

**QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE**

**WOMEN**

**BUDGET ESTIMATES 2008-2009  
15 OCTOBER 2008**

**PORTFOLIO: WOMEN**

**1. The CHAIR asked the Minister for Women, the Hon VERITY FIRTH MP (page 1):**  
Could you tell us the number of women and children who have died as a result of domestic violence particularly in the years 2006-07 and 2007-08?

**ANSWER:**

Statistics relating to the numbers of female and child murder victims who died as a result of domestic violence are publicly available from the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research.

**Verity Firth MP  
Minister for Education and Training  
Minister for Women**

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**2. The CHAIR asked the Minister for Women, the Hon VERITY FIRTH MP (page 2):**  
How many women, following the granting of an apprehended violence order, have been subsequently assaulted or harmed by the perpetrator?

**ANSWER:**

This is a matter that falls within the portfolio responsibilities of the NSW Minister for Police. I refer Ms Parker to the Hon. Tony Kelly MLC for a response.

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**3. The Hon MARIE FICARRA asked the Minister for Women, the Hon VERITY FIRTH MP (page 4):** When will the first review of the effectiveness of the restructuring be conducted? Will it be an independent review?

**ANSWER:**

Consideration is being given to this issue as part of the development of the NSW Domestic and Family Violence Framework which is currently underway.

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**4. Ms LEE RHIANNON asked the Minister for Women, the Hon VERITY FIRTH MP (page 5):** In May this year there was quite a stand-off between the Attorney General, Mr Hatzistergos, and Don Weatherburn about the interpretation of crime statistics. You may remember that Mr Weatherburn said that the bureau's report into a trial for guilty pleas in domestic violence cases had not shown the levels of success in Campbelltown and Wagga Wagga courts. He stated at the time that the Minister had exaggerated the results. Can you tell us your interpretation of those figures and how you think that trial is going?

**Ms VERITY FIRTH:** I know it is a trial that we believe is good, good enough to be given more funding in the latest round of our policy, in the review of our Violence Prevention Coordination Unit and the new funding we have rolled out. I may cross to Alexandra Shehadie to see if she has anything to add on that?

**Dr SHEHADIE:** I have to take part of your question on notice and get back to you, but in that evaluation a number of issues were raised. I know the participants were happy with the process themselves, but there are other issues I will have to get back to the Committee on.

**Ms LEE RHIANNON:** So, you are taking on notice, as well as what you have said, giving the Committee the Minister's evaluation if the program is successful in terms of numbers? Had there been more guilty pleas in the trial? I just want to clarify that.

**Ms VERITY FIRTH:** Yes, that is all right.

#### ANSWER:

In relation to the evaluation of the Domestic Violence Intervention Court Model (DVICM), the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research reports that:

- The number of domestic violence reports to the police did not display a consistent upward or downward trend.
- The proportion of alleged domestic violence offenders charged by Campbelltown and Macquarie Fields Local Area Commands showed an increase after the DVICM commenced, however the increase in Campbelltown appeared to reflect a trend that began prior to the DVICM.
- Wagga Wagga LAC had high charge rates prior to the DVICM and these remained high throughout the DVICM period.
- The increase in charge rates observed in Campbelltown and Macquarie Fields, however, was not restricted to these DVICM sites. The 'rest of NSW' control group also demonstrated an increase in charge rates.
- The percentage of matters finalised by guilty plea did not shift in Campbelltown, and in Wagga Wagga decreased after the DVICM was introduced. The proportion of matters withdrawn by the prosecution or dismissed by the court remained stable in both Local Courts.

- In Campbelltown Local Court, the proportion of good behaviour (Section 9) bonds with supervision handed down for the principal domestic violence offence increased after the commencement of the DVICM.
- The proportion of non-conviction (Section 10) bonds also increased. The results relating to the Section 9 bonds with supervision, however, were based on a pre-DVICM period that contained unusually low proportions of this penalty. There were no observed changes in Wagga Wagga Local Court relating to penalties.
- Court duration for matters that proceeded to hearing improved in Campbelltown Local Court after the DVICM but remained stable in Wagga Wagga Local Court.
- Overall, victims reported that they were very satisfied with the police response in both Campbelltown/Macquarie Fields and Wagga Wagga Local Area Commands
- Victims were very satisfied with the support they received from the Victims' Advocate in Campbelltown and Client Advocate in Wagga Wagga.
- Most victims reported they felt safe at the time of the interview, with around four in five reporting they did feel safe. The majority of victims said they would report a similar incident to the police in the future.
- The majority of stakeholders who were members of DVICM reference groups were invited to participate in the key stakeholder interviews.
- The majority of key stakeholders believed the DVICM was a successful pilot and that the model should be continued in Campbelltown and Wagga Wagga and also be considered for implementation in other locations, with a controlled and staged approach taken to any rollout of the model.

