

Attachment A

From: COMMISSIONER
Sent: Thursday, 2 December 2021 17:21
To: QPS ALL POLICE OFFICERS; QPS ALL STAFF MEMBERS; QPS Chaplains; PSBA Contractors; PSBA to QPS All Staff
Subject: Commissioner's Message - Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce Report

Dear colleagues

As you may be aware, the *Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce* (the Taskforce) was an independent body established by the Queensland Government to examine:

1. coercive control and review the need for a specific offence of commit domestic violence; and
2. the experience of women across the criminal justice system.

Today the Taskforce handed its first [report](#) to the Queensland Government. The report was developed after extensive consultations across the sector, government, victim survivors, and the wider community.

From the very outset I want to thank you for the work that you do in what is the most complex and challenging environment. I know and appreciate that it is relentless and acknowledge how difficult your job is.

The report is not exclusively about the Queensland Police Service (QPS) however some aspects of the report are clearly critical of the QPS. In recent times there has been a number of Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) related homicides which have generated significant interest from the media and community. Upon review of some incidents, at times our responses have not met the expectation of the QPS or the community. As a learning organisation, we should acknowledge there are always opportunities for improvement. Whilst the vast majority of the organisation performs this work to the highest of standards – the instances where these standards are not maintained unfortunately causes reputational harm to the entire organisation which is evident by the numerous submissions to the Taskforce.

Whilst acknowledging the findings of the report, I would like to highlight the complex nature of DFV and the tireless work you perform each and every day. Without performing the role of a police officer, day in and day out, it is difficult to understand how complex and challenging the policing of DFV is. The following figures demonstrate your significant commitment to preventing DFV in the community:

- On average, the QPS attend more than 300 DFV incidents a day.
- In 2020/21, the QPS laid 30,500 contravene Domestic Violence Order charges (26.5% more than the previous year).
- We lodged more than 21,000 police applications for protection orders (79% of all applications)
- We made over 89,000 police referrals for at-risk individuals.

These figures reinforce the vital role the QPS performs in the prevention, disruption, investigation, and response of DFV, and you should be proud of your contribution to protecting victims.

DFV reform within the QPS has been a priority since I began as Commissioner. This is demonstrated by the work we have already undertaken which includes:

- The establishment of a dedicated DFV & Vulnerable Persons Command led by an Assistant Commissioner.
- A new service wide DFV strategy and DFV doctrine.
- World leading development of artificial intelligence to identify and target high risk, high harm perpetrators. The first two pilot operations in 2020 and 2021 showing a 50-56% reduction in breach offences.

- Enhancements to QLITE devices giving frontline members access to all DFV history in one place to enable informed decision making.
- The requirement for body worn camera to be activated at all DFV attendances.
- Continued supervisory approval requirements for Police Protection Notice conditions.
- The recent addition of 24 additional DFV coordinators across districts.
- The addition of 6 DFV coordinators into police communication centres to ensure the frontline is supported.
- Implementation of online reporting and SMS reporting in 2020 to assist victims contacting police.
- Successfully lobbying government to introduce a trial to allow DFV statements to be taken by body worn camera to reduce ongoing victim trauma.

Further to this, we are continuing to lobby for amendments to legislation to reduce the administrative burden and develop more efficient processes for our frontline officers - including the electronic service of DFV documents. We will also continue to educate our partners and the community that DFV is not solely a problem that policing can remedy and a sense of shared responsibility needs to be adopted to tackle this very volatile and complex issue.

As the report has only just been released it will take some time to understand the full impacts to the organisation.

From an initial review of the Report, there are about 17 recommendations that apply specifically to police. About 10 of those recommendations are already under way or are initiatives that we welcome and have advocated for.

One of the recommendations is for a 'Commission of Inquiry' to examine widespread cultural issues within the QPS relating to the investigation of DFV. Whilst we never shy away from opportunities to improve, I do not support this recommendation as I do not believe there are wide spread cultural issues in the QPS. I am of the firm opinion an inquiry is not necessary due to a significant number of reforms already undertaken and future planned initiatives by the QPS, which will achieve the same outcomes as the proposed inquiry and enhance the Service's capability to protect vulnerable people.

Furthermore, such an inquiry would come at considerable cost to the government and community – a cost which could be used elsewhere for victim support and perpetrator programs. Additionally, already in existence in this state are independent bodies like the Crime and Corruption Commission (CCC) that have a long history of holding the QPS to account.

We will continue to review the outcomes and recommendations of this report in detail and work with our partners on its implementation. We must all play our role, not only as part of our professional obligations, but also as community members, as parents and as friends to work together to prevent domestic and family violence.

Many of the recommendations are an opportunity to drive change to build a better Service that supports you in your role as first responders and assists victims and survivors.

To be clear, my focus is on improving our response to DFV through supporting our frontline personnel.

I encourage you to follow the [Domestic, Family Violence and Vulnerable Persons Command](#) on Workplace to receive important and regular updates about the work and progress happening in this space.

A sincere thank you again for your continued professionalism and dedication to your duties.

Kind regards

KATARINA CARROLL APM
COMMISSIONER



Our values are at the core of who we are and what we do each day