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 Australian Government Defence		DECISION BRIEF FOR DEPSEC DP AND CPERS: NEW MANDATORY FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS CAMPUS COURSE	
Group/Service:	Defence People Group	Reference:	EC23-005098
For information:	CDF, VCDF, SEC	Due date:	29 February 2024 Routine

Purpose

1. To inform you of the new Defence Family and Domestic Violence (FDV) Awareness course that is available on Campus.
2. To inform you that this course will be mandatory for all staff.

Recommendations

3. That you:
 - a. **Note** the Defence FDV Awareness course is available on Campus and Campus Anywhere, and the associated MINDP direction and sensitivities.
 - b. **Approve** the 'Intranet News' advising of the course and the mandatory completion requirements (Attachment 1).
 - c. **Approve** the DEFGRAM for release by DGDMFS and HMP (Attachment 2).
 - d. **Sign** the Minute to Group Heads and Service Chiefs requesting their promotion of the mandatory FDV awareness course (Annex A).

 Wade Stothart MAJGEN HMP Tel: s47E(d) Mob: s22 20 th Mar 24	a. <u>Noted</u> / Please discuss b. <u>Approved</u> / Please discuss c. <u>Approved</u> / Please discuss d. <u>Signed</u> / Please discuss s22  Justine Greig Deputy Secretary DP 5 April 14 Mar 24	a. Noted / Please discuss b. <u>Approved</u> / Please discuss c. <u>Approved</u> / Please discuss d. <u>Signed</u> / Please discuss s22  Natasha Fox LTGEN CPERS Mar 24
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Contact Officer: s47E(d)	Tel: s22
Clearance Officer: Libb, Cremen	Tel: 

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2

Key Issues

4. In June 2022, Defence Member and Family Support (DMFS) with Defence Learning Branch (DLB) started developing an online general awareness Family and Domestic Violence (FDV) course. The benefits of developing an online course include:

- a. provision of consistent information;
- b. ability to test learning outcomes;
- c. improvement of accessibility to the course such as for remote workers; and
- d. update of the information delivered in the original general awareness FDV presentation.

5. During the development of the Campus course, the Defence FDV Working Group raised concerns about mandating the online course. Between November 2022 and June 2023 the Working Group concerns raised included:

- a. staff completing a course with a sensitive subject matter in isolation;
- b. that the course could be completed as a 'tick and flick';
- c. that there are already a number of other mandatory courses personnel need to complete;
- d. that personnel could not actively ask questions; and
- e. lack of availability of immediate support to Defence personnel negatively affected by the course content, the potential for vicarious traumatising.

6. Some of these concerns are mitigated through a content warning at the start of the online training and the contact number of the Helpline and other support services will be available as part of the course content when the course is made mandatory.

7. In January 2023, while developing the new *Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023 – 2028* (the Strategy), Minister for Defence Personnel (MINDP) provided direction that FDV awareness training be mandated for all employees.

8. On 26 April 2023, DMFS released the new Defence FDV Awareness Training course on Campus for all Defence personnel (PMKeyS proficiency code P129223). The release of this online course is in the draft First Action Plan, per action item four.

9. The course includes information on:

- a. the Defence context (i.e. strategy and values);
- b. the nature of family and domestic violence;
- c. key principles when responding to allegations of FDV;
- d. information about the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children (2023-2032), and the myths and realities related to FDV;

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3

- e. elements of healthy and abusive relationships;
- f. impacts of domestic violence on the workplace and personal lives;
- g. how to respond appropriately including what to say to a colleague; and
- h. internal and external referral options.

10. The MINDP expectation of FDV awareness training being mandatory for all employees (as detailed in the Strategy's draft Action Plan) has been communicated to the Defence People Committee and FDV Working Group. This requirement has not been communicated to all key stakeholders, including Defence employees.

11. Defence Families Australia also advocate for mandatory FDV training for all Defence staff.

12. The Strategy brief to MINDP noted the FDV awareness information in the mandatory Workplace Behaviour Campus training. Additionally, in briefing MINDP and as outlined in the draft Action Plan, the mandating of the Campus training is scheduled to be actioned by April 2024.

Next Steps

13. The all staff email at Annex A outlines the mandatory training requirements for all Defence personnel for 2024 – highlighting the new training requirements such as FDV and suicide prevention. Following your approval, the email and the Minute at Annex B will be released.

14. A DEFGRAM and Intranet News Item will also be released to communicate the course and its mandatory nature.

Background

15. In support of the *Defence Family and Domestic Violence Strategy 2017 – 2022*, in May 2018 a general presentation regarding Family and Domestic Violence was released for delivery to all Defence personnel. Defence People Group in conjunction with a contracted provider, Rape and Domestic Violence Services Australia (now known as Full Stop), developed the presentation titled "Responding appropriately to disclosures of domestic violence" (PMKeyS proficiency code p124964). The presentation was not mandatory, however Chief of Air Force made the presentation compulsory for all Air Force personnel.

16. During COVID, there was a requirement to provide an alternative way of accessing the course. Additionally, there was no evaluation attached to the course, nor a way to ensure consistency of its delivery.

17. The new 'Defence FDV Awareness' course on Campus provides users with a comprehensive overview of their role in responding to FDV. The updated course builds on the previous presentation by providing additional subject areas including alignment of Defence values with the new Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence and the impact of FDV on individuals and Defence as an organisation.

18. Further to this, the new course provides previously omitted guiding principles for responding to FDV that align with National Plan for Ending to Violence Against Women and

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Children 2023-2028. The course allows for a measurement of change in knowledge before and after completion of the course. It also allows access in remote or overseas locations and provides a consistent delivery of the material.

Evaluation of knowledge

19. Course participants are required to complete a test of their knowledge of learning outcomes at the end of the course and require a pass rate of 80 per cent to satisfactorily complete the course.

20. Analysis with DLB of the completions and comments will provide insights into potential enhancements to the course.

Desired outcome

21. As per the Strategy: contribute to the broader community efforts in preventing FDV by promoting an understanding and awareness of FDV, particularly within a Defence context.

22. As per the Strategy: facilitate and coordinate appropriate Defence responses to FDV experienced in the Defence community through the delivery of online awareness training.

23. As per the Strategy: provide Defence personnel with the skills, knowledge and confidence to recognise, respond and refer people at risk of, subjected to, and affected by FDV, so as to respond effectively to their needs in accordance with the Defence Values and Behaviours.

Consultation

24. In January 2023, MINDP feedback was received by Defence People Group advising that FDV awareness training be mandated for all personnel, including general awareness training and training for leaders.

25. In June 2022, DMFS commenced consultation with DLB on the development of an online general awareness FDV Campus course. This consultation ensured that the course met Defence learning standards in threshold learning outcomes developed, along with testing of knowledge gained by users.

26. The FDV Working Group was notified of the work being undertaken in developing an online course on 25 August 2022. At the November 2022, February 2023 and June 2023 Working Group meetings the Defence FDV Working Group discussed the merits and issues of making the new online CAMPUS course mandatory.

Attachments:

1. FDV Awareness Training – Intranet News
2. FDV Awareness Training - DEFGRAM

Annex:

- A. DEPSEC DP/ CPERS Minute to Group Heads and Service Chiefs

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ANNEX A



Australian Government
Department of Defence
Defence People Group

MINUTE

EC23-005098

See distribution

RELEASE OF THE NEW MANDATORY DEFENCE FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS CAMPUS COURSE

1. In 2022 the Australian Government released their agenda for ending family and domestic violence through the *National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022 – 2032* (National Plan). The National Plan calls on workplaces to advance gender equality and take a proactive role in the prevention of family and domestic violence (FDV). The National Plan encourages a whole of society approach to prevention, engaging people of all ages in the places they live, work, learn, socialise and play
2. Defence is committed to preventing and ending family violence. On the 30 November 2023, Defence reaffirmed its commitment with the release of the *Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023 – 2028* (the Strategy). A key action is continued education of the Defence community about FDV and its impacts, as well as how we can respond compassionately and effectively to assist colleagues, friends and family.
3. In support of the new *Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023 – 2028*, Defence has mandated all personnel complete a Defence Family and Domestic Violence (FDV) awareness course. The course can be completed at any time on Campus.
 - a. The proficiency has an expiry date and needs to be completed every two years to maintain a proficiency.
 - b. The course supersedes the previous Defence Member and Family Support (DMFS) course 'Responding appropriately to allegations of FDV', that was delivered in small groups.
4. Groups Heads and Chiefs are responsible for promoting the mandatory completion of the Defence FDV Awareness Course to all staff.
 - a. DMFS will seek initial completion figures from Defence Learning Branch. Groups and Services will also report on completion rates through the Defence FDV Working Group.
 - b. DMFS will monitor the implementation of the mandated training to meet governance and reporting requirements associated with the new *Defence Strategy for the Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028*.

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5. The POC for this is DG DMFS, Libby Cremen, on phone s22
s22

Natasha Fox
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s47E(d)
Tel: s47E(d)

28 Mar 24

s22

Justine Greig
DEPSEC DP

s47E(d)
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5 April
Mar 24

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Australian Government
Defence

Ministerial Background Brief

MS26-000122

FOR: Minister for Defence Personnel

INFO: Deputy Prime Minister

CC: CDF, SEC, VCDF, ASSOCSEC, DEPSEC GOV, DEPSEC DP, CN, CA, CAF, FASMECC

**DEFENCE STRATEGY FOR PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE 2023-2028
ACTION PLAN UPDATE**

Defence continues to implement the Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence (FDV) 2023–2028 (the Strategy) (released in November 2023) and the supporting Action Plan (released in December 2024) ([Attachment A](#)).

Defence has prioritised initiatives that align with Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide (RCDVS) Recommendation 102, requiring Defence to implement and improve upon the Strategy.

Key actions undertaken include establishing a senior-level FDV Steering Group to oversee implementation, the introduction of dedicated FDV-incident categories in Defence’s Case Management System to improve case tracking, and the publication of a new FDV chapter in the Complaints and Alternative Resolutions Manual. A status update against each Action Plan deliverable is provided at [Attachment B](#).

Media Considerations:

While this issue is sensitive, this update in and of itself is not expected to generate any media interest.

Minister Comments:

Cleared by: Lieutenant General Natasha Fox AO CSC
Chief of Personnel
Defence People Group (DPG)
s47E(d)
11 March 2026

Primary Contact Officer:
Air Vice-Marshal Lara Gunn CSM
Head Joint Support Services Division, DPG

s47E(d) / s22

Secondary Contact Officer:
Ms Libby Cremen
Director General
Defence Member Family Services, DPG

s47E(d) / s22

Sensitivity: Yes.

1. The recent class action and ongoing focus on sexual violence in Defence may influence perceptions and implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan.

Financial Impacts: No.

Systems/legislation/deregulation: No.

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Consultation: Yes.

2. Air Commodore Jules Adams CSC, Chief of Staff, Air Force Headquarters
3. Air Commodore Adam Spinks, former Chief of Staff, Joint Capabilities Group.
4. Brigadier Matt Campbell AM, Chief of Staff, Army Headquarters.
5. s47E(d), Acting Assistant Secretary Financial Compliance, Defence Finance Group.
6. s47E(d), Acting Assistant Secretary Project Management and Governance, Security and Estate Group.
7. Mr Jonathan Dean, former Chief Information Security Officer, Joint Capabilities Group.
8. s47E(d), Deputy Program Director ERP Capability, Defence Digital Group.
9. Ms Tracey Crawford, Assistant Director General People Services, Australian Submarine Agency.
10. s47F, Assistant Director General People Branch, Australian Signals Directorate.
11. s47E(d), Director ADF Financial Services and Consumer Centre, Chief of Personnel.
12. s47E(d), Acting Provost Marshal-ADF and Commander Joint Military Police Unit, Chief of Personnel.
13. Commodore Mark Page, Director General Mental Health and Wellbeing Branch, Defence People Group – People Strategy Organisation.
14. s47E(d), former Chief of Staff, Defence People Group.
15. s47E(d), former Chief of Staff, Military Personnel Division.
16. Mr Adam Del'Aquila, Assistant Secretary Human Resource Services, Defence People Group – People Strategy Organisation.
17. Ms Bronwyn Graham, former Assistant Secretary People System and Payroll Services, Defence People Group – People Strategy Organisation.
18. Brigadier Troy Francis CSC, Commanding Officer, Australian Defence Force Academy.
19. Brigadier Kirk Lloyd OAM, Director General People Policy and Employment Conditions, Defence People Group – People Strategy Organisation.
20. s47E(d), Director Military Administration and Discipline Law, Chief of Personnel.
21. Ms Petrina Cole, Assistant Secretary Work Health and Safety, Defence People Group – People Strategy Organisation.
22. s47E(d), Defence Family Advocate of Australia, Defence Families Australia.

Attachments:

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| <u>Attachment A</u> | Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028 – Action Plan. |
| <u>Attachment B</u> | Family and Domestic Violence Action Plan Status Update. |

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Background:

Governance and Oversight

23. In 2025, the FDV Steering Group (SG) was established, comprising senior ADF and APS officials. The FDV SG is responsible for overseeing the implementation, coordinating efforts, and providing high-level guidance and direction for the delivery of the Strategy and Action Plan.
24. Defence is a member of the Interdepartmental Committee on Ending Gender-Based Violence (EGBV IDC). Participation in the EGBV IDC ensures Defence perspectives are reflected in cross-Government policy development and has strengthened Defence collaboration with other agencies.
25. In 2024-25, Defence contributed for the first time to public reporting under the *National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022-2032*. The Strategy aligns with this National Plan.

Policy and Guidance Tools

26. To support consistent decision-making and compliance, Defence has updated its suite of policy and guidance tools. These resources provide clear, practical direction on key processes to ensure alignment with current standards and regulatory requirements. By streamlining information and offering accessible guidance, the tools aim to enable Defence personnel to work confidently and efficiently while maintaining best practice. The updates include:
 - a. in February 2025, a FDV Incident Category was created in the Defence Enterprise Resource Planning Case Management System (DECMS) to enhance consistency in reporting, recording and management of FDV incidents and protection orders;
 - b. in May 2025, the Joint Military Police Unit (JMPU) delivered a presentation to Defence Healthcare providers outlining their reporting obligations (both to Command and externally to firearms registries), as well as legal provisions and restrictions relating to 'risks of harm to self or others' identified during a health assessment; and
 - c. in August 2025, Defence released new and updated FDV policy and guidance materials following consultation and testing across Defence. These materials included:
 - i. new FDV Chapter in the CARM, providing enterprise-level policy guidance for all Defence personnel involved in responding to FDV incidents;
 - ii. Commander and Manager's Toolkit (replaced the previous Commanders and Managers Guide) outlining clear processes and practical support for managing FDV-related matters; and
 - iii. Defence APS People Policy on Family and Domestic Violence Support, detailing support available to Defence APS employees experiencing FDV and setting out supervisor responsibilities and associated support mechanisms.

Education and Training

27. Defence has continued to advance education and training initiatives, including:
 - a. in April 2024, Defence mandated biennial FDV awareness training for all personnel. The training includes guidance on individual safety for those affected by FDV and how to respond to a colleague that discloses FDV. While the training is mandatory, Defence personnel who may find the content distressing have the option to seek an exemption; and

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- b. in September 2025, Defence revised the FDV awareness training, incorporating:
 - i. elements of safe and healthy relationships;
 - ii. guidance on how to support someone who discloses they have experienced FDV or use violence in relationships; and
 - iii. information acknowledging of the nexus between exposure to FDV and key wellbeing indicators including suicidality.

Defence Families Australia Housing and Relocations Roundtable

- 28. Defence chaired the first Defence Families Australia (DFA) Housing and Relocations Roundtable on 5 September 2025. The meeting discussed housing and relocation benefits for ADF members and their families, challenges arising from relationship breakdown and FDV, and areas for improvements in communication and support for ADF members and families regarding relocations and access to Defence housing.
- 29. The meeting specifically addressed the outstanding recommendations made by DFA in its issues paper on ADF families and FDV, as required under RCDVS Recommendation 102 Part C.
- 30. Defence and DFA agreed a set of outcomes arising from the meeting and are collectively progressing them, these included:
 - a. options will be explored to include additional tenants or declarations on the Defence Residential Agreement;
 - b. communication and availability of information for partners will be improved; and
 - c. processes will be developed to ensure partners can make direct contact, and be directly contacted, where needed.
- 31. Although not captured in the Action Plan Update, there are multiple additional initiatives underway within Defence – focused on culture, leadership, diversity, safety, mental health, suicide prevention, wellbeing, and sexual violence – that contribute to reducing the risk of FDV and align with the objectives of the Strategy.

2026 Forward Work Plan

- 32. Key priorities for 2026 include:
 - a) Conduct of an enterprise risk assessment and development of a risk management strategy for FDV, informed by National Risk Assessment Principles and Risk Factors.
 - b) Development of a consolidated report of Enterprise policies, programs and services to:
 - i. identify intersections with FDV,
 - ii. determine and address any gaps, risks and inadvertent opportunities for systems abuse,
 - iii. support the development of an updated FDV action plan.
 - c) Development of a lived-experience consultation pathway to support engagement with Defence personnel who are victim-survivors.
 - d) Undertaking enterprise-wide scoping to inform an implementation plan for strengthening services, systems and referral pathways that support trauma-informed, connected, and coordinated responses to FDV and Sexual Violence. This will be informed by the risk assessment and risk management strategy.

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- e) Updating FDV policy following the release of the updated National Risk Assessment Principles and Risk Factors of FDV.
- f) Conducting a targeted internal awareness campaign to promote FDV prevention, highlight support services and increase awareness of Defence's commitment to preventing and responding to FDV.

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ATTACHMENT B

MS26-000122

FEBRUARY 2026

FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ACTION PLAN STATUS UPDATE

Action 1: Advance gender equality and address the drivers of all forms of gender-based violence, including through initiatives aimed to improve community attitudes and norms toward family, domestic and sexual violence.			
Defence Actions	Defence Deliverables	Status	Update
Action Item 1.1	Update this Action Plan to include Enterprise-wide intersectional prevention initiatives.	In progress	The identification of intersectional initiatives has commenced, with the support of the FDV SG. The updated Action Plan is anticipated to be endorsed and published in Q4 2026.
Action Item 1.2	Amendment to Financial Policy – Grants.	In progress	The Family Support Funding Program (FSFP) grant program was aligned with the Defence Family and Veteran Wellbeing Strategy 2025-2030 and the Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028 following a review completed in 2025. Organisations that demonstrate their programs directly support these strategies will be prioritised for funding. Work to identify and assess further opportunities under the grant framework is underway and is anticipated to be completed in Q2 2026.
Action Item 1.3	A consolidated report from relevant Enterprise policy, program and service owners detailing intersections with FDV and recommendations for policy and program updates.	In Progress	The identification of relevant enterprise policies and programs, owners and gaps has commenced. This is supported by key stakeholder engagement activities, including the DFA housing and relocations roundtable. This report is anticipated to be completed by Q4 2026, and will inform the development of the subsequent FDV Strategy and Action Plan. Gaps, risks and opportunities identified in policies, programs and services will be addressed as they arise.

Action Item 1.4	Online contemporary FDV awareness training for all Defence personnel.	Complete	There is a contemporary FDV awareness course available to all Defence personnel. This training was made mandatory for all Defence personnel in April 2024, and updated in September 2025 to include information on health relationships, support during FDV disclosures and the nexus between FDV and wellbeing. It will be reviewed annually in June to ensure that it remains fit-for-purpose.
Action Item 1.3	An awareness campaign plan for FDV prevention and awareness initiatives.	In progress	Defence will continue the awareness campaign to promote FDV prevention, highlight support services, and engage personnel through targeted messaging and key dates. Efforts will move to focus on at-risk and prevalent cohorts to ensure targeted support. Defence is finalising the 2026-2027 communications plan for FDV, with a new communication plan to be developed annually for commencement in January each year.
Action 2: Improve the national evidence base by working towards consistent terminology and monitoring and evaluation frameworks, and by strengthening collection and sharing of data and evidence.			
Action Item 2.1	Whole of Enterprise data set on Family Violence, Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence incidents for the Defence population that includes utilisation of data on veteran populations captured in the National Personal Safety Survey and aligns with the <i>Privacy Act 1988</i> (cth).	In progress	DECMS amendments were implemented in February 2025 to provide consistent terminology for FDV and sexual violence reporting, ensuring consistent data collection. This has been communicated with the workforce to support reporting and recording. These changes will support Defence in analysing current data and existing research to understand FDV and sexual violence.
Action Item 2.2			
Action Item 2.3	An Enterprise risk assessment and risk management strategy for FDV.	Not commenced	This action has not yet commenced. This project is anticipated to be finalised in Q4 2026 and will leverage the National risk assessment principles and risk factors that are under development by the EGBV IDC.

Action 3: Increase and strengthen the capability of mainstream and specialist workforces to deliver quality services, activities and programs across the four domains, including those that are tailored to respond to the unique experiences of all victim-survivors.			
Action Item 3.1	A training-needs analysis report detailing current training provided and recommendations for FDV training delivery across Defence.	In progress	Initial consultation and preliminary scoping has been undertaken with Defence Learning Branch. The training needs analysis report is anticipated to be completed by Q2 2027, and will inform the development of the subsequent FDV Strategy.
Action 4: Build the capacity of services and systems that support victim-survivors to provide trauma-informed, connected and coordinated responses that support long-term recovery, health and wellbeing.			
Action Item 4.1	A consultation pathway for victim-survivors and people with lived experience.	In progress	Initial engagement with lived experience subject matter experts has commenced to understand best-practice. The lived-experience consultation pathway and supporting policy is anticipated to be finalised by Q3 2026.
Action Item 4.2	An implementation plan for strengthening services, systems and referral pathways that support trauma-informed, connected and coordinated responses to FDV and Sexual Violence.	Not commenced	The scoping for this activity will commence in Q2 2026.
Action 5: Strengthen systems and services to better hold people who choose to use violence to account, and provide opportunities to support people who have used violence, or are at risk of using violence, to change their behaviours, with the aim of protecting the safety and wellbeing of current and potential victim-survivors.			
Action Item 5.1	A report detailing current processes for identification, notification, response and referral for respondents of alleged FDV and perpetrators of FDV and recommendations for future approaches to strengthening system and service responses to perpetrators of FDV in Defence.	Not commenced	This report is anticipated to be completed by Q2 2027, and will inform the development of the subsequent FDV Strategy.
Action Item 5.2	ERP DECMS report available for commanders and managers.	Not commenced	This action has not yet commenced as it required completion of Action 2.1 and 2.2. The scoping for this action will commence in Q1 2026.
Action Item 5.3	Existing Defence policies are updated and a new Chapter of the CARM is published and publically available that communicates the Defence approach to FDV.	In progress	Defence has released a FDV Chapter in the CARM and a revised Commander and Manager's Toolkit in August 2025. These provide clear enterprise-level policy and practical support for managing FDV-related matters. There is ongoing work to release the revised CARM chapter publically, which is anticipated to occur by Q2 2026. It is expected that the CARM and Commander and Manager's Toolkit will be updated in Q2 2026 following minimum standards review and the release of

			updated National Risk Assessment Principles and Risk Factors for Family and Domestic Violence. The APS People Policy on Family and Domestic Violence Support was released in August 2025. Defence released policy in the Military Personnel Policy Manual in September 2025 to facilitate more consistent management of Defence members who have committed serious misconduct that warrants consideration of interim administrative action including suspension from duty and/or involuntary separation from the Australian Defence Force. Serious misconduct includes threats or acts of family and domestic violence, other threats or forms of violence, exploitation of a vulnerable person (including a child or a person for whom the respondent has a legal or moral duty of care), or allegations of a sexual nature (particularly in relation to a child or young person).
Action Item 5.4	PMKeyS amendments to enable recording of civilian firearms licenses held by Defence members. A system to notify civilian police/firearms registry of relevant Defence weapons restrictions.	In progress	Defence is continuing to explore recommendations to improve oversight of privately owned firearms by ADF members. Defence is working to gain access to the planned National Firearms Registry, expected to be operational by 2028. This would allow for verification of firearm licences, holdings of ADF members directly and associated protection order restrictions. In the interim, Defence is exploring the possibility of mandating that members record in PMKeyS that they have a firearms licence to assist in managing individual risk where appropriate.

Action 6: Improve action to prevent and address sexual violence and harassment in all settings, across the four domains of the National Plan.			
Action Item 6.1	The Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Office (1800 SeMPRO) is responsible for the delivery of services to prevent and address sexual misconduct in Defence. 1800 SeMPRO's prevention and response activities and services will form an important part of Defence's response to Family Violence, Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence. 1800 SeMPRO, as a member of the Defence FDV Steering Committee, will contribute to reporting on outcomes relevant to FDV and provide expertise on matters relating to sexual violence.	In Progress	Defence formally adopted the term <i>sexual violence</i> in October 2025 to align with the National Plan, replacing previous references to sexual misconduct. To reinforce this change and emphasise prevention, the Chief of the Defence Force directed a sexual violence stand down for all ADF personnel. SeMPRO is progressing key initiatives, including the development of the Defence Sexual Violence Prevention Strategy, which is scheduled for release in Q2 2026. Education for commanders and managers has been reviewed, with a pilot workshop planned for February 2026. Policy updates have also been implemented, with CARM Chapter 9 revised in December 2025 to incorporate new terminology, clarify sexual offence definitions, provide direction for command engagement with JMPU, and outline guidance on prevention considerations. The Military Personnel Policy Manual and APS People Policy on Family and Domestic Violence Support were also updated to incorporate the sexual violence terminology. Additionally, DECMS categories were updated in December 2025 to reflect sexual offence definitions, supporting improved reporting of sexual violence in the future.

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QUESTION BRIEF (QB)

TOPIC: Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028

ISSUE OF THE DAY

- The Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-28 (the Strategy) and its supporting Action Plan align with the National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022-32, and outlines Defence's commitment to addressing Family and Domestic Violence.
- Defence provides a range of support services to victim-survivors, including the 24/7 Defence Member and Family Helpline, access to Defence social workers, emergency accommodation, the Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Office, and the APS Employee Assistance Program.

If asked: What action has Defence taken to address Family and Domestic Violence?

- Defence implements a culture of safety and support for individuals experiencing family and domestic violence, ensuring they have access to support mechanisms including crisis intervention, safety planning and referral to specialised services.
- Defence acknowledges military-specific factors can create contexts in which family and domestic violence could arise, and can at times increase vulnerability for individuals experiencing family and domestic violence and provide barriers to accessing support.
- Defence acknowledges the strong nexus between exposure to family and domestic violence and key wellbeing indicators, including suicidality.
- All Defence personnel undertake mandatory training to raise awareness of family and domestic violence. The training is focussed on recognising family and domestic violence, identifying at risk cohorts, and understanding available supports.
- A dedicated chapter in the Defence Complaints and Alternative Resolutions Manual provides enterprise-wide policy guidance for responding to family and domestic violence-related incidents.

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QUESTION BRIEF (QB)

TOPIC: Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028

- Defence has published a Commanders and Managers Toolkit on responding to family and domestic violence to support those responding, managing and reporting family and domestic violence -related incidents; ensuring victim safety and access to appropriate support services are the primary considerations.

BACKGROUND AND CHRONOLOGY

- Defence did not have a dedicated family and domestic violence strategy or policy prior to 2017. The first Defence Family and Domestic Violence Strategy (2017-2022) was launched in 2017, accompanied by an Action Plan that focused on five key areas: culture; communication; training; referrals and support; and policy.
- The current Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028 (the Strategy) was released on 30 November 2023 and the accompanying Action Plan was released on 10 December 2024.
- The Strategy is underpinned by the four domains detailed in the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-32; prevention, early intervention, response and recovery.
- The Strategy outlines Defence's vision, objectives, principles and priorities aiming to:
 - Enhance response, support and intervention provided to victim-survivors and those who commit family and domestic violence;
 - Provide Defence personnel with the skills and knowledge to recognise and confidently respond to family and domestic violence and
 - Promote community understanding and awareness of Family and Domestic Violence.
- The Action Plan commits Defence to measuring and reporting its achievement against the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032*.

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QUESTION BRIEF (QB)

TOPIC: Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028

MEDIA

<u>Date</u>	<u>Outlet</u>	<u>Reporting</u>
		Nil relevant media reported in the past seven days.

Lead Division

Contact: Air Commodore Davin Augustine

Division: Acting/Head Joint Support Services Division

Date First Prepared: 14 January 2026

Originating Source: MO

Phone: s47E(d)

Action Officer: s47E(d)

Date Last Updated: 10 August 2026

GROUP LEVEL BRIEF

Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence Strategy 2023-28

Lead: Lieutenant General Natasha Fox AO CSC, Chief of Personnel.

