

# **PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE NO. 5 - JUSTICE AND COMMUNITIES**

**Thursday 27 February 2025**

**Examination of proposed expenditure for the portfolio area**

## **WOMEN, SENIORS, PREVENTION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT**

<b>CORRECTED</b>
------------------

**The Committee met at 9:15.**

### **MEMBERS**

The Hon. Robert Borsak (Chair)

Ms Abigail Boyd

The Hon. Mark Buttigieg

The Hon. Susan Carter

The Hon. Emma Hurst

The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones (Acting Deputy Chair)

The Hon. Bob Nanva

The Hon. Nichole Overall

The Hon. Emily Suvaal

### **PRESENT**

**The Hon. Jodie Harrison**, *Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault*

## **CORRECTIONS TO TRANSCRIPT OF COMMITTEE PROCEEDINGS**

**Corrections should be marked on a photocopy of the proof and forwarded to:**

**Budget Estimates secretariat  
Room 812  
Parliament House  
Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000**

**The CHAIR:** Welcome to the first hearing of Portfolio Committee No. 5 – Justice and Communities for the additional round of the inquiry into budget estimates 2024-2025. I acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, the traditional custodians of the lands on which we are meeting today. I pay my respect to Elders past and present, and celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal peoples and their ongoing cultures and connections to the lands and waters of New South Wales. I also acknowledge and pay respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people joining us today. My name is Robert Borsak and I am the Chair of the Committee. I welcome Minister Harrison and accompanying officials to this hearing.

Today the Committee will examine the proposed expenditure for the portfolios of Women, Seniors, and the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. I ask everyone in the room to please turn their mobile phones to silent. Parliamentary privilege applies to witnesses in relation to evidence they give today; however, it does not apply to what witnesses say outside of the hearing. I urge witnesses to be careful about making comments to the media or to others after completing their evidence. In addition, the Legislative Council has adopted rules to provide procedural fairness for inquiry participants. I encourage Committee members and witnesses to be mindful of these procedures. I welcome and thank you all for coming today to give evidence. Minister, I remind you that you do not need to be sworn as you have already sworn an oath to your office as a member of Parliament. I remind all witnesses except Ms Jarrett that they have already been sworn before this Committee during this inquiry and therefore do not need to be sworn again.

**Mr MICHAEL TIDBALL**, Secretary, Department of Communities and Justice, on former oath

**Ms ANNE CAMPBELL**, Deputy Secretary, Strategy, Policy and Commissioning, Department of Communities and Justice, on former oath

**Ms HANNAH TONKIN**, Women's Safety Commissioner, Department of Communities and Justice, on former affirmation

**Ms GILLIAN WHITE**, Deputy Secretary, Social Policy and Intergovernmental Relations, the Cabinet Office, on former oath

**Ms TANYA SMYTH**, Director, Women NSW, the Cabinet Office, on former affirmation

**Ms KATHRYN McKENZIE**, Acting NSW Ageing and Disability Commissioner, NSW Ageing and Disability Commission, on former oath

**Ms BIANCA JARRETT**, Executive Director, Transforming Aboriginal Outcomes, Department of Communities and Justice, sworn and examined

