

Update on Current Initiatives

We must continue to develop initiatives along a continuum of responses to domestic violence, from early intervention educational programs to post-crisis housing, employment support and justice responses.

As stated above, we recognise gender inequality as a root cause of domestic violence. South Australia has a long and proud history of responding to the needs of women, beginning with the Dunstan Government's appointment of the first adviser on women's issues, the establishment of the Women's Information Switchboard, the Rape Crisis Centre and women's shelters. An ongoing commitment to addressing violence against women took us from the women's shelters of the 1970s, community housing in the 1980s, 1990s policies where women and their children moved into cluster accommodation out of reach from perpetrators, to today's legislative and procedural measures emphasising common risk assessments, multi-agency responses and the removal of perpetrators from family homes.

A wide range of services are currently in place, including:

- emergency services that provide specific support and treatment services for women who have experienced violence;
- crisis response and ongoing counselling and medical services for victims of sexual assault and their families;
- ongoing counselling, information and support services for women and children who have experienced violence in their lives through community health and women's health services;
- services for victim of crime and women's refuges and domestic violence outreach support services;
- services for adult survivors of child sexual abuse and a range of non-government family support programs, focusing on families where women and children have experienced domestic violence;
- programs targeting men who use violence and sex offenders;
- crime prevention activities that specifically address violence against women;
- mental health and drug and alcohol services;
- services provided by multi-cultural and Aboriginal organisations;
- police services that respond to and prevent violent crimes against women;
- court resources for criminal and civil cases; and
- Equal Opportunity Commission initiatives to reduce discrimination and provide a complaints resolution service for unlawful discrimination, including sexual harassment.

The current initiatives of the South Australian Government span in key directions spelt out in *A Right to Safety*, being prevention, service provision and protection, together with performance⁶⁷.

Current initiatives

		Performance must be measured so we know what is working, so our programs are evidence-based and we remain accountable		
pg		Prevention is about stopping the violence before it happens	Provision is providing and improving services for women who have experienced violence	Protection means enabling women who experience or fear violence to seek protection and access to legal remedies
13	Intervention Orders Legislation		✓	✓
72	Domestic Violence Workplace Policies	✓	✓	✓
72	White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation	✓		
74	Domestic Violence Leave Entitlement		✓	✓
77	D3 Digital Challenges	✓	✓	✓
77	Health Responses	✓	✓	
78	Child Protection Response	✓	✓	
78	Safeguarding Women with Disability	✓	✓	✓
79	Cross-Border Justice Scheme		✓	✓
80	Information Sharing	✓	✓	✓
82	Domestic Violence Serial Offenders Database		✓	✓
85	Women's Domestic Violence Court Assistance Service		✓	✓
85	Family Court Support		✓	✓
86	Witness Assistance Service		✓	✓
88	Vulnerable Witness Provisions			✓
88	Safe at Home		✓	✓
89	Domestic Violence and Housing and Homelessness Support		✓	✓
92	Tenancy Assistance		✓	✓
92	Domestic Violence Response Review		✓	✓
93	Domestic Violence Courts and Perpetrator Treatment Programs		✓	
97	Coronial Domestic Violence Information System		✓	✓
97	National Domestic Violence Order Scheme			✓
98	Council of Australian Governments (COAG)	✓	✓	✓

Domestic Violence Workplace Policies

Workplaces are key environments in which preventative action can be taken to reduce domestic violence and support people who are experiencing or escaping violence. Workplaces can play an effective role in supporting victims to remain safe, stay in work and access specialist support services.

Domestic violence can have significant impacts on the workplace. Workplaces can be used as places for perpetrators to harass victims and locate their whereabouts. The perpetrator may also harass colleagues of the victim.

Being subject to abuse, particularly of an ongoing nature, can affect an employee's work performance, cause poor physical and mental wellbeing, lead to time off work and, in some cases, result in termination of employment.

The adoption of domestic violence workplace policies is aimed at empowering victims to speak up about any abuse they are experiencing and seek support. Stability in the workplace, and in turn financial stability, is also important in assisting victims to maintain their autonomy and leave a violent situation.

Such policies also facilitate the public conversation around domestic violence and encourage all employees to think about the ongoing and widespread impacts domestic violence has on its victims. In such a way, these policies also have a role to play in the primary prevention of domestic violence by encouraging cultural change and education.

White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation

The South Australian Government's strong leadership in responding to domestic violence and violence against women is reflected in its commitment that all South Australian Government agencies will obtain White Ribbon Workplace accreditation. This builds upon the implementation of domestic violence policies that are in place across agencies.

White Ribbon is described as "Australia's campaign to prevent men's violence against women"⁶⁸. It is a national, male-led campaign with the vision that all women live safely from all forms of men's violence. White Ribbon's mission is to make women's safety a man's issue⁶⁹.

White Ribbon Day is observed annually on 25 November, which is the International Day of the Elimination of Violence against Women. White Ribbon Day signals the start of the 16 Days of Activism to Stop Violence against Women, which ends on Human Rights Day (December 10)⁷⁰. In acknowledgement that violence impacts women at work, White Ribbon has established the Workplace Accreditation Program which is described as follows:

The Workplace Accreditation Program recognises workplaces that are taking active steps to prevent and respond to violence against women, accrediting them as a White Ribbon Workplace. Assessment of White Ribbon Workplaces against the criteria is undertaken by our independent Assessors. White Ribbon Workplace Assessors are specialists with expertise in organisational development, business management, organisational change, quality improvement, gender equity and accreditation.

White Ribbon Workplaces are centres of respect and proactivity in relation to the safety of women in the workplace, and are members of a truly leading edge cohort, both nationally and internationally. The Program is an award-winning initiative which is complementary to women's empowerment initiatives and strengthens the organisation's stance in relation to anti-bullying legislation. Key benefits:

- *drive social change*
- *improved office safety and morale*
- *increased staff knowledge and skills to address this issue*
- *improved retention rates and lower staff turnover*
- *risk mitigation*
- *improved work productivity and reduced absenteeism*
- *improved reputation*
- *becoming an employer of choice⁷¹.*

The Accreditation process is currently underway and includes a number of elements, including training across the public sector.

Staff at AGD, for example, have shown their commitment to zero tolerance of violence against women by either signing or emailing to have their name included on AGD's *We Swear* poster.

'we swear'
 never to commit, excuse or stay silent about violence against women. This is our oath.
 Take the oath and sign your name here...

Andrew Swanson *David Evans* *Ian Heffernan*
Doreen Cosovan *Stakit Sakena* *Christine Ray* *Scott Christie*
John Evangelista *Carryn Waters* *Lauren Garcia* *Andrew Camilleri*
Michelle Rosette *Ahmed El Khalidi* *Mandy Fisher* *Julie Ellidson*
Lauren Djakovac *Lachlan Parker* *Joanna Martin* *Juliette Jones*
Joanna Hughes *Aileen Beverley* *Lana Stappford* *David Walters*
Christine Ray *Ben Painter* *Maria Kosti* *Rick Perse*
Marta Louva *Margaret Cameron* *Kirsten Sweeney*

**One woman a week dies from an act of domestic violence.
 I am committed to helping uncover Australia's dark secret. Are you?**

1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732)
 24 hour, National Family & Domestic Violence Counselling Line

Mensline Australia
 Supports men and boys who are dealing with family and relationship difficulties - 1300 78 99 78

Proudly working with White Ribbon to create a safer workplace
 Australia's campaign to stop violence against women

Government of South Australia
 Attorney-General's Department

As part of the campaign, AGD distributed 27 posters, which received more than 1,000 staff signatures. The confronting image and striking design is now instantly recognisable within AGD and has generated high levels of staff engagement and discussion. The AGD poster design was also adopted by other State Government agencies including SAPOL, who distributed an additional 40 posters and anticipated receiving 2,000 signatures.

Furthermore, business units within AGD have made their own commitments to tackle violence against women, generating an infographic that represents the stance of the Department's staff.

AGD on Domestic Violence.
We believe that workplaces can make a difference in stopping violence against women. Our aim is to be accredited as a White Ribbon Workplace.

Fines Unit promotes staff awareness by relating the White Ribbon campaign to the Unit's values, and working compassionately with clients who are victims of domestic violence to help them address their fines debt.

Equal Opportunity Commission supports male leaders to make changes to their organisations to stop disadvantaging women. EOC promote gender equality initiatives, violence prevention programs and practices that foster respectful relationships.

SafeWork SA educates staff about the impact of domestic and family violence on the workplace and increases public awareness by passing this knowledge on through worksite visits and education outreach.

Ombudsman SA is responsible for the Information Sharing Guidelines that promote early and effective service coordination in response to risks to the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable women and children.

Public Advocate has systems to identify clients at high risk of domestic violence, develop prevention strategies and enable decision making. They are collaborating with other agencies to prevent and address issues of abuse and harm to vulnerable older people.

Crown Solicitors Office assesses and pays victims of crime claims to support women who are victims of domestic violence. CSO advises on initiatives i.e. residential tenancy reforms, domestic violence Court services, and developed a standard clause on domestic violence and gender equality for SA government contracts.

Forensic Science SA deals with sexual assault cases as high priority. Victims who have quick forensic results have the confidence in the system to support police investigation and improve the chances of a conviction.