My view on the program will be further informed by the consultations that will occur in 2009 as part of the development of the NSW Domestic and Family Violence Strategic Framework.

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**5. Ms LEE RHIANNON asked the Minister for Women, the Hon VERITY FIRTH MP (page 5-6):**

**Ms LEE RHIANNON:** I take it from that that you are not advocating for a new department to be restored? You are happy because you certainly see it is working across departments. You will probably need to take this question on notice, and I know some of this is in the budget papers but they are not easy to read, and I am after a comparison. In the first, and I think the second, year after 2004 when the department went, there was a drop in funding for women. You have stated there was an increase—I think you said it was quite a sizeable increase?

**Ms VERITY FIRTH:** Just in the past year, yes.

**Ms LEE RHIANNON:** So, are we back to where we were in 2004 or are we still way below that? I think we are still way below that, and inflation has gone up in that time. I am interested in that comparison. With that additional money, how many staff are you employing? Has the number of staff gone up and has the grants program been restored?

**Ms VERITY FIRTH:** I sort of partially answered this before. I will have to take on notice the 2004 figures. I just do not have that information. The majority of our increase in funding, which has doubled in the past year, has gone to grants programs for domestic and family violence NGOs. That is where the vast majority of the funding increase has gone. It is specifically \$900,000 for Aboriginal organisations.

#### **ANSWER:**

In 2003/4, the Department for Women had 44 established positions and a Budget of \$5.636m (of which \$1.155m was allocated to grants).

The Office for Women's Policy has 17 established positions. The Office's 2008/09 Budget will be finalised following the 11 November 2008 Mini-Budget.

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**6. Ms LEE RHIANNON asked the Minister for Women, the Hon VERITY FIRTH MP (page 6):** In the last election, neither Labor nor the Coalition parties had much to say about their women's policy, which was clearly disappointing. One of the changes many of us feel with that downgrading of women's issues within the Labor Government is that women's advocacy organisations have been effectively marginalised in policy debates over the past decade. I appreciate that probably does not apply to the issue of domestic violence, because I acknowledge the considerable work you have done in that area, although there is obviously room for improvement. However, I would be interested in what your office is doing with regard to the issue of pay rates and with regard to the hardship that particularly women in regional and rural areas are suffering because of cutbacks in health and the lack of transport options?

**Ms VERITY FIRTH:** I am happy to provide that ...

...

**Ms VERITY FIRTH:** We can send a copy of it to you. It was called Better Services for Women. It was a comprehensive pre-election policy.

**Ms LEE RHIANNON:** You should get it on your website; you should get it out so we can actually get it beforehand.

**CHAIR:** In the interests of transparency and no spin.

**Ms VERITY FIRTH:** I can send you a copy.

#### **ANSWER:**

A copy of *Better Services for Women* has been provided to the Chair.

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#### **7. The CHAIR asked the Minister for Women, the Hon VERITY FIRTH MP (page 8):**

**Ms VERITY FIRTH:** Two Staying Home Leaving Violence programs currently operate. One is located in Eastern Sydney and one in Bega. Following successful evaluations, the Government has committed to expanding Staying Home Leaving Violence to a further 16 sites, making a total of 18 sites. Six new sites will be funded in 2009-10, and a further 10 sites in 2010-11. The locations are still to be finalised. The Department of Community Services funds the program and it is administered by that department's communities division. Another key project—the development of the risk assessment tool—aims to assess the risk to individuals and families of domestic and family violence, and identify and coordinate interventions to manage or reduce this risk. I am advised that the project will commence as a six-month trial by the middle of next year. The trial locations will include one urban and one regional community. One of these locations will include an Aboriginal community.