**The CHAIR:** Today's hearing will be conducted from 9.15 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. We are joined by the Minister in the morning session from 9.15 a.m. to 1.00 p.m., with a 15-minute break at 11.00 a.m. In the afternoon we will hear from departmental witnesses from 2.00 p.m. until 5.30 p.m., with a 15-minute break at 3.30 p.m. During these sessions there will be questions from Opposition and crossbench members only, and then 15 minutes allocated for Government questions at 10.45 a.m., 12.45 p.m. and 5.15 p.m. We begin with questions from the crossbench.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Good morning, Minister, and to all of you. The first thing I wanted to talk about was funding for frontline domestic and family violence services. I put forward a motion in the last sitting week, last week, calling on the New South Wales Government to commit to providing a "significant and permanent increase in baseline funding for existing domestic and family violence services in the coming budget" and Labor said no to that. Why are you unable to commit to an increase in funding?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Thank you for the question, Ms Boyd. The reason we declined to support that motion was because we're in the process of going through budget processes at the moment and we can't commit to anything in future budgets at the moment. These are the things that are going into the mix of budget considerations, but from a government perspective, we can't make commitments at this stage on what is going to be included in future budgets.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** In previous years, as I've mentioned in estimates before, the Victorian Government has been funding its frontline services at roughly twice what we have in New South Wales. I understand that they've just significantly increased. The increase is double the entire amount that we spend on our frontline services. We've spoken about this before, and this is an incredibly basic ask from the sector and it's the headline ask in the DVNSW budget submission. It wasn't paid any attention last year or the year before. Will you be advocating for an increase to baseline funding in the budget process?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I want to thank Domestic Violence NSW for the pre-budget submissions they make to the budget each and every year and certainly the work—and I know that there is a considerable amount of work—that goes into those pre-budget submissions. Those pre-budget submissions certainly get considered in what we put forward through the budget process. But, unfortunately, it is a competitive budget process. I don't agree that there was no attention paid to them in the past. There certainly was. There was consideration given, and we are in a restricted fiscal environment.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** We could dispute that. I will dispute that with the Treasurer. But when we're talking about an increase in baseline funding—so, for example, in Queensland, in its recent budget, it had a 20 per cent permanent increase in just baseline funding for frontline services—we're dealing now with a situation where it has been many, many years since there has been any significant increase in the funding for frontline services for that baseline funding, and yet we have a government that says that it's serious about tackling domestic and family violence in the State. How do those two things add up?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I think the announcement we made about the emergency package last year was a significant improvement, particularly for Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Services, which are the initial risk assessment.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Sorry, we spoke about that at length last time. I'm talking specifically, because this Government, like the one before it, has a habit of wanting to announce new programs and emergency packages et cetera, but when it comes to actually people working in these services on the front line—in the places where it

has been identified that the most difference could be made in terms of safety for victim-survivors, women and children fleeing domestic violence—there has been nothing from this Government to actually address that. I'm as flummoxed as I was last budget estimates. How can we say we're serious about tackling domestic family violence when the peak body is telling us the number one thing you need to do is increase that funding and there's just nothing from the Government?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** We are absolutely serious about tackling domestic and family violence. We're focusing on increasing support to frontline services. We're focusing on increasing the number of frontline workers.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** How do you increase the number of frontline workers in services where they are so under-resourced, they are so stressed by lack of funding, they're working around the clock and they're having to turn away women and children? Women and children are sleeping in car parks nearby to these refuges. We've heard of services having women and children sleeping on their front porch because they can't get any help for them. How can we be serious about tackling domestic and family violence if we're not giving those very basic amounts to services? It's perplexing.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** We are serious. We are coming from quite a way back, and we want to get to a place where services have what they need. We are on the way to doing that. We've increased the number of frontline workers in women's refuges across New South Wales. We're in the process of increasing the number of frontline workers by—

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** What is the workforce increase over the past two years?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** We're in the process of increasing the number of frontline workers by 148.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** In the process of, but how many have we actually net increased in the workforce?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** As at 18 February, we have 140 workers out of the 148.4 FTE, which is 126.4.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** I'm sure that the Opposition will probably bring up this later. I'm not talking about those particular workers; I'm talking about all frontline workers in New South Wales at domestic and family violence services. Has there been a net increase or a net decrease over the past two years?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** There has been a net increase in all frontline workers across New South Wales.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** By how much?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** By at least that number.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** And you're confident that is a net increase?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Absolutely, and then on top of that we've also had the increase to Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Services.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Yes, I know about that. We're still talking about the front line. They are front line, I understand. I'm talking about baseline funding.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** They are front line. They do the initial risk assessment in Safer Pathway. In Safer Pathway, WDVCS do the initial risk assessment and do the referral. I think it's important to recognise that that increase is actually an increase to frontline services.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Unfortunately, it's old news. Last year we talked about this, and I said I was very, very happy to see that increase in focus for WDVCS. They do an amazing service, but they are just one piece of the puzzle. They're the court advocacy aspect. I want to talk about the workers who are coming to my office and saying, "We are so overworked and under-resourced, we are turning women and children away from our doors and sending them back to perpetrators because we are underfunded." Where is the increase in funding for those services?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** As I said, we are in the process of considering the budget for 2025-26. The Domestic Violence NSW pre-budget submission is one of the things that are being considered in pulling a budget together for 2025-26. I can't make any announcements about the 2025-26 budget. We're not at that stage yet.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** When the Government is determining we're going to spend X amount on domestic and family violence in this budget, how much does it pay attention to the experts in the sector in allocating that money?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** That pre-budget submission is certainly something that gets close consideration in what we put to Treasury as proposed funding for domestic and family violence.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** I want to make it very clear, I have great respect for you in your work in this area. I know that you care very deeply. I'm trying to work out who I need to go and beat up because clearly last year you asked for funding. Where is the hold up? Who is saying no to funding for baseline services within the Government for DVNSW and frontline services?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Obviously I can't say where the no occurs, because that's Cabinet in confidence, but this Government is absolutely committed to dealing with domestic and family violence as a priority.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Do you accept it doesn't look like that, though, when the top line ask for a number of years now has been an increase in baseline funding? It has been half to two-thirds of what we get in other States and Territories. Incidence of domestic violence is only increasing in this State. Do you understand that it doesn't look like the Government cares when it can't put money behind those commitments?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I understand that the ask from Domestic Violence NSW hasn't been successful to date. What I will point out, though, is that we can't only focus—this Government is focusing on all aspects of domestic and family violence, which is why we're focusing on primary prevention. We want to relieve the pressure. We actually want to reduce the number of victims that need those services. That's certainly going to take time, and you and I both know that.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** And it's not going to help the people who are already fleeing.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** We need to really focus on increasing the focus on prevention without taking our eyes off making sure that women and children who need a safe place to stay and the support that they need at that place get that.