Strategic Communications Group are the design force behind the White Ribbon campaign for the department. A communication plan and online marketing initiatives that feature emotive imagery to engage staff and actively raise awareness.

Commissioner for Victims' Rights provide advocacy and assistance to women and children subject to violence, including helping install security devices and assisting high risk victims to escape violence. The commissioner actively spreads messages about domestic violence to the community.

Consumer and Business Services helped change tenancy laws to protect victims of domestic violence, and gives special consideration when a person trying to escape from a domestic violence situation applies to change their name.

Human Resources Unit promote the use of special leave with pay to staff who may be victims of domestic violence.

Projects and Technology are building a system to allow intervention orders information to be shared between SAPOL and Courts to give immediate access to data to assist in preventing and responding to domestic violence.

Office of Crime Statistics and Research monitors statistical trends relating to violence against women and provides a range of reports which provide information based on Australian Bureau of Statistics data.

Director of Public Prosecutions, through the Witness Assistance Service, ensure that all victims of crime and their immediate family have access to information and support services, and are aware of their rights and responsibilities when dealing with the criminal justice system.

The Women's and Children's Health Network (WCHN) joined the four other SA Health Networks, the South Australian Ambulance Services, the South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service and the Environmental Protection Authority in the November 2015 Cohort for White Ribbon Accreditation.

WCHN staff were surveyed and WCHN exceeded the requirement of a minimum of 30% of staff responding to this baseline survey. The confirmation of this achievement and the results have been forwarded to the Chief Executive Officer and WCHN is now proceeding in the gathering of evidence to obtain certification.

In June 2015, the Commissioner of Police and Chair of the South Australian Committee for White Ribbon, Grant Stevens, and the Chief Executive Officer of White Ribbon Australia, Libby Davies, signed a Statement of Commitment for SAPOL to become an accredited White Ribbon Workplace. SAPOL appointed a Senior Manager as Project Sponsor and established a White Ribbon Accreditation Implementation Working Group to undertake the work required for successful accreditation in accordance with White Ribbon Australia standards and agreed timeframes. SAPOL's support of White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation complements recent initiatives aimed at improving their response to violence against women in the workplace.

Domestic Violence Leave Entitlement

The South Australian Government has also introduced 15 days special leave for public servants experiencing domestic and family violence.

Building upon the implementation of South Australian Government departmental domestic violence policies, in late 2015 the South Australian Government announced the development of a whole-of-government policy granting public sector employees experiencing domestic and family violence access to up to 15 days special leave with pay. This policy reflects that domestic violence is not just a private issue, but rather it is a public and workplace issue. Paid work can play a critical role in providing the financial stability to enable a woman to leave an abusive relationship and recover from that abuse.

In addition, workplaces have a key role in supporting women and providing the flexibility to enable them to take action against violence whilst maintaining employment. Being the largest employer in the state, the South Australian Government is perfectly placed to lead by example in implementing these new leave entitlements.

In addition to supporting women who are experiencing domestic violence, workplaces can also take positive action to prevent domestic violence through education, which is a powerful early intervention tool.

In 2012, SAPOL extended the special paid leave available to non-sworn staff (through the South Australian Public Sector Wages Parity Agreement: Salaried 2012) to assist employees who are victims of domestic violence, to have a general application and availability to sworn staff. The purpose of this domestic violence leave was to support employees who may need time away from the workplace to address health issues or to attend to legal, financial, childcare or other matters which arise as a consequence of domestic violence. Relevant policies were amended to reflect the availability of special paid leave for this purpose.

In 2016, further work has been undertaken by SAPOL to ensure that policies and procedures are clearly articulated and provide the necessary detail to members who need to access this leave, and to managers in appropriately managing absences and other associated needs of an affected employee.

Other Government Workplace Policies

In addition, all South Australian Government Departments are implementing or have implemented domestic violence workplace policies, after endorsement from the Premier. These policies are modelled on one developed by DCSI. A copy of this policy and guidelines are available at: www.officeforwomen.sa.gov.au

It is intended that roll out of domestic violence workplace policies throughout Government will be an example to non-government organisations to also adopt such policies.

The DCSI policy available online is suggested as a basis for non-government workplaces to use as a template for their own policies.

A further example is found within the DCS *Domestic and Family Violence Framework 2015-2017*, which outlines the approach DCS will adopt to strengthen their response to domestic violence.

The framework has the following five key areas of focus:

- prevention;
- victim support and assistance;
- collaboration and information sharing;
- control and monitoring; and
- accountability and behavioural change.

Organisational Cultural Change within the Department for Correctional Services

DCS is taking active steps in creating an organisational culture that is opposed and responsive to violence against women, and to redressing gender inequity within DCS staffing and in relation to its services to women offenders. In addition to seeking White Ribbon Workplace accreditation, DCS is increasing the number of women in leadership, as well as actively acknowledging and rewarding women's achievements.

DCS is bringing greater focus to the prevalence of domestic violence in the lives of women offenders with the recently released Women Offenders Framework, designed to:

- bring a gendered response to the specific needs of women offenders in prisons, as well as in the community; and
- include trauma informed approaches to sexual, physical and psychological abuse.

DCS has also established a Domestic and Family Violence Advisory Group (DFV Advisory Group). The DFV Advisory Group, which involves a cross section of staff and external stakeholders with expertise in the area of domestic violence, provides an accountability and oversight mechanism for DCS's activity on domestic violence. The DFV Advisory Group:

- provides strategic oversight and monitors delivery of DCS's response to domestic violence;
- identifies gaps, risks, opportunities and strategies to ensure policy consistency and an integrated and coordinated departmental response to domestic violence prevention;
- ensures linkages with corporate strategy and communication with stakeholders on complex domestic violence projects and issues;
- contributes to, and supports, research activity and practice development to enhance DCS's domestic violence response; and
- reports quarterly on programme progress to DCS Executive Group.

SA Health's Response to Domestic Violence

By way of further example, the Domestic Violence Policy Directive (which is available on the SA Health website at: www.sahealth.sa.gov.au) represents SA Health's position in respect to support and assistance for those employees who are victims of domestic or family violence. SA Health recognises that anyone, male or female, can be a victim of domestic violence, however the overwhelming majority of people who experience domestic violence and abuse in the home are women. This Policy Directive provides employees and managers with information relating to a range of supports available in the workforce and those employees who experience domestic or family violence.

SAPOL Response

As responding to domestic violence is part of SAPOL's core business, there are existing comprehensive policies which contain SAPOL's philosophy, procedures and instructions with respect to recognising and responding to the needs of victims, and on ensuring accountability of offenders. Victims who are employees are, in effect, a subset of victims with additional needs. Similarly, responding to incidents where a domestic violence offender is identified as a SAPOL employee brings additional complexities and places additional responsibilities upon SAPOL to manage that employee within their Code of Conduct.

A Victim's Story: Can a workplace really make a difference?

Elizabeth experienced domestic violence at the hands of her fiancé Michael. After Elizabeth managed to leave Michael she found out that a colleague at her work, Sarah, took a phone call one day from Michael's ex-partner. The ex-partner had telephoned Elizabeth's workplace and asked to speak to her. Elizabeth was away and Sarah took the call. Sarah became distressed and upset because Michael's ex-partner told her that he was violent, that Elizabeth may be in danger and that Michael had a long history of domestic violence. Sarah spoke to her Manager who told her that it was "none of our business" and that she should not say anything to Elizabeth. Months went by and Elizabeth continued to hide the abuse. Sarah eventually left to work elsewhere. Nothing was ever said. One day in the work kitchen, Elizabeth let something slip and another colleague looked at her closely, quizzically and said "Elizabeth, you know he should not be doing that, don't you." Elizabeth laughed it off but those words helped. When Elizabeth left Michael, she had to tell her workplace, because Michael would always call. Elizabeth had to ask them to not put through his calls and in the end she asked them to not tell her he had called. She needed a safe space. It was then the Manager told her, you should go and talk to Sarah, you know, because Sarah left because of you, you need to apologise to her. Elizabeth was confused and it was then the Manager told her about the phone call from Michael's ex-partner. Elizabeth was shocked and met with Sarah to apologise. Elizabeth felt bad that Sarah had been caught up in the middle but she also felt like Sarah and her Manager were blaming her.

A workplace policy about domestic violence could have helped both Sarah and Elizabeth, and would have guided the Manager as to how she should have dealt with the phone call.

Names have been changed to protect people's identity.

D3 Digital Challenges

The D3 Digital Challenge is a South Australian Government initiative that offers a new way of working to achieve better outcomes for our community. D3 Digital Challenges team up digital entrepreneurs with digital users to help discuss, design and deliver innovative solutions to social issues to better connect South Australians with the services they want and need.

In 2015, the South Australian Government ran a D3 Digital Challenge focused on designing innovative digital solutions to keep women safe. The challenge recognised that perpetrators of violence are increasingly using technology to facilitate their abuse of women, and that there is a need to turn this around and use technology in a positive way that aids women to be happy, healthy and safe in their environment. Information about D3 Digital Challenges is available at:

www.yoursay.sa.gov.au

The D3 Digital Challenge saw teams of digital entrepreneurs brought together with women's safety experts to learn about violence against women, how technology is used to perpetrate violence and how technology could be used to keep women safe.

