 7. Enhance online safety for children and young people.

Progress against national priority one actions 2015–16

National priority one action 1: Supporting communities to prevent, respond to and speak out against violence

Stop it at the start campaign — all jurisdictions

On 25 November 2015 the Australian Government released confronting research highlighting the need for all Australians to challenge the negative attitudes that can lead to violence against women. The research, by Taylor Nelson Sofres, shows that although the vast majority of Australians agree domestic violence is wrong, too often influencers of young people minimise disrespectful behaviours and instances of gender inequality. In doing so, people can unwittingly excuse the behaviour in boys, and teach girls to accept it. This research informed the campaign.

In 2015 COAG agreed to jointly fund the \$30 million primary prevention campaign to reduce violence against women and their children. *Stop it at the start* launched on 20 April 2016 and focuses on how people and communities can positively influence the attitudes of young people, aged 10 to 17, towards violence and gender inequality.

Our Watch — Australian Government, Victoria, Queensland, Tasmania, Northern Territory, Australian Capital Territory

The Tasmanian, Queensland, South Australian, Northern Territory and Australian Capital Territory governments started funding Our Watch during 2014–16. The Australian and Victorian Governments had established Our Watch in June 2013 to drive nation-wide change in the culture, behaviours and power imbalances that lead to violence against women and their children. The Australian and Victorian Governments have each committed more than \$5 million in base funding over five years (2012–13 to 2016–17) to support Our Watch operations and to deliver primary prevention activities.

ACT Education and Training Directorate funding — Australian Capital Territory

In 2015 the ACT Education and Training Directorate provided grant funding of \$2,500 per year per school. The funding is for schools to improve students' social and emotional learning, including building respectful relationships as part of primary prevention. This funding is also available in 2016–17.

A mandatory reporting training module with a specific focus on domestic and family violence has been developed and all teachers are required to complete this module in 2016.

The Directorate is also developing a webpage with information and links about domestic and family violence for parents, teachers and students.

In addition, the Directorate is providing professional learning sessions for education staff to promote understanding of the effect of trauma and adversity on the development of a child's brain, and strategies to better identify and support traumatised students with their learning. One strategy being piloted is the Trauma Understanding and Sensitive Teaching (TRUST) project. The TRUST pilot project started in April 2015 in four ACT primary schools and expanded in 2016 to include another two primary schools. The 2015 evaluation report indicated that staff found the training valuable. Further evaluations in 2016 will determine the impact of the pilot project and outcomes for students, informing implementation within other schools.

Women's Safety Grants Program — Australian Capital Territory

The Women's Safety Grants Program advances the objectives of the *ACT Prevention of Violence against Women and Children Strategies 2011–2017*. It supports projects and activities that help women and children stay safe, ensures diverse groups of women are supported, and provides early intervention and prevention programs for children and young people. The grants program is a joint initiative between the Justice and Community Safety Directorate and the Community Services Directorate. In 2015–16, a total of 12 organisations received grants, ranging from \$4,000 to \$80,000.

2016 Violence Prevention Awards — Australian Capital Territory

The 2016 Violence Prevention Awards were held on 29 June. The theme was 'Canberra unites to prevent violence against women and children'. The awards recognised contributions to best practice in partnerships, innovations and activities, which create awareness of gender-based violence and/or work to prevent violence and sexual assault against women and children in the ACT.

Adopting the philosophy that domestic violence is a whole-of-community problem requiring a whole-of-community response, the awards focused on non-traditional activities initiated by people who operate outside the specialist domestic and family violence field. Consequently, the award categories were: Media, Sports, Private sector, Community sector, and/or Education.

The wide variety of nominees reflected this philosophy, with winners including radio announcers, national footballers, high profile businesses, small-scale enterprises and local community initiatives.

Local Domestic and Family Violence Committee Grants — New South Wales

In August 2015 the New South Wales Government allocated funding for Local Domestic and Family Violence Committee Grants that support the prevention of domestic and family violence at a local level. The government provides annual grants of \$1,000 to Local Domestic and Family Violence Committees across the state to:

- raise awareness in the community of the impacts of domestic and family violence
- reinforce messages about positive behaviours and social norms rejecting violence against women
- increase awareness in the local community of domestic and family violence services and assistance available.

Tackling Violence Program — New South Wales

The New South Wales Government funded a domestic violence education and prevention program that uses rugby league as a vehicle to change attitudes and behaviours to domestic violence. In 2015 approximately 1,130 men signed the code of conduct.

Player surveys in 2015 found that participating players identified the Tackling Violence Program as the trigger for discussion of domestic violence in families and communities for the first time in their lives. In 2016, a total of 21 regional rugby league clubs and two metropolitan clubs are participating in the program.

In April 2016 the New South Wales Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, the Hon Pru Goward MP, launched a video resource for the program, *Lana's Warriors*. This documentary tells the story of an Aboriginal family's domestic violence homicide and the lasting impact of this crime on the family. *Lana's Warriors* will be used in education workshops with rugby league clubs across regional New South Wales as a tool for facilitating safe discussions around domestic and family violence.

Anti-violence campaigners tour Tiwi Islands — Northern Territory

In August 2015 the Northern Territory Minister for Women's Policy, the Hon Bess Nungarrayi Price MLA, toured Pirlangimpi on the Tiwi islands, accompanied by 2015 Australian of the Year, Rosie Batty. They viewed the strong and active Women's Centre and the support framework in place to deal with the serious threats of violence in the community. The visit assisted Ms Batty in reporting back to COAG and Our Watch on the unique challenges and circumstances of Indigenous women in remote locations.

No More campaign — Northern Territory

In 2015–16 the Northern Territory Government continued to sponsor the CatholicCare *No More* initiative to reduce domestic and family violence. The Northern Territory Government purchased promotional space on Darwin buses to promote the message that men and their families can challenge domestic violence and be agents of change. Sporting organisations have implemented Domestic Violence Action Plans and *No More* signage has been introduced at sporting venues as part of the campaign.

An Action Against Domestic Violence Award — presented by the Northern Territory Minister for Women's Policy and Minister for Men's Policy, the Hon Bess Nungarrayi Price MLA — invites men to be agents of social change in challenging domestic and family violence and sexual assault, and to send a strong message to other men that violence against women is unacceptable.

Not Now, Not Ever campaign — Queensland

In 2016 the Queensland Government launched the *Not Now, Not Ever* campaign to raise awareness and encourage community participation, in support of Queensland's Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month, held each year in May. The campaign asks Queenslanders to take up the *Not Now, Not Ever* challenge to put an end to domestic and family violence. Promotional tools are available to help people to take up the challenge, including personalised templates and digital resources.

Against Violence campaign — Victoria

In November 2015 the Victorian Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence, the Hon Fiona Richardson MP, announced the inaugural *Victoria Against Violence* campaign. Coinciding with the 16 Days of Activism against gender-based violence, the campaign built momentum across the state by raising awareness of the issues of family violence and addressing underlying causes. A historic joint sitting of the Victorian Parliament occurred, with 2015 Australian of the Year, Rosie Batty, addressing the Parliament.

On day one of the campaign, members of the public showed their support for those affected by family violence by decorating a t-shirt with prevention messages on the steps of Victoria's Parliament House, as part of the Clothesline Project.

During the campaign the Victorian Parliament House hosted the first Listening Project. The project provided an opportunity for victims and survivors of family violence to voice their stories, and provide advice on how to improve current systems. A series of workshops covered issues including the prevention of family violence, after-trauma support, and ensuring the justice and policing system does not re-traumatise victims and survivors.

Family violence prevention projects — Victoria

The Victorian Government's 2015–16 State Budget provided \$2 million over one year for four family violence prevention projects targeted at specific settings and at-risk populations. The projects are:

- Workplace Equality and Respect Project, led by Our Watch — a program aimed at prevention of violence against women and promotion of gender equality and respect by equipping workplaces with knowledge, skills and resources to create gender equitable structures, norms and practices.

-
- Workforce Development Program on Gender and Disability project, led by Women with Disabilities Victoria — an organisational change program that builds the capacity of disability service organisations to deliver gender equitable and sensitive programs and services to improve the lives of women with disabilities.
 - Partners in Prevention Program delivered by Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria — a state-wide network of community, youth, health and education sector professionals working with children and young people, that provides state-wide leadership on respectful relationships and violence prevention education, as well as training and resources. This program builds the capacity of community organisations who work with early childhood services and primary and secondary schools, to support their delivery of respectful relationships education.
 - A local government prevention project, led by the Municipal Association of Victoria, that builds on the existing prevention of violence against women work, through the delivery of time-limited prevention initiatives.

Youth Say No! campaign — Western Australia

On 25 November 2015 the Western Australian Department for Child Protection and Family Support launched the updated *Youth Say No!* campaign. This initiative includes a redeveloped website and related publications about family and domestic violence targeting young people.

The campaign was developed in consultation with young people. The updated publications raise understanding about the importance of healthy, respectful relationships. The campaign promotes a wide range of resources and services available for those experiencing violence in the home, and for those supporting victims and survivors. In addition, the website includes a new section with learning materials for teachers to help them embed respectful relationships education in classrooms.

Building Safe Communities for Women Program — Australian Government

Building Safe Communities for Women is an Australian Government funded grants program that builds on the partnership between governments and communities established through the National Plan. The Australian Government is providing more than \$5.8 million in one-off financial support to 40 communities to assist them to create their own practical solutions to address violence against women. The program has funded diverse projects in a mix of locations, including areas with a high rate of domestic violence incidents.

Sports Grants Bank — Australian Government

The Australian Government has committed \$1 million over four years to 30 June 2018 towards the Our Watch Sports Grants Bank. Under this initiative, sporting organisations are encouraged to drive innovative work increasing awareness, addressing gender inequality and developing tools and strategies to implement change. Grants have been awarded to the Australian Football League, the National Rugby League, the Australian Rugby Union, and Netball Australia.

National priority one action 2: Improving media engagement on violence against women and their children

National Media Engagement Project — Australian Government

Our Watch received Australian Government funding of \$1 million over four years to June 2016 to deliver a National Media Engagement Project. The project aimed to improve media reporting of violence against women and raise awareness of the impacts of gender stereotyping and inequality. The project included:

- Our Watch Awards for exemplary reporting to end violence against women
- media capacity training for future and practicing journalists
- resources for journalists on the Our Watch website
- a national survivors media advocacy program.

These activities were supported and informed by a separate resource to support the sector in engaging with the media in the prevention of violence against women, formative research to develop an evidence base around media representations of violence against women and a Media Advisory Board.

National priority one action 3: Reducing violence against women and their children by promoting gender equality across a range of spheres

White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation — Queensland, Northern Territory, South Australia, Tasmania, Western Australia

A number of government departments across several jurisdictions undertook the White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation program in 2015–16. The accreditation process involved increasing staff knowledge and skills to address family and domestic violence, and enhancing the departments' capacity to respond to the issue of men's violence against women in the workplace.

Queensland

In April 2016 the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships became the first Queensland Government agency to achieve White Ribbon Accreditation. The Department of Transport and Main Roads has also achieved accreditation, and the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services is currently working through the process. Going forward, the Queensland Government has recently commenced an innovative multi-agency White Ribbon Accreditation program involving 13 participating agencies.

Northern Territory

In 2015–16 the Northern Territory Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Department of Correctional Services gained White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation, while the Department of the Attorney-General and Justice, and the Department of Local Government and Community Services undertook the accreditation process.

The Department of the Attorney-General and Justice also implemented a Domestic Violence Workplace Policy that recognises gendered violence and provides measures to support victims of domestic violence.

South Australia

The White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation process began for South Australian Government departments in 2015 and will continue into 2016–17. In 2014 the South Australian Government committed to all South Australian Government departments obtaining White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation. This builds on the individual domestic violence workplace policies all South Australian Government departments already have in place.

Tasmania

In August 2015 the Tasmanian Government made the commitment that all departments would undertake the White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation Program, under *Safe Homes, Safe Families, Tasmania's Family Violence Action Plan 2015–2020* (Safe Homes, Safe Families Action Plan). The Department of Premier and Cabinet, Department of Treasury and Finance, and Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management, all successfully completed phase one of the program.

In April 2016 the Tasmanian Training Consortium (within the Department of Premier and Cabinet) launched a whole-of-government online awareness training program for all State Service employees and officers. This will support the White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation of Tasmanian Government departments. The training program will ensure staff know where to seek support if they or a colleague experience family violence. It will also ensure staff understand their entitlements under Employment Direction No. 28, which gives all Tasmanian Government State Service employees access to family violence leave.

Western Australia

On 16 November 2015 the Western Australian Department for Child Protection and Family Support received White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation.

The Department has developed and implemented a Family and Domestic Violence Workplace Policy, procedures and supporting resources.

In June 2016 the Department was awarded a Best Practice in Corporate Social Values Achievement Award by the Institute of Public Administration Australia WA for its White Ribbon Accreditation.

2016 Women's Awards — Australian Capital Territory

In March 2016 ACT Women's Awards were announced, honouring individual women who have made an outstanding contribution to the lives of women and girls in the ACT. There are three categories: ACT Woman of the Year; ACT Senior Woman of the Year; and ACT Young Woman of the Year.

In 2016 an additional category was included to recognise the dedication of ACT women working to support women and children who experience domestic violence in the Canberra community.

Investing in Women Funding Program — New South Wales

In April 2016 the New South Wales Government invited applications for the Investing in Women Funding Program. This program provides funding for New South Wales organisations to develop and implement projects that support the economic empowerment and leadership of women in New South Wales across the three strategic directions of: work and financial security; education and learning; and leadership. Funding of up to \$25,000 per project is available, during 2016–17.

Addressing domestic and family violence in workplaces — Queensland

The Queensland Government is working closely with business, non-government organisations and all levels of government to support Queensland workplaces to prevent domestic and family violence, support affected employees, and build a culture of respect and gender equity.

In early 2016 the Queensland Government announced the Domestic and Family Violence Workplace Package, developed in response to the workforce-related actions in the *Not Now, Not Ever* Taskforce Report and the *Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2016–2026*.

The package includes a whole-of-government directive, *Support for employees affected by domestic and family violence*, developed to provide options in the workplace including 10 days paid special leave, flexible working arrangements, reasonable workplace adjustments, and counselling through government departments' employee assistance programs.

These domestic and family violence initiatives are supported by broader work on gender equality in the Queensland Public Service, including the *Queensland Public Sector Inclusion and Diversity Strategy 2015–2020*, *Queensland Public Sector Gender Equity Strategy 2015–2020* and the Constructive Workplace Cultures overview framework.

2016 Women's Week — Queensland

This year, the inaugural Queensland Women's Week ran from 7–13 March 2016. By expanding International Women's Day into a week-long, state-wide series of activities, greater numbers of Queenslanders recognised and celebrated the achievements of Queensland women and girls. This year's theme was *Good for her. Great for us*. The aim of the theme was to show that when women achieve, Queensland succeeds. The theme highlighted why gender equality is good for everyone in the community and acknowledged the benefits when women play an equal role in business, leadership and government.

The Advance Queensland Women's Academic Fund — Queensland

The Advance Queensland Women's Academic Fund supports the retention, development and progression of female researchers within Queensland-based universities and publicly funded research institutes/organisations. The program encourages female researchers to return to their research careers following maternity leave, and provides carer funding to support female researchers to attend and present at conferences. Funding is also available to organisations to arrange lectures or presentations that highlight the research of leading Queensland female researchers. In 2015–16 the fund provided grants to 75 women academics.

Gender equality in leadership — South Australia

On 10 March 2016 the South Australian Government released a strategy for gender equality in leadership in the South Australian Public Sector. The strategy focuses on three areas of action, including:

- leadership accountability — ensuring chief executives and senior leaders actively support and advocate for gender equity within their organisations and are role models for good practice across the public sector
- empowered workplaces — developing a supportive culture for women in the workplace that recognises and addresses gender biases and encourages flexible work practices
- talent pipeline — ensuring recruitment and employment practices include sustainable initiatives that attract, develop and retain women along the talent pipeline.