**The CHAIR:** Minister, the twentieth and the twenty-first centuries have been exciting times for women and leadership in Australia. Many ministerial positions in this Government are held by women members, such as yourself, for example, and women feature in many fields that in the past were primarily dominated by men. However, the foundation of our society is the nuclear family. Despite the multitude of victories for feminism—and we have seen significant progress—Simone de Beauvoir said, "No woman should be authorised to stay at home and raise children. Society should be different. Women should not have that choice, precisely because if there is such a choice, too many women will make that choice"—that is, to raise a family.

This leaves us with huge issues. Australia already has a falling birth rate. Those people who contribute most to society—well-educated and well-situated married couples—are least likely to have more than one child, let alone large families. Women often feel compelled to go back to work to try to pay for mortgages and the cost of living—an issue brought on by the current cost-of-living crisis and, of course, the housing crisis we're seeing at the moment—where still there is sometimes a stigma attached to homemakers, propagated by some in the media, and some women who choose this path are often looked down upon. Minister, what specific support does the current Government provide for women who choose to be homemakers as their vocation and to raise their children rather than have a career in retail, business, industry or indeed government?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I think choice for women is a really important aspect—choice for people in the way they run their lives. There is no doubt about that. The majority of support that we provide to women is in relation to—certainly economic support is in relation to being in the workforce, or choosing to be in the workforce if they do, and trying to overcome barriers—

**The CHAIR:** But, Minister, what about women who choose not to be in the workforce or leave the workforce and decide to permanently become homemakers? What's the Government specifically doing for them to promote the nuclear family?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Certainly the supports we're providing in relation to early childhood education, to reduce costs for families in relation to sending their kids to preschool and for early childhood education, is a large aspect of that.

**The CHAIR:** But mostly those support arrangements are related to supporting families and women who are going to go back to work anyway. I'm talking about women who want to stay in the family environment and bring their children up full time. What support are they getting? Or what is the Government planning to do?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** The preschool supports are for kids who are aged three to five, so that they can participate in preschool. There's certainly an economic benefit, a financial benefit, to women, even if they choose to remain at home, who have kids who are at preschool.

**The CHAIR:** Can you in more detail outline that sort of support, especially in relation to women who quite often have to go back to work within six weeks of giving birth? What support specifically has the Government—are there any cash grants? What is the Government contemplating or what has the Government done in relation to those family arrangements?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Sorry, was that in relation to women who choose to go back into the workforce after six weeks?

**The CHAIR:** Yes.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Or is that for women who choose not to be in the workforce?

**The CHAIR:** I think we're looking at both. Particularly, this question relates to women who choose not to be, but I'm asking what could be done to make sure that they don't have to go back as early as six weeks if they're forced to go back.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Certainly all of the cost-of-living measures that this Government is introducing in relation to health, cost of women's health—

**The CHAIR:** How does that apply in practice?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** It certainly reduces the economic—if a woman feels that she needs to go back into the workforce for economic reasons, it will reduce that particular reason, that particular impost for her.

