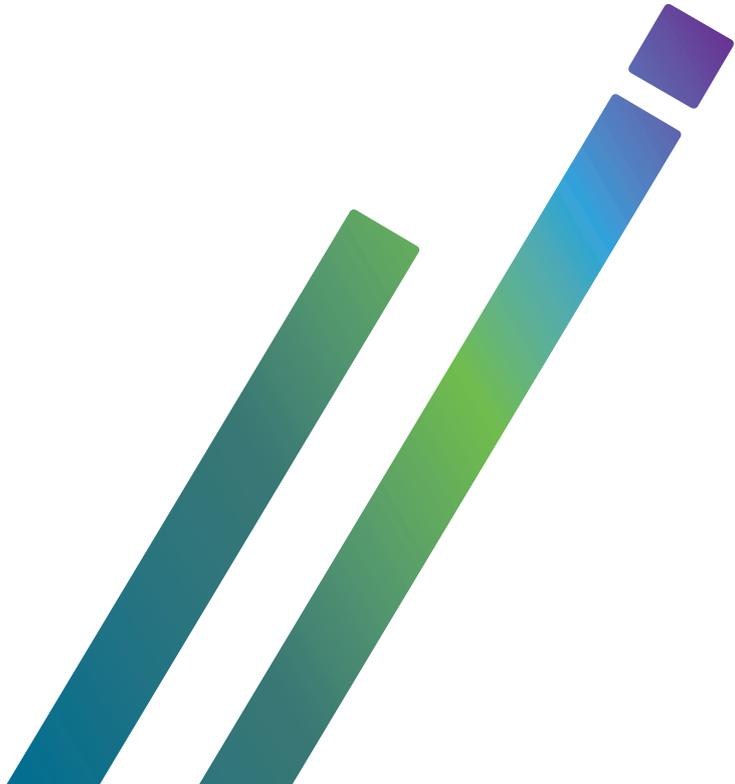




**Australian Government**

**Australian Institute of  
Health and Welfare**

# Monitoring perpetrator interventions in Australia



**AIHW**



# **Monitoring perpetrator interventions in Australia**

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare  
Canberra

Cat. no. FDV 7

**The AIHW is an independent statutory Australian Government agency producing authoritative and accessible information and statistics to inform and support better policy and service delivery decisions, leading to better health and wellbeing for all Australians.**

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# Summary

Family, domestic and sexual violence occurs every day, and can affect people of all ages and backgrounds. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics' 2016 Personal Safety Survey:



Intervening with perpetrators and holding them to account is an important element of our efforts to prevent and reduce family, domestic and sexual violence. Holding perpetrators accountable for their violence is key to ensuring that families and communities are safe. Monitoring these interventions at a national level enables governments to keep track of what actions are being taken, and the outcomes achieved.

This report presents a conceptual overview of the outcome monitoring activities currently being undertaken across states and territories, and does not include data. It highlights similarities and differences in outcome monitoring approaches and informs government understanding of potential data improvements in this area that could be considered in future.

## What are perpetrator interventions?

Perpetrator interventions are the responses that engage with a perpetrator directly because of their violence, or risk of perpetrating violence. This includes systems, structures and services which make decisions or orders that directly relate to perpetrators' interactions with those against whom they have used violence. It also includes programmes and services targeted at working with perpetrators to enable them to change violent behaviours and attitudes.

## How are perpetrator interventions monitored?

The National Outcome Standards for Perpetrator Interventions (NOSPI) were established as a core set of principles to guide the actions of governments, systems and services. They are captured by the following headline standards:

1. Women and their children's safety is the core priority of all perpetrator interventions
2. Perpetrators get the right interventions at the right time
3. Perpetrators face justice and legal consequences when they commit violence
4. Perpetrators participate in programmes and services that change their violent behaviours and attitudes
5. Perpetrator interventions are driven by credible evidence to continuously improve
6. People working in perpetrator intervention systems are skilled in responding to the dynamics and impacts of domestic, family and sexual violence.

Outcomes and indicators developed to be consistent with these headline standards are used to measure and assess the performance of perpetrator interventions, and the perpetrator interventions system as a whole. Across states and territories, outcomes relating to perpetrator interventions are monitored in a variety of ways, including through the development of specific outcome frameworks, indicators and measures, or through regular reporting. Examples of these indicators and measures are presented in this report to assist readers to understand current practice and future planned improvements in reporting in this important area. Data against these indicators are not included in this report.

## What do we know?

The *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–22* (National Plan) recognised the need to strengthen the evidence base for perpetrator interventions. Currently, the data available to report on perpetrator interventions are primarily sourced from police and courts. These data can be used to understand what happens when violence is detected by police and a perpetrator enters the justice system, however, they are only part of the picture. Information about police and court interactions related to family, domestic and sexual violence can be found in the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) collections, Recorded Crime—Offenders, and Criminal Courts, Australia. They have not been included here as this report presents a conceptual overview only, of the outcomes, indicators and measures currently being used by governments.

## Where are the data gaps?

There are notable information gaps across the perpetrator interventions system, for example:

- Specialist perpetrator programs—there are limited data on behaviour change programs, or specialist FDSV services that have a perpetrator response. Where these data are available, they are collected and reported using different definitions and practices, and cannot be used to provide an overview of the sector.
- Perpetrator characteristics—there are limited data on characteristics such as age, sex, Indigenous status, country of birth. Detailed data on perpetrators can shed light on how violence is experienced or perpetrated differently across population groups, and can be used to show where perpetrators are likely to be misidentified, and who is in most need of protection.

- Data on children and young people—there are limited data on children and young people who experience and use FDSV. Children and young people should be considered in their own right as they may require different types of service responses to meet their needs and manage risk.
- Nationally consistent data—where data are being collected, there is limited scope to compare or aggregate data at a national level.

### **What has been done to improve data nationally?**

Since the beginning of the National Plan, a range of activities have been undertaken to improve the collection and reporting of data on family, domestic and sexual violence. These activities include improving the capture of data on perpetrators in existing data collections (for example, in the AIHW Specialist Homelessness Services Collection) and building or enhancing collections. However, additional opportunities exist to improve understanding of perpetrator interventions nationally, including greater use of linked data.



# 1 Introduction

Family, domestic and sexual violence is a major health and welfare issue in Australia. It occurs across all ages and sociodemographic groups but is mainly perpetrated by men towards women and children. While victims and survivors are the core focus of many policies and programs under the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–22* (the National Plan), interventions that work with perpetrators and hold them to account are also critical to ensuring that families and communities are safe and free from violence.

This report compiles information about the work currently being done in Australia to monitor and report on perpetrator interventions, and supplements previous reporting on the National Outcome Standards for Perpetrator Interventions (NOSPI). By bringing this information together, this report provides an opportunity for greater information sharing, and highlights where nationally consistent approaches could be prioritised.

This report complements the AIHW's compendium style reports *Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia, 2019* and accompanying thematic reports, such as the In Focus report *Sexual Assault in Australia, 2020*. It also complements national research underway by Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) on the value and effectiveness of family, domestic and sexual violence (FDSV) interventions, programs and strategies, including perpetrator interventions.

### **Box 1: What is family, domestic and sexual violence?**

Family, domestic and sexual violence (FDSV) are broad terms that encompass a range of behaviours. There is no single nationally agreed definition of family and domestic violence, and definitions vary across policy, legislative, service provision, and research contexts. Broadly speaking, **family violence** is violence between family members, such as between parents and children, siblings and intimate partners. **Domestic violence** is a type of family violence, and is often used specifically to refer to violence between current or former intimate partners. An exception to this is in Tasmania, where 'family violence' refers to violence between current or former intimate partners. Both family and domestic violence may include behaviours such as:

- physical violence (hitting, choking, use of weapons)
- emotional abuse, also known as psychological abuse (intimidating, humiliating)
- controlling behaviour (controlling access to finances, monitoring movements, isolating from friends and family)
- sexual violence.

**Sexual violence** covers sexual behaviours carried out against a person's will. This can occur in the context of family or domestic violence, or be perpetrated in the community by known persons or strangers. Sexual violence includes **sexual assault**, which is a type of sexual violence that involves any physical contact, or intent of contact, of a sexual nature against a person's will, using physical force, intimidation or coercion (ABS 2011; AIHW 2019a). Sexual assault can be aggravated in nature (including rape, attempted rape, sexual assault with a weapon, indecent assault, penetration by objects, forced sexual activity that did not end in penetration, attempts to force a person into sexual activity) or non-aggravated in nature (such as indecent assault without aggravating circumstances or threat of sexual activity) (ABS 2011).

### **How common is family, domestic and sexual violence?**

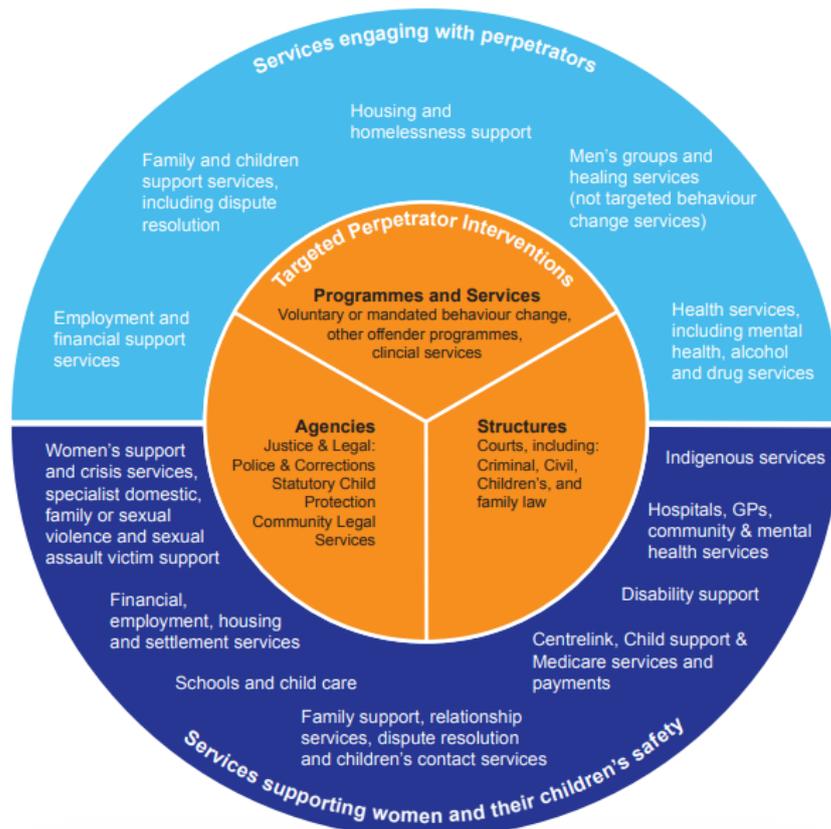
Data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2016 Personal Safety Survey (PSS) show that:

- 1 in 6 women and 1 in 16 men have experienced physical or sexual violence by a current or previous partner since the age of 15
- 1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men have experienced emotional abuse by a current or previous partner since the age of 15
- 1 in 5 women and 1 in 20 men have experienced sexual violence since the age of 15
- 1 in 6 women and 1 in 9 men were physically or sexually abused before the age of 15 (ABS 2017).

## **What are perpetrator interventions?**

Perpetrator interventions are services, agencies and structures that identify and respond to perpetrators of family, domestic and sexual violence. This report refers to them collectively as 'perpetrator intervention services' or the 'perpetrator interventions system', and they include various agencies across a range of sectors (Figure 1.1).

**Figure 1.1: The Perpetrator Interventions System**



Source: DSS 2015.

## Which perpetrator interventions are in scope?

The scope of this report is targeted perpetrator interventions, consistent with the NOSPI framework. Targeted perpetrator interventions are those that engage with a perpetrator directly because of their violence, or risk of perpetrating family, domestic or sexual violence. This includes agencies, structures, programmes and services which make decisions or orders that directly relate to perpetrators' interactions with those who have experienced violence. It also includes programmes and services targeted at working with the perpetrator to enable them to change violent behaviours and attitudes (DSS 2015).

Services that work to raise awareness or prevent violence from occurring in the first instance are out of scope. This report recognises that targeted perpetrator interventions will capture only a small proportion of incidents and perpetrators as many instances of family, domestic and sexual violence go unreported and are not in view of the perpetrator interventions system.

## Roles of governments in perpetrator interventions

Perpetrator interventions span multiple sectors and are delivered by a range of government and non-government agencies. The Australian Government plays a role in the administration and funding of the High Court of Australia, the Federal Circuit Court of Australia, the Federal Court and Family Court of Australia (legislation to merge the Federal Circuit Court of Australia and the Family Court of Australia passed in February 2020).

State and territory governments administer:

- police services (including the ACT community policing function performed by the Australian Federal Police)
- courts services (supreme courts, district/county courts and magistrates' courts, which include children's and coroners' courts)
- corrective services (including prison custody and a range of community corrections orders and programs)
- child protection services.

Perpetrator intervention services delivered by non-government agencies may receive funding from the Australian Government, state and territory governments, and other sources.

## National policy context

Under the National Plan, governments committed to establishing outcome standards for perpetrator interventions to enable monitoring of progress against one of six national outcomes:

### **National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–2022**

National Outcome 6: Perpetrators stop their violence and are held to account

## What are the National Outcome Standards for Perpetrator Interventions?

The NOSPI were an initiative of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG, now the National Federation Reform Council). The NOSPI were developed as a set of headline standards, or principles, to guide and measure the actions that governments and community partners take to intervene with perpetrators of family, domestic and sexual violence, and the outcomes achieved by these actions.

The following six headline standards were agreed by COAG in 2015:

1. Women and their children's safety is the core priority of all perpetrator interventions
2. Perpetrators get the right interventions at the right time
3. Perpetrators face justice and legal consequences when they commit violence
4. Perpetrators participate in programmes and services that change their violent behaviours and attitudes
5. Perpetrator interventions are driven by credible evidence to continuously improve
6. People working in perpetrator intervention systems are skilled in responding to the dynamics and impacts of domestic, family and sexual violence.

