

7<sup>th</sup> July 2022

Jane Moynihan  
Executive Director  
Commission of Inquiry into Queensland Police Service Responses to DFV  
[REDACTED]

RE: EVAWQ Submission into Submission to the Independent Commission of Inquiry into  
Queensland Police Service responses to domestic and family violence

**Combined Women's Refuge Group (CWRG), representing over 20 refuges across SE QLD**

An anonymous survey of key women's services within Queensland was conducted to collate responses to the key Terms of Reference identified in the Commission of Inquiry into Queensland Police Service (QPS) responses to domestic, family and sexual violence (DSFV).

Approximately 71 participants across different organisations responded. Overall, the themes of this response align with the key areas that the CWRG believes need to be addressed through the Inquiry.

The CWRG believes that many QPS employees are committed to identifying and responding appropriately to DSFV. Their work needs to be upheld and amplified by QPS cultural and structural change.

We submit to the Inquiry that cultural and systemic issues within QPS impact on the identification of and responses to DSFV, and it is important to shift police culture and systems through accountability and commitment to increase the access, equity and fairness of process and ensure consistency of QPS responses.

We recommend that the Inquiry consider:

Terms of Reference #1
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Zero-tolerance Leadership, in word and action, is fundamental to improving QPS culture.</li><li>2. Shift police culture through accountability and commitment to increase the access, equity and fairness of process and ensure consistency of QPS responses.</li><li>3. Police systems need to be established to provide trauma responsive and collaborative approaches.</li><li>4. Child safe standards to be applied to Police system and approaches.</li></ol>

5. Clear Policy approach to access and diversity, improved ongoing training and development for Officers in reflective practice.

#### Terms of Reference #2

1. A preparedness of the police to negotiate the role they play in discreet local communities including Meaningful investment in culturally restorative Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-led solutions and working in partnership with community Elders and leaders.
2. Creating non carceral solutions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
3. Imprisonment as last resort. Accountability to reduce the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the criminal justice system as outlined in *Closing the Gap* Target 10: By 2031, reduce the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults held in incarceration by at least 15 percent.
4. Elders and Police Liaison Officers (PLOs) should hold decision making positions in local policing matters.
5. Significant investment in developing trauma-informed policing responses as it relates to domestic, family and sexual violence.
6. Supporting independent research and evaluation to identify systemic or institutional bias and racism within the QPS in the context of DFSV response and investigation.

#### Terms of Reference #3

1. Recruitment and selection – pre-assessment; specifically assessing for bias and tolerance toward gender-based violence and to what extent this will affect judgement, decision-making, social competence and collaboration.
2. Change legislation to allow for a single statement process across all forms of DFSV and ensure statements are able to be completed in a safe and trauma-informed environment, with suitably trained officers and specialist support.
3. Commitment to reasonable adjustments to taking statements in accessible and trauma responsive manner taking into account disability, language and cultural needs. And responsive processes that use innovative solutions such as the body worn camera trial.
4. Clear policy framework and accompanying action plan that requires QPS to understand and address the causes and drivers of gender-based violence, intersectionality and embed appropriate systems responses.

5. Multidisciplinary team approaches to co response to DFSV such as DFSV Specialists, Mental Health and legal professionals, alongside community Elders.
6. Standardised screening for cognitive disability (including FASD) for all first responders and complete review of the DV PARF and commitment to using the CRASF.

#### Terms of Reference #4

1. Establish an independent Victims Commissioner as an independent statutory officer with powers to advocate for the respect, recognition and inclusion of victims of crime in the justice system, as both a prosecuting and investigatory function.:
  - a. Providing oversight of QPS and its compliance with The Charter of Victims' Rights, set out in the *Victims of Crime Assistance Act 2009*
  - b. to provide leadership and give expert advice to QPS about laws, policies, practices and services for victims of DFSV;
  - c. to analyse and evaluate, at a systemic level, policies and practices relevant to victims of DFSV and the performance of QPS in appropriate response and investigation
  - d. oversee complaints about QPS from victims of crime in the context of the Victims' Charter.
2. QPS should facilitate targeted and appropriate engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, peak multicultural, migrant and refugee community organisations, along with other groups who have historically faced barriers to accessing appropriate resolution of complaints including youth organisations, LGBTIQ+ organisations and disability organisations to ensure complaint process is victim centric.