**The CHAIR:** If that woman decides that she doesn't want to go in the workforce, then she gets no support. Is that what you're saying?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I can take the detail of any financial supports for women who choose not to go back into the workforce on notice, but there are certainly a lot of cost-of-living measures that this Government is implementing, and continuing with, that will assist families in whatever model they choose to live with their family.

**The CHAIR:** Can you take that on notice? Is that what you're saying?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I can take cost-of-living measures for women who choose to stay out of—

**The CHAIR:** It's not so much the cost of living; it's the support for women who want to remain in the home. That's what I'm talking about. Specifically, what programs are available for women to be able to avail themselves of should they decide not to go back to work after six weeks or as early as six weeks after birth?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I need to take that on notice because that would certainly require—I know there are playgroups and things like that where women are able to take their children to get socialisation and for them to have socialisation as well. They don't sit within my portfolio, but I can certainly find out what I can.

**The CHAIR:** How will the Government ensure that the role of homemaker and mother is validated to encourage women to voice their own stories and experiences in an Australia that is increasingly marginalising homemakers and stay-at-home mums as not working?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I think the support that we give for women-based organisations, organisations like the Rural Women's Network, the Country Women's Association—

**The CHAIR:** How does the Government support those organisations?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** We provide grants. We actually fund the Rural Women's Network ourselves. It is a part of Government. The Rural Women's Network runs events across rural and more remote regional New South Wales to allow women to network with one another and create that socialisation so they're not isolated by being in the home.

**The CHAIR:** In the metro areas, what is the Government doing to encourage homemaking by women?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** That question is very much, I think, similar to the previous question that was asked, so again I think I'd have to take that on notice.

**The CHAIR:** I didn't actually understand the answer. You took some of it on notice, but I thought I might come at it a different way.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I'm happy to take it on notice.

**The CHAIR:** All right, thank you.

**GILLIAN WHITE:** Chair, the one additional thing I would add is that I think many of the questions you're going to also relate to Commonwealth settings in terms of welfare and the responsibilities of when Centrelink kicks in and what other parental leave supports—

**The CHAIR:** I do understand there is a lot that happens in that space at the Commonwealth level, but the New South Wales Government also has a very detailed role in relation to women's affairs. Certainly the areas you're talking about, supporting women in work, are fine, but what about supporting women as homemakers? That's what I'm getting at. It can't just be one-sided: You do this and they do that. There has to be some equality in relation to treatment of women who choose to stay at home as homemakers. That is why I'm asking those questions. What you're inferring by that answer is that the New South Wales Government is doing nothing for homemakers.

**TANYA SMYTH:** New South Wales public service employees are entitled to 14 weeks paid parental leave. That's for men and women. There is also a scheme where, if both parents exhaust that leave, there's an extra two weeks bonus and that encourages both parents to take that time. I think another thing that the Government is doing is funding the New South Wales Working Women's Centre and one of their remits will be to ensure that women in various industries do have access to paid parental leave. That is being worked through and is currently being set up.

**The CHAIR:** So in the New South Wales Government both men and women get paid parental leave now?

**TANYA SMYTH:** Correct.

**The CHAIR:** How long is that for?

**TANYA SMYTH:** Fourteen weeks and then they get an extra two weeks if both of them exhaust that, which encourages dads to spend time with their children as well.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Thank you very much everyone for coming today. Minister, why did you accept an invitation from the Benevolent Iranian Women Association for an event that questioned western perception of women in Iran, promoted Islam as a pioneer in women's rights and ignored the millions of Muslim women who are living under theocracies?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** At the outset I want to indicate that I have sincerely apologised for my participation—I didn't attend that event—and the message that my participation sent is certainly incongruent with my personal views and with the views of the New South Wales Government. I certainly apologise—sincerely apologise—for the offence that it would have caused groups, women, communities within New South Wales.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Did you ask for advice before accepting the invitation?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** My office examined the invitation. The invitation was fairly innocuous. My office spoke with the organisers of the event. The event seemed fairly innocuous. We agreed to provide a video message which was—and I'm happy to read it—fairly innocuous.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Was that the advice?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** We didn't receive any departmental advice.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Is it usual, when you're invited as Minister to attend or participate in an event in your ministerial capacity, not to seek the advice of the department?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** It is actually usual to not seek the advice of the department.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** But wouldn't you want to know if the department or the Government is funding an organisation, who else might be attending, any further information that the department may be able to provide you or your office?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** You'll probably recall this from when you were Minister. Certainly if I was attending, I would've received a brief and notes on the organisation. Because we were providing a video message, that wasn't done. To be honest, in future, probably what my office will be doing would be, if we aren't aware of the organisation—and this is a new organisation—to seek advice from someone like Multicultural NSW because, as I said, it's a new organisation and the event looked innocuous. Having said that, clearly the views of the panellists at that event are not views that I share at all. The decision that I made to provide a video message was ill-considered, and I certainly apologise for offence that it has caused.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Minister, the invitation actually promoted challenging the western view of Iranian women. Certainly that would have been alarm bells.