The D3 Digital Challenge on keeping women safe was a joint initiative between the South Australian and Commonwealth Governments and the December 2015 pitch night saw nine teams present their ideas to a judging panel. All of the teams presented inspired and practical ideas, but there could only be three winning teams.

Grant funding of \$20,000 was awarded to the following teams to fund the development of a prototype:

- ASMS Innovators (a group of year 10 and 11 students from the Australian Science and Mathematics School) with Choose Your Own Adventure pitch – an app that helps young South Australians understand the consequences of different behavioural decisions;
- Cartland Law with ALIRA (Automated Legal Information Research Assistant) – an artificial intelligence program that can empower women with information on domestic violence law; and
- Technology for Women's Safety with Snapshot – a digital toolkit to support women who are in abusive relationships and their support networks.

Teams presented their prototypes to the Office for Women, DPC and the Commonwealth Department of Social Services in early March 2016 and conversations are currently underway regarding further funding.

Health Responses

The WCHN has realigned community based services to embed trauma-specific care practices in responding to vulnerable populations that are impacted by violence and abuse. This new alignment of services forms the Youth and Women Safety and Wellbeing Service (YWSWS) which will ensure efficient and high quality services responsive to the complex relationship between violence, criminal justice and health. For example, YWSWS is working in collaboration with SAPOL toward piloting a domestic violence forensic response whereby trauma-informed health care and injury documentation will be provided to women who have experienced domestic violence. After care support, including counselling, case management and referral, will also be provided. Services that make up YWSWS are: Yarrow Place Rape and Sexual Assault Service; the Women's Safety Strategy; MAPS; Women's Health Service; Metropolitan Youth Health Service and the SA Cervix Screening Program. All services work in partnership with each other and other government, non-government and consumer groups.

Child Protection Response

Children's Protection (Implementation of Coroner's Recommendations) Amendment Act 2016

The *Children's Protection (Implementation of Coroner's Recommendations) Amendment Act 2016* was developed as a result of the Coroner's report on the death of Chloe Valentine, and passed Parliament on 14 April 2016.

Within these amendments are provisions that will contribute to stronger consideration of domestic violence in assessments and interventions to protect children's safety. These include:

- the consideration of cumulative harm as part of child protection assessments of risk to the child to enable greater attention to the cumulative effects of domestic violence and its impact on children, and encourage earlier intervention; and
- the provision to issue instruments of guardianship or restraining notices where a child's parent, or someone who is residing, or about to reside with a child, has been convicted of a qualifying offence.

Qualifying offences include murder, manslaughter, criminal neglect, causing serious harm and acts endangering life or creating risk of serious harm (where the victim was a child and the offender was their parent or guardian).

The PATRICIA Project

Statutory child protection agencies across Australia are participating in the PATRICIA Project – a study of service responses to support the safety and wellbeing of children and young people living with, and separating from, domestic violence. PATRICIA is a loose acronym for Pathways and Research in Collaborative Inter-agency working. Its focus is on service pathways and the relationships between child protection services, domestic violence services and family law. The project is coordinated by the University of Melbourne. It is funded by ANROWS and by individual jurisdictions, including South Australia. Families SA is participating in two components of this project: Case Studies of Innovative and Promising Practice and Child Protection Interventions with Perpetrators.

Women with Disability

International research has found that women with disability are more likely than men with disability and women without disability to experience all forms of violence, and that violence perpetrated against women with disability is more severe and committed over an extended period.

Women with disability experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. While there is no agreed definition of violence against women with disability in Australia, it is recognised that violence against women with disability results from the intersection of systemic gender-based and disability-based discrimination. Examples of violence against women with disability include controlling women's access to mobility, communication or health supports, threats to withdraw care or institutionalise, and sexual activity demanded in return for required care. Violence may be perpetrated by family members, service providers, peers or co-residents.

Safeguarding women with disability is of key importance to both the Office for Women and Disability SA. In recognition of this, a working group has been established with members from both agencies to consider other opportunities for preventing and responding to violence against women with disability and enhancing the positive status of women with disability.

It is essential that women are enabled to be self-advocates and, where necessary, that they have the support of an advocate to ensure they are informed decision makers and are heard by the service responders.

It is important that resources are available that support women with disability to communicate and advocate for their rights and, if necessary, inform the required people of their concerns regarding domestic violence. These resources should take the form of alternative and augmentative communication systems (including assistive technology), AUSLAN, audio versions for those with literacy issues, Braille and ensuring information is easily understood in everyday language and not in legal language.

It is important to recognise that violence against women may mean restrictions to health services and a lack of personal choice in health decision making.

It is also recognised that animals that are intrinsically part of women's everyday functioning, including helper dogs such as Guide Dogs, or therapy/assistance dogs, are often used as a control mechanism in the abuse cycle.

The particular needs of women with disability are recognised in the National Plan and in *A Right to Safety*. In addition, the Government notes the importance of a gendered approach to rights protection and safeguarding people with disability as echoed in the *National Disability Strategy 2010-2020 – Outcome Area 2: Rights Protection, Justice and Legislation*.

The Office for Women developed a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan, as required across all State Government agencies. The plan recognises the particular needs of women with disability and that their issues and needs are often overlooked within services and programs. This can increase vulnerability, with women with disability often lacking vital information about their rights resulting in them being unaware or unable to defend and advocate for these rights. The Office for Women also committed to consider and incorporate issues affecting women with disability into policy agendas. In addition, the Women's Information Service will continue to ensure women with disability have full access to information on their rights and services available to them.

Cross-Border Justice Scheme

Acknowledging the regional affiliations and mobility of people within the cross-border region of South Australia, Northern Territory and Western Australia known as the Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (NPY) Lands, systems and service integration have been strengthened across the borders to improve the safety of Aboriginal women and children.

The Cross-Border Justice Scheme includes:

- legislation introduced in 2009 to reduce the significance of borders on criminal justice responses to offending;
- cross-border referral protocols for the Family Safety Framework between South Australia and Alice Springs, Northern Territory;
- a Cross-Border Intelligence Desk located in Alice Springs to improve the health safety and wellbeing of families and children in the NPY Lands through improved intelligence and information sharing among South Australia, Western Australia and Northern Territory police and other agencies;
- NPY Women's Council Domestic and Family Violence Service which provides crisis response, case work, advocacy and community education services to women affected by domestic violence across the region; and
- a Cross-Border Family Violence Program which provides a behaviour change program for offenders in the region.

Information Sharing

The Government plays a vital role in the provision of information and support to the victims of domestic violence.

In South Australia, the Information Privacy Principles (IPPs) regulate the way public sector agencies collect, use, store and disclose personal information. The IPPs are contained in Cabinet Administrative Instruction No.1 of 1989 entitled *PC012 Information Privacy Principles, Instructions and Privacy Committee Proclamation*, which is publicly available at:

<http://dpc.sa.gov.au/premier-and-cabinet-circulars>.

Guidelines

Information sharing in South Australia is facilitated by the *Information Sharing Guidelines for Promoting the Safety and Wellbeing of Children, Young People and Their Families (ISG)*.

The ISG is a policy for all State Government agencies and non-government organisations funded to deliver services to children, young people and families. The ISG:

- defines a process for information sharing that promotes earlier and more effective service coordination in response to risks to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people;
- includes information sharing for all adults irrespective of their status as parents or caregivers; and
- applies to all clients and information sharing practice across both adult and child services.

In 2013, the South Australian Cabinet directed that the scope of the ISG be broadened to include information sharing for all vulnerable population groups, including all adults, irrespective of their status as parents or caregivers, where there are threats to safety and wellbeing. At that time, it was also decided to relocate responsibility for the ISG to Ombudsman SA. This decision enables service providers to apply the expanded ISG to all clients with whom they work and aligns information sharing practices across both adult and child services.

The ISG and more information is available at www.ombudsman.sa.gov.au/isg

By way of example of how information sharing is facilitated, the SAPOL ISG Appendix was updated in August 2015. It provides specific operational guidance and processes for employees to facilitate and support appropriate information sharing practices in line with legislative requirements, other privacy protocols (for example, the IPPs), and organisational policy for information sharing. The SAPOL ISG Appendix includes protocols for gaining consent and for discussing limited confidentiality, lines of approval, documenting actions and record keeping, where to seek assistance in the event of a dispute over information sharing, references to legislation and policy and, importantly, a number of case studies of operational situations where information sharing is considered. Corporate training was delivered on the revised SAPOL ISG Appendix across the organisation in December 2015.

Notification Requirements and Enhanced Information Sharing

The Act contains notification requirements that ensure all relevant public sector agencies (that is, those responsible for education, families and communities, child protection, corrections and social housing) are aware that an intervention order has been made, varied or revoked (either by the courts or police).

After the Act was implemented, an interim solution using manual processes was used to transfer information between police and courts and the other relevant public-sector agencies that were to be notified. Currently, notifications are provided to DCSI, DECD including Families SA, DCS and the South Australia Housing Trust.