Supporting: Air Vice-Marshal Lara Gunn CSM, Head of Joint Support Services Division.

Context: Defence recognises it has a responsibility to prevent and mitigate the impact of family and domestic violence on Defence personnel including ADF, APS, contractors, and their families, through the Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028 and Action Plan.

Key Messages

- The safety of those affected will always be the primary focus for Defence.
- The *Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-28* (the Strategy) aligns with the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-32* and outlines Defence's commitment to addressing family and domestic violence.
- The Strategy is underpinned by the four domains detailed in the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–32: Prevention, Early Intervention, Response and Recovery.
- Defence acknowledges the findings and recommendations of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide and acknowledges the association between exposure to family and domestic violence and indicators of wellbeing, including suicidality.
- To support the *Defence Strategy an Action Plan for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence* was released in December 2024, which will also deliver against Recommendation 102 from the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide.
- Defence is engaged with whole of Government governance structures to support progress under the National Plan and is actively participating in the:
 - Ending Gender Based Violence Interdepartmental Committee; and
 - Sexual Violence and Harassment Community of Practice Interdepartmental Committee.
 - Public reporting against the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children.

Prepared By:

Name: Ms Libby Cremen

Position: Direct General Defence Member and Family Support

Division: Joint Support Services Division

Phone: s47E(d) / s22

Cleared By:

Name: Air Vice-Marshall Lara Gunn CSM

Position: Head of Joint Support Services

Group: Defence People Group

Phone: s47E(d) / s22

Budget Estimates May/June 2026

Last updated: 13 May 2026

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Facts and Figures

Financial Year	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (31 Mar)	Total
Budget allocated	0	0	\$95,000	\$95,053	\$20,000	\$50,000	\$260,053
SAFE expenditure	\$37,049	\$14,359	\$16,024	\$13,653	\$24,864	\$8,097	\$110,206
Other expenditure	0	0	\$78,704	\$1,882	0	0	\$80,586

- Actions underway across Defence addressing culture, leadership, diversity, safety, mental health, suicide prevention, wellbeing and sexual misconduct all have an impact on risk of family violence.
- It is therefore difficult to quantify the total Defence budget allocation and expenditure on all FDV related activities.

Recorded cases of family and domestic violence over the last five years

- It is widely recognised that most incidents of family and domestic violence go unreported due to fear, feelings of shame and confusion, or a reluctance to acknowledge the incident has occurred.
- Due to the complex nature of family and domestic violence, including the understood underreporting of incidence, there are challenges in ensuring robust and reliable data.

Financial Year	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at 1 Apr)	Total
Number of DMFS intakes containing FDV as a presenting issue (via IMS)	50	82	112	169	286	208	907
Number of family and domestic violence incidents recorded in DECMS	X	2	6	4	121	140	273

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Defence Annual Report data for SAFE

- Defence provides a short-term accommodation provision under Defence's Special Accommodation for Emergencies Scheme in situations where a member or member's family are under threat of a domestic crisis or threat of a domestic crisis.

Financial Year	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at 1 Apr)	Total
Intakes	29	10	14	16	30	21	121

Number of calls/emails seeking SAFE (eligibility is checked before SAFE is approved).

- For the period 1 July 2025 – 1 April 2026:
 - 21 referrals received
 - 100 per cent were processed within required three hour timeframe
- Timelines of approvals for SAFE was included as a performance measure for the 2024/25 Defence Annual Report because SAFE provides critical support in a high-risk area for ADF members and families.
- The three hour window for approval was chosen to provide ADF members and families with timely support in times of crisis and provide Defence Member and Family Support staff adequate (sufficient but not excessive) time to appropriately assess and seek approval from the delegate.
- The Defence recording system required modification to enable the inclusion of a date/time stamp to enable assessment of timeliness of response.
- Defence commenced recording the time taken to approve SAFE referrals from April 2025.
- As Defence only began recording the time taken to approve SAFE referrals from April 2025, we are unable to report on our performance for previous financial years.
- The 2024-25 reporting period was therefore reported as a baseline year for SAFE referrals against Performance Measure 4.4b.

Defence Family and Domestic Violence Strategy and Action Plan

- 30 November 2023: The *Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-28* (the Strategy) released:
 - sets out Defence's vision, objectives, key areas of focus and principles. With a focus on the domains of prevention, early intervention, response and recovery,
 - aims to:
 - enhance response, support and intervention provided to victim-survivors and those who commit family and domestic violence

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- : provide Defence personnel with the skills and knowledge to recognise and confidently respond to family and domestic violence
 - : promote community understanding and awareness of family and domestic violence.
 - aligned with the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032 (National Plan).
- 10 December 2024: Supporting Action Plan released:
 - details targeted actions and deliverables through which Defence will raise awareness and understanding, strengthen services and programs, and prevent violence.
 - will contribute to Defence meeting Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide Recommendation 102: Implement and improve upon the Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence (see Attachment A for a table of key Action Plan activities against Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide recommendations).
- March 2025: A Family and Domestic Violence Steering Group of senior ADF and APS officials was established (and met) to oversee implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan.
 - The Family and Domestic Violence Steering Group is accountable to Defence Senior Leadership and report progress to the Minister for Defence Personnel, the Chief of Defence Force and the Defence Secretary.
 - The Defence Family Advocate is a standing invitee.
 - The Steering Group meets twice a year to provide an update on actions taken to date against the Family and Domestic Violence Strategy and Action Plan and discuss outstanding actions. The Steering Group has met on the following dates:
 - : 13 March 2025.
 - : 18 September 2025.
 - : 30 March 2026.
- 5 September 2025: Defence and Defence Families Australia co-chaired a Roundtable with Housing Stakeholders (Defence Housing Australia, Toll) to discuss the outstanding actions from the DFA Issues Paper.

Education and training

- April 2024: Defence mandated all personnel to complete Family and Domestic Violence Awareness training biennially. The training includes guidance on victim-safety and how to respond to a colleague that discloses family and domestic violence.
- September 2025: Defence revised the Family and Domestic Violence Awareness training, incorporating:
 - elements of safe and healthy relationships,

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- how to support someone who discloses they have experienced Family and Domestic Violence or use violence in relationships,
 - acknowledgment of the nexus between exposure to Family and Domestic Violence and key wellbeing indicators including suicidality.
- As at 1 April 2026: the percentage of Defence Personnel compliant in completing the mandatory training was:
 - 85 per cent for Officers.
 - 80 per cent for Other Ranks.
 - 85 per cent for Defence APS.

Policy and management systems

- February 2025: a Family and Domestic Violence Incident Category was created in the Defence ERP Case Management System to enhance consistency in reporting, recording and management of family and domestic violence incidents and protection orders.
- May 2025: The Joint Military Police Unit delivered a presentation to Defence Healthcare providers regarding their reporting obligations (to Command and externally to firearms registries), legal provisions and restrictions relating to 'risks of harm to self or others' identified during a health assessment.
- August 2025: Defence released new and updated guidance materials for Family and Domestic Violence following consultation and testing with key policy areas across Defence
 - Release of a new Family and Domestic Violence Chapter in the Complaints and Alternative Resolutions Manual which provides enterprise-level policy guidance for all Defence personnel who may be involved in responding to Family and Domestic Violence incidents.
 - A Commanders and Managers Toolkit (replaced the previous Commanders and Managers Guide) offering clear processes and practical support for Defence personnel managing Family and Domestic Violence-related matters.

Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide Recommendation 102 Implement and improve upon the Strategy

- Defence incorporated the recommendations made by the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide Action Plan (published 10 December 2024).
- This included consideration of the recommendations from the Defence Families Australia Issues Paper.
- The following key actions have been completed:
 - Establishment of Family and Domestic Violence Steering Group.
 - Recognition of the nexus between Family and Domestic Violence and suicide included in Defence Family and Domestic Violence related policy guidance.

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- Standardised emergency response information provided in the Commander and Manager's Toolkit for Responding to Family and Domestic Violence and on the Defence Family and Domestic Violence Intranet webpage.
 - Assessed which Defence Families Australia recommendations have not been fully implemented, in consultation with Defence Families Australia (Roundtable held 5 September 2025).
 - Reviewed Enterprise policy and programs to assess if they could inadvertently create contexts that may contribute to increased vulnerabilities for victim-survivors, provide opportunities for use of power and control by perpetrators and/or act as barriers to accessing support.
- The following key actions are being progressed:
- Explicit consideration of suicide risk within responses to Family and Domestic Violence included in Family and Domestic Violence training for Frontline services (Defence Member and Family Support Helpline and social workers, health care professionals, chaplains).
 - Resolution of impediments to emergency service vehicles being able to access Defence establishments.
 - Amendments to the *Defence Act 1903* to enable Defence to collect contact details for family members, enabling communication to be sent directly to them about support services and programs.
 - Amendments to the *Defence Act 1903* to ensure section 58B can be used to provide benefits to former partners of ADF members, avoiding a situation where benefits cut off suddenly in the event of a separation, inhibiting safe separation in the case of family violence.

Defence Families Australia Issues Paper

- In its *ADF Family and Domestic Violence Issues Paper* (3 March 2023), DFA made recommendations on the following:
- **Governance, support and processes.** Establish clear, Defence-wide FDV policies and step-by-step procedures for relationship breakdown, supported by dedicated case management.
 - : Implemented via CARM Chapter and Toolkit.
 - **Training and workforce capability.** Implement mandatory, Defence-wide FDV training for all personnel and relevant contractors, informed by best practice and designed to improve identification, response and attitudes to victim survivors.
 - : FDV awareness training is mandatory across Defence. Training content is subject to annual review.
 - : Outstanding components will be addressed through Action Item three of the Strategy's Action Plan which involves a training needs analysis to

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identify requirements across key personnel and inform future FDV training delivery. This is anticipated to be completed by Q2 2027.

- **Communication with families.** Shift to an opt-out communication model to ensure all families receive consistent, direct information on FDV supports, rights and reporting pathways.
 - : RCDVS Bill 2 will enable achievement of this 'opt-out' communication model.
- **Victim survivor support.** Extend and maintain access to Defence-funded support services, including social workers, as well as Open Arms for victim survivors following relationship breakdown.
 - : Defence members and families continue to have access to support services including Open Arms.
- **Housing, relocations and financial protections:** Reform Defence housing, relocation and associated financial policies to reduce structural power imbalances and coercive control by extending removal and notice periods, introducing a formal cooling-off period, strengthening housing security and temporary accommodation, increasing flexibility of benefits, ensuring safe access to personal property, and removing member-only control over key administrative and financial processes.
 - : Defence is progressing:
 - inclusion of additional tenants or declarations on the Defence Residential Agreement;
 - alignment of communication material and enhanced access to information;
 - development of processes to enable partners to make direct contact with DHA and Toll, and be directly contacted, where required.

Timeline of Major Events and Ministerial Announcements

Date	Event
February 2022	First draft of the Strategy was developed and consulted with the Family and Domestic Violence Working Group and across Defence
June 2022	First draft of the Action Plan was developed and consulted with the Family and Domestic Violence Working Group and across Defence
11 August 2022	<u>Interim</u> Report release by the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide.
17 October 2022	<u>National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032</u> released by Department of Social Services.

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February 2023	Phoenix Australia published full results from the Intimate Partner Violence study among current and ex-serving Australian Defence Force personnel and families.
28 February 2023	Results from consultation with research experts in family and domestic violence was provided to Defence by Defence Families Australia to inform the Strategy.
3 March 2023	Issues Paper on ADF Family and Domestic Violence released by Defence Families Australia.
16 August 2023	National Plan Outcomes Framework released by Department of Social Services.
30 November 2023	Public release of the <u>Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028</u> .
20 June 2024	Lived Experience Report (" <u>Shining a Light</u> ") released by the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide.
9 September 2024	Final Report was released by the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide, with recommendations relating to family and domestic violence in the Defence community including recommendation to address recommendations in the Defence Families Australia Issues Paper.
7 November 2024	Internal Defence release of updated – Family and Domestic Violence General Awareness Training Course content.
11 December 2024	Public release of <u>the Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028 Action Plan</u>
20 December 2024	Public release of the <u>Defence and DVA Family Wellbeing Strategy and Action Plan 2025-2023</u> and Media release from MINDP Minister Keogh's Office 'More support for Defence and Veteran Families'.

Key Information Requests

Date	Type	Title	Released
18 October 2024	FOI	Request from Office of the Hon Andrew Hastie for all briefs prepared for Question Time on 12 September – Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence (QB24-000040).	21 October 2024

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Relevant Media Reporting

- On 17 March 2026, multiple media outlets, including [news.com.au](https://www.news.com.au), reported that individuals' confidential files from 1800RESPECT are being subpoenaed and used by an alleged perpetrators legal team.

Division: Joint Support Services Division	
PDR No: SB26-000294	
Prepared by: Ms Libby Cremen Director General Defence Member and Family Support Mob: s22 Ph: s47E(d) Date: 13 May 2026	Cleared by Division Head: Air Vice-Marshal Lara Gunn CSM Head Joint Support Services Division Defence People Group Mob: s22 Ph: s47E(d) Date: 13 May 2026
Consultation: Not applicable.	
Cleared by Deputy Secretary/3 Star: Lieutenant General Natasha Fox AO CSC Date: 18 May 2026 Chief of Personnel Defence People Group	
☒ I confirm that all information in this brief is suitable for public release ☒ I confirm this brief follows the template guidance and checklist	

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Name: Air Vice-Marshall Lara Gunn CSM
Position: Head of Joint Support Services
Group: Defence People Group
Phone: s47E(d) / s22



Date: 13 March 2025
Time: 1430-1530
Location: Skype
Chaired by: Ms Libby Cremen, Director General Defence Member and Family Support, Joint Support Services Division

Attendees:

Ms Libby Cremen, Director General Defence Member and Family Support (DMFS) (Chair)
AVM Lara Gunn, Head Joint Support Services Division
s47E(d) , on behalf of CDRE Eric Young, Chief of Staff Navy
BRIG Matthew Campbell, Chief of Staff Army
AIRCDRE Jules Adams, Chief of Staff Air Force
Ms Emma McCarthy, Assistant Secretary Financial Compliance
s47E(d) , on behalf of Mr Adam Dell'Aquila Assistant Secretary Human Resource Services
s47E(d) , on behalf of s47E(d) , Joint Military Police Unit
s47E(d) , on behalf of AIRCDRE Adam Spinks Chief of Staff Joint Capabilities Group
s47E(d) , Director Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Office
s47E(d) , on behalf of Ms Tracey Crawford Assistant Director General People Services Australian Submarine Agency
s47E(d) , on behalf of Ms Petrina Cole Assistant Secretary Work Health and Safety.
s47E(d) , Director Strategy and Policy DMFS
s47E(d) , Assistant Director Strategy and Policy DMFS
s47E(d) , Policy Officer, Strategy and Policy DMFS.

Apologies:

BRIG Jane Spalding, ADF Financial Services Consumer Centre
s47E(d) , Chief of Staff Security and Estate Group
Ms Petrina Cole, Assistant Secretary Work Health and Safety



Agenda Item
1. Opening remarks Ms Cremen gave a welcome to country and thanked everyone for their attendance. Members were introduced including the DMFS Strategy and Policy team, Director s47E(d), Assistant Director s47E(d) and Policy Officer s47E(d).
2. AVM Gunn opening comments - AVM Gunn told Steering Group (SG) members they were central to the implementation of the 'Preventing and Responding to Domestic Violence Action Plan' (Action Plan), particularly in the area of prevention. This includes looking at policies and programs through a systems abuse lens and assess whether they may contribute to FDV. - AVM Gunn noted that her position and CPERS had responsibility to report on the collective progress made in implementing the Action Plan at the Defence People Committee, Inter Departmental Committee for the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children, the Royal Commission Implementation Program Board and directly to our Ministers. - AVM Gunn said that SG members were responsible for the implementation of specific actions either as leads or contributors. AVM Gunn thanked members for their efforts to date to address FDV and highlighted that the purpose of the SG was to steward the implementation of the Action Plan. - AVM Gunn requested attendees to keep Chains of Command informed on what is occurring in the FDV SG, what actions have been taken and progress made on implementing the Action Plan. - AVM Gunn will be briefing the Defence People Committee in April 2025 and senior leadership were keen to see the progress made to line areas against the Action Plan.
3. Terms of Reference - Ms Cremen asked members to review and provide feedback on the Terms of Reference to the Secretariat by 4 April 2025. - The Defence FDV SG will meet biannually. Consequently, the majority of work will occur out of session.
4. Updates on FDV Strategy Progress - DMFS is responsible for oversight of the Action Plan and coordinating the implementation of the strategy. In response to guidance from the Minister, there will be one Action Plan for the lifetime of the Strategy rather than the three, as previously announced. - DMFS released a revised version of the FDV Awareness Training in November 2024. The course addressed items from the Action Plan. Ms Cremen noted that after feedback from the services face-to-face FDV training has been re-instated. - DMFS have led on the update of the DECM's categorisation of FDV incidents in consultation with relevant stakeholders across Defence. - s47E(d) briefed the members on the development of FDV as a standalone category in DECMS which went live on 28 February 2025. Additional information pertaining to these categories and how to report



on FDV within DECMS will be published in an upcoming DEFGRAM (to be shared with SG members upon release).

- The current Commanders and Managers Guide to FDV will be replaced by a chapter in the Complaints and Alternative Resolutions Manual and will be supported by a Toolkit. The Toolkit and Chapter are in process of testing and will be released in June 2025.
- Ms Cremen advised that the SG will be a mechanism to share advice on FDV initiatives being implemented across Defence in support of the Action Plan.
- AIRCDRE Adams suggested that the COS DPG could be invited as a member alongside a member from ADC or ADFA as having their representation at could help to implement FDV training appropriate for young people/ ab-initio.

Action: DMFS to invite CoS DPG and ADFA to the Steering Group.

5. FDV Action Plan strategy allocation

- Ms Cremen reiterated AVM Gunn's messaging that all areas were responsible for implementation of the Action Plan. DMFS as lead of the FDV Strategy requested members review the FDV Action Plan Implementation Table and identify items within their respective remits.

Action: SG members to identify FDV initiatives that support implementation of the FDV Action Plan and advise the Secretariat by 4 April 2025.

- Ms Cremen acknowledged that members may not be able to implement actions immediately but members can discuss work underway as well as planned activities against the action items.
- s47E(d) noted that DMFS has already undertaken some intersectional consultation on Action Plan item 1.01 pertaining to the identification of enterprise wide prevention initiatives which has been reported to the Interdepartmental Committee on Women's Safety for awareness (not for wider advice). Current programs captured are in Attachment 3.

6. Closing Remarks

- The Secretariat would welcome engagement from areas on their respective FDV initiatives to ensure alignment and identify synergies to support implementation.
- Ms Cremen thanked SG members for their attendance and said the [Secretariat](#) will advise of the next meeting date planned for six months' time.

Action Items

01. SG members to review the TORs by 4 April 2025 and provide feedback to the Secretariat.
02. SG members to identify FDV initiatives that support implementation of the FDV Action Plan and advise the Secretariat by 4 April 2025.
03. Secretariat to add CoS DPG, CO ADFA to the Steering Group membership.

Key Dates

Defence People Committee 2025/156 – Family and Domestic Violence Strategy – next meeting 17 April 2025.

Commander and Managers Response to Family and Domestic Violence Toolkit (Attachment 4) and draft Complaints and Resolution Chapter (Attachment 5) testing period amongst groups and Services to occur between 17 March – 9 May 2025.



Next meeting – September 2025



Date: 18 September 2025
Time: 1400-1500
Location: Skype
Chaired by: Ms Libby Cremen, Director General Defence Member and Family Support, Joint Support Services Division

Attendees:

Ms Libby Cremen, Director General Defence Member and Family Support (DMFS) (Chair)

s47E(d), on behalf of CDRE Eric Young, Chief of Staff Navy

BRIG Matthew Campbell, Chief of Staff Army

AIRCDRE Jules Adams, Chief of Staff Air Force

BRIG Jane Spalding, Chair ADF Financial Services Consumer Centre

s47E(d), Deputy Chief of Staff, Army Headquarters

s47E(d), on behalf of s47E(d), Joint Military Police Unit

s47E(d), on behalf of Mr Adam Dell'Aquila Assistant Secretary Human Resource Services

s47E(d), Deputy Chief of Staff, Joint Capabilities Group

CDRE Ryan Gaskin, Director General Navy People

s47E(d), Deputy Director Governance and Assurance, Defence People Group

s47E(d), SO1 Culture and Capability

Ms Emma McCarthy, Assistant Secretary Financial Compliance

s47E(d), on behalf of s47E(d), Director Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Office

s47E(d) Director Strategy and Policy, Mental Health and Wellbeing

s47E(d), Director, Defence Finance

s47E(d), Executive Director Strategic Advisory Group, Defence People Group

s47E(d), Executive Director Relocations and Housing, Defence Relocations and Housing, Security and Estate Group

Mr Shaun Love, Assistant Secretary Governance and Risk, Defence Digital Group

s47E(d), Director Workforce & People Capability, Directorate of Workforce & People Capability Governance & Risk Branch, Defence Digital Group

s47E(d), Director Education and Training, Australian Defence Force Academy



s47E(d) [redacted], Coordinator Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, Mental Health and Wellbeing Branch

s47E(d) [redacted] Director ADF Financial Services and Consumer Centre, Joint Support Services Division

s47E(d) [redacted], Assistant Director Zone Operations & Coordination – EWZ

s47E(d) [redacted], Assistant Director Programs, Defence People Group

s47E(d) [redacted], WHS Manager, Defence People Group

s47E(d) [redacted], Director IT IS, Joint Capabilities Group

s47E(d) [redacted], Director PMKeyS Enhancements, Defence People Group

s47E(d) [redacted], Principal Cyber Security Engineer, Joint Capabilities Group

s47E(d) [redacted], Legal Officer, Defence Legal

s47E(d) [redacted], Defence – CISO, Cyber Command

s47F [redacted]

s47E(d) [redacted], Defence Families Australia Advocate, Defence Families Australia

s47E(d) [redacted], Director Strategy and Policy DMFS

s47E(d) [redacted], A/g Assistant Director Strategy and Policy DMFS

s47E(d) [redacted], Policy Officer, Strategy and Policy DMFS.

Apologies:

NIL

Agenda Item
1. Opening remarks Ms Cremen gave an acknowledgment of country and thanked everyone for their attendance. She also welcomed s47E(d) [redacted] who was attending to provide a readout of the Defence Families Australia (DFA) Housing Roundtable event. Ms Cremen acknowledged Air Vice-Marshal Lara Gunn's comments at the previous Steering Group meeting that implementation of the FDV work relies on contributions from each of the respective areas in attendance – not solely DMFS or DPG – and thanked people for the work they have done to support this.
2. Defence Families Australia Housing Roundtable s47E(d) [redacted] provided a read out of the DFA Housing Roundtable event. She acknowledged that there was a lot of enthusiasm for the day and that it was productive day. s47E(d) [redacted] led attendees through each agenda item, highlighting key points and associated action items.



The detailed summary of these items is provided below.

Agenda item 2: Defence Housing Agreement – Service Residency Tenancy Agreement (SRTA) highlighted the housing entitlements under the Defence Housing Policy are allocated to the serving member only. These entitlements do not extend to the member's family or dependents. Ms Webb highlighted that communication must be improved to manage expectations of both serving member and their spouse. Specifically, there is a need for an education component targeted at non-serving spouses. The Action arising from Agenda item 2 was to seek Defence Legal's perspective regarding the feasibility of; listing additional tenants on the Defence Residential Agreement (DRA); including an additional articulation or declaration of individuals residing in the home, separate to the DRA; and, providing a copy of the Defence Residence Agreement (DRA) to the spouse.

Agenda item 3: Consideration of Removal Deadlines highlighted the significant challenges faced by Defence families in securing housing within the current cost of living crisis. It was highlighted that being given only 28 days to find suitable accommodation places considerable stress on families, particularly in high-demand or low-supply rental markets. Agencies acknowledged that discretion is applied in housing-related decisions based on individual circumstances which enable negotiation of an amended length of removal period. Toll advised that removal timeframes can extend beyond 28 days where necessary, and that flexibility and discretion are built into their processes. It was clarified that if housing arrangements extend beyond the standard 28-day period, the member may be required to cover the cost, which is deducted from their pay, and may present issues for the ex-partner. It was reiterated that Defence holds a moral obligation to support spouses and Defence families. This includes ensuring access to relevant information, services, and support mechanisms, particularly during times of transition or relationship breakdown.

Agenda item 4: Review Uplift Accommodation Entitlement. This agenda item served as a mythbuster regarding the review of uplift accommodation entitlements. Attendees confirmed that discretion is routinely applied to these scenarios, and that entitlements are assessed on a case-by-case basis to reflect individual circumstances.

Agenda Item 5.1: Authorisation of Removals. Agencies discussed challenges with removal scheduling and deadline pressures, and noted that delays can exacerbate stress for families, especially those experiencing FDV. This agenda item served as a mythbuster to clarify existing processes and support mechanisms. It was confirmed that the authorisation of a removal can be triggered by a partner. Toll reiterated that their process includes an additional security measure or verification step before proceeding with a removal, ensuring safeguards are in place. Toll also highlighted the role of their case managers, who provide a hands-on, trauma-informed experience to support families through the removal process. Additionally, reimbursement is available if a private removal is authorised by the spouse.

Agenda Item 5.2: Insurance Claims. This agenda item served as a mythbuster regarding insurance claims. It was clarified that Toll case managers have been in place for a significant period and play an active role in supporting families throughout their relocation.

Agenda Item 5.3: Loss of Access to Personal Items highlighted the complexities surrounding access to personal items in the context of relationship breakdowns. It was acknowledged that discretion is applied in these circumstances, and spouses may seek reimbursement where appropriate. Case management approaches are used to determine how best to support individuals through these situations. It was noted that decisions regarding ownership and access to personal items are ultimately matters for the family court. In cases involving FDV, the safety of all parties remains the primary focus. While discretion can be exercised, there are limits—some matters require formal legal resolution through court orders. There was agreement on the importance of encouraging victim-survivors to seek legal advice, including through women's legal services.

Agenda Item 5.4: Housing Entitlements. Agencies acknowledged that discretion is applied in housing-related decisions based on individual circumstances which enable negotiation of an amended length of



removal period.

Agenda Item 5.5: Access to DHA Reference Letter confirmed that the issue regarding access to the DHA reference letter has been resolved. It was clarified that any individual, including non-serving members, can contact DHA directly to request the letter. The letter will be provided upon request without restriction.

In the closing remarks of the Roundtable update, attendees expressed a general consensus that the session was both productive and informative. The collaborative discussion and shared insights were valued by participants.

A representative from Defence Relocations and Housing acknowledged the positive evolution of stakeholder relationships, noting that collaboration has remained strong with ongoing connection and progress. The representative also commended the mythbusting efforts, recognising their role in driving effective outcomes.

3. Updates on FDV Strategy and Action Plan Progress

Ms Cremen gave an update on the FDV Strategy and Action Plan progress and passed to s47E(d) to provide an update on the Complaints and Resolutions Manual (CARM) and the Commander and Managers Toolkit for Responding to FDV, and FDV reporting in DECMS.

s47E(d) acknowledged that Defence released a dedicated FDV chapter in the CARM and an updated Commander and Managers Toolkit in August. She said that the DECMS system to capture FDV incidents was released in February and is providing improved data visibility and offers a clearer picture of FDV across Defence. She advised attendees that amendments to the FDV DECMS reporting categories – specifically regarding the terminology used for sexual offence-related incidents – are scheduled to be implemented to align with the release of SeMPRO's sexual violence policy (November 2025).

Ms Cremen advised that Defence has revised the Family and Domestic Violence Awareness training which incorporates:

- o elements of safe and healthy relationships,
- o how to support someone who discloses they have experienced Family and Domestic Violence or uses violence in relationships,
- o acknowledgment of the nexus between exposure to Family and Domestic Violence and key wellbeing indicators including suicidality.

She advised that as at 1 August 2025, 71 per cent of Defence personnel were compliant with completing the FDV mandatory training.

Ms Cremen provided an update on the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide Recommendation 102. This included consideration of the recommendations from the Defence Families Australia Issues Paper. Ms Cremen acknowledged other key actions that have been completed. This included:

- o Establishment of Family and Domestic Violence Steering Group.
- o Defence Families Australia representative attending the Family and Domestic Violence Steering Group meeting in September 2025.
- o Recognition of the nexus between Family and Domestic Violence and suicide included in Defence Family and Domestic Violence related policy guidance.
- o Standardised emergency response information provided in the Commander and Manager's Toolkit for Responding to Family and Domestic Violence and on the Defence Family and Domestic Violence Intranet webpage.
- o Assessed which Defence Families Australia recommendations have not been fully implemented, in



consultation with Defence Families Australia (Roundtable held 5 September 2025).