#### Terms of Reference #5

QPS needs to have a zero-tolerance position to domestic, family and sexual violence both as an employer, through a public education campaign and as a responsible public entity subject to the *Human Rights Act 2019*.

Yours sincerely,

**The Combined Women's Refuge Group Inc**

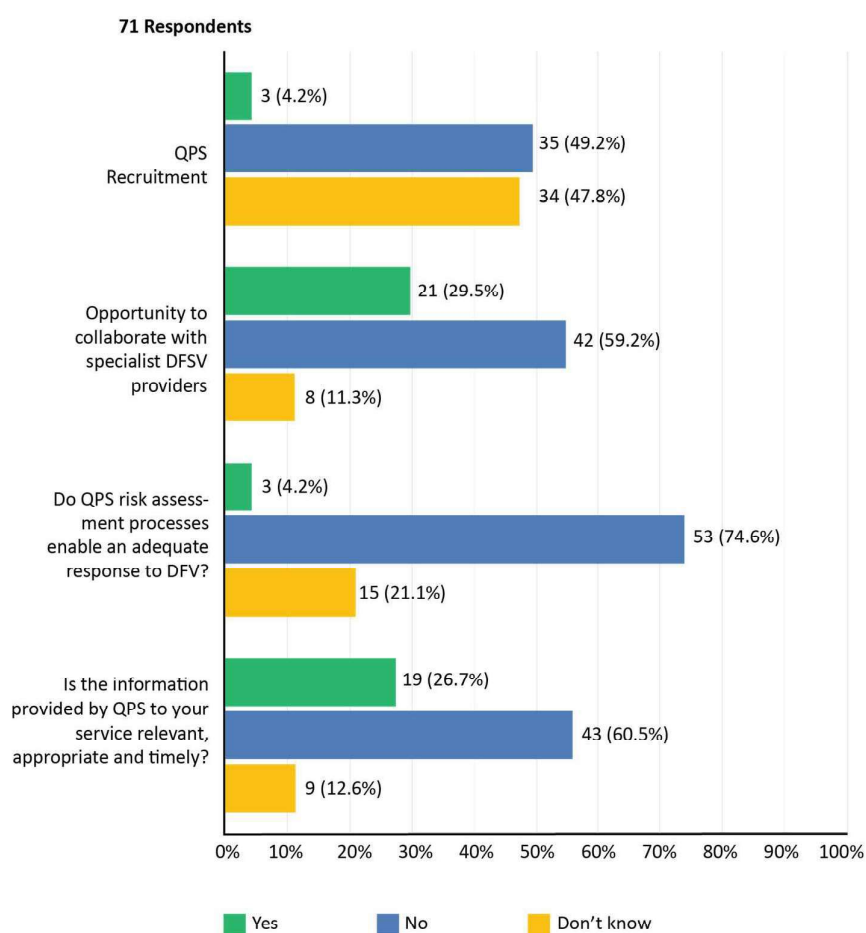
cwrg\_seqld@hotmail.com

[www.cwrg.org](http://www.cwrg.org)