The AGD Criminal Justice Information Management (CJIM) Project was tasked with assessing this interim solution and recommending an electronic solution to be implemented to address the limitations of information sharing using manual processes. Together with SAPOL and the CAA, AGD successfully implemented Phase I of the Intervention Orders Project in February 2016. As a result, intervention order and proof of service information is now exchanged electronically between SAPOL and the CAA.

Electronic exchanges have sped up the process of issue, notification and receipt of this order information considerably.

The electronic exchange of intervention order information now means:

- orders are now exchanged in a matter of seconds, instead of days;
- there is a consistent view of information across agencies;
- effort required by staff to manage intervention orders (send, manually match, data enter and update) has been significantly reduced;
- data integrity has been improved through elimination of information re-keying;
- scheduling of court hearings are now automatic;
- monitoring of transactions enables alerts if a transaction is not successful and appropriate action is taken to correct the issue; and
- order information for other legislated agencies is now system-generated.

Considering there were approximately 6,700 lodgements in court relating to an intervention order in the first two years of the legislation, the electronic exchange of intervention order information has been an important gain.

The two main procedural improvements for SAPOL have been:

- the elimination of the need to fax a copy of the PIIO to court; and
- making scanned intervention orders from courts directly accessible by SAPOL, eliminating the need for them to be 'data-entered' and making them immediately available to operational members.

The second stage implementation occurred on 23 February 2016, which eliminated the need for SAPOL to fax a copy of the Proof of Service. Planning for Phase II will begin in 2016 and will extend the implementation of information exchange to other legislated agencies.

Information Sharing Within Correctional Services

DCS has in place a number of strategies designed to facilitate the provision of information and support to victims of domestic violence. DCS has put in place strategies to work with victims of domestic violence who are members of their staff, victims known to DCS in the general community (for example, where the perpetrator is known to DCS) and victims who are in DCS custody (for example, female offenders). These strategies include:

- actively supporting staff experiencing domestic violence through the provision of flexible work arrangements, workplace safety plans and access to appropriate counselling and support services;
- maintaining a formal Victims Register, including the names of victims associated with a perpetrator in DCS custody who is convicted of an offence unrelated to the domestic violence;
- informing and updating registered victims as the perpetrator progresses through the system, for example, where a perpetrator applies for parole, DCS assist the victim to make a submission to the Parole Board;
- referring victims to appropriate community-based services on release of a perpetrator from custody to maximise their safety; and
- ensuring appropriate interactions with community-based victims of domestic violence in cases where the perpetrator is undertaking DCS programs by partnering with specialist victim agencies.

DCS is improving intervention order perpetrator identification processes and systems across community and custodial operations by:

- arranging the transfer of intervention order information in relation to DCS offenders from SAPOL;
- inclusion of intervention order and domestic violence warning flags on the Justice Information System (JIS); and
- DCS incident reporting specific to domestic violence offences to monitor risk and trends.

Domestic Violence Serial Offender Database

The Domestic Violence Serial Offender Database is available to domestic violence and Aboriginal family violence service providers in South Australia to enable the identification of serial offenders. The database is hosted and managed by the Domestic Violence and Aboriginal Family Violence Gateway, a state wide 24 hours service providing an entry point for all South Australians to access services to help eliminate all forms of domestic violence.

The database allows for the identification of perpetrators and the identification of patterns of abuse from those who have multiple victims or victims who have multiple perpetrators. This enhances the ability of key intervention services to assess risk and develop appropriate safety action plans with victims.

Family Safety Framework

State wide implementation of the Family Safety Framework was completed in November 2013.

With a focus on the safety of women and children and the accountability of offenders, the Family Safety Framework was developed under the auspice of the Strategy and the Keeping them Safe – Child Protection Agenda, to drive the development of improved, integrated service responses to violence against women and children in South Australia.

The Family Safety Framework brings together organisations. Through regular meetings, information sharing is enhanced and it is emphasised that action to address the safety of victims must occur across many services, ensuring that perpetrators are held accountable for their use of violence.

Through these regular meetings and sharing of information, those families most at risk of violence potentially resulting in serious injury or death are dealt with in a structured and systematic way. Government and non-government agencies share information about high risk families and take responsibility for supporting these families to navigate the service system.

To facilitate SA Health staff in complying with the Family Safety Framework policy directive, YWSWS provides training to the relevant SA Health staff in all aspects required in recognising and responding to domestic and Aboriginal family violence.

Under the Family Safety Framework both government and non-government departments and agencies attend a regular family safety meeting (usually fortnightly) in 19 police local service areas across the state. The implementation of the Framework is managed by the Office for Women, in conjunction with the Family Safety Framework Implementation Committee made up of representatives from participating agencies.

The core agencies involved are: SAPOL; Families SA; Housing SA; Community Corrections; health services; Health SA (including community, YWSWS, Aboriginal health, midwifery, nursing and hospital staff); Adult Mental Health Services; Drug and Alcohol Services SA; DECD; non-government women's domestic violence services and the South Australian Victim Support Service. Additional agencies are invited to participate where they have involvement with an adult or child victim of domestic or family violence.

Prior to the meeting, participants identify cases of domestic violence assessed as imminent high risk (using a common risk assessment tool) and refer them to the local family safety meeting (through SAPOL). These case details are provided to each participant prior to the meeting. At the meeting, each participant shares information and a Positive Action Plan is implemented for each referral.

The Family Safety Framework has also been implemented in Alice Springs and work has commenced in NSW for the implementation of Safety Action Meetings, which are similar in focus to the Family Safety Framework.

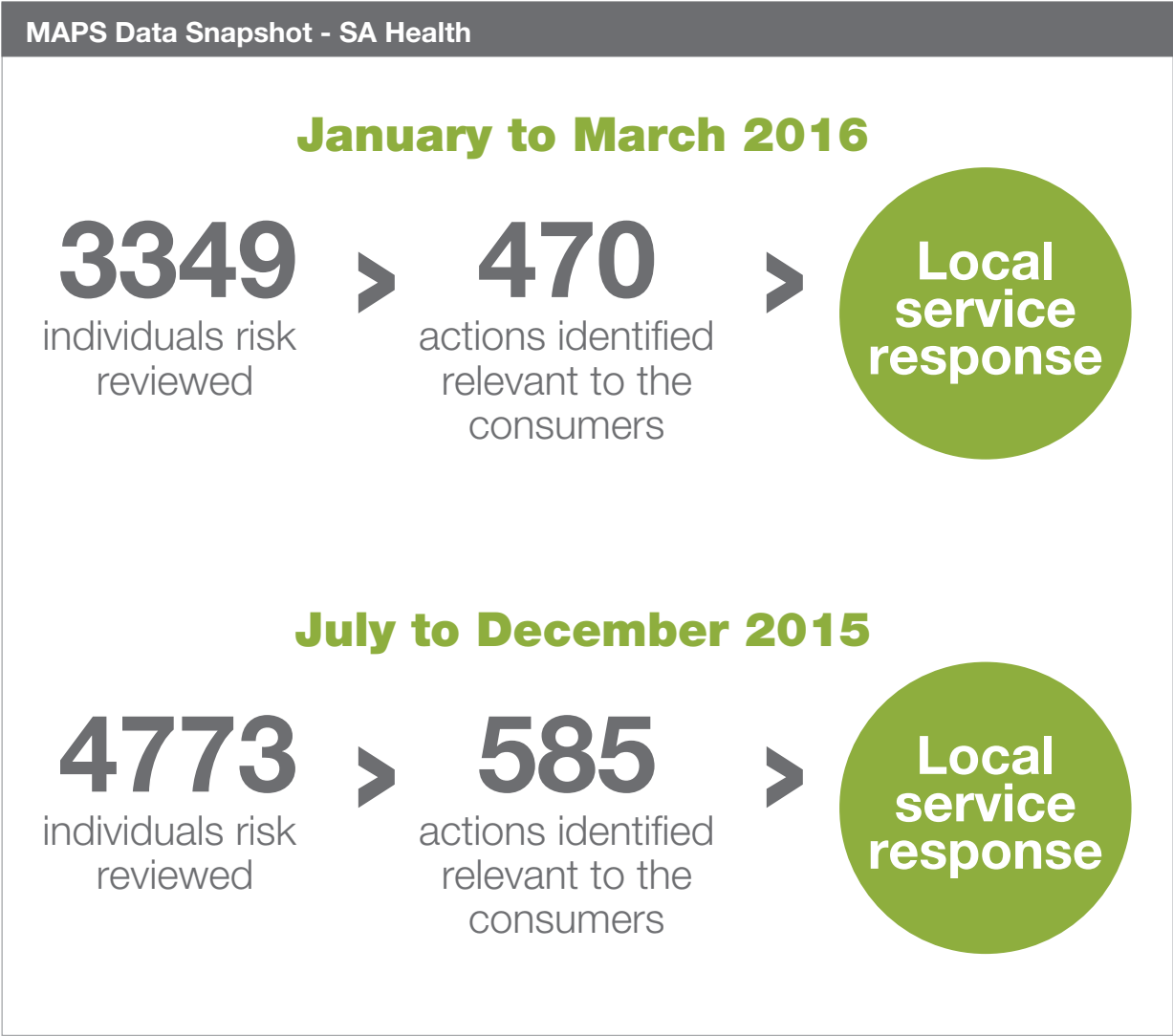
Multi-Agency Protection Service

Through MAPS, staff from SAPOL, DECD (Families SA), SA Health (WCHN/YWSWS), DCSI (Housing SA) and DCS are co-located under the one roof to promote collaboration, information sharing and to provide a coordinated response to high risk domestic violence cases. MAPS enables these staff to work side-by-side and share information, triaging risk following police responses to domestic violence incidents.

