

**COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO QUEENSLAND POLICE SERVICE RESPONSES TO DOMESTIC
AND FAMILY VIOLENCE**

*Commissions of Inquiry Act 1950
Section 5(1)(d)*

STATEMENT OF SARAH VUZEM

Name of Witness:	SARAH VUZEM
Date of birth:	[REDACTED]
Current address:	[REDACTED]
Occupation:	Client Service Manager, YFS
Contact details (phone/email):	[REDACTED]
Statement taken by:	Insert

I Sarah Vuzem make oath and state as follows:

1. I am a Manager at YFS, a multi service non government agency that provides community support and assistance to those in need through integrated services and partnerships. We provide domestic and family violence support including men's programs, financial, legal housing, youth support and more. We have been doing this work in Logan since 1983 and help families escaping domestic violence work with our domestic violence specialists, financial counsellors, housing specialist and employment providers.
2. Additionally in September 2016 QPS Logan and YFS Ltd entered into an innovative partnership agreement to enable a domestic violence worker (DVW) employed by YFS to co-locate and operate the from Beenleigh Police Station, Logan District, Domestic Violence Unit. The QPS at Beenleigh Station also function within a broader multi-agency response to DFV in accommodating and collaborating with the High Risk Team (HRT).
3. The Domestic Violence Unit became the Logan District Domestic, Family Violence & Vulnerable Persons Unit in January 2020.

Witness signature

Reg.No. [REDACTED]

Justice of the Peace/Commissioner for Declarations/Lawyer

4. The DVW collaborates with QPS officers to provide a proactive policing model that features prompt assessment, referral and support to those aggrieved by domestic violence. The initiative is referred to as Project Hera.
5. Project Hera's objective is to enhance victim/survivor safety and well-being. The staff's commitment to reduce DFV is high as is their empathy and support for victims/survivor. Proactive policing, follow up and information sharing with the DVW is a feature of Project Hera and appears effective. Project Hera responds to diversity in family type, culture, gender identify and more.
6. Project Hera operates essentially with one permanent full time YFS DV worker, who provides an initial 'triage' type response to identify the support and safety needs of victim/survivors. The DVW case-manages the referrals that are made by the QPS VPU Officers and continues to monitor the victim/survivor and their needs.
7. A challenge for Project Hera is that one DVW can only provide very limited numbers of victims/survivors with support, and very few respondents. When the project commenced, there were constraints with the QPS Logan District Domestic Violence Unit as it did not have a permanent staff allocation. All staff in the QPS VPU are now permanent positions.
8. The co located model has seen a strong working relationship develop between the DVW and QPS.
9. YFS carried out an evaluation of Project Hera. The women supported by Project Hera recognised the benefits in having police from a specialist unit collaborate with a DVW.
10. The strengths of Project Hera include the following;
 - (a) The commitment of the Project Hera DVW and QPS officers in the VPU is high
 - (b) Proactive personalised service
 - (c) Swift response to high risk identification
 - (d) Shared understanding of police and DVW role and responsibilities is helpful
 - (e) Ongoing case and risk monitoring
 - (f) Unique one stop shop for complex cases.
11. Helpful elements of the Project Hera model include:
 - (a) the capacity to provide co-responder support to VPU officers
 - (b) being on hand to meet with victim/survivors when they attend the VPU to provide statements
 - (c) DVW attending home visits when safe to do so
 - (d) the ability to re-engage with victim/survivors as soon as their situation changes.

Witness signature

Reg.No. [REDACTED]

Justice of the Peace/Commissioner for Declarations/Lawyer


12. Project Hera is limited by the amount of work that one worker can do and would benefit from a second DV worker.

OATHS ACT 1867 (DECLARATION)


I Sarah Vuzem do solemnly and sincerely declare that:

- (1) This written statement by me is true to the best of my knowledge and belief: and
- (2) I make this statement knowing that if it were admitted as evidence, I may be liable to prosecution for stating in it anything I know to be false.

And I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true and by virtue of the provisions of the Oaths Act 1867

.....Signature

Taken and declared before me at Slacks Creek this 1st day of August 2022.

Taken By 

Justice of the Peace / Commissioner for Declarations / Lawyer

Reg. No. 