Women on Boards Strategy — Tasmania

The *Women on Boards Strategy 2015–2020* is an initiative of the *Tasmanian Women's Plan*. Launched on 1 July 2015, the strategy aims to address the gender imbalance of government board membership. The Tasmanian Government is committed to 50 per cent representation of women across Tasmanian Government boards and committees by July 2020.

Council for Women's Economic Opportunity — New South Wales

The New South Wales Council for Women's Economic Opportunity brings together experts from business, industry, non-government organisations, academia and government to provide the NSW Government with specialist advice on enhancing women's economic opportunities with a focus on education, financial security and leadership.

Family Violence Leave Provision — Victoria

In August 2015 the Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence, the Hon Fiona Richardson MP, and the Minister for Industrial Relations, the Hon Natalie Hutchins MP, announced that family violence leave provisions would be negotiated into all state public sector enterprise agreements.

A best practice model clause offers 20 days paid leave each year to assist employees who have experienced family violence. The leave provision, which came into effect in May 2016, is available to all public service employees.

2016 Honour Roll of Women — Victoria

The Victorian Honour Roll of Women acknowledges and celebrates the outstanding achievements of Victorian women who have contributed to lasting change across many fields of endeavour at a local, national and international level.

In March 2016 a total of 20 women were inducted including Virginia Geddes, who was the Executive Officer of the Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria for 25 years, and who made a significant contribution to addressing family violence in Victoria.

Women's consultative forums — Western Australia

Between March and November 2015 the Western Australian Premier, the Hon Colin Barnett MLA, and the Minister for Women's Interests, the Hon Liza Harvey MLA, held a series of forums that explored and developed strategies to improve female participation in the workforce and economic independence. The forums were attended by industry leaders from across the mining and resources, science and technology, education, engineering, corporate and trades sectors. Forum themes were: attracting women to skilled trades and science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) careers; retaining female talent in the workforce; and re-engaging female talent after a prolonged career break. Outcomes of the forums are being progressed by the Western Australian Department of Local Government and Communities.

2016 Australian of the Year — Australian Government

On Australia Day 2016 the former Lieutenant General, David Morrison AO, was named Australian of the Year for his gender equality work within the Australian Army. Mr Morrison's work includes a focus on domestic and family violence, gender diversity and the gender pay gap. He has pledged to support the work undertaken by 2015 Australian of the Year, Rosie Batty, in combatting domestic and family violence in Australia. This appointment is helping to keep the issue of domestic and family violence in the spotlight.

Voices against violence — Australian Government

The Australian Government funded the Girl Guides Australia in 2015–16 to undertake the nationwide rollout of the global Girl Guiding Program, *Voices against Violence*, which empowers girls to talk about violence, understand its root causes, recognise their rights, and develop the skills and confidence to access those rights.

National priority one action 4: Supporting young people through The Line campaign

The Line campaign — Australian Government

Supporting and educating young people about respectful relationships is paramount to preventing domestic and family violence and sexual assault.

The Australian Government is providing Our Watch with \$6.6 million over four years to June 2017 to deliver *The Line* social media campaign. *The Line* is a primary prevention social marketing campaign for young people aged 12 to 20. It aims to encourage healthy and respectful relationships by challenging and changing the attitudes and behaviours that support violence against women.

In September 2015 Our Watch launched its *You can't undo violence* advertising campaign for *The Line*. The campaign primarily targets young males aged 12 to 17 with the clear message that there is no excuse for violence and there are lasting consequences if you hurt someone. The campaign directs audiences to *The Line* website, which includes primary prevention messaging, resources and support.

National priority one actions 5 and 6: Fostering respectful relationships

Respectful relationships in schools — all jurisdictions

Respectful relationships education seeks to prevent sexual assault and domestic and family violence through educating young people in ethical behaviour, engaging in respectful relationships, and developing resilience and protective behaviours.

Jurisdictions are using a range of methods to embed respectful relationships education within schools. In March 2016 a Respectful Relationships Education working group was established under COAG's Education Council to assist in consolidating and extending this work.

Schools can deliver respectful relationships content at multiple points within the Foundation to Year 10 Australian Curriculum, which was endorsed by all Education Ministers in September 2015. In particular, respectful relationships content can be delivered within the Health and Physical Education learning

area and the General Capabilities ‘ethical understanding’ and ‘personal and social capability’ area.

Respectful relationships in schools — ACT

The ACT Government has provided \$615,000 in funding for schools to implement Social and Emotional Learning Programs in 2015–16. This funding amounts to \$2,500 per school, per year and is part of the ACT Government’s early intervention and prevention approach to address family and domestic violence by enhancing the skills of children and young people to engage in respectful relationships. In addition, the Safe and Supportive Schools Policy has been developed to help ACT public schools create a safe, respectful and supportive school environment. The policy supports school processes and procedures to deal with bullying, harassment, and violence, including providing guidelines for schools to support students with complex and challenging behaviours.

Respectful relationships in schools — New South Wales

On 3 July 2015 the New South Wales Government announced that young people will be empowered with the knowledge, understanding and skills to help prevent domestic and family violence under important new changes to the school syllabus. From the start of Term 1 in 2016, the mandatory New South Wales 7–10 Personal Development, Health and Physical Education syllabus was updated to explicitly include domestic violence prevention.

Respectful relationships in schools — Northern Territory

The Northern Territory Government Domestic and Family Violence Reduction Strategy, *Safety is Everyone’s Right* commits to promoting respectful relationships in schools and non-government settings.

The strategy undertakes to provide students with the opportunity to develop personal and social capabilities, including building positive relationships, through the curriculum. It also undertakes to extend access to healthy relationships education to non-school settings. All Northern Territory Government schools use the Australian Health and Physical Education Curriculum, which has safety as a key focus area for transition to Year 10.

Respectful Relationships Program in schools — Queensland

In February 2016 the Queensland Government released its Respectful Relationships Education Program to help all schools in the state create a culture that emphasises:

-
- developing and maintaining respectful relationships
 - respecting self
 - supporting gender equality.

The Queensland Respectful Relationships Education Program focuses on influencing behaviour change to prevent undesirable social consequences such as domestic and family violence. The content is based on domestic and family violence research and best practice educational approaches, and is designed for five hours of instruction per year level for students from Prep to Year 12. It can be delivered as part of the curriculum or as a standalone pastoral care program and is available to all schools in Queensland, state and non-state, via a web-based platform.

Respectful Relationships Program in schools — South Australia

The South Australian Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) *Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum (KS:CPC)* was developed during 2003 to 2007 by child protection experts, leaders and teachers and has been implemented in DECD sites since 2008.

The curriculum provides a comprehensive respectful relationships and child safety program through developmentally appropriate topics for children and young people age 3 to Year 12.

It is mandated in all DECD and South Australian Catholic education sites and used in South Australian independent schools. Staff that deliver the KS:CPC must complete a full day face-to-face training.

The KS:CPC was independently evaluated in 2010 and found to be a world class, evidence-based curriculum. DECD has agreements with seven Australian and three international jurisdictions for use of the KS:CPC materials.

The KS:CPC was reviewed and updated in 2013–14 to align with the *Early Years Learning Framework*, *Australian Curriculum*, *Teaching for Effective Learning Framework*, and reflect contemporary issues such as bullying and cyber safety.

In 2016–17 the KS:CPC will be updated to enhance domestic and family violence information based on forthcoming recommendations from the Respectful Relationships Education working group, which was established under COAG's Education Council to assist in addressing domestic violence through school education.

In 2016 the South Australian Government announced a complementary program *Power to End Violence Against Women* to be run through the Port Adelaide Football Club in partnership with Centacare, which aims to use footballers as role models to challenge the attitudes that contribute to violence against women. The program is being rolled out in at least 15 schools in metropolitan Adelaide in 2016. Port Adelaide Football Club players attend and assist in facilitating the sessions.

Respectful relationships in schools — Tasmania

Under the Tasmanian Government's Safe Homes, Safe Families Action Plan, respectful relationship education programs will be developed and delivered in all Tasmanian Government schools from Kindergarten to Year 12 by 2017. Students in non-government schools who are affected by family violence will also be supported. In addition, a Safe Homes, Safe Families training program is being developed for all Tasmanian Department of Education frontline staff, including staff in TasTAFE and LINC's (facilities that provide library, research, and literacy services).

Respectful relationships in schools — Victoria

In 2016 the Victorian Government introduced respectful relationships into the school curriculum for Prep to Year 10 students. This was a recommendation by the Royal Commission into Family Violence.

The 2016–17 Victorian State Budget allocated \$21.8 million to build the capacity of all Victorian schools to deliver respectful relationships education using a whole-of-school approach, and to provide training for early childhood educators. This funding will provide professional learning for thousands of primary and secondary school teachers and up to 4,000 early childhood professionals, around respectful relationships and family violence prevention. Dedicated health officers will also be located in each Department of Education and Training local area to support schools in responding to family violence and to make connections with relevant services in the community.

In December 2015 Our Watch completed the Respectful Relationships Education in Schools pilot project, which received funding of \$550,000 over two years from the Victorian Government. The pilot was conducted across 19 schools, reaching 1,700 school staff and 4,000 students.

In December 2015 the Victorian Government released an evidence paper which strongly reinforces that intensive and long-term education programs in the school context can produce lasting change in attitudes and behaviours, with positive effects on participants' attitudes towards intimate partner

violence. The paper provides a clear best practice approach to creating school cultures that promote respectful relationships and challenge gender stereotyping and violence-supportive attitudes. It is anticipated that the final evaluation report will be released later in 2016.

Respectful relationships in schools — Western Australia

The Women’s Council for Domestic and Family Violence Services (WA) has been delivering violence prevention education in high schools since 2005. The Promoting Safe and Respectful Relationship Program (PSRRP) aims for a whole-of-school approach, working with the principal, teachers, support staff and students.

In this reporting period, the PSRRP was delivered to a school for students who are not part of mainstream learning. The modules were adapted to take into account the range of literacy levels and learning difficulties within the group. The use of art was also included as a medium with which student were able to express themselves around safe and unsafe behaviours.

Refuge staff have also taken part in a pilot Train the Trainer program to equip them with tools to provide violence prevention education in schools within their own regions, including a number of staff from rural and remote services.

Growing and Developing Healthy Relationships Resource — Western Australia

The Western Australian Department of Health has funded Growing and Developing Healthy Relationships, an innovative curriculum support resource for teachers across the school spectrum from pre-primary to Year 10. The resource is a portal designed to support Western Australian schools to provide positive and comprehensive relationships and sexuality education. The learning activities and associated content incorporates concepts of respectful relationships.

A major review of program materials was conducted over a three-year period. This resulted in the portal and associated content being rewritten and updated in October 2015, to align with both the national and Western Australian Curriculums in health education.

Training and professional development in relationships and sexuality education for teachers — Western Australia

In 2002 the Western Australian Department of Health initiated professional development and training in relationships and sexuality education for primary and secondary teachers and school nurses.

Curtin University began delivering the program in 2014, securing a long-term centre for this work, and developing undergraduate teacher education and biannual symposiums, the first of which was held in October 2015, attracting 160 educators.

Several two-day teacher professional development events have been held, targeting teachers in low socioeconomic status and rural settings. Approximately 40 teachers attended each course, with teacher relief and travel costs covered.

The first 12-week pilot unit for undergraduate education students was delivered in 2014 and is now an ongoing optional unit within the education course of study at Curtin University. Several after school seminars have also been facilitated.

Respectful relationships education resources — Australian Government

In September 2015 as part of the Women's Safety Package, the Australian Government committed \$5 million to expand the Safe Schools Hub website to include resources for teachers, parents and students on respectful relationships. These resources are currently in development.

National priority one action 7: Enhancing online safety for children and young people

Technology safety training — Australian Capital Territory

In 2015–16 the ACT Government funded *Technology Safety: Increasing Safety for Women Experiencing Violence* training. The Women's Services Network delivered the training for service providers and other professionals, aiming to increase the privacy, safety and health of women and girls experiencing all forms of gender-based violence. The training was provided in response to concerns raised by community organisations.

In November and December 2015 more than 25 community organisations and government bodies participated in the four days of training. About 80 participants from a wide range of sectors in the ACT and regional New South Wales learnt about technology abuse, and techniques and strategies to use technology as an evidence tool to support survivors of family and domestic violence. The in-depth training opened up opportunities for participants to discuss technology-facilitated abuse faced by survivors of domestic violence as well as approaches to develop safety plans and ultimately to prevent this abuse from occurring.

Online safety — Australian Government

In March 2015 the *Enhancing Online Safety for Children Act 2015* was passed, creating the Office of the Children's eSafety Commissioner. The office takes a national leadership role in enhancing online safety for Australian families, supports educators and frontline service providers in online environments, administers a complaints scheme for serious cyberbullying affecting Australian children, and investigates notifications about technology-facilitated child sexual abuse material and other illegal online content.

In December 2015 a new legislative function to support and empower Australian families and women at risk of technology-facilitated domestic or family violence was added. As part of the Women's Safety Package, the Office has been funded to develop a resource package on online safety for women. The Office launched a dedicated website for women in April 2016 — eSafetyWomen (www.esafety.gov.au/women) — and in June 2016 began training frontline professionals to raise awareness of technology-facilitated abuse and what can be done about it.

National priority two

Understanding diverse experiences of violence

Some groups of women can be more vulnerable to violence and face challenges in getting access to information, services and support. Indigenous women, women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and women with disability can face an increased risk of violence. Learning more about violence against these groups of women is critical.

The Second Action Plan has focused on deepening our understanding of diverse experiences of violence. While a great deal has been achieved, we know there is still more to do. We continue to work with women and communities to make sure diverse groups of women receive the information and support they need.

National priority two actions

8. Meet the needs of Indigenous women and their children through improving access to information and resources, and providing avenues for advocacy and leadership.
9. Improve outcomes for Indigenous Australians through building community safety.
10. Gain a better understanding of 'what works' in improving Indigenous community safety.
11. Work with culturally and linguistically diverse communities to reduce violence and support women and their children, particularly those who can be most vulnerable.
12. Deliver awareness raising, training and prevention activities and responses to violence that are tailored to meet the needs of women with disability, based on outcomes from the Stop the Violence project, as well as continuing to build the evidence base.

Progress against national priority two actions 2015–16

National priority two actions 8, 9 and 10: Supporting the needs of and improving outcomes for Indigenous Australians

Domestic and Family Violence Skills Development Strategy — New South Wales

From November 2015 the New South Wales Government began rolling out skills training through the Skills Development Strategy. The three year strategy aims to increase the capability of the domestic and family violence frontline sector workforce by offering workers a mix of qualification, part-qualification and professional development courses.

This includes development and delivery of training packages targeted at workers who engage with the following priority community groups:

- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander individuals and groups
- people with disabilities
- lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ)
- culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD).

Supporting Aboriginal Men and Women — New South Wales

The New South Wales Education Centre Against Violence offered a series of workshops to Aboriginal men to gain an understanding of their own, and their communities', experiences of violence. The course helps the men explore being an Aboriginal man, find strength in their own identity and be a positive role model. The men also explore issues of trans-generational trauma resulting from community experiences of child sexual assault and domestic violence.

The New South Wales Education Centre Against Violence has also offered series of workshops to Aboriginal women on domestic and family violence and sexual assault which support women in their aim to address and prevent violence, resulting in safer communities. The course discusses survival strategies, and also provides advice and information about legal rights, family law and accessing legal support.

Local reference groups — Northern Territory

Under the Northern Territory Government's *Domestic and Family Violence Reduction Strategy 2014–17 — Safety is Everyone's Right*, local reference groups have been established in Alice Springs, Darwin, Katherine and Tennant Creek. This place-based approach aims to ensure local expertise informs the strategy's implementation at the local level.