It was in November 2013, in response to a proposal by the Commissioner of Police, that the State Government committed to expand its commitment to integrated responses to violence against women and children through the establishment and trial of MAPS. MAPS is an information sharing model to manage domestic violence and child protection matters for the whole of South Australia in a phased model. The aim of MAPS is to reduce the incidents and/or impact of domestic violence and child abuse in the community through information sharing and the issuing of actions to participating agencies.

MAPS commenced operation of Phase 1 in July 2014 with all agencies providing an allocation of staff from within their existing resources. Phase 1 involves examining SAPOL PIRs and DARs, reviewing and sharing information, the production of a Summary Document, which details each participating agency's relevant information holdings, and formulating and distributing actions. Work is progressing to improve the efficiency of process, systems and information technology issues utilised by MAPS.

The below snapshot reports on the work directly undertaken by the SA Health (WCHN) MAPS team in responding to the SAPOL PIRs and DARs that flow into central MAPS. Each PIR or DAR identified to be 'mapped' involves on average five individuals whose risk is reviewed. The SA Health MAPS team provide support to Local Health Networks through case discussion and providing training. It is important to note this does not reflect the response undertaken by SA Health staff at the local service site in their direct contact with victims and perpetrators of domestic violence.



Domestic Violence Legal and Court Services

As announced in *Taking a Stand*, commencing in 2015 the Women's Domestic Violence Court Assistance Service (WDVCAS) delivered by Victim Support Services (VSS) provides a greater level of support within the court system for victims of violence by providing assistance to women to successfully deal with court systems and increase their access to justice. Legal officers provide free and confidential support and advocate on behalf of women who may have difficulty applying for an intervention order or reporting a breach of an intervention order. The WDVCAS is state wide and operates from the VSS network of metropolitan and regional service centres. The WDVCAS team is located at the VSS office in Adelaide. Women can also access the service via video-link from VSS service centres in Mount Gambier, Murray Bridge, Berri, Port Pirie, Port Augusta, Whyalla and Port Lincoln.

The WDVCAS also addresses particularly difficult circumstances, such as where there may be existing or impending Family Court orders that are at odds with the safety requirements of an intervention order.

A range of legal services support people affected by domestic violence in South Australia. Services are available through South Australia's community legal centres, the Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement, the Legal Services Commission of South Australia and the Family Violence Legal Service Aboriginal Corporation. The Women's Legal Service (SA) provides specialist legal advice and assistance to women in South Australia who experience domestic violence and family law matters.

The Legal Services Commission has assisted domestic violence victims with legal information and advice since the early 1990s. Whilst there is a necessary focus on legal matters, the first priority is a victim's safety and wellbeing. In 2015, the Legal Services Commission was one of 12 legal assistance services providers around Australia selected to receive funding from the Commonwealth to deliver the Commonwealth Government Women's Safety Package. The funding is to provide:

- a health justice partnership project that aims to link abuse victims to legal assistance when they present to healthcare facilities; and
- a specialist domestic violence unit that aims to swiftly provide assistance and advice to domestic violence victims in conjunction with other domestic violence service providers.

Domestic violence victims often first seek help from healthcare professionals. Under the health justice partnership, lawyers work with medical professionals to assist victims of domestic violence when they present to healthcare facilities. Through this partnership, healthcare workers are trained to better identify and respond to domestic violence.

The specialist domestic violence unit is a small team of lawyers, based in Adelaide's north. The lawyers are mobile and can advise victims of domestic violence at hospitals, health units and community centres as well as from a traditional office. Victims face a variety of legal issues, and advice may cover many matters including tenancy, property and debt, parenting and custody matters, intervention orders and other family law matters.

Family Court Support

Since 2005, the Women's Information Service (part of the Office for Women) has provided a free and confidential Family Court Support Program. Trained volunteers accompany women to the Adelaide Family Court. Volunteers are able to:

- provide information about the Family Court and its processes;
- liaise with security staff at court during proceedings;
- sit with women before and during the hearing;
- offer a listening ear throughout the day at court; and
- introduce women to the Women's Information Service to provide women with information and referrals about other issues, including domestic and sexual violence, housing options, financial matters and health and wellbeing.

Witness Assistance Service

The Office of the Directors of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) provides a range of practical services and emotional supports to victims of crime and witnesses for the prosecution in the most serious criminal matters in the state via its Witness Assistance Service (WAS).

The WAS employs a team of senior social work professionals (called Witness Assistance Officers) and targets those at increased vulnerability due to the nature of the offences involving them, and due to the nature of their personal or individual circumstances.

The ODPP has successfully piloted a number of strategies to better respond to the increased reporting, investigation and charging of criminal matters involving domestic and family violence including the establishment of:

- the Witness Assistance Service Brief Intervention Team; and
- an Integrated Model of Domestic and Family Violence Practice.

WAS Brief Intervention Team (BIT) Pilot

In early August 2015, the WAS Team piloted the Witness Assistance Service Brief Intervention Team (the WAS BIT).

The WAS BIT specially prioritises and ‘fast-tracks’ any matter referred to the service that is likely to resolve or not proceed to a criminal trial where:

- an early plea has been entered;
- admissions by the accused have been intimated, made or recorded;
- there is an identified legal issue associated with the matter proceeding to a criminal trial;
- a matter is assessed as having no reasonable prospect of conviction;
- a victim intimates or indicates they do not want the criminal prosecution to proceed;
- a victim indicates they will not attend court or assist the prosecution in taking the matter to a criminal trial.

The WAS BIT strategy was implemented in response to the increasing volume of criminal prosecutions involving serious and high risk domestic and family violence, in circumstances where victims indicate they do not want to pursue the matter before the criminal courts and are seeking to have the criminal charges withdrawn.

Between August 2015 and April 2016, a total of 135 prosecution matters involving victims of crime were prioritised and fast-tracked through the WAS BIT Team, with the overwhelming majority of these (80%) involving domestic and family violence related charges.

The WAS BIT strategy is an important initiative that has resulted in the early triage, engagement and management of victims in serious and high risk domestic and family violence matters at a critical point in the prosecution process. The strategy is practical and preventative in its focus and aims to better manage the risk, safety and child protection outcomes for victims, children and families in domestic and family violence matters in circumstances where criminal charges are unlikely to proceed.

An Integrated Model of Domestic and Family Violence Practice

In direct response to the increasing volume of criminal prosecutions involving domestic and family violence, the ODPP has adopted a more integrated model and approach to criminal prosecutions involving domestic and family violence that better balances:

- legal obligations to prosecuting such matters before the criminal courts;
- non-legal obligations to the risk, safety and support of victims and children;
- improved interagency collaboration and information sharing practices in prosecution matters involving serious and high risk domestic and family violence.

Despite the increased reporting, investigation and charging of criminal matters involving domestic and family violence, the ODPP continues to see significant numbers of victims (primarily women) who report threats, abuse and violence to SAPOL at the time of the criminal offending, and who later make decisions to not pursue the charges, not assist the ODPP or to withdraw from the criminal prosecution before the courts.

Many of these victims continue to be subjected to ongoing threats, violence and abuse by the offender, are involved in entrenched patterns of ongoing domestic and family violence, and make decisions to return to relationships involving imminent and high risk domestic and family violence involving them and their children.

In addition to the legal obligations and duties undertaken by legal staff in assessing the reasonable prospects of conviction, with the assistance of WAS staff the ODPP has adopted a broader practice of:

- obtaining existing domestic violence risk assessments from SAPOL prior to meeting with the victim;
- accessing information about current interventions and the involvement of domestic and family violence services;
- proactively assessing victims' current and ongoing risk of violence, and risks to others including their children or family members;
- conducting updated risk assessments and providing the outcomes of these to other key services including SAPOL, the Family Safety Framework, MAPS, Domestic and Aboriginal Family Violence Gateway Service and other domestic and family violence services (thereby closing the information sharing loop);
- having clearer discussions with victims about patterns of domestic violence, ongoing risk and the potential of further violence;
- undertaking focused discussions with victims about their ongoing safety planning and future reporting to police;
- making clearer and more direct referrals to domestic and family violence and other services based on the levels of active and imminent risk; and
- making early and timely child protection notifications to Families SA (via the Child Abuse Report Line).

This more integrated practice approach has resulted in the ODPP better attending to both legal and non-legal obligations to victims involved in serious criminal offences involving domestic and family violence, based on practices of improved risk assessment, safety management, interagency collaboration and information sharing.

Vulnerable Witness Provisions

In South Australia, statutory provisions outlining protections available to witnesses in proceedings for intervention orders are contained in the Act.

There are also vulnerable witness provisions in the *Evidence Act 1929* (SA) and the *Statutes Amendment (Vulnerable Witnesses) Act 2015* (SA). These came into operation on 27 June 2016.