**CHAIR:** Which one?

**Ms VERITY FIRTH:** That is still being determined, but we will advise you when we know.

#### **ANSWER:**

The Department of Community Services is the lead agency for Staying Home Leaving Violence and I refer the Hon. Robyn Parker to the Minister for Community Services, the Hon. Linda Burney MP, for a response.

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## **ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

### **WOMEN**

#### **BUDGET ESTIMATES 2008-2009 15 OCTOBER 2008**

##### **Questions from the Chair**

1. When was Dr. Alexandra Shehadie appointed to the position of manager, Violence Prevention Coordination Unit?
  - a. At what level is this appointment and at what salary level? Is this a contract position or a permanent appointment?
  - b. How many applicants were there for this position?
  - c. Other than her legal background, what experience does Dr. Shehadie have in the development and delivery of coordinated domestic violence services?

##### **ANSWER:**

The position of Manager, Violence Prevention Coordination Unit is a permanent Senior Office Grade 1 position. Ms Shehadie was appointed to this position following a merit selection process.

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**ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

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**BUDGET ESTIMATES 2008-2009  
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**Questions from the Chair**

2. What is the overall Budget allocation for the Office for Women?

**ANSWER:**

The allocated Budget for the Office for Women's Policy in 2008-09 will be finalised following the 11 November 2008 Mini-Budget.

**Verity Firth MP  
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**ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

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**Questions from the Chair**

3. What is the Budget allocation for:
- a. Staff
  - b. General administration

**ANSWER:**

The allocated Budget for the Office for Women's Policy in 2008-09 will be finalised following the 11 November 2008 Mini-Budget.

**Verity Firth MP  
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**ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

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**Questions from the Chair**

4. How much money is spent, either directly or indirectly on:
- a. Publications
  - b. Public information
  - c. Promotional activity
  - d. Out of which budget allocation does this money derive

**ANSWER:**

The allocated Budget for the Office for Women's Policy in 2008-09 will be finalised following the 11 November 2008 Mini-Budget.

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**Questions from the Chair**

5. How many staff are employed within the Office for Women? At which levels?

**ANSWER:**

The Office's formal structure is 17 staff, employed at the following levels:

- Senior Executive Service Level 3 – one officer
- Senior Officer Grade 1 – two officers
- Clerk Grade 11/12 – two officers
- Clerk Grade 9/10 – five officers
- Clerk Grade 7/8 – three officers
- Clerk Grade 5/6 – three officers
- Clerk Grade 3/4 - one officer

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**Questions from the Chair**

6. How is staffing allocated between:
- a. Programme administration
  - b. Public information and promotional activities
  - c. Policy coordination and advice

**ANSWER:**

Programme administration: 0 positions

Public information and promotional activities: 0 positions

Policy coordination and advice: 13 positions

The remaining 4 positions are allocated to policy support and administration.

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**PORTFOLIO: WOMEN**

**Questions from the Chair**

7. What proportion of the OFW Budget allocation is spent on administration costs?

**ANSWER:**

The allocated Budget for the Office for Women's Policy in 2008-09 will be finalised following the 11 November 2008 Mini-Budget.

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**Questions from the Chair**

8. What measures is the OFW implementing to ensure unnecessary administration costs are reduced?

**ANSWER:**

As part of the Department of Premier and Cabinet, the Office for Women's Policy is able to access common corporate services support.

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## **ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

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##### **Questions from the Chair**

9. What policy areas within the NSW Government has the OFW identified as key to promoting equality between men and women?

##### **ANSWER:**

In 2006 the NSW Government released the NSW State Plan. The State Plan has a clearly defined purpose – to deliver better results for all members of the NSW community from Government services. In 2007, providing further support of the Government's vision for the State, and complementing the State Plan, the Government released the policy document *Our Commitment to Women*. These policy documents provide the overarching framework for the work of the Office for Women's Policy.

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#### **Questions from the Chair**

**10.** How does the OFW foresee the NSW Government implementing its recommendations?

#### **ANSWER:**

Issues affecting women in NSW are the responsibility of all Government agencies and the Office for Women's Policy has an important role in ensuring that all policy and legislative developments take into account the diverse needs of women in communities across the State. The location of the Office within the Department of Premier and Cabinet enables the Office to monitor issues affecting the women of NSW across the whole of Government and to lead and coordinate policy development across government in relation to issues affecting women in NSW.