The overarching objective of the NOSPI is that women and their children are safe from family, domestic and sexual violence.

## Development of the NOSPI reporting framework

Following COAG endorsement of the headline standards, the NOSPI reporting framework was developed in 2016. The intention of the reporting framework was to enable the NOSPI standards to be reported against nationally and annually over time.

The Australian Government also committed:

- \$4 million in funding to be shared among state and territory governments to assist them in implementing the National Outcome Standards.
- \$3 million to Australia’s National Research Organisation for Women’s Safety (ANROWS). The funding was used by ANROWS to establish a dedicated perpetrator interventions research stream, to strengthen the evidence base and support jurisdictions to implement the National Outcome Standards. For more information about this stream of work, visit [Perpetrator Interventions Research stream](#).

The NOSPI reporting framework was developed by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) in collaboration with governments and agreed in 2017. The framework included 27 indicators for reporting, which were developed in collaboration with states and territories by mapping available data to the NOSPI headline standards (see Appendix A). Where data were not available, indicators were developed as aspirational, to guide data development activities.

## Key learnings

Since 2017, the NOSPI framework has been used to develop 2 reports (see Appendix B for detailed timelines):

- The NOSPI Baseline report, which included data for 6 indicators over the 2015–16 reporting period. The NOSPI baseline report was published in 2018.
- The second NOSPI report, which included data for the 2016–17 and 2017–18 reporting periods. The second NOSPI report was produced for information only, and is not publicly available.

The previous approaches to reporting on the NOSPI have highlighted that further work is required before data can be reported nationally for the purpose of monitoring progress against outcomes over time. Feedback from states and territories during the development of the 2 NOSPI reports, and in the early stages of developing this report, has shown support for a more scaled back approach to reporting on perpetrator interventions that draws on existing information and activities. Since the endorsement of the NOSPI headline standards, there have also been a range of initiatives undertaken by state and territory governments to measure and report on outcomes at the jurisdiction level. Many of these outcome and monitoring frameworks broadly align with the NOSPI, but were developed to meet jurisdiction specific needs.

## Monitoring perpetrator interventions—a revised approach

This report compiles information from published sources to shed light on how perpetrator interventions are being monitored at the jurisdiction level, and discusses how these relate to the NOSPI headline standards. This report also identifies key concepts in perpetrator interventions. Data are not presented against the NOSPI indicators. Instead, the original NOSPI indicators are used to guide discussion about data gaps and areas for data development and/or improvement nationally.

## How is this report structured?

This report is structured as follows:

- Chapter 1—Introduction
- Chapter 2—Monitoring the perpetrator interventions system
- Chapter 3—Key concepts in perpetrator interventions
- Chapter 4—Data availability, limitations and development opportunities.

**Chapter 1** outlines the scope of the report and how the current report aligns with previous NOSPI reporting. **Chapter 2** looks at existing outcome and monitoring frameworks and uses them to identify commonalities and key concepts. **Chapter 3** collates information from states and territories to report against key concepts, and shows where data are available and routinely reported. **Chapter 4** concludes the report with a discussion of the current data limitations and opportunities for development from a national perspective.

## **2 Monitoring the perpetrator interventions system**

How perpetrators are held to account can change the future for both perpetrators and victims. In order to ensure the actions taken by governments and systems are effective at intervening with perpetrators, mechanisms should be in place to monitor the outcomes of policies, programs and initiatives. Ongoing monitoring and reporting can help determine whether the system is effective at: enabling perpetrators to take responsibility for their violence; encouraging perpetrators to change violent behaviours and attitudes; and addressing factors that amplify risk (COAG 2015). Ongoing monitoring and reporting can also facilitate greater information sharing between states and territories, and build the evidence base about what is currently being done and what works.

Since the NOSPI were endorsed in 2015, many state and territory governments have taken actions to monitor and report outcomes relating to family, domestic and sexual violence. Many outcome and monitoring frameworks developed by governments align with the national priorities under the National Plan, and include actions and outcomes related to perpetrator interventions.

### **State and territory outcome monitoring**

Many states and territories have developed jurisdiction-specific action plans or strategies to guide family and domestic violence policy. Table 2.1 shows the action plans and strategies that have been put in place since the establishment of the National Plan. These plans and strategies include actions and strategies specific to the jurisdiction, which may complement existing policy agendas in other areas such as those related to health, justice and other community services. These plans do not represent a complete history of the work undertaken to address family and domestic violence and in many instances, will follow on from previous plans and policies undertaken at the state and territory level, many of which were established prior to 2010.

**Table 2.1: State and territory policy plans during the life of the National Plan**

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>National</b>	National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–2022											
<b>NSW</b>							Domestic and Family Violence Blueprint for Reform 2016–2021					
<b>Vic</b>							Ending Family Violence—Victoria’s 10-year Plan for Change					
<b>Qld</b>							Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2016–2026					
<b>WA</b>				Western Australia’s Family and Domestic Violence Prevention Strategy 2013–2022			Path to Safety: Western Australia’s Strategy to Reduce Family and Domestic Violence 2020–2030					
<b>SA</b>								Committed to Safety: A framework for addressing domestic, family and sexual violence in South Australia 2018–2022				
<b>Tas</b>	Safe at Home: Tasmania’s integrated criminal justice response to family violence 2005 (ongoing)					Safe Homes, Safe Families 2015–2020: Tasmania’s Family Violence Action Plan				Safe Home, Families, Communities: Tasmania’s action plan for family and sexual violence 2019–2022		
<b>ACT</b>	ACT Prevention of Violence against Women and Children Strategy 2011–2017								Safer Families Reforms 2019–2024			
<b>NT</b>								Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Reduction Framework 2018–2028				

Note that the majority of policies covered in Table 2.1 focus on family and domestic violence. While sexual violence responses may be covered within these, or may be included where they are FDV-related, this report does not look at sexual violence-specific policy agendas. Responses to perpetrators of sexual violence may be more specialised, and will form the basis of forthcoming work (see Chapter 4).

## Outcome and monitoring frameworks

Outcome frameworks are a useful tool for governments to keep track of actions taken and the outcomes achieved. Outcomes relating to perpetrator interventions are often included in broader family, domestic and sexual violence outcome frameworks (Table 2.2), but may also feature in broader whole-of-government frameworks (for example, the Northern Territory Social Outcomes Framework). Table 2.2 includes the frameworks purpose designed to monitor outcomes related to family, domestic and sexual violence.

**Table 2.2: Outcome and monitoring frameworks for family, domestic and sexual violence**

<b>State/territory</b>	<b>Outcomes frameworks for perpetrator interventions</b>
<b>Vic</b>	Family Violence Outcomes Framework
<b>Qld</b>	Evaluation Framework for the Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy

This report focuses on the frameworks outlined in Table 2.1, which are most closely aligned with the NOSPI, and include specific indicators and outcomes related to perpetrator

interventions (Box 2). Additional information about broader actions taken by governments, and indicators and outcomes from related frameworks, is included in Appendix C.

### **Box 2: Outcomes and indicators**

Outcome and monitoring frameworks can include multiple elements such as goals, outcomes, indicators and measures. There are no nationally agreed definitions for these elements, and these terms can be used in different contexts. This report focuses on outcomes and indicators as 2 key elements of outcome frameworks.

#### **Outcomes**

Outcomes typically measure the status of individuals or the community. They define the target, standard, or the ideal result against which the indicator is to be assessed. Outcomes should be strategic, high level and observable, expressed in clear, measurable and achievable terms.

In the context of the NOSPI, outcomes represented by the Headline Standards, describe the ideal state when perpetrators are held to account.

#### **Indicators**

Indicators specify what needs to change in order to achieve a desired outcome. Indicators should be appropriate to the objectives and concepts of the outcomes they are intended to measure. In the context of perpetrators, indicators should directly measure an aspect of perpetrator interventions, including inputs, outputs and outcomes. Indicators are very useful for summarising how well people, populations and service systems are faring.

This report collates indicators related to perpetrator interventions (see Appendix C), and uses them to identify commonalities and priority concepts across state and territory frameworks.

## **Key concepts**

A review of the current Australian, state and territory government policy documents outlined in Appendix C identified several common themes in relation to family, domestic and sexual violence perpetrator interventions. These are broad themes that encompass a range of policies, programs and initiatives, and can be thought of as the current priorities in perpetrator interventions.

These concepts were identified by reviewing current policy initiatives, indicators and measures and grouping them according to similarities. Table 2.3 below includes a brief description of each concept and highlights how the concepts relate to each other for the purposes of NOSPI. Table 2.3 also identifies which concepts are considered out of scope.

Consistent with the original NOSPI framework, only concepts relating to targeted perpetrator interventions are considered in scope. These are the agencies, structures, programmes and services that interact with perpetrators directly, once family, domestic and sexual violence has been detected.

**Table 2.3: Current priorities in perpetrator interventions**

Concept	Description
Victim safety, support and confidence in system	A core priority of perpetrator interventions is ensuring victim safety, providing support and maintaining confidence in the perpetrator interventions system. This is often done by making contact with victims, or providing appropriate referrals to services as part of the intervention with the perpetrator.
Managing risk	Many family, domestic and sexual violence initiatives focus on managing and mitigating risk. This includes the development of risk assessment tools for deployment in various settings such as Emergency Departments, and greater information sharing across agencies in order to keep perpetrators and victims in view. Several strategies to manage risk focus on primary prevention, to stop violence in the first instance.
FDV orders	FDV orders (sometimes referred to as interventions orders) are a key aspect of the perpetrator interventions system. FDV orders offer immediate protection to victims. Perpetrators can be charged with a criminal offence if orders are breached.
Justice and legal consequences	The justice and legal systems play a major role in responding to perpetrators of violence when a crime has been committed. This includes responses by police and courts. While FDV orders are part of these responses, they will be discussed separately in this report (see above).
Reoffending	Reducing or eliminating reoffending is a key objective of many policy agendas. Rates of reoffending can be used to assess whether perpetrator interventions have been effective at stopping future violence from occurring. <i>Con</i>
Specialist perpetrator programs	<p>Specialist perpetrator programs are those that work directly with perpetrators of violence to address behaviour. The majority of specialist perpetrator programs are Men's Behaviour Change Programs (MBCP), which are a core part of the service response to perpetrators and are administered in every state and territory. Behaviour change programs are administered in the community and correctional facilities, and can be voluntary or mandated.</p> <p>Other specialist perpetrator programs include services that provide referrals or assistance to men who have used violence, or are at risk of using violence. Specialist perpetrator programs can focus on family and domestic violence, or may be used as a response to sexual violence specifically.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued)</i></p>

**Table 2.3 (continued): Current priorities in perpetrator interventions**

Workforce capacity and capability	People working in the perpetrator accountability system require support and access to professional development opportunities. Many policy initiatives include specialist training so that those working with perpetrators are able to engage effectively, and respond to a diverse range of perpetrator needs.
Included within other concepts	
Diversity	The importance of responding to perpetrators from a wide range of circumstances and backgrounds is a key part of many policy agendas. This applies across a range of perpetrator interventions and can be discussed within the context of other concepts.
Timeliness	Timeliness is often identified as a priority and can be used to assess the expediency of certain processes in the perpetrator interventions system (for example, justice and legal responses) or to ensure perpetrators get the right interventions at the right time (for example, acceptance in MBCP). Timeliness can also refer to primary prevention activities and early intervention (both of which are out of scope for this report).
System integration	Perpetrator intervention services should be well integrated through established pathways so that perpetrators can remain visible, and the risk to victims can be managed. Information sharing, and the use of common tools and frameworks across agencies should occur as part of service delivery where feasible.
Evidence and evaluation	<p>Building the evidence base is a priority that underlies many initiatives. There are many knowledge gaps in perpetrator interventions, and there are many efforts to address these gaps include conducting evaluations of key programs and improving the collection and reporting of data.</p> <p>Regular evaluation of programs and services that utilise the available Australian and international evidence base can strengthen new and existing interventions, promote innovation based on evidence, and actively encourage continuous improvement.</p>
Out of scope	
Awareness raising	<p>Raising awareness about family, domestic and sexual violence is key to ensuring people recognise violence and are able to seek help. Initiatives that focus on raising awareness are broad and are often targeted towards the broader population. Many awareness campaigns are also focused on primary prevention, and are therefore out of scope for the NOSPI report.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued)</i></p>

**Table 2.3 (continued): Current priorities in perpetrator interventions**

Early intervention	Early intervention focuses on intervening with people who are at risk of offending. Early intervention is a critical aspect of reducing family, domestic and sexual violence at the population level. However, given that the NOSPI report focuses on services that intervene with perpetrators once violence has been committed, early intervention activities are out of scope.
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### Reporting against key concepts

This report will use the key concepts highlighted in Table 2.3 above to provide an overview of perpetrator interventions and examples of how they are monitored by governments. It complements existing research on perpetrator interventions such as ANROWS' [Improved accountability—the role of the perpetrator intervention systems](#) and [‘What works’: Evidence synthesis, methods and communication](#) (forthcoming 2022). ANROWS' 'What works' provides assessment of the overall value and effectiveness of FDSV interventions, programs and strategies, while this report answers the following questions:

- How are governments monitoring outcomes in relation to perpetrator interventions?
- What are the commonalities between outcome and monitoring frameworks?
- What data are available to report on indicators related to perpetrator interventions?
- Where are the data gaps when it comes to perpetrator interventions?