Protections for Witnesses in Intervention Order Proceedings

Under the Act, during court proceedings relating to the making of an intervention order, special arrangements may be put in place about examination-in-chief, cross-examination or re-examination. The special arrangements can be put in place to protect a person who is a witness and against whom it is alleged the defendant has committed or might commit an act of abuse. In addition, the special arrangements can also be applied to a child who allegedly may have been exposed to the effects of an act of abuse committed by the defendant against a person. Special arrangements may include, but are not limited to:

- transmission of evidence by Closed Circuit Television (CCTV);
- replaying an audio visual record of the evidence;
- providing a screen or partition;
- preventing the defendant from seeing and hearing the vulnerable witness while giving evidence;
- allowing the witness to be accompanied by a relative, friend or other person for emotional support; and
- if the witness suffers from a physical disability or cognitive impairment, allowing evidence to be taken in a particular way to minimise embarrassment or distress.

Recording of evidence is available to the evidence of a witness as a whole or to particular aspects of their evidence, such as, cross-examination and re-examination. The Act also provides that cross-examination of a witness, against whom it is alleged the defendant has committed or might commit an act of abuse, is to be conducted either by counsel, or, if the defendant is unrepresented, by submitting questions to the judge who will only ask the questions 'determined to be allowable,' or in a manner otherwise directed by the court.

These same provisions apply for children who are witnesses who it is alleged have been (or might be) exposed to the effects of an act of abuse committed by the defendant against another person.

Protections for Witnesses in Criminal Proceedings

Appendix 3 provides details as to the provisions contained within other legislation, such as the *Evidence Act 1929* (SA), designed to protect vulnerable witnesses in criminal proceedings. These provisions apply to victims and witnesses in cases where the offence committed was also an act of domestic violence.

Safe at Home

Responses to violence are now informed by a commitment to *Safe at Home* policy frameworks. This means that policies need to improve the safety of women who have separated from abusive partners, support women and their children to stay in their own homes when safe and appropriate, deter perpetrators from re-offending and facilitate the collection of admissible evidence to improve justice responses.

Following a recent increase in funding from the Commonwealth Government to support women and children at high risk of experiencing domestic violence, South Australia has been able to expand the services provided to women and children experiencing domestic violence. In particular, additional funding has been secured to expand the State Government funded state wide Staying Home Staying Safe (SHSS) Program, which is delivered by the VSS in partnership with Housing SA.

The SHSS Program delivered by VSS is a security upgrade program for women and children who have been affected by domestic and family violence and want to remain in their own home. The SHSS Program helps women who are at risk of homelessness because of domestic abuse by providing free home safety audits and tailored home security packages, including the installation of locks, sensor lights, and alarms. VSS also provides women and their children with safety planning assistance.

The additional Commonwealth funding of \$1.6 million over three years will enable the SHSS Program to increase the number and type of security items fitted to victims' properties to assist women and children who want to remain living safely in their home after a domestic violence incident. The additional funding will allow for increased provision of CCTV monitoring and cameras, home-based duress alarms, and the development of safety applications on smart phones.

Domestic Violence and Housing and Homelessness Support

The Government is committed to empowering victims to leave violence, and when safe and appropriate, remain safely living in their homes, connected to families, schools and communities. Housing SA staff work closely with specialist homelessness service providers, SAPOL, Families SA and other key stakeholders to coordinate services and ensure victims of domestic and family violence have access to safe and secure housing and quality support.

Housing SA is increasingly working with women and children impacted by domestic and family violence. Women and children are being identified for support and safety planning through intervention order management, Housing SA's Risk Identification Tool and MAPS. As at 31 December 2015, there have been 38,808 people entered into the Intervention Order Management System and of those, 62% (23,955) are people who seek services from Housing SA, either as a tenant or those who have accessed our private rental and bond assistance. In addition, 91% of intervention orders that are responded to by Housing SA involve domestic or Aboriginal family violence.

When Housing SA identifies people who experience or are at risk of domestic violence, staff with specialist skills engage with women and children to ensure that their safety and support needs are being met. Often Housing SA will engage other specialist agencies, and for women and children at high risk and imminent danger, Housing SA works closely with SAPOL and the Family Safety Framework.

For those who are among the 40,000 tenants and at risk of domestic and family violence, Housing SA will install security items to their property to support them to remain safely within their home. Security items include security doors, security locks to front and rear doors, window locks and security screens to windows. The provision of security items aims to reduce the disruption from having to vacate a property and take up temporary accommodation or shelter.

If the lease agreement is in the perpetrator's name, Housing SA works with the South Australian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (SACAT) to place the lease into the protected person's (usually the woman's) name.

Housing SA also works within a system that includes multiple service providers working together to deliver tailored housing solutions for people impacted by domestic violence within the broader community. In emergency situations, Housing SA provides financial assistance to families to access emergency accommodation, and Housing SA funds the Specialist Homelessness Services Sector to provide accommodation, safety and risk assessments, case management, support and the supply of essential items (e.g. nappies and food). In 2014 -2015, Domestic and Aboriginal Family Violence Services supported 766 clients in emergency (motel) accommodation via financial support from Housing SA. Housing SA then prioritises women and children in crisis to access longer term accommodation through their private rental, public housing and Aboriginal housing assistance programs.

Homelessness Services Sector

Services responding to the safety of people experiencing domestic violence in South Australia, including women and their children, are primarily funded through the National Affordable Housing Agreement (NAHA) and NPAH. For 2016-17, these agreements deliver a total of \$59.9 million dollars comprising \$41.1 million NAHA; and \$18.8 million NPAH. This funding is South Australia's primary response to reducing homelessness. In 2015-16 \$12.844 million (22.2%) of this money was provided to domestic violence specific services to support victims of domestic and family violence who were homeless or at risk of homelessness.

This funding is administered to government and non-government agencies by Housing SA.

In 2009-10, South Australia reformed the way it delivered services responding to homeless people and those at risk. This reform had a primary focus to strengthen the safety responses to women and children experiencing domestic violence. These reforms achieved increased and specialised service responses to the growing number of women and their children who were leaving their homes and becoming homeless as a direct result of domestic and Aboriginal family violence.

Whilst these reforms acknowledged and supported the need for specialist responses to domestic and Aboriginal family violence, they also recognised the fact that over a third of those women and children experiencing domestic and family violence who access homelessness services, do so from non-specialist domestic violence services. In response to this, an integrated 'no wrong door' approach to responding to women and children experiencing domestic and family violence was established in order to maximise access and improve safety.

In 2014-15, there were 22,832 people assisted by homelessness services in South Australia of which 8,075 (35%) people (6,123 women and 1,952 children 0-14 years) reported as experiencing domestic violence.

Of this group of people:

- 62% (4,983 people) only sought assistance from a domestic violence specific service, 16% (1,313 people) sought assistance from both a domestic violence specific and a non-domestic violence specific service, while 22% (1,779 people) only sought assistance from a non-domestic violence specific service;
- of the 1,952 children experiencing domestic or family violence, 74% (1,441 children) only accessed domestic violence specific services, 10% (190 children) accessed both a domestic violence specific and a non-domestic violence specific services, while 16% (312 children) only accessed assistance from non-domestic violence specific services; and
- 24% identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

In South Australia, there are 73 specialist homelessness and domestic and Aboriginal family violence programs delivered across 97 outlets in South Australia, mostly through non-government partners. These services are delivered across four specialised areas:

- domestic and Aboriginal family violence;
- young people;
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander; and
- generic services (single adults and families, and a catch-all service in areas of smaller population).

To maximise access to these services, South Australia operates a 'no wrong door' approach to service access.

There are currently three Service Gateways:

- Domestic and Aboriginal Family Violence Gateway (9am-5pm, weekdays);
- Youth Gateway (9am-5pm, weekdays); and
- Homelessness (Generic) Gateway (24 hours, seven days per week).

These gateways provide information, support, risk assessment and counselling to victims seeking support, and directly connect people to other services for ongoing support. The Domestic and Aboriginal Family Violence Gateway also provides connection to broader services delivered through the courts and police to maximise immediate responses to protect those experiencing domestic violence and maximise their safety.

In addition to these three Service Gateways, people experiencing domestic violence can also access domestic violence specialist services by making contact with any one of the 97 service outlets state wide. All these services are connected to each other through an integrated referral and case management system called Homeless to Home. This system enables victims to only have to tell their story once to get the services they need – even if they need to access multiple services from different programs over time.

Children

Children aged 0-14 years accounted for almost a quarter (1,952) of those who were experiencing domestic violence who were assisted by the homelessness services sector during 2014-15. To ensure each child's individual support needs are met, homelessness service providers are required to assess each child as a client in their own right and, where required, develop specialist child-focused case plans. For example, a number of homelessness agencies also provide dedicated services and support for children affected by domestic violence and homelessness through the Together 4 Kids Program. This program provides individual and group support for children aged 0-12 years who are experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness. Therapeutic interventions take place within structured playgroups for children aged 0-5 years, and in the form of specialised case management for those children aged 0-12 years with particularly high and complex needs.

South Australia also secured Commonwealth funding of \$150,000 per annum over three years for a new Local Support Coordinator (LSC) to identify and respond to homelessness and domestic violence in Southern Adelaide. The LSC will provide specialist casework support to women aged 15 to 24 years, including Aboriginal women who are victims of domestic violence and/or sexual assault, and high risk young people under the Guardianship of the Minister. The LSC will develop partnerships with service providers, and will be a part of Housing SA's Regional Response Team at the Southern Adelaide office.

