

Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Cross Agency Working Group - Communique

Meeting 20 of the Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence (DFSV) Cross Agency Working Group (CAWG) was held in Darwin on 29 August 2023. The meeting was attended by representatives from the:

- Domestic and family violence networks in Darwin, Alice Springs, Big Rivers, Barkly and the Top End Remote Safe House network;
- Northern Territory Council of Social Service (NTCOSS), Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance Northern Territory (Northern Territory (NT) (AMSANT) and the NT Legal Assistance Forum;
- Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities (the Department), the Department of the Attorney-General and Justice (AGD), NT Correctional Services, NT Health, NT Police, Fire and Emergency Services (NTPFES), and the Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet. The Department of Education were an apology.

Coronial Inquests

The current Coronial Inquests into the deaths of four Aboriginal women killed by their partners were acknowledged. Members were invited to reflect on the process, noting the impact this has had on members with some providing evidence to the Coroner.

Update from Non-Government Organisation (NGO) members

NGO representatives reported on current activity and issues, including:

- Raising challenges with service resourcing and need for appropriate investment, with reduced service capacity as a result of NT Government budget and indexation decisions;
- The evidence submitted to the Coroner in the recent inquests and the need for further information to support advocacy efforts;
- Challenges with sector staffing recruitment and retention;
- Feedback on the *Domestic and Family Violence Act Amendment Bill*;
- Feedback on Correction's processes regarding prisoner release and engagement with stakeholders to ensure victim survivor safety.

Aboriginal Advisory Board (AAB) update to CAWG

The attending Aboriginal Advisory Board member provided an update, noting the Board has had two meetings thus far, focussing on establishing the identity of the Board. A key responsibility of the AAB will be the development of a DFSV Aboriginal Prevention Initiative under Action Plan 2. Further work will be undertaken to ensure there are strong governance connections between CAWG and the AAB.

Update from the DFSV-Interagency Coordination Reform Office (DFSV-ICRO)

A presentation was provided on the key deliverables of the DFSV-ICRO achieved by 30 June 2023, including:

- Establish Aboriginal Advisory Group on DFSV
- Development of DFSV Monitoring, Evaluation and Accountability Plan
- Mapping and analysis of all DFSV investment and gaps

Katherine Local Reference Group T Tennant Creek Local Reference Group Top End Remote Safe House Network NT Legal Assistance Forum



- Development of Budget Cabinet Submission and draft Action Plan 2
- Jurisdictional audit and development of ongoing mechanism

Action Plan 2 has been finalised and implementation will be underpinned by the Monitoring, Evaluation and Accountability Plan (MEAP). [Action Plan 2](#), the [DFSV Mapping Report](#) and the [Monitoring, Evaluation and Accountability Plan](#) are now available online.

An overview of the proposed DFSV-ICRO structure and governance to oversee Action Plan 2 were presented.

Guest Presentation: Dr Peter Stephenson, Action Plan 1 Review Governance Findings

Dr Peter Stephenson provided an overview of the key findings from Action Plan 1 Review as related to DFSV governance. Members agreed to establish a sub-committee to focus on reviewing the CAWG Terms of Reference in light of the Action Plan 1 findings, and to determine an appropriate governance structure for the implementation of Action Plan 2.

Update from Northern Territory Government Agencies

Written updates on new actions committed to under [Action Plan 2](#) will be provided to members out of session, noting the early stages of implementation.

Next meeting

The next CAWG meeting will be held in early December 2023.

For more information about the CAWG, contact the DFSV-ICRO on dfv@nt.gov.au.