**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** In the context of the entire invitation, it didn't.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Is the Government funding this organisation at all, or providing any funding?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Not to my knowledge. Certainly my agencies do not provide any funding to this organisation.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Have you asked?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Have I asked whether any funding—

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** If Multicultural NSW or any—

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I've asked my agencies whether it's funded, and it's not funded through any of my agencies.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Minister, in 2023 there were 181 antisemitic incidents and then, in 2024, 795. With this disturbing rise in antisemitism in the Jewish community—and it is fair to say that they are living in fear—what is being done to support Jewish women in the community?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I think the Premier has been really clear about the Government's view on antisemitism and we—

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** But you're the Minister for Women. I'm asking what you have done as the Minister for Women to support Jewish women in the community.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** The issues in relation to community disharmony, and in particular antisemitism, are in no way acceptable and are, in fact, abhorrent. These are issues that are really important for the Government. The legislation that has been brought down in relation to antisemitism I am wholly supportive of and support it. I'm totally committed to the Government's support for ensuring that this is a safe community.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Minister, following the bombing of a childcare centre in January this year, what support did you provide to women following this attack?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** That was an issue that was taken up by police and by—

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Did you ask for a briefing from the police Minister?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** No, I didn't. That was an issue of a crime that was committed on a childcare centre and the last thing that I wanted to do was have government agency resources diverted away from what they should have been doing, and that was to find who actually committed those crimes.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I'm not asking for a full briefing; I was asking if you spoke to the police Minister. Did you ask her about the incident? Did you reach out to the childcare centre?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I think it's important that the relevant government agencies are able to get on with doing their job.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Minister, earlier this month Jewish women were pelted with eggs at Bondi Beach. Are you aware of these attacks?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I think I am aware of those attacks as one of very many attacks against Jewish people.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** So you can understand my line of questioning. There are women in the Jewish community who are scared to go out, who are being abused, who are being pelted by eggs. Women—parents—are scared to send their children to school. I'm asking you, as the Minister for Women, what are you doing to support women and young girls in the Jewish community?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I think this Government is being—

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** We're aware of the legislation that was passed last week. We all sat till five o'clock in the morning. I'm asking you, as the Minister for Women: For over 500 days since October 2023, what have you done as the Minister for Women?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** There is no question of the commitment of this Government to ensuring the safety of Jewish people—men, women and children—in New South Wales, and that is why we have taken the actions that we have.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Have you met with the Jewish Board of Deputies or any leaders of the Jewish community?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I have met—well, you can see in my diary disclosures.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** But specifically about the attacks on Jewish women, have you met with anyone in the Jewish community?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Yes, and you'll see from my diary disclosures that I've met with the National Council of Jewish Women of Australia.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** What was the nature of those meetings?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** That was in relation to government support for Jewish people.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** But not specifically anything to support Jewish women?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Well, Jewish women.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Minister, are you aware of the BOCSAR results that were released last week?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I am.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Can I ask what has been the increase in domestic-violence-related incidents over the last 12 months or during that period up to September 2024?