Supporting Aboriginal Family Violence Services

Housing SA, in partnership with the Office for Women and the domestic and Aboriginal family violence service sector, has undertaken significant reform of the sector. The reform process aimed to:

- create a state wide strategic response to women and their children who are victims of domestic violence; and
- complement legislative reforms and provide support to women and their children to remain in their homes whenever it is safe to do so.

With the reform came significant new investment in domestic and Aboriginal family violence support and accommodation services, including an increase in funding of \$15 million to the sector and an additional 120 stimulus properties.

Outcomes include:

- consistent services for victims of domestic and Aboriginal family violence across the state;
- the state wide Domestic and Aboriginal Family Violence Gateway Service (also discussed above) complemented by a weekend, public holiday and after hours service through the Homelessness Gateway Service to provide 24 hour, seven day a week telephone information, advice, support and assessment and referrals to regional services;
- Domestic Violence Safety Packages to provide advice and safety products to women who are victims of violence to enable them to remain safely in their own homes;
- a state wide CALD Domestic Violence service to provide specialised support to women and their children from CALD backgrounds complemented by an 8% target for women and their children from backgrounds for all regional domestic violence services; and
- 120 new stimulus housing properties for women and their children who are victims of domestic violence.

The current Specialist Homelessness Services sector comprises 40 government and non-government organisations providing 75 programs through 97 service outlets across the state. The Domestic and Aboriginal Family Violence Services account for 21 of these programs. According to Homeless 2 Home Database data from July 2013 to June 2014, 38% of people have experienced domestic and family violence across all specialist homelessness services.

Between 1 July 2015 and 31 March 2016, Specialist Homelessness Services assisted 1,698 clients who reported experiencing domestic or family violence and identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

In addition to the above Specialist Homelessness Services, DCSI delivers the Kurlana Tangkuinya 'New Dreams' Program, which provides Aboriginal women and children who experience family violence with safe housing and support to participate in employment, education, training and school. Housing support is integrated with economic participation outcomes, and clients are provided with a six-month lease that is extended every six months subject to their ability to actively participate in the program. Kurlana Tangkuinya is a Housing SA economic participation project.

To support the program, a number of agencies have agreed to partner with Housing SA to refer clients to the program and once accepted, work together with Kurlana Tangkuinya to support them in their participation pathway. Key partners include the University of Adelaide, Workskil SA, TAFE SA, the University of South Australia, and Tauondi Aboriginal College.

To ensure the program continues to offer a culturally appropriate service, Aboriginal people have been engaged to design and deliver project outcomes, including the participation of people from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander backgrounds in the project's management and working groups.

It is intended that the program will provide a minimum of 16 housing outcomes in metropolitan Adelaide over three years from 2015-16 to 2017-18.

Tenancy Assistance

In 2015, new laws were put in place to protect victims of domestic violence who are renting their homes. Amendments to the *Residential Tenancies Act 1995* (SA) commenced on 10 December 2015 to assist people living with their abusive partners in rental properties to terminate rental agreements so they can leave the abusive relationship without suffering the financial hardship of continuing to be liable for rent.

The changes mean that a victim of domestic violence can apply to SACAT for an order to terminate the lease on a rental property they share with abusive partners without facing further financial penalties. Orders can also be made:

- allowing the victim to remain in the property without the perpetrator;
- stopping the landlord from listing your details on a Residential Tenancy Database (tenant 'blacklist') for damage caused by the perpetrator;
- determining how the bond will be refunded.

Without these laws there was always a chance that a victim who had left a shared rental home would continue to be liable for rental payments and liable for damage caused to a property by an abusive partner even after they had fled for their safety or the safety of their children.

Domestic Violence Response Review

The State Government has introduced an ongoing Domestic Violence Response Review (DVRR). This enables a detailed response systems analysis in instances where a domestic violence service provider does not believe the most appropriate responses to their clients have been implemented. It is designed to increase accountability within the South Australian Government to direct services providers and facilitate an escalation of issues where there have been process flaws or gaps in the response of a Government agency to domestic violence. The DVRR may at times refer issues to the Family Safety Framework or MAPS to gather further information and facilitate positive safety action planning.

The DVRR is implemented by a Senior Policy Officer within the Office for Women, and is accountable to the DVRR Advisory Committee. The DVRR Advisory Committee consists of representatives from key agencies to discuss agency systems and examine service development to improve outcomes for victims of domestic and family violence.

Domestic Violence Courts and Perpetrator Treatment Programs

Court Mandated Programs

There is an intervention program that operates through the South Australian Magistrates Court via the Family Violence Court, called the Abuse Prevention Program.

The Family Violence Courts operate in every Magistrates Court in the metropolitan area and in Port Augusta, Murray Bridge and Mount Gambier. The Family Violence Courts deal with matters relating to applications for intervention orders, and a case manager from the Abuse Prevention Program attends each hearing and accepts referrals from the court.

While perpetrators of abuse can be in various different types of relationships with victims, the overwhelming majority of intervention orders are made out against men for the protection of their female partner or ex-partner and children. As part of the intergovernmental response model to enhance and ensure the safety and protection of women and children from domestic violence, the CAA established the Abuse Prevention Program for men issued with an intervention order and facing charges for domestic violence related offences. Men can also be referred to the program under the *Bail Act 1985* (SA) as an alternative to the court making participation a condition of the intervention order.

The CAA funds the community services sector to deliver a range of programs to address the different needs of the men referred by the court through the Abuse Prevention Program and these programs are called Domestic Violence Prevention Programs. There are places for approximately 300 men per 12-month period. In the Adelaide metropolitan area there is the Bringing Peace to Relationships Program which takes a minimum of 24 weeks to complete. There is also a 12-week program called Safe Relationships. There is a 12-week program run for Aboriginal men by Kornar Winmil Yunti (KWY) and 8-10 individual counselling sessions are available for men who cannot participate in the group sessions, due to language or literacy issues or other reasons. Men from CALD backgrounds can receive counselling based intervention using the assistance of accredited interpreters.

As noted above, with Family Violence Courts operating at Port Augusta, Murray Bridge and Mount Gambier, men can be referred from these courts to a Domestic Violence Prevention Program. The Women's Safety Contact Program also operates in these regions to provide support for the partners or ex-partners of the men who are referred.

At Port Augusta, a three-day intensive group program for Aboriginal men living in or around the regional centre of Port Augusta, can be run on a monthly basis if there are a minimum of four men and up to a maximum of 12. Individual counselling sessions are also available on a monthly basis for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal men.

Men referred from the Murray Bridge and Mount Gambier Family Violence Court may be referred to individual counselling sessions and there is flexibility to run a group program in these locations if sufficient numbers of men are referred. The Safe Relationships group program commenced in Mount Gambier in April 2016.

The CAA has collated the following data concerning the Abuse Prevention Program. Up to December 2015, 1,793 men were referred to an Abuse Prevention Program, of which 861 (48%) were accepted.

Of the 861 accepted into the program, as at December 2015 there were:

- 100 still in progress; and
- 761 listed as finalised.

However, of the 761 noted as finalised participants, only 34% (296 men) had completed a program. The remaining 465 men did not complete a program.

Table 7 below lists the details of the 465 men who did not complete the program. Some were removed due to disruptive behaviour, others because they were in custody. In some cases the intervention order was dismissed or revoked, meaning the person was no longer required to attend.

Table 7: Reasons for Non-Completion of Abuse Prevention Program

Method of Finalisation	Number	%
REMOVED from Program for:		
Nonattendance	204	87.9
Poor performance, disruptive behaviour	9	3.9
Other (e.g. warrant issued, in custody)	19	8.2
Total REMOVED	232	100
DID NOT COMPLETE Program:		
Order dismissed/revoked/withdrawn or contested	76	32.6
No condition on interim order/condition removed by Magistrate	69	29.6
Not suitable (e.g. poor literacy, mental health issues, illness, in rehabilitation)	31	13.3
Work/study/child care commitments	27	11.6
Referred to another program/counselling	14	6.0
Moved outside of metropolitan boundary	13	5.6
Other (e.g. deported, died)	3	1.3
TOTAL DID NOT COMPLETE	233	100

Table 8 below indicates the number of referrals made by courts to the Abuse Prevention Program. Table 8 considered together with the data provided in Tables 5 and 6 above tends to indicate that rates of referral to the Abuse Prevention Program vary between court locations.

Table 8: Source of referral to Abuse Prevention Program

Court	Number
Adelaide Magistrates Court	607
Elizabeth Magistrates Court	355
Christies Beach Magistrates Court	284
Holden Hill Magistrates Court	284
Port Adelaide Magistrates Court	131
Port Augusta Magistrates Court	54
Mount Barker Magistrates Court	42
Whyalla Magistrates Court	12
Murray Bridge Magistrates Court	10
Victor Harbor Magistrates Court	10
Mt Gambier Magistrates Court	4
TOTAL	1,793

Topic 6 of this Discussion Paper asks readers to consider whether the current intervention programs available are sufficient to meet the needs of defendants. This consideration should be extended to whether the compliance rate of defendants can be improved.