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**Questions from the Chair**

11. Could the OFW provide the report outlining key areas to the Opposition and the public?

**ANSWER:**

*Our Commitment to Women* is available on the website of the Office for Women's Policy – [www.women.nsw.gov.au](http://www.women.nsw.gov.au).

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**Questions from the Chair**

**12.** In what policy areas is the OFW a key stakeholder?

**ANSWER:**

The Office for Women's Policy is a key stakeholder in all policy areas affecting women.

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## **ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

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#### **Questions from the Chair**

**13.** Does the OFW act as the spearhead for any high-level policy initiatives, if so which?

#### **ANSWER:**

The Office for Women's Policy leads and coordinates whole of government policies for women in a number of areas, including the prevention of violence against women and women's workforce participation.

In February 2008, the Government announced a new approach to addressing domestic and family violence, supported by a new structure. The new structure includes a central coordination unit in the Office for Women's Policy, Department of Premier and Cabinet. This Unit – the Violence Prevention Coordination Unit - has responsibility for leading and coordinating policies aimed at reducing violence against women, and is developing the strategic framework that will underpin state-wide responses to domestic and family violence.

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## **ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

### **WOMEN**

#### **BUDGET ESTIMATES 2008-2009 15 OCTOBER 2008**

#### **Questions from the Chair**

- 14.** How many interdepartmental committees does OFW form part of and how many interdepartmental or high level policy committees and working groups does OFW chair?
- a. Has this changed since last year?

#### **ANSWER:**

The Office for Women's Policy participates in the following interdepartmental committees:

- o Apprehended Violence Legal Issues Committee
- o Victims of Crime Interagency Forum
- o Reference Group for Project-Review of Support Services for Victims of Crime in NSW
- o NSW Department of Education and Training Advisory Group for Gender Equity in Education
- o Housing and Human Services Senior Officers Group
- o The Partnership Against Homelessness Sub-Committee of the Housing and Human Services Senior Officers Group
- o Senior Officers Group for Volunteering
- o Staying Home Leaving Violence Executive Committee
- o Premier's Council for Women (ex officio)
- o Premier's Council on Preventing Violence Against Women (ex officio)

In addition, the Assistant Director General (Policy) represents the Department for Premier and Cabinet, including the Office for Women's Policy, on:

- o Human Services and Criminal Justice Senior Officers Group
- o Working Group on Ageing

Since 2007, the Office has taken on responsibility for chairing the following:

- o The Domestic Violence Senior Officers Group (chair); and
- o Interagency Working Group – Minimum Standards for Domestic Violence Behaviour Change Programs (co-chair).

Since 2007, the Office is no longer a member of the following:

- o NSW 16 Days of Activism to Stop Violence Against Women Working Party;
- o The Network of Government Agencies – Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Issues - Strategic Framework Implementation Group; and
- o Violence Against Women State Management Group.

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**Questions from the Chair**

**15.** According to the NSW Government Directory the Minister for Women is not responsible for the administration of any Acts. Can the Minister please tell us exactly what she does?

**ANSWER:**

An explanation of the Minister's role is available on the website of the Office for Women's Policy - [www.women.nsw.gov.au](http://www.women.nsw.gov.au).

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#### Questions from Ms Robertson

**16.** Can the Minister detail recent initiatives aimed at increasing the attractiveness of the NSW public sector as an employer for women?

#### ANSWER:

In September this year, I had the pleasure of launching *Making the Public Sector Work Better for Women*, the sector-wide women's employment and development strategy to improve women's recruitment, development and retention over the next five years.

*Making the Public Sector Work Better for Women* aligns with the Government's broader *NSW Public Sector Workforce Strategy 2008-2012* which supports the *State Plan*.

*Making the Public Sector Work Better for Women* commits the Government to achieving the following sector-level benchmarks by 2012:

- Increase women's representation in non-traditional occupations from 16% to 20%;
- Increase women's representation in senior positions (grade 12 and above or equivalent) from 28% to 35%; and
- Maintain women's representation at a minimum of 60%.