### 3 Key concepts in perpetrator interventions

Identification of key concepts in perpetrator interventions highlights where governments are focusing efforts to respond to perpetrators. The key concepts can be understood as the current priorities in perpetrator interventions, and bringing them together provides an overview of targeted perpetrator interventions and shows how outcomes are being monitored across different areas. This chapter examines key concepts in perpetrator interventions and answers the following questions:

- **How is it currently being monitored in states and territories?** What indicators and measures are being used to monitor progress against outcomes related to the key concepts?
- **What data are available?** What data are available to report on relevant indicators and measures to illustrate the key concept?
- **What else do we know?** What major evaluations or reviews exist to illustrate actions taken by governments to address each concept in relation to perpetrator interventions?

This chapter includes outcomes and indicators from state and territory frameworks as illustrative examples of the measurements currently in place to monitor perpetrator interventions against key concepts. By bringing them together, this report provides an opportunity for greater information sharing, and highlights where nationally consistent approaches could be prioritised.

#### Managing risk

In order for perpetrator interventions to work effectively, agencies across all sectors that come into contact with perpetrators should share information about perpetrator risk. This includes monitoring perpetrators' risk over time, sharing information between agencies and working collaboratively to manage risk, particularly for known offenders or high risk offenders.

This concept is linked to the following NOSPI Headline Standards:

1. Women and their children's safety is the core priority of all perpetrator interventions
2. Perpetrators get the right interventions at the right time.

#### How is it being monitored?

Increased information sharing across agencies keeps perpetrators and victims in view of services and enables greater collaboration and coordination of responses (Table 3.1).

**Table 3.1: Examples of indicators for managing risk**

<b>State/territory</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Data available</b>
<b>Victoria</b> Family Violence Outcomes Framework	Increased coordination and collaboration across the system	No
	Increase sharing of information to assess and respond to needs and risks	Yes
	Increase early identification of people, children and young people, at risk of family violence	No
<b>Queensland</b> Evaluation Framework for the Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy	Increased proportion of multiagency safety plan actions completed across High Risk team sites	Yes
	Timely and efficient responses to high risk domestic and family violence through the High Risk Team sites	Yes
	Total number of referral reports on occurrences with a domestic and family violence offence for at-risk individuals to support services	Yes
	Total number of local authority meetings or other community meetings attended by Domestic and Family Violence Coordinators	Yes

## **What else do we know?**

### **National risk assessment principles for family and domestic violence**

In 2018, ANROWS developed the National Risk Assessment Principles for domestic and family violence to provide an overarching conceptual understanding of risk and managing risk. The intention of the principles is to keep women and children safe. The principles provide a guide for policy makers and practitioners to develop risk assessment tools and resources.

A key principle relating to perpetrators, is that a perpetrator's current and past actions and behaviours bear significant weight in determining risk. Perpetrators must be kept 'in view' across all aspects of risk assessment and safety management. Perpetrator interventions must include assessing, monitoring and responding to the perpetrator's violence, including patterns of coercive control (Toivonen and Backhouse 2018).

### **Multi-agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework**

In Victoria, the Multi-agency Risk Assessment (MARAM) Framework was developed following a 2016 review of the Common Risk Assessment Framework (CRAF). The review of the CRAF found that there was strong support for a common framework that articulated and highlighted the risks posed by intimate partner violence. The review also found that the CRAF built a shared sense of the responsibility to identify and respond to risk, but was used inconsistently across different professional groups. This highlighted some of the challenges

involved with identifying and managing risk across such a diverse sector (McCulloch et al 2016).

The 27 recommendations from the review were used in the development of the MARAM, which supports organisations to recognise a wide range of risk indicators for children, older people and diverse communities, as well as keep perpetrators in view and hold them accountable for their actions and behaviours.

For more information, visit [Multi-agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework](#).

### **DFV Common Risk and Safety Framework**

The Queensland Common Risk and Safety Framework (CRASF) was developed in 2017 by Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) and the Queensland Government. The CRASF is used by government and non-government agencies to deliver integrated service responses to domestic and family violence to enhance the safety of victims and their children and hold perpetrators to account. The CRASF articulates a shared understanding, language, and common approach to recognising, assessing, and responding to domestic and family violence.

Following an independent evaluation of Queensland's integrated service response model in 2019, a revision of the CRASF is underway. The revised CRASF will strengthen Queensland's integrated service response through updated risk assessment and safety planning tools, an enhanced focus on the perpetrator, best practice approaches to dynamic and ongoing assessment and management, and clear identification of key cultural considerations, including risk and protective factors. It is anticipated the revised CRASF will be released early in 2022.

### **Family Violence Risk Assessment Tool**

In March 2017, the Australian Capital Territory Policing began using the Family Violence Risk Assessment Tool (FVRAT). The FVRAT is a 37-item tool that officers are required to complete when responding to a reported incident of violence perpetrated by a current or former intimate partner. Implementation of the FVRAT is part of ACT Policing's broader effort to meet the objectives of the ACT's inter-agency Family Violence Intervention Program, specifically the identification and protection of (particularly) at-risk victims.

A study published by the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) in 2019 examined the predictive validity of the FVRAT. The aim was to determine whether the FVRAT's risk ratings accurately predict repeat DV. The study found that the FVRAT was not a strong predictor of repeat domestic violence, however a refined version of the FVRAT had much more accuracy predicting repeat DV (Dowling and Morgan 2019).

### **Domestic and Family Violence Risk Assessment and Management Framework**

The Northern Territory Government Domestic and Family Violence Risk Assessment and Management Framework (RAMF) provides a consistent evidence-based way to identify, assess and respond to domestic and family violence across the Northern Territory. It is a key component of the DFV Information Sharing Scheme and includes practice guides and practice tools. The RAMF also includes a Common Risk Assessment Tool (CRAT) to assess and respond to domestic and family violence risk.

### **Review of the Family Safety Framework**

In the NT, the Family Safety Framework (FSF) provides an integrated service response from multiple agencies from those experiencing DFV who are at high risk of serious injury or

death. For clients assessed as being at serious risk, the CRAT can be used to refer a client to the FSF, which operates in 6 locations in the NT.

A review of the FSF conducted in 2016–17 found:

- Stakeholders agree that the FSF has achieved its aims, has improved outcomes for families and has enabled a broader and more coordinated service response.
- Local knowledge and regional oversight has been crucial, but the FSF requires significant administrative support from key agencies. There are unmet needs, especially for victims living outside the current FSF sites.
- The information sharing protocol is a key element of FSF, however, stakeholders identified barriers to information sharing such as differing perceptions of risk between agencies.

The review made a number of key recommendations regarding the continuation and ongoing review of different aspects of the FSF.

For more information, visit [Domestic and family violence risk assessment and management](#).

## Victim safety, support and confidence in the system

While the perpetrator interventions system works primarily with perpetrators of violence, it is critical for these services to prioritise safety and provide support for victims and survivors. Effective perpetrator interventions must give women and their children confidence that they will be supported and protected if they report violence. The perpetrator interventions system must also work to minimise any trauma victims and survivors experience as a result of their involvement with perpetrator interventions. A perpetrator interventions system that is well-integrated across sectors should have mechanisms in place that provide opportunities for victims to access specialist support services wherever appropriate (DSS 2015).

This concept is linked to the following NOSPI Headline Standards:

1. Women and their children's safety is the core priority of all perpetrator interventions.

### How is it being monitored?

Victim support and confidence can be captured in different ways across multiple sectors such as police, courts and community services (Table 3.2). Often, these measures focus on the extent to which perpetrator interventions facilitate contact between victims and appropriate services.

There are a range of mechanisms which can be used to support victims when a service comes into contact with perpetrators of violence. Among the perpetrator interventions in scope the most common mechanisms are:

- providing referrals to appropriate support services
- making contact with victims
- conducting follow-up consultations
- providing specialist arrangements in court and legal processes (e.g. alternative methods for giving evidence)
- assessing the victim's level of satisfaction post intervention.

**Table 3.2: Examples of indicators for victim support and confidence**

State/territory	Indicator	Data availability
<b>Victoria</b> Family Violence Outcomes Framework	Increase safety for victim survivors <sup>(a)</sup>	Under development
	Increase in people receiving help and support following first disclosure	Under development
	Increase feelings of safety for victim survivors	Under development
	Increase self-referrals to family violence support services	Under development
	Increase in victim survivors feeling supported and understood	Under development
<b>Queensland</b> Evaluation Framework for the Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy	Clients self-reported experience at court	Under development
	Victims are supported to access crisis accommodation in a timely way	Yes
	Proportion of victim referrals where contact with the victim occurred a) domestic and family violence b) sexual assault	No

(a) This indicator is measured by number/proportion of victim survivors who experience family violence while receiving a family violence service, by service/program type

## What else do we know?

### Police referrals

Police are often first responders to family, domestic and sexual violence and often act as an entry-point for perpetrators into the justice and legal system. Police can also act as an important point of contact for victims. In many states and territories, there are protocols in place to ensure that victims are referred to appropriate services when family, domestic and sexual violence has been detected.

Many states and territories have developed models or guides to facilitate referrals for victims of family and domestic violence (for example, [Queensland Police referrals](#), [Victoria Police Code of Practice for the investigation of family violence](#)). However, the number of referrals themselves do not reflect the whole story. Referrals can take many forms and without follow-up, it can be difficult to recognise the extent to which a victim's needs are adequately met.

## Streamlined referral pathways

Some jurisdictions have state-wide programs that bring together a range of services to assist victim-survivors of domestic and family violence, for example [Safer Pathway in New South Wales](#). The aim of the Safer Pathway is to facilitate streamlined referrals and to help victims of domestic and family violence receive a timely and consistent approach that secures their safety and supports their recovery (ARTD 2019). In 2019, an evaluation of the Safer Pathway was undertaken (Box 3.1).

### Box 3.1: Evaluation of Safer Pathway

The purpose of this evaluation was to examine whether and the extent to which Safer Pathway is being implemented as intended and meeting its stated objectives, and to identify opportunities for improvement.

#### Scope

The evaluation reviewed all five components of Safer Pathway and covered all Central Referral Point (CRP) referrals, Local Coordination Points (LCPs) and Safety Action Meetings (SAMs) in operating in Safer Pathway sites up to March 2018. It examined the program interactions and, where available, outcomes for female and male victims in situations of intimate and non-intimate partner violence, assessed as at threat or serious threat. Where data permits, the analysis reflects victims' diverse backgrounds and vulnerabilities.

#### Findings

- Overall, almost two-thirds of referrals into Safer Pathway were for intimate partner violence.
- LCPs/Local Support Services (LSSs) were able to contact two-thirds of victims from these referrals, for victims of both intimate and non-intimate DFV, with no contact details for 10%, and 25% not responding to contact.
- LCPs/ LSSs provided information or referrals for other services to approximately half of those they were able to contact, though the rate was higher for victims of intimate DFV –approximately one-third of all referrals into Safer Pathway for victims of intimate DFV, and one quarter for victims of non-intimate DFV.
- Aboriginal people comprised approximately 10% of all referrals to Safer Pathway.
- The findings suggest Safer Pathway has been effective in supporting victims who identify as LGBTQI. This group (along with people with disability) had the highest contact rates from LCP/LSSs, with over 90 per cent being contacted.
- While male victims comprised almost one-third (29%) of all victims referred to Safer Pathway, the program was less effective in engaging and supporting them than female victims.
- Victims of DFV reported that they found LCP/LSS workers to be calm, compassionate and non-judgemental, as well as receptive to their wishes. This helped to build trust and rapport. They also found them to be reliable in following through on what they said they would do, which increased confidence in them and the system.

For full details, visit [Evaluation of Safer Pathway](#).

## Review of criminal justice responses

A review of criminal justice response can help shed light on the extent to which victims feel supported by perpetrator interventions (Box 3.2 and 3.3).

### **Box 3.2: Policing domestic violence**

In 2018, the Australian Institute of Criminology conducted a review of domestic violence policing practices across several domains. The following findings relate to victim support and confidence.

#### **Investigative responses**

While not always translating into positive longer-term criminal justice outcomes, greater investigative effort can build victims' confidence in the police and encourage them to report further instances of domestic violence.

Current findings suggest that the availability of victim statements is associated with an increased likelihood of cases being accepted for prosecution and conviction, while witness statements appear to have little impact. Victim statements are more common following incidents in which children are present, and among victims who are employed, while victims of more serious violence appear more likely to subsequently retract their statements. Fear of the perpetrator, concerns about the welfare of children, embarrassment (especially in smaller communities) and attitudes towards the justice system are the most common reasons that victims retract statements to police. Police training, particularly training on interview techniques, can decrease the likelihood that victims will retract their statements.

For full details, visit [Policing domestic violence: a review of the evidence](#).

### **Box 3.3: Criminal justice responses to domestic and family violence**

A review of the criminal justice responses to domestic and family violence literature in Queensland found the following in relation to victim support and confidence.

#### **Police-focused responses**

- Proactive policing practices showed promising results regarding victim understanding of violent behaviours, understanding of no-contact orders, and help-seeking behaviours.

#### **Courts-focused responses**

- Legal advocacy is associated with greater social support, better quality of life, reduced likelihood of further abuse, and greater access to community resources.
- Restorative justice approaches uncovered mixed results with some studies suggesting fewer emergency visits to home and improvements in perpetrator empathy and self-esteem.

#### **Multi-agency/inter-agency responses**

- Initiatives that pair police and victim advocates (other than second responder programs) were associated with increased service uptake, lower homicide rates and greater police contact.
- Second responder programs were not associated with a reduction in repeat victimisation. They did, however, appear to improve victim confidence in disclosing incidents to police.
- Multi-agency centres for victim support in overseas jurisdictions are shown to effectively assist victims of DFV and improve conviction rates. Further research is required to assess suitability in Australian context.

For further detail, visit [Criminal justice responses to domestic and family violence](#).