To date, 62 government and non-government organisations are represented in these groups, comprising 19 government organisations, 16 Aboriginal organisations and 27 non-government organisations.

The Northern Territory Government, in partnership with the Australian Government, has expanded critical intervention outreach services for Indigenous victims of domestic and family violence to a further 16 remote Indigenous communities and 29 town camps. An additional \$800,000 has also been invested in developing specialist domestic and family violence support services for Indigenous youth aged between 12 and 17 in Alice Springs, surrounding town camps and remote communities.

Strategies to engage Indigenous men — Northern Territory

The Office of Men's Policy has developed a policy framework for Northern Territory Men. The framework, the first of its kind in Australia, underscores the Northern Territory Government's commitment to Territory men and to reducing incidents of domestic and family violence. In 2015–16 the Northern Territory's Office of Men's Policy successfully developed a significant number of engagement strategies with Indigenous men, as well as men from other ethnic backgrounds, and non-Indigenous men. These include:

- The Indigenous Male Advisory Council which provides high-level strategic and policy advice on issues specifically identified as affecting Indigenous men and the community.
- The Indigenous First-Language Family Violence Prevention Project. The Galiwin'ku Community Statement to prevent family violence is the first of its kind that facilitates community and stakeholder engagement to identify how to best target violence prevention, capacity building, employment, education and training in first languages to ensure that activities are community motivated and controlled.
- The Tangentyere Men's Behaviour Change program includes training on the prevention of family violence. This training includes understanding the qualities and attributes that define a strong man; the impact of violence, power and control; trauma and associated

issues that affect children; the impacts of family violence; health costs of family violence; and the myths and beliefs around family violence. Following this training, the men can work with young people who use violence.

Addressing Aboriginal family violence — Victoria

In February 2016 the Victorian Government announced \$350,000 to address Aboriginal family violence through community-led action. Under this funding package:

- Indigenous Family Violence Regional Action Groups will receive \$220,000 to support their work developing education tools and initiatives for family violence prevention
- Victoria Police will receive \$50,000 to expand the Koori Police Protocols to help build trust and mutual understanding between police and the Aboriginal community
- additional funding of \$80,000 will be allocated to a communications campaign that will be developed in consultation with the Aboriginal community.

The 2016–17 Victorian State Budget has committed \$25.7 million over two years to deliver initiatives including prevention activities, development of a business case for a new trauma-informed healing model, and enhanced early intervention to address violence in Aboriginal communities through mediation and dispute resolution. Funding will also be provided for Aboriginal dispute resolution workers.

Indigenous Advancement Strategy — Australian Government

Work is being undertaken across services and systems around Australia to improve the safety of Indigenous women and communities.

Through the Indigenous Advancement Strategy, the Australian Government has committed \$4.9 billion over four years for activities to improve the lives of Indigenous Australians.

In 2015–16 more than \$250 million was provided for activities to improve community safety and wellbeing — including \$23.1 million for family violence prevention legal services to support victims of domestic violence, and \$6.9 million for activities to prevent domestic and family violence. Other activities funded include alcohol and drug treatment, youth crime prevention

and diversion, support for prisoners to reintegrate into their communities, and community night patrols.

Women's Safety Package: Indigenous Women — Australian Government

Under the Women's Safety Package, the Australian Government provided \$21 million, in addition to the existing investment in the Indigenous Advancement Strategy, for activities to increase Indigenous women's safety. This funding is helping to: strengthen police responses to domestic violence in remote communities; reduce re-offending by Indigenous perpetrators; share information on victims and perpetrators who move around the cross-border region of Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory with a Cross-Border Domestic Violence Intelligence Desk; and provide better support for at-risk young mothers.

Enhancing women's safety programs — Australian Government

In 2015–16 the Australian Government continued to fund Lifeline Australia to deliver DV-alert. The nationally accredited program delivers training to help community frontline workers recognise, respond to and refer people experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, domestic and family violence.

Lifeline Australia runs specific workshops for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, which are co-delivered by recognised Indigenous trainers. Lifeline consults with local Indigenous elders and the community before scheduling any Indigenous training to ensure it is welcomed. In addition, DV-alert has developed programs for health and allied health workers in CALD communities, and has also held sessions for an Indigenous men's awareness program.

Enhancing White Ribbon engagement — Australian Government

The Australian Government is providing White Ribbon Australia with \$1 million in funding over four years to June 2018 to increase its engagement with Indigenous and CALD communities. White Ribbon has recruited a diversity officer to oversee the project's implementation and has established CALD and Indigenous reference groups to provide advice over the life of the project. Demographic research has also been commissioned into the cultural and linguistic needs of target communities. White Ribbon has also delivered training workshops and forums and held diversity-focused events.

National priority two action 11: Work with culturally and linguistically diverse communities to reduce violence and support women and their children

National Roundtable on Responding to Violence against Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Women and their Children — all jurisdictions

The Second Action Plan of the National Plan has a strong focus on deepening the understanding of CALD women's experience of violence and improving CALD women's safety.

The *Hearing her voice* report was released on 30 July 2015 following 29 kitchen table conversations, which were held from October 2014 to March 2015 and were supported by the Australian Government. The report informed the ongoing implementation of the Second Action Plan.

The first national roundtable on violence against CALD women and their children was held on 7 August 2015. Over 80 participants attended, as well as Australian Government, all state and territory Ministers responsible for reducing violence against women and their children, and senior officials from each jurisdiction.

The national roundtable brought together CALD leaders, community and business leaders, academics, specialists from domestic violence and sexual assault services, and other stakeholders from around Australia. Building on the findings in the *Hearing her voice* report, participants discussed how to support CALD women, their children and young people, engage CALD men, and drive whole-of-community action.

A platform for action, the report from the national roundtable, was released on 2 May 2016. This will help build on existing work, enhance the understanding of diverse forms of violence and assist with policy and program development in the future.

Community Action for Multicultural Society Program — Queensland

In 2015–16 the Queensland Government provided 19 community-based organisations with more than \$1.7 million to deliver the Community Action for Multicultural Society (CAMS) program. CAMS supports CALD individuals and community groups to achieve greater social connectedness.

While domestic and family violence is not the primary focus, CAMS activities include initiatives focused on domestic violence awareness and prevention.

For example, the Islamic Women’s Association of Queensland is delivering a series of youth workshops promoting respectful relationships under its state-wide initiative supporting Muslim women.

Prevention of Violence Against Women in CALD Communities Project — Victoria

In February 2016 Our Watch completed the Prevention of Violence Against Women in CALD Communities Project. The project received \$550,000 over two years from the Victorian Government.

The project, conducted with Whittlesea Community Connections and Co-health Community Health Service, aimed to build the capacity of two specific CALD communities in Victoria: the newly arrived Iranian community in Whittlesea; and the Indian community in Brimbank and Wyndham.

The final evaluation report found that the project raised awareness of violence against women and their children, and built cross-sector links and trialled models of primary prevention that can be embedded across other CALD and local communities.

Capacity Building and Participation Program — Victoria

In March 2016 the Victorian Government announced funding of \$6.2 million for the Capacity Building and Participation Program. This initiative seeks to strengthen the participation, inclusion and contribution of high needs groups including regional multicultural communities, refugees and asylum seekers, youth, women, seniors and LGBTIQ multicultural community members. The program also seeks to build community capacity to respond to family violence including through initiatives promoting gender equality, women’s leadership, women’s financial literacy, family safety, family violence prevention and service access.

Better support for agencies to respond to diverse families — Victoria

The 2016–17 Victorian State Budget committed \$3.25 million over two years to deliver system improvement and specialist early intervention. This includes funding for the InTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence — an agency that works with women and children from CALD backgrounds who are victim-survivors of family violence — to develop the agency as a state-wide specialist provider and peak body, and support the capacity of mainstream universal systems to better respond to CALD family violence.

A further \$330,000 has been allocated for specialist family violence responses for CALD victims and perpetrators in the corrections system, as well as \$1 million over two years for the prevention of family violence in CALD communities.

National Education Toolkit for Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting Awareness — Australian Government

The Australian Government funded the Multicultural Centre for Women's Health to deliver the National Education Toolkit for Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting Awareness project in both 2014–15 and 2015–16. This funding delivered a national coordination point so that communities and service providers can share resources, information, tools and knowledge to support victims, and change attitudes to end this harmful practice.

Changes to visas and support for victims of human trafficking — Australian Government

In the 2014–15 Federal Budget the Australian Government announced reforms to the *Human Trafficking Visa Framework* and the associated support provided to suspected victims of human trafficking. These changes were implemented on 1 July 2015.

The reforms included:

- redesigning the Bridging F visa for the exclusive use of trafficked people
- changing the title of the permanent visa to the Referred Stay visa, removing perceived stigma associated with the previous title
- including a broader definition of human trafficking within the Migration Regulations
- improving social security and language training access for trafficked people.

The reforms are the result of significant work with stakeholders and reflect the commitment to fighting human trafficking crimes and supporting trafficked people.

Support for Trafficked People Program — Australian Government

The program is a critical component of the *National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking and Slavery 2015–19*. It provides timely assistance to all victims of human trafficking, slavery and slavery-like practices, including forced marriage and forced labour, who meet the eligibility criteria. Since

2004, the program has helped people access a range of case management support and services, commensurate to their needs, including suitable accommodation, financial support, medical treatment, counselling, social support and referral for legal and migration advice. It also provides opportunities to learn new skills. In 2015–16 more than 80 people received practical and compassionate support through the program.

Family Safety Pack — Australian Government

In August 2015, following consultation with key stakeholders, the Australian Government released a pre-departure family safety pack on domestic and family violence, sexual assault and forced marriage, for men and women coming to Australia on a Partner visa. The family safety pack aims to reduce violence against women from CALD backgrounds by providing information about Australia's laws and women's right to be safe.

In November 2015 the government expanded the pack to other visa classes such as Student visas and Temporary Work (subclass 457) visas.

The family safety pack includes four fact sheets and a low literacy storyboard. The fact sheets and storyboard have been translated into 46 languages.

Information about the pack and where to find it is included in relevant visa grant letters issued by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection. The pack is also available on the Department of Social Services' website.

The *Interpreting in domestic violence situations* and *Interpreters and family safety* fact sheets complement the family safety pack. These fact sheets aim to raise awareness of the role and responsibility of interpreters in domestic violence situations. They are also available on the Department of Social Services' website.

Information Sharing — Australian Government

On 16 March 2016 the Australian Government introduced into Parliament the Migration Amendment (Family Violence and Other Measures) Bill 2016 (the Bill) to enhance the Government's ability to address family violence within the family visa program. The Bill lapsed on 15 April 2016 following the dissolution of Parliament. Among other things, the Bill sought to:

- extend sponsor assessment by requiring a police clearance in all cases (currently this is only required where there is a minor child included in the application)

-
- allow for refusal of sponsorship application; and cancellation and/or bar of a family sponsor where serious offences are detected — especially those involving violence.

The reforms introduced through the Bill were intended to improve the sharing of personal information between parties identified in the sponsorship application and the program more generally, so that prospective partner and family migrants are aware of any history of domestic violence offences committed by their sponsor.

Safety and security in the courtroom project — Australian Government

The Australian Government has funded the Migration Council of Australia to strengthen the capacity of the Australian courts system and ensure access to justice for women from CALD backgrounds through the Safety and Security in the Courtroom project. It specifically addresses child and early forced marriage, female genital mutilation, family violence and human trafficking. The project may also consider the issues faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in the courtroom.

This project will:

- disseminate a national consultation report to all courts
- establish a national framework to support judicial officers and court administrators
- create a training package to be used as part of the National Judicial College training programs.

Consultations were held in major capital cities with CALD and Indigenous women in 2015–16. Roundtables in Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne involved representatives from the judiciary peak settlement bodies, peak Indigenous bodies, settlement service providers and specialist legal services. The project is expected to be completed by mid to late 2016.

National priority two action 12: Raising awareness, training and prevention activities and responses to violence to meet the needs of women with disabilities

Crisis response scheme for women with disabilities who experience domestic violence and/or sexual assault — Australian Capital Territory

The ACT's crisis response scheme for women with disabilities who experience domestic violence and/or sexual assault completed its first year of operation in 2015. The scheme involves the Disability and Community Services Commissioner the Domestic Violence Crisis Service, Canberra Rape Crisis Centre, Women with Disabilities ACT, and the Victims of Crime Commissioner providing immediate support to women with disability to escape domestic violence and/or sexual assault. In its first year of operation the scheme assisted five people with disability by sourcing emergency accommodation, obtaining interpreter services and providing assistance with court matters.

The rollout of the crisis service scheme training across the disability and victim support sectors also occurred in 2015–16. The purpose of the training for disability frontline staff was to raise awareness about the different services available to victims of crime, the issues women with disability face in the criminal justice system, and barriers to accessing services. The training also concentrated on how the disability and victim support sectors could best work together to meet the aims of the crisis services scheme.

Addressing the impact in Queensland — Queensland

In June 2016 the Queensland Government commissioned People with Disability Australia to review the impact of domestic and family violence on people with disability. The review is a commitment from the *Not Now, Not Ever* report.

Workforce Development Program on Gender and Disability — Victoria

In 2015–16 the Victorian Government provided \$400,000 for the Workforce Development Program on Gender and Disability. Women with Disabilities Victoria started delivering the project in November 2015, building on its previous work.

The project is delivering an organisational change program that builds the capacity of disability service organisations to provide gender equitable and sensitive programs and services to improve the lives of women with disabilities.

Building capacity of the sector to respond — Australian Government

The Australian Government provided additional funding to 1800RESPECT in 2015–16 to build on and enhance the high quality services it provides to meet the needs of women with disability.

The government, 1800RESPECT, and Women with Disabilities Australia are working together to:

- research and provide evidence-based advice on good practice information, materials and resources to address and prevent violence against women with disability
- consult and actively engage with women with disability to assess, the 1800RESPECT website, digital platforms and counselling service to identify gaps, barriers and solutions for women and girls with disability experiencing or at risk of experiencing violence
- improve the response, relevance, engagement and accessibility of 1800RESPECT telephone, online and other related information by using innovative technologies
- build the capacity of women with disability to identify, disclose, substantiate and escape from sexual assault and domestic and family violence situations
- build the capacity of service providers by increasing awareness of the particular vulnerabilities of women and children with disability.

National priority three

Supporting innovative services and integrated systems

Services and systems need to work well together for women and their children to be protected and supported. This means fostering integration and working in new ways across a number of levels, including police, courts, child protection, domestic and family violence and sexual assault services, services for perpetrators and other community services.

The Second Action Plan has focused on looking strategically across systems and strengthening integration at a policy, services system and individual level. Work is being progressed to enhance information sharing across states and territories, in order to protect women and their children and meet local priorities and needs.

National priority three actions

13. Continue building first stop support for women and their children experiencing violence, based on 'what works', and develop national standards for telephone and online counselling services.
14. Strengthen systems and service integration to ensure that specialist responses for identifying and responding to violence against women and their children are supported and effective, including through:
 - a. collaborative models of service delivery
 - b. information sharing protocols and risk assessment tools.
15. Strengthen systems integration and service delivery models, including in remote and cross-border contexts, to meet the specific needs of Indigenous women and their children experiencing violence.
16. Build support for children who have experienced, witnessed or been exposed to violence.
17. Improve information sharing across court processes.
18. Implement a national scheme for family and domestic violence protection orders.

-
19. Drive continuous improvement in systems through reviewing domestic and family violence-related deaths and child deaths.
 20. Continue to strengthen pro-active policing, highlighting and building on good practice.