To support the achievement of these benchmarks, the Department of Premier and Cabinet will coordinate the following programs and initiatives:

- Providing training and an online resource kit to support line and human resources managers to implement flexible work practices;
- An e-mentoring program for women building their careers in regional and remote areas, in non-traditional occupations and in senior positions;
- A career mobility program piloted with mid-career finance professionals;
- An annual conference for women building their careers;
- Four agency-hosted Senior Women's Network events each year;
- Scholarships and a child care subsidy for women to undertake the Executive Fellows Program at the Australia and New Zealand School of Government; and
- CEO Kits to help agencies to attract and retain women's talent at senior levels.

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## **ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

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#### **BUDGET ESTIMATES 2008-2009**

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#### **Questions from the Chair**

**17.** Can the Minister detail progress on developing key indicators on the status of women in NSW?

#### **ANSWER:**

In 2007, the Government released the policy document *Our Commitment to Women*. As a testament to the Government's commitment to improving the lives of women in NSW, the Government stated it would provide future reports on key indicators of the status of women. I am pleased to confirm that in meeting this commitment, many relevant Government agencies will begin providing gender disaggregated data as part of their progress reporting under the NSW State Plan.

Supplementing the collection of data on women through the State Plan, I will be working with my colleagues around Australia to develop a national set of indicators for women.

On 3 October 2008, I presented a paper at the Commonwealth, State, Territories & New Zealand Ministers Conference on the Status of Women (MINCO), proposing that Ministers agree to the establishment of a working group, chaired by NSW, to develop a set of key national indicators on the status of women. My proposal was supported enthusiastically by all jurisdictions and the Working Group - under the leadership of NSW - will be preparing a report on those indicators, for consideration by MINCO in 2009.

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## ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

### WOMEN

#### BUDGET ESTIMATES 2008-2009 15 OCTOBER 2008

##### Questions from the Chair

**18.** Can the Minister provide information about the grants provided to community organisations under the first round of the Domestic and Family Violence Grants Program?

##### ANSWER:

\$2.9 million has been allocated to high priority domestic and family violence projects across NSW as part of the new Domestic and Family Violence Projects Grants Program, from 2007/08.

Each of these grants in round one has been allocated to organisations that have a demonstrated track record in providing effective services to women and children experiencing domestic or family violence.

The 27 projects are located in urban, rural and regional NSW and are targeted to help with education, housing, court and legal assistance, counselling and other health services.

##### 20 Mainstream Grants – outline of projects

- NAPCAN (Statewide) – implementation of the Love Bites program across the state. Love Bites aims to reduce sexual assault and domestic and family violence by educating and informing young people in schools, through workshops and a creative awareness training process.
- UNIFEM (Statewide) – assist with White Ribbon Day community and educational activities in NSW.
- ACON (Statewide) – to improve the capacity of mainstream agencies to respond to same sex domestic violence, and increase access by gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people to domestic violence services, through the development of training and support for mainstream service providers, marketing and promotion.
- Rape Crisis Centre (Sydney) – employment of a Counselling Co-Ordination Assistant to work with mental health, sexual assault and drug and alcohol services to develop co-ordinated clinical care networks for women suffering complex trauma as a result of violence.
- Women's Refuge Resource Movement (Sydney) – support for this joint project of the NSW Women's Refuge Movement (WRM) and the Family Law Courts Sydney Registry. The aim of the service is to provide non-legal support, information and referrals for women attending the Sydney Family Law Registry in relation to separation, with a particular focus on women and children who are separating from a violent partner.
- Penrith Women's Health Centre (Penrith) - *Looking after Me* project resource kit which focuses on safe and healthy relationships for women with intellectual disability.
- Penrith Women's Health Centre (Penrith) - funding for a Women's Community Choir which includes Aboriginal women, CALD women and women with an intellectual disability.