### **Rights for victims of crime**

Victims of family, domestic and sexual violence may be protected by policies and legislation designed to respond to victims of crime more broadly. For example, in the ACT there is a Charter of Victims Rights to protect and promote the rights of victims of crime when they engage with justice agencies in the criminal justice system. The Charter commenced in January 2021 and is contained in the *Victims of Crime Act 1994*. It includes specific rights for victims of crime in the following areas:

- Respectful engagement and protections related to safety and privacy
- Access to support services and other forms of assistance
- Provision of information about general administration of justice processes
- Provision of information in regards to investigations, proceedings and decisions
- Participation in proceedings.

The justice agencies that must uphold the Charter of Victims Rights include ACT Policing, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, ACT Corrective Services, ACT Courts and Tribunals when acting in an administrative capacity, the Sentence Administration Board, the Restorative Justice Unit and Victim Support ACT.

For more information, visit [Victim Support ACT](#).

## Restorative Justice

Restorative Justice (RJ) is a way for the people most affected by a crime—the victim, their family and friends and their family and friends to talk about what happened, how people were affected, and what needs to be done to make things better. In the ACT, the Restorative Justice Unit's (RJU) primary objective is to provide restorative justice to members of the ACT community who have been affected by an offence in a forum that provides:

- victims with an opportunity to talk about how the offence has affected them and others close to them;
- offenders with an opportunity to accept responsibility for their actions;
- victims, offenders and supporters an opportunity to discuss the harm and what needs to be done to repair that harm; and
- offenders with an opportunity to repair the harm done by the offence.

The final phase of the scheme commenced November 2018, and included referrals for family violence and sexual offences. In these matters the RJU work with ACT justice agencies and community organisations to ensure that safety assessment and planning is prioritised, recognising the dynamics and complexities of family violence and sexual offences. Professional supporters also assist participants to be emotionally and psychologically prepared for the RJ process.

For more information, visit [Restorative Justice ACT](#).

## Voices of victims, perpetrators and services

Understanding the lived experience of abuse from the perspective of victims and survivors, including children and young people, is critical for ensuring perpetrator interventions provide adequate victim support and confidence in the system. A large-scale study conducted by Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety will capture the perspectives of victims/survivors (ANROWS forthcoming).

For more information, visit [Transforming responses to intimate partner and sexual violence: Listening to the voices of victims, perpetrators and services](#).

## Family and domestic violence orders

Family and domestic violence orders (DVOs) are the most broadly used justice response mechanisms for ensuring the safety of women and children exposed to family and domestic violence (Taylor et al. 2015). While DVOs may differ across states and territories, in general a DVO is a civil order issued by a court that sets out specific conditions that must be obeyed—such as stopping the respondent from contacting or communicating with the protected person; tracking or attempting to locate the protected person; or going to, or remaining within, a certain distance of the protected person. In some jurisdictions, such as Tasmania, a Family Violence Order may also include the option to impose electronic monitoring conditions on the perpetrator.

In some states and territories, domestic violence orders can be issued through the courts or by police to provide immediate protection. The function and scope of orders issued by police vary across states and territories, but they serve the purpose of enabling first responders, such as police, to take immediate action and remove the burden of responsibility of protection from the victim. Where a DVO is breached, the matter becomes a criminal offence.

This concept is linked to the following NOSPI Headline Standards:

1. Women and their children's safety is the core priority of all perpetrator interventions
2. Perpetrators get the right interventions at the right time
3. Perpetrators face justice and legal consequences when they commit violence

## How is it being monitored?

Types of orders vary across states and territories, and can include both interim (or temporary) orders and finalised orders. In some states and territories, orders or similar notices can be issued by police (Table 3.3).

**Table 3.3: Family and domestic violence orders, by state and territory**

State/territory	Type of order
NSW	Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders
Vic	Family Violence Intervention Orders
Qld	Domestic Violence Order: Protection Orders and Temporary Protection Orders
WA	Family Violence Restraining Order (FVRO)
SA	Intervention Orders
Tas	Police Family Violence Order and Family Violence Order
ACT	Family Violence Order
NT	Domestic Violence Order

Applications for protection orders are civil matters in the court while offences relating to domestic and family violence (including breaches of violence orders and protection orders) are dealt with in criminal courts. Data are available from the ABS Recorded Crime—Offenders and Criminal Courts collections for selected states and territories where breaches have occurred and these incidents have entered into view of the criminal justice system.

Indicators and measures used to monitor family and domestic violence orders often focus on compliance, timeliness and accessibility (Table 3.4).

**Table 3.4: Examples of indicators for monitoring family and domestic violence orders**

<b>State/territory</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Data availability</b>
<b>Victoria</b> Family Violence Outcomes Framework	Reduction in all family violence behaviours <sup>(a)</sup>	Yes
<b>Queensland</b> Evaluation Framework for the Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy	Number of intervention orders made	Yes
	Percentage of applications for protection orders finalised within six months of being lodged	Yes
	Reduced average time (in days) for considering a temporary protection order resulting from an application, Queensland wide	Yes
	Proportion of police-attended DFV incidents where police issued a DFV intervention order on behalf of the victim	Yes
	Number of reported breaches of domestic violence orders	Yes

(a) This indicator is captured by two measures: the number and proportion of reported contraventions of Family Violence orders, and the number/proportion of individuals identified as the primary aggressor in an L17 report who receive a subsequent L17 report within [12 months]

## What else do we know?

### National Domestic Violence Order Scheme

In 2017, the National Domestic Violence Order Scheme (NDVO) came into effect. Under the NDVO scheme, local police are able to enforce the conditions of DVOs regardless of where they were issued. All DVOs issued in an Australian state or territory from 25 November 2017 are automatically recognised and enforceable across Australia.

## Review of criminal justice responses

Reviewing current practices for issuing DVOs and responding to breaches can also shed light on how DVOs can be used most effectively (Box 3.4).

### **Box 3.4: Policing domestic violence**

In 2018, the Australian Institute of Criminology conducted a review of domestic violence policing practices. This review examined several domains of police involvement including prevention of repeat domestic violence through protection orders. Key findings show:

- breaches of order conditions are most likely in the period immediately after the order is granted (up to three months, based on Australian research).
- protection orders are more effective where victims have fewer enduring ties to perpetrators and the ability to be independent. They are less effective where perpetrators have a history of violence, general crime, stalking or mental health issues.
- police may be reluctant to enforce breaches where they believe the victim has failed (or is unable) to comply with order conditions and where it proves difficult to investigate low-level breaches. Enforcement is more likely for severe, repeated breaches, or where there is perceived to be a high risk of re-victimisation (Dowling et al. 2018).

For full details, visit [Policing domestic violence: a review of the evidence](#).

### **Box 3.5: Review of the Implementation of the Family Violence Act**

In 2020, a review of the implementation of *the Family Violence Act 2016* was conducted in the ACT to assess the extent to which the Act has increased the protection of family violence victims and resulted in systematic and/or cultural and change.

The review was conducted by gathering relevant stakeholders' observations, experiences and ideas concerning the Act and included an analysis of people's lived experiences with family violence orders (FVOs). Responses were varied, but often highlighted the negative aspects of experiences with FVOs. Note that this is likely correlated with an individual's willingness to participate in the project, as those with negative experiences may be more likely to participate in order to contribute to change.

The project highlighted a few key areas for improvement where issues could be addressed. These include:

- the need for applicants to feel more protected and for their children to be better protected
- the interaction of family law orders with FVOs, which may lead to survivors feeling blamed for their children's lack of safety
- problems in applying for orders
- the gaps in the legislation and/or its implementation that can facilitate the persistence of abuse
- a serious lack of knowledge about Special Interim Family Violence Orders
- possible safety issues deriving from delay in service of orders, their duration and the response to breaches.

The project also highlighted concerns about the lack of inter-agency communication and continuity of services. In general, most participants in the study felt that further changes are required to support the ACT in improving practices in responses to family violence. Most supported other manifestations of family violence being added to FVOs, so that police can act to ensure that breaches are treated as breaches.

For more information, visit [Final report of the Review of the Family Violence Act 2016](#).

## **Justice and legal consequences**

Legal responses to perpetrators are a powerful tool that can interrupt and address violence against women and their children. Broadly speaking, legal systems use the following mechanisms to ensure perpetrator accountability:

- improved police responses
- legal sanctions (including protection orders)
- court-directed attendance at MBCPs (Devaney 2014).

Criminal justice responses fall within the broader category of legal responses and include actions taken to arrest, charge and prosecute perpetrators of family, domestic and sexual violence where a crime has occurred (Chung et al. 2020).

When the justice and legal systems work effectively, the burden is shifted from women and their children to protect themselves. Systems become accountable for ensuring that: perpetrators face appropriate justice and legal consequences for their violence; perpetrators understand what those consequences mean; the victim/survivor is informed about the consequences that the perpetrator faces; and the system responds effectively to perpetrators who do not comply with the mandatory sanctions placed on them.

Justice and legal system accountability involves making systems competent at engaging effectively with perpetrators from diverse cultures, communities and circumstances and facilitating a sense of justice for all victim/survivors.

This concept is linked to the following NOSPI Headline Standards:

1. Women and their children’s safety is the core priority of all perpetrator interventions
2. Perpetrators get the right interventions at the right time
3. Perpetrators face justice and legal consequences when they commit violence

**How is it being monitored?**

Indicators and measures used to monitor justice and legal consequences begin when incidents of family, domestic and sexual violence are detected by police and focus on the process through which these incidents become charges, convictions and sentences in the criminal courts (Table 3.5).

**Table 3.5: Examples of indicators for monitoring justice and legal consequences**

State/territory	Indicators	Data available
<b>Queensland</b> Evaluation Framework for the Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy	Proportion of reported breached DFV intervention orders that have a further legal consequence	Proposed for further exploration
	Proportion of DFV perpetrators who perpetrate again with a new DFV or sexual offence within X months of completing a behaviour change program (or other perpetrator interventions)	Proposed for further exploration

**What else do we know?**

**Review of criminal justice responses**

Conducting regular reviews of criminal justice and police responses can also shed light on how victims and perpetrators interact with the justice and legal system, and the extent to which interventions are effective (Box 3.6 and 3.7).

### **Box 3.6: Policing domestic violence**

In 2018, the Australian Institute of Criminology conducted a review of domestic violence policing practices across several domains related to justice and legal consequences. Findings are as follows.

#### **Reporting to police**

Several interventions appear to increase reporting rates. Strategic policy interventions such as police codes of practice for domestic violence and legislation that encourages prosecution of protection order violations appear to increase reporting. Specialised police teams and interagency second responder programs have also been linked to increasing reporting among repeat victims. Mandatory medical reporting and measures in which health professionals make routine enquiries of patients appear effective at identifying domestic violence cases. In contrast, mandatory arrest may have the effect of discouraging victim reporting.

#### **First response**

Incident characteristics such as their perceived severity, signs of visible injury, use of a weapon and presence of witnesses have each been found to increase the likelihood of arrest. There is mixed support for pro-arrest and mandatory arrest policies among police officers. Overall, arresting the perpetrator is moderately effective in reducing repeat domestic violence (see also Reoffending). However, police attendance—irrespective of the outcome—can reduce the risk of repeat victimisation. Mandated arrest policies have been shown to significantly increase arrest rates, but do not necessarily reduce domestic violence.

For full details, visit [Policing domestic violence: a review of the evidence](#).

### **Box 3.7: Criminal justice responses to domestic and family violence**

In 2018, a systematic review of the impact evaluation literature was conducted to examine Queensland's criminal justice system responses to domestic and family violence. The aim of the review was to: identify impact evaluation evidence that addressed ways to improve the engagement of domestic and family violence victims with the criminal justice system; and identify best practice approaches to improve the identification of, and responses to, high risk recidivist perpetrators of domestic and family violence within the system. The findings are as follows.

#### **Police-focused responses**

- Higher staffing levels are linked to a lower risk of DFV homicide.
- The use of body worn cameras during DFV incidents and the collection of photographic evidence can positively impact court outcomes.
- Proactive policing practices showed promising results regarding victim understanding of violent behaviours, understanding of no-contact orders, and help-seeking behaviours.
- Mixed support is found for specialised domestic violence units.
- Conditional cautioning practices reduce the severity of subsequent crimes for offenders.

*(continued)*

### **Box 3.7 (continued): Criminal justice responses to domestic and family violence**

- Mandatory arrest policies are not associated with reductions in homicide or repeat victimisation. Evidence suggests that mandatory arrest can create further harm to victims, particularly for racial minorities.
- Police training in evidence-based practices do not increase the length of time officers spend with victims at DFV incidents or improve conviction rates.

#### **Courts-focused responses**

- Legal advocacy is associated with greater social support, better quality of life, reduced likelihood of further abuse, and greater access to community resources.
- Restorative justice approaches uncovered mixed results with some studies suggesting fewer emergency visits to home and improvements in perpetrator empathy and self-esteem.
- No evidence to support mandatory prosecution policies in terms of recidivist offending was found.
- The impact of judicial monitoring on batterer intervention attendance and completion is mixed and difficult to disentangle, as is the evidence on specialised domestic violence courts.
- The increased supervision of offenders in these interventions is often linked to higher rates of recidivism when drawing on official reports. However, these findings may reflect an increased ability to detect recidivism rather than the intervention causing greater abuse.

#### **Corrections-focused responses**

- Motivational interviewing techniques can increase offender motivation and readiness to change, increase program completion rates, and reduce domestic violence recidivism.
- Treating concurrent risk factors—such as substance abuse problems—can help reduce reoffending.
- Batterer programs which draw on multiple frameworks such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and Duluth are associated with lower reconviction rates.

#### **Multi-agency/inter-agency responses**

- Initiatives that pair police and victim advocates (other than second responder programs) were associated with increased service uptake, lower homicide rates and greater police contact.
- Second responder programs were not associated with a reduction in repeat victimisation. They did, however, appear to improve victim confidence in disclosing incidents to police.
- Multi-agency centres for victim support are shown to effectively assist victims of DFV and improve conviction rates.
- Legislative responses such as banning firearm possession for known DFV offenders is found to significantly decrease the number of DFV homicides by firearm.
- Death Review Boards are shown to be effective in implementing system change although they are not associated with reductions in DFV homicides.
- Intensive bail supervision is an effective deterrent.