Progress against national priority three actions 2015–16

National priority three action 13: Continuing to build first stop support for women and their children experiencing violence

Technology trials — all jurisdictions

The Women's Safety Package includes joint funding from Australian, state and territory governments to trial the use of innovative technologies with the potential to keep women and their children safe, improve frontline services, and hold perpetrators to account. The trials aim to find solutions that can help reduce violence against women and their children.

As part of the Safe Technology for Women measure of the Women's Safety Package, on 17 March 2016 the Prime Minister announced a joint commitment with Telstra and the Women's Services Network (WESNET) to support women experiencing technology-facilitated abuse and to help domestic violence victims stay connected with services.

Telstra is providing 20,000 smartphones over three years to the WESNET. The Australian Government is providing \$2.5 million to the WESNET to distribute smartphones and train frontline services to help victims of domestic violence understand how to use their smartphones safely. This commitment will allow domestic violence victims access to safe and secure communications.

Dedicated family violence and community safety teams — Australian Capital Territory

In October 2015 ACT Policing put in place two new dedicated family violence and community safety teams, in a significant restructure designed to strengthen its response to domestic abuse. The teams comprise both sworn and unsworn officers, who operate alongside the frontline police and detectives who continue to attend and investigate family violence offences.

The teams have a coordination role, ensuring ACT Policing's frontline response to family violence matters is timely, consistent and comprehensive. The teams work closely with external stakeholders to achieve the best outcomes.

Innovative Technology Trial — Victoria

A \$900,000 pilot is underway in Victoria to trial innovative technology to help keep women and their children safe in their homes and communities.

The Personal Safety Initiative, led by the Safe Futures Foundation, will provide personal duress alarms and CCTV technology to more than 70 women, and test how technological interventions can be used to improve the safety of those experiencing family violence. The 12-month pilot is being trialled in Eastern Melbourne, Darebin, Whittlesea, Moreland, Hume, Wellington Shire and the Latrobe Valley. The pilot project is scheduled to finish in February 2017.

The Victorian Government, with the Neighbourhood Justice Centre, has also developed and trialled the Family Violence Intervention Order Application Online Project, which enables family violence victims to apply for an intervention order through a secure online website. The Victorian Government has invested \$365,000 for the rollout of this initiative to the busiest Magistrates' Court in Victoria.

The 2016–17 Victorian State Budget committed a further \$32.5 million to develop a new system for safeguarding and sharing information between services so that victims are kept safe from family violence.

1800RESPECT — Australian Government

As part of the Women's Safety Package, an additional \$5 million was committed for 1800RESPECT to expand and enhance the service to ensure more women are supported. This builds on existing Australian Government funding of \$50.5 million over six years for this national sexual assault, domestic and family violence counselling service.

Since its establishment in 2010, 1800RESPECT has delivered new and innovative ways to support women experiencing or at risk of experiencing violence. The service provides 24-hour, seven-days-a-week, professional telephone and online counselling. The service is available to individuals who have experienced or are at risk of experiencing, sexual assault or family and domestic violence, their family and friends, as well as frontline and isolated workers.

1800RESPECT DAISY app — Australian Government

In September 2015 the DAISY app was updated to include translated information in 28 languages, text-to-voice functionality and group SMS functionality to enable users to send messages to a number of friends and family.

National priority three actions 14 and 15: Strengthening systems and service integration

DV-alert — all jurisdictions

Under the Women's Safety Package, Lifeline Australia is receiving \$13.5 million to further expand the DV-alert training program to police, social workers, emergency department staff and community workers, to better support women.

There is strong demand for DV-alert, with course participants reporting high levels of satisfaction and increased understanding, skills and confidence. By January 2016 a total of 8,162 people had received training through face-to-face and e-learning modes since the program's introduction.

An evaluation of the two-day program undertaken in 2015 also showed that 87 per cent of surveyed participants used what they learned through DV-alert in their workplace.

National Partnership Agreement on Legal Assistance Services — all jurisdictions

During 2015–16 there was a strong focus on better supporting women through the legal assistance service system. A new National Partnership Agreement on Legal Assistance Services started on 1 July 2015.

The agreement provides approximately \$1.3 billion in Australian Government funding to states and territories over five years for legal aid commissions and community legal centres.

People experiencing or at risk of family violence are a priority client group under the agreement.

In addition, approximately \$350 million over five years will be provided to Indigenous legal assistance providers through direct agreements.

Affordable housing — Australian Government, New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia

On 7 January 2016 the Australian Government announced the establishment of an Affordable Housing working group, to boost the supply of affordable rental housing. The working group includes officials from the Commonwealth Treasury and Australian Government Department of Social Services, and the New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia Treasuries, at the request of the Council on Federal Financial Relations. The working group has conducted a public consultation process, which included a call for public submissions and two roundtables with stakeholders from the financial, community housing, developer and academic sectors. A final report is due to report to Heads of Treasuries in the second half of 2016.

Housing assistance and homelessness services — all jurisdictions

The Australian Government spent more than \$6.5 billion on housing assistance and homelessness services during 2015–16. The Australian Government supports the states and territories in their role of delivering services to homeless people or those at risk of homelessness by providing financial assistance through the National Affordable Housing Agreement (\$1.3 billion annually) and the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness (\$115 million annually).

In 2015–16 the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness was extended for two years to 2017, with Australian Government funding of \$230 million. All states and territories have agreed to match the Australian Government commitment. Under the two year agreement, the Australian Government gives funding priority to frontline homelessness services, focusing on women and children experiencing domestic and family violence and homeless youth. More than \$100 million is being provided to some 130 service providers to deliver around 60 homelessness initiatives to women and children experiencing domestic and family violence.

Women's Safety Package: stronger service and system measures — all jurisdictions

Keeping Women Safe in their Homes

In collaboration with the states and territories, the Australian Government is funding the Keeping Women Safe in their Homes measure as part of the Women's Safety Package.

Under this measure, all states and territories are working to improve the safety of women who have separated from abusive partners by supporting them and their children to stay in their own homes when it is safe and appropriate, deterring perpetrators from re-offending and facilitating the collection of admissible evidence to improve justice responses.

The funding will also expand initiatives like the Safer in the Home program to install CCTV and other safety improvements in women's homes.

Local Support Coordinators

Under the Women's Safety Package funding was provided for a new Local Support Coordinators program. The Australian Government collaborated with all jurisdictions about the design of the program. State and territories are introducing Local Support Coordinators in priority locations to coordinate support and services for women affected by family violence to respond to safety, housing, budgeting and other needs in an integrated way.

The Local Support Coordinators will assist women affected by family violence to effectively access new supports, and to navigate the existing service system.

Specialist domestic violence legal assistance services

Additional funding of \$15 million was provided to 13 existing legal assistance providers to support 12 new specialist domestic violence units and five health justice partnerships. The new units will provide expert legal assistance and help women to access other support services, such as crisis accommodation, counselling or financial advice. The health justice partnerships will provide training for health professionals on identifying and responding appropriately to signs of domestic violence, and on-site legal advice will be available to women at partnered hospitals or health centres.

Independent external review of ACT Government Directorates and service providers — Australian Capital Territory

On 22 February 2016 the ACT Government appointed Laurie Glanfield AM to conduct an independent external review of ACT Government Directorates and service providers who respond to family violence. The review considered the effectiveness of interactions between directorates, agencies and service providers. It specifically considered the extent to which ACT authorities are legally able to, and do, share and receive information on at-risk families internally and with other jurisdictions. The Glanfield report was released on 20 May 2016, highlighting areas for further action to strengthen the ACT response to domestic and family violence.

Risk assessment — Australian Capital Territory

ACT Policing has implemented a trial risk assessment tool for frontline police officers to establish the risk a person poses to their partner (or ex-partner). This tool is designed to support the professional judgements currently made by officers and will support consistent decision-making when considering the need to seek a protection order or oppose bail when a person is arrested for a family violence offence.

Gap Analysis Project — Australian Capital Territory

Under the Second Implementation Plan of the *ACT Prevention of Violence against Women and Children Strategy 2011–17*, the ACT Government committed to a gap analysis of the entire service system related to domestic violence in the ACT. Research by the Office for Women looked at current service delivery against best practice, with a focus on integration and collaboration. The report was released on 20 May 2016 following extensive consultation with stakeholders including: face-to-face consultations; an online survey; and three workshops. This report will inform future policies and practices to reduce violence against women and children in the ACT.

***It Stops Here, Safer Pathway* — New South Wales**

The New South Wales Government is continuing to implement, *It Stops Here Safer Pathway* — the Domestic and Family Violence Framework for Reform. Safer Pathway is a new referral pathway for victims of domestic and family violence, supporting a consistent safety assessment and referral process. Safer Pathway was launched on 1 July 2015. Victims of domestic and family violence receive a common safety assessment through the use of the Domestic Violence Safety Assessment Tool, as well as automated referrals to support services, regardless of where they live.

Safety Action Meetings — inter-agency meetings that coordinate safety and service responses to victims identified as at serious threat of further violence — were established in a further four sites in 2015 and will continue to be rolled out across the state in the coming years.

Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme — New South Wales

In April 2016 the New South Wales Government launched Australia's first Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme. The scheme aims to increase the safety of people potentially at risk of domestic violence. This scheme will enable people to find out if their partner has a history of domestic violence offending.

The model for the scheme was informed through state-wide public consultations and targeted roundtables hosted by the New South Wales Attorney-General and the New South Wales Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. The New South Wales Police Force hosts the scheme in partnership with support services.

Justice Legislation Amendment (Vulnerable Witnesses) Bill 2015 — Northern Territory

On 9 February 2016 the Northern Territory Parliament passed a Bill that provides more protection to vulnerable witnesses. The Justice Legislation Amendment (Vulnerable Witnesses) Bill 2015 strengthens existing vulnerable witness provisions and protections, to reduce the impact and trauma of court proceedings on vulnerable witnesses.

The Bill assists witnesses to feel more confident and comfortable in giving evidence, which in turn is likely to lead to more successful prosecutions. The amendment of the definition of 'vulnerable witness' in the *Domestic and Family Violence Act 2007* now includes people who have applied for a Domestic Violence Order but whose applications have not yet been finalised.

Home Safety Upgrades — Queensland

The Queensland Government is funding home domestic violence counselling services to provide for upgrades to home security, to support victims and their children to remain safely in their own homes, close to existing support networks. Funding started in 2015–16 and runs over five years.

A series of legislative amendments — Queensland

The Queensland Government has progressed legislative amendments to strengthen Queensland's response to domestic and family violence, including:

- amending the *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008* to require a court to notify the Commission when a protection order is made, naming a welfare reform community resident as the respondent
- increasing maximum penalties for breaches of domestic violence orders and enabling notations on criminal histories to assist in identifying a pattern of domestic violence behaviour
- ensuring that the availability of protections for special witnesses apply to all victims of domestic violence in criminal proceedings
- ensuring that, where there are conflicting allegations of domestic violence in civil applications for protection orders, courts identify and protect the person most in need of protection
- requiring the court to consider imposing an 'ouster' condition excluding a perpetrator from the family home in all applications for domestic violence orders
- recognising the importance of victims of domestic violence being able to express their views and wishes
- clarifying that the use of body-worn cameras by police officers acting in the performance of their duties is lawful
- providing for domestic and family violence to be an aggravating factor on sentencing
- creating an offence of choking, strangulation or suffocation in a domestic setting under the Criminal Code.

Integrated Service Response Trials — Queensland

In 2015 the Queensland Government started trialling integrated service response models to domestic and family violence in three locations: an urban community; a regional community; and a discrete Indigenous community. The safety and protection of victims and their children is at the heart of Queensland's integrated service response to domestic and family violence. The integrated service responses see service providers and government agencies working together to share information, complete risk assessments and undertake collaborative risk management to enhance the safety of victims and their children, and provide opportunities to hold perpetrators to account and change their behaviour.

In September 2015 Logan-Beenleigh was announced as the location of the urban trial site, with the trial starting in mid-2016. In early 2016 work began with sector stakeholders in Logan-Beenleigh to co-design the local model and build community buy-in.

In April 2016 the Queensland Government announced Mount Isa as the regional trial site.

The discrete Indigenous community trial site has been selected, with an announcement expected later in 2016.

Multi-Agency Protection Service — South Australia

The South Australian Government's Multi-Agency Protection Service (MAPS) is an early intervention gateway for sharing information related to domestic and family violence and child protection matters. In 2015–16 MAPS reviewed and mapped approximately 2,000 high risk domestic violence matters.

MAPS is led by the South Australia Police, working in partnership with other state government departments, including correctional services, schools, child protection, health and housing. The state-wide program brings agencies together in a unique co-location arrangement.

The service receives around 400 referrals per week, with each agency sharing their information about cases to build a clearer, more comprehensive picture and enable better informed responses. This integrated multi-agency approach strengthens relationships between agencies and is a clear example of collaboration in action.

Social Development Committee of Parliament — South Australia

During 2015 the Social Development Committee (SDC) of the South Australian Parliament, sought to better understand the nature and scope of domestic and family violence in South Australia. The Committee was informed by a range of submissions from government, non-government and individuals, as well as discussions with a range of people.

On 12 April 2016 the SDC Report, which makes 35 recommendations, was tabled in both houses of Parliament.

A government response to the recommendations will be completed in 2016–17.

Safe Families — Tasmania

The flagship action of Safe Homes, Safe Families Action Plan is establishing Safe Families Tasmania, to which \$8 million has been allocated over four years (from 2015–16 to 2018–19).

The Safe Families Coordination Unit, which began full operations in June 2016, brings together staff from across Tasmanian Government agencies in a co-located collaborative unit to undertake inter-agency case assessment for families experiencing family violence. By bringing together the best available information and data from across government, the unit ensures families at risk are identified and supported as early as possible. The unit also collects the best available evidence about perpetrators from across government to aid the prosecution of offenders.

Safe Choices, the new wrap-around service, delivered by CatholicCare will provide practical support for people in or choosing to exit violent relationships. Safe Choices is being trialled in southern Tasmania from June 2016 and then rolled out in the north and north-west. The Safe Families Coordination Unit and Safe Choices complement and build on the operational services already delivered through the state's Safe At Home program.

Family Violence Amendment Bill 2015 — Tasmania

On 18 August 2015 the Tasmanian Premier announced the tabling of the Family Violence Amendment Bill 2015 to strengthen and clarify the operation of the *Family Violence Act 2004 (Tas)* and improve the effectiveness of responses to family violence. The Tasmanian Parliament passed the amendments, which commenced on 6 October 2015 and included:

- an automatic ban on the publication of any material that might identify an affected child in family violence proceedings
- extending the time, from six to 12 months, within which a prosecution under the Act may be brought for economic abuse or emotional abuse or intimidation
- amending the definition of family violence to include ‘property damage’ as a type of family violence.

The amendments were informed by extensive consultation across a wide range of stakeholders. Further amendments will be progressed in 2016–17.

Multidisciplinary centres — Victoria

Victims of sexual assault and child abuse can access a range of specialised services in Victoria, with the opening of two new multi-disciplinary centres. An initiative of the Victorian Government, these centres bring together services including police, child protection, forensic medical and sexual assault counselling.

The centres provide victims, who have experienced family violence and/or sexual assault, with a safe place to report crimes and receive the help they need without having to repeat their story to numerous services.

On 15 October 2015 the Minister for Police, the Hon Wade Noonan MP, and Minister for Families and Children, the Hon Jenny Mikakos MLC, officially opened the multi-disciplinary centre in Bendigo. Jenny Mikakos also officially opened the second multi-disciplinary centre in Morwell on 18 February 2016. Multi-disciplinary centres are also operating in Dandenong, Geelong, Mildura and Seaford.

Risk Assessment and Management Panels — Victoria

In June 2016 the Victorian Government announced the rollout of Risk Assessment and Management Panels, which will bring together specialist women's family violence services, police, housing, mental health, alcohol and drug services, men's family violence services, child protection and family support services. These experts will share critical information about specific cases of women and their children at serious and imminent risk of family violence, and develop coordinated action plans to protect them. Implementing Risk Assessment and Management Panels was a recommendation of the Royal Commission into Family Violence and the Coronial Inquest into the death of Luke Batty.