## QPS Inquiry Data Collection

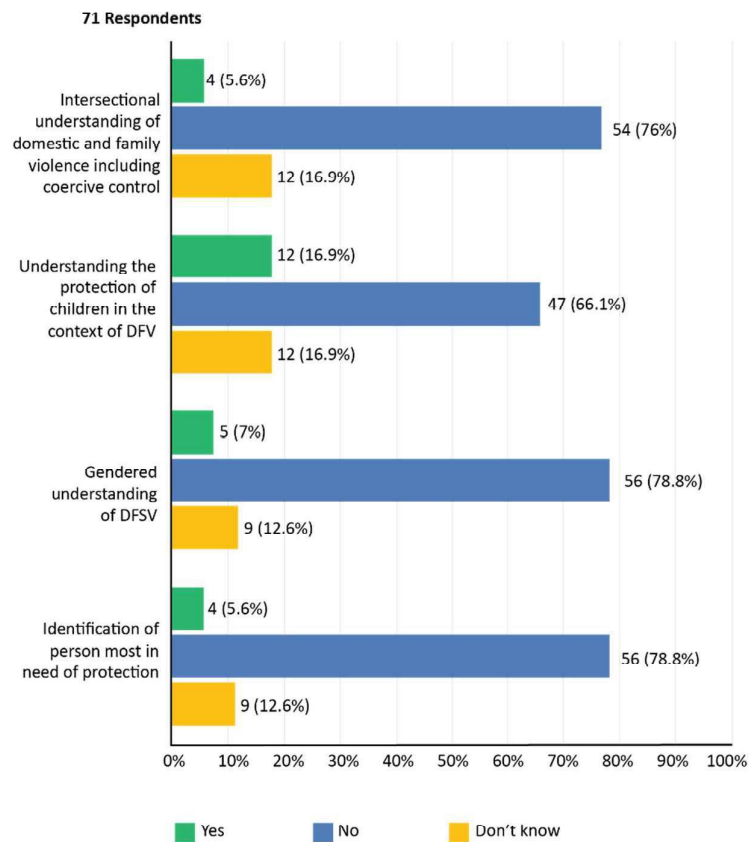
This survey had 71 responses in total. For questions with a scaling system of yes/no or negative/positive, we have supplied all quantitative data/responses with a short-written summary below. With the open comment field questions, we have selected key responses, with a summary capturing the main themes of replies/ issues that arose over multiple responses. A spreadsheet with the full raw data can be requested via [info@evawq.org](mailto:info@evawq.org).

**Question 1:** *Does the current structure of the QPS enable them to have both capacity and capability to respond to DFV in the following circumstances?*



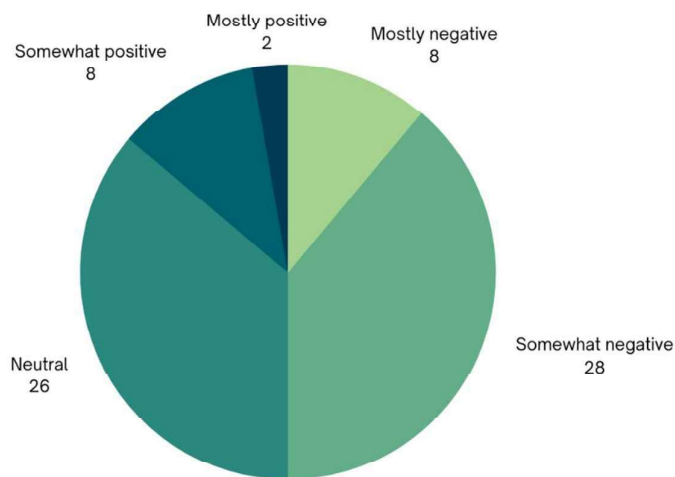
Overall, the responses demonstrated a mostly negative view of QPS structure, capacity and capability.

**Question 3:** *Does the current training structure of QPS allow them to have understanding of the following concepts?*



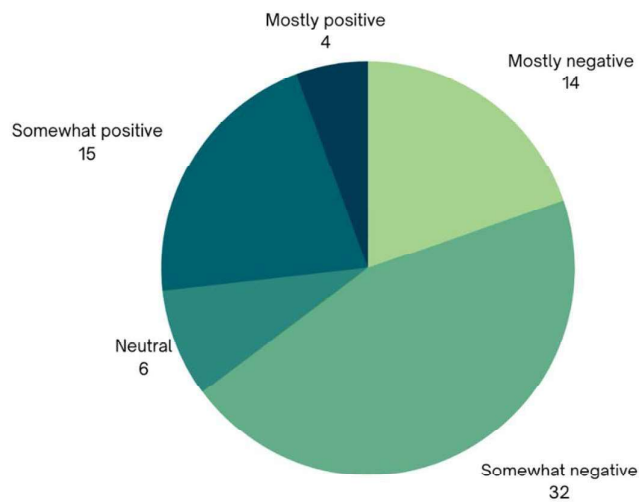
Overall, the responses demonstrated a mostly negative view of QPS training structure, and demonstrated that QPS have a lack of understanding of the listed concepts.