For further detail, visit [Criminal justice responses to domestic and family violence](#).

## Reoffending

Reoffending, or recidivism, occurs when acts of family, domestic and sexual violence are repeated by the same perpetrator. According to the ABS Personal Safety Survey, the majority of people who experienced violence from a partner, experienced multiple incidents of violence. An estimated 54% of women (149,600) and 65% of men (97,600) who experienced violence from a current partner experienced more than one incident of violence from that partner, and 68% of women (931,800) and 61% of men (241,600) who experienced violence from a previous partner experienced more than one incident from that partner (ABS 2017).

When perpetrators of FDSV reoffend, their violence may be used to re-victimise family members and establish a cycle of recurring violence. Effective perpetrator interventions should reduce or prevent reoffending by removing victims from potential harm, and by working with perpetrators to change their behaviours.

This concept is linked to the following NOSPI Headline Standards:

1. Women and their children's safety is the core priority of all perpetrator interventions
2. Perpetrators get the right interventions at the right time
3. Perpetrators face justice and legal consequences when they commit violence

### How is it being monitored?

Indicators and measures relating to reoffending focus on repeat interactions with the justice system (Table 3.6).

**Table 3.6: Examples of indicators for monitoring reoffending**

State/territory	Indicators	Data available
<b>New South Wales</b> Premier's Priority to reduce the number of domestic violence reoffenders by 15% by 2023	Number of domestic violence reoffenders charged with domestic violence assault and who had a domestic violence assault charge in the previous 12 months	Yes
<b>New South Wales</b> Domestic and Family Violence Outcomes Framework	Reduction in the proportion of domestic violence perpetrators reoffending by 25% by 2021 (based on the 2019 cohort of DFV offenders)	Yes
<b>Victoria</b> Family Violence Outcomes Framework	Reduction in all family violence behaviours <sup>(a)</sup>	Yes
<b>Queensland</b> Evaluation Framework for the Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy	Proportion of DFV perpetrators who perpetrate again with a new DFV or sexual offence within X months of completing a behaviour change program (or other perpetrator interventions)	Under development

(a) This indicator is captured by two measures: the number and proportion of reported contraventions of Family Violence orders, and the number/proportion of individuals identified as the primary aggressor in an L17 report who receive a subsequent L17 report within [12 months]

## What else do we know?

There is a growing body of research examining factors associated with family and domestic violence reoffending. Data from New South Wales Local Courts have been used to examine whether short prison sentences deter perpetrators from reoffending (Box 3.8).

### **Box 3.8: Does a prison sentence affect future domestic violence reoffending?**

A study conducted in 2016 by the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research used data on data on DV-related offences finalised in the New South Wales Local Courts between January 2009 and December 2013 to examine the relationship between short prison sentences and reoffending. These data were used to compare time to reoffence among 1,612 matched pairs of offenders, in which one of each pair received a prison sentence of 12 months or less and the other received a suspended sentence of two years or less. A DV-related offence was defined as any offence that the court recorded as domestic violence related under the Crimes (Domestic and Personal Violence) Act 2007.

Analysis showed that DV-related reoffending was not significantly different for people with suspended sentences and prison sentences. After 1 year, 20.3% of people given a suspended sentence and 20.3% of people given prison sentence had at least one new DV-related offence, and after 3 years the proportions were 34.2% and 32.3% respectively (Trevena and Poynton 2016).

For further information, visit [Contemporary Issues in Crime and Justice](#).

Data from Victoria Police are also available to examine predictors of reoffending among police recorded family violence perpetrators (Box 3.9).

**Box 3.9: Predictors of recidivism amongst police recorded family violence perpetrators**

A study conducted in 2016 analysed the relationship between repeat family incidents, and factors that may predict such incidents. These include perpetrator characteristics (such as age and sex) and risk factors as recorded in the Victoria Police Family Violence Risk Assessment and Risk Management Report (also known as the L17 form). Data related to family incidents recorded by police from 1 July 2004 to 30 March 2015, were analysed and used to report on some of the characteristics and patterns of recidivism. For further detail, visit [Crime Statistics Agency](#).

## Specialist perpetrator programs

Specialist perpetrator programs are those that engage directly with perpetrators of family, domestic and sexual violence to provide them with the appropriate supports to take responsibility for their actions and change their behaviours. The most common interventions for early or ongoing offending are variations of behaviour change programs. These are often referred to as Men’s Behaviour Change Programs (MBCPs) and are available in a range of settings, including in both the community and custodial settings. MBCPs are available to those who self-refer or are otherwise concerned about their own behaviours. Perpetrators can also be mandated to attend programs, either informally by their partners or communities, or formally through courts or corrections. MBCPs include those that are designed for perpetrators of family and domestic violence, and those focusing on sexual violence specifically.

To respond effectively to all perpetrators, specialist perpetrator programs and services should integrate with different sectors and services beyond the scope of targeted perpetrator interventions, such as the mental health or alcohol and other drug sectors, so that perpetrators are able to address factors that may be related to their offending, but are not underlying drivers of FDSV. Programs such as MBCPs should also include mechanisms for providing victim/survivors with access to ongoing partner, family or other support services wherever appropriate, particularly women and their children who have not had contact with support services before. From a program delivery perspective, MBCPs should also be accessible and adaptable for perpetrators from diverse cultures, communities and circumstances, and engage effectively with perpetrators with diverse needs.

This concept is linked to the following NOSPI Headline Standards:

2. Perpetrators get the right interventions at the right time
4. Perpetrators participate in programs and services that enable them to change their violent behaviour and attitudes

## How is it being monitored?

Indicators and measures used to monitor specialist perpetrator programs are often related to accessibility and engagement (Table 3.7).

**Table 3.7: Examples of indicators related to specialist perpetrator programs**

<b>State/territory</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Data available</b>
<b>Victoria</b> Family Violence Outcomes Framework	Increase appropriateness of type and timing of responses, including cultural responsiveness	No
	Increase engagement and retention of perpetrators in programs and interventions	No
	Increase the equity and safety of relationships	No
	Increase perpetrators overall wellbeing	No
<b>Queensland</b> Evaluation Framework for the Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy	Availability of behaviour change programs in locations across Queensland	Yes
	Increased number of perpetrators who are assessed as suitable for a behaviour change program	Under development
	Proportion of perpetrators assessed as suitable and ready to commence community-based behaviour change programs, but who wait longer than x* months	Under development
	Increased number of perpetrators who access perpetrator programs or related services	Yes
	Increased proportion of perpetrators who commence a behaviour change program (or other perpetrator interventions)	Proposed for further exploration
	Increased proportion of perpetrators who participate in at least X hours of programming	Proposed for further exploration
	Increased proportion of perpetrators who complete a behaviour change program (or other perpetrator interventions)	Proposed for further exploration
	Positive change in perpetrators' beliefs and attitudes about domestic and family violence	Proposed for further exploration
	Increased number of perpetrators that have been assessed by NGOs as having reduced their use of domestic and family violence	Yes

## What else do we know?

### Helplines

Men's Line and Men's Referral Services are contacted by a range of people, including: men who might be using violent or controlling behaviour; people who would like more information about male family violence; friend's, family, or colleagues of people who are using or experiencing family violence, and professionals wishing to support clients using or experiencing family violence.

In some states and territories, men's counselling and referral services are integrated with other perpetrator interventions (such as police) through automatic referral pathways. This enables systems to work together to provide appropriate services where violence has been detected.

For more information, visit [NSW Automatic Referral Pathway](#).

### Men's Behaviour Change Programs

There are currently no national data on the number of MBCPs being delivered or the number of perpetrators who undertake MBCPs. However, data may be available from selected services to report on waiting times, and rates of commencement and completion.

### Evaluation of MBCPs

Evaluations of MBCPs are used to determine whether the programs are effective at improving the safety and wellbeing of those who have experience violence, or are at risk of violence. As part of the perpetrator interventions research stream, ANROWS has conducted [extensive research into MBCPs](#). Some key evaluations at the state and territory level are included in Box 3.10.

### **Box 3.10: Evaluation of MBCPs in New South Wales**

#### **EQUIPS Domestic Abuse Program**

In 2018, an evaluation of the EQUIPS Domestic Abuse Program (DVEQUIPS) in New South Wales was conducted to estimate the effect of commencing the program on general reoffending and domestic violence (DV)-related reoffending. The evaluation looked at DV reoffending within 12 months of free time (non-custodial) after program referral for DVEQUIPS starters and offenders who were referred but did not start. Analysis indicated that offenders who started the program were not significantly different from those who did not start the program for general or DV-related reoffending within 12 months of referral (Rahman and Poynton 2018). There was no evidence of a treatment effect for those who start DVEQUIPS within 12 months compared with those who were referred but did not start.

#### **Community based MBCPs**

In 2015, the New South Wales Government rolled out specialist community-based MBCPs in South Western Sydney, Central Coast, Northern NSW and Mid-North Coast. An evaluation was undertaken by the University of New South Wales between May 2017 and October 2019 to review the implementation process. Key findings from the evaluation are as follows:

- 58% (250) of participants were reported to have a low understanding of the program content by providers. However, 21 participants interviewed felt that the content helped them to recognise their behaviours as violent and enabled them to take responsibility. This was also supported by partners who were interviewed.
- 69% (36) of participants from MBCP Provider 1 strongly agreed that they behave less threateningly and/or violently towards their ex/current partner.
- 78% (76) of participants from MBCP Provider 2 rated their progress as 7 or 8 out of 10 (where 0 is 'no progress' and 10 is 'complete progress') on their reduction or cessation of violence and abuse.
- 89% (58) of facilitators from MBCP Providers 3 and 4 reported a perceived reduction in physical and sexual violence among participants.
- 86% (38) of current or ex partners from Providers 3 and 4 reported a perceived reduction in physical and sexual violence among participants.

For further details, visit [Men's Behaviour Change Programs Evaluation Summary Report](#)

## **Workforce capacity and capability**

A range of people, both generalist and specialist professionals and practitioners, can have a significant impact in addressing and reducing family, domestic and sexual violence through interactions with perpetrators. In order for the perpetrator interventions system to respond effectively, people working with perpetrators should have access to professional development opportunities that enable them to understand the dynamics family domestic and sexual violence. Workers should also be equipped to intervene safely and appropriately with perpetrators from a diverse range of backgrounds and understand the impact that interventions can have on those who have experienced violence.

This concept is linked to the following NOSPI Headline Standards:

6. People working in perpetrator intervention systems are skilled in responding to the dynamics and impacts of domestic, family and sexual violence.

## How is it being monitored?

Indicators and measures relating to workforce capacity and capability focus on building specialist capabilities across a range of sectors, improving system coordination and implementing standards of practice and delivery (Table 3.8).

**Table 3.8: Examples of indicators related to workforce capacity and capability**

State/territory	Indicators	Data availability
<b>Victoria</b> Family Violence Outcomes Framework	Increase workforce diversity	Yes
	Increase workforce skills and capabilities	Yes
	Increase in health, safety and wellbeing of the family violence workforce	Yes
<b>Queensland</b> Evaluation Framework for the Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy	Proportion of staff providing perpetrator interventions who meet minimum practice standards* (or other validated standards).	Under development
	Percentage of magistrates receiving professional development on domestic and family violence, as well as percentage of duty lawyers and court registry staff receiving training on domestic and family violence and how to respond	Yes
	Increased number of victims and perpetrators receiving advice from specialist domestic and family violence duty lawyers	Yes
	Increased number of perpetrators, victims and families assisted by the Community Justice Groups	Yes
	Domestic and Family Violence Coordinators attend domestic and family violence specific professional development/training opportunities	Yes
	Local justice authority structures are sufficiently resourced to implement community driven responses to domestic and family violence	Yes

## What else do we know?

Many states and territories have strategies and frameworks in place to guide training and workforce capability or development. These frameworks may encompass the broader family, domestic and sexual violence service system, or they may be limited to sectors. Perpetrator intervention services operate as part of the broader FDSV service system, and may be directly, or indirectly affected by these policies. Examples of strategies or frameworks to guide workforce capacity and capability development include:

- [Victoria's Family Violence Capability Frameworks](#)
- [The ACT Government Domestic and Family Violence Training Strategy](#)

- [The Northern Territory Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Workforce and Sector Development Plan.](#)

Data on the perpetrator interventions workforce are not routinely collected at a national level. However, a survey of workers in the broader FDSV services workforce can provide an overview of some perpetrator interventions (Box 3.11).

### **Box 3.11: The National Survey of Workers in the Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Sectors**

In 2018, the Social Policy Research Centre conducted a National Survey of Workers in the Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Sectors. While the survey looks at FDSV services more broadly, some data are available to report on specialist perpetrator interventions.

According to the Survey, 2.6% (30) of workers surveyed were identified as working in specialist perpetrator programs. Of those respondents:

- 75% were in frequent (daily) contact with perpetrators FDV
- 38% were in frequent (daily) contact with victims of FDV
- 17% were in frequent (daily) contact with perpetrators of sexual assault.

The survey also asked respondents about their ability to recognise and respond to violence and meet client needs. Of the respondents identified as working specialist perpetrator programs 93% agreed that they were confident screening for risk and identifying safety needs.

#### **Outcome measurement**

Respondents working in perpetrator interventions were less likely to agree that they were confident in measuring outcomes. Half (50%) agreed or strongly agreed that they were 'confident in measuring outcomes'—a lower proportion of respondents compared with every other service type. Further, less than half (46%) said that outcomes of their interventions were measured 'all of the time or 'most of the time'.