Funding of \$9 million over four years has been provided to specialist family violence agencies to fund 18 Risk Assessment and Management Panel coordinators and flexible brokerage funding across Victoria.

Strengthening Hospital Responses to Family Violence Project — Victoria

In November 2015 Our Watch completed the Strengthening Hospital Responses to Family Violence Project. The pilot project received \$300,000 over two years from the Victorian Government.

The project, conducted at the Royal Women's Hospital and Bendigo Health, aimed to increase hospital staff competence, develop resources and improve practice to better identify and respond to women and children at risk of experiencing family violence.

The final evaluation report was released on 30 November 2015. It highlighted that hospital staff had an improved ability to recognise the signs of family violence, were better able to sensitively address the issue with women, and that their knowledge about the specialist family violence system and ability to assist women access services had increased.

In addition, the pilot resulted in an increased evidence base on the prevalence rates and presentations to hospital by women and children experiencing family violence, and strengthened the partnerships between the hospitals and local specialist family violence services.

Family and Domestic Violence Response Teams — Western Australia

From March 2016 the Western Australian Family and Domestic Violence Response Team model was strengthened in priority areas with additional partner agencies and dedicated men's and women's family violence workers.

The model is a partnership between the Western Australian Department for Child Protection and Family Support, Western Australia Police and specialist community sector agencies. Seventeen Family and Domestic Violence Response Teams operate throughout the state, including eight in the metropolitan area and nine in regional and remote locations.

The teams aim to improve the safety of victims of family and domestic violence through a collaborative approach that focuses on timely and early intervention, following a police call out to a domestic violence incident.

The teams conduct joint risk assessments, determine if further follow-up is required, coordinate responses and instigate multi-agency case management for high-risk cases. A shared database has been developed to support the teams' operations and reinforce data integration, including recording outcomes.

Family and domestic violence, standardised forms, screening, assessments and referrals — Western Australia

In October 2015 WA Health endorsed the allocation of standardised medical record numbers to Family and Domestic Violence forms for use across all health services.

The creation of standardised medical record numbers for three Family and Domestic Violence forms was an action item in the *Department of Health, Family and Domestic Advisory Group Strategic Plan (2015)* and an action item in the *Western Australian Women's Health Strategy 2013–2017*.

Introducing dedicated medical record numbers for WA Health Family and Domestic Violence forms promotes uniformity across WA Health, creates a benchmark for reporting of abuse and violence, provides easier access and use for staff as standalone documents, and assists with achieving the minimum standard of intervention.

Family and Domestic Violence Training and Education Program — Western Australia

The Family and Domestic Violence Training and Education Program for WA Health staff was formally introduced in 2013. It covers identifying and screening for family and domestic violence, risk assessments, working with CALD groups, and understanding the impact of violence and trauma in CALD communities.

In 2016 the program expanded to include new workshops such as working with perpetrators. The program is also used as a consultative service for developing guidelines, policy and practice issues for the various health services.

National priority three action 16: Building support for children who have experienced, witnessed or been exposed to violence

Service integration and coordination to support expectant parents — all jurisdictions

In December 2015 the *Third Action Plan 2015–2018* under the *National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009–2020* was launched. The Plan was developed by the Australian, state and territory governments and community sector representatives. It focuses on early intervention and prevention to reduce the number of children entering the child protection system. There are three strategies, one of which focuses on a child's first 1,000 days.

This strategy has an explicit focus on families affected by family violence, including actions to improve support for expectant, new and vulnerable parents, which evidence indicates are high-risk cohorts for family violence.

As part of this strategy, a trial will be undertaken in selected locations where there is a high incidence of domestic and family violence. This is intended to improve coordination of resources — services and activities — to better meet the needs of vulnerable expectant parents.

The trial will drive integration of services at the local level. This builds on evidence about the best ways to support workforce development, program design and collaboration to address the needs of expectant parents and their children, where young children may be exposed to violence and other risks.

The trial will prioritise vulnerable and expectant new parents, where there are issues of drug and alcohol abuse, mental health, and family and domestic violence, to improve mainstream service responses to achieve better outcomes for children.

Child Protection Flexible Responses — Victoria

In April 2016 the Victorian Government announced a new initiative to enable child protection practitioners and family violence workers to work more closely together, to provide better support to vulnerable children and families. The Child Protection Flexible Responses initiative co-locates family violence workers in child protection offices to strengthen child protection practice, and acknowledges family violence as a key driver of child protection notifications. More than \$17 million over five years has been allocated to this initiative.

Children and Community Services Act — Western Australia

The Western Australian Government recognises that agencies and services working with children and families will sometimes need to share information to protect their clients' safety and wellbeing.

The *Children and Community Services Act 2004* (the CCS Act) is the legislative basis for child protection responses in Western Australia. It enables information sharing between agencies to protect the wellbeing of children.

Amendments to the CCS Act came into effect on 1 January 2016. These amendments significantly expand information sharing provisions relevant to the safety of a person who has been subjected or exposed to family and domestic violence.

The amendments also acknowledge the emotional harm caused by those who perpetrate family and domestic violence and define exposing a child to an act of family and domestic violence (as defined in the *Restraining Orders Act 1997*) as a form of emotional abuse. Harm is defined in the CCS Act to mean any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's wellbeing.

Annual Child Aware Approaches conference — Australian Government

On 23 and 24 May 2016 Families Australia and the Australian Government Department of Social Services hosted the 4th Annual Child Aware Approaches conference in Brisbane. This conference brought together a broad range of practitioners, researchers, and policy makers representing diverse child and family services and communities.

The conference provided an opportunity to showcase promising and innovative practices and to discuss policy and analysis in three important areas:

- advancing children’s development and wellbeing in the first 1,000 days
- supporting young people in out-of-home care to become resilient and independent in adulthood
- building child safe organisations and environments.

National priority three action 17: Improving information sharing across court processes

Trial of a specialist domestic and family violence magistrates court — Queensland

The Queensland Government is conducting a specialist court trial, dealing exclusively with domestic and family violence matters. This court trial is taking place in Southport from 1 September 2015 to 30 June 2017.

Two dedicated magistrates who have an interest and extensive experience in domestic and family violence issues are presiding over the court. The trial is supported by a suite of legal and support services to help victims and perpetrators navigate the processes.

The goals of the trial are to provide a coordinated, consistent and timely response to domestic and family violence matters, enhance safety for victims of domestic violence, make perpetrators accountable for their violence, and build stronger collaboration across the service system that supports the court. The trial is being evaluated, with results informing the development of a state-wide specialist approach.

In addition, funding of \$1.1 million was allocated in 2015–16 to expand the Domestic and Family Violence Duty Lawyer Service to 14 locations state-wide, through Legal Aid Queensland.

Women's Domestic Violence Court Assistance Service — South Australia

From 1 July 2015 the South Australian Government has supported women in the state to access the Women's Domestic Violence Court Assistance Service, delivered through the Victim Support Service, a not-for-profit organisation. This free, confidential service provides a greater level of support within the court system for victims of violence. Legal officers provide support and advocate on behalf of women who have difficulties applying for an Intervention Order, reporting a breach or raising a safety concern.

In addition to providing direct services to women, the assistance service provides education and resources on intervention orders to the domestic violence sector in South Australia, increasing its capacity to advocate for women in these matters.

Co-location of state child protection practitioners at family court registries — Victoria

Since 2012 child protection practitioners from the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services have been co-located in the Melbourne and Dandenong registries of the Family Court of Australia and the Federal Circuit Court of Australia. An evaluation report by the Australian Institute of Family Studies found that these roles were valuable in improving information sharing between the family law and child protection systems, and ensuring children are in the appropriate court, given the family circumstances.

Family Violence Support Lists and integrated arrangements for tackling family violence in courts — Western Australia

During 2015–16 the Western Australian Magistrates Courts implemented new arrangements known as the Family Violence Support Lists. Appropriate victim support is at the core of the model, with the new lists designed to support integrated service delivery responses and facilitate information sharing, particularly around risks to victim safety and wellbeing.

This highly collaborative exercise between police, corrective services, government and non-government service providers, aims to add more types of family violence charges to the lists over time. For example, courts are already rearranging their listings to ensure that all violence restraining order breaches and serious assaults in family violence circumstances are heard on the same day each week. This allows service providers from the Western Australia Police, Department for Child Protection and Family Support, Department of Corrective Services, and the Victim Support Service, to provide specialist advice and support to those on the list.

Family violence legislative overhaul — Western Australia

On 8 March 2015 the Western Australian Government announced the overhaul of the *Restraining Orders Act 1997* to introduce a new category of Family Violence Restraining Order, along with related legislation aimed at improving safety for victims of family violence and making perpetrators accountable. Drafting of the Bill is now well advanced and includes:

- adopting a new, ‘modernised’ definition of family violence to reflect contemporary understandings
- redefining the grounds for an order by removing the broad discretion of magistrates in deciding whether to grant an order, so that if conditions for making the order are met, then it should be made, unless there are special circumstances
- fostering better decision-making by requiring courts to adopt a risk-management approach to the granting of Family Violence Restraining orders, considering information from Western Australia Police, the Department for Child Protection and Family Support, and other agencies about risks to the victim
- enabling courts to tailor responses specifically to family violence, including by ordering perpetrators to participate in mandatory behaviour change programs.

It is intended that the Bill be introduced into the Parliament later in 2016.

Family Law Council interim report on Families with Complex Needs and the Intersection of the Family Law and Child Protection Systems — Australian Government

In October 2014 the Australian Government Attorney-General issued the Family Law Council (Council) terms of reference on Families with Complex Needs and the Intersection of the Family Law and Child Protection Systems.

The Council released its interim report in August 2015 and provided its final report to the Attorney-General on 30 June 2016.

The interim report recommendations included developing protocols for sharing information between the family law courts, child protection departments, police and mental health services, as well as developing a national database of court orders. The final report focuses on the terms of reference relating to opportunities for enhancing collaboration and information sharing within the family law system, and between the family law system and other relevant support services.

The Government is considering the recommendations of these reports.

National Family Violence Bench Book — Australian Government

In June 2015 the Australian Government commissioned the Australasian Institute of Judicial Administration and the TC Beirne School of Law to develop a National Family Violence Bench Book. The bench book will promote best practice and consistency in judicial decision-making in cases involving domestic and family violence across jurisdictions.

This comprehensive online tool will cover laws and practices across Australian Government, state and territory jurisdictions. Experts in family violence, including judges, legal practitioners and academics, are informing the content through an advisory committee and a judicial reference group.

The first part of the bench book is available and covers terminology, the dynamics of family violence, fair hearing and safety issues, perpetrator intervention programs, and sentencing issues. The final part of the bench book is due to be delivered by June 2017.

National priority three action 18: Implementing a national scheme for family and domestic violence protection orders

National Domestic Violence Order Scheme — all jurisdictions

All governments are working together to support the implementation of a National Domestic Violence Order Scheme. The scheme will:

- automate recognition and enforceability of a domestic violence order (DVO) issued in one Australian jurisdiction in all other jurisdictions
- include model laws and a national system to support the sharing of DVO information across jurisdictions.

This will ensure protected people continue to receive protection from their DVOs across all states and territories, without needing to manually register their order in new jurisdictions.

At the 5 November 2015 meeting of the Law, Crime and Community Safety Council, Ministers endorsed the model laws underpinning the scheme. At the 11 December 2015 COAG meeting, each state and territory committed to introduce these model laws in the first half of 2016. New South Wales was the first jurisdiction to pass such laws in April 2016, followed by the ACT, which passed its laws in August 2016. Legislation to enact the model laws was introduced in the Tasmanian Parliament on 16 June 2016, the South Australian Parliament on 22 June 2016, and the Victorian Parliament on 23 June 2016.

COAG also agreed to develop two systems in parallel, to support the sharing of DVO information between courts and police across Australian jurisdictions. An interim system will leverage the existing National Police Reference System and be available toward the end of 2016. A national system, to be known as the National Order Reference System, is being developed in parallel. The new system is being purpose-built to support information sharing about DVOs between courts and police across jurisdictions and will support the enforcement of national DVOs. It will take up to four years to deliver.

Under the Second Action Plan of the National Plan, funding was originally provided to prototype a different information sharing system called the National DVO Information Sharing System. This prototype was to be trialled with New South Wales, Tasmania and Queensland, with the aim of improving coordination and sharing of information about DVOs. In late 2015 the Law, Crime and Community Safety Council and COAG agreed that work on the prototype would cease, with work to-date being redirected to the interim system and National Order Reference System projects.

National priority three action 19: Driving continuous improvements in systems through reviewing domestic and family violence-related deaths and child deaths

Review of Family Violence Deaths in the ACT — Australian Capital Territory

On May 2016 the Domestic Violence Prevention Council released a Review of Family Violence Deaths in the ACT. The review found that many victims did not access help from the police, family violence services or other frontline responders to violence. They did, however, have contact with service providers unrelated to family violence, strengthening the case that family violence is everyone's business. The report is a valuable tool for informing future government decisions about family violence prevention and detection mechanisms.

Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board — Queensland

On 15 October 2015 the Queensland Parliament passed a Bill to establish the Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board. The Board's functions include reviewing domestic and family violence related deaths at a systemic level and making recommendations to prevent and reduce the likelihood of future domestic and family violence deaths. The establishment of the Board and expansion of the Domestic and Family Violence Review Unit deliver on recommendations of the *Not Now, Not Ever* report.

Domestic Violence Death Review Team — New South Wales

The Domestic Violence Death Review Team is a multi-agency committee that reviews closed cases of domestic violence deaths occurring in New South Wales, convened by the State Coroner with Government and non-government sector experts. The Team reports bi-annually to Parliament, providing data analysis, in-depth case reviews and recommendations for legislation, policy and practice change to prevent and reduce the likelihood of future deaths.

Taking a Stand — South Australia

The South Australian report *Taking a Stand* brings together a whole-of-state-government response to issues raised by the State Coroner following the Zahra Abrahamzadeh Inquest. The report includes a number of policy responses and broad measures to help prevent domestic violence, including:

- introducing a Women's Domestic Violence Court Assistance Service in July 2015

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- initiating a domestic violence response review in January 2015 to increase accountability and provide an escalation point, when there have been flaws in responding to domestic violence
 - ensuring all state government agencies gain White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation (beginning in 2015 and continuing into 2016–17)
 - considering stronger penalties for people who are proven to be consistent domestic violence offenders, with a discussion paper for public comment released in July 2016.

National priority three action 20: Continuing to strengthen pro-active policing

Domestic Violence Safety Assessment Tool — New South Wales

On 1 July 2015 the New South Wales Police Force launched the Domestic Violence Safety Assessment Tool. The tool allows police to better identify the level of threat to a victim of domestic and family violence, and determine the most effective way to address individual needs, including electronic referral to victim services.

Plain English Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders — New South Wales

In November 2015 the New South Wales Government announced that all Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders (ADVOs) would be written in plain English, so defendants have no excuses for not understanding the orders. Plain English ADVOs are designed to use language that a 13-year-old can understand. The New South Wales courts and police will start rolling out the new ADVOs across the state in late 2016. The documents will spell out in plain English the penalties for breaching an ADVO, including up to two years in prison.

Suspect Target Management Plans — New South Wales

The New South Wales Government's Suspect Target Management Plans involve a standardised, coordinated approach to the assessment, targeting and management of offenders.

In 2016 this was expanded to cover recidivist domestic violence offenders. This aligns with approaches police take to manage other serious crimes. The Central Metropolitan Region started using the Suspect Target Management

Plans in October 2015 with the view of rolling this out across the state during 2016.