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** Eight point—<sup>1</sup>

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I'm sorry, I'm happy to chat in the afternoon, but I'm interested if the Minister is aware.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** It was 8.2 per cent per year over the last—

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I'll refresh your memory, Minister. There has been an increase of 2,342 in the number of incidents in that 12-month period. It says that for the outer south-west area, there has been a 31.3 per cent increase. Is that the Macarthur region that they're referring to?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I don't have the detail of all of the BOCSAR figures in front of me. The 10-year average is an average of 3 per cent per year.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I'm asking about the 12-month period.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I don't have the 12-month period in front of me, sorry. There were 37,849 incidents of domestic-violence-related assault recorded by police in the 12 months to March 2024.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** And that's an increase of 2,342. We've established that. I'm asking about the 31 per cent increase in the outer south-west.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Yes.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Would you say that's quite a large increase?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** It is. It's a large increase in reported assaults to police, yes.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** What have you done about asking for more information as to trends or why this has occurred?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I think the really key thing is that we are taking action on what is being—we are taking action to support victim-survivors of domestic and family violence in those areas.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** What support have you provided to the Macarthur region in the last 12 months?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** In Camden, the women's health centre has received additional support, Staying Home Leaving Violence is in place there, and there are additional specialist children's workers being put out there in the Campbelltown area.

---

<sup>1</sup> In [correspondence](#) to the committee dated 10 March 2025, Mr Michael Tidball, Secretary, Department of Communities and Justice, provided a clarification to his evidence.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** So this is specifically for domestic and family violence?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** That's what Staying Home Leaving Violence and specialist children's workers are. Yes, they're in my domestic and family violence portfolio. In the Campbelltown area, which as well is in the Macarthur area—again, support to the women's health centre for Staying Home Leaving Violence to ensure that women and children who have experienced domestic and family violence can upgrade, get safety upgrades to their home, get casework support and, if they can't live in their home, to actually get safety upgrades to their home of choice. As a result of our expansion of specialist children's workers, the women's health centre there is also receiving new children's workers in that area.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** How many have gone into the Macarthur area? I'm happy for you to take that on notice.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I don't know. We can probably provide that now, if you'd like, rather than take it on notice. Do you have that, Ms Campbell?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I might move on while Ms Campbell is looking for that figure. Domestic-violence-related murders have increased by 43.5 per cent over the past two years. What are you doing to reverse this trend?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Our primary prevention strategy is a clear—and this is New South Wales's first ever dedicated primary prevention strategy. It's important that what we do is we continue to support victim-survivors with a safe place to go, and that we continue to increase the support that is given to the services that do risk assessments for women and children so that they can create proper safety plans.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** We already know that—and my colleague asked questions about frontline staff. We're aware that refuges are at capacity. People are being forced to stay in unsafe situations, and I'm asking you what exactly you're doing to reverse this trend.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Our primary prevention strategy is a key part of that.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** But clearly it's not working.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Our primary prevention strategy was released last year. We are starting to work with communities to fund them, to help them working in areas where people live and where they work and where they play and where they socialise, to change those attitudes and beliefs that actually allow domestic and family violence to exist. That's a long piece of work. It's not going to be an overnight solution. We're also working in the early intervention space. The work that Minister Washington does in relation to supporting families is a really key part of early intervention with domestic and family violence.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** But there's nothing specific that you can refer to?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** We are expanding the men's behaviour change programs that we have across New South Wales.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Minister, can you explain why there has been—

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** And law reform is a really key part.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I'll come to that shortly. Minister, can you explain why there's a 15.7 per cent increase in domestic violence assaults on young victims? And these are young people under the age of 17. Again, it's all in the BOCSAR results.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I can't explain that, and that is why we're doing research into perpetrators.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Have you asked?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** That is why we're doing research into perpetrators. There's a large piece of work that we're—

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Who are these perpetrators?

**The Hon. EMILY SUVAAL:** Point of order: I'm loath to take a point of order, but the Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones continues to interrupt the Minister as she is very early—

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I'm happy to let the Minister answer the question.

