

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

Meeting 17 of the Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence (DFSV) Cross Agency Working Group (CAWG) was held in Darwin on 22 November 2022. The meeting was attended by:

- representatives from the Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities (TFHC), the Department of the Attorney-General and Justice, Northern Territory (NT) Correctional Services, the Department of Education, the Department of Health, NT Police, Fire and Emergency Services (NTPFES), the Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet, and the DFSV Interagency Coordination and Reform Office (ICRO).
- representatives from the domestic, family and sexual violence networks in Darwin, Alice Springs, Big Rivers, Barkly and the Top End Remote Safe House network
- representatives from the Northern Territory Council of Social Service (NTCOSS), Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance NT (AMSANT) and the NT Legal Assistance Forum.

## Presentation on the development of a DFSV data snapshot

A presentation was provided on DFSV data in the Northern Territory, including Risk Assessment Management Framework training sessions, Family Safety Framework and DFSV assaults and homicides. The Office of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Reduction (ODFSVR) is developing a regular DFSV data snapshot for the CAWG.

## Guest Presentation – Dr Lucy Owen

Dr Lucy Owen from the Department of Health presented on her project to undertake an audit of domestic and family violence related presentations to the Emergency Departments at the Royal Darwin Hospital and the Palmerston Regional Hospital.

## Family Safety Framework (FSF)

Following the annual continuous improvement review of the FSF by TFHC and NT Police, involving FSF Chairs, FSF intelligence and administration offices, NT Police Victim Engagement Team, NT Government agency representatives on the FSF, NGO representatives on the FSF, and South Australian government staff managing South Australia's FSF, recommendations were presented for improvements.

The CAWG accepted the recommendations, including that the MOU between NT Police and TFHC be more rigorously implemented and that an MOU include all the agencies (NT Government and NGOs) who participate in the FSF.

The CAWG expressed ongoing support of the FSF and will consider the implementation plan for the recommendations around governance, participation and resourcing at the next meeting.

## Update from the ODFSVR

The Director of ODFSVR accompanied the Minister for Prevention of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence at the launch of the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032 in Canberra in October.

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



The Director of ODFSVR is the NT's representative on the Jurisdictional Working group with counterparts from all states and territories. The Jurisdictional Working Group is currently working on the development of a draft National Plan Action Plan, with a parallel process underway with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Council on Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence working on the standalone First Nations National Plan and Action Plan.

Information was provided to CAWG on initiatives announced by the Australian Government during the recent budget announcement for 2022-2023. Further information will be provided to CAWG and other sector partners as it becomes available from the Australian Government on specific funding allocations to the NT.

### Update from DFSV ICRO

A written update was provided on the overview of ICRO's activities. A budget cabinet submission is currently in development for Action Plan 2 under the NT Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Reduction Framework 2018-2028 *Safe, respected and free from violence* in accordance with the tasks allocated to the ICRO.

The Expression of Interest for members of the Aboriginal Advisory Board recently closed and the Minister will be considering them for early 2023.

### Update from Department of the Attorney-General and Justice (AGD)

AGD thanked the members for their submissions into the Review of Legislation and the Justice Responses to Domestic and Family Violence in the NT. These are being review with legislative reform to be developed. Systemic reform recommendations are currently being considered by the DFSV ICRO.

### Update from Non-Government Organisation (NGO) representatives and discussion of systemic issues

- NGO representatives discussed key activities since the last meeting. The follow matters were identified and discussed: NTPFES Family Harm Coordination Project that recently commenced in Alice Springs was welcomed as an innovation, however services requested further information from Police.
- Grassroots community activity to respond to DFSV in Tennant Creek and the Barkly Region was acknowledged.
- Services continue to experience very high demand across the NT, including referrals from the FSF, and many services are concerned at funding levels not keeping up with demand.

### Next meeting

The next CAWG meeting will be held on 21 February 2023.