

3 March 2025

Mr Alex Greenwich, MP, Chair, IND
Mrs Sally Quinell, MP, Deputy Chair, ALP
Mr Stephen Bali, MP, ALP
Ms Liza Butler, MP, ALP
Mr James Griffin, MP, LIB

Dear Members of the Legislative Assembly Select Committee on Essential Worker Housing,

Re: Essential Worker Housing for DFV workers to address higher rates of domestic and family violence in regional and remote NSW.

Following the evidence we gave at the Essential Worker Hearing, we are providing additional evidence showing the significantly higher rates of domestic and family violence (DFV) in regional and remote NSW compared to metropolitan areas.

The Domestic Violence Assault Regional Comparison Tool tracks DFV assault rates per 100,000 people from October 2014 – September 2024. The highest DFV rate in a metropolitan region, North Sydney and Hornsby, stands at 105.3 per 100,000, whereas the highest recorded regional DV rate, in New England & North West, reaches 705.2 per 100,000 – more than six times higher. Additionally, while North Sydney & Hornsby saw the highest five-year growth rate in DFV incidents among metropolitan areas (+5.6% annually), regional areas like Coffs Harbour - Grafton experienced nearly double that growth (+10.6% annually)¹. Towns in western NSW like Moree, Walgett and Bourke are reporting DFV levels over five times the state average².

Impact Economics and Policy provided us with further analysis to support the DVNSW Pre-Budget Submission 2024-25. This analysis, demonstrated in the table below, indicates that the severity of domestic violence-related incidents, breaches of Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders (ADVOs), and the commencement of ADVOs significantly increases with remoteness in NSW. The data illustrates that remote regions experience incidents at rates 7.45 times higher than major cities.

Remoteness level	Domestic violence assaults [¹]	Breaches of Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders	Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders commenced	Combined impact – multiple of major cities
	Incidents per 100,000 population			
Major cities	342	178	478	-
Inner Regional	582	385	882	1.90x
Outer regional	864	707	1422	3.16x

¹ NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR), "Domestic Violence," *BOCSAR*, 2024,

² Cat Woods, "Addressing Domestic Violence in Regional Areas," *Law Society Journal*, January 31, 2023.

Remote	2118	1571	3513	7.45x
Very remote	-	-	-	7.45x
NSW average	457	297	680	

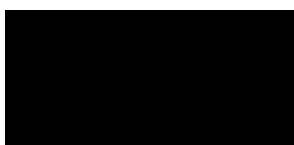
Table: Domestic violence related incidents reported to Police, 2023-24

^[1] Incident data sourced from BOSCAR domestic violence statistics

The high rates of DFV in regional and remote areas stem from deeply rooted structural issues. A severe housing shortage forces many victim-survivors to remain with perpetrators, while limited transport options and a lack of safe courtrooms further make it harder to seek help. Additionally, higher rates of gun ownership and a strong sense of privacy create further barriers, compelling women to stay in violent relationships.³

The prevalence and severity of DFV in regional and remote areas highlight a critical disparity, and policy responses must reflect this gap. Providing DFV workers with essential worker housing will help maintain staffing levels in DFV services and, therefore, increase support for victim-survivors.

Sincerely,



Delia Donovan
CEO
Domestic Violence NSW

³ Cat Woods, "Addressing Domestic Violence in Regional Areas," *Law Society Journal*, January 31, 2023.