Pro-active policing initiatives — Queensland

In June 2016 the Queensland Government announced the Queensland Police Service target for 50 per cent of new police recruits to be women. This will be complemented by \$2.2 million over four years to deliver policing initiatives that drive cultural change in line with the recommendations of the *Not Now, Not Ever* report.

Safe At Home — Tasmania

Operating since 2004, Safe At Home is Tasmania's integrated criminal justice response to family violence, underpinned by the *Family Violence Act 2004* (Tas). Safe At Home involves a range of services working together within an integrated framework to protect and support victims of family violence, while making offenders responsible for their behaviour.

In June 2015 the Tasmanian Government accepted all 17 recommendations of a review of Safe At Home, including improving police processes and training and improved services for young people. Implementation of the recommendations has been ongoing since July 2015.

National priority four

Improving perpetrator interventions

Domestic and family violence and sexual assault are violent crimes. People who perpetrate them should be held to account to the full extent of the law. The National Plan recognises that reducing violence against women and their children cannot be achieved without effectively responding to perpetrators.

The Second Action Plan focuses on improving the quality of and access to perpetrator interventions across the country. Ultimately, systems including police, justice, corrections, and community services need to work together in consistent and integrated ways to increase the effectiveness of perpetrator interventions and stop perpetrators reoffending.

The Second Action Plan also focuses on increasing evidence about 'what works' in perpetrator interventions, with particular focus on reducing recidivism and high-risk groups.

21. Improve the evidence base on perpetrator interventions, with a focus on reducing recidivism and a better understanding of high risk groups.
22. Finalise and set national outcome standards for best practice perpetrator interventions.
23. Build capacity to implement national outcome standards for perpetrator interventions and improve the quality and quantity of perpetrator interventions.

Progress against national priority four actions 2015–16

National priority four action 21: Improving the evidence base on perpetrator interventions and gaining a better understanding of high-risk groups

ANROWS perpetrator interventions research stream — all jurisdictions

Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) has been funded \$3 million to develop a dedicated perpetrator interventions research stream. The aim is to build the evidence base and support state and territory governments to implement the National Outcome Standards.

On 9 December 2015 ANROWS released its research priorities and a research paper on the 'state of knowledge' on perpetrator interventions in Australia. This paper includes a literature review of Australian and international literature, a plan of perpetrator interventions, and a map of perpetrator pathways through the legal and justice systems in every jurisdiction, for domestic and family violence, and sexual assault perpetrators.

In February 2016, following the release of the research priorities, ANROWS invited applications for funding under its perpetrator interventions research stream.

Information sharing — Northern Territory, South Australian, Western Australia

As part of the Women's Safety Package, the Australian Government provided an additional \$3.6 million to continue the Cross Border Domestic Violence Intelligence Desk in the tri-state region of the Northern Territory, South Australia and Western Australia. The Desk enables the three jurisdictions to share information about victims and perpetrators who move across their borders, allowing police to more easily apprehend perpetrators and protect victims.

National priority four action 22: Finalising and setting the national standards for perpetrator interventions

National Outcome Standards for Perpetrator Interventions — all jurisdictions

On 11 December 2015 COAG agreed to the Headline Standards and a supporting framework for the National Outcome Standards for Perpetrator Interventions, with implementation materials including indicators and a reporting framework to be agreed in 2016.

The Australian, state and territory governments developed the national outcome standards through extensive consultation with non-government service providers and experts.

The Government continues to work with state and territories, as well as non-government service providers to develop performance indicators and a reporting framework for the national outcome standards, including via a series of workshops across the country.

The national outcome standards will contribute to the National Plan's target of a significant and sustained reduction in violence against women and their children, and improve the lives of Australian women and children who experience domestic and family violence and sexual assault.

National priority four action 23: Building capacity to implement national outcome standards for perpetrator interventions and improve the quality and quantity of perpetrator interventions

National Outcome Standards implementation — all jurisdictions

To support state and territory governments to fully implement the national outcome standards for perpetrator interventions, the Australian Government is providing a \$4 million implementation payment to be shared among state and territory governments.

Crimes (Domestic and Family Violence) Amendment Bill 2015 — Australian Capital Territory

On 27 October 2015 the ACT Legislative Assembly passed a Bill that aims to establish additional protections for women and children, and bring perpetrators to account. The Crimes (Domestic and Family Violence) Amendment Bill 2015 recognises the harm domestic, family and sexual violence can have on the individuals, families and community. The legislation substantially strengthened responses to domestic and family violence.

The new legislation:

- amends an 'act endangering health' to reflect that strangulation often has harmful effects on a person's health but may not leave marks or render the victim unconscious
- allows police records of interview to be admitted as evidence-in-chief for family violence and all sexual offences
- expands protections for victims of domestic and family violence in criminal proceedings to allow special protections to apply to

complainants in breaches of domestic violence orders and domestic damage to property offences

- creates special interim domestic violence order schemes to extend interim orders until the finalisation of related criminal charges.

Family Violence Bill 2016 — Australian Capital Territory

On 7 June 2016 the ACT Attorney-General introduced the first part of a major family violence reform program. The Family Violence Bill 2016 addresses 22 recommendations from the Australian and New South Wales Law Reform Commissions' Report, *Family Violence — A National Legal Response*. The Bill contained the first stages of this reform program, including amendments that will:

- expand the definition of family violence to expressly include a broader range of behaviours including emotional psychological and economic abuse
- amend the grounds for making a final order, and after-hours order, to improve access to the protection order scheme in the ACT
- amend the *Evidence (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1991* to allow the complainant's pre-recorded evidence to be tendered as evidence-in-chief in all sexual assault matters
- implement the scheme for national recognition of family violence orders as agreed by COAG.

The Family Violence Bill was passed by the ACT Legislative Assembly in August 2016, and will come into effect in May 2017.

Domestic Abuse Program — Australian Capital Territory

On 29 June 2015 ACT Corrective Services commenced the Domestic Abuse Program in Community Corrections for medium, medium-high and high-risk offenders. The program targets men who are convicted of a domestic abuse offence against their current or recent ex-partner. It aims to address issues within relationships, whether the victim of the offence is a current or past partner, and explores links between behaviours, thoughts and feelings in relation to offending — leading to a model of accepting responsibility and victim safety.

Men's behaviour change programs — New South Wales

In October 2015 the New South Wales Government announced \$19.5 million in behaviour change programs to target domestic violence offenders within the New South Wales criminal justice system.

This commitment is in addition to the \$5.28 million announced in August 2015 to pilot four community-based men's behaviour change programs over three years, from July 2015.

These programs target men who want to stop using violent and controlling behaviour towards a current or former partner, children or other family member.

The Men's Behaviour Change Network New South Wales continues to act as an advisory body for men's behaviour change work and received \$54,000 in 2015–16.

Men's Referral Service — New South Wales

In May 2016 New South Wales began a six month pilot referral system between the New South Wales Police Force and the Men's Referral Service, to respond to the Premier's priority of reducing domestic and family violence reoffending. During the pilot, police will refer (with consent) all male persons of interest involved in a domestic and family violence incident to the Men's Referral Service, which will pro-actively engage with them within 48 hours.

The New South Wales Government's Men's Referral Service was established in 2013 as part of the three-year \$9.8 million Domestic and Family Violence Funding Program. This specialist service provides free, confidential telephone counselling, information and referral to men to assist them to take responsibility for, and to stop using, violent and controlling behaviours.

Men's Behaviour Change Program — Northern Territory

The Northern Territory Government's Men's Behaviour Change Program offers male perpetrators of domestic and family violence the opportunity to take responsibility for their behaviour through assessment, counselling and group work.

The program contributes to building the evidence base for working with Indigenous men and Indigenous families in a remote context. It is delivered by a consortium of non-government Indigenous and non-Indigenous service providers, comprising Tangentyere Council, Jesuit Social Services and the Alice Springs Women's Shelter.

This type of partnership approach to service delivery is a key component of the Northern Territory's *Safety is Everyone's Right* strategy.

Perpetrator Interventions — Queensland

In June 2016 the Queensland Government announced \$10.3 million over four years for new or enhanced perpetrator interventions, including the Child Safety Walking with Dads initiative in Mount Isa, Sunshine Coast and Moreton Bay.

Intervention Order Act — South Australia

Amendments to South Australia's *Intervention Orders (Prevention of Abuse) Act 2009* commenced on 1 December 2015, following the passage of the Intervention Orders (Prevention of Abuse) (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2015. The amendments include requiring:

- courts to notify police before any variation or removal of an intervention order, to give police the opportunity to provide input into the matter
- magistrates to consider any orders made under the Family Law Act (Family Law Act orders) applying to the offender, with regard to the magistrate's powers under the Family Law Act to amend or discharge aspects of existing Family Law Act orders if they are inconsistent with an intervention order
- offenders who breach an order to attend a treatment program — they will be required to pay for the treatment and be fined if they do not attend.

Residential Tenancy (Domestic Violence Protections) Amendment Bill 2015 — South Australia

The South Australian Parliament passed the Residential Tenancies (Domestic Violence Protections) Amendment Bill in 2015. The amendments commenced on 10 December 2015.

Key changes include:

- recognising domestic violence in South Australian tenancy legislation
- allowing victims to continue in the tenancy without the perpetrator, leave the tenancy and no longer be liable for the premises, or terminate the tenancy

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- empowering the South Australian Civil and Administrative Tribunal to determine that one or more, but not all, co-tenants are liable for compensation to the landlord
 - prohibiting a victim's personal information being listed on a Residential Tenancy Database, where it is determined domestic violence has occurred.

Men's behaviour change programs — Victoria

In February 2016 the Victorian Government announced additional funding of \$1.25 million for men's behaviour change programs. This investment is part of the Victorian Government's Family Violence Fund, established to respond to increased demand for services while the Royal Commission into Family Violence was underway.

The funding includes \$145,000 for the Men's Referral Service, which provides anonymous and confidential telephone counselling and referrals for men seeking help for violent and controlling behaviour.

The Victorian Aids Council Gay Men's Health Centre, which delivers services to the LGBTIQ community, will also receive \$145,000. This is the first time an LGBTIQ community organisation will receive funding for men's family violence services in Victoria.

Funding of \$100,000 has also been provided to support professional training for men's behaviour change program facilitators in Victoria, to help reduce waitlists.

The 2015–16 Victorian State Budget also invested in additional Men's Behaviour Change Program placements, including \$500,000 for court-mandated programs and \$2 million for programs in correctional settings.

The Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence recommended that the Victorian Government convene a committee of experts on perpetrator interventions and behaviour change programs to advise government on the spectrum of programs, services and initiatives that should be available in Victoria to respond to all perpetrators across varying forms and risk levels of family violence. In response, the 2016–17 Victorian State Budget provided \$23.9 million to begin reforming the justice system to better protect victims and hold perpetrators to account. This includes funding for more men's behaviour change programs.

Holding perpetrators to account — Tasmania

The Safe Homes, Safe Families Action Plan allocated \$2 million to support perpetrator programs for low-risk to medium-risk family violence offenders.

No To Violence (Men's Referral Service) has been contracted to provide a telephone counselling and referral service to family violence perpetrators and their families.

Relationships Australia has been contracted to provide Men's Behaviour Change Programs and education and training for mainstream service providers who come in contact with family violence offenders.

Practice Standards for Perpetrator Intervention: Engaging and Responding to Men who are Perpetrators of Family and Domestic Violence — Western Australia

On 1 December 2015 the Western Australian Government launched the resource, *Practice Standards for Perpetrator Intervention: Engaging and Responding to Men who are Perpetrators of Family and Domestic Violence*.

The minimum standards were developed to support agencies and organisations to respond to men who use violence, and to hold them accountable and provide them with the opportunity to take responsibility for their behaviour. The minimum standards establish important components of program governance, design, delivery, review and evaluation, which all men's behaviour change programs must adhere to.

MensLine — Australian Government

MensLine provides support, information and referral services to protect women and children by improving the attitudes and behaviours of potentially abusive or violent men.

MensLine reported a continuing, significant increase in the number of calls received in relation to violence. Between 2014–15 and 2015–16, there was a 25.1 per cent increase in calls where violence was an issue.

The number of referrals MensLine made to family violence services also trended upwards, from 947 referrals in 2014–15 to 1,180 referrals (or an increase of 19.7 per cent) in 2015–16.

In total, MensLine counsellors made 9,520 referrals in 2015–16, which is an increase of 11 per cent from 2014–15. As well as the referrals to family violence services, this includes referrals to services specifically for men, including support and education services, and behavioural change programs.

Additional funding of \$2 million, under the Women's Safety Package, was allocated to MensLine to develop specific services to support men who are at risk of using or who are using domestic or family violence towards women, children, or other family members.

Other MensLine services available during 2015–16 included the:

- Anger Management Call Back Program, where men can register for online counselling via the website or by calling the helpline
- Change for Good Program, which provides engagement and support to men who completed the Men's Behaviour Change Program to reinforce and maintain behavioural and attitudinal change.

National priority five

Continuing to build the evidence base

A solid, national evidence base is required for the National Plan to be successful. Data and research on violence against women and their children has been expanded and enhanced through the Second Action Plan. This helps us better understand what works in preventing and responding to violence and sexual assault against women and their children, and whether or not community attitudes to violence against women are changing.

National priority five actions

24. Expand the quality and quantity of national research on violence against women and their children through the implementation of the National Research Agenda.
25. Measure the prevalence of violence against women and their children and community attitudes towards violence through national surveys.
26. Build the *National Data Collection and Reporting Framework*.

Progress against national priority five actions 2015–16

National priority five action 24: Expanding the quality and quantity of national research on violence against women and their children

ANROWS research program — all jurisdictions

ANROWS has established a comprehensive research program and is making progress in delivering high quality, innovative and relevant research to better understand violence against women and children.

Following consultation with state and territories, ANROWS released the national research agenda in 2014. The ANROWS Research Program (2014–2016) was subsequently developed to produce research under the national research agenda to support the National Plan.

Part one of the research program consists of 20 projects with a combined value of around \$3.5 million. These projects are across four strategic research themes:

- experience and impacts
- gender inequality and primary prevention
- service responses and interventions
- systems.

In December 2015 the Australian Government engaged KPMG to undertake an independent evaluation of the Second Action Plan and to review ANROWS as part of the overall evaluation of the National Plan. The review of ANROWS found that the organisation is making progress towards meeting its objectives. The review identified a number of strategies for ANROWS to build on its ability to provide research services that support implementation of the National Plan.

National priority five action 25: Measuring the prevalence of violence against women and their children and community attitudes towards violence through national surveys

Personal Safety Survey and the National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women survey — Australian Government

The Australian Government has funded the Australian Bureau of Statistics \$12.3 million to conduct the Personal Safety Survey (PSS) in 2016. People aged 18 years and older will be surveyed to determine the nature and extent of violence experienced by women and men since the age of 15. The most recent Personal Safety Survey was undertaken in 2012. This year's survey will be conducted from November 2016 onwards, with results released in 2017.

The Australian Government funded the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (Vic Health) in 2009 and 2013 to conduct the National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS) at a cost of approximately \$2.8 million for each wave. The Australian Government has funded ANROWS to conduct the next NCAS in 2017 (\$3.1 million). The survey provides information about community attitudes, enables changes to be measured over time and informs activities to prevent violence in the future.

National priority five action 26: Building the framework for data collection and reporting

National Data Collection and Reporting Framework — all jurisdictions

All governments are working collaboratively towards implementing the *National Data Collection and Reporting Framework* (DCRF) to provide consistent and comparable administrative data. It is anticipated that the framework will be implemented by 2022.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) has started a cross-jurisdictional data sharing and integration project to explore new ways to share information relating to family and domestic violence across jurisdictions and to progress the DCRF to inform future policy development and service delivery. This project involves the Australian Government Department of Social Services, Australian Bureau of Statistics, state and territory representatives, and a number of research bodies.