**The Hon. EMILY SUVAAL:** Thank you.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I'm asking who are these perpetrators. You said you're doing research into the perpetrators who are assaulting young victims. Who are these perpetrators?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** That's what we're working out. We're working out what a perpetrator looks like, what drives someone to use violence in a domestic setting. We know that people who use violence are from all ages, and the work that we're doing in relation to understanding perpetrators and what can be done, what interventions can be done, to change the behaviour of a perpetrator—

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** What's the time frame for this research you're doing to find out who the perpetrators are that are assaulting young victims?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** The perpetrator intervention—the perpetrator strategy isn't about identifying who an individual perpetrator is. What it is about—

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** But, Minister, you just said—

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** It is about identifying what drives someone to use violence in a domestic setting, and so what interventions can we, as a government, take to change that.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Minister, as I've just said to you, you've got a 15.7 per cent increase over that 12-month period of young victims. You're doing some research into the causes so you can then think about what you'd like to do to prevent this and you can't give me a time frame of when you're going to make a decision and actually implement something to stop a young person being assaulted.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I think we will have the perpetrator strategy done by the end of the year.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I can take that on notice, but I'm pretty sure by the end of the year.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** So another strategy.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** We're doing consultations with organisations who have an interest in the area and have expertise in the area of people who use violence. I actually attended a workshop—

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** What's the youngest age of one of these victims?

**The Hon. EMILY SUVAAL:** Point of order: Chair, the Minister is attempting to answer what is a very serious question in a considered way—

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** She's talking about a strategy.

**The Hon. EMILY SUVAAL:** —and she should be afforded the chance to do so without continual interruption from the member.

**The CHAIR:** Please allow the Minister to answer a question before you start a new one.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I attended one of the consultations in relation to older people who use violence in a domestic—

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Minister, I'm actually asking about young victims under the age of 17.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** You were asking about the perpetrator more generally. I think you are changing the question now.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** No, Minister, I'm actually asking about young victims. These are people who don't have a voice. They are looking to government to give that support. You are saying you will have a strategy at the end of the year and potentially implement some policies next year or the year after. What is the youngest age of one of these victims?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** The youngest age of a victim of domestic and family violence? Tragically, there are babies who are murdered by people who are supposed to love them.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** And you're doing nothing but waiting for a strategy.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I find that offensive.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** You just said that a strategy will come out at the end of the year. You are talking and you are reviewing.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I find it offensive that you are indicating that.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I'm asking specifically what you're doing to protect these young victims.

**The Hon. MARK BUTTIGIEG:** Point of order: What happens is that the member attempts to ask a question and then, when the Minister answers it, the member makes a political point instead of listening to the answer. I ask that you direct the member to wait for the Minister to give a thorough answer, which is her right and which is exactly what she's trying to do.

**The CHAIR:** I uphold the objection.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** As well as the strategy, which will work into the future, and as well as our primary prevention work, which will work into the future, the changes that we've made in relation to the laws, bail reform and electronic monitoring of offenders—these are all really important strengthenings of the law that are aimed at stopping people from committing domestic and family violence in the first place. That is short-term work that we can do now, but we have also got to do the longer term work. The Attorney General has brought in really strong laws in relation to domestic and family violence. In fact, I think they're the strongest in Australia.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** They don't seem to be working.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** They were brought in last year. We've got to see how they roll—

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Do you think electronic monitoring is working?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** —because those figures are for the last 12 months. We also need to do the work to change people's attitudes. As uncomfortable and as ugly as it may seem, we need to work with perpetrators to get them to change their behaviours. That's the way that we're going to be able to stop domestic and family violence: change people's attitudes that allow domestic and family violence, change the attitudes of perpetrators or people who use violence and provide support for people who are experiencing domestic and family violence.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Minister, can we talk about the recommissioning program that's going across various streams of funding that impacts on domestic and family violence services? I'm just looking at the 2023-24 annual report for DCJ. There's a line in there on page 57 that says:

DCJ is also undertaking work to analyse coverage and nature of specialist domestic and family violence case management services and map this against need across NSW to build a better understanding of the domestic and family violence services landscape and inform future program recommissioning.

