

Commission of Inquiry into QPS responses to DFV Question for Commissioner

14: What more can the Queensland Police Service do to ensure it adequately assesses its capability and capacity to respond effectively to domestic and family violence?

The QPS Performance Management Framework provides a structured system of performance measurement at all levels of the organisation, which assists the QPS to regularly assess its capability and capacity to respond effectively to all policing activities, including DFV.

The QPS is currently undertaking a maturity assessment across its 15 police districts to ascertain capability gaps with respect to the establishment of DFV&VPUs. This will inform future resource planning and allocations.

The QPS recognises the importance of academia's contribution to assessing and improving police responses to DFV, and will continue to contribute to external DFV research through sharing of data, access to its workforce for survey purposes, and other in-kind support. As at 15 August 2022, 20 DFV-related research applications have been approved.

15: How does the Queensland Police Service use community and member feedback to improve its responses to domestic and family violence?

The QPS engages with the community and its members at multiple levels and through multiple channels.

The DFV Command has established the DFV Advisory Group, which provides an important interface with representatives from the DFV community service sector. For example, the Advisory Group was used as a forum to discuss and seek feedback on a draft of the QPS DFV Strategy 2021-2023. The Advisory Group was also used to invite discussion on how police can balance de-escalation of DFV situations against the perception of an officer favouring a respondent.

At the local level, DFV Coordinators, DFV Liaison Officers and Officers in Charge also maintain relationships with external stakeholders and service providers. Relationships with these external stakeholders influence how police undertake their duties. The District DFV&VPUs located in the South Brisbane, North Brisbane, Sunshine Coast and Logan Districts have embedded specialist DFV support service workers working alongside police.

The QPS currently operates a DFV co-responder model in South Brisbane District, with police and a DFV service provider together attending a DFV incident after the police first response has been completed and safety ensured. This enables a victim to receive immediate support from a DFV service provider, while enhancing the risk assessments undertaken by frontline police. The QPS is exploring whether further co-responder models can be developed in other parts of the State.

QPS also has regard to community feedback via formal submissions such as those to the Women's Safety Justice Taskforce and the Commission of Inquiry.. Feedback by way of complaint can also be made through various mechanisms. Complaint feedback assists in the identification of mistakes and areas of improvement, with ESC investigations routinely incorporating organisational recommendations regarding further reviews or amendments to policy.

Member feedback informs change activities and is received through channels including the Working for Queensland Survey, where questions gauge:

- member awareness of DFV policies and supports;
- member confidence and competence to respond to DFV and sexual harassment; and
- employee perceptions of workplace (attitudes, behaviour, harassment, dignity, respect, etc).

Commissioner Performance Reviews and Business Unit Reviews, the QPS internal social media platform 'Workplace', and workshops conducted in Districts provide further opportunities for members to raise suggested enhancements to service delivery. The DFV Command also facilitates engagement with DFVCs in each District to support proactive identification of potential state-wide issues. This has led to red-tape reduction initiatives, amendments to policy, and technological advancements to support frontline and DFV specialist service delivery. For example, an online DFV Document Service Guide was developed, clarifying procedure in order to minimise unnecessary and inefficient service of DFV documents.

The QPS also reviewed member responses to the questions from the 2017 and 2021 White Ribbon Baseline Surveys. The White Ribbon Baseline Survey is an essential tool in understanding member perceptions of violence against women in Australia and how it impacts them in their everyday lives. It measures several key indicators, including how comfortable people are with language, supporting a friend and/or colleague and where to find essential policies and procedures. Results from the survey inform the QPS White Ribbon Accreditation Operational Plan, which actualises the accreditation standards into everyday practice to champion gender equality and prevent gendered violence.

16: What more can the Queensland Police Service do to ensure improvement to the organisation's culture in relation to domestic and family violence?

The QPS will carefully consider the findings of the Commission of Inquiry in the development of its response to Recommendation 31 of the first report of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce. Factors identified as influencing culture include:

- frustrations with process inefficiency;
- demand, volume and repeat calls for service;
- engagement with the workforce;
- environmental conditioning and influencing factors such as having appropriate mentors and trainers, the right people in the right roles and leadership reinforcing DFV messaging;
- the cumulative effects of responding to DFV incidents, first response policing operational stressors and organisational stressors, vicarious trauma and compassion fatigue;
- personal drive, attitudes, beliefs and values;
- the need to deliver more face-to-face training with respect to DFV, particularly around its gendered nature and how best to deliver a victim-centric response.

QPS intends to develop a monitoring and evaluation framework to oversee and measure the impacts of the implementation of recommendations arising out of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce and Commission of Inquiry.

It is important to also recognise the role of the QPS Performance Management Framework, which ensures the QPS is consistently monitoring its organisational culture and responses to DFV.

DFV is not a problem that can be solved by policing alone. The QPS is very grateful for community organisations and service providers who continue to work with us to tackle this volatile and complex issue, and we will always advocate for increased support while we continue to progress strategies and make improvements within our organisation. The QPS needs well-resourced and accessible partners to provide support and services to help us prevent, disrupt, and respond to DFV. It is also vitally important that DFV processes be improved through legislative amendment

17: What further resourcing does the Queensland Police Service require to make this happen? How is this determined?

The QPS's desire for an enhanced integrated service response requires further investment not just in the QPS, but in the DFV service sector. A whole-of-government partnership approach is required to combat DFV.

With respect to the establishment of DFV&VPUs in each district, the QPS relies upon demand modelling and the assessment of the districts against the DFV&VPU maturity framework to assess resourcing needs.

It is difficult to quantify exactly what further resources are required. Assessment of the resources required to implement the recommendations from this Commission of Inquiry, as well as the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, will form part of the QPS' standard Cabinet budget processes.

It is clear however that greater investment is required in order to address existing gaps such as more face-to-face DFV training. The QPS preference is for sufficient resource allocation to facilitate a stand-alone DFV training team, to enable the QPS to provide dedicated resources in each district aimed at ensuring appropriate police responses and enhancement of workplace culture with respect to DFV.

The Commission of Inquiry has also heard evidence of frustration with the inefficiencies created by existing DFV legislation. A significant overhaul of DFV legislation is required to move towards a paperless system, which will likely require investment to update ICT systems for the QPS and Courts.

More generally, the QPS is currently working with Queensland Treasury Corporation (QTC) to identify the future resourcing requirements required to meet the QPS' wide range of service demands now and into the future, which include DFV.

The QPS is undertaking this work to ensure it can properly inform the government as to how the QPS can meet the ever-increasing demands for its services in a way which is sustainable and fiscally responsible. The QPS is acutely aware of the need to ensure our future model is as effective and efficient as possible.