Victims and offenders data project — all jurisdictions

Expanding existing administrative data collections is a key activity for implementing the DCRF. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has worked with state and territory police agencies to incorporate a family and domestic violence data flag into its existing recorded crime datasets.

The ABS has used this information to develop a national standard for family and domestic violence statistics in recorded crime collections. It released the experimental *Recorded Crime — Victims 2014 (cat. no. 4510.0)* data on 23 September 2015 (for selected states and territories) and *Recorded Crime — Victims 2015 (cat. no. 4510.0)* on 13 July 2016 (for all states and territories) Key findings from the *Recorded Crime — Victims, 2015* data included:

- there were more female victims of family and domestic violence-related assaults than males in all selected states and territories
- around a third (35 per cent) of family and domestic violence related homicides did not involve a weapon, while over a quarter (27 per cent) involved the use of a knife and less than one in 10 (eight per cent) involved the use of a firearm
- the most common location for all family and domestic violence-related offences was a 'residential' setting.

The ABS released the publication *Recorded Crime — Offenders* (cat. no. 4519.0) on 24 February 2016. It included experimental statistics on family and domestic violence. Due to system constraints in some jurisdictions, the statistics did not include data from South Australia, Western Australia or Tasmania. Key findings included:

- males were four to eight times more likely to be offenders of family and domestic violence
- people aged between 20 and 34 years were most likely to be offenders of family and domestic violence.

Criminal Courts and Corrective Services data project — all jurisdictions

The ABS has also been working with state and territory criminal courts and corrective services agencies to understand the extent and nature of family and domestic violence-related information collected in administrative data systems.

This project is exploring the incorporation of family and domestic violence-related information (or flags) for each jurisdiction into the existing ABS' criminal courts and corrective services collections.

Preliminary results and recommendations from phase one have been provided to the Australian Government Department of Social Services, with attention now turning to phase two of the project.

Based on the findings from this work for courts and corrections, the ABS will assess whether sufficient, comparable and good quality data exists to enable the creation of experimental family and domestic violence-related data sets to be released in future.

Family Violence Index — Victoria

The Victorian Government has commissioned ANROWS to develop Australia's first Family Violence Index to measure the scope and scale of family violence in the community. The index will bring together data from across crime and justice, healthcare, education and community attitudes — to create a single indicator of family violence.

During 2015–16 ANROWS mapped what is currently known about family violence, identify gaps and make recommendations about the indicators and data collection capabilities that will be required to support the index.

Data Linkage Research Project 2015–16 — Western Australia

A paper on research conducted by the Western Australia Sexual Assault Resource Centre's Medical and Forensic Service and Curtin University Centre for Population Health is expected to be published in October 2016. The three-year research project was funded by a Lotterywest research grant, commenced in 2014.

The research project analysed data held by the centre. The analysis assessed vulnerability factors, health and forensic outcomes for people who experienced sexual assault in Western Australia.

This study identifies and quantifies non-fatal strangulation (NFS) risk factors in female sexual assault and highlights the strong association with intimate partner sexual assault. Of all sexual assaults with NFS, intimate partners were the assailant in 58.2 per cent of cases, whereas in sexual assault cases without NFS, intimate partners were the assailant in 15.9 per cent of cases. The odds of NFS were 8.4 times higher in women sexually assaulted by an intimate partner compared with women assaulted by an acquaintance/friend and 4.9 times higher compared with women assaulted by a stranger.

Greater awareness of NFS in sexual assault is expected to lead to improvement in medical screening, forensic and risk assessment by sexual assault and domestic violence services, emergency departments and police.

Overarching policy frameworks

National

Women's Safety Package

In September 2015 the Australian Government announced a \$100 million Women's Safety Package to help keep women and their children safe.

The Women's Safety Package includes practical measures to deliver better frontline support and services, improve training for frontline workers, trial innovative and integrated service delivery in critical areas, and provide the best educational resources to parents, teachers and children to change the attitudes of young people. The package also contains specific measures to help Indigenous women and their communities.

National Primary Prevention Framework

On 10 November 2015 Our Watch, in partnership with ANROWS and VicHealth, launched Australia's first national primary prevention framework, *Change the Story*. The framework aims to support a coordinated approach to, and enhanced delivery of, policies and programs to prevent violence against women and their children.

The framework was informed by extensive consultations across Australia and presents evidence and a conceptual approach for preventing violence against women and their children. It will be supported by the development of a range of implementation tools in 2016.

Indigenous Advancement Strategy

The Australian Government provided more than \$250 million in 2015-16 through the Indigenous Advancement Strategy for activities to improve community safety and wellbeing in Indigenous communities, including \$23.1 million for family violence prevention legal services and \$6.9 million for family safety activities.

National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking and Slavery

The *National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking and Slavery 2015–19* provides the strategic framework for Australia’s whole-of-community response to human trafficking, slavery and slavery-like practices. The plan’s areas of focus include:

- monitoring the effectiveness of relevant legislative frameworks, including the *Commonwealth Criminal Code Act 1995*
- increasing awareness raising and education about human trafficking and slavery among vulnerable groups, frontline responders and the general community
- strengthening cooperation and connectedness between the Australian Government and the states and territories.

National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children

The *National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children 2009–2020* is a long-term commitment between the Australian, state and territory governments, the non-government sector and key researchers. It focuses on achieving the goal that Australia’s children and young people are safe and well. Implementation is guided by a series of action plans, with the *Third Action Plan 2015–2018* released in December 2015.

The Third Action Plan focuses on three strategies: advancing children’s wellbeing through early intervention, with a focus on children’s early years, particularly the first 1,000 days; helping young people in out-of-home care to thrive into adulthood; and helping organisations respond better to children and young people to keep them safe. The needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families are a core component of the plan.

The National Disability Strategy

The *National Disability Strategy 2010–2020* provides a 10-year national policy framework for all levels of government to improve the lives of people with disability. One of the central outcomes of the strategy is to ensure the rights of people with disability are promoted, upheld and protected.

The strategy is an important mechanism to ensure that the principles underpinning the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities are incorporated into policies and programs affecting people with disability, their families and carers.

Federal Budget

In the 2016–17 Federal Budget the Australian Government announced \$100 million for the Third Action Plan of the National Plan.

Australian Capital Territory

ACT Government response to family violence reports

On 28 June 2016, the ACT Government released a response to the three family violence reports (Glanfield Review, Death Review and Gap Analysis) including 38 separate government commitments to address family violence.

ACT Prevention of Violence against Women and Children strategy

The ACT Government is committed to ending violence against women and their children through the *ACT Prevention of Violence against Women and Children Strategy 2011–17*. The ACT strategy aims to prevent violence against women both inside and outside their homes and to reduce the number of children exposed to violence.

On 17 August 2015 the Attorney-General, the Hon Simon Corbell MLA, and Minister for Women, the Hon Yvette Berry MLA, launched the *Second Implementation Plan 2015–2017* under the ACT strategy. This plan continues to highlight the need for the whole community to be involved in upholding and respecting the rights of women and children to live free from the fear and experience of violence.

The ACT strategy and associated actions align with the Second Action Plan of the National Plan and the report of the ACT Domestic Violence Prevention Council Extraordinary Meeting held in April 2015. At this meeting representatives from government directorates, the police, courts and the community sector had an open and honest conversation about how the ACT Government and other stakeholders could strengthen and improve responses to family violence.

The ACT has incorporated specific recommendations from the meeting into its Second Implementation Plan. The five priority areas over the next two years for the plan are:

- driving whole-of-community and government action to prevent violence and create an anti-violence culture
- understanding diverse experiences of violence

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- supporting innovative services and joined up service systems
 - improving evidence-based perpetrator interventions so that men are held accountable and supported to change their behaviour
 - continuing to build the evidence base.

ACT Budget

The 2015–16 ACT Budget included additional funding to counter violence against women and children, including:

- additional funding for the Domestic Violence Crisis Service, Canberra Rape Crisis Centre and EveryMan Australia to meet increased demand for crisis assistance as a result of awareness raising campaigns
- funding for schools to provide social and emotional learning programs to build communities that model and teach respectful relationships and provide easy access to support
- funding for Women’s Safety Grants, support to develop a domestic and family violence data framework, and increasing the capacity and work of the ACT Domestic Violence Prevention Council.

The significant work undertaken to improve the evidence base and continue promoting an anti-violence culture in the ACT led to historic investment in responding to family violence as part of the 2016–17 ACT Budget.

The 2016–17 ACT Budget is a catalyst for the next phase of reform in the family violence service system. An unprecedented \$21.42 million Safer Families package over four years commits to a range of activities and innovative practices to achieve an integrated and collaborative single service system for families experiencing domestic violence, and to respond to those who perpetrate violence.

The Safer Families package includes funding for:

- a full-time Coordinator-General for Family Safety and a dedicated Safer Families team
- integrated case management and coordination of services for victims of family violence centralised in a Family Safety Hub
- enhanced quality assurance and support for improved decision-making in child protection services

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- the introduction of training for frontline staff across Community and Emergency Services, Health, and Education to support identification of family violence and early intervention
 - increased capacity of specialist drug treatment services to deliver programs that integrate best practice in family violence specialist services
 - much needed investment in translation and interpreting services in the ACT Courts and Tribunal, and family violence specialist services
 - a brokerage and bond fund to assist victims of family violence with immediate expenses
 - increased support for the Domestic Violence Crisis Service and the Canberra Rape Crisis Service for the vital work they do 24/7
 - an innovative residential behaviour change program for men who use or are at risk of using violence
 - support for ACT Policing to apply for Domestic Violence Orders on behalf of victims
 - support for the first stage of implementation of the Joint Australian Law Reform Commission and New South Wales Law Reform Commission report *Family Violence — A National Legal Response*
 - stronger criminal justice responses to alleged perpetrators of family violence
 - increased support for Legal Aid to improve access to legal services for victims of family violence
 - a Reportable Conduct Scheme to improve oversight of how organisations with a high-level of responsibility for children respond to allegations of child abuse.

New South Wales

The Blueprint for domestic and family violence reform

The New South Wales Government is developing a Blueprint for domestic and family violence reform to further improve its response to domestic and family violence.

The Blueprint is being developed in consultation with policy makers across government, service providers, peak organisations and the community, through workshops and a public consultation process.

The Blueprint will set out a direction for reform of the domestic and family violence response in the state to ensure services provided are coordinated, accessible, flexible and client-centred.

New South Wales Sexual Assault Strategy

The development of a New South Wales Sexual Assault Strategy is in response to the expanded violence prevention portfolio for the Hon Pru Goward MP, Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, to establish a framework for a coordinated whole-of-government and whole-of-community response to sexual assault in New South Wales.

The purpose of the strategy is to set out the overarching principles and client outcomes to be achieved across the state. The strategy seeks to optimise the response to victims/survivors, as well as potential victims of sexual assault in New South Wales, and to provide a cohesive and whole-of-government and community response to the needs of adult and child victim/survivors of sexual assault, adult victims/survivors of childhood sexual assault and families, carers and significant others. The strategy will address the following domains:

- facilitating sexual assault prevention and education
- supporting victims
- holding perpetrators accountable
- improving the system as a whole.

Premier's priority to reduce re-offending

In September 2015 reducing domestic and family violence reoffending was announced as one of the New South Wales Premier's priorities. The priority seeks a five percentage point reduction in the proportion of domestic violence offenders who re-offend within 12 months, by 2019.

New South Wales Budget

On 14 October 2015, the New South Wales Government announced a \$60 million package to target perpetrators and support women, men and children who have experienced domestic violence.

The package includes new Police Domestic Violence High-Risk Offender Teams to target perpetrators and reduce the rate of re-offending, as well as domestic and family violence Suspect Target Management Plans that will put offenders on notice. The package also includes Mandated Behaviour Change Programs to help perpetrators address their behaviour. In addition, the package will increase Crisis Accommodation Support and introduced Australia's first Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme, to enable people to find out if their partner has a history of domestic violence offending.

On 21 June 2016 in the 2016–17 New South Wales Budget, the Government announced funding of over \$300 million over four years to address domestic and family violence in the state. New South Wales' record investment in 2016–17 strengthens efforts to work innovatively, in partnership with the non-government sector and the wider community, to prevent domestic and family violence, support victims and hold perpetrators of violence to account.

This includes \$53 million over four years to expand Safer Pathway across New South Wales, which ensures victims receive a consistent and integrated multi-agency response to secure their safety and support recovery. Other major initiatives to support victims include a \$20 million Innovation Fund for prevention, early intervention and crisis responses that support domestic and family services and refuges and \$13 million over four years to improve risk assessment and services for male victims such as gay men, or fathers and sons suffering family violence.

The 2016–17 New South Wales Budget also strengthens efforts to hold perpetrators accountable for their actions, with investment that includes \$15 million over four years for community-based perpetrator programs led by non-government organisations.

Northern Territory

Domestic and Family Violence Reduction Strategy: Safety is Everyone's Right

The *Domestic and Family Violence Reduction Strategy 2014–2017: Safety is Everyone's Right*, aims to increase the safety of victim-survivors and their children, reduce rates of inter-generational trauma caused by exposure to domestic and family violence, increase accountability of perpetrators, and establish integrated service delivery systems that are sustainable and adaptable, with a particular focus on developing effective responses for Indigenous people in regional and remote communities.

The key to the strategy is an integrated response that addresses the negative impact of service fragmentation on vulnerable persons.

The strategy's integrated response is underpinned by strengthening non-government organisation services to improve the responses to victims and their children. This is being achieved by establishing a suite of place-based specialised support and counselling services.

Family Safety Framework

The strategy's centrepiece is the deployment of the *Family Safety Framework*, which is an action-based, crisis intervention response.

The framework is an integrated agency response, led by Northern Territory Police, to assess risk and provide those at risk of homicide or further serious harm with high-level case management. The aim is to reduce immediate risk and address the negative impact of service fragmentation, to protect victims from further harm.

The framework includes consistent risk assessment tools, information sharing, and fortnightly family safety meetings where agencies plan immediate actions and jointly monitor safety improvements for each referral.

The framework has been implemented in Alice Springs, Darwin, Katherine, Nhulunbuy, Tennant Creek and Yuendumu. More than 1,800 frontline government and non-government employees have received training to support the framework.

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Strategy

Another aspect of the Northern Territory's overarching *Safety is Everyone's Right* strategy is the development of a whole-of-government Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Strategy, in line with objectives and priority areas under the National Plan.

The Northern Territory Government has started work on this strategy to prevent and respond to all forms of sexual assault in the Northern Territory. A cross-government sexual assault working group has started meeting regularly to inform the development and implementation of the strategy and consultations with stakeholders will occur in 2016–17.

Northern Territory Budget

On 24 May 2016 the Northern Territory Government's 2016–17 Budget included funding of \$7.47 million to continue and expand a range of domestic violence prevention and reduction initiatives.

Queensland

Domestic and family violence reforms

In 2014 a bipartisan Queensland Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence, led by Dame Quentin Bryce AD CVO, was established to undertake a comprehensive and coordinated review of domestic and family violence in Queensland. The Taskforce presented its report, *Not Now, Not Ever: Putting an end to Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland*, in February 2015.

On 18 August 2015 the Queensland Government released its response to the *Not Now, Not Ever* report, accepting all 121 recommendations relating to government agencies and supporting the remaining 19 recommendations directed at non-government bodies.

In November 2015 a Domestic and Family Violence Implementation Council was established to support these reforms. The Council is chaired by Ms Bryce and includes community and government representatives. The Council will monitor implementation of the recommendations from the *Not Now, Not Ever* report and the *Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2016–2026* (see below), as well as championing the ongoing implementation of the strategy.

Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy

In response to the Taskforce recommendations, the Queensland Government developed the *Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2016–2026*. The strategy was developed through consultation with service providers, community leaders and the general public.