- o Reviewed Enterprise policy and programs to assess if they could inadvertently create contexts that may contribute to increased vulnerabilities for victim-survivors, provide opportunities for use of power and control by perpetrators and/or act as barriers to accessing support.

Ms Cremen acknowledged the key actions that have been progressed. This included:

- o Assessment of feasibility to implement the single outstanding Defence Families Australia Issues Paper recommendation, in consultation with Defence Families Australia (post Roundtable held September 2025). This includes:
 - Reviewing the Defence Residence Agreement with Defence Legal to assess whether additional information being provided to the spouse;
 - Reviewing the removals process, including removal deadlines, insurance claims, and access to personal items in the event of a relationship breakdown.
 - Reviewing accommodation entitlements
 - Revising content on the DMFS website to ensure information related to relationship breakdown is easily accessible
 - Identifying how to improve education and awareness around existing support pathways and to empower spouses and families with information that promotes self-agency.
- o Explicit consideration of suicide risk within responses to Family and Domestic Violence included in Family and Domestic Violence training for Frontline services (Defence Member and Family Support Helpline and social workers, health care professionals, chaplains).
- o Resolution of impediments to emergency services being accessed on bases.

Ms Cremen provided an update on the research project Defence is currently engaged in with Monash University and Australia's National Research Organisation on Women's Safety (ANROWS) which addresses FDV in military and veteran families in the Australian context. Ms Cremen acknowledged that DMFS has reached out to relevant stakeholders and data custodians across Defence for their views and have received support. This has included CJHLTH for health data, DECMS, PMADF for Policing Data, ASG Data Division, and ADF Chaplaincy.

Ms Cremen updated Steering Group members on Defence's input into the public reporting for the National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children. She added that this has insofar involved two rounds of input and is scheduled to be finalised by October. Ms Cremen acknowledged that this further supports Defence's collaboration with other agencies through the Ending Gender Based Violence Interdepartmental Committee, which Air Vice-Marshal Gunn attends, and provides a forum to advance broader systems based approaches to addressing FDV.

4. Update on other work underway to address FDV

s47E(d) provided an update on Defence's FDV prevention and response policies available to officers and their families posted abroad, with a particular focus on understanding how entitlements and support mechanisms are structured for Defence personnel serving overseas and clarifying support for alleged victims. It was clear support to overseas members/families is not adequately covered in current policies. s47E(d) advised that DMFS are working closely with the Overseas Entitlements area to understand current practice and ensure that any policy updates are aligned with the unique needs of Defence personnel and families posted abroad. s47E(d) advised FDV SG members that upcoming work will require their input and advice.

During the open discussion, a representative from Defence Legal highlighted the intersection of FDV,



sexual violence, and ADF members. They advised that a paper is being prepared for Air Vice-Marshal Gunn addressing the definition of sexual violence within Defence, and reviewing policies related to mandatory termination, disciplinary action, and involuntary separation notices.

The representative referenced insights from the UK Defence Force, which has adopted a zero-tolerance approach and a low threshold for what constitutes sexual violence. It was noted that fear of repercussions continues to deter individuals from coming forward.

Ms Cremen advised attendees that inputs into the Joint Issues Implementation Support Tool (JIIST) would be sent to data custodians in the coming week. She also welcomed input into the MINDP update, specifically regarding the review of contributions to the FDV Action Plan.

Action Items

NIL

Next meeting – March 2026



Date: 30 March 2026
Time: 1100 – 1140
Location: Skype
Chaired by: Ms Libby Cremen, Director General Defence Member and Family Support, Joint Support Services Division

Attendees:

Ms Libby Cremen, Director General Defence Member and Family Support (DMFS) (Chair)
CDRE Mark Page, Director General Mental Health and Wellbeing
CDRE Marcus Buttler, Deputy Program Director ERP Capability Executive Team
s47E(d) , on behalf of s47E(d) , Chief of Staff Navy
s47E(d) , Chief of Staff Defence People Group
s47E(d) , on behalf of BRIG Matthew Campbell, Chief of Staff Army
s47E(d) , on behalf of BRIG Troy Francis, Commanding Officer Australian Defence Force Academy
s47E(d) , Director Military Administration and Discipline Law
s47E(d) , on behalf of AIRCDRE Jules Adams, Chief of Staff Air Force
s47E(d) , Chief of Staff Join Capabilities Group
s47E(d) , Chief of Staff Military Personnel Division
s47E(d) , on behalf of s47E(d) , Provost Marshal ADF and Commander JMPU
s47E(d) , DD Navy Sensitive Issues Management
s47E(d) Command Warrant Officer
s47E(d) Defence Family Advocate (DFA) of Australia
Ms Tracey Crawford, Assistant Director General People Services ASA
s47E(d) , A/S Program Management and Governance Branch (PM&G)
s47E(d) , on behalf of s47F , Assistant Director General People Branch ASD
s47E(d) , on behalf of BRIG Jane Spalding, Chair ADF Financial Services Consumer Centre
s47E(d) , on behalf of Mrs Petrina Cole, A/S Work Health and Safety
s47E(d) , on behalf of Mr Adam Dell'Aquila, A/S Human Resource Services
s47E(d) , on behalf of Mr Nikhil Iyengar, A/S Financial Compliance
s47E(d) , Assistant Director Strategy and Policy
s47E(d) , Graduate Strategy and Policy FDV

Apologies:

MAJGEN Robert Watson, on behalf of Mr Paul Clarke, Chief Information Security Officer, Defence Cyber and Information Assurance Branch



BRIG Jane Spalding, Chair ADF Financial Services Consumer Centre

BRIG Matthew Campbell, Chief of Staff Army

BRIG Troy Francis, Commanding Officer Australian Defence Force Academy

AIRCDRE Jules Adams, Chief of Staff Air Force

s47E(d) [REDACTED], Chief of Staff Navy

s47E(d) [REDACTED], Provost Marshal ADF and Commander JMPU

Mr Paul Clarke, Chief Information Security Officer, Defence Cyber and Information Assurance Branch

s47F [REDACTED], Assistant Director General People Branch ASD

Mr Adam Dell'Aquila, A/S Human Resource Services

Mrs Petrina Cole, A/S Work Health and Safety

Mr Nikhil Iyengar, A/S Financial Compliance

Agenda Item

1. Opening remarks

Ms Cremen gave an Acknowledgement of Country and thanked members for their attendance. She expressed her appreciation for the contributions made by the Family and Domestic Violence Steering Group (FDV SG) in supporting requests from the DMFS Team, noting that the FDV SG continues to be a valuable mechanism for gathering insights from across the enterprise. She also welcomed Ms Selwyn, who would provide updates on Action Items 1.01, 1.03 and 4.01 of the *Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence – Action Plan*.

Ms Cremen provided an overview of the recent achievements highlighted in the update to the Minister of Defence Personnel on the implementation of the FDV Action Plan. She thanked members for their efforts and contributions to this update. Key achievements included:

- Establishment of the FDV SG to guide Strategy and Action Plan implementation
- Strengthening cross-government collaboration through participation in the Ending Gender-Based Violence Interdepartmental Committee
- Mandated biennial FDV awareness training for all personnel
- Delivery of the first DFA Housing and Relocations Roundtable to address FDV-related challenges in housing and relocation
- Development of new and updated enterprise-wide materials including:
 - The Complaints and Alternative Resolutions Manual (CARM) FDV Chapter
 - The Commander and Manager Toolkit
 - The APS FDV Support Policy
- Establishment and refinement of FDV incident categories in Defence Enterprise Resource Planning Case Management Solution (DECMS)

Ms Cremen advised that the team is considering options to develop a live update document to streamline the process for future Ministerial updates and reduce end-of-year workload.



She also provided an update on *Recommendation 47 of the Financial Abuse Inquiry*. Following approval from the Minister, Defence has provided in-principle support for the intent of the Recommendation. However, Defence has noted several practical challenges with Defence leading the implementation, particularly given that Defence does not hold the technical expertise or regulatory authority required to develop sector-wide financial guidelines. These responsibilities appropriately sit with financial institutions, industry bodies and regulatory agencies. It was noted that the Australian Government's response to the Inquiry, including Defence's commentary, is expected to be tabled in Parliament on 22 May 2026.

2. 2026 Family and Domestic Violence Forward Work Plan

Ms Cremen provided an update on the *2026 Family and Domestic Violence Forward Work Plan*, recently submitted to the Minister. She noted that several critical actions are yet to commence and that there is a significant body of work across 2026 and 2027, leading into the Strategy's conclusion in 2028.

Ms Cremen outlined the key priorities for 2026, which include:

- Progressing outstanding actions under the Reform Management Plan for Recommendation 102, including ongoing work with the Directorate of Relocations and Housing, Defence Housing Australia and TOLL to advance outcomes from the Defence Families of Australia Housing Roundtable
- Progressing external subject matter expert reviews of the CARM FDV Chapter and Commander and Manager Toolkit
- Identifying intersectional policies, programs and services to inform the development of an Updated FDV Action Plan incorporating enterprise-wide intersectional prevention initiatives. This includes preparing a consolidated report outlining intersections with FDV, identified gaps, risks, opportunities and recommendations
- Developing a Lived-Experience Consultation Pathway to support safe engagement with Defence APS employees and ADF members who are victim-survivors
- Undertaking enterprise-wide scoping to inform an implementation plan aimed at strengthening services, systems and referral pathways to support trauma-informed, connected and coordinated responses to FDV
- Strengthening strategic communications, including developing clear and consistent messaging to increase awareness of Defence's commitment to preventing and responding to FDV
- Continuing development of annual communication plans to ensure consistent, enterprise-wide messaging

3. Intersectional Initiatives

s47E(d) provided an update on the work underway for Action Items 1.01 and 1.03. She noted that these items focus on assessing how Defence's current policies, programs and services may unintentionally contribute to risk or harm for victim-survivors of FDV, while also identifying where existing activities already support prevention. An intersectional lens is central to this work.

To support the analysis, a request for input was issued on 3 March to members of the FDV SG and key stakeholders, seeking feedback on:

- Where risk may be unintentionally created,
- Existing prevention initiatives, and
- Identified gaps, risks and opportunities for improvement and reform

Responses were due COB Friday, 27 March 2026. s47E(d) emphasised that stakeholder insights and day-to-day operational experience are essential to ensuring Action Plan deliverables that are practical,



evidence-based and reflective. Given the importance of comprehensive input, she confirmed that timeframes remain flexible and encouraged stakeholders to request extensions if required.

s47E(d) advised that next steps included consolidating and analysing the input to identify key systemic risks and recurring themes, mapping strengths in current prevention efforts and identifying opportunities for change. She also noted that this work will inform the development of a Revised Action Plan with strengthened primary prevention initiatives, along with a detailed report outlining gaps, risks and recommended changes. Draft materials will be shared as the work progresses.

s47E(d) expressed his support for the work, noting that there are pockets of expertise and enthusiasm across the organisation. He encouraged the team to continue seeking support and engaging with stakeholders when needed.

4. Lived-Experience Framework

s47E(d) presented the *Defence Family and Domestic Violence Lived Experience Consultation Pathway (DFDV-LECP)*, noting that development of a consultation pathway is a key deliverable under the Action Plan. She emphasised that lived-experience engagement must occur through a structured, safe, ethical and consistent approach, rather than through informal engagement, to minimise the risk of harm or re-traumatisation for victim-survivors.

s47E(d) guided members through the draft placemat and highlighted the following key elements:

- Purpose and definition of lived-experience. The placemat defines lived-experience as direct, first-hand knowledge of FDV. It emphasises its role in strengthening openness, trust, cultural change and the quality of Defence's policies, programs and services, ultimately helping to better meet the needs of people affected by FDV. The DFDV-LECP aims to provide a structured, evidence-informed approach for safely and meaningfully incorporating lived-experience perspectives into Defence's FDV policy, programs and systems.
- Best-practice principles. The DFDV-LECP best-practice principles are informed by national frameworks and research, and specifically tailored to the Defence context. The eight best-practice principles include:
 - Recognise and value lived experience – affirming victim-survivors as experts
 - Trauma-informed practice: Do no further harm – readiness assessments, psychological safety and minimising re-traumatisation
 - Transparency – clear expectations and strong feedback mechanisms.
 - Accountability – continuous review and accessible complaints pathways.
 - Trust and collaboration – building safe, respectful relationships.
 - Addressing power imbalances – focusing on “power-with” approaches.
 - Diversity and inclusion – ensuring representation reflects the breadth of Defence experiences.
 - Sustainability – resourcing, long-term engagement and realistic workloads.

The DFDV-LECP also links lived experience values – understanding, autonomy, choice, respect and dignity – with Defence's organisational values of service, courage, respect, integrity and excellence

- Governance Structures include the FDV SG, the Defence People Committee, a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, the LEAF-CoP and relevant Terms of Reference.
- Proposed engagement methods include an advisory forum, working groups, surveys, dedicated feedback channels, and research participation.



- Engagement Levels. The DFDV-LECP also describes four levels of engagement through roles and responsibilities across the organisation:
 - Individuals – readiness, appropriate support, resourcing and release from duties.
 - Command and leaders – creating opportunities and enabling safe participation.
 - Workforces/communities – balancing lived-experience engagement with business needs and understanding support requirements.
 - Organisational/strategic – normalising lived-experience involvement, standardising processes and embedding monitoring and evaluation.

s47E(d) advised that engagement will involve a defined, limited cohort of ADF members and Defence APS employees to ensure that participation is manageable, consistent and appropriately supported. Further work is required to refine the practical engagement mechanisms and undertaking broader stakeholder consultation is essential.

Ms Cremen asked for comments on the DFDV-LECP:

- CDRE Page commented that the Mental Health and Wellbeing Branch, who have established a Defence Lived Experience Framework for Lived-Experience of mental health and suicide, have assisted the team in establishing the DFDV-LECP. He expressed that what has been presented by s47E(d) is a best-practice model and that he commended it.
- CDRE Buttler confirmed his support for the Lived-Experience Framework
- Ms Cremen invited s47E(d) to comment. s47E(d) emphasised that incorporating a lived experience component is essential, but emphasised the importance of ensuring the approach remains trauma-informed, noting that FDV continues to impact the community. She expressed her appreciation for the work undertaken to date.

s47E(d) asked for any concerns or gaps of the DFDV-LECP:

- s47E(d) sought clarification on whether the DFDV-LECP would duplicate work already being undertaken by the Mental Health and Wellbeing Branch, or whether it is unique. s47E(d) advised that the Framework is unique, noting that she is not aware of any existing lived-experience framework specific to FDV. She emphasised that, given the need for all lived-experience engagement to be trauma informed informal engagement should not be occurring. s47E(d) also highlighted a potential concern regarding overlap, as some individuals may participate in both the Mental Health and Wellbeing Branch's Defence Lived Experience Framework and the DFDV-LECP, causing increased burden on the individual.

Ms Selwyn advised that the next stage of work includes:

- Detailing practical mechanisms of lived-experience engagement
- Undertaking further consultation with subject-matter experts
- Continuing consultation with the FDV SG

Once finalised, the framework will be presented to Defence People Committee.

Ms Cremen emphasised the importance of progressing Action Item 4.01 carefully and collaboratively, particularly in close partnership with both the FDV SG and the Mental Health and Wellbeing Branch. She thanked the team and encouraged ongoing feedback from members.

5. Update on other work underway to address FDV

Ms Cremen invited members to provide any advice, updates or reflections on initiatives across Defence aimed at preventing and responding to FDV.



s47E(d) provided an update on the *RCDVS Bill No. 2* and the associated family-related measures. She advised that work is underway to implement amendments to the Defence Act, focused on improving information-sharing and removing barriers that currently limit access to support for Defence families. COL Sanders highlighted that over the next two weeks there will be targeted engagement with relevant groups involved in measures affecting Defence families, particularly in relation to information sharing. The Bill is progressing toward presentation in the House of Representatives in May 2026, and is intended to be effective 1 July 2026.

Ms Cremen noted that direct communication with families, an expectation reinforced by the RCDVS, has been historically challenging. She expressed optimism that the legislative changes will help address these barriers.

Ms Cremen also noted upcoming changes to the AD150 form, explaining that the form will shift to an opt-in approach, allowing members to consent to Defence sharing information directly with families. However, the long-term aim is to move to an opt-out model, consistent with the RCDVS Recommendations, to overcome limitations in Defence's ability to provide essential information and support directly to families.

6. Closing Remarks

Ms Cremen thanked members for their contributions and discussion, and encouraged them to share any further information or insights to DMFS that may support the ongoing work.

Action Items

NIL

Next meeting – 16 September 2026

OFFICIAL: Sensitive

FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ACTION PLAN STATUS UPDATE AND FORWARD WORK PLAN

Action 1: Advance gender equality and address the drivers of all forms of gender-based violence, including through initiatives aimed to improve community attitudes and norms toward family, domestic and sexual violence.			
Defence Actions	Defence Deliverables	Status	Update
Action Item 1.1	Update this Action Plan to include Enterprise-wide intersectional prevention initiatives.	In progress	The identification of intersectional initiatives has commenced, with the support of the FDV SG. The updated Action Plan is anticipated to be endorsed and published in Q4 2026.
Action Item 1.2	Amendment to Financial Policy – Grants.	In progress	The Family Support Funding Program (FSFP) grant program was aligned with the Defence Family and Veteran Wellbeing Strategy 2025-2030 and the Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028 following a review completed in 2025. Organisations that demonstrate their programs directly support these strategies will be prioritised for funding. Work to identify and assess further opportunities under the grant framework will progress in 2026.
Action Item 1.3	A consolidated report from relevant Enterprise policy, program and service owners detailing intersections with FDV and recommendations for policy and program updates.	In Progress	The identification of relevant enterprise policies and programs, owners and gaps has commenced. This is supported by key stakeholder engagement activities, including the DFA housing and relocations roundtable. This report is anticipated to be completed by Q4 2026, and will inform the development of the subsequent FDV Strategy and Action Plan. Gaps, risks and opportunities are identified in policies, programs and services will be addressed as they arise.
Action Item 1.4	Online contemporary FDV awareness training for all Defence personnel.	Complete	There is a contemporary FDV awareness course available to all Defence personnel. This training was made mandatory for all Defence personnel in April 2024, and updated in September 2025 to include information on health relationships, support during FDV disclosures and the nexus between FDV and wellbeing. It will be reviewed annually in June to ensure that it remains fit-for-purpose.

Action Item 1.3	An awareness campaign plan for FDV prevention and awareness initiatives.	In progress	Defence will continue the awareness campaign to promote FDV prevention, highlight support services, and engage personnel through targeted messaging and key dates. Efforts will move to focus on at-risk and prevalent cohorts to ensure targeted support. Defence has finalised the 2026-2027 communications plan for FDV, with a new communication plan to be developed annually for commencement in January each year.
Action 2: Improve the national evidence base by working towards consistent terminology and monitoring and evaluation frameworks, and by strengthening collection and sharing of data and evidence.			
Action Item 2.1	Whole of Enterprise data set on Family Violence, Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence incidents for the Defence population that includes utilisation of data on veteran populations captured in the National Personal Safety Survey and aligns with the <i>Privacy Act 1988</i> (cth).	In progress	DECMS amendments were implemented in February 2025 to provide consistent terminology for FDV and sexual violence reporting, ensuring consistent data collection. This has been communicated with the workforce to support reporting and recording. These changes will support Defence in analysing current data and existing research to understand FDV and sexual violence.
Action Item 2.2			
Action Item 2.3	An Enterprise risk assessment and risk management strategy for FDV.	Not commenced	This action has not yet commenced. This project is anticipated to be finalised in Q4 2026 and will leverage the National risk assessment principles and risk factors that are under development by the EGBV IDC.

Action 3: Increase and strengthen the capability of mainstream and specialist workforces to deliver quality services, activities and programs across the four domains, including those that are tailored to respond to the unique experiences of all victim-survivors.			
Action Item 3.1	A training-needs analysis report detailing current training provided and recommendations for FDV training delivery across Defence.	In progress	Initial consultation and preliminary scoping has been undertaken with Defence Learning Branch. The training needs analysis report is anticipated to be completed by Q2 2027, and will inform the development of the subsequent FDV Strategy.
Action 4: Build the capacity of services and systems that support victim-survivors to provide trauma-informed, connected and coordinated responses that support long-term recovery, health and wellbeing.			
Action Item 4.1	A consultation pathway for victim-survivors and people with lived experience.	In progress	Initial engagement with lived experience subject matter experts has commenced to understand best-practice. The lived-experience consultation pathway and supporting policy is anticipated to be finalised by Q3 2026.
Action Item 4.2	An implementation plan for strengthening services, systems and referral pathways that support trauma-informed, connected and coordinated responses to FDV and Sexual Violence.	Not commenced	The scoping for this activity will commence in Q2 2026.
Action 5: Strengthen systems and services to better hold people who choose to use violence to account, and provide opportunities to support people who have used violence, or are at risk of using violence, to change their behaviours, with the aim of protecting the safety and wellbeing of current and potential victim-survivors.			
Action Item 5.1	A report detailing current processes for identification, notification, response and referral for respondents of alleged FDV and perpetrators of FDV and recommendations for future approaches to strengthening system and service responses to perpetrators of FDV in Defence.	Not commenced	This report is anticipated to be completed by Q2 2027, and will inform the development of the subsequent FDV Strategy.
Action Item 5.2	ERP DECMS report available for commanders and managers.	Not commenced	This action has not yet commenced as it required completion of Action 2.1 and 2.2. The scoping for this action will commence in Q1 2026.
Action Item 5.3	Existing Defence policies are updated and a new Chapter of the CARM is published and publically available that communicates the Defence approach to FDV.	In progress	Defence has released a FDV Chapter in the CARM and a revised Commander and Manager's Toolkit in August 2025. These provide clear enterprise-level policy and practical support for managing FDV-related matters. There is ongoing work to release the revised CARM chapter publically, which is anticipated to occur by Q2 2026. It is expected that the CARM and Commander and Manager's Toolkit will be updated in Q2

			2026 following minimum standards review and the release of updated National Risk Assessment Principles and Risk Factors for Family and Domestic Violence. The APS People Policy on Family and Domestic Violence Support was released in August 2025. Defence released policy in the Military Personnel Policy Manual in September 2025 to facilitate more consistent management of Defence members who have committed serious misconduct that warrants consideration of interim administrative action including suspension from duty and/or involuntary separation from the Australian Defence Force. Serious misconduct includes threats or acts of family and domestic violence, other threats or forms of violence, exploitation of a vulnerable person (including a child or a person for whom the respondent has a legal or moral duty of care), or allegations of a sexual nature (particularly in relation to a child or young person).
Action Item 5.4	PMKeyS amendments to enable recording of civilian firearms licenses held by Defence members. A system to notify civilian police/firearms registry of relevant Defence weapons restrictions.	In progress	Defence is continuing to explore recommendations to improve oversight of privately owned firearms by ADF members. Defence is working to gain access to the planned National Firearms Registry, expected to be operational by 2028. This would allow for verification of firearm licences, holdings of ADF members directly and associated protection order restrictions. In the interim, Defence is exploring the possibility of mandating that members record in PMKeyS that they have a firearms licence to assist in managing individual risk where appropriate.

Action 6: Improve action to prevent and address sexual violence and harassment in all settings, across the four domains of the National Plan.			
Action Item 6.1	The Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Office (1800 SeMPRO) is responsible for the delivery of services to prevent and address sexual misconduct in Defence. 1800 SeMPRO's prevention and response activities and services will form an important part of Defence's response to Family Violence, Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence. 1800 SeMPRO, as a member of the Defence FDV Steering Committee, will contribute to reporting on outcomes relevant to FDV and provide expertise on matters relating to sexual violence.	In Progress	Defence formally adopted the term <i>sexual violence</i> in October 2025 to align with the National Plan, replacing previous references to sexual misconduct. To reinforce this change and emphasise prevention, the Chief of the Defence Force directed a sexual violence stand down for all ADF personnel. SeMPRO is progressing key initiatives, including the development of the Defence Sexual Violence Prevention Strategy, which is scheduled for release in Q2 2026. Education for commanders and managers has been reviewed, with a pilot workshop planned for February 2026. Policy updates have also been implemented, with CARM Chapter 9 revised in December 2025 to incorporate new terminology, clarify sexual offence definitions, provide direction for command engagement with JMPU, and outline guidance on prevention considerations. The Military Personnel Policy Manual and APS People Policy on Family and Domestic Violence Support were also updated to incorporate the sexual violence terminology. Additionally, DECMS categories were updated in December 2025 to reflect sexual offence definitions, supporting improved reporting of sexual violence in the future.



OBJECTIVES

- 1. Raise Awareness.** Ensure Defence personnel, their families, commanders and managers understand what FDV is, its impacts, and available support services. This includes raising awareness for those in same sex relationships.
- 2. Promote Prevention.** Encourage respectful relationships and early intervention, empowering leaders to model and reinforce positive behaviours.
- 3. Build Trust and Confidence.** Demonstrate that Defence is actively taking steps to prevent and respond appropriately to family and domestic violence, with visible leadership endorsement and clear accountability.
- 4. Provide Clear Pathways for Assistance.** Make reporting options and support services visible and accessible for members, families and leaders. Clarify commanders' and managers' responsibilities in reporting, and provide clear guidance on the parameters and scope of support available through Defence Member and Family Support (DMFS) to ensure consistency and confidence in accessing assistance.
- 5. Foster a Culture of Respect and Safety.** Embed messaging into leadership communications and training to align with Defence values, the National Plan, the Strategy and its Action Plan.

This communication activity directly supports Action Item 1 in the Action Plan that supports the implementation of Defence's FDV Strategy, which requires the delivery of targeted FDV prevention and awareness activities.



THEMES/KEY MESSAGES

- Theme 1: Safety and Respect.** Everyone has the right to feel safe and respected at home and at work. Unsafe personal relationships can affect wellbeing and safety.
- Theme 2: Family and Relationship Harm.** Family and Domestic Violence can take many forms and early support helps reduce risk and escalation.
- Theme 3: Support and Early Assistance.** Confidential support is available and early help can strengthen wellbeing and safety.
- Theme 4: Leadership Care and Responsibility.** Leadership supports safety by listening, guiding and connecting people to appropriate support.
- Theme 5: Shared Responsibility.** Creating safe and respectful environments is everyone's responsibility. Defence personnel, leaders and families share responsibility for recognising concerns, speaking up and supporting safety.
- Theme 6: Confidentiality and Trust.** Personal matters are handled sensitively, with clear information about confidentiality and obligations, including reporting obligations.

Information for support services will be included in communication products as required.

The themes and key messaging will be connected and expressed through the Defence Values and Behaviours, where relevant.



AUDIENCES

Internal

- Defence Personnel (ADF members, Defence APS employees, Defence contractors).
- Commanders and Managers.
- DMFS Area Managers, Social Workers and Helpline Staff.
- Military Support Officers.
- Targeted Groups: CALD groups and overseas postings.
- Groups and Services Communication teams.

External

- Families of ADF members.
- Defence Families of Australia (DFA).
- Open Arms.
- Returned and Services League (RSL) and other Ex-Service Organisations (EXOs).
- Community Organisations funded by DMFS.



RISKS/SENSITIVITIES

- 1. Misinterpretation or distress from messaging.**
 - Risk: messages may be misunderstood as punitive, judgmental, graphic or targeting specific groups. They may trigger emotional responses and cause harm.
 - Mitigation: use clear, neutral, culturally sensitive language with a focus on safety, wellbeing and support. Provide trigger warnings where needed and embed support information upfront.
- 2. Inconsistent or poorly delivered communication.**
 - Risk: conflicting messaging may reduce credibility and trust.
 - Mitigation: Provide standardised scripts and guidance through trusted channels.
- 3. Fear of personal or career consequences.**
 - Risk: Defence personnel, partners and families may be hesitant about seeking help or accessing service due to concerns about postings, promotions, career progression, security clearances or personal consequences. This fear can prevent them from seeking early assistance.
 - Mitigation: Clear communication on the confidential support available, and that support seeking does not automatically trigger formal action. Communications should emphasise safety, confidentiality and early support pathways.