#### **Training**

All respondents were asked how many days, in the last 12 months, they had spent on training which was relevant to family and domestic violence and sexual assault. Of the respondents whose main service was a specialist perpetrator service:

- 17% said that they did no days of domestic violence or sexual assault related training in the last 12 months.
- 17% said they had done 1 or 2 days of training
- 40% said they had done 3 to 5 days of training
- 27% reported they had done more than 5 day of training.

For those working frequently with perpetrators, priority areas for skill development include working with client's resistant to intervention, promoting behaviour change, and evaluating participants' progress.

For full details, visit the [National Survey of Workers in the Domestic Family and Sexual Violence Sectors](#).

The capacity and capability of the perpetrator intervention workforce can be monitored through purpose designed surveys that focus on family, domestic and sexual violence services specifically (for example, Victoria's [Family Violence Workforce Census](#)) or surveys administered to mainstream services with specialist perpetrator responses. These services can provide an overview of worker's perspectives and identify priority areas for development.

Evaluations of major training initiatives can also shed light on whether different areas within the perpetrator interventions system are equipped to respond to perpetrators of family, domestic and sexual violence.

**Practice standards**

Several states and territories have practice standards in place to guide service delivery. Some of these standards relate specifically to Men’s Behaviour Change Programs while others apply to family and domestic violence services more broadly (Table 3.9).

**Table 3.9: Practice standards related to perpetrators of family, domestic and sexual violence**

<b>State/territory</b>	<b>Standards</b>
NSW	<a href="#">Practice Standards for Men’s Behaviour Change Programs</a>
Vic	<a href="#">Men’s Behaviour Change Minimum Standards</a>
Qld	<a href="#">Domestic and family violence support services: Practice principles, standards and guidance</a>
WA	<a href="#">Practice Standards for Perpetrator Intervention</a>
NT	<a href="#">Central Australian Minimum Standards for Men’s Behaviour Change Program</a>

National practice standards for sexual violence responses are currently being developed (see Chapter 4).

**Review of criminal justice responses**

In order to ensure that the workforce is effective at identifying and responding to perpetrators of family, domestic and sexual violence, efforts to develop the workforce and build capabilities should be routinely evaluated (Box 3.12 and 3.13).

### **Box 3.12: Specialist domestic and family violence courts in Queensland**

In Queensland, a trial specialist DFV court commenced in Southport in 2015 following key recommendations of the Not Now, Not Ever: Putting an end to domestic and family violence in Queensland report.

The specialist DFV court model is multi-disciplinary and collaborative. A key component of the specialist DFV court approach is collaboration between government and non-government agencies and service providers who deliver critical support to people involved in DFV proceedings. The specialist DFV court justice response is supported by local governance through operational working groups that support a collaborative, multi-agency approach.

#### **Evaluation**

In 2017, an evaluation of the Specialist DFV Court trial in Southport was undertaken by the Griffith Institute of Criminology and considered short- and medium-term outcomes. The evaluation found that specialisation provides a way of managing the complexity of DFV matters in court, as well as providing a meaningful service to victims and perpetrators. The evaluation made several recommendations including to conduct a long-term outcomes evaluation of the Southport specialist DFV court.

An independent, long-term evaluation of the Southport specialist DFV court commenced in July 2019 and will conclude in 2021. The evaluation is being undertaken by ARTD consultants, partnering with Murawin, an Indigenous-owned consultancy. The objectives of the evaluation are to determine if the Southport specialist DFV court is operating according to the intended specialist court model, to measure progress against the 2017 evaluation and to measure social and economic impacts connected with the Southport specialist DFV court.

Following the successful trial and independent evaluation of the Southport specialist DFV court, the Queensland Government has established Southport as a permanent DFV court. Specialist DFV courts are operational in four other locations: Beenleigh, Townsville, Mount Isa and Palm Island.

For more information, visit [Specialist Domestic and Family Violence Court](#).

### **Box 3.13: Policing domestic violence**

In 2018, the Australian Institute of Criminology conducted a review of domestic violence policing practices across several domains. The following findings relate to workforce capacity and capability.

#### **Workforce development**

Training (particularly practice-oriented training) can influence police responses to domestic violence and increase recognition among officers of the importance of police intervention. The benefits of training appear to decay over time without adequate reinforcement. Efforts have been made to formalise and enhance on-the-job training so that it is practice-oriented, does not significantly interfere with operational duties, and gives junior officers the chance to learn from and observe more senior colleagues.

For full details, visit [Policing domestic violence: a review of the evidence](#).

## **4 Data availability, limitations and development opportunities**

Chapter 3 outlines the current availability of data for reporting against key concepts at the state and territory level, based on the indicators developed as part of state and territory policies. This chapter focuses on the availability of data at the national level, and the current limitations and development opportunities, using the NOSPI reporting framework as a basis.

### **What data are available to report on perpetrator interventions at a national level?**

Since the NOSPI reporting framework was endorsed by COAG in 2017, data have been collated and reported against for only a limited number of indicators (Table 4.1). These selected indicators were identified through consultations with states and territories as the most feasible to collect for the 2015–16, 2016–17 and 2017–18 reporting periods. Available data were included in two previous NOSPI reports and are not re-reported here.

**Table 4.1: NOSPI indicators previously used for reporting**

Indicator	Included in baseline report	Included in second report	
3	Proportion of police-attended FDV incidents where police issued FDV intervention orders on behalf of the victim	Yes	Yes
15	Average time from breach of an order to court outcome: a) FDV b) Sexual assault	Yes	Yes
16	Proportion of perpetrators assessed as suitable and ready to commence community-based behaviour change programmes, but who waited longer than x* months *Could be disaggregated by less than 1 month, 1–3 months, 4–6 months, etc.	Yes	Yes
17	Proportion of incidents reported to or recorded by police where charges were laid (where appropriate) a) FDV b) Sexual assault	No	Yes
19	Proportion of sexual assault charges that result in convictions	Yes	Yes
20	Proportion of reported breached FDV intervention orders that have a further legal consequence: a) charge b) conviction c) custodial sentence	Yes	Yes
22	Average time from charge to court outcome a) FDV breach of order b) Sexual assault	Yes	Yes
23	a) Proportion of perpetrators who <u>commence</u> a behaviour change programme (or other perpetrator interventions) b) Proportion of perpetrators who <u>complete</u> a behaviour change programme (or other perpetrator interventions)*	Yes	Yes

Data for 6 indicators were included in the NOSPI baseline report for the 2015–16 reporting period. Indicator 15 was reported with Indicator 22 because the proxy data available from the ABS Criminal Courts data collection could not be further disaggregated.

The second NOSPI report included an additional 2 years of data for 2016–17 and 2017–18 for each of the 6 previously reported indicators (3, 16, 19, 20, 22 and 23) allowing for comparison across 3 years where appropriate. Through consultations with states and territories, data for two additional indicators (17 and 21) were included, as additional information was obtained about the definitions. These indicators had not been previously reported due to data quality concerns. After assessment of the data collated, Indicator 21 was excluded from the final report.

### Data provided by states and territories

Data for indicators 3, 16, 17, 21 and 23 were provided by states and territories where available. In both NOSPI reports, data were provided according to the NOSPI data

specifications where possible. Detailed information was also provided on how the data provided by states and territories aligned with the specifications. However, due to the differences in definitions, legislation, policy and practices, the data collected were not comparable across states and territories. For this reason, national data on the outcomes of perpetrator interventions remains a key data gap.

### **ABS' Criminal Courts, Australia**

In the previous NOSPI reports, data from the ABS' Criminal Courts, Australia collection were used as proxy measures to report against indicators 19, 20 and 22. Criminal Courts, Australia publishes national statistics about defendants dealt with by criminal courts including demographic, offence, outcome and sentence information.

Data from the ABS' Criminal Courts publication on family and domestic violence defendants are considered experimental, and can only be used to capture the NOSPI indicators partially to the specifications. The ABS continue to make changes and improvements to the experimental FDV data. For more information, visit [ABS Criminal Courts, Australia methodology](#).

## **Data limitations**

While the NOSPI indicators (see Appendix A) provide a framework for understanding how outcomes relating to perpetrator interventions could be monitored across key areas, there are many areas where key data gaps remain. Further, where data are available, there are limitations in using these data to report on outcomes nationally.

### **Data are not comparable between states and territories**

Consultations with states and territories have shown that there is substantial variation in how data collected across jurisdictions. Data are collected according to different policy, practices and legislation. While the NOSPI reporting framework includes definitions and indicator specifications, there is substantial variation in how closely data can be aligned with these measures. Many states and territories have undertaken work to improve data collection and reporting systems since the agreement of the NOSPI, however, these improvements have not enhanced the comparability of data nationally.

### **Perpetrator interventions are fragmented and multi-sectoral**

Currently, there is limited visibility of services that provide targeted perpetrator interventions outside police, courts and selected men's behaviour change programs. The system is fragmented, and services are administered by a range of government and non-government agencies. There is limited visibility of specialist family and domestic violence services and this can make it difficult to assess the performance of perpetrator interventions within the context of family and domestic violence service system more broadly. Further, the diversity of service providers operating targeted perpetrator interventions means that data collection and reporting capabilities will vary. There is also limited visibility of how perpetrators move through the intervention system.

### **Data on specific population groups are limited**

Understanding how the perpetrator interventions system identifies and responds to perpetrators from diverse backgrounds is a key priority under the NOSPI framework. While data capturing the diversity of perpetrators such as data on age, Indigenous status,

remoteness, country of birth and languages spoken may be collected by states and territories, these data are not always suitable for publication. This can be for a range of reasons including data quality issues relating to poor identification of such groups, as well as small numbers leading to reliability and confidentiality issues.

### **Children and young people**

Currently, there is limited information on young people (particularly 10-17 year olds) who use violence in the home or in their interpersonal relationships. The ABS Recorded Crime—Offenders data includes some experimental statistics on children and young people proceeded against by police for family and domestic violence offences, but data on patterns of violent behaviour over time are not available. In addition, there is no visibility of perpetrator interventions tailored to the needs of young people who use violence. Young people require support services that are different from those designed for adult perpetrators given the different context of their violence.

## **What has been done to improve data at the national level?**

Since the NOSPI were agreed, there have been key improvements to national family, domestic and sexual violence data. These have included efforts to improve the capture of FDSV in existing data sets, and work to develop new collections to fill known data gaps. While the data improvements relating to perpetrator interventions to date are still limited in their ability to report on outcomes, they indicate where there are opportunities for development.

### **ABS Recorded Crime—Offenders**

The ABS Recorded Crime—Offenders collection provides experimental statistics about offenders of selected family and domestic violence related offences, as recorded on state and territory recording systems. Currently, the FDV data is experimental, with further work required to improve the comparability and quality of the data. This work is ongoing.

For more information, visit [ABS Recorded Crime—Offenders methodology](#).

### **ABS Criminal Courts, Australia**

The ABS Criminal Courts, Australia provides experimental statistics on all defendants finalised for family and domestic violence related offences. These statistics are published for selected offences, including:

- Homicide and related offences
- Acts intended to cause injury (such as assault)
- Sexual assault and related offences
- Abduction/harassment
- Property damage
- Breach of violence orders
- Other dangerous or negligent acts.

Due to continuous improvements, national FDV data were available and published for the first time in the 2019–20 release.

For more information, visit [ABS Criminal Courts, Australia methodology](#).

## **National legal assistance data**

ABS is undertaking a project to develop a statistical evidence base for the Australian legal assistance sector in partnership with the Attorney General's Department and the Department of Social Services. This project aims to improve the availability of data about persons who receive legal assistance for FDSV-related matters.

## **AIHW Specialist Homelessness Services Collection**

The Specialist Homelessness Collection currently collects data on clients seeking SHS due to family and domestic violence. From 1 July, the SHS was able to collect whether a person required (or was provided with) victim or perpetrator services.

The additional data is potentially a valuable source of information about perpetrators and their experiences of homelessness services. Further work to assess data quality is required before these data are available for publication.

## **Men's Behaviour Change Minimum Data Set**

In 2019, ANROWS undertook a study into developing a national minimum data set for Men's Behaviour Change Programs (MBCPs) in Australia. A minimum data set would fill a critical gap in the perpetrator interventions landscape and provide information about:

- how many participants are referred to and/ or attend MBCPs in Australia
- the relationship between participant characteristics and social contexts with attrition, completion and recidivism during and after the MBCP.

A minimum data set would also support the perpetrator interventions system in holding perpetrators accountable and visible within the system. Data from a minimum data set could also help keep programs accountable for the services they provide and for funding allocation (Chung et al. 2020). The study highlights the value in developing a national data set and provides key items for consideration. It also highlights that there is some support for developing a minimum dataset in this area but further work is required. The study itself does not go as far as specifying the contents of a minimum dataset.

## **ANROWS What Works**

Work to build the evidence base has also included the consolidation of research and evaluation. ANROWS' [What Works project](#) produces a framework to support the assessment of the overall value and effectiveness of family, domestic and sexual violence interventions, programs and strategies. It will develop:

- an evidence portal/what works framework that allows for comparison between different practices and summarises the evidence base in relation to what works to reduce or respond to VAW
- accessible and practical information about the applicability and implementation of interventions
- directions for future research, including suggestions in terms of research design and recommendations around the measurement of outcomes.

This work demonstrates the value of having nationally comparable information on interventions and services, to understand the extent to which evidence-based practices are implemented.

## **Future opportunities for data development and improvement**

### **Linked data**

The National Crime and Justice Data Linkage Project aims to link administrative datasets from across the criminal justice sector, including police, criminal courts, corrective services, and juvenile justice. Once fully established, this data system could provide insight on how perpetrators of family and domestic violence move through the criminal justice sector, including corrective service outcomes for FDSV offenders. In the future, other health and welfare datasets could also be included to provide a more holistic view of perpetrators, and potentially, their victims.