**Question 4:** *What is your experience of QPS culture?*



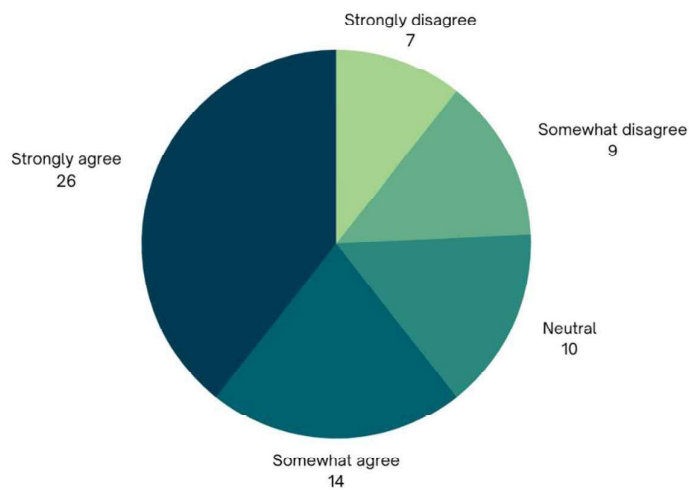
The average response to this question was between Somewhat Negative and Neutral.

**Question 5:** *In your professional opinion, have you seen QPS culture affect their investigations/ response to incidents of DFV?*



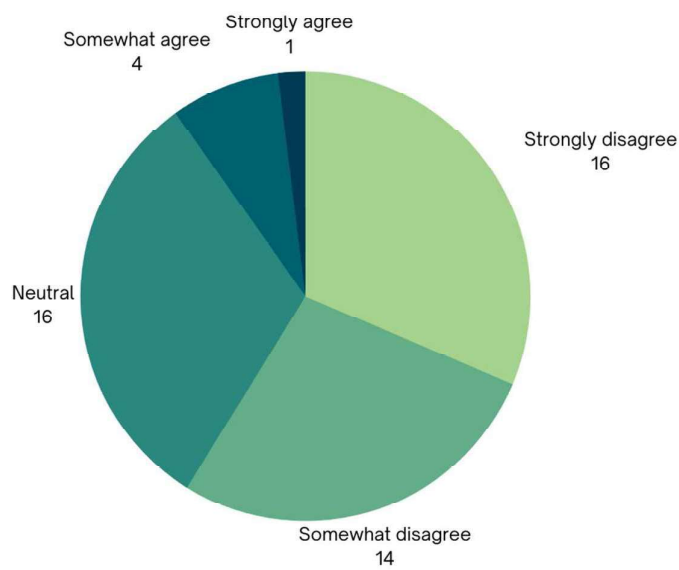
The average response to this question was Somewhat Negative.

**Question 7:** *There are cultural issues within the QPS that may contribute to the overrepresentation of First Nations people in the criminal justice system.*



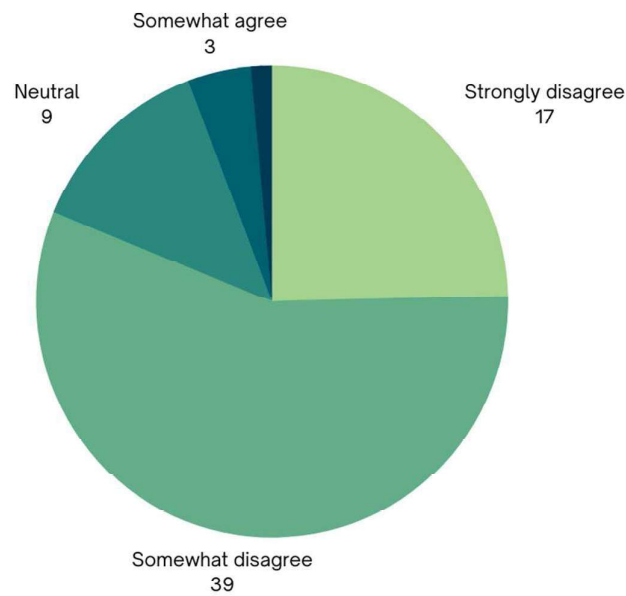
The average response to this question was Strongly Agree.

**Question 9:** *Current internal conduct and complaints handling processes against QPS officers are adequate.*



The average response to this question was between Somewhat Disagree and Neutral.

**Question 11:** *QPS effectively responds to alleged breaches of DVOs.*



The average response to this question was Somewhat Disagree.