COMMUNICATION IMPLEMENTATION TABLE (TACTICS, PRODUCT & ACTIVITY SCHEDULE)

Month	Context	Product	Notes
March	International Women's Day	Standard points on women's safety and wellbeing shared with Groups and Services Communication teams for incorporation into their products.	Gender equality, empowerment, and awareness of women's rights, including safety and wellbeing.
May	FDV Prevention Month for ACT, NSW, QLD	News Story, DEFGAM, standard points on FDV shared with DMFS Area Managers and Social Workers and Commanders and Managers in these regions for incorporation into their discussions.	Prevention campaigns, education and local community engagement.
September	R U OK? Day	Engagement with MHWB to incorporate family and relationship stress/healthy relationships into their communication products.	Mental health and wellbeing awareness, provides and opportunity to link stress, relationship strain and support pathways.
October	FDV Prevention Month for WA, VIC, SA.	News Story, DEFGAM, standard points on FDV shared with DMFS Area Managers and Social Workers and Commanders and Managers in these regions for incorporation into their discussions.	Prevention campaigns, education and local community engagement.
	Overseas Posting Briefings (DORS, TA, MSA)	Presentation to the specific cohorts, including partners of Defence personnel posting overseas. Include messaging to current overseas cohort.	Awareness of support, safety and leadership responsibility prior and during to overseas posting.
November	16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence - International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women - International Men's Day	News Story, DEFGAM, Secretary and CDF Joint Email, Social Media Post and Service Newspaper Articles on Defence's commitment to ending gender-based violence.	Ending violence against women and girls, highlighting prevention, support series and leadership action. Men's health and communities, and men speaking out against violence towards women; prevention and awareness campaigns.



OUTCOMES & EVALUATION

The communication plan aims to increase awareness of family and domestic violence, promotes safety and wellbeing, encourage early help-seeking, and reinforce leadership responsibility across Defence. Success will be measured through engagement metrics, feedback from Defence Personnel, uptake of support services, and the demonstration of consistent, safe responses in line with policy. Evaluation will inform ongoing refinement of messaging, delivery channels, and targeting initiatives to ensure effectiveness and reach.



SPOKESPEOPLE

- DG DMFS
- HJSSD
- CPERS
- Other spokespeople will be identified and approved as needed and dependent on the communication activity.



IMPLEMENTATION/COORDINATION

The communication will be implemented through a coordinated, multi-channel approach, ensuring messages reach all Defence personnel, families and identified targeted groups in a timely and appropriate manner. Implementation will involve collaboration with key stakeholders. Campaigns will be aligned with national awareness days to maximise reach and impact.



PRODUCT CLEARANCE PROCESS

- The communications products will be drafted by DSP and circulated with relevant stakeholders for feedback.
- The communications products will be cleared by DG DMFS, following review from DMFS Communication team and DPG Media and Communication.



CLEARANCE

- DRAFTED by: s47E(d), Assistant Director Strategic Policy - DMFS, 190126
- CLEARED by: s47E(d), DPG Media & Comms 260202 1709h
- CLEARED by: G DMFS, 19022026
- CLEARED by: AVM Lara Gunn, HJSSD, 28042026

Individuals

- Provide resources to support LE requirements and readiness to participate
- Participation includes individual readiness and Command/Leader release from duties
- LEAF offers peer support and opportunities for LE participation

Command and Leaders

- Defence Groups and Services that use LE in their core business
- Provide LE opportunities to individuals
- Supported by LEAD-CoP

Community and Workforces

- Supported to balance LE with business requirements
- Resources to understand and support individuals
- Supported by LEAD-CoP

Organisation and Strategic Level

- LE inclusion in committees, work groups, policy reviews and workforces becomes normalised
- Standardised processes and resources support individuals, Command/Leaders, workforces and the organisation
- Monitoring and Evaluation Framework supports continuous improvement, safety and ethical requirements

Lived or Living Experience (LE) refers to the first-hand knowledge, insights and understanding a person gains through their own life circumstances and experiences.



Best Practice Principles

- Recognise and value FDV LE
- Trauma-Informed Practice: Do No Further Harm
- Transparency in FDV Engagement
- Accountability for FDV-Safe Systems
- Trust and Collaboration with People Impacted by FDV
- Address FDV-related Power Imbalances
- Diversity and Inclusion in FDV Perspectives
- Sustainability of FDV LE Involvement

Values

- Defence Values: Service, Courage, Respect, Integrity, Excellence
- Understanding
- Autonomy and Choice
- Respect and Dignity

Governance

- Family and Domestic Violence Lived Experience Terms of Reference
- Family and Domestic Violence Steering Group
- Defence People Committee
- Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
- LEAD-CoP

Engagement of People with LE

- FDV Lived Experience Advisory Forum (FDV-LEAF)
- Working Groups
- Surveys
- Requests for feedback via email
- Opportunities to participate in research

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		DECISION BRIEF FOR HJSSD: 2026-27 FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COMMUNICATION PLAN	
Branch: DMFS		Reference: EC26-001288	
For information: Not applicable.		Due date: 24 April 2026 Routine	

Purpose

1. To seek endorsement of the Family and Domestic Violence communication plan on a page and agreement that the Director General Defence Member and Family Support (DG DMFS) will clear all communication materials associated with the Plan.

Recommendations

2. That you:
 - a. **Approve** the Family and Domestic Violence communication plan on a page at Enclosure 1.
 - b. **Agree** that DG DMFS will act as the clearing authority for all communication products developed under the plan.

Key Issues

3. The Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023- 2028 – Action plan commits, at action item 1.05, to the development and delivery of an awareness campaign plan for Family and Domestic Violence (FDV) prevention and awareness initiatives.
4. The communication plan at Enclosure 1 implements this requirement by providing a coordinated 2026 communication framework, detailing key messaging, thematic alignment, risks and sensitivities, audience groups, and an annual schedule of communication products.

s22  Libby Cremen DG DMFS Tel: s47E(d) Mob: s22 17 Apr 26	a. Approved / Please Discuss b. Agreed / Please Discuss
	Lara Gunn AVM HJSSD Apr 26
	Contact Officer: s47E(d) / Director DSP / s47E(d)
	Clearance Officer: Libby Cremen / DG DMFS / s47E(d) / s22

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5. The messaging underpinning the plan emphasises safety, confidentiality, respectful behaviour, early assistance and clear leadership responsibility. This approach ensures communications provide essential information and model the standards of conduct, culture and care that Defence expects leaders and personnel to uphold. The framework is designed to embed consistent, sensitive and constructive messaging across the organisation and contribute to the broader cultural objectives of the Strategy.

6. The plan does not propose standalone FDV campaigns. It adopts a measured, integrated communication approach, to align FDV messaging with national awareness events throughout the year, ensuring consistency, visibility, and timely delivery of information to Defence personnel, families, and stakeholders. This ensures that messaging is timely, appropriate, and delivered in a way that minimises distress while maximising reach, relevance, and sensitivity.

7. It is proposed that DG DMFS is the clearing authority for all communication materials developed under the communication plan, following review and advice from the DMFS Communication Team and DPG Media and Communication.

Consultation

8. The following were consulted on the communication plan:

- a. FDV Steering Committee Members
- b. Governance Group - Ministerial and Executive Coordination and Communication, DPG Media and Communication Manager, s47E(d) .

Enclosure:

- 1. Family and Domestic Violence Communication Plan on a Page

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE
DEFENCE PEOPLE COMMITTEE
19 JUNE 2025

EC25-002518 – 09 Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence

Sponsoring DPC member: Chief of Personnel, LTGEN Natasha Fox AO, CSC

SPONSORS EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose / Decision Required

1. To seek agreement from the Defence People Committee to publish the Commander and Managers Toolkit for Responding to Family and Domestic Violence ('the Toolkit') and the Complaints and Resolutions Manual Chapter on Responding to Family and Domestic Violence ('the CARM FDV Chapter').

Recommendations

2. It is recommended that the Committee:
 - a. **Agree** to the release and publication of the CARM FDV Chapter and the Toolkit.

Background

3. Defence guidance on management and response to reports of Family and Domestic Violence (FDV) has historically been contained in a stand-alone Commanders and Managers Guide.
4. A new FDV Chapter (**Attachment A**) in the Complaints and Alternative Resolutions Manual (CARM) has been developed to provide clear policy guidance to assist commanders and managers responding to incidents of FDV. A supporting toolkit (**Attachment B**), including checklists, a safety plan template, and a process flowchart has been created to supplement the policy.
5. The CARM FDV Chapter and Toolkit address actions 2.01 and 5.03 in the Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence Strategy Action plan.
6. The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide recommended Defence implement and improve upon the Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to FDV (Recommendation 102). The publication of the CARM Chapter contributes in part to the implementation of this recommendation.
7. Initial consultations were undertaken on the draft CARM FDV Chapter and the Toolkit from December 2024 to January 2025 with key subject matter experts across the department (**Attachment C**). Initial feedback received highlighted the CARM FDV Chapter required further work. Specifically advising it was overly complex, the flow of the information was disjointed and could be simplified similarly to that of the Toolkit.

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8. The draft Chapter and Toolkit underwent significant revision in consultation with stakeholders including commanders and managers from across Defence.

User Testing / Consultation

9. Service Headquarter Chiefs of Staff nominated a minimum of 10 Commanders from each of the three Services to undertake user testing over 18 March – 13 May 2025 (an 8 week period) to ascertain whether both the CARM FDV Chapter and Commanders and Managers Toolkit were fit for purpose.
10. Services were requested to test the two documents on an incident by incident basis if/when an FDV incident occurred, and for testing to be across a mixture of ranks, levels & locations.
11. The intent of the testing was for users to refer to the CARM FDV Chapter and Toolkit when responding to new or active FDV incidents and to confirm whether the processes were correct, fit for purpose, if the guidance was clear and digestible, and whether additional nuances needed to be taken into consideration or if further guidance or clarification was required.
12. The consolidated feedback received from each of the Services was largely positive advising the CARM FDV Chapter and Toolkit provides 'thorough step-by-step tools, the content is clear and digestible, covers all angles, is legally aligned, and provides good delegation/list of referrals to improve decision making.'
13. Feedback resulted in minor amendments being integrated and was provided back to the Service Headquarter Chiefs of Staff to close the feedback loop.
14. The following elements participated in User Testing on behalf of the Services:
 - a. Navy – NHQ, Fleet Command: HMAS Kuttabul, HMAS Albatross, HMAS Penguin, HMAS Waterhen, HMAS Cerberus and HMAS Harman.
 - b. Army - AHQ
1 Div – 2/14 LHR, 4 Regt RAA, 1CSSB, 2RAR, 7 Sig Regt
2 Div – HQ RFSG, 12/40 RTR, 1/15 RNSWL, 11/28 RWAR
FORCOMD – RMC-D, 1RTB, AUR
AVIATION COMD – 20 Regt RAA
SOCOMD – 2CDO Regt
 - c. Air Force - AFHQ, and the following Force Element Groups (FEGs) Air Force Training Group (AFTG), Air Mobility Group (AMG), Air Combat Group (ACG), Surveillance and Response Group (SRG) and Combat Support Group (CSG).

Risks and Issues

15. Delay in the publication of the updated guidance given the extant Commander and Managers Guide (2021) is outdated may present risk, as the two documents vastly expand upon the previous iteration.

Contractor Workforce

16. Nil.

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Finance and Resource Implications

17. Nil.

Supporting Data

18. FDV incident management categories were incorporated in DECMS in February 2025 (DEFGRAM 138/2025 March 2025). Over time, this will provide Defence with access to Defence population level, de-identified FDV statistical reporting data to understand prevalence, location, themes, unit and group/service which will inform further policy reform and allocation of resources.

Next Steps

19. Upon DPC approval, DMFS will progress the publication of the CARM FDV Chapter and the Toolkit on the Defence intranet, including internal communication within Defence.
20. DMFS will work closely with MECC on external communications to develop appropriate content for the public facing Defence FDV website advising the release and intent of the two documents.

Prior Committee Consideration

21. A verbal update was provided to DPC on 20 February 2025 (DPC2025/164) seeking a deferral of this item to 19 June 2025 which was approved to enable formal testing to occur outside of December/ January respite period.
22. A written update of progress against the FDV Strategy was provided to DPC on 08 April 2025.

Contact Officer: Ms Libby Cremen, Director General Defence Member and Family Support

Authorised by: AVM Lara Gunn, Head Joint Support Services Division

Date: 30 May 2025

Attachments

- A. Final Draft – Complaints and Resolutions Manual Chapter – Responding to Family and Domestic Violence
- B. Final Draft – Commanders and Managers Toolkit for Responding to Family and Domestic Violence
- C. Initial Consultation List December 2024 – January 2025

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Time: 0900-1200

Date: 5 September 2025

Location: DMFS Conference Room, L1 – 33-35 Brindabella Cct, Brindabella Park

Co-Chaired by: s47E(d) and AVM Lara Gunn

Attendees:

- Co-Chair: AVM Lara Gunn, Joint Services and Support Division, Defence
- Co-Chair: s47E(d), Defence Families Advocate Australia
- s47E(d), Director, Strategy and Policy, DMFS
- s47E(d), Director, DMFS, Defence
- s47E(d), A/g Assistant Director DMFS, Defence
- s47E(d), A/g Director Overseas Conditions and Housing, Defence
- s47E(d), Director, Overseas Conditions and Housing Policy, Defence
- s47E(d), Policy Officer, Personnel Policy and Employment Conditions, Defence
- [REDACTED], Acting Provost Marshal-ADF
- Elise Wattan, AS Program Management and Governance, Defence
- s47E(d), Executive Director, Relocations and Housing, Defence Relocations and Housing, Defence
- s47E(d), A/g General Manager, Strategy, Strategy and Transformation, Defence Housing Australia.
- s47E(d), General Manager Managed Services, Toll Government and Defence

Agenda Item

1. Welcome and Context

- AVM Lara Gunn welcomed participants to the Defence Families Australia (DFA) Housing Roundtable and acknowledged the importance of the forum in addressing housing-related challenges faced by Defence families. She emphasised the need to examine Defence housing through the lens of **systems abuse**, particularly in the context of **relationship breakdown** and **Family and Domestic Violence (FDV)**.
- AVM Gunn highlighted the alignment of the roundtable's focus with key strategic frameworks, including:
 - The **ADF Family Covenant**, which reinforces Defence's commitment to listening to and supporting families;
 - The **Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to FDV (2023–2028)** and its Action Plan; and
 - **Recommendation 102** of the *Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide*, which calls for improvements to housing-related services and draws on insights from the Defence Families Australia Issues Paper.
- **AVM Gunn** noted that the roundtable would explore both **interim arrangements** and **longer-term approaches** to reform, and acknowledged the complexity of some issues. AVM Gunn reaffirmed Defence's commitment to undertaking the difficult work required to deliver meaningful and lasting change for Defence families. AVM Gunn thanked DFA for initiating and driving this important activity.
- DFA Advocate s47E(d) thanked Defence Member and Family Support (DMFS) for facilitating the roundtable. She emphasised DFA's commitment to ensuring that **evidence-based responses** are implemented to address the issues raised, particularly those impacting Defence families in relation to housing and Family and Domestic Violence.



Agenda Item 2. Defence Housing Agreement – Service Residency Tenancy Agreement (SRTA)

Key Discussion Areas

- It was confirmed that housing entitlements under the Defence Housing Policy are allocated to the *serving member only*. These entitlements do not extend to the member's family or dependents. This clarification will be reinforced in future communication and policy guidance to ensure consistent understanding across all stakeholders.
- It was agreed that communication must be improved to manage expectations of both serving member and their spouse. Specifically, there is a need for an education component targeted at non-serving spouses, including provision of the Defence Residential Agreement (DRA).
- It was noted that this process would be linked to the formal recognition of the relationship.
- The group discussed the importance of establishing a clear mechanism for contacting the partner to ensure appropriate support is provided.
- Attendees emphasised the importance of ensuring that tenancy agreements do not inadvertently reinforce power imbalances, particularly in situations involving FDV, due to the entitlement being held solely by the serving member.
- Discussion on the support provided to both parties in the event of a relationship breakdown which may trigger a removal process. Reinforcement that avenues for support is the same for serving member and spouse.
- Attendees acknowledged the inherent complexity of FDV cases, noting that many allegations involve allegations without substantiated findings. It was agreed that there is no one-size fits all approach, and all FDV related matters must be managed with a strong commitment to procedural fairness, recognises the diverse circumstances and sensitivities involved.
- It was emphasized that policy extended to circumstances of relationship breakdown and not just instances of FDV.
- It was asked whether a documented process exists for when a relationship breaks down and if this is needed. It was also flagged the need to consider dual serving members and the policy surrounding these circumstances.

Action:

- DHA to engage with Defence Legal to assess the feasibility of:
 - Listing additional tenants on the Defence Residential Agreement (DRA); and/or
 - Including an additional articulation or declaration of individuals residing in the home, separate to the DRA.
 - Providing a copy of the Defence Residence Agreement (DRA) to the spouse. While the spouse would not be formally recognized on the lease, they would receive information outlining steps to take in the event of a relationship breakdown.



- DMFS to explore the feasibility of adding a feature to the Family Portal that enables users to easily contact support services.
- DMFS to revise content on the Defence Member and Family Support (DMFS) website to ensure information related to relationship breakdown is easily accessible. This includes:
 - Reviewing current navigation and content structure
 - Enhancing visibility of support services and guidance materials
 - Ensuring language is clear, inclusive, and trauma-informed

The goal is to improve user experience and ensure members and families can quickly find relevant support during periods of relationship stress or separation.

- DHA to consider the value of DMFS developing an informative resource to be included in the “Welcome Visit” pack provided to families moving into new DHA accommodation. In addition to providing key housing information, the pack could include specific support services available from DMFS and guidance for partners—particularly in the context of relationship changes or breakdowns, including FDV.

Agenda Item 5.1 Authorisation of Removals¹

Key Discussion Areas

- Agencies discussed challenges with removal scheduling and deadline pressures.
 - Noted that delays can exacerbate stress for families, especially those experiencing FDV.
- Overall, this agenda item served as a mythbuster to clarify existing processes and support mechanisms. Attendees discussed concerns regarding the authorisation of removals and the availability of support options for Defence spouses.
- It was confirmed that the authorisation of a removal can be triggered by a partner. Toll reiterated that their process includes an additional security measure or verification step before proceeding with a removal, ensuring safeguards are in place.
- Toll also highlighted the role of their case managers, who provide a hands-on, trauma-informed experience to support families through the removal process. Additionally, reimbursement is available if a private removal is authorised by the spouse.
- It was acknowledged that removal timeframes can be flexible to accommodate individual circumstances. In cases where the member does not provide consent and is uncooperative through command channels, chaplains may be engaged to support resolution and facilitate compassionate outcomes.
- Attendees agreed that the recommendations outlined in the Defence Families of Australia (DFA) Issues Paper are already in place. However, there is a need for increased education and awareness to highlight existing avenues of self-agency available to Defence spouses.

Action:

NIL

¹ Attendees agreed to proceed to Agenda Item 5 ahead of schedule, as it was more closely related to the discussion under Agenda Item 2.



Agenda Item 3. Consideration of Removal Deadlines

Key Discussion Areas

- DFA noted the significant challenges faced by Defence families in securing housing within the current cost of living crisis. It was highlighted that being given only 28 days to find suitable accommodation places considerable stress on families, particularly in high-demand or low-supply rental markets.
- DFA acknowledged that these pressures can impact wellbeing and stability, and discussed the need for flexible, compassionate approaches to housing timelines and support. Continuity of housing was identified as essential to ensure stability and wellbeing.
- Agencies acknowledged that discretion is applied in housing-related decisions based on individual circumstances which enable negotiation of an amended length of removal period. The SAFE housing initiative was used as an example, where although the formal guidance indicates a five-day limit, in practice, stays often extend beyond this timeframe to meet the needs of families.
- It was clarified that if housing arrangements extend beyond the standard 28-day period, the member may be required to cover the cost, which is deducted from their pay, and may present issues for the ex-partner.
- It was agreed there must be clear and accessible information available to help families understand how to access support and what options are available.
- It was noted that members cannot be compelled to enter Live-in Accommodation (LIA) without legal justification. DMFS should be the first point of contact to assist families in developing a tailored housing plan in the event of relationship breakdown. This may include referral pathways to local, community based support services and resources.
- Toll advised that removal timeframes can extend beyond 28 days where necessary, and that flexibility and discretion are built into their processes.
- JMPU raised a caution regarding the potential for fraud during “trial separation” periods, which may be prolonged indefinitely. Other agencies advised against rigid policy changes, noting that flexibility is key.
- Agreement that the recommendations outlined in Agenda Item 3 are largely already in place with emphasis on the discretion provided to Defence families around housing removal periods.
- It was reiterated that Defence holds a moral obligation to support spouses and Defence families. This includes ensuring access to relevant information, services, and support mechanisms, particularly during times of transition or relationship breakdown.
- Further work is needed to improve education and awareness around existing support pathways and to empower families with information that promotes self-agency.
- Once operational, the Family Portal will also serve as a direct communication channel for families.

Action:

- DMFS, DHA, and Toll to review existing handbooks, guides, and webpages to ensure consistent language and strengthen linkages between resources, improving clarity and ease of navigation for families.
 - AVM Gunn raised a caution regarding version control of documents, noting the importance of maintaining consistency and accuracy across platforms to avoid confusion or outdated guidance.



- DHA and Toll to review publicly available documents that reference or outline the 28-day removal timeline, to ensure clarity and consistency in communication and support provided to families.
- DHA and Toll (with support from PPEC) to undertake a review of current practice and communication products to ensure alignment with PACMAN policy – specifically the provisions related to removals, including timelines, entitlements, and responsibilities.



Agenda Item 4. Review Uplift Accommodation Entitlement

Key Discussion Areas

- This agenda item served as a mythbuster regarding the review of uplift accommodation entitlements.
- Attendees confirmed that discretion is routinely applied to these scenarios, and that entitlements are assessed on a case-by-case basis to reflect individual circumstances.

Action:

- As per Action on Agenda Item 3, all areas (DMFS, DHA, and Toll) to review existing handbooks, guides, and webpages to ensure consistent language and strengthen linkages between resources, improving clarity and ease of navigation for families

Agenda Item 5.2. Insurance Claims

Key Discussion Areas

- This agenda item served as a mythbuster regarding insurance claims.
- It was clarified that Toll case managers have been in place for a significant period and play an active role in supporting families throughout their relocation.
- Toll maintains a profile for each individual or family being moved, which includes relevant details beyond just the Defence member. This ensures a more tailored and informed approach to removals and support, reinforcing that the process is not solely dependent on the Defence member's input.
- Once case managers are assigned (by Toll), they communicate directly with the person they are removing. Toll acknowledged that bank details are not defaulted to the Member's account and compensation is paid back to the bank account of the person seeking a removal.

Action:

NIL



Agenda Item 5.3. Loss of Access to Personal Items

Key Discussion Areas

- Attendees discussed the complexities surrounding access to personal items in the context of relationship breakdowns. It was acknowledged that discretion is applied in these circumstances, and spouses may seek reimbursement where appropriate. Case management approaches are used to determine how best to support individuals through these situations.
- It was noted that decisions regarding ownership and access to personal items are ultimately matters for the family court. In cases involving family and domestic violence (FDV), the safety of all parties remains the primary focus. While discretion can be exercised, there are limits—some matters require formal legal resolution through court orders.
- There was agreement on the importance of encouraging victim-survivors to seek legal advice, including through women's legal services. Defence members are entitled to free legal advice at all times.
- Concerns were raised about the perception that releasing inventory lists may, in some cases, contribute to coercive control. This highlights the need for careful management of expectations and clear communication around processes and safeguards.
- It was agreed that messaging around support options for both Defence members and spouses should be reinforced.

Action:

NIL

Agenda Item 5.4. Housing Entitlements

Key Discussion Areas

- As per Agenda Item 3, agencies acknowledged that discretion is applied in housing-related decisions based on individual circumstances which enable negotiation of an amended length of removal period.

Action:

- As per Action on Agenda Item 3, all areas (DMFS, DHA, and Toll) to review existing handbooks, guides, and webpages to ensure consistent language and strengthen linkages between resources, improving clarity and ease of navigation for families

Agenda Item 5.5. Access to DHA Reference Letter

Key Discussion Areas

- Attendees confirmed that the issue regarding access to the DHA reference letter has been resolved. It was clarified that any individual, including non-serving members, can contact DHA directly to request the letter. The letter will be provided upon request without restriction.

Action:

NIL



Agenda Item 6. Closing Remarks and Next Steps

- AVM Gunn thanked attendees for their contributions and reaffirmed the importance of collaborative reform.
- There was a general consensus that the roundtable was productive and informative.
- Positive feedback was shared regarding current communication strategies around FDV, with a noted increase in perpetrators coming forward attributed to reduced opportunities for concealment, expanded reporting channels, and strengthened support systems.
- AVM Gunn advised that engagement with additional agencies not present at the roundtable was required to ensure a comprehensive approach. She also reinforced that improving education and awareness around FDV support is a shared and continuous responsibility across all agencies.
- A follow-up session will be scheduled to track progress on action items and further align efforts with Recommendation 102.

Action Items Summary

- Engage with Defence Legal regarding adding additional component to the DRA for residents residing in the home.
- Review existing communication products to ensure clarity and accessibility for Defence spouses
- Identify and compile objective evidence or source documentation to support actions that have already been implemented. This may include policy references, procedural guidelines, service delivery records, or stakeholder communications that demonstrate alignment with the recommendations.
- Review and Align with Reform Management Plan (RMP) 102, noting timelines and milestones for implementation.

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DEFENCE PEOPLE COMMITTEE

15 JUNE 2023

**DPC 2023/097 – DEFENCE STRATEGY FOR PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO
FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE - FIRST ACTION PLAN - UPDATE**

Purpose / Decision Required

1. To seek endorsement on the First Action Plan (2023-24) of the *Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028* (the Strategy).

Recommendations

2. It is recommended the Committee:
 - a. **Notes** the Strategy is awaiting Minister for Defence Personnel (MINDP) patronage and endorsement.
 - b. **Notes** funding from the Enterprise Business Committee was not secured for a series of new initiatives and associated resourcing for the First Action Plan.
 - c. **Notes** the achievement to date against the First Action Plan, including the draft Terms of Reference and Governance and Reporting Framework.
 - d. **Endorses** the First Action Plan 2023-2024 for the Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028.

Background

3. On 16 February 2023, the Defence People Committee (DPC) endorsed the Strategy.
4. The Committee requested that the Strategy align with the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032. DPC agreed one action plan with decentralised implementation and reporting against a common governance framework. The Committee also discussed mandatory reporting of allegations as it relates to the ability to hold a security clearance. The action plans were updated to reflect these requirements.
5. Defence Families Australia (DFA) have provided feedback through the FDV Working Group and other means. This has included (but not limited too) advocating and ensuring appropriate mandatory FDV training for all Defence staff and a review of housing and relocation policies.
6. Since then, the following MINDP feedback has been received and incorporated.
 - a. A need to develop a suite of supports for victims of family and domestic violence (FDV) who present to Defence, whether they be Australian Defence Force (ADF) members, partners, or family.
 - b. A need for mandatory FDV awareness training for all personnel, including general awareness training and command assistance training for all commanders.
 - c. A need to build capacity within Defence Member and Family Support (DMFS) to assist victims of FDV and connect them to specialist services.
 - d. A need for separate authorities/delegations for partners and families of ADF perpetrators to access FDV services.
 - e. FDV victims who are ADF members must not be required to disclose to chain of command, but need to be provided with support and FDV leave in any event.

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7. A revised Strategy and First Action Plan is with MINDP. Preliminary feedback from OMINDP has been positive, and DPG expects to receive formal direction shortly.
8. The First Action Plan 2023-24 (**Attachment A**) was developed to build on the foundations of the previous Strategy, and incorporates MINDP's intent of direction.
9. The Second Action Plan 2025-26 will focus on measuring change, impact and themes, while the Third Action Plan 2027-28 will focus on reviewing change and future planning.