The strategy focuses on three foundation areas: shifting community attitudes and behaviours; integrating service responses; and strengthening justice system responses. It will be supported by four action plans that will provide a blueprint to guide government and the community to help achieve the vision of a Queensland free from domestic and family violence.

Queensland Women's Strategy

In March 2016 the Queensland Government released the *Queensland Women's Strategy 2016–2021*. The strategy provides a framework for government, private sector and community to achieve gender equality. It is based on the best available evidence and consultation with community members and representatives from the non-government, government and private sectors.

The strategy's vision is that the Queensland community respects women, embraces gender equality and promotes and protects the rights, interests and wellbeing of women and girls. The strategy has four priority areas: participation and leadership; economic security; safety; and health and wellbeing.

The strategy is the Queensland Government's call to industry, business and the community to take responsibility and be part of the change. The Queensland Government will work with stakeholders to prioritise activities and develop a community implementation plan for the strategy.

Violence Against Women Prevention Plan

Recognising the great costs all forms of violence against women have on those who experience it, their families, the community and the economy, the Queensland Government is developing a Violence Against Women Prevention Plan. The plan will support the priority area of safety in the *Queensland Women's Strategy 2016-2021* and build on the *Queensland Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2016–2026*. The plan will be based on best available evidence and cover all forms of violence against women. The plan is currently being developed in consultation with government, community and private sectors.

Queensland Budget

Since the 2015-16 Queensland Budget, the Queensland Government has allocated an additional \$198.2 million over five years to implement the *Not Now, Not Ever* report recommendations. This brings total funding to implement the government's response to \$233.8 million over five years.

South Australia

Women's safety strategies

The South Australian Government has demonstrated strong leadership in addressing violence against women since 2005 as evidenced in the *Women's Safety Strategy 2005–2010*, which was followed by *A Right to Safety 2011–2022*. This leadership has harnessed efforts to build:

- consistent responses across services and systems
- community understanding of, and involvement in responding to violence against women
- local community actions to prevent violence against women before it occurs.

Achieving Women's Equality: South Australia's Women's Policy

In July 2015 the South Australian Government released *Achieving Women's Equality: South Australia's Women's Policy*, which provides a framework to achieve gender equality. This policy involves all facets of state government in partnership with non-government organisations, business, local government and community groups.

The policy draws together existing programs that support three priorities:

- improving women's economic status
- increasing women's leadership and participation
- improving women's safety and wellbeing.

The South Australian Government has also provided funding to develop a new pilot program offering education pathways to women affected by domestic and family violence.

Investing in Women's Futures: South Australia's Economic Empowerment Blueprint

On International Women's Day, 8 March 2016, the South Australian Minister for the Status of Women launched *Investing in Women's Futures*, part of a strategy designed to increase women's economic wellbeing.

Investing in Women's Futures continues the South Australian Government's leadership in gender equality, addressing women's economic empowerment with actions and initiatives to address the issues and disadvantages women face across their lifetime.

Actions include:

- compulsory superannuation contributions for public servants while on paid parental leave, which will be backdated to 2012
- an audit to identify the gender pay gap including classification levels, roles and government agencies where the gap is more prevalent
- a job-swap network and 'shadowing' program where women in the public sector can work within another government agency to gain skills and experience in information technology and other science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields
- financial literacy information sessions to be provided at the Women's Information Service.

South Australia Budget

In the 2016–17 Budget, the South Australian Government allocated \$1.3 million for the National Domestic Violence Order Scheme. In addition, the government committed \$683,000 over four years to include non-government women's domestic violence services in the Multi-Agency Protection Service (MAPS). The South Australian Government continues to support a range of initiatives to address violence against women.

Tasmania

Safe Homes, Safe Families, Tasmania's Family Violence Action Plan

On 13 August 2015 the Tasmanian Premier, the Hon Will Hodgman MP, launched *Safe Homes, Safe Families, Tasmania's Family Violence Action Plan 2015–2020*. Under Safe Homes, Safe Families, the Tasmanian Government has committed an additional \$26 million to new and direct actions to address family violence in Tasmania.

Safe Homes, Safe Families focuses on three priority areas for action:

- changing the attitudes and behaviours that lead to family violence
- supporting families affected by violence
- strengthening legal responses to hold perpetrators to account for their violent behaviour.

The Premier was joined at the launch of Safe Homes, Safe Families by the Tasmanian Minister for Women, the Hon Jacque Petrusma MP, Australia's Ambassador for Women and Girls and Our Watch Chair, Natasha Stott Despoja AM, and 2015 Australian of the Year, Rosie Batty.

Safe Homes, Safe Families Implementation Plan

On 25 November 2015 the Minister for Women and Tasmania Police Commissioner, Darren Hine APM, launched the *Safe Homes, Safe Families Implementation Plan* (August 2015 to December 2016). This first Implementation Plan outlines the short-term milestones planned for each action and will track progress.

Primary prevention

In response to the First Action Plan under the National Plan, the Tasmanian Government developed *Taking Action: Tasmania's Primary Prevention Strategy to Reduce Violence against Women and Children 2012–2022*. Tasmania's *Second Implementation Plan 2013–2016* continued Tasmania's strong focus on primary prevention.

Under Safe Homes, Safe Families, the Tasmanian Government remains committed to changing the culture, behaviours and power imbalances that lead to violence against women and their children.

Tasmanian Women's Plan

The Tasmanian Government is committed to addressing the underlying factors that create and maintain gender inequality, and to empowering and enabling women and girls to reach their full potential through the *Tasmanian Women's Plan 2013–2018*.

A central initiative of the *Tasmanian Women's Plan* is the *Women on Boards Strategy 2015–2020*, which was launched on 1 July 2015. The strategy aims to change the gender imbalance of government board membership. The Tasmanian Government is committed to a target of 50 per cent representation of women across Tasmanian Government boards and committees by July 2020.

The Tasmanian Government is also supporting women in leadership by providing scholarships for women to develop their leadership skills through the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Tasmanian Budget

In August 2015 the Tasmanian Government announced significant further commitments in addressing family violence, with a \$26 million investment to implement *Safe Homes, Safe Families, Tasmania's Family Violence Action Plan 2015–2020*. This funding is in addition to the \$16 million in direct and \$24 million in indirect funding the Tasmanian Government spends to address family violence each year.

Victoria

Gender equality strategy

In December 2015 the Victorian Government released a consultation paper for the development of Victoria's first ever gender equality strategy. Promoting gender equality is recognised by the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence as an important component of family violence prevention.

Submissions closed on 19 March 2016. More than 200 submissions were received, providing valuable insight into how gender inequality affects women's health, wellbeing, safety and economic and social participation. The final gender equality strategy will be released in late 2016.

Royal Commission into Family Violence in Victoria

Australia's first Royal Commission into Family Violence formally commenced in Victoria on 22 February 2015. The Royal Commission, which worked over 13 months, was tasked with identifying the most effective ways to:

- prevent family violence
- improve early intervention so as to identify and protect those at risk
- support victims particularly women and their children and address the impacts of violence on them
- make perpetrators accountable
- develop and refine systemic responses to family violence, including in the legal system and by police, corrections, child protection, legal and family violence support services
- better coordinate community and government responses to family violence
- evaluate and measure the success of strategies, frameworks, policies, programs and services introduced to put a stop to family violence.

The Royal Commission's report was informed by 44 community consultations, more than 1,000 written submissions, 25 days of public hearings, 220 witnesses, data collection, literature reviews, commissioned research and discussions with experts. The Commission also heard from individuals directly affected by family violence — which was fundamental to helping the Commission reflect on measures to reduce the risk of family violence, respond to the needs of those affected, and critically assess current approaches and practices.

On 29 March 2016 the Royal Commission provided its report to government. The report will guide government in preventing and responding to family violence and in building the structures that will guide and oversee a long-term reform program.

The Royal Commission made 227 comprehensive recommendations under 36 priority areas. The report outlines the primary priorities for reform and the principles that must underpin future strategies, policies and programs aimed at dealing with family violence.

The report covers a broad range of priority areas including service system pathways, police, courts, offences and sentencing, housing, financial security, recovery, the experience of children and young people and people from diverse communities, system governance and oversight, industry planning, primary prevention, the role of the health system, and the role communities and workplaces can play in addressing family violence.

Victorian Budget

The Victorian Government has committed to implementing all 227 Royal Commission recommendations. In April 2016 a family violence funding package of \$572 million over two years was announced as part of an initial response to the Royal Commission and to start implementing 65 of the most urgent recommendations. The funding package includes:

- \$152.5 million to build and redevelop family violence refuges, expand crisis accommodation, and rapidly fund up to 130 new social housing homes for victims of family violence
- \$122 million to keep children safe from harm, including through expanding a new program that gives intensive support for children in their own home, and continuing reform of the child protection system
- \$103.9 million for specialist family violence services such as crisis support and counselling to meet unprecedented demand
- \$61.6 million in family violence prevention, including expanding the Respectful Relationships education program, introducing Victoria's first Gender Equality Strategy, prevention initiatives for the Indigenous and CALD communities, and targeting elder abuse
- \$32.5 million to develop a new system for sharing information between services to keep victims safe
- \$25.7 million to address Aboriginal family violence including through prevention and early intervention programs and new approaches to dispute resolution
- \$23.9 million to reform the justice system and hold perpetrators to account, including through expanding legal services for victims and additional men's behaviour change program placements
- \$19 million for a new type of family violence navigator to guide victims through every step of crisis and recovery

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- \$15.4 million to establish an independent monitor to hold government to account as the Royal Commission recommendations are implemented, and to support the new Victim Survivors Advisory Council, and Family Violence Steering Committee
 - \$10.4 million to build the capacity of the family violence workforce
 - \$5 million to begin rolling out 17 new Safety and Support hubs as recommended by the Royal Commission.

In addition, the Victorian Government will develop a comprehensive 10-year Victorian Family Violence Plan, undertake Court upgrades to improve the safety of victims, and trial the use of body-worn cameras for police to record evidence at the scene of a family violence incident.

Western Australia

Family and Domestic Violence Prevention Strategy

The Western Australia's *Family and Domestic Violence Prevention Strategy to 2022* is a whole-of-government, whole-of-community approach to tackling this serious issue. The strategy provides the overarching framework for action over the longer-term and aligns the state priorities with the focus areas of the National Plan.

Freedom from Fear Action Plan

On 7 September 2015 the prevention strategy's *Freedom from Fear Action Plan, Working towards the elimination of family and domestic violence in Western Australia* was launched. This action plan, which was endorsed by Western Australia's Cabinet, focuses on engaging and responding to perpetrators of family and domestic violence and sets out 20 actions under five priority areas:

- promote understanding and awareness about family and domestic violence
- target communities and populations at greatest risk
- trial and evaluate innovative approaches to perpetrator intervention

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- promote consistent quality practice in engaging and responding to men who use violence
 - increase the capacity and authority of the service system to stop perpetrators of family and domestic violence when they are identified.

Family and Domestic Violence Common Risk Assessment Risk Management Framework second edition

The second edition of the *Western Australian Family and Domestic Violence Common Risk Assessment and Risk Management Framework* was officially launched on 27 November 2015.

Developed for use by all government and non-government service providers in Western Australia, the purpose of the framework is to:

- support better identification of, and responses to, victims of family and domestic violence regardless of what area of the service sector they come into contact with
- ensure service responses are client and safety focused
- support inter-agency collaboration so responses are timely, holistic, streamlined and coordinated
- hold perpetrators accountable for their use of violence.

The second edition of the framework includes new resources, including fact sheets and practice tools, and presents minimum standards for screening, risk assessment, risk management, information sharing and referral.

Women's Health Strategy 2013–2017

The Women and Newborn Health Service produced the Western Australian Women's Health Strategy 2013–2017. The aim of the strategy is to improve and promote the health and wellbeing of Western Australian women. Within this, health responses to family and domestic violence have been named as a priority area. The strategy was endorsed by the Western Australian Minister for Health in 2013 and is currently being up-dated for 2017. It is anticipated that family and domestic violence will remain a key priority in terms of addressing women's health.

Safer Families, Safer Communities: Kimberley Family Violence Regional Plan

On 1 October 2015 the Western Australian Government launched the *Safer Families, Safer Communities: Kimberley Family Violence Regional Plan*. The five-year Kimberley plan is an action under *the Freedom from Fear Action Plan 2015*. It includes a combination of strategies to strengthen current family and domestic violence service provision and coordination between responders.

The plan also includes approaches specific to Aboriginal people, families and communities. These strategies are entrenched in a strong Aboriginal law and culture framework to improve the safety for women and children, and accountability for perpetrators.

Family safety teams are being established in East and West Kimberley. The teams provide a coordinated multi-agency response to support individuals and families experiencing family and domestic violence, by extending current partnership arrangements (between the Department for Child Protection and Family Support, Western Australia Police and community sector family and domestic violence services) to include the Department of Corrective Services and dedicated men's and women's family violence workers.

Western Australian Budget

The Western Australian Government continues to support a range of initiatives to address violence against women. This includes increased funding for frontline services to support and accommodate women and children.

Looking ahead

It is important to acknowledge the many significant achievements by all jurisdictions under the First and Second Action Plans of the National Plan.

The Australian, state and territory governments are now working together to develop the National Plan's Third Action Plan, which is due for release later in 2016.

Informed by experts, the Third Action Plan will set out Australia's policy priorities, actions and direction to help reduce violence against women and their children for the next three years.

The Third Action Plan is the half-way point for the National Plan. This milestone, combined with momentum in addressing violence against women in the Australian community, makes this Third Action Plan particularly important and influential.

The Third Action Plan will be informed by:

- recommendations from the COAG Advisory Panel
- targeted workshops and roundtables held around the country in early to mid-2016.

Governments have also drawn on the evaluation of the National Plan's Second Action Plan and the many national, state and territory inquiries and consultation processes to inform the Third Action Plan. These include:

- the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence
- the Queensland Special Taskforce
- the Senate Inquiry into Domestic Violence in Australia
- independent reviews of existing programs and services.

Links

For more information on initiatives being delivered under the National Plan and the Second Action Plan:

www.dss.gov.au/nationalplan

www.plan4womenssafety.dss.gov.au

For more information on programs funded under the Second Action Plan:

1800RESPECT

www.1800respect.org.au

www.1800respect.org.au/daisy

DV-alert

www.dvalert.org.au

ANROWS

www.anrows.org.au

Our Watch

www.ourwatch.org.au

Stop it at the Start Campaign

www.respect.gov.au

The Line

www.theline.org.au

White Ribbon Australia

www.whiteribbon.org.au

Personal Safety Survey

www.abs.gov.au/ausstats

National Survey on Community Attitudes Towards Violence Against Women

www.vichealth.vic.gov.au

2012 Family Violence Amendments

www.aifs.gov.au

Gap Analysis Project

www.cmd.act.gov.au

COAG Advisory Panel on Reducing Violence against Women and their Children

www.dpmc.gov.au

eSafetyWomen

<https://www.esafety.gov.au/women>

Australian Capital Territory initiatives

www.women.act.gov.au

www.cmd.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/883484/ACT-Government-Response_family_violence.pdf

New South Wales initiatives

www.domesticviolence.nsw.gov.au

www.women.nsw.gov.au

Northern Territory initiatives

www.women.nt.gov.au

Queensland initiatives

www.communities.qld.gov.au/gateway/end-domestic-and-family-violence/home

www.communities.qld.gov.au/gateway/not-now-not-ever/not-now-not-ever-campaign

www.communities.qld.gov.au

South Australia initiatives

www.officeforwomen.sa.gov.au

www.victimsa.org.au

Tasmania initiatives

www.dpac.tas.gov.au/safehomessafefamilies

www.safeathome.tas.gov.au

Victoria initiatives

www.dpc.vic.gov.au

Western Australia initiatives

www.cpfs.wa.gov.au

NATIONAL PLAN TO

REDUCE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND THEIR CHILDREN