- Amelie House (Sutherland) - an outreach program within the Sutherland Shire to inform women escaping domestic violence about their legal rights and the availability of other key services.
- Older Women's Network (Statewide) - to undertake a feasibility study to determine what training and community education is available to service providers and the community generally, to enable them to recognise violence against older women, including those from rural and remote areas, CALD women and Aboriginal women.
- Australian Bosnian Women's Association (Sydney) - to hold four seminars across Sydney on *Things you need to know about domestic and family violence*.
- Sutherland Shire Family Support Service (Sutherland) - Domestic Violence Pro-Active Support Service Project. The project provides support and services to victims of domestic violence in the period immediately following police intervention. The aim of the project is to: prevent victims of domestic violence from falling through the net after police intervention; reduce the rate of ADVO withdrawals; facilitate victims access to services; improve police responses; and improve interagency collaboration
- YWCA NSW (Statewide) - to deliver 'Y-ise Up About Relationships', an abuse prevention education program for high school girls and boys, in the Shoalhaven, Northern Rivers and Greater Metropolitan Sydney regions.
- NSW Department of Community Services – (as auspice for 3 projects):
  - Manly Warringah Women's Resource Centre – Bringa Domestic Violence Support Service.
  - Carrie's Place – Carrie's High Domestic Violence Support Service Outreach service.
  - Orana Far West Safe House Projects Child and Family Establishment (establishment five safe houses in Bourke, Brewarrina, Lightning Ridge, Walgett and Wilcannia).
- Liverpool Women's Health Centre (Liverpool) - Funding for the Women Educating Each Other – Women in Safe and Equal Relationships young women's project.
- Immigration Advice and Rights Centre (Statewide) - to fund the domestic violence and family violence information sheets regarding provisions under immigration law, in a number of languages.
- Central West Women's Health Service (Statewide) - an anti-stalking project which will develop an information booklet to be distributed via Women's services in NSW and through a website. The project will also include a training program for service providers in the Central West and a train-the-trainer program.
- Wilma Women's Health Centre (Macarthur) - *Silent No More/Sign a While* project to support a deaf and hearing impaired support worker/counsellor at Macarthur.
- Joan Harrison Support Services (Liverpool) – a two year pilot project to employ a full time worker to work with women affected by mental health problems and domestic violence.

## 7 Aboriginal Grants

- Redfern Legal Centre (Sydney) - funding to improve Aboriginal women's access to the Downing Centre Court and increase the number of positive outcomes for Aboriginal women seeking ADVOs.
- Yoorana Gunya Family Violence Healing Centre (Forbes) - provide an Aboriginal community awareness and education program to create an environment of zero tolerance to family violence within the community.

- Carries Place (Maitland) - create an Aboriginal outreach position to provide culturally appropriate early intervention, outreach and court support for Aboriginal women experiencing domestic and family violence.
- Mudgin-Gal Aboriginal Corporation (Redfern) - funding to expand the Blackout (anti) Violence campaign.
- Broken Hill Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention Service (Far West) - a self-esteem program for young Aboriginal women (12-16 year olds) in Broken Hill and the outlying areas of the Far West to raise awareness and provide advice on violence issues.
- Waminda South Coast Women's Health and Welfare Aboriginal Corporation (Nowra) - support women, children and extended family members who are experiencing the effects of domestic and family violence, through education and training on violence issues, provision of out of hours care, access to safe housing and legal and counselling services.
- Mirang Din Aboriginal Women's Resource Centre Inc (Mt Druitt) -provide ongoing services and support to Aboriginal women affected by domestic or family violence.

In addition, 77 Local Domestic and Family Violence Committees have been funded in 2008/09 for activities during the *16 Days of Activism to Stop Violence Against Women* campaign in NSW.

**Verity Firth MP**  
**Minister for Education and Training**  
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## **ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

### **WOMEN**

#### **BUDGET ESTIMATES 2008-2009 15 OCTOBER 2008**

##### **Questions from the Chair**

**19.** Can the Minister inform the Committee about its involvement in the Productivity Commission's Inquiry into Paid Maternity Leave?

##### **ANSWER:**

I am delighted to have worked with my colleagues responsible for the Industrial Relations portfolio, to provide input from NSW into the Productivity Commission Inquiry. The NSW Government has been a leader in the area of paid maternity leave and flexible working conditions in its public service. We firmly believe that these benefits need to be available to all working women. And we firmly believe this requires federal leadership.

NSW is taking a prominent role in pushing for national reform for the benefit of all women and working families in NSW. The NSW Submission to the Productivity Commission Inquiry expressed strong support for a national paid parental leave scheme, and welcomed the extensive research and consultations undertaken by the Productivity Commission, to examine options for an appropriate model for Australia.