Update on the implementation of the First Action Plan

10. Action Item 4: Develop online (CAMPUS) Defence FDV Awareness training for all Defence personnel. A new Defence FDV Awareness Training CAMPUS for all Defence personnel was released on 26 April 2023 (**Attachment B**). Over 800 personnel have completed the course to date, with positive feedback received.
11. Action Item 5: Update Commanders and Managers Guide (version 4). ADFHQ Project Officer, in conjunction with DMFS, has commenced consultation on the next version of this guide (titled *Responding to Family and Domestic Violence: A Leaders' Guide*) planned for release in October 2023.
12. Action Items 6 & 7: Develop a training course for Commanders and Managers and mandate FDV training. DMFS is working with DLB on a CAMPUS course to replicate and complement information provided in the *Responding to Family and Domestic Violence: A Leaders' Guide*, scheduled for release Q1 2024.
13. Action Items 9, 10: Provide frontline staff with trauma informed training and facilitate availability of self-care training. A professional development training plan that includes FDV, trauma informed principles and self-care, is being implemented for all DMFS frontline staff (i.e. Defence Social Workers, and Defence Member and Family Helpline Intake Workers).
14. Action Item 11: Facilitate FDV professional development for Chaplaincy to promote a consistent and best practice response to allegations of FDV. DMFS has developed a trauma informed FDV course for chaplains as frontline responders to FDV (**Attachment C**). Head of People Capability has received in-principle support from the Religious Advisory Committee Chair for the course, and as discussed with the PRINCHAP-AF this will now be progressed in concert with DGDMS and PRINCHAP-AF.
15. Action Item 18: Continue to engage with 'experts' and emerging research on FDV, through networking and liaison with individuals and organisations, and membership of a community of practice, to ensure currency of knowledge of research and emerging development in the field. DMFS Executive staff are represented on an Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) Community of Practice. Additionally, DMFS participated in a working group for a recent research study on IPV, which was commissioned by DVA and undertaken by Phoenix Australia – Centre for Posttraumatic Mental Health.
16. Action Item 18: Identify emerging issues via the Defence-wide Working Group. The initial meeting of the quarterly Defence FDV Working Group occurred on 30 March 2023, and provided an update on the transition between the two Defence Strategies. Remaining meetings scheduled for 22 June, 31 August, and 30 November in 2023 will focus on delivery of the action plan.
17. To govern the Strategy: DMFS has developed a Governance and Reporting Framework (**Attachment D**) and a Working Group Terms of Reference (**Attachment E**).

Risks and Issues

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18. Whole-of-Defence capability and safety sensitivity: The Strategy requires Defence as an employer to provide its personnel with the skills and knowledge to appropriately respond to and support people affected by FDV. Failure to achieve this could result in adverse outcomes for individuals and managers, and negatively affect Defence capability. Furthermore, the Royal Commission into Veteran Suicide has also requested information and documentation relating to Minutes of Meetings held over recent years related to Defence's FDV Strategy.
19. The First Action Plan addresses this sensitivity, by continuing to offer awareness training, 24-hour support, and advice for personnel.
20. Whole-of-Defence reputation sensitivity: The soon to be released Phoenix Report on Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), a research study commissioned by the Department of Veterans' Affairs, is likely to receive negative media attention. Findings from this study (while caveated) indicate rates of IPV in families of veteran and current serving members, exceed those of community samples. While this report may result in a spotlight on rates of FDV within Defence, it will provide valuable baseline data on prevalence. The First Action Plan will use research to enhance data on the prevalence of IPV in Defence and best practice in prevention to address this sensitivity.
21. Whole-of-Defence reputation sensitivity: Recent representations by interest groups and advocates regarding FDV in Defence, could adversely affect Defence's reputation. Defence Families Australia has raised concerns about a lack of FDV mandatory awareness training, Defence entitlements on breakdown of relationships, and lines of effort in prevention. The First Action Plan addresses these concerns, as new awareness training will be available, initiatives to influence prevention actioned, and a review of Defence policies intersecting with FDV undertaken.

Finance and Resource Implications

22. The Strategy and action plans are sponsored through DMFS Branch within Defence People Group, as an enterprise-wide program.
23. Proposed initiatives to action the Strategy will incur cost, and Deputy Secretary Defence People is continuing to explore avenues for funding and resources, subsequent to resourcing not being forthcoming through the Enterprise Business Committee. If funding is not available for initiatives that planned to have external SME input, then DMFS will resource the implementation of the initiatives through current staff. This will delay any planned implementation and potentially limit effectiveness of the proposed initiatives.

Next Steps

24. Next Steps are as follows.
 - a. Coordinate with OMINDP the release of the Strategy.
 - b. Promote the launch of the new Defence FDV Awareness Training CAMPUS course.
 - c. Consult on the draft Terms of Reference, and Governance and Reporting Framework with the Defence FDV Working Group.
 - d. Develop a communication plan for the Strategy and First Action Plan.
 - e. Develop project plans for new initiatives outlined in the First Action Plan.
 - f. Provide an update on the implementation of the First Action Plan to the DPC on 16 November 2023.

Consultation

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25. Members of the Defence FDV Working Group which includes representatives from Navy, Army, Air Force, Defence Families Australia and Defence Groups including SEG, CIOG, JCG and DPG.

MAJGEN Wade Stothart, Head People Capability

s47E(d) , Director Helpline, Incidents and Welfare Policy

June 2023

Attachments

- A. *First Action Plan 2023 - 2024*
- B. Draft communication about Defence FDV Awareness Training CAMPUS course
- C. Draft *Responding Appropriately to FDV within a Defence context for Frontline staff*
- D. *The Strategy Governance and Reporting Framework*
- E. *Defence FDV Working Group Terms of Reference*

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**Defence People Committee
15 JUNE 2023
TALKING POINTS**

**ITEM: 2023/097 DEFENCE STRATEGY FOR PREVENTING
AND RESPONDING TO FAMILY AND DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE - FIRST ACTION PLAN**

- The *Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028* and First Action Plan 2023 - 2024 are awaiting clearance from Minister Defence Personnel.
 - Preliminary feedback has been positive and we expect to received formal direction from the Minister shortly.
- There are whole-of-Defence sensitivities for preventing and responding to family and domestic violence (FDV). Sensitivities include a soon-to-be released study indicating higher rates of intimate partner violence in families of veteran and serving members.
 - The other sensitivity is concerns raised by advocacy groups (including Defence Families of Australia) about actions Defence should be considering.
- It is important to note, funding has not been secured for the new initiatives within the First Action Plan.
- The First Action Plan does address sensitives by enhancing the Defence system in preventing and responding through actions associated with prevention, early intervention, response and recovery.
- The First Action Plan has a total of 18 actions and is operationalised through the Strategy's objectives which include: communication and promotion, training, policy review, support services, and governance and accountability.
- Actions undertaken to implement the First Action Plan include:
 - The release in April 2023 of a new Defence FDV Awareness Training CAMPUS course, which will become mandatory once agreed by CDF and Secretary of Defence. .
 - Commencement of consultation for the next version of the Commanders and Managers Guide to Responding to FDV. This update will be used to form the basis for a complementary and mandatory CAMPUS Leaders course to be completed in Q1 2024.

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- o Development of a one hour online professional development course for ADF Chaplains focused on practice principles in responding, the Defence context, and referral options.
 - o Development of a training plan for DMFS frontline staff.
- A Governance and Reporting Framework has been developed for the Groups and Services who are encouraged to develop their action plans that align with the Strategy, to address their specific circumstances.
- A Defence FDV Working Group Terms of Reference has been developed to enhance governance and assist the First Action Plan.

Prepared by: s47E(d), Director Helpline, Incidents and Welfare Policy,
24 May 2023

Cleared by: MAJGEN Wade Stothart, Head People Capability, 09 June 2023

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Notes / Outcomes

[illegible]**OFFICIAL**

DEFENCE FDV AWARENESS TRAINING CAMPUS COURSE – COMMUNICATION

SPOTLIGHT ARTICLE

New mandatory Defence FDV Awareness Training course on CAMPUS

Defence supports the National campaign to end Family and Domestic Violence (FDV). FDV is currently one of the major health and welfare issues affecting broader Australian and global societies. Data indicates that more than 2.2 million Australians have experienced family violence, with the impacts including relationship breakdowns, homelessness, financial insecurity, and hospitalisation. If you are not personally affected by FDV, you are likely to know someone who is.

Preventing and responding to FDV is everyone's responsibility. As part of the soon-to-be-released *Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028*, a new mandatory awareness course titled "Defence FDV Awareness Training" is now available in CAMPUS. This has been developed by Defence People Group and provides an alternative mode of delivery to that of the face-to-face presentation delivered by Defence Member and Family Support. The Defence FDV Awareness Training course is available on 'Campus DPE' and 'Campus Anywhere' and is ready for learner registration as detailed below.

Campus DPE

Title: DEFENCE FDV AWARENESS TRAINING

Course ID: 00017512

Campus Anywhere

Title: DEFENCE FDV AWARENESS TRAINING

Course ID: 00006640

For questions, advice or initial support in relation to the course the Defence Member and Family Helpline can be contacted on 1800 624 608 or via email memberandfamilyhelpline@defence.gov.au.

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DEFENCE PEOPLE COMMITTEE

OUT OF SESSION DPC

**DPC 2023/097 – DEFENCE STRATEGY FOR PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO
FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE - FIRST ACTION PLAN**

Decision Required

1. To seek out of session endorsement on the First Action Plan (2023-24) of the Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028 (the Strategy).

Recommendations

2. It is recommended that the Committee:
 - a. **Notes** the changes to the draft First Action Plan, and draft Responding Appropriately to FDV within a Defence context for Frontline staff training, in line with the actions required from the 15 June 2023 DPC.
 - b. **Endorses** the First Action Plan 2023-2024 for the Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028.

Background

3. On 16 February 2023, the Defence People Committee (DPC) endorsed the Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023 – 2028. MINDP direction and feedback on the Strategy has been incorporated and is in the process of returning through DPG to MINDP for clearance.
4. The draft First Action Plan 2023 – 2024 was developed to execute the Strategy and illustrate the practical elements of implementing the Strategy. Item 3 of the Defence People Committee held on 15 June 2023 was the Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence First Action Plan update (DPC 2023/097). The following outcomes occurred.
5. The Committee:
 - a. **Noted** the Strategy is awaiting Minister for Defence Personnel (MINDP) patronage and endorsement.
 - b. **Noted** funding from the Enterprise Business Committee was not secured for a series of new initiatives and associated resourcing for the First Action Plan. (DEPSEC DP has committed to resource).
 - c. **Noted** the achievement to date against the First Action Plan, including the draft Terms of Reference and draft Governance and Reporting Framework.
 - d. **Endorsed** the First Action Plan 2023 – 2024 for the Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023 – 2028, subject to final comments by the Committee being incorporated.

Update on actions post the 15 June 2023 DPC meeting

6. The following actions were undertaken by DMFS as per the DPC Action 230615/04 HPC to incorporate feedback from 15 June DPC and recirculate Out of Session:
 - a. DMFS invited feedback from the Services and People Services regarding MINDP request to link specific Strategy pillars with specific Defence Values. Workforce Planning Branch also offered input on the Strategy. As requested by DEPSEC DP, Acting FAS-PS provided input on the link between the Defence Value of Service and Response. This was incorporated into the First Action Plan at Attachment A.

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- b. The Strategy and Action Plan now only references an enterprise-wide Action Plan.
- c. The draft *Responding Appropriately to FDV within a Defence context for Frontline staff* presentation has been updated to neutralise gender language, including a quote about the link between abuse and respect, at Attachment B.
- d. The First Action Plan includes specific plans to map internal and external intervention services including behavioural change programs, as per Action Item 15. Further, Action Item 16 now specifies that as part of this plan, consideration will be given as part of the trial that training for Command to include active bystander training.
- e. Invitations to the Defence Family and Domestic Violence Working Group were specifically extended to Assistant Secretary Space Strategic Plans and Workforce Planning Branch. Further interested nominations are encouraged to contact DMFS.
- f. A Defence FDV Working Group meeting occurred on the 22 June 2023. The meeting focused on providing an update on the clearance of the Strategy, the submission of the First Action Plan to the DPC, and associated actions. Subsequently, the Working Group has been invited to provide input on the draft Governance and Reporting Framework and draft Terms of Reference.

Risks and Issues

- 7. Whole-of-Defence reputation sensitivity: MINDP has requested an update on the progress of the Strategy and requested clarification about why the new Strategy has not been released yet. Additionally, representations by interest groups and advocates regarding FDV in Defence have raised concerns about Defence plans to prevent and respond to FDV. Further, the Royal Commission into Veteran Suicide has also requested information and documentation relating to Minutes of Meetings held over recent years related to Defence's FDV Strategy. Progressing the Strategy for MINDP release will address a number of these concerns.
- 8. Whole-of-Defence capability and safety sensitivity: The Strategy requires Defence as an employer to provide its personnel with the skills and knowledge to appropriately respond to and support people affected by FDV. Failure to achieve this could result in adverse outcomes for individuals and managers, and negatively affect Defence capability. The First Action Plan addresses this sensitivity, by continuing to offer awareness training, 24-hour support, and advice for personnel.

Finance and Resource Implications

- 9. The Strategy and action plans are sponsored through DMFS Branch within Defence People Group, as an enterprise-wide program.
- 10. Proposed initiatives to action the Strategy will incur cost, and Deputy Secretary Defence People in consultation with Associate Secretary will provide funding for these initiatives from the Workforce Budget excess FY23/24.

Next Steps

- 11. Next Steps are as follows.
 - a. Coordinate the release of the Strategy with OMINDP.
 - b. Consult with the Defence FDV Working Group on the practical issues requirements to mandate the Defence FDV Awareness Training CAMPUS course
 - c. In alignment with MINDP direction, brief DEPSEC DP, CDF and SEC on mandating the Defence FDV Awareness Training CAMPUS course
 - d. Promote the launch of the new Defence FDV Awareness Training CAMPUS course.
 - e. Based on the cleared Strategy, progress action on the draft Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.

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- f. Continue consultation on the draft Terms of Reference, and Governance and Reporting Framework with the Defence FDV Working Group.
- g. Develop a communication plan for the Strategy and First Action Plan.
- h. Develop project plans for new initiatives outlined in the First Action Plan.
- i. Provide an update on the implementation of the First Action Plan to the DPC on 16 November 2023.

Consultation

- 12. Service representatives on the Defence Family and Domestic Violence Working Group, including Air Force, Army, and Navy.
- 13. Acting First Assistant Secretary People Services Cassie Haynes

MAJGEN Wade Stothart, Head Military Personnel

s47E(d) [REDACTED], Director Helpline, Incidents and Welfare Policy

July 2023

Attachments

- A. First Action Plan 2023 - 2024
- B. Draft Responding Appropriately to FDV within a Defence context for Frontline staff

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DEFENCE PEOPLE COMMITTEE

[OUT OF SESSION]

DPC 2024/117 – PROPOSED ENDORSEMENT OF PUBLIC FACING FIRST ACTION PLAN (2023 -24) FOR DEFENCE STRATEGY FOR PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Purpose / Decision Required

1. To seek endorsement of the public facing version of the First Action Plan of the Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

- a. **Note** the endorsement by the DPC of the internal First Action Plan of the Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028 in August 2023.
- b. **Endorse** the public facing version of the First Action Plan (Attachment A) of the Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028.

Background

2. The whole of government *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032* (the National Plan) was released by the Department of Social Services on 17 October 2022.
3. The National Plan positions FDV as a workplace issue requiring a whole of society effort. In relation to military populations, reference is made to the systems and structures of military service. This includes deeply held cultural views that can cause isolation and complex barriers to seek help. It further highlights the need for military and veteran families to have available access to support that understands and can respond to their experiences.
4. In August 2023, Defence People Committee (DPC) endorsed the *Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028* (the Strategy) (**Attachment B**) and its First Action Plan 2023 - 2024 (**Attachment C**).
5. The *Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028* was released publically by MINDP on the 30th of November 2023. At the time of release, Defence was advised of the Minister's preference for the First Action Plan to also be released publically.
6. The Minister was advised that the Action Plan had been drafted as an internal working document and not designed for public release.
7. Please note updates will be made to the current version of the internal facing working document (Attachment C), to be clearer on commencement and completion dates of actions, to enable reporting on achievement of actions to the DPC annually.
8. It was agreed that further consultation and engagement on the Strategy with Department of Social Services (DSS) would occur and a public facing version would be developed. A public facing Action Plan would then be provided to the Minister in the first quarter of 2024.

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9. DSS are the lead department for the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children. In December 2023, DMFS engaged with DSS to seek feedback on the internal Defence First Action Plan.
10. DSS compiled feedback from relevant areas across the Women's Safety Group and feedback was returned to DMFS in January 2024. The feedback from DSS was focused on structure and content to closer align to the National Plan.

INTENT OF PUBLIC FACING ACTION PLAN

11. Advice from DSS, that does not alter the intent or sentiment of the internal Action Plan, has been incorporated into the draft public facing Action Plan. This feedback includes:
 - a. inclusion of support numbers at the beginning of the document,
 - b. the need for focus on drivers such as gender inequality,
 - c. reference any actions addressing sexual violence,
 - d. inclusion of definitions,
 - e. inclusion of a diagram that shows various actions overtime,
 - f. messaging that Defence is committed to prevention, and reducing any repetition.
12. The public facing Action Plan provides a narrative for the public on the intent of Defence actions in implementing the Strategy, and maintain a balance between being informative and managing expectations of public scrutiny of Defence actions.

Risks and Issues

13. Whole-of-Defence reputation sensitivity: Representations by interest groups and advocates regarding FDV in Defence have raised concerns about Defence plans to prevent and respond to FDV. Further, the Royal Commission into Veteran Suicide has also requested information and documentation relating to Minutes of Meetings held over recent years related to Defences FDV Strategy. The delivery of the Strategy's First Action Plan will address a number of these concerns.
14. Ministerial and Departmental sensitivity: the public release of the Department's Action Plan by MINDP will result in the potential for increased public scrutiny on Departmental actions, outcomes, and funding, in preventing and responding to FDV.
15. Whole-of-Defence reputation sensitivity: the internal working Action Plan was consulted over an extended time, with the Defence FDV Working Group including DFA, Senior Leadership, and DSS. Given the time-sensitive nature of the anticipated release date, there has not been consultation on the draft public facing Action Plan, which could raise concerns from within the Defence enterprise and by other interest groups such as DFA. The public facing action plan will require further scrutiny and some elements are likely to be seen as contentious by some DPC members.
16. Whole-of-Defence reputation sensitivity: the potential for increased Ministerial and Departmental scrutiny may mean that any changes to planned deliverables or timeframes could cause public concern for the Department's ability to deliver on its commitment to preventing FDV.

Contractor Workforce

17. Development of the public facing Action Plan has been internally sourced through DMFS, with an EL 2, EL 1 and APS 6 working on the Action Plan as part of other duties.

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Finance and Resource Implications

18. Release of a public facing Action Plan means that there may be public expectation to deliver on any actions mentioned, which may require confirmation

Next Steps

19. Next Steps are as follows:

- a. Clearance and Senior Leadership Group endorsement on the draft public facing First Action Plan 2023 – 2024 for the Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence Strategy 2023-2024,
- b. Minister for Defence Personnel Foreword and Media release, to be provided post senior leader endorsement,
- c. Based on the endorsed working First Action Plan, continued implementation of actions from the Action Plan,
- d. As part of an action item, Defence FDV Awareness training launched in March 2023 on CAMPUS to be promulgated as a mandatory enterprise-wide training,
- e. As part of an action item, implement key deliverables aimed at supporting members and families in Defence communities to know where and how to seek help if necessary, and
- f. DPC submission in August 2024 to provide an update on the implementation of the First Action Plan.

Consultation

20. The internal version of the Action Plan was developed through consultation with Defence FDV Working Group, which includes representatives from Navy, Army, Air Force, DFA, and Defence Groups. The DPC was consulted and endorsed an internal Action Plan in August 2023.
21. Subsequent to the initial endorsed internal Action Plan, in January 2024 the Department of Social Services, the owner of the National Plan, provided advice on closer alignment of the Action Plan to the National Plan.

MAJGEN Wade Stothart, Head People Capability

s47E(d), Director Helpline, Incidents and Welfare Policy

March 2024

Attachments

- A. Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028 First Action Plan 2023-2024
- B. Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028.
- C. Draft First Action Plan 2023 - 2024 (internal document).

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Out of Session Clearance

Meeting discussed / Date Registered	22 March 2024
Agendum No. and Title	DPC2024/117 - Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence
Action required	It is requested that Members provide feedback and decision against the attached Proposed Endorsement of Public Facing First Action Plan.
Due Date for Member approval	1200 Thurs, 28 March 2024
Due Date for Co-Chair Approval	1200 Thurs, 04 April 2024
POC for Member questions	s47E(d) , Director Helpline, Incidents and Welfare Policy

Appointment	Comments	Initial / Signature
Line Area	Inserts comments for the Clearing Officer's consideration	
CPERS	Endorsed/Not Endorsed Agreed / Not Agreed Noted / Please Discuss	
DEPSEC DP	Endorsed/Not Endorsed Agreed / Not Agreed Noted / Please Discus	

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Collation of Member decisions and comments			
Appointment	Decision	Additional comments	Line area response to additional comments'
Head Military Workforce Design (VCD FG) (Deputy Chair)	Endorsed/Not Endorsed Agreed / Not Agreed Noted / Please Discuss	1. Revised structure, content and language of Defence's public facing version of the Action Plan reflects Cth Dept of Social Services input/guidance and aligns with National Plan. 2. This pragmatic approach by DMFS staff will enable Defence's public facing Action Plan to be more readily understood, interpreted and evaluated by a diverse audience. 3. Proposed staged implementation, with "lessons identified" being considered throughout the Plan's lifecycle is a pragmatic approach. This will result in more positive and sustainable outcomes aimed at realising Defence's stated Vision. 4. Finance and Resource Implications (see DPC Covering Brief para 18). Current content, although acknowledging public expectation that Defence will deliver its Action Plan, does not provide an early assessment of the quantum/scale of potential resources required. It is understood that DPC has previously been provided with an indication of likely resource requirements, as part of DMFS's development and submission of the internal version of the Action Plan endorsed by DPC in 2023.	4. Resourcing request has been made previously to DPC. The Action Plan is being implemented within existing resources.

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Collation of Member decisions and comments			
Deputy Chief of Navy	Endorsed/ Not Endorsed Agreed / Not Agreed Noted / Please Discuss	Navy recognises the importance of this issue at a national level and the research that identifies a higher proportion of FDV in Military Families. Navy endorses the public facing version of the first action plan, however to generate practical outcomes, the Plan could be strengthened by clearly identifying some principles to guide commanders and their actions, such as: Our military power is derived from Strength at home, Defence does not condone FDV, Defence will take action to address systemic causal factors of FDV, Defence will take action against perpetrators of FDV, Defence will support victim-survivors of FDV whether they are the serving member or partner / children).	Agree to strengthening the action plan by including several of the suggested principles (the first and second principles).
Deputy Chief of Army	Endorsed/ Not Endorsed Agreed / Not Agreed Noted / Please Discuss	Army is supportive of the First Action Plan 2023-2024 (FAP) and understands the appetite for the public facing document. Army is very supportive of the 'whole community approach' to addressing FDV and supports efforts to align with the national plan. Army is concerned that the FAP is heavily focused on the 'response' and 'recovery' domains with limited 'actionable steps' for unit commanders to make meaningful change in the 'prevention' and 'early intervention' domains. Army would like to see further detail around actionable steps	It is anticipated that knowledge gained through the proposed trial in Victoria will enable the development of 'actionable steps' to make meaningful change in the 'prevention' and 'early intervention' domains. There are no

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Collation of Member decisions and comments			
		Unit commanders and leaders within units can take to identify 'those at risk of FDV' and to create 'protective environments' for their communities. Additionally, Army would like to see further detail around how intersectionality aspects with FDV is going to be addressed, specifically for our higher risk population groups such as Indigenous Australians, CALD and LGBTIQA+ groups. Addressing FDV within these sub-communities will require a tailored approach within all four domains to ensure meaningful change is achieved. 'One size fits all' training that is centrally developed and delivered may miss some of the nuances these high risk communities face. More flexible options would need to be considered with a very specific target group in mind. Finally, Army has concerns regarding the resourcing and financial implications of the FAP. Unit Commanders and leaders want to play their part in addressing FDV but they will require suitable resourcing and support within their Units. Para 18 of the brief highlights the need to confirm resourcing requirements prior to issuing this public facing document. Army supports this requirement.	reliable tools to identify those at risk of FDV. Assessment is a dynamic process and informed not only by knowledge of static and acute risk factors, but also a good understanding of changes in a couple's relationship over time. Further work on intersectionality will be undertaken within the second action plan. [It is noted that attempts made in Defence's first strategy to identify some at risk groups resulted in complaints from members of those at risk groups, leading to that content being removed from the strategy]. As noted previously, resourcing requests have been made previously.
Deputy Chief of Air Force	Endorsed/Not Endorsed Agreed / Not Agreed	Air Force agree to support the endorsement by the DPC of the internal First Action Plan of the Defence Strategy for the Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence	

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Collation of Member decisions and comments			
	Noted / Please Discuss	2023-2028in August 2023. Air Force support the endorsement of the public facing version of the First Action Plan of the Defence Strategy for the Preventing and Responding to family and domestic violence 2023-2028.	
Head of Military Personnel Division	Endorsed/ Not Endorsed Agreed / Not Agreed Noted / Please Discuss	The Strategy is endorsed as the sponsor of the paper.	
FAS Workforce and People Strategy	Endorsed/ Not Endorsed Agreed / Not Agreed Noted / Please Discuss	NIL comments.	
Surgeon General – ADF	Endorsed/ Not Endorsed Agreed / Not Agreed Noted / Please Discuss	Supportive of the public-facing document and endorses the approach of aligning to the National Plan.	
Deputy Chief of Joint Capabilities	Endorsed/ Not Endorsed Agreed / Not Agreed Noted / Please Discuss	DCJC endorses the public facing plan with no amendments	
Head Intelligence Capability	Endorsed/ Not Endorsed Agreed / Not Agreed Noted / Please Discuss	NIL comments.	
Deputy Chief Joint Operations	Endorsed/ Not Endorsed Agreed / Not Agreed Noted / Please Discuss	JOC group notes the recommendation (a) and fully supports and endorses the public facing version of the First Action plan in recommendation (b).	
FAS Defence	Endorsed/ Not Endorsed	NIL response	

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Collation of Member decisions and comments			
Security (SEG)	Agreed / Not Agreed Noted / Please Discuss		
Chief – Research Technology and Operations (DSTG)	Endorsed/Not Endorsed Agreed / Not Agreed Noted / Please Discuss		
FAS Enterprise transformation and Governance (ASSOC SEC)	Endorsed/Not Endorsed Agreed / Not Agreed Noted / Please Discuss	Feedback was provided by s47E(d), Enterprise Change Management. s47E(d) spent over 3 years working in the Department of Social Services, Women's Safety Group, where she contributed to the development of the <i>National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-32</i> and the evaluation activities associated with the former National Plan. Her specific role was working across small-scale and large-scale national and international data and research and providing specific guidance to stakeholders on the relevance, usefulness and validity of their data, this includes regularly consulting with data custodians such as the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australian Institute of Criminology and Australian Institute of Welfare. She developed an evidence repository that contained all the relevant family, domestic and sexual violence (FDSV) data and research sources and provided advice to senior executives and women's safety ministers. She also managed the Commonwealth's relationship with Australia's National	

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Collation of Member decisions and comments			
		Research Organisation for Women's Safety, which included regularly liaising with researchers and providing advice on upcoming, in-progress and completed research as well as assisting with setting the future national research agenda for FDSV research. Separately, she has a degree in sociology, specifically specialising in gender and masculinity. s47E(d) would be happy to work with the team to further develop this document. <u>FEEDBACK:</u> <u>Overall comments:</u> - If you haven't done so already, I would suggest consulting with the Department of Veteran's Affairs. I also think its incredibly important consider/revise the document in light of some of the early findings/commentary around the Royal Commission. I expect that there may be more public interest in this document than previous years and that it may be viewed against the Royal Commission. <u>Introduction:</u> - The role of workplaces in FDSV is two-fold. Suggest reframing the introduction to recognise the value of	The DPC has previously endorsed the Strategy, MINDP has released it and has also provided feedback on the internal Action Plan which has been addressed. Given this, significant changes are unable to be made to Defence's direction at this time. DVA have its own strategy which is closely aligned to Defence's previous strategy. There is ongoing engagement with DVA on these issues. DSS were consulted on the Action Plan to ensure its consistency with the intent of the National Plan. A number of amendments have been made in the Public Facing version to reflect DSS comments.

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Collation of Member decisions and comments			
		workplaces and organisations in: Supporting individuals: recognising, responding to and supporting those who experience FDSV Changing the story: contributing to the overall prevention of violence by (refer to the socio-ecological model of violence and recommendations from The 2021 National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS), Findings for Australia, ANROWS): - Addressing the four key gendered drivers of violence (Change the Story: A Shared Framework for the Primary Prevention of Violence against Women in Australia, Our Watch, 2021a): attitudes that condone violence against women, support rigid gender roles, tolerate disrespect or aggression towards women and endorse limits to women's decision-making and independence - Changing community attitudes towards violence	The guidance provided in the development of Defence's strategy was to focus on the perspective of the role of an employer. The authors of the strategy and action plan have consulted with Our Watch and are very familiar with the socio-ecological model of violence, along with the various other models proposed to explain FDV and IPV. Given the requested focus on Defence as an employer, the authors have also drawn on relevant literature including grey literature such as material developed by the Champions of Change Coalition.