### **Sexual violence responses**

The AIHW has been contracted to produce a report on national sexual violence responses in Australia, for release in 2022. This work will draw on a desktop review of the literature and provide a summary of the data available, highlighting relevant measures across states and territories, including common themes and data gaps. This report will also conduct high-level reporting where available on existing data collections that would enhance the availability of data on sexual violence, including sub-national data sources.

The National Association for Services against Sexual Violence have worked with University of New South Wales Gender Violence Research Network to update and publish a new (third) edition of the Standards of Practice Manual for Services against Sexual Violence. These standards, were published 6 September 2021 ([NASASV National Standards of Practice 3rd Ed](#)) and include evidence-based standards for working with perpetrators of sexual violence.

### **Specialist FDSV services data collection**

The development of a national specialist FDSV services data collection ('prototype') was announced in the 2020–21 Budget. At a national level there are very limited data from specialist family and domestic violence services, which include things like crisis services, or family and relationship counselling, family violence outreach services, and perpetrator intervention programs. Improved data on specialist services could potentially be a valuable source of information about related perpetrator services, including pathways and referrals into perpetrator intervention services.

# Appendix A: NOSPI indicators

The NOSPI reporting framework included 27 indicators for reporting. These indicators were developed in collaboration with states and territories by mapping available data to the NOSPI headline standards. Where data were not available, indicators were developed as aspirational, to guide data development activities.

**Table A1: NOSPI indicators**

Indicator	Included in baseline report	Included in second report
1 Proportion of reported family and domestic violence (FDV) incidents where a victim risk assessment was made	No	No
2 Proportion of police reported FDV incidents where the victim was referred to an appropriate service or programme for assessment	No	No
3 Proportion of police-attended FDV incidents where police issued FDV intervention orders on behalf of the victim	Yes	Yes
4 Proportion of victims reporting sexual assault referred to specialist sexual assault services	No	No
5 Proportion of victim referrals where contact with the victim occurred a) FDV b) Sexual assault	No	No
6 Proportion of child protection notifications that record FDV in the notification	No	No
7 Proportion of FDV cases that are managed by FDV case tracking	No	No
8 Proportion of women (and their children) who felt safer a) before b) at the time of c) after the perpetrator intervention was operating	No	No
9 Proportion of cases where alternative options for providing evidence (such as video conferencing) were available to the victim (when offered or requested): a) FDV b) Sexual assault	No	No
10 Proportion of women who experience FDV who are re-victimised by the same perpetrator within 12 months	No	No
11 Proportion of children who experience FDV who are re-victimised within 12 months.	No	No
12 Proportion of perpetrators who are assessed for perpetrator intervention programmes a) FDV (behaviour change programmes) b) Sexual assault (clinical treatment)	No	No
13 Proportion of FDV incidents where the perpetrator was referred to an appropriate service or programme for assessment	No	No
14 Proportion of referrals of perpetrators that proceed to a case management plan (or equivalent)	No	No <i>(continued)</i>

**Table A1 (continued): NOSPI indicators**

	Indicator	Included in baseline report	Included in second report
15	Average time from breach of an order to court outcome: c) FDV d) Sexual assault	Yes	Yes
16	Proportion of perpetrators assessed as suitable and ready to commence community-based behaviour change programmes, but who waited longer than x* months *Could be disaggregated by less than 1 month, 1–3 months, 4–6 months, etc.	Yes	Yes
17	Proportion of incidents reported to or recorded by police where charges were laid (where appropriate) c) FDV d) Sexual assault	No	Yes
18	Proportion of perpetrators that are first time offenders a) FDV b) Sexual assault	No	No
19	Proportion of sexual assault charges that result in convictions	Yes	Yes
20	Proportion of reported breached FDV intervention orders that have a further legal consequence: d) charge e) conviction f) custodial sentence	Yes	Yes
21	Average time from police report : a) FDV (legal consequence/application for court order) b) Sexual assault (charge)	No	No
22	Average time from charge to court outcome c) FDV breach of order d) Sexual assault	Yes	Yes
23	a) Proportion of perpetrators who <u>commence</u> a behaviour change programme (or other perpetrator interventions) b) Proportion of perpetrators who <u>complete</u> a behaviour change programme (or other perpetrator interventions)*	Yes	Yes
24	Proportion of FDV perpetrators who participate in services which offer support for partners (including ex-partners)	No	No
25	Proportion of FDV perpetrators who perpetrate again with a new FDV or sexual offence within 12 months of completing a behaviour change programme (or other perpetrator interventions)	No	No
26	Proportion of interventions that meet minimum practice standards (or other validated standards)	No	No
27	Proportion of staff providing perpetrator interventions who meet minimum practice standards (or other validated standards).	No	No

# Appendix B: NOPSI development and implementation

## National priority actions and areas

Perpetrator interventions have remained a national priority across all the action plans. The second and third action plans in particular, included specific actions for finalising and implementing the NOSPI.

### **Second Action Plan 2013–2016**

#### **National Priority Four: Improving perpetrator interventions**

Action 22—Finalise and set national outcome standards for best practice perpetrator interventions

Action 23—Build capacity to implement national outcome standards for perpetrator interventions and improve the quality and quantity of perpetrator interventions.

### **Third Action Plan 2016–2019**

#### **National Priority Area 6: Keeping perpetrators accountable across all systems**

Action 6.2(a)—Implement key performance indicators against the National Outcome Standards for Perpetrator Interventions and develop an approach to report against these indicators annually to drive further refinements and improvements.

Under the Fourth Action Plan 2019–2021, the following was identified as one of several key achievements under the National Plan:

- COAG agreed to the National Outcome Standards for Perpetrator Interventions, setting out the practice standards and performance indicators for perpetrator interventions to be used by all governments and community partners.

A timeline of the NOSPI development and implementation is included below (Table B1).

**Table B1: Timeline of NOSPI development and implementation**

2016	<p><b>Reporting and framework development</b></p> <p>Following endorsement from the COAG, the Commonwealth government, in consultation with states and territories, worked collaboratively develop draft indicators to measure outcomes across the NOSPI.</p> <p>The NOSPI indicators were developed following a review of available data and other reporting information from women’s safety, health, justice and corrections agencies, and consultation with government agencies and non-government service providers.</p> <p>Available data from each jurisdiction was mapped against each headline standard. Where data were not available, indicators were developed to be aspirational, with the view that data could be collected and reported in future.</p> <p>The NOSPI reporting framework was presented to all jurisdictions in April 2016, and was followed by consultation with service providers in July 2016.</p> <p>See the following section for details on NOSPI indicators.</p>
2017	<p><b>Agreement to reporting strategy</b></p> <p>Under the committee formerly known as the Law, Crime and Community Safety Council, Attorneys-General and Ministers agreed to the Commonwealth working with all jurisdictions to commence reporting on the National Outcome Standards for Perpetrator Interventions in 2017.</p> <p>This included agreement from all jurisdictions to the 2017–19 reporting strategy, and agreement to provide data for key indicators.</p>
2017	<p><b>Data stocktake and collection</b></p> <p>Following agreement from LCCSC, the AIHW worked with states and territories to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• conduct a stocktake of jurisdictional data holdings in relation to the NOSPI indicators</li> <li>• collect and report data against selected NOSPI indicators.</li> </ul> <p>States and territories raised concerns about data quality and comparability across the 27 indicators. Of the 27 indicators, only 6 were identified as feasible to report for the 2015–16 period. Proxy data for 3 of the 6 indicators were taken from the ABS’ Criminal Courts collection.</p>
2018	<p><b>First NOSPI report published</b></p> <p>The NOSPI Baseline report was published, which included data for selected indicators and a number of proxy measures. States and territories also provided narrative appendixes to describe the reforms and policies relevant to each Headline Standard. This narrative appendix was intended to highlight work done by states and territory governments in perpetrator interventions, where data were not available to report.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued)</i></p>

**Table B1 (continued): Timeline of NOSPI development and implementation**

2019	<p><b>Second NOSPI report developed</b></p> <p>AIHW developed a subsequent NOSPI report for the 2016–17 and 2017–18 reporting period. A stocktake process was undertaken for a small number of indicators identified by the AIHW as having potential to report. Consultations showed that as with the baseline report, the data collated were not comparable across states and territories, although some ad-hoc data improvements had taken place. . Given the limitations in these data, the second NOSPI report was developed for information only, not for publication.</p>
2020	<p><b>Approach for reporting on perpetrator interventions nationally revised</b></p> <p>Following the completion of the first and second NOSPI reports, the AIHW were contracted by DSS to finalise the NOSPI body of work. The final phase of the NOSPI work was intended to highlight how perpetrator interventions have improved, and how these improvements have been monitored since the endorsement of the NOSPI.</p> <p>The National Outcome Standards for Perpetrator Interventions Advisory Group was convened including representatives from all states and territories. Discussions highlighted key issues in collecting and reporting data against the NOSPI indicators, and in collecting comparable national data more broadly about perpetrator interventions.</p> <p>Given these issues, a revised approach was proposed by AIHW to collate information about the work being done across governments to monitor and report on perpetrator interventions.</p>

# Appendix C: State and territory outcome measures and actions

Below is a summary of relevant state and territory outcome and monitoring frameworks. Information about indicators and outcomes related to perpetrator interventions are provided. Note that this appendix provides an overview only. Mechanisms for monitoring outcomes related to perpetrators may be included under other outcome areas or indicators that have not been included here.

## New South Wales

### Domestic and Family Violence Blueprint for Reform

The Domestic and Family Violence Blueprint for Reform 2016–2021: Safer Lives for Women, Men and Children sets out the directions and actions to reform the domestic violence system in New South Wales. The Blueprint actions are:

1. Preventing domestic and family violence
2. Intervening early with vulnerable communities
3. Supporting victims
4. Holding perpetrators accountable
5. Delivering quality services
6. Improving the system.

Under the Blueprint, the perpetrators are held to account by the Premier's Priority to reduce domestic violence re-offending.

For more information, visit [Domestic and Family Violence Blueprint](#).

## Victoria

### Family Violence Outcomes Framework

The Family Violence Outcomes Framework (FVOF) translates Victoria's vision to end family violence, outlined in Ending Family Violence—Victoria's 10-Year Plan for Change, into a set of outcomes, indicators and measures. The 10-year plan helps to communicate key priorities, why they matter and what reform success looks like. 'Perpetrators and people who use violence' is a key priority of the second Family Violence Reform Rolling Action Plan 2020-2023.

The 4 FVOF domains reflect the long-term outcomes to be achieved through the reform:

- Family violence and gender inequality are not tolerated.
- Victim survivors, vulnerable children and families, are safe and supported to recover and thrive.
- Perpetrators are held accountable, connected and take responsibility for stopping their violence.
- Preventing and responding to family violence is systemic and enduring.

The FVOF aligns with the Victorian Government’s overarching whole of government outcomes architecture, articulated in Outcomes Reform in Victoria. According to the Family Violence Outcomes Framework Measurement and Monitoring Implementation Strategy, the domains provide a logical structure for grouping related outcomes and a line of sight from each outcome to the overall vision.

**Domain 3: Perpetrators are held accountable, connected and take responsibility for stopping their violence**

The FVOF provides a transparent approach to monitoring and reporting towards ending family violence. The Victorian Government is developing a full set of measures for all outcomes and indicators. Preliminary reporting includes 29 measures from the inaugural FVOF report to be released in March 2022. Additional monitoring will occur as measures are developed in the coming year.

**Table C1: Outcomes, indicators, measures and data sources**

Outcomes	Indicator	Measure	Source	Data available
Perpetrators stop all forms of family violence behaviour	Reduction in all family violence behaviours	Number/proportion of reported contraventions of Family Violence orders	DJCS	Yes
	Reduction in all family violence behaviours	Number/proportion of individuals identified as the primary aggressor in an L17 report who receive a subsequent L17 report within [12 months]	DJCS	Yes

For more information, visit [Family Violence Outcomes Framework \(FVOF\)](#).

**Queensland**

**Evaluation Framework for the Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy**

The purpose of the Evaluation Framework is to enhance the government’s capacity to identify domestic and family violence programs that are successful and effective in addressing issues of violence as well as those that may be inefficient or ineffective.

The high level outcome of the Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy is: all Queenslanders feel safe in their own homes and children can grow and develop in safe and secure environments. This is underpinned by seven supporting outcomes:

- Queenslanders take a zero tolerance approach to domestic and family violence
- Respectful relationships and non-violent behaviour are embedded in our community
- Queensland community, business, religious, sporting and all government leaders are taking action and working together

- Queensland’s workplaces and workforce challenge attitudes contributing to violence and effectively support workers
- Victims and their families are safe and supported
- Perpetrators stop using violence and are held to account.

### Supporting Outcome 6: Perpetrators stop using violence and are held to account

An update to the Revised indicator matrix of the evaluation framework was published in October 2021, which outlined the outcome, indicators, data sources for evaluation. Table C3 provides the outcomes, indicators and data sources related to Supporting Outcome 6.