The Minister for Industrial Relations and I are currently finalising a further submission on behalf of the NSW Government, in response to the Productivity Commission's Draft Report.

**Verity Firth MP  
Minister for Education and Training  
Minister for Women**

**QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE**

**WOMEN**

**BUDGET ESTIMATES 2008-2009**

**15 OCTOBER 2008**

**Questions from Ms Ficarra**

**20.** Does the Government believe one-off grants, such as the Anti-Stalking Programme grant of \$118,000 to the Central West Women's Health Centre, significantly reduce domestic and stalking rates?

**ANSWER:**

Successful projects funded under the 2007/08 Grants Program were required to have been evaluated or to include evaluation as part of the project. Outstanding evaluations will be provided to the Office for Women's Policy at the conclusion of relevant projects, after which time outcomes can be measured.

**Verity Firth MP**  
**Minister for Education and Training**  
**Minister for Women**

**QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE**

**WOMEN**

**BUDGET ESTIMATES 2008-2009  
15 OCTOBER 2008**

- 23.** Does the Minister have statistics for the number of Sexual assaults in NSW over the past 12 months?

**ANSWER:**

The total number of recorded sexual assaults in NSW in the 12 months ending 30 June 2008 is publicly available on the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research web site at [www.bocsar.nsw.gov.au](http://www.bocsar.nsw.gov.au).

**Verity Firth MP  
Minister for Education and Training  
Minister for Women**

**QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE**

**WOMEN**

**BUDGET ESTIMATES 2008-2009  
15 OCTOBER 2008**

**24.** If so, is the Minister able to provide details of the number of incidents in the past 12 months separated by police local area command?

**ANSWER:**

This question relates to matters within the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Police, the Hon. Tony Kelly MLC and I refer Ms Ficarra to Minister Kelly for a response.

**Verity Firth MP  
Minister for Education and Training  
Minister for Women**



**QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE**

**WOMEN**

**BUDGET ESTIMATES 2008-2009  
15 OCTOBER 2008**

**25.** If not by police local area command, how are the statistics across the state broken up?

**ANSWER:**

The NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research records incidences that are reported for the whole of NSW, the NSW Statistical Divisions and Sydney Statistical Divisions.

**Verity Firth MP  
Minister for Education and Training  
Minister for Women**

**QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE**

**WOMEN**

**BUDGET ESTIMATES 2008-2009  
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- 26.** Are sexual assault counsellors available and on call at all hospitals across NSW?
- 27.** If so, are they available for the wider public? How do ordinary citizens get in touch with these counsellors?
- 28.** Can you provide a list of all counselling services available across NSW hospitals?

**ANSWER:**

Answers to questions 26- 28 within the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Health, the Hon John Della Bosca MLC. I refer Ms Ficarra to Minister Della Bosca for a response.

**Verity Firth MP  
Minister for Education and Training  
Minister for Women**

**QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE**

**WOMEN**

**BUDGET ESTIMATES 2008-2009  
15 OCTOBER 2008**

- 29.** How does the Minister's department liaise with the NSW Police Force to ensure support is available to victims of sexual assault?

**ANSWER:**

The Office for Women's Policy, through the Violence Prevention Coordination Unit liaises with the Police region coordinators on a range of violence against women's issues, including sexual assault.

**Verity Firth MP  
Minister for Education and Training  
Minister for Women**

**QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE**

**WOMEN**

**BUDGET ESTIMATES 2008-2009  
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**30.** What actions has the Minister taken to ensure such support remains available?

**ANSWER:**

As Minister for Women I liaise with a number of Ministers to ensure support is available to victims of sexual assault. I will also be advised by the new Premier's Council on Preventing Violence Against Women on appropriate supports for such victims. The role of the Violence Prevention Coordination Unit in the Office for Women's Policy covers all types of violence against women including sexual assault. In this regard it examines, among other things, issues of support for victims. The Unit is also a member of the Reference Group for Project-Review of Support Services for Victims of Crime in NSW which examines support services for victims of sexual assault.

**Verity Firth MP  
Minister for Education and Training  
Minister for Women**