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		against women, rejecting gender inequality and rejecting sexual violence (identified as targets/priorities in the <i>National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032</i> and supporting Outcomes Framework). c. Encouraging pro-social bystander intervention (identified as targets/priorities in the <i>National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032</i> and supporting Outcomes Framework). d. Increasing knowledge of behaviours that constitute FDSV (identified as targets/priorities in the <i>National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032</i> and supporting Outcomes Framework). The current narrative within the introduction is very employer-focused, reframing as above, would target both aspects of a workplaces' role in	

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		experiences of violence from any perpetrator, not just an intimate partner. If using this data then your statement is false as men are more likely than women to experience physical violence from any perpetrator (2 in 5 men or 42% compared with 1 in 3 women or 31%). For specific data on women's experiences of partner violence refer to the primary data source, the ABS Personal Safety Survey 2021-22, Partner Violence. There is also no recognition of First Nations men and women's experiences of violence. - Gender is a key factor contributing to people's experiences of violence, as are cultural background, age, ethnicity, gender identity and adverse childhood experiences. These are not characterised as 'issues'. <u>How do we prevent and respond to FDV</u> - It is unclear in this section whether you are talking about how defence is responding to FDV or how the Australian community as a whole is responding to FDV. - This section and the previous section would benefit from providing the data/research as a narrative rather	Obtaining a true picture of the incidence and prevalence of DV/IPV is very problematic We have used the data from AIHW in this document. We have not included First Nations data as we were asked to remove this from the previous strategy, after complaints from First Nations people. This draws on key messages from the literature.

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		than as a list. Consider the role of data insights in determining trends, patterns, at risk demographics/geographic locations etc. - On the specific point relating to focusing on <u>partner supports and community integration</u> – opportunity to align to work underway in the Recruiting and Retention (R2) initiative under Defence Families Support seeking to establish a dedicated family support strategy and associated measures underway and in development. Elements of this strategy may include initiatives associated with partner employment and childcare. <u>First action plan at a glance:</u> <u>Vision:</u> as above. <u>National Plan Domains:</u> I would agree with aligning the Defence Action plan with the National Plan domains, or even actions from the First Action Plan of the National Plan. However, you may wish to consider Defence's role in supporting some of the following: - Prevention can be defined as 'stopping violence before it starts': while it is important to 'grow our awareness of the	The action plan was developed prior to work being undertaken in the R2 initiative. As noted, the DPC and MINDP have previously endorsed or accepted Defence's First Action Plan. We have now been asked to write this as a public facing document. A narrative has been produced to explain Defence's actions but the identified actions have to align with those already agreed to by Defence and MINDP. As noted previously, the focus is on an employer's role: we aren't seeking to replicate the role of DSS. The action plan which supports Defence's strategy is one small piece of work being

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		drivers of abuse'. We may also want to consider 'supporting men and boys in developing healthy masculinities and positive supportive relationships with their male peers' and 'strengthening positive, equal and respectful relationships between all people', especially in light of the Royal Commission. I anticipate our first action plan, if publically released, may fall under scrutiny for not properly addressing these aspects of prevention. To summarise, you could reword this as: 'increase our knowledge, awareness and understanding of the factors contributing to violence, including at-risk cohorts, and support healthy, positive, equal and respectful relationships within the workplace'. o The statement on 'enhancing our understanding of influences of FDV in the Defence context' better aligns with prevention. Early intervention pertains to 'stopping violence before it escalates and preventing it from re-occurring'. Consider how we are intervening early	undertaken by Defence on culture (eg Cultural Blueprint). We are hopeful that the National Plan developed by DSS will influence some of the changes suggested.

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		and responding to early indicators of violence and abuse, for example enhancing accountability, reducing misidentification and addressing mistrust, improving our timeliness in responding to reports, encouraging and rewarding by-stander intervention. ○ Statements for response and recovery are ok. • <u>Implementation</u>: this is a vague statement that doesn't really summarise your approach to implementation. For example, what is meant by 'responding through innovation'? Would suggest revising into a clear statement that addresses your vision. If innovation is the focus then would consider this as a continued focus through 2025-26 and 2027-28 as a means to continue to explore new ways to prevent and respond to FDV. • <u>Five key approaches to operationalise the Strategy</u>: consider also providing how you would improve the overall culture across Defence, in light of the Royal Commission, and address factors influencing hegemonic masculinity (consider research by	

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		Michael Flood, Michael Salter and RW Connel). • <u>To be delivered:</u> ○ Consider how we are supporting and encouraging prosocial behaviours and by-stander intervention. Are we also training staff and middle-managers to recognise and respond to signs and symptoms, are we encouraging programs that are tailored specifically to each of the services? ○ Consider revising the third deliverable, "provide appropriate and tailored support services and/or training programs to those at-risk of or who have experienced violence and as well as those who have used violence and ensure the visibility and accessibility of these programs". <u>Action plan:</u> • <u>Action 1:</u> how will leadership encourage and 'sponsor' these initiatives and promote help-seeking behaviours. This is also a big part of communication and promotion as we	

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		know that there are multiple barriers to seeking and accessing help and support. Although you have identified this, you have not identified specific actions to address this. Communication contributes to changes in culture. We know from data on campaigns such as 'Help is Here' and 'Stop it at the Start' that appropriate promotion and advertisement works. • <u>Action 2:</u> You mention tiered-training but have not described what these tiers will be, only what research you will undertake. Will you be supporting leaders and middle-managers to actively recognise and respond to the signs and symptoms of FDV in their staff? Will you provide them with vicarious trauma training and other training that will enable them to have appropriate conversations with staff, for example Blue Knot. • <u>Action 3:</u> Again, I would think about the Royal Commission. Also consider the specific culture statements for each of the services. • <u>Action 4:</u> Do you plan to speak to, learn from and acknowledge the real-life experiences and accounts of victim-survivors? Have we considered their specific needs? Are you capturing any feedback or data on the use of	The authors have been able to hear the experiences of hundreds of victim-survivors over the past 6 years. Their commonly stated need is for the behaviour they are concerned about to stop. Invariably, they don't want to do anything that will jeopardise the alleged perpetrator's career. Many wish to remain anonymous. The action plan includes a reference to establishing a network of

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		these services and their usefulness? How will we know that our support services are actually meeting the needs of our people? Are we also focused on continuous learning and development for our support staff? Are they equipped with the right training? • <u>Action 5</u>: Healthy relationship education is important but we must not forget the role of peers in supporting a healthy and inclusive culture and the impact of hegemonic masculinity. • Embedding governance and accountability: what safeguards to we have for reporting and protecting victims? Include reference to any specific data strategy to assist in protecting victim identities. • Monitoring progress and measuring success: would we consider longer term view ie. reduced incidents (perhaps initially focussed on Victoria trial site identified under Action 2) <u>Glossary</u>: confirmed against National Plan. Nil comment.	victim-survivors to provide input into the development of specific actions and initiatives for subsequent action plans. Not in this version of the Action Plan as it is possible/likely that incident reporting will increase as a result of people becoming more aware of what FDV/IPV is and feeling empowered to report incidents and seek support.

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FAS Budgets and Financial Services (DFG)	Endorsed/ Not Endorsed Agreed / Not Agreed Noted / Please Discuss	1. Under point 11 of the brief – item b. states - <i>the need for focus on</i> There appears to be a missing statement – what is being focused on? 2. Under point 18 of the brief – Finance and Resource Implications stipulates - <i>Release of a public facing Action Plan means that there may be public expectation to deliver on any actions mentioned, which may require confirmation</i> The intent of this statement is unclear. A public facing action plan will gain greater scrutiny from the public as well as through the parliamentary process. This brief should clearly articulate the estimated cost of implementing the 5 key actions as outlined in the action plan as well as timeframes for implementation and performance measures. 3. Acronyms are not clearly articulated in full when first used in the brief. 4. There are formatting issues in the brief.	Will be rectified.
FAS Strategic Policy (SP&IG)	Endorsed/Not Endorsed Agreed / Not Agreed Noted / Please Discuss		
Group Business	Endorsed/ Not Endorsed	CASG is committed to the Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to	

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Manager Capability Acquisition and Sustainment (CASG)	Agreed / Not Agreed Noted / Please Discuss	Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028, and endorses the first action plan. CASG will continue to work with Defence personnel and their families at risk of, or affected by family and domestic violence, seeking to provide a safe and supportive workplace.	
FAS Group Operations (DDG)	Endorsed/ Not Endorsed Agreed / Not Agreed Noted / Please Discuss		
FAS Enterprise HQ (NSSG)	Endorsed/ Not Endorsed Agreed / Not Agreed Noted / Please Discuss	NIL comments.	
FAS Director-General People and Portfolio Management (ASD)	Endorsed/Not Endorsed Agreed / Not Agreed Noted / Please Discuss		
Head of Business Transformation (ASG)	Endorsed/ Not Endorsed Agreed / Not Agreed Noted / Please Discuss		
Executive Director GWEO-HQ (GWEO)	Endorsed/ Not Endorsed Agreed / Not Agreed Noted / Please Discuss	- The content of the strategy appears well researched and well-consulted on. - The presentation of the strategy and the First Action Plan flows well and is easy to comprehend. - The crucial issues appear to be well articulated and supported with	

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		relevant data and references. - The proposed public facing First Action Plan appears to offer the intended balance of being informative and managing expectations of public scrutiny of Defence actions.	
Chief Operating Officer (ASA)	Endorsed/Not Endorsed Agreed / Not Agreed Noted / Please Discuss		

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DEFENCE PEOPLE COMMITTEE

09 OCTOBER 2024

DPC 2024/118 – DEFENCE ACTION PLAN FOR PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE 2023-2028

Purpose

1. The purpose of this brief is to provide an update to DPC on the status of the draft Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence (FDV) 2023-2028 Action Plan (AP).

Recommendations

2. It is recommended that the Committee:
 - a. **Note** the update on the status of the draft Action Plan.
 - b. **Agree** that a Steering Group be established that will provide annual progress updates to the DPC.
 - c. **Note** that DPC endorsement will be sought in February 2025 on a new chapter in the CARM on Family and Domestic Violence. Once published this will replace the existing Commanders and Managers Guide to Family and Domestic Violence.
 - d. **Note** further updates to the Action Plan will consider Recommendation 102 from the Royal Commission into Defence and Veterans Suicide Report.

Background

3. The draft AP was endorsed by DPC in August 2023.
4. The AP has however undergone significant further work following feedback from OMINDP, with further feedback pending.
5. The current draft of the AP (**Attachment A**) has clearer alignment with the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032 and a greater focus on outcomes and enterprise wide accountabilities.

Next Steps and other work underway

6. It is proposed that a Steering Group be established to coordinate, monitor and lead the implementation of the Action Plan. The Steering Group will be chaired by DG DMFS with Band 1/1 Star equivalent members represented from areas identified as accountable for an identified deliverable. It is proposed that progress updates will be reported to DPC annually.
7. DMFS are continuing to work closely with several stakeholders on ongoing streams of work such as:
 - a. Department of Social Services - ensuring alignment with the National Plan Outcomes Framework and Performance Measurement Plan

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- b. Ensuring alignment across other relevant Defence Strategies including the draft Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the draft Defence and Veterans Family Wellbeing Strategy, and their associated action plans, monitoring and evaluation frameworks, benefits realisation models and lived experience frameworks.
8. DMFS are continuing to work with stakeholders to incorporate FDV policy and process as a standalone sub category under Unacceptable Behaviour in the Complaints and Resolution Manual (CARM). Once published in the CARM, the existing Commanders and Managers Guide to Family and Domestic Violence will be retired. This will be presented to the DPC in February 2025 (DPC 2024/164).
9. The inclusion of FDV as a category of UB will then enable it to be included as an incident sub-category in DECMS. This will generate improved visibility and data regarding FDV incidents; informing continued evolution of the Action Plan.
10. The FDV annual mandatory general awareness training has undergone review in response to feedback and is in the final stages of clearance.
11. Consideration of recommendation 102 *Implement and improve upon the Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence* from the Royal Commission Report is underway.
 - a. Recommendation 102a: Recognise the nexus between family violence and suicide, including the inclusion of family violence indicators within approaches to suicide prevention, and consideration of suicide risk within responses to family violence.
 - i. The Defence FDV Strategy and Action Plan can be amended to include language that demonstrates a recognition of the nexus between family violence and suicide however more analysis and consultation is required to form targeted actions to address this risk.
 - b. Recommendation 102b: Implement all recommendations made by Defence Families of Australia (DFA) in its issues paper on Australian Defence Force families and domestic violence and work collaboratively in an enduring fashion with the DFA to deliver ongoing reforms to prevent family and domestic violence and support victims of family and domestic violence.
 - i. Some of the recommendations in the Issues Paper have been implemented completely or partially. Others (e.g. recommendations relating to housing policy) require further engagement with DFA and accountable areas across Defence.

Risks and Issues

12. Key Risks include visibility of key interdependencies across broader Defence bodies of work. The establishment of a Steering Group and annual reporting to DPC will assist in mitigating these risks.

Finance and Resource Implications

13. Implementation of the AP will require commitment and application of resources from across Defence.

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Consultation

14. The draft AP has been extensively consulted with internal and external stakeholders. The following internal stakeholders were engaged seeking input from their respective Services/Groups/Areas:
- a. BRIG Bronwyn Johnstone, Chief of Staff, Defence People Group Headquarters (DPG-HQ),
 - b. s47E(d) [REDACTED], Chief of Staff, Defence Integrity Division (DID),
 - c. s47E(d) [REDACTED], Chief of Staff, Head of Business Transformation, Associate Secretary Group (ASG),
 - d. s47E(d) [REDACTED], Chief of Staff to Chief Financial Officer (CFO),
 - e. s47E(d) [REDACTED], Chief of Staff to DEPSEC Security and Estate Group (SEG),
 - f. s47E(d) [REDACTED], Chief of Staff Head Military Workforce Design, Vice Chief of the Defence Force (VCDF) Group,
 - g. s47E(d) [REDACTED], Chief of Staff to Chief of Navy, Royal Australian Navy (RAN),
 - h. s47E(d) [REDACTED], Military Assistant to the Deputy Chief of Army (Army),
 - i. s47E(d) [REDACTED], Staff Officer to Deputy Chief of Air Force, Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF),
 - j. s47E(d) [REDACTED], Research Officer, People, Policy & Employment Conditions (PPEC), Defence People Group (DPG)
 - k. s47E(d) [REDACTED], Executive Director Guided Weapons and Explosive Ordnance (GWEO) HQ,
 - l. VADM Jonathan Mead, DG Australian Submarine Agency, Australian Submarine Agency (ASA),
 - m. Ms Cassie Haynes, FAS People Services & Wellbeing, Defence People Group (DPG),
 - n. s47E(d) [REDACTED], DG Joint Transition Authority (JTA), Military Personnel Organisation (MPO),
 - o. s47E(d) [REDACTED], Director Social and Personnel Research Strategy, Defence People Intelligence and Research, Defence People Group (DPG),
 - p. Mr Michael Drew, AS Health Protection & Policy, Joint Health Command (JHC), and
 - q. Mr John Love, AS Work, Health and Safety, Defence People Group (DPG).

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15. External stakeholders include:

- a. s47E(d) [REDACTED], Defence Family Advocate, Defence Families of Australia
- b. s47E(d) [REDACTED], AS Health and Wellbeing Policy, Department of Veterans Affairs
- c. s47E(d) [REDACTED], Veteran Family Advocate
- d. s47E(d) [REDACTED], Policy Team Manager, Our Watch
- e. s47E(d) [REDACTED], Branch Manager, Prevention and Early Intervention, Department of Social Services.

AVM Lara Gunn, Head Joint Support Services Division

Paper prepared by Libby Cremen, Director General Defence Member and Family Support
18 September 2024

Attachments

- A. Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence
2023-2028 Action Plan (Draft)

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**Defence People Committee
9 October 2024
TALKING POINTS**

ITEM: DPC2024/118 – Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-28 - Update

- The purpose of this agenda item is to update the committee on the status of the Defence Action Plan to support our Strategy for preventing and responding to family and domestic violence.
- The Action Plan was to come to DPC out of session for clearance however this was overtaken by events following engagement with OMINDP. The Action Plan has undergone significant rework, and was extensively consulted internally and externally and after a number of iterations, the draft Public facing Action Plan is awaiting clearance from the Minister.
 - we expect to receive formal direction from the Minister shortly.
- The Action Plan has a total of 6 action areas aligned to the National Plan to end violence against Women and Children; gender equality, consistent evaluation frameworks, quality specialised workforce, quality services and programs, accountable behaviours and protection/safety, and sexual violence prevention. These are further broken down into specific actions and deliverables.
- Recommendation 102 of the RCDVS Report: *Implement and improve upon the Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to FDV* will inform continued development of our Action Plan.
- Actions already undertaken or underway to implement the Action Plan include:
 - The release in April 2023 of a new Defence FDV Awareness Training CAMPUS course, which is mandatory for all Defence personnel/staff (over 93,000 completions).
 - The course has been reviewed, with a new updated version to be released shortly.
 - Development of a complementary and mandatory CAMPUS FDV course for Leaders.
 - Development of a one hour online professional development course for ADF Chaplains focused on practice principles in responding, the Defence context, and referral options.

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- o Development of a training plan for DMFS frontline staff.
- Terms of Reference have been developed for a Band1/1* Steering Group to enhance governance and progress actions of the Action Plan across the enterprise. Seeking agreement for this forum to coordinate, monitor and lead implementation of the Action Plan with annual reporting back to the DPC.
- FDV will be included as a standalone sub category of Unacceptable Behaviour in future iterations of the Complaints and Resolutions Manual. This will include policy and process advice. This is scheduled to be presented to DPC in Feb 25. Once published, this will directly replace the Commanders and Managers Guide to Family and Domestic Violence.
- DMFS is engaged with Department of Social Services to ensure ongoing alignment of the Defence Action Plan with the National Plan to End Violence Against Women and children Action Plan framework, and to leverage and align with their evaluation methodologies, metrics and data sources where possible.

Prepared by: Libby Cremen, DGDMFS, 18 September 2024

Cleared by: AVM Lara Gunn, Head Joint Support Services
Division, 24 September 2024

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Notes / Outcomes

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Australian Government
Defence

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE
DEFENCE PEOPLE COMMITTEE
08 APRIL 2025

**EC25-000332 – Family and Domestic Violence Strategy / Action Plan Bi-Annual
Update - Status**

Sponsoring DPC member: Chief of Personnel, LTGEN Natasha Fox AO, CSC

SPONSORS EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose

1. To provide a progress update on implementation of the Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028 and its supporting Action Plan.

Recommendations

2. It is recommended the Committee:
 - a. **Note** activity towards the FDV Action Plan since October 2024, including initiation of the FDV Steering Group (SG) and progress against Action Plan actions 1.01, 1.04, 2.01, 5.02 and 5.04.
 - b. **Agree** course owners should align mandatory training course content, where relevant, to emphasise a 'psychologically safe workplace' as a common protective factor.

Background

3. The Minister released the FDV Strategy in November 2023.
4. The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide (RCDVS) recommended Defence implement and improve upon the Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to FDV (Recommendation 102). The recommendation includes addressing all recommendations made by Defence Families of Australia (DFA) in its issues paper on ADF Families and Domestic Violence.

Activity since October 2024 update

5. **Publication of Action Plan.** The Minister released the FDV Strategy Action Plan (the Action Plan) in December 2024. Actions align with outcomes and domains in the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2023-2033 (National Plan).
6. **Establishment of Steering Group.** The FDV Steering Group (FDV SG) was initiated on 13 March 2025 to provide governance and assurance for implementation of the FDV Strategy (Terms of Reference currently being updated post Steering Group and will be provided at a later date out of session).
7. FDV SG members were advised they are responsible for the implementation of actions under their remit either as leads or contributors in relation to the Action Plan.
8. The Action Plan Implementation Table (Attachment B) was provided to members to identify areas of responsibility for implementation and where crossover exists under their current portfolios of work and report back to the FDV Secretariat by 04 April 2025.
9. **Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.** The FDV SG members have been requested to provide feedback on the FDV Strategy Monitoring and Evaluation Framework by 18

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April 2025. The draft Monitoring and Evaluation Framework has been developed in alignment with the National Plan Outcomes Framework and the National Plan Performance Measures Plan, and has utilised guidance from the Commonwealth Evaluation Toolkit. This Framework aligns where feasible with other Defence monitoring and evaluation frameworks under development; such as the Mental Health & Wellbeing, and the Family Wellbeing monitoring and evaluation framework.

10. Progress against the Action Plan will be monitored through the FDV SG and reported to DPC every six months under agenda item 2025/156.

11. Progress of Specific Actions.

- a. Action 1.01 *identifying current enterprise-wide intersectional prevention initiatives* will be an ongoing activity as new prevention programs are developed.
- b. Action 1.04 *Update enterprise-wide FDV awareness training annually*: a revised version of the FDV Awareness Training was released in November 2024. Annual updates will follow. As of 1 January 2025, 71 per cent of Defence personnel were compliant with completion of FDV mandatory training (Attachment D).
- c. Action 2.01 *Review policy and processes for recording and reporting incidents of FDV* and Action 5.02 *Strengthen systems to improve tracking and monitoring of FDV related protection orders*: A standalone FDV incident category with supporting sub-categories has been created in the Defence Enterprise Case Management System (DECMS). Protection Order categories and sub-categories have been amended in DECMS. This will enable consistent recording and reporting of incidents. The system changes took effect on 28 February 2025 with promulgation via DEFGRAM (Attachment C).
- d. Action 5.03 *Review and update Defence policies regarding FDV*: A stand-alone FDV Chapter in the Complaints and Alternative Resolutions Manual (CARM) chapter is under development to provide clear policy guidance to assist commanders and managers responding to incidents of FDV. A supporting toolkit, including checklists, a safety plan template, and a process flowchart has been created to supplement the policy. Each of the Services have nominated units to test the chapter and toolkit for six weeks in March and April 2025. It is intended that the documents will be published in June 2025.
- e. Action 5.04 *Establish information sharing mechanisms with civilian police / firearms registry around firearms restrictions imposed within Defence*. Joint Health Command and Joint Military Policing Unit have been working to refine policy and procedures for sharing information with the civilian police firearms registry.

Risks and Issues

12. There is a risk Defence personnel, especially commanders and managers, may become overwhelmed with training where the subject matter intersects, reducing impact of key messages.
 - a. Multiple intersecting initiative have introduced mandatory training, both online and face-to-face to enhance awareness.
 - b. The underlying theme of all is that a 'psychologically safe workplace' is a protective factor. Consistency of this message across all relevant training would assist in reinforcing the key message and connecting these bodies of work.
 - i. Defence FDV Awareness Training
 - ii. Defence Youth Protection Awareness

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- iii. Defence Sexual Misconduct Foundation of Knowledge
- iv. SeMPRO AppOK: Consent Matters
- v. SeMPRO AppOK: Peer Response to a Disclosure
- vi. Defence Suicide Awareness
- vii. Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs in ADF
- viii. Work Health and Safety for all Defence Workers
- ix. Workplace Behaviour Mandatory Awareness
- x. Fraud and Integrity Awareness

13. The Action Plan was published 12 months after the FDV Strategy. Defence is aiming to implement all actions within the 2023-2028 Strategy timeframe. There is potential that some actions items may be fully implemented and evaluated within the life of the current Strategy.

Contractor Workforce

14. Nil.

Finance and Resource Implications

15. Action areas have been requested to assess their resource requirements (responses pending) for their activities in the FDV Action Plan Implementation Table (Attachment B).

Next Steps

16. The FDV SG will provide a progress report to DPC as part of future bi-annual updates.

Consultation

17. Initial consultation was conducted on the SG Terms of Reference (TORs) (Attachment A) for the establishment of the FDV SG with the former FDV WG members.

18. Further consultation has been conducted with FDV SG representatives:

- a. COS Navy Headquarters, Navy
- b. COS Army Headquarters, Army
- c. COS Air Force Headquarters, Air Force
- d. COS Joint Capabilities Group Headquarters, Joint Capabilities Group
- e. Joint Support Services Division, Defence People Group
 - i. Head Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Office, Joint Support Services Division, Defence People Group
 - ii. Provost Marshal / Commander Joint Military Policing Unit, Joint Support Services Division, Defence People Group
 - iii. Chair of ADF Financial Services Consumer Centre
- f. Assistant Secretary, Human Resource Services, Defence People Group
- g. Assistant Secretary, Work Health and Safety, Defence People Group
- h. Director People Services, Australian Submarine Agency
- i. Director, Work Health and Safety, Australian Signals Directorate

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- j. COS, Office of DEPSEC Security and Estate Group, Security and Estate Group
- k. Assistant Secretary, Financial Compliance, Defence Finance

Contact Officer: Libby Cremen, Director General Defence Member and Family Support

Authorised by: AVM Lara Gunn, Head Joint Support Services Division

Date: 19 March 2025

Attachments

- A. FDV Steering Group Terms of Reference (Draft) (Return due 04 April 2025 from FDV SG)
- B. FDV Action Plan Implementation Table (Return due 04 April 2025 from FDV SG)
- C. DEFGRAM - DECMS FDV Categories (Draft)
- D. FDV General Awareness Training Group and Service Course Completion Breakdown as at 1 Feb 2025.

FDV Action Plan Implementation Table

ID	Action Item	Deliverables	Responsible Area	Responsible Officer	Proposed Start Date	Proposed End Date
1.01	Identify enterprise-wide intersectional prevention initiatives that contribute to advancing gender equality, improving attitudes and behaviours and creating a safe work environment.	Update this Action Plan to include enterprise-wide intersectional prevention initiatives.	DMFS	EL1 FDV Implementation officer	Annual – November update	Ongoing
1.02	Explore the opportunity for Defence awarded grants to support the promotion of safe and positive experiences in the workplace that aim to support, prevent and respond to family, domestic and sexual violence.	Amendment to Financial Policy – Grants.				
1.03	Review enterprise policy and programs to assess if they could inadvertently create contexts that may contribute to increased vulnerabilities for victim-survivors, provide opportunities for use of power and control by perpetrators and/or act as barriers to accessing support (e.g. access to information, finances, housing, support services).	A consolidated report from relevant Enterprise policy, program and service owners detailing intersections with FDV and recommendations for policy and program updates.				
1.04	Update enterprise-wide FDV awareness training annually in line with industry and community best practice and in response to evaluation and feedback	Online contemporary FDV awareness training for all Defence personnel.	DMFS	EL1 FDV Implementation officer	Annual – November update	Ongoing
1.05	Deliver targeted FDV awareness campaigns and training	An awareness campaign plan for FDV prevention and awareness initiatives.				
2.01	Review policy and processes for recording and reporting incidents of Family Violence, Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence to ensure data collection is consistent and utilises consistent terminology.	Whole of Enterprise data set on Family Violence, Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence incidents for the Defence population that includes utilisation of data on veteran populations captured in the National Personal Safety Survey and aligns with the Privacy Act 1988 (cth).	DMFS	EL1 FDV Implementation officer		
2.02	Analyse current data and existing research to improve understanding of Family Violence, Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence prevalence, risk factors and priority groups within Defence.					
2.03	Undertake a whole of Enterprise risk assessment to identify and evaluate existing controls and mitigations to determine those that support the objectives of the Strategy, those that may contradict, and identify any gaps.	An Enterprise risk assessment and risk management strategy for FDV.				
3.01	Conduct a training needs analysis to determine FDV and prevention training needs for key Defence personnel that support the wellbeing of the Defence community and coordinate access to specialist FDV services (e.g. commanders and managers, health, Chaplaincy, Defence social workers, policing, military justice system). The training needs will consider suicide risk within responses to FDV.	A training needs analysis report detailing current training provided and recommendations for FDV training delivery across Defence.				
4.01	Liaise with relevant internal and external stakeholders to develop a consultation pathway that engages victim-survivors and people with lived experience and ensures that diverse lived experiences are informing policies and solutions.	A consultation pathway for victim-survivors and people with lived experience.				
4.02	Review service and referral pathway coordination to determine where services and systems need to be strengthened to best support victim-survivors, including those at risk of suicide.	An implementation plan for strengthening services, systems and referral pathways that support trauma-informed, connected and coordinated responses to FDV and Sexual Violence.				
5.01	Review of the current process for identification, notification, response and referral to intervention programs (e.g. behaviour change, mental health, alcohol, substance misuse) for respondents of alleged FDV and perpetrators of FDV in Defence.	A report detailing current processes for identification, notification, response and referral for respondents of alleged FDV and perpetrators of FDV and recommendations for future approaches (e.g. policy and Commanders and Managers Guide updates) to strengthening system and service responses to perpetrators of FDV in Defence.				
5.02	Strengthen systems to improve tracking and monitoring of FDV related protection orders.	ERP DECMS report available for commanders and managers.	DMFS / DID	EL1 FDV Implementation officer		
5.03	Review and update Defence policies regarding FDV including regarding workplace management of protection orders to ensure they can be upheld in the workplace, ensuring postings and workplace arrangements prioritise the safety of the victim.	Existing Defence policies are updated and a new Chapter of the CARM is published and publically available that communicates the Defence approach to FDV.	DMFS	EL1 FDV Implementation officer		
5.04	Establish information sharing mechanism with civilian police / firearms registry around firearms restrictions imposed within Defence.	PMKeyS amendments to enable recording of civilian firearms licenses held by Defence members. A system to notify civilian police/firearms registry of relevant Defence weapons restrictions.	JMPU & JHC			
6.01	The Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Office (1800 SeMPRO) is responsible for the delivery of services to prevent and address sexual misconduct in Defence. 1800 SeMPRO's prevention and response activities and services will form an important part of Defence's response to Family Violence, Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence. 1800 SeMPRO, as a member of the Defence FDV Steering Committee, will contribute to reporting on outcomes relevant to FDV and provide expertise on matters relating to sexual violence.		DMFS	H/SeMPRO		

Defence

DEFGRAM 138/2025

Issue date: 24 March 2025

DECMS INCIDENT REPORTING: CREATION OF FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CATEGORY

New DECMS Incident Categories have been created to improve consistency and accuracy in the recording and reporting of incidents of Family and Domestic Violence (FDV).