**Table C2: Outcomes, indicators, data sources**

Outcome	Indicator	Data source	Status of data source
Intermediate Outcome 6.1: Perpetrators get the right interventions at the right time	Availability of behaviour change programs in locations across Queensland	Department of Justice and Attorney-General administrative data	Partial
		Queensland Corrective Services administrative data	Available (Logan, Beenleigh and Beaudesert)
	Increased number of perpetrators who are assessed as suitable for a behaviour change program	NOSPI measure (Indicator 12)	Proposed for further exploration
		Queensland Corrective Services administrative data	Available (Logan, Beenleigh and Beaudesert)
	Proportion of perpetrators assessed as suitable and ready to commence community-based behaviour change programs, but who wait longer than x* months	NOSPI measure (Indicator 16)	Proposed for further exploration
			<i>(continued)</i>

**Table C2 (continued): Outcomes, indicators, data sources**

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Data source</b>	<b>Status of data source</b>
Intermediate Outcome 6.2: Perpetrators participate in programmes and services that enable them to change their violent behaviours and attitudes	Increased number of perpetrators who voluntarily access perpetrator programs or related services	Department of Justice and Attorney-General administrative data	Available
	Increased proportion of perpetrators who commence a behaviour change program (or other perpetrator interventions)	NOSPI measure (Indicator 23)	Partial
	Increased proportion of perpetrators who participate in at least X hours of programming	Department of Justice and Attorney-General administrative data	Proposed for further exploration
		Queensland Corrective Services administrative data	Proposed for further exploration
	Increased proportion of perpetrators who complete a behaviour change program (or other perpetrator interventions)	NOSPI measure (Indicator 23)	Partial
	Positive change in perpetrators' beliefs and attitudes about domestic and family violence	Funded service providers	Proposed for further exploration
		Queensland Corrective Services administrative data	Proposed for further exploration
	Increased number of perpetrators that have been assessed by NGOs as having reduced their use of domestic and family violence	Department of Justice and Attorney-General administrative data	Available
	Proportion of reported breached DFV intervention orders that have a further legal consequence	NOSPI measure (Indicator 20)	Proposed for further exploration
			<i>(continued)</i>

**Table C2 (continued): Outcomes, indicators, data sources**

Outcome	Indicator	Data source	Status of data source
Intermediate Outcome 6.2: Perpetrators participate in programmes and services that enable them to change their violent behaviours and attitudes (continued)	Proportion of DFV perpetrators who perpetrate again with a new DFV or sexual offence within X months of completing a behaviour change program (or other perpetrator interventions)	NOSPI measure (Indicator 25)	Proposed for further exploration
Intermediate Outcome 6.3: People working in perpetrator intervention systems are skilled in responding to the dynamics and impacts of domestic and family violence	Proportion of staff providing perpetrator interventions who meet minimum practice standards* (or other validated standards).	NOSPI measure (Indicator 27)	Proposed for further exploration

For more information, visit [Evaluation Framework](#) and [Revised indicator matrix of the evaluation framework](#).

## Western Australia

### **Path to Safety: Western Australia’s strategy to reduce family and domestic violence 2020–2030**

Western Australia’s Strategy to Reduce Family and Domestic Violence 2020–2030 is a ten-year strategy to realise the vision of a Western Australia where all people live free from family and domestic violence. The framework for change has four focus areas with intersecting and mutually reinforcing outcomes:

- Work with Aboriginal people to strengthen Aboriginal family safety
- Act now to keep people safe and hold perpetrators to account
- Grow primary prevention to stop family and domestic violence
- Reform systems to priorities safety, accountability and collaboration.

The focus area related to perpetrator interventions includes the following outcomes and priority actions (Table C4).

**Table C3: Focus areas, outcomes and actions related to perpetrators**

Focus area	Outcomes	Priority Actions
Act now	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adult and child victims are safe and supported to recover and thrive</li> <li>• Perpetrators are visible, held to account and supported to change.</li> <li>• People at risk of experiencing or using violence are identified early and supported to access effective, evidence-based interventions.</li> <li>• Responses meet people's diverse and intersecting needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure victims have immediate, early and ongoing access to safety and are supported to recover.</li> <li>• Support the long-term recovery and wellbeing of children who have experienced family and domestic violence</li> <li>• Develop tailored responses that consider people's diversity and intersecting needs</li> <li>• Connect perpetrators with timely evidence-based interventions to support accountability and behaviour change.</li> </ul>

In addition, under the Path to Safety: First Action Plan 2020–2022, the ongoing monitoring of perpetrator interventions are captured by the following actions:

- Action item 10: Develop a framework for improving WA's perpetrator response system that considers and integrates the emerging national and international evidence relevant to this work.

For more information, visit [Strategy to Reduce Family and Domestic Violence 2020–2030](#).

## South Australia

### **Committed to Safety: A framework for addressing domestic, family and sexual violence in South Australia 2018–2022**

Committed to Safety (CTS) is a policy framework that provides a clear and considered plan for action in relation to preventing domestic, family and sexual violence.

CTS features 3 pillars of response:

- Primary Prevention
- Service and Support
- Justice (Legislative, Statutory and Community).

Under the CTS are a range of short, medium and long term actions against each of the 3 pillars, and a focus on key population groups. Table C4 includes broad actions relevant to perpetrators.

**Table C4: Pillars and actions related to perpetrators**

Pillar	Broad actions
Services and support responses	<p>We will work on a perpetrator specific risk assessment and referral pathways into the FSF for those working directly with perpetrators who have no information about their partner/former partner and/or children, but are concerned about the current risk they present to their partner's and children's safety</p> <p>We will seek to strengthen FSF responses to perpetrators and the risk they present to women and children's safety.</p>
Justice (legislative, statutory and community) responses	<p>We will continue to work on an overall reduction in re-offending, with a focus on perpetrators of domestic, family and sexual violence.</p> <p>As well as an ongoing focus on improvements to court mandated perpetrator programs, we will explore the use of accommodation for perpetrators of domestic, family and sexual violence, in keeping with safety first principles.</p> <p>We will seek to strengthen women's safety in their own homes by building a whole of system response to perpetrators from early intervention through to justice responses that focus on perpetrator accountability and responsibility.</p> <p>We will seek to ensure that frontline services understand their ability to share information relating to risk and safety under the Information Sharing Guidelines to assist in holistic safety planning and perpetrator accountability</p> <p>We will convene the Multi-Agency Governance Committee to address whole of system responses to both women and their children, and perpetrators of violence.</p>

For more information, visit [Committed to Safety \(CTS\)](#).

## Tasmania

### Safe Homes, Families, Communities

Safe Homes, Families, Communities: Tasmania's Action Plan for Family and Sexual Violence 2019–2022 identifies 3 priority areas:

- Primary prevention and early intervention
- Response and recovery
- Strengthening the service system.

A commitment under the Action Plan is to continue to hold perpetrators to account and help them to change their violent behaviours. Actions related to perpetrators are included across all priority areas. The Action Plan does not include outcomes and indicators specifically, but annual progress reports include data from across the service system.

**Table C5: Priority areas and actions relating to perpetrator interventions**

Priority area	Action
Primary prevention and early intervention	Deliver the Men's Referral Service
Response and recovery	Deliver perpetrator programs for low, medium and high-risk perpetrators
	Introduce the ability to require mandated behaviour change program participation as part of a Family Violence Order
Strengthening the Service System	Trial electronic monitoring of high-risk family violence offenders
	Strengthen specialist police prosecution services
	Implement legislative reform to strengthen legal responses to family and sexual violence

Actions under Safe Homes, Families, Communities complement Tasmania's integrated criminal justice response to family violence, Safe at Home, which has operated since 2005. Safe at Home provides a service system underpinned by the *Family Violence Act 2004*, which is founded on the principle that safety of the victim is paramount and uses a pro-intervention strategy to realise this principle.

Safe at Home supports interagency case coordination to ensure ongoing management of service responses and to ensure that victims and perpetrators are referred to appropriate services.

The objectives of the Safe at Home service system are to:

- improve the safety and security for adult and child victims of family violence in the short and long term.
- ensure that offenders are held accountable for family violence as a public crime and change their offending behaviour.
- reduce the incidence and severity of family violence in the longer term.
- minimise the negative impacts of contact with the criminal justice system on adult and child victim.

For more information, visit [Safe Homes, Families, Communities](#).

## Northern Territory

### Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Reduction Framework

The Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Reduction Framework 2018–2028 is the Northern Territory's strategy to reduce domestic, family and sexual violence. It builds on the achievements of the Northern Territory Government's previous domestic and family violence strategy, Safety is Everyone's Right.

## Action Plan 1: Changing Attitudes, Intervening Earlier and Responding Better (2018–2028)

Under Action Plan 1, Outcome 4 *Perpetrators are held accountable and connected early to responses that change their behaviours and reduce violence*, is used to guide activities taken by governments to engage with perpetrators.

Perpetrator accountability is embedded in system, prevention and intervention responses that identify DFSV as part of a pattern of behaviour. Behaviour change interventions are targeted towards high-risk DFSV offenders and reflect the distinctive social and geographical contexts and drivers in which violence against women occurs in the Territory.

**Table C6: Outcomes and actions related to perpetrator interventions**

What we will do	How we will do it	Who is responsible
4.1: Connect perpetrators to timely, effective and evidence based behaviour change interventions.	<p>a) Expand the range and coverage of perpetrator programs in the NT</p> <p>b) Ensure that all offenders convicted of a domestic, family or sexual violence related offence who are held in custody are assessed by Corrections' treatment services, and that intervention pathways and risk management strategies are developed for individual male and female prisoners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NT Government</li> <li>• Specialist DFSV Services</li> </ul>
4.2: Implement perpetrator interventions that are effective and reduce reoffending.	<p>a) Support the development and implementation of evidence-based perpetrator interventions.</p> <p>b) Conduct an analysis of perpetrator programs to improve the effectiveness of interventions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NT Government</li> <li>• Aboriginal corporations/ organisations</li> <li>• Local Government Councils</li> <li>• Specialist DFSV Services</li> </ul>
4.3: Refocus the justice system on the rehabilitation and restoration of perpetrators to violence-free families.	<p>a) Align perpetrator outcomes with National Outcome Standards for Perpetrator Interventions.</p> <p>b) Implement awareness and education in youth detention facilities for detainees about respect for women and girls and preventing violence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NT Government</li> <li>• Community legal services</li> <li>• Specialist DFSV Services</li> </ul>

For more information, visit [Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Reduction Framework 2018–2028](#).

## Northern Territory Social Outcomes Framework

In the Northern Territory, outcomes related to family and domestic violence perpetrators are also captured by the Social Outcomes Framework. The Social Outcomes Framework is a tool that provides a clear consistent focus on identified priority outcomes that the community, governments, and the NGO sector can use to collectively measure progress.

The scope of the Social Outcomes Framework is broader than family and domestic violence. However, it aligns with individual agency strategies to ensure that there is consistency in the Northern Territory’s whole of government approach.

Table C8 shows the outcomes, indicators and measures related to domestic and family violence perpetrators.

**Table C7: Relevant outcomes, indicators and measures from the Social Outcomes Framework**

Outcomes	Indicators	Measures
Territorians are safe from abuse and violence	Reduce domestic and family violence	Number of domestic and family violence offences reported
		Rate of Domestic Violence Order breaches
	Reduce sexual violence	Number of sexual violence offences
	Reduce other violence and abuse	Number of assaults

For more information, visit [Northern Territory Social Outcomes Framework](#).

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# Acknowledgments

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## Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
DFV	Domestic and family violence
DSS	Department of Social Services
FDV	Family and domestic violence
FDSV	Family, domestic and sexual violence
LCCSC	Law, Crime and Community Safety Council
NOSPI	National Outcome Standards for Perpetrator Interventions

# Glossary

**domestic violence:** A set of violent or intimidating behaviours usually perpetrated by current or former intimate partners, where a partner aims to exert power and control over the other, through fear. Domestic violence can include physical violence, sexual violence, emotional abuse and psychological abuse.

**family violence:** Violent or intimidating behaviours against a person, perpetrated by a family member including a current or previous spouse or domestic partner. 'Family violence' is the preferred term used to identify experiences of violence for Indigenous Australians, as it encompasses the broad range of extended family and kinship relationships in which violence may occur.

**intimate partner violence:** Violent or intimidating behaviours perpetrated by a current or cohabiting partner, boyfriend, girlfriend or date. See also domestic violence.

**partner violence:** Violent or intimidating behaviours perpetrated by a current or former cohabiting partner. See also domestic violence and intimate partner violence.

**sexual assault:** A sexual act carried out against a person's will through the use of physical force, intimidation or coercion. This includes rape, attempted rape, aggravated sexual assault (assault with a weapon), indecent assault, penetration by objects, forced sexual activity that did not end in penetration, and attempts to force a person into sexual activity. These acts are an offence under state and territory criminal law.

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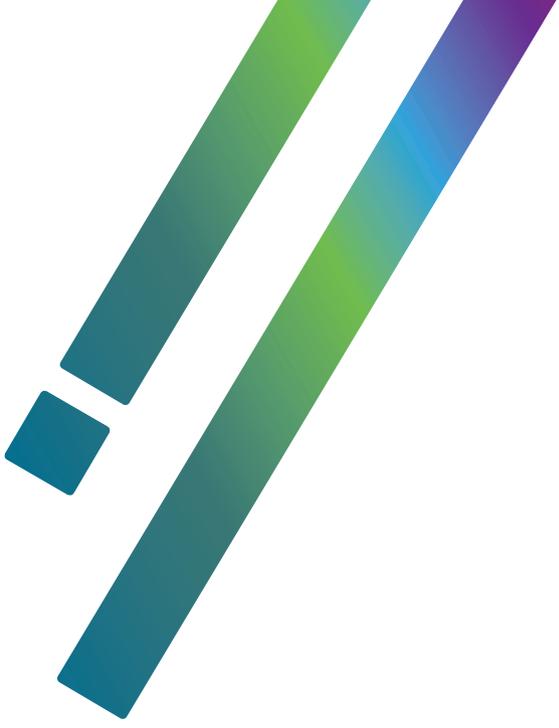
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## Related publications

This report, *Monitoring Perpetrator Interventions in Australia* complements other AIHW reports on family, domestic and sexual violence:

- AIHW 2018. Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia. Cat. No. FDV 2. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2019. Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: continuing the national story. Cat. No. FDV 3. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2020. Sexual Assault in Australia. Cat. no. FDV 5. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW (forthcoming 2021). Family, domestic and sexual violence data in Australia.
- AIHW (forthcoming 2021). Family, domestic and sexual violence service responses in the time of COVID-19.



This report brings together information from a range of sources to show how perpetrator interventions are being monitored in Australia. This report also highlights where key data gaps remain, and the work being done to build the evidence base.

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