Otherwise, as asked on page 43 (see 'The Corrections System'), are there more responses that address the attitudes of perpetrators and target the underlying causes of domestic violence, including within Aboriginal and CALD communities?

Correctional Services Programs

A key element of the DCS response to domestic violence is the provision of domestic and family violence behaviour change programs to offenders.

Current programs include:

- the Domestic and Family Violence Intervention Program (DFVIP);
- the Cross Borders Indigenous Family Violence Program;
- the Violence Prevention Program (VPP); and
- the Sexual Behaviours Clinic (SBC and SBC-me) Programs.

The DFIIP is a 10-week men's behaviour change program that aims to address violent and abusive behaviours within spousal relationships, whether the victim is a current or past partner. The core philosophy underlying the program is that the safety of women and children is paramount. In addition to addressing the needs of the perpetrators of violence, a support service is provided by the Central Domestic Violence Service to the partners and ex-partners of the program participants. There are six modules to the course comprising:

- Responsibility Taking
- Dangerous Thinking
- Cycles of Abuse
- Safe Relationships
- Effects for Children
- Safety Planning

DCS also contracts the Cross Borders Indigenous Family Violence Programs (with support from the Department for Corrective Services in Western Australia and the Northern Territory Department of Correctional Services) to deliver a four-week family violence perpetrator program in the NPY Lands (the Cross Borders Program).

The central tenet of the Cross Borders Program concerns the criminality of family violence. Participants are continuously reminded that violence is a crime and unacceptable. Participant's beliefs, attitudes and behaviour are challenged in a non-threatening manner so they take responsibility for their thoughts, feelings and behaviour. The program began in 2007 and now 74 programs have been delivered in 13 communities with 449 men successfully completing the program. A further seven programs have been delivered to 65 men incarcerated in the Port Augusta and Alice Springs prisons.

The Cross Borders Program addresses Aboriginal family violence, personal values and beliefs, cultural context of violence, intergenerational aspects of violence, the law and family violence, recognising and responding appropriately to anger, violence and substance abuse, motivation to change and changing controlling behaviours, abuse of power, dynamics of family violence, functional self-talk, relationships, taking responsibility for own behaviours and resolving conflict without violence and change. The program duration is 15 four-hour sessions.

The current funding agreement with the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet concludes on 30 June 2018.

DCS also facilitates several other rehabilitation programs that are not targeted specifically to domestic and family violence perpetrators, but may include such offenders.

The VPP is a nine-month intensive offender rehabilitation program for medium and high risk violent offenders. The VPP focuses on reducing cognitions and attitudes that are supportive of violent behaviour through cognitive behavioural therapy. The VPP comprises the following nine modules:

- Orientation
- Mindfulness
- Distress Tolerance
- Offence Mapping
- Core Beliefs
- Problem Thinking
- Emotion Regulation
- Relationships
- Safety Planning

The SBC is a nine-month intensive offender rehabilitation program for medium and high risk sexual offenders. The SBC focuses on reducing cognitions and attitudes that are supportive of sexualised offending behaviour. The SBC comprises the following eight modules:

- Self-Management Part 1 and 2
- Cognitive Distortions
- Emotion Management
- Intimacy
- Deviant Sexual Arousal
- Relationships
- Empathy
- Self-Management Part 3 and 4

The SBC-Me is tailored to meet the needs of sexual offenders who have an identified neuropsychological, cognitive or intellectual issue that would prevent them from fully engaging in the SBC.

There is a measure of complexity when considering the efficacy of perpetrator programs. To date, policy development in the violence against women space has necessarily been concerned with victims and their safety. Moving forward, there is an ongoing need to ensure that perpetrator programs are appropriate, culturally relevant and evaluated.

Youth Justice

DCSI recognises the opportunity to utilise knowledge and expertise already in DCSI to develop service responses within Youth Justice, which target young people who are perpetrators of intimate partner and family violence. Service response development takes account of the fact that young people are also at higher risk of being victims of child abuse and domestic violence, in particular amongst young people from Aboriginal and CALD communities, young women, and young people who have a disability. As such, the needs of young people in the justice system are diverse and necessitate an individualised response, to best equip them to desist from future violence toward their partners, siblings, parents and other family members. Such responses are most effective when based upon accurate and timely structured risk assessment, case formulation, targeted intervention planning and collaboration with other service agencies.

Coronial Domestic Violence Information System

Commencing in January 2011, the Office for Women, in partnership with the South Australian Coroner's Office, established a Senior Research Officer (Domestic Violence) position, to research and investigate open and closed deaths related to domestic violence in South Australia. The position identifies domestic violence issues, contexts, relevant service systems and issues while investigating the adequacy of responses and assisting the Coroner's Court to undertake relevant Coronial Inquests.

This work provides a unique opportunity, through collaboration with the Coroner's Court, to capture a range of previously unavailable data in relation to domestic violence. This position maintains a purpose built Coronial Domestic Violence Information System (CDVIS). The CDVIS is capable of housing both incident and historic victim and perpetrator related information. The collection of this data aims to assist in identifying factors that are most prevalent or unique, to contribute to the development of a South Australian and national evidence base about deaths occurring in a domestic violence context, coronial investigations involving a death in a domestic violence context as well as those that result in an Inquest.

The development of a robust database capturing this information will also support the development of preventative strategies in South Australia. This information will be released in the Annual Report of the State Coroner.

National Domestic Violence Order Scheme

Reducing violence against women is a priority item on the COAG agenda. At the December 2015 meeting, leaders agreed to introduce model legislation for a national domestic violence order scheme (the NDVOS) so that domestic violence orders (DVOs) issued in one state will be automatically recognised in all others.

All states and territories have legislation that allows for the issue of an order to provide protection for victims of domestic violence. Each jurisdiction's legislation also has a provision that allows DVOs from one jurisdiction to be registered and enforced in another jurisdiction. Once registered, the DVO is recognised and enforceable as if it had been made there.

This is largely an administrative process, however it is recognised that for victims this is an additional process that may be stressful as it involves some contact with the court system. Indeed, some victims may simply choose not to register their DVO in the new jurisdiction for fear of the perpetrator finding out that they have moved.

The aim of the NDVOS is to increase protection for victims of domestic violence across Australian borders by providing for the automatic recognition and enforcement of DVOs across Australia. This removes the need for individuals to register their DVO in a new jurisdiction.

Model legislation has been developed to underpin the NDVOS. States and territories (apart from NSW who has passed the *Crimes (Domestic and Personal Violence) Amendment (National Domestic Violence Orders Recognition) Act 2016*) are in the process of drafting this legislation for introduction into their respective parliaments.

The South Australian Intervention Orders (Prevention of Abuse) (Recognition of National Domestic Violence Orders) Amendment Bill 2016, which seeks to give effect to the model legislation in South Australia, is currently before the South Australian Parliament.

States and territories are also working with the Commonwealth to develop a comprehensive national DVO information sharing system that police and courts will be able to use for evidentiary purposes or to enforce DVOs. This national system will take several years to develop and implement across Australia. In the meantime, an interim information sharing system is currently being established to provide police and courts with information on all DVOs that have been issued.

Council of Australian Governments

The work in South Australia must be placed within the context of work being done through COAG and elsewhere on a national level including the interaction between the Commonwealth family law system and the state and territory systems for making family violence orders (being intervention orders in South Australia).

Reducing violence against women and their children has been on the COAG agenda since April 2015 and in this time, COAG has taken action to:

- consider national outcome standards for perpetrator interventions;
- consider actions to limit technology-facilitated abuse;
- implement the NDVOS so DVOs issued in one state will be recognised nationally;
- implement a comprehensive national DVO information sharing system that police and courts will be able to use for evidentiary purposes or to enforce DVOs;
- develop a \$30 million national campaign to reduce violence against women and their children; and
- organise a national summit on preventing violence against women and their children in the last quarter of 2016 to profile best practice and review progress.

COAG established an 11-member Advisory Panel on Reducing Violence against Women and their Children to:

- provide a high level assessment of current Commonwealth, state and territory approaches and identify areas for further national leadership to COAG;
- provide further advice on the implementation of the three COAG priority work areas: the NDVOS model laws and information sharing system, the national outcome standards on perpetrator interventions to hold perpetrators to account, and strategies to keep women safe from technology facilitated abuse;
- deliver advice to COAG in relation to the future direction of the National Plan.

The Advisory Panel identified six areas for further joint action by Commonwealth and state and territory action:

- national leadership to challenge gender inequality and transform community attitudes;
- empowering women who experience violence to make informed choices;
- recognising children and young people as victims of violence against women;
- holding perpetrators to account for their actions and supporting them to change;
- providing trauma-informed responses to violence for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities; and
- providing integrated responses to keep women and their children safe.

Jurisdictions will consider the recommendations in each of these areas in developing the Third Action Plan of the National Plan throughout 2016.

Under the National Plan, all jurisdictions are committed to reporting on progress against the National Outcomes of the Action Plans. Public reporting is an opportunity to highlight engagement, collaborative efforts and progress across all jurisdictions and the non-government sector in reducing violence against women and their children and to communicate with the community more broadly about commitment and progress under the National Plan.