These changes align with the Defence Family and Domestic Violence Strategy 2023-2028 (released November 2023), the corresponding Action Plan (released December 2024), and Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide recommendations

The new FDV incident reporting categorisation changes took effect in DECMS on 28 February 2025.

- a. For general guidance on the creation and maintenance of Incident records, see the [ERP System Steps Library](#)¹.

A Commanders and Managers Guide to Responding to Family and Domestic Violence can be found on the [Responding to Family and Domestic Violence](#)² webpage. Updated guidance and a supporting toolkit for Commanders and Managers will be published in the Complaints and Alternative Resolutions Manual (CARM) by June 2025.

Main and secondary category usage for reporting on Family and Domestic Violence related matters

End Users (EUs) are to categorise the incident (using main level categories) based on the circumstances of the matter. The updated DECMS incident management categorisations are outlined in Table 1.

The classification of the four levels of categories of an incident can be changed at any time prior to closure of the incident. When there are several elements to an incident, the EU is required to determine the more serious aspects and choose the most appropriate L1 main category and identify the sub L2-L4 categories accordingly.

2. 1.
s47E(d)

3. s47E(d)

- a. For example, if a Defence member or APS employee is charged with assault and the assault is also FDV related (where a temporary protection order is granted) and there are threats of physical violence the following reporting categories would be utilised.
- b. For example, if a Defence member or APS employee is charged with assault and the assault is also FDV related (where a temporary protection order is granted) and there are threats of physical violence the following reporting categories would be utilised.

Main Category:

- L1 Civil Offence
- L2 Assault
- L3 CCIR
- L4 Notifiable

Secondary Category

- L1 Family & Domestic Violence
- L2 Issue of Protection Order
- L3 Temporary Protection Order

Additional FDV categories may be applied as relevant e.g.

- L1 Family & Domestic Violence
- L2 Physical
- L3 Threats

In terms of the FDV Incident categories, the EU will be required to make a determination of whether the incident is a main or secondary category.

ENRICHING THE DEFENCE INCIDENT

The following information is mandatory when an FDV incident is raised:

- c. the scene of incident location and any other relevant locations

- d. a support case must be created, recording all support offerings provided to the individuals involved (complainant, victim and respondent) and whether the support is accepted or declined
- e. all relevant incidents and cases where raised by other entities within Defence (e.g. JMPU) are to be linked if applicable

For any queries on FDV categorisation, please contact Defence Member and Family Support - Strategy and Policy ^{s47E(d)} [REDACTED] [@defence.gov.au](mailto:[REDACTED]@defence.gov.au).

Table 1: Family and Domestic Violence Categories

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Family & Domestic Violence	Physical	Stalking/Harassment
Family & Domestic Violence	Physical	Animal Cruelty
Family & Domestic Violence	Physical	Destruction/Damage of Property
Family & Domestic Violence	Physical	Elder Abuse
Family & Domestic Violence	Physical	Abuse
Family & Domestic Violence	Physical	Threats
Family & Domestic Violence	Physical	Other - Specified in Notes
Family & Domestic Violence	Sexual	Sexual Abuse
Family & Domestic Violence	Sexual	Sexual Harassment
Family & Domestic Violence	Sexual	Intimate Image Abuse
Family & Domestic Violence	Sexual	Other - Specified in Notes
Family & Domestic Violence	Emotional	Harassment
Family & Domestic Violence	Emotional	Restricting Freedom
Family & Domestic Violence	Emotional	Public Embarrassment
Family & Domestic Violence	Emotional	Neglect
Family & Domestic Violence	Emotional	Abuse / Threats
Family & Domestic Violence	Emotional	Other - Specified in Notes
Family & Domestic Violence	Coercive Control	Financial Control
Family & Domestic Violence	Coercive Control	Isolation
Family & Domestic Violence	Coercive Control	Other - Specified in Notes
Family & Domestic Violence	Concern for Minor Welfare	State / Territory Contact
Family & Domestic Violence	Issue of Protection Order	Protection Order
Family & Domestic Violence	Issue of Protection Order	Temporary Protection Order
Family & Domestic Violence	Breach of Protection Order	Protection Order
Family & Domestic Violence	Breach of Protection Order	Temporary Protection Order

Family and Domestic Violence related Prosecution Cases

Where a Prosecution Case is raised to manage FDV related court appearances, e.g. appearances related to protection orders, the appropriate Civil Order case category is to be utilised. To record specific outcomes of those court appearances, the

categories within Table 2 must be used. Therefore, in some FDV related cases it may be pertinent to raise two cases, one to record the protection order in place and the other to record the outcomes of any other related civilian charges if applicable.

For the issuance of a Protection Order a 'Planned Start Date' and 'Planned End Date' must be entered advising the start and finish date of the protection order.

In addition the following must be detailed in 'Notes', details of the circumstances surround the issue of the Protection Order (such as details of the complaint, dates, affidavits and court proceedings).

- f. the duration and conditions of the Protection Order
- g. whether the member is presently in possession of, or has access to, any Defence weapons, ammunition, body armour and/or explosive ordnance
- h. whether the member has any personal firearms and/or ammunition stored in any Defence armoury, magazine or other designated storage facility, and if so, their whereabouts.

Status changes of protection orders must be recorded and updated in 'Notes' including any geographic restrictions, limits or restrictions to access or possession of a weapon, cancellation, suspension or refusal of a weapon licence, permit, registration or confiscation or disposal of a weapon.

Table 2: Investigation Charge Activity - Civil Order Categories

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Civil Order	Court Appointed Order	Issue of Protection Order	Protection Order
Civil Order	Court Appointed Order	Issue of Protection Order	Temporary Protection Order
Civil Order	Court Appointed Order	Breach of Protection Order	Protection Order
Civil Order	Court Appointed Order	Breach of Protection Order	Temporary Protection Order
Civil Order	Court Appointed Order	Revocation of Protection Order	Court Revocation

For any queries on Investigative Charges or Civil Order categories please contact your local JMPU or s47E(d) [@defence.gov.au](mailto:s47E(d)@defence.gov.au) direct for guidance.

s22



Libby Cremen

Director General
Defence Member and Family Support
Branch, JSSD

Contact officer:

s47E(d)

Assistant Director Strategy and Policy
Defence Member and Family Support
Telephone: s47E(d)

4.

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Attachment E



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Defence

MINISTERIAL TALKING POINTS

Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028

Background

- The *Defence Strategy for Preventing and responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028* (the Strategy) outlines Defence's contribution to addressing family and domestic violence and builds on awareness raised, support structures developed, and cultural changes achieved through the implementation of the initial Strategy (2017-2022).
- The Strategy is underpinned by the four domains detailed in the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032*, of Prevention, Early Intervention, Response, and Recovery.
- The Strategy articulates Defence's commitment to reduce the prevalence of FDV in our society and to increase the safety, wellbeing and recovery of those affected by supporting victims and working to ensure Defence provides a safe and supportive workplace for all personnel.
- The Strategy will be supported by discrete action plans, detailing specific mechanisms to be used by the Groups and Services to realise the strategic objectives, guided by an enterprise-level plan.

Talking Points

- Family and domestic violence has no place in the Defence community.
- It is imperative Defence takes steps to actively prevent, and respond appropriately to family and domestic violence.
- Defence is committed to preventing family and domestic violence, and working with Defence members and their families to support those at risk or affected, through a range of internal and external services and support.

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- The *Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023–2028* (the Strategy), underpinned by the *National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022-2032*, outlines Defence's contribution to addressing family and domestic violence.
- The Strategy aims to contribute to a Defence community that is safe from family and domestic violence and committed to responding effectively to support those affected.

If asked: what actions has Defence taken to reduce family and domestic violence in its workforce?

- Defence is committed to building a culture of safety and support for those experiencing family and domestic violence, and ensure they have access to support mechanisms including legal advice, medical and counselling support services.

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- Defence conducts regular presentations to its staff to provide comprehensive information about how they should respond to family and domestic violence, Defence policies, and access to support services and entitlements.

If asked: how many cases of family and domestic violence have occurred in Defence over the last 5 years?

- It is widely recognised that most incidents of family and domestic violence go unreported due to fear, feelings of shame and confusion, or a reluctance to acknowledge the incident has occurred.
- Due to the complex nature of family and domestic violence including the understood underreporting of incidence, there are challenges in ensuring robust and reliable data. The Strategy and associated plans will investigate the means to collate Defence-wide data for identifying the prevalence of FDV, risk factors and evaluate the effectiveness of prevention measures and interventions.
- As part of the new Strategy, Defence is implementing a governance and reporting framework to increase understanding of the current extent and incidence in the Defence community.

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If asked: what support services does Defence provide for its workforce and their families?

- Defence has established systems, training and processes to educate our people that seek to prevent family and domestic violence.
- Defence provides a range of support services to people who are affected and that best suits their needs, including the 24/7 Defence Member and Family Helpline, access to defence social workers, emergency accommodation, the Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Office, and Australian Public Service Employee Assistance Program.

Contact officer: s47E(d)

Contact officer phone: s22

Clearance	Name	Appointment	Date and time
Cleared by: (Group/Service)	MAJGEN Wade Stothart	Head People Capability	09/03/2023
MECC Embedded Communication Director	s47E(d)	Director Enablers	28/02/2023 1331
Has a copy been provided to Defence Media for Information?	No.		

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THE HON MATT KEOGH MP
MINISTER FOR VETERANS' AFFAIRS
MINISTER FOR DEFENCE PERSONNEL

Ref No: MS23-000227

Defence Families of Australia Delegates
Defence Families Australia
advocacy@dfa.org.au

Dear Defence Families of Australia Delegates,

DFA FDV ISSUES PAPER & FDV EXPERT ADVICE ON DEFENCE FDV STRATEGY

Thank you for your correspondence of 3 March 2023 regarding the important issue of family and domestic violence within Defence.

Family and domestic violence has no place in the Australian community and it is in direct opposition to Defence values.

In finalising the Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence, the Department of Defence has sought to address your feedback on the earlier draft. Please find the final Strategy enclosed.

I note that you are a member of the Defence Family and Domestic Violence Working Group, which is the optimal forum for collaboration with Defence. I look forward to seeing the outcomes of your joint efforts in implementing the Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence.

Yours faithfully,

s22



HON MATT KEOGH MP

27 November 2023

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Australian Government
Defence

Ministerial Brief for Action

MS23-000227

FOR: Minister for Defence Personnel

Action Requested by: 27 September 2023.

INFO: Deputy Prime Minister

Reason for Urgency: Previous Strategy has expired.

CC: SEC, CDF, VCDF, ASSOC SEC, DEPSEP DP, FASMECC

DEFENCE STRATEGY FOR PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE 2023-2028

Key Issues:

The *Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028* (the Strategy) which applies to all Defence personnel, outlines the enterprise-level plan to prevent and respond to family and domestic violence (Attachments A and B).

The Strategy aligns with the four domains of the *National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children*, and embeds a principles-based approach for preventing and responding to family and domestic violence (FDV). Consultation on the Strategy occurred widely within Defence and with Defence Families Australia (DFA).

On 3 March 2023, you received correspondence from DFA regarding concerns about Defence's response to FDV (Attachment C). DFA points are addressed in the Strategy and its draft First Action Plan. The Defence FDV Working Group, of which DFA is a member, remains the optimal forum for collaboration, and Defence will continue to work with DFA to deliver the Strategy. A response letter to DFA is at Attachment D. The adjustments to this Strategy have taken time due to being briefed at the Defence People Committee to ensure broad Defence engagement and to ensure the Minister's comments were addressed.

Recommendations:

Decision

That you:

1. **note** Defence Senior Leadership has endorsed the Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028;
2. **agree** to publicly release the Strategy, with timing to be confirmed with your office; and
3. **sign** the response letter to DFA.

Noted/Please discuss

Agree/Not agreed

Signed/Not signed

as a reminder

Media Considerations:

It is anticipated the Strategy will attract media attention given current media focus on Defence's culture. If you agree to publicly release the Strategy, Defence will work with your office to develop a communication strategy. Ministerial Talking points have been provided at Attachment E.

Signature

Matt Keogh
November 2023

Minister comments:

Noted that Action Plan will also be made available on public Defence website in early 2024

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Cleared by	Justine Greig Deputy Secretary Defence People Group	Lieutenant General Natasha Fox Chief of Personnel Defence People Group
23 November 2023	s22	s22
Contact Officer		Secondary Contact
Libby Cremen Director General, Defence Member and Family Support s22		s47E(d) Director National Operations, Member and Family Support s47E(d)

Sensitivity: Yes.

Whole-of-Defence capability and safety sensitivity

1. As an employer, Defence should provide its personnel with the skills and knowledge to appropriately respond to and support people affected by FDV. If this objective is not achieved, it could lead to adverse outcomes for individuals, co-workers (including commanders and managers) and negatively impact Defence capability. The Strategy and associated action plans will provide a blueprint to address this sensitivity, by continuing to offer awareness training and 24-hour support and advice for personnel.

Whole-of-Defence reputation sensitivity

2. Allegations or cases that are high profile with associated media attention could adversely affect Defence's reputation. The findings of the Phoenix Report on Intimate Partner Violence, a research study commissioned by the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA), were presented to Defence and DVA on 23 May 2023, and are likely to receive negative media attention when publically released.
 - a. Defence recently contributed to a ministerial brief containing information on the findings and recommendations of this report, which DVA will provide to you.
 - b. Findings from this study indicate rates of Intimate Partner Violence exceed those of community samples, in families of veteran and current serving members.
 - c. While this report may result in a spotlight on rates of FDV within Defence, it will provide valuable baseline data on prevalence.
 - d. The Strategy and associated action plans will be supported by further research to provide more accurate measures of the prevalence of Intimate Partner Violence in Defence, and best practice prevention responses, to address this sensitivity.

Whole-of-Defence reputation sensitivity

3. The lived experience testimony of witnesses at the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide may lead to particular recommendations about FDV.

Whole-of-Defence reputation sensitivity

4. Emerging research on the prevalence of interpersonal violence (IPV) and family and domestic violence (FDV) in military populations has highlighted the need for development of a new Defence Strategy. This will ensure Defence provides appropriate responses to those exposed to IPV/FDV, including through the training of all personnel. The new Strategy and associated actions address this sensitivity

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Whole-of-Defence reputation sensitivity

5. The National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032 identifies military and veteran families as one of the diverse groups requiring specific attention. Having a Strategy, associated action plans and a dedicated FDV Working Group will provide mechanisms to address this sensitivity.
6. Representations by Defence interest groups and advocates regarding FDV in Defence need to continue to be addressed. DFA's correspondence of 3 March 2023 raises concerns about a lack of FDV mandatory awareness training, Defence entitlements on breakdown of relationships, and lines of effort in prevention. The Strategy and associated plans address these concerns as awareness training will be mandated, initiatives to influence prevention actioned, and a review of Defence policies intersecting with FDV will be undertaken.

Financial Impacts

7. The Strategy and its implementation are sponsored through the Defence Member and Family Support (DMFS) Branch, Military Personnel Organisation, Defence People Group, as an enterprise wide program.
8. Funding has been secured to implement the strategy

Systems/legislation/deregulation

9. No.

Consultation

10. From April 2022 members of the Defence FDV Working Group, which includes representatives from Navy, Army, Air Force, DFA, and Defence Groups, were consulted in the Strategy's development.

Attachments:

<u>Attachment A</u>	<i>Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028.</i>
<u>Attachment B</u>	<i>First Action Plan 2023 - 2024 - Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028.</i>
<u>Attachment C</u>	Correspondence from Defence Families Australia, 3 March 2023.
<u>Attachment D</u>	Draft response letter to DFA.
<u>Attachment E</u>	Ministerial Talking Points.
<u>Attachment F</u>	Minister for Defence Personnel Foreword - <i>Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028.</i>

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Response to the Minister's comments/questions about the Strategy

11. Question: The old strategy expired in 2022, a new one should already be in place. Please provide an explanation as to why this was not done.
 - a. The Strategy was dependent on the release of *The National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032*, in October 2022. On 25 November 2022, the Strategy and a draft First Action Plan (2023-2024) was submitted to the Defence Senior Leadership for endorsement.
 - b. The Senior Leadership requested amendments with respect to related cultural frameworks and definitions. Further consultation occurred across Defence with key enhancements made including re-titling, aligning with Defence's Cultural Blueprint and Safeguarding Framework, and embedding accountability through the Strategy's Governance and Reporting Framework.
 - c. An updated Strategy was considered by Senior Leadership mid-February 2023, and further adjustments were made.
12. Question: There is a need to develop a suite of supports for victims of DV who present to Defence, whether they be ADF members, partners, or family.
 - a. The Strategy (and its first Action Plan) addresses the provision of enhanced support to victim-survivors through the following actions that are associated with each of the Strategy domains.
 - i. An internal review of the intersection between FDV and specific Defence policy is due for completion in May 2024.
 - ii. Compilation of a comprehensive list of subject matter expert support services in the community is due for completion in March 2024.
 - iii. Building capability of leaders to respond to alleged FDV.
 - iv. Continued training of frontline staff to respond appropriately.
 - v. Building the capacity of the broader community to understand the specific needs of Defence victim-survivors of FDV through intersectoral collaboration.
 - b. The initiatives outlined above are part of a series of initiatives proposed to implement the Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to FDV. The First Action Plan identified commencement of preliminary work on these initiatives between July and December 2023.
 - c. Proposed initiatives to action the Strategy will incur cost with funding secured to engage external specialists to conduct and support several of these initiatives in line with current best practice. Defence will provide funding for these initiatives from the Workforce Budget FY23/24.
13. Question: There must be mandatory training for all services: a. General training for all; b. Command assistance training for all commanders.
 - a. The 2023 Mandatory Workplace Behaviour Awareness Program Campus eLearning was released to learners on 9 December 2022. It includes FDV content including what FDV is, Defence's position, behavioural indicators of exposure to FDV, and information on avenues for assistance. Mandatory training for all Services is explicitly addressed in the draft First Action Plan.

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- c. Specific FDV awareness training is currently available to all personnel, including additional presentations for commanders and managers. In April 2023 the *Defence Family and Domestic Violence Awareness Training* was released on CAMPUS. This is planned to be mandated in 2024 following further consultation with Groups and Services.
 - d. The *Commanders and Managers Presentation* will be aligned with the updated *Commanders and Managers Guide (Leaders' Guide)*, scheduled for completion December 2023. A face-to-face version of the presentation will be available in July 2024, ahead of a CAMPUS course scheduled for release in late 2024. Given the sensitive nature of the topic, it is critical to develop safeguards into training regimes to ensure the ongoing safety and wellbeing of victims.
 - e. DMFS is developing a mandatory professional development presentation for all ADF Chaplains to enhance frontline responses to FDV, and to encourage utilisation of the 24/7 Defence Member and Family Helpline (DMFH). This will ensure crisis intervention is provided within a trauma informed framework, safety planning is undertaken, and appropriate referrals are made. Improved data collection on the prevalence of DFV in the Defence community will also be facilitated, important to the development of annual action plans under the Strategy.
14. Question: There is a need to build capacity within DMFS to respond to, assist victims of DV, and connect them to services.
- a. Currently DMFS responds to victim-survivor of FDV by providing emotional support, assessing immediate needs and risk, providing information about other specialist services and developing a collaborative plan focused on prioritising safety. The Strategy and associated plans will bolster the capability of DMFS to respond and assist victims through the professional development of frontline and executive staff, and monitoring of FDV trends within Defence.
 - i. The professional development plan being implemented for frontline DMFS staff includes trauma informed practice and FDV specific training focused on current best practice. Additionally, updates to practice manuals will define required staff competencies for trauma informed practice.
 - ii. DMFS executive staff will receive professional development through attendance at nationally held FDV conferences/summit and, participation in a community-of-practice.
 - iii. DMFS executive staff will review data and trends in FDV presented issues, and use it to inform an enterprise response.
 - b. DMFS staff do not investigate allegations made about FDV. DMFS staff prioritise the safety of victims, and provide trauma informed crisis intervention, short-term emergency accommodation, and linkages to specialised community based services. This aligns with current best practice.
15. Question: The gateway through which DV services are accessed needs to have separate authorities/delegations for partners and families of ADF perpetrators. I.e. the people and systems that assist partners/families need to be different from those that service the ADF perpetrators.
- a. DMFS provides assistance to victim-survivors of FDV, independent of a member's Chain of Command. The Minister's advice will be addressed in a review of a number of Defence policies that intersect with FDV, which will provide valuable insight into how Defence might better support its personnel. Elements of the policy review have already commenced. Work on other policies requiring review will be completed by May 2024.

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- b. There are a range of civilian (i.e. 1800 RESPECT, No To Violence) and military services (i.e. DMFH, Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Office (SEMPRO), Joint Military Police Unit) which provide support to those impacted by FDV, and those using abusive behaviours. The Strategy's draft First Action Plan includes a commitment to map specialist services for victims and perpetrators across Australia, to enable frontline staff, managers and commanders to utilise optimal referral pathways.
 - c. In addition, DMFS will seek to promote an understanding in the community sector about the impacts and vulnerabilities of FDV within the Defence community.
16. Question: Must not require DV victims who are ADF members to have to disclose to chain of command, but need to provide support and DV leave in any event.
- a. Independent of the Chain of Command, family members can discuss concerns about FDV at any time through the DMFH. A team of human service professionals will provide emotional support, crisis intervention, safety planning and ongoing support options for the family member. Where appropriate, DMFH will discuss options of reporting including seeking an AVO, or escalation of concerns with the relevant service HQ.
 - b. Additionally, to promote an optimal referral pathway for families within Defence, further training for Chaplains and an updated *Commanders and Managers Guide* to FDV will focus on referring families to DMFH.
 - c. Government vetting and Command can have particular requirements in managing security and reporting, and similarly there can be different legislative requirements from states and territories. The presentation of a member experiencing FDV can be complex and the priority for frontline staff is of prioritising safety.
 - d. The *Commanders and Managers Guide* provides information about reporting requirements, safety, leave, and entitlements. As part of the update, we have identified the need for further consultation and review to ensure reporting requirements for members exposed to FDV are balanced with trauma-informed considerations.
17. Question: In respect of point 5 in MINDP's earlier comments (violence orders), the situation is different if there is a criminal conviction in respect of any domestic violence. The review mechanism in respect of whether a person is 'fit and proper' is activated in the event of a violence order or related criminal conviction.'
- a. The Military Personnel Manual (MILPERSMAN) Part 9 Chapter 4 requires members to notify command within a set timeframe of being a respondent to a Protection Order (PO) or Weapons Prohibition Order (WPO). This also requires the member to submit a change of circumstance to AGSVA.
 - b. As part of administrative action, where Command is notified of a PO or WPO, they are required to consider whether the alleged actions of the Defence member leading to the PO or WPO being issued, constitute unacceptable behaviour.
 - c. MILPERSMAN provides the instruction that: 'Commanders may issue a notice for termination when there are allegations of physical violence (including property damage), or threats of physical violence, and:
 - i. the member has been found to have committed acts of physical violence by a civil court;
 - ii. the member has admitted to the chain of command they have committed acts of physical violence that were not lawfully justified (e.g. self-defence); or

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- iii. there is evidence a member has committed acts of physical violence or property damage that were not lawfully justified’.
- d. In relation to civil offences, such as an assault conviction, MILPERSMAN provides the instruction that: ‘When a Defence member is arrested and/or charged with a civil offence, or participates in a Diversionary Program, the ADF is to be informed and is to determine whether the member remains suitable for their current employment or position.’
- e. For allegations of FDV that Command becomes aware of training, guidance and advice can be accessed as well as guidance about reporting requirements. Avenues for this from DMFS include training for Command on responding compassionately to FDV, a Leader’s Guide to Responding to FDV, and 24-hour advice from DMFS. That advice focuses on three key principles: prioritising safety for those exposed to FDV; holding the person using FDV responsible for their actions; and emphasising such behaviour does not align with Defence values.
- f. Commands requirements for the reporting of incidents is outlined the Complaints and Resolution Manual, and the Incident Reporting and Management Policy. Command can seek advice on reporting requirements from Defence Incident Record Managers including JMPU.

Strategy Background

- 18. Defence has a responsibility to prevent and mitigate the impact of FDV on its members and their families. Defence takes FDV seriously, and strives to provide considered and comprehensive guidance in these matters.
- 19. Defence did not have a discrete FDV policy or Strategy prior to 2017. While policy elements existed that guided Defence action, including reporting and management of notifiable incidents, special accommodation for emergencies, management of ADF members subject to protection orders, referral of victims to appropriate community services and the use of risk assessments for known FDV incidents, a coherent approach to preventing or responding to FDV was lacking. Subsequently, the *Defence Family and Domestic Violence Strategy (2017-2022)* was launched.
- 20. The 2017-2022 Action Plan was implemented for the five pillars of culture, communication, training, referrals and support, and policy. This included the development and delivery of awareness training to Groups and Services, a *Commanders and Managers Guide*, development of a Defence-wide Working Group, and dedicated 24-hour support, advice and information from the previously established DMFH.
- 21. The *Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023–2028* provides a blueprint for Defence to contribute to addressing FDV, and builds on awareness raised, support structures developed, and cultural changes achieved through the implementation of the initial Strategy. The Strategy is underpinned by the four domains detailed in the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032*.
 - a. Prevention;
 - b. Early Intervention;
 - c. Response; and
 - d. Recovery.
- 22. The Strategy articulates Defence’s commitment to reduce the prevalence of FDV in our society, and increase the safety, wellbeing and recovery of those affected, by supporting victim-survivor and working to ensure Defence provides a safe and supportive workplace for all personnel.

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23. A number of research papers and studies were used to develop the *Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023–2028*. DMFS can provide the complete list by separate correspondence, if required.
24. The Strategy will be supported by enterprise action plans, which will guide discrete action plans from the Groups and Services, by detailing specific mechanisms to realise the strategic objectives. The enterprise-level First Action Plan 2023–2024 was finalised at the Defence People Committee in August 2023.

QUESTION BRIEF (QB)

CONFIDENTIAL

TOPIC: Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-28

ISSUE/S OF THE DAY

- The Government recognises that our Defence personnel are our most important asset, and we value the role that our ADF families play in supporting Defence members.
 - The Government is committed to achieving our goal of ending family and domestic violence within one generation and is taking action now including in Defence through the Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-28 (the Strategy).
- Defence has a responsibility to prevent and mitigate the impact of family and domestic violence on Defence personnel including APS, contractors, and their families.
 - Defence treats family and domestic violence seriously, and provides considered and comprehensive guidance on this matter.
 - Defence provides a range of support services to victim-survivors that best suits their needs, including the 24/7 Defence Member and Family Helpline, access to Defence social workers, emergency accommodation, the Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Office, and the APS Employee Assistance Program.
 - The Strategy was released by the Minister for Defence Personnel on 30 November 2023.
 - The Strategy aligns with the National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022-32 and outlines Defence's commitment to addressing family and domestic violence.
 - The Strategy is underpinned by the four domains detailed in the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-32:
 - Prevention;
 - Early intervention;
 - Response; and
 - Recovery.

QUESTION BRIEF (QB)

CONFIDENTIAL

TOPIC: Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-28

- The Strategy aims to support those experiencing Family and Domestic violence and break down barriers that may deter victims from seeking help.
- The Strategy provides support channels for Defence personnel to access appropriate perpetrator intervention services.

If asked: About action taken by Defence to reduce family and domestic violence in its workforce

- Defence implements a culture of safety and support for victim-survivors to ensure they have access to support mechanisms including crisis intervention, safety planning and referral to specialised services.
- Defence provides regular education to Defence leaders which offers comprehensive information on: family and domestic violence; relevant policies; access to support services and entitlements; and how to respond compassionately to victim-survivors.
- Defence has implemented mandatory training for all Defence personnel to raise awareness of family and domestic violence, how to respond and the supports available. To date over 83,000 personnel have completed the training (69 percent of all ADF Service Categories and APS staff).

If asked: About the number of cases of family and domestic violence which have occurred in Defence over the last five years

- Defence monitors the access of its services and notes that as at 19 August 2024, six people have accessed short term emergency accommodation provisions in 2024-25.
- Short term emergency accommodation provision can be accessed in situations where a member or member's family is under threat of a domestic crisis or experiencing a domestic crisis.

Financial Year	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 FYTD	Total
Number	29	10	14	16	6	75
Expenditure	\$37,049	\$14,359	\$8,556	\$13,653	\$3,576	\$77,193

QUESTION BRIEF (QB)

CONFIDENTIAL

TOPIC: Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-28

BACKGROUND AND CHRONOLOGY

- Defence did not have a discrete family and domestic violence policy or Strategy prior to 2017. The Defence Family and Domestic Violence Strategy (2017-2022) was launched in 2017. The 2017-22 Action Plan was implemented with measures addressing the five pillars of culture, communication, training, referrals and support, and policy.
- Defence has developed and delivered awareness training to Groups and Services; a Commanders and Managers Guide; specialised training including risk assessments and safety planning for front-line workers; and dedicated 24-hour crisis intervention, advice and information.
- The Strategy provides a blueprint for Defence to address family and domestic violence, and builds on awareness raised, evidence-based support structures developed, and cultural changes achieved through the implementation of the initial Strategy.
- The Strategy articulates Defence's commitment to reduce the prevalence of family and domestic violence in our society, and increase the safety, wellbeing and recovery of those affected, by supporting victim-survivors and working to ensure Defence provides a safe and supportive workplace for all personnel.
- Actions undertaken to support Defence's new Strategy will include further work on the identification and amelioration of institutional structures, practices and behaviours within the Defence culture which may contribute to gender inequality, discrimination and violence.
- A number of research papers and studies were used to develop the Strategy.
- The enterprise-level Action Plan for the Strategy is on-track for public release in Quarter 3, 2024.

QUESTION BRIEF (QB)

CONFIDENTIAL

TOPIC: Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-28

MEDIA

<u>Date</u>	<u>Outlet</u>	<u>Reporting</u>
		<i>Nil relevant media reporting from past 7 days.</i>

Lead Division

Contact: Air Vice-Marshal Lara Gunn

Phone: s22

Action Officer: s4 / E(d)

Division: Head Joint Support Services Division

Date first prepared: 1 February 2024

Date last Updated: 19 August 2024

Originating Source: MO

Contributing Division/s

Contact: Nil

Phone:

Division:

Action Officer:

Date first prepared: 1 February 2024

Date last Updated: 19 August 2024

Budget Estimates 5-6 June 2024

Last updated: 30 May 2024

Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence Strategy 2023-28

Key witnesses: Lieutenant General Natasha Fox AO CSC; Air Vice-Marshal Lara Gunn CSM.

Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence Strategy 2023-28

Handling Note:

- Chief of Personnel, Lieutenant General Natasha Fox AO CSC, to lead on this topic.
- Head of Joint Support Services Division, Air Vice-Marshal Lara Gunn CSM, to support on this topic.

Key Messages

- The Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-28 (the Strategy) aligns with the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-32 and outlines Defence's commitment to addressing family and domestic violence.
- The Strategy was released by the Minister for Defence Personnel on 30 November 2023.
- The Strategy is underpinned by the four domains detailed in the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032: Prevention, Early Intervention, Response and Recovery.
- The Strategy builds on the initial Defence Family and Domestic Strategy 2017-2022 which focused on raising awareness and understanding of family and domestic violence in Defence workplaces through providing specialist training to welfare personnel, and the implementation of policies focused on supporting Defence personnel experiencing family and domestic violence.
- The Strategy will be supported by an action plan that details targeted actions that align with the National Plan and Outcomes Framework.

Talking Points

- Family and domestic violence is incompatible with Defence values and behaviours.
- Defence is committed to preventing family and domestic violence, and working with Defence members and their families to support those at risk or affected, through a range of internal and external services and support.
- Defence released its Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028 on 30 November 2023.
- This is the second Defence Strategy following the first Defence Family and Domestic Violence Strategy 2017-2022.
- The Strategy aligns with the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-32, and outlines Defence's contribution to addressing family and domestic violence.

Prepared By:

Name: Ms Libby Cremen

Position: Director General Defence Member and Family Support

Division: Military Personnel

Phone: s22

Cleared By:

Name: Lieutenant General Natasha Fox AO CSC

Position: Chief of Personnel

Group/Service: Defence People Group

Phone: s22

Budget Estimates 5-6 June 2024

Last updated: 30 May 2024

Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence Strategy 2023-28

Key witnesses: Lieutenant General Natasha Fox AO CSC; Air Vice-Marshal Lara Gunn CSM.

- The Strategy articulates Defence's commitment to prevent family and domestic violence in our society and to increase the safety, wellbeing and recovery of those affected by supporting victims and working to ensure Defence provides a safe and supportive workplace for all personnel.

Facts and Figures

- Prior to 2022-23, family and domestic violence did not have its own budget line/allocation in Defence Member and Family Support. The majority of costs were related to travel to provide family and domestic violence briefings to Command and to attend conferences.
- The Strategy's Action Plan activities will seek to improve Defence's understanding of family and domestic violence expenditure as a measurement of performance.

Financial Year	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	FYTD	Total
Budget	0	0	0	\$95,000	\$80,000	\$175,000
Expenditure	0	0	0	\$78,704	\$1,882	\$80,586

- Defence provides a short-term accommodation provision under Defence's Special Accommodation for Emergencies Scheme (SAFE) in situations where a member or member's family are under threat of a domestic crisis or threat of a domestic crisis.
- Over the last five years, the SAFE provision has been used 87 times with an additional 11 utilised in 2023-24 as at 1 May 2024.

Financial Year	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	FYTD	Total
Number	23	29	10	14	11	87
Expenditure	\$17,024	\$37,049	\$14,359	\$8,556	\$8,053	\$85,041

If pressed: how many cases of family and domestic violence have occurred in Defence over the last five years?

- It is widely recognised that most incidents of family and domestic violence go unreported due to fear, feelings of shame and confusion, or a reluctance to acknowledge the incident has occurred.
- Due to the complex nature of family and domestic violence, including the understood underreporting of incidence, there are challenges in ensuring robust and reliable data.

Prepared By:

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Division: Military Personnel

Phone: S22

Cleared By:

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Position: Chief of Personnel

Group/Service: Defence People Group

Phone: S22

Budget Estimates 5-6 June 2024

Last updated: 30 May 2024

Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence Strategy 2023-28

Key witnesses: Lieutenant General Natasha Fox AO CSC; Air Vice-Marshal Lara Gunn CSM.

If pressed further:

- The below table includes the number of contacts relating to family and domestic violence per year with Defence Member and Family Support:

Financial Year	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Start 2022 calendar year: Whole of DMFS information system (IMS) implemented.	2022-23	FYTD	Total
Contact via telephone re: family and domestic violence to Defence Member and Family Helpline	182	101	97		X	X	380
Contact via form (AC698) request for DMFS services	Not recorded	45	34		X	X	79
Number of intakes containing family and domestic violence as a presenting issue (via IMS)	Not recorded				112	138	250

If asked: what actions has Defence taken to reduce family and domestic violence in its workforce?

- Successfully preventing family and domestic violence relies on a number of approaches.
- Defence's initial Strategy focused on culture, communication, increasing awareness across Defence through training and establishing referral and supports mechanism for victim-survivors including:
 - establishing a 24/7 Defence Member and Family Helpline
 - access to Defence social workers, legal advice, medical and counselling support services
 - access to emergency accommodation
 - safety planning, and
 - referral to specialised services.
- Defence has developed and delivered awareness training to Groups and Services; a Commanders and Managers Guide; specialised training including risk assessments and safety planning for front-line workers; and dedicated 24-hour crisis intervention, advice and information.

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Budget Estimates 5-6 June 2024

Last updated: 30 May 2024

Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence Strategy 2023-28

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- Defence provides regular education to its Defence leaders which offer comprehensive information on family and domestic violence, relevant policies, access to support services and entitlements, and responding compassionately and in a trauma-informed way to victim-survivors.
- **Research:** A number of research papers and studies were used to develop the Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023–2028.
- Defence remains focused on developing targeted prevention and behaviour change programs and further research is planned to identify institutional structures, policies, practices and behaviours within the Defence context which may contribute to gender inequality, vulnerabilities and violence.
- **Education / training:** Defence conducts regular presentations to its staff to provide comprehensive information about how they should respond to family and domestic violence, Defence policies, and access to support services and entitlements.
- Defence has recently mandated that all Defence personnel complete online Family and Domestic Violence Awareness Training. The training package provides Defence personnel with an awareness of family and domestic violence, signs of healthy and unhealthy relationships and an understanding of how to respond to and support someone who is impacted by family and domestic violence including what supports are available within and external to Defence. As at 1 May 2023, 36,355 personnel had completed the online awareness training, which was initially released in April 2023.
- **Advice and information:** Defence offers 24-hour support, advice and information for members, their families and Command, while also promoting help seeking. This assistance is responsive to concerns members of the Defence community may have at any stage about healthy and safe relationships, through to concerns about managing safety where there are concerns of family and domestic violence.
- **Data improvement:** Data collection and analysis capabilities within Defence will continue to be strengthened with the implementation of the Case Management System module of the Enterprise Resource Planning System.
- Tranche 2 Case Management Solution introduces a simplified, integrated and standardised case management system which will be used for entering, tracking, resolving and reporting personnel related cases – including family and domestic violence data.
- Defence is developing an integrated workplace behaviours, culture, and integrity reporting capability through the Defence ERP program. It is anticipated that the reporting capability will integrate multiple sources of data – psychosocial, cultural, case management, complaints, and integrity – for the purposes of enabling unacceptable behaviour prevention, detection and response. This integrated reporting capability will

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Group/Service: Defence People Group

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Budget Estimates 5-6 June 2024

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Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence Strategy 2023-28

Key witnesses: Lieutenant General Natasha Fox AO CSC; Air Vice-Marshal Lara Gunn CSM.

enable proactive identification and mitigation of behavioural integrity issues from the enterprise to command level, and across demographics.

If pressed: How is Defence responding to the recent report which indicated that that Intimate Partner Violence is a significant issue of concern within the Australian military and veteran populations?

- . The report identified the need to conduct further research to improve Defence's understanding of family and domestic violence prevalence, risk factors, reform areas, priority groups and emergent trends and issues in the Defence community.
- . As an employer, Defence has a moral and legal duty of care for our personnel. We also recognise a responsibility to families.
- . Defence is committed to reducing the prevalence and impact of family and domestic violence and increasing the safety and wellbeing of those affected.
- . Defence acknowledges that military specific factors can create contexts:
 - where Family and Domestic Violence could arise,
 - that could increase vulnerability for victim-survivors, and
 - that could provide barriers to accessing support.
- . This informed the development of the Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023–28.
- . The Strategy and its associated action plan will seek to address this as a key action item, using insights gained from research to inform development of targeted initiatives to address family and domestic violence in the Defence context.

If pressed: what support services does Defence provide for its workforce and their families?

- . Defence provides a range of support services to people who are affected and that best suits their needs, including:
 - the 24/7 Defence Member and Family Helpline;
 - access to Defence social workers;
 - emergency accommodation (Special Accommodation for Emergencies (SAFE) expenditure for 2023-24 as at 1 May 2024 is \$8,053);
 - the Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Office; and
 - The Australian Public Service Employee Assistance Program.

Background

- . Defence did not have a discrete family and domestic violence policy or Strategy prior to 2017. Policy elements existed that guided Defence action, included;
 - reporting and management of notifiable incidents;
 - special accommodation for emergencies;
 - management of ADF members subject to protection orders;

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Position: Director General Defence Member and Family Support

Division: Military Personnel

Phone: s22

Cleared By:

Name: Lieutenant General Natasha Fox AO CSC

Position: Chief of Personnel

Group/Service: Defence People Group

Phone: s22

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Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence Strategy 2023-28

Key witnesses: Lieutenant General Natasha Fox AO CSC; Air Vice-Marshal Lara Gunn CSM.

- referral of victims to appropriate community services; and
 - the use of risk assessments for known family and domestic violence incidents.
- The 2017-22 Action Plan was implemented for the five pillars of culture, communication, training, referrals and support, and policy. This included the development and delivery of awareness training to Groups and Services, a Commanders and Managers Guide, development of a Defence-wide Working Group, and dedicated 24-hour support, advice and information from the previously established Defence Member and Family Helpline.
- Department of Veterans Affairs commissioned Phoenix Australia to undertake a study on Intimate Partner Violence in Defence and Veteran populations. The report was released on 29 November 2023.
- The Intimate Partner Violence study was based on analyses of survey data from the Transition and Wellbeing Research Program in 2015. The data set included 2,881 ADF members who had recently transitioned from the regular ADF between 2010 and 2014 and 6,246 permanent, full-time current serving members at that time. A sub-sample of 266 transitioned personnel who provided consent for their responses to be linked with data from family members comprised a 'couple's dataset'

Supporting Information

Questions on Notice

- No QoNs asked.

Freedom of Information (FOI) Requests

- No FOIS requested.

Recent Ministerial Comments

- The Minister for Defence Personnel and Veterans' Affairs released a [media statement](#) launching the Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-28 on 30 November 2023.

Relevant Media Reporting

- On Wednesday 6 December 2023, The Daily Telegraph's Gwen Cherne reported [to end domestic violence we need men to be part of the conversation](#). We need them to feel like they can come forward when they are victims and when they need to seek help or support without fear of judgement or shame. There has to be space for rehabilitation, healing, and self-improvement.

Prepared By:

Name: Ms Libby Cremen

Position: Director General Defence Member and Family Support

Division: Military Personnel

Phone: s22

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Name: Lieutenant General Natasha Fox AO CSC

Position: Chief of Personnel

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Phone: s22

Budget Estimates 5-6 June 2024
Last updated: 30 May 2024
Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence Strategy 2023-28
Key witnesses: Lieutenant General Natasha Fox AO CSC; Air Vice-Marshal Lara Gunn CSM.

- On Thursday 7 December 2023, The Mandarin’s Renee Wilson reported that Defence’s strategy, released on 30 November, to combat family and domestic violence doesn’t go far enough. The article states that the [strategy does not address the difference between the military and civilian divide](#) and does not discuss how that will be addressed.

Division: Joint Support Services	
PDR No: SB24-000263	
Prepared by: Ms Libby Cremen Director General Defence Member and Family Support Mob: s22 Ph: s47E(d) Date: 29 May 2024	Cleared by Division Head: Air Vice-Marshal Lara Gunn CSM Head Joint Support Services Defence People Group Mob: s22 Ph: s47E(d) Date: 30 May 2024
Cleared by Deputy Secretary (or equivalent Band 3/3*): Lieutenant General Natasha Fox AO CSC Chief of Personnel Defence People Group Date: 30 May 2024	
☒ I confirm that all information in this brief is suitable for public release	
☒ I confirm this brief follows the template guidance and checklist	

Prepared By: Name: Ms Libby Cremen Position: Director General Defence Member and Family Support Division: Military Personnel Phone: s22	Cleared By: Name: Lieutenant General Natasha Fox AO CSC Position: Chief of Personnel Group/Service: Defence People Group Phone: s22
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Defence Family and Domestic Violence Steering Group

TERMS OF REFERENCE

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Author	Defence Member and Family Support – Strategic Policy Directorate
Owner	Director General Defence Member and Family Support
Objective ID	BN98472113
File Name	Defence Family and Domestic Violence Steering Group – Terms of Reference

Reviews and Approvals

This document has been reviewed and approved by the personnel listed in the below table. Evidence of the approvals must be retained in accordance with Information Management policy.

Name	Title	Date	Role
FDV SG	Members	18.06.2025	Permanent Members

Summary of Changes

Version	Details	Author	Date

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CONTENTS

PURPOSE	4
COMPOSITION AND OPERATION	5
Membership.....	5
Responsibilities of the Chair	6
Responsibilities of FDV SG Members.....	6
Contestability.....	7
FDV SG direction and powers	7
FDV SG PROCESSES	8
Meeting frequency	8
Out of session management.....	8
Below the line management	8
Secretariat.....	8
Agenda.....	8
Supporting materials.....	9
Minutes.....	9
Actions	9
Record keeping	9

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PURPOSE

1. The Defence Family and Domestic Violence Steering Group (FDV SG) supports the Chief of Personnel in their responsibilities to deliver joint policy and assure appropriate governance for preventing and responding to Family and Domestic Violence in Defence. The FDV SG provides a formal mechanism for consultation, cooperation and coordination on enterprise wide gaps, risks, issues and opportunities that affect implementation of the Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028 (the Strategy) and subsequent Action Plan and Defence's support to the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032 objectives.
2. The primary role of the FDV SG is to lead and monitor the implementation of the Strategy, ensuring the execution of the Australian National Action Plan (NAP) to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032.
3. Key functions of the FDV SG are:
 - a. Governance:
 - (1) Providing strategic guidance and policy direction for FDV within Defence.
 - (2) Ensuring alignment of FDV activities with broader Defence Strategies, objectives and activities.
 - (3) Identifying and harmonising FDV-related processes and procedures across Defence.
 - (4) Monitoring progress against FDV planned activities as articulated in the Action Plan.
 - (5) Ensuring a focus on National Plan Objectives, priorities, performance and risk in relation to FDV activities is maintained.
 - (6) Escalating risks, issues and opportunities (through Head Joint Support Services Division) to the Defence People Committee.
 - b. Assurance:
 - (1) Assessing Defence's performance against the Strategy, Action Plan and wider NAP.
 - (2) Providing an annual report to Defence People Committee (DPC)
 - c. Continuous improvement:
 - (1) Inspiring creative solutions to and innovation aimed at, advancing the implementation of Australia's NAP to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032 within Defence.
 - (2) Strengthening linkages between critical stakeholders to ensure a One Defence approach to the implementation of the Strategy.

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COMPOSITION AND OPERATION

Membership

4. The FDV SG is chaired by the Director General of Defence Member and Family Support (DGDMFS) and consists of members from each Group and Service. In DGDMFS's absence, another delegate nominated by DGDMFS, may chair the meeting.

5. The following are permanent members of the FDV SG:

- a. Director General Defence Member and Family Support (Chair)
- b. Chief of Staff Navy Headquarters, Navy
- c. Chief of Staff Army Headquarters, Army
- d. Chief of Staff Air Force Headquarters, Air Force
- e. A/S Financial Compliance, Defence Finance Group
- f. A/S Human Resource Services, Defence People Group
- g. A/S Work Health and Safety, Defence People Group
- h. Chair ADF Financial Services Consumer Centre, Joint Support Services Division, Defence People Group
- i. Provost Marshal ADF and Commander JMPU, Joint Support Services Division, Defence People Group
- j. Chief of Staff Joint Capabilities Group, Joint Capabilities Group
- k. A/S Program Management and Governance Branch (PM&G), Security and Estate Group, Associate Secretary
- l. Chief of Staff Defence People Group, Defence People Group
- m. Assistant Secretary People System and Payroll Services Branch, Defence People Group
- n. Chief Information Security Officer, Defence Cyber and Information Assurance Branch
- o. Commanding Officer Australian Defence Force Academy, Australian Defence Force Academy
- p. Director General People Policy and Employment Conditions Branch, Defence People Group
- q. Director General Mental Health and Wellbeing, Defence People Group
- r. Chief of Staff, Military Personnel Division

The following are Subject Matter Experts (SME) members of the FDV SG, who have discretion to attend based on each meeting's agenda or as requested by the Chair:

- a. Director Military Administration and Discipline Law, Joint Support Services
- b. Deputy Program Director, ERP Capability Executive Team, Defence Digital Group
- c. Assistant Director General People Services ASA, Australian Submarine Agency
- d. Assistant Director General Work Health and Safety, Australian Signals Directorate

6. The FDV SG will have external representation from other Government Departments / Agencies or external service providers on an invitation only basis. This may include: Our Watch, Defence Families of Australia (DFA), Department of Social Services (lead on the

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National Plan), and the Attorney General's Department (lead on National Domestic Violence Order Scheme - NDVOS).

7. Only a person acting officially in the position of the member may represent FDV SG members. When a FDV SG member is unavailable to attend a meeting and there is no official acting arrangement in place, an alternative representative may attend only with the Chair's pre-approval, sought via the Secretariat.

8. The Chair may invite personnel to attend meetings in order to make presentations or to participate in FDV SG deliberations.

Responsibilities of the Chair

9. The Chair is responsible for the leadership of the FDV SG through demonstration of the [Defence Values and Behaviours](#).

10. The Chair's responsibilities include:

- a. Ensuring FDV SG members remain focused on achieving Defence outcomes
- b. Making decisions that fall within the remit of the FDV SG and are outside the remit of an individual member's accountabilities
- c. Instructing FDV SG members to raise relevant issues at FDV SG meetings
- d. Encouraging FDV SG member contributions in open and constructive deliberations;
- e. Approving FDV SG administrative instruments, item papers and outcomes
- f. Managing conflicts of interest in accordance with Defence Instruction (General) Personnel 25-6 – *Conflicts of interest and declarations of interest*.

11. As the FDV SG considers matters and issues as a whole, the Chair's role is to summarise the thoughts of the FDV SG, seek a broad range of views to reach robust decisions and explicitly navigate through the recommendations presented to the FDV SG.

12. The Chair will ensure that outcomes and actions generated by the FDV SG are explicit and linked to an action officer and timeframe in order to support effective secretariat functions. The Chair will also ensure FDV SG members are aware of actions arising from the meeting and their individual responsibilities in relation to those actions.

13. The Chair will determine whether issues discussed during SG meetings need to be brought to the attention of other Defence forums.

Responsibilities of FDV SG Members

14. FDV SG members are to contribute through demonstration of Defence Values and Behaviours.

15. The FDV SG subscribes to conflict of interest principles set out in the Integrity Policy. This is linked to Defence Instruction (General) Personnel 25-6.

16. For the purpose of this Terms of Reference, the responsibilities and obligations assigned to FDV SG members are also applicable to invited guests. The FDV SG will consist of Band 1/ 1 Star (or equivalent) representatives across Groups and Services and will be responsible for:

- a. Leading the delivery of FDV programs, projects and initiatives

17. Providing assurance to the Defence People Committee (DPC) that the enterprise is efficiently executing assigned work packages in response to the FDV Action Plan and in

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alignment with the Defence Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence 2023-2028

- a. Providing assurance to Groups and Services that programs, projects and initiatives are considerate of the needs of their respective workforce, are of suitable quality, and are fit for purpose.
- b. Provide oversight of cross-departmental coordination of the Strategy.
- c. Shaping the priority of effort and output of the FDV Action Plan with endorsed projects, policies and initiatives aligned to the enterprise Strategy.
- d. Evaluating the feasibility and value proposition of projects, policies and initiatives to deliver on the FDV Action Plan and NAP including where these are Service, Branch or Enterprise specific.
- e. Considering research findings and subsequent translation of opportunities across the enterprise.
- f. Supporting a bottom up approach to identification of projects, policies and initiatives that align to the FDV Strategy.

Contestability

18. FDV SG members are to offer challenging ideas in a constructive and respectful manner, trusting that other members will do the same.
19. Individual and shared accountabilities of the FDV SG members are to be recognised and respected; as such members are to seek assurances on issues where there are interdependencies prior to FDV SG consideration.
20. All agenda items must be sponsored by a FDV SG member. FDV SG members are accountable for the information they provide to the FDV SG and need to provide assurances that information around interdependencies and implications of implementation, including resourcing, have been properly considered through consultation.
21. FDV SG members are to provide transparency of judgements, processes and risks of the proposal being considered.

FDV SG direction and powers

22. The FDV SG is a decision-making forum. It is empowered to make decisions affecting the Defence implementation of the Strategy and to direct Enterprise efforts, and its decisions are binding across the Defence organisation.
23. To support a One Defence approach, the FDV SG is to coordinate its efforts with related committees – in particular the Defence People Committee (DPC). Where there is potential for significant impacts on or across the Enterprise these must be escalated to the appropriate committee, or relevant group or service as determined by the Chair.
24. The FDV SG may receive direction from a higher tier enterprise committee, whenever it is lawful and reasonable to do so. The higher committee may direct the timeframe in which the FDV SG is to meet requests for documentation or information, which is to be provided to the Chair of the higher tier committee through the Secretariat.
25. There are no formal sub-committees for the FDV SG.

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FDV SG PROCESSES

Meeting frequency

26. The FDV SG is to convene bi-annually, generally in March and September. The Chair may convene additional meetings on an 'as needed' basis to progress critical and/or urgent issues affecting the Enterprise, or seek out-of-session consideration from FDV SG members.

Out of session management

27. Items may be considered out-of-session by exception, at the Chair's discretion.

Below the line management

28. Items not requiring a decision by the FDV SG (for noting only) will be considered below-the-line by default unless directed by the Chair.

29. FDV SG members are provided with an opportunity to discuss below-the-line items during *other business* at the conclusion of the formal agenda.

30. If the below-the-line items are not raised for discussion, the paper recommendations are considered supported or noted in the meetings outcomes.

Secretariat

31. The Strategy and Policy Team of the Defence Member and Family Support Branch (DMFS), Defence People Group (DPG) administers the Secretariat.

32. The Secretariat is responsible, in consultation with the Chair, for setting meeting dates, issuing invitations (including to agreed guests), compiling and distributing meeting packs and other FDV SG administration such as distributing outcomes.

- a. The meeting agenda is to be distributed to members no later than five working days prior to the meeting.
- b. Draft meeting minutes are to be distributed to FDV SG members no later than five business days after the meeting.
- c. Meeting minutes are to be finalised within ten business days after the meeting.
- d. FDV SG Terms of Reference (TORs) are to be reviewed annually or in accordance with changes to the Enterprise Committee Framework as required.

Agenda

33. The Chair or their delegate will agree to the agenda managed by the Secretariat. Any requested changes to an agenda must be approved by the Chair or their delegate, via the Secretariat.

34. All agenda items must be sponsored by a FDV SG member.

35. The format for 'as needed' FDV SG meetings will be tailored to the discussion topic/s. In the event an 'as needed' meeting is not possible, agenda items may be considered out-of-session by electronic or other means.

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Supporting materials

36. Meeting papers are to be submitted to the FDV SG Secretariat ten working days prior to the meeting date.
37. The cleared agenda and supporting materials for regular meetings will be distributed by the FDV SG Secretariat at least one week (five business days) before each meeting. Supporting material for 'as needed' meetings will be provided as early as practicable.
38. Areas sponsoring items for FDV SG consideration are responsible for drafting supporting materials, in line with Secretariat guidance, within requested timeframes. Sponsoring areas are to use the Secretariat-provided templates for supporting materials.
39. Where possible all supporting material should be developed, submitted, and distributed electronically on the DPE.

Minutes

40. The Secretariat will draft minutes, capturing decisions and incorporating actions that clearly identify the SG member, or invited guest, responsible for delivery and the timeframe to fulfil the action/s.
41. The Chair will have the final say on draft outcomes and actions and will engage with relevant FDV SG member(s) in the instances where outcomes are contested.
42. The outcomes are to be released no later than five business days following each meeting, and will include actions required of FDV SG members. The outcomes will also record all members who attended or observed the meeting.

Actions

43. The Secretariat will maintain a register of outstanding actions that will be tabled as a standing item at the FDV SG.
44. FDV SG members are to ensure that decisions and actions arising from the FDV SG are implemented where they fall to their areas of accountability. Action officers are responsible for advising the respective Secretariat when an action is complete, with sufficient detail to enable verification, so the register of decisions and actions can be updated.
45. Where a member seeks to change an agreed action, the change is to be raised in session for consideration by the forum.
46. Only the Chair can close an action.

Record keeping

47. The Secretariat is to maintain records in accordance with the Department's Records Management Policy, its obligations under the Archives Act 1983 and Section 37 of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013.
48. The Secretariat may electronically record the meetings, provided the room permits electronic devices and all members agree at the commencement of each meeting.

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