I asked a question on notice about which programs were being evaluated as part of the recommissioning process. In response, I was told, "The following programs have undergone evaluation, and the findings will inform the recommissioning." And then it talks about Specialist Workers for Children and Young People, Staying Home Leaving Violence, and the Integrated Domestic and Family Violence Services. Can you just explain a little bit more about what this recommissioning process is and what impact it's going to have?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** At the moment we're in the process of working with the sector on what the needs are. I know there is concern. I've spoken with services who are nervous about what might happen and, of course, that is going to happen with any recommissioning. Lack of certainty creates nervousness. What we want to do, and what DCJ is doing, is work with services to understand what recommissioning might look like in individual areas, because it's not going to be a blanket approach. Recommissioning is not going to take a blanket approach. It will consider what the program is that is being recommissioned and it will also be what the local environment is as well. Ms Campbell, I'm sure, can give more detail. That's part of what's creating the uncertainty, I think, because there is no one size fits all.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** It is causing a huge amount of concern. We're talking about services that are so underfunded. The idea that there could be even more money taken from them instead of more money being given to them is quite scary. But also, in this answer to the question on notice, it was said that these three particular reports would inform the recommissioning approach for contracts from July 2026 and then it referred to a report as old as 2018. Are we relying on seven-year-old information to drive the recommissioning process for contracts? That answer makes it look like it has already been reviewed.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Obviously we're not going to use only 2018 information in decisions in relation to recommissioning.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** I would hope not.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** That would be a bad thing indeed. I'm really keen to make sure that decisions that we make are based on the best information we have at the time. That's why we're working with services and local DCJ offices on exactly what a recommissioning model might look like for each type of service and each area.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Could I ask you on notice to come back after having looked at the answer to this question on notice, which is 3323, whether you stand by the answer to question one? It doesn't seem to accord

with what you're saying. I think maybe there is a bit of disconnect. It says, "The following programs have undergone evaluation, and the findings will inform the recommissioning approach for contracts from July 2026", and then it quotes three reports from 2024, 2022 and 2018 for three separate programs. That seems quite extraordinary, if that's the basis on which even a large part of this recommissioning will be conducted.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Certainly, what services and what local offices and what particular regions are experiencing is something that will be going into the recommissioning process.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** When you look at the statement about looking at how this works across New South Wales, there's also the fear this has engendered that metropolitan services, for example, might be defunded in order to fund more regional and rural services. Although we're all very in favour of additional money going to rural and regional, the idea that there is any fat, if you like, in the capacity of metro services would be an absurd proposition. Is what the Government planning to do with this recommissioning moving the deck chairs around on the *Titanic*, or are we actually looking at putting more funding in and checking that where the gaps are, we're filling them?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** We are putting more funding in through the increase to Staying Home Leaving Violence and certainly through the increases in the emergency package. I can't guarantee the future budgets because governments can't do that. I think any government who promised a future—

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** No, but the recommissioning—it just sounds like we're looking for cost efficiencies. It's quite frightening, especially for a sector that—when you were elected to government, Labor was talking about, "We're going to remove your funding uncertainty. We're going to have five- or 10-year contracts in regional and rural areas. Everyone will know where they stand." And now we have contracts being rolled over for a year, people not knowing if they're going to keep their doors open after the end of next year. It's really destabilising for a sector that has been so systemically underfunded for so long.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I understand the uncertainty. I certainly heard that very clearly from the services that I spoke to about it. We are absolutely committed to five-year contracts for services—absolutely. Recommissioning is not intended to drive down what services charge. It is aimed at ensuring that services are provided in the areas where there is need, and the most need, so that there is equity right across New South Wales. Ms Campbell can give detail into—

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** We'll come back to her in the afternoon. We've spent a lot of time talking about the pressures on the workforce that come from the uncertainty in funding—again, acknowledging that you inherited responsibility for a sector that had been systemically underfunded for many, many years. But that uncertainty and that needing to jump through hoops for every year of funding was one of the reasons why services were finding it hard to attract and retain a workforce. Do you accept that this recommissioning announcement now is adding even more uncertainty for workforce? Is that part of the workforce strategy?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I said not long ago in regard to your previous question that I understand that there is uncertainty that's created as a result of recommissioning. Government can't just say, "We're going to continue to fund you forever." We just can't. It's not a responsible thing to do with taxpayers' money. We have to get the best—

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Name one service that has more funding than they need. Name one service within the domestic and family violence sector that actually has more funding than they require. You know there's not any. You know they're all underfunded. What is this saying to the sector when they're all looking at each other and going, "Nobody here is flush with cash. We are funded at least half of what we need to be and now they're talking about taking away funding"? You've just said, "We can't fund you forever." I would love it if there was no need for domestic and family violence services. That is not the case.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I didn't indicate that—my intention wasn't to say that we can't fund you forever. My intention was to say that a government can't commit to saying that a particular—budgets don't work like that. They just can't. We budget in budget terms. But we are committed—

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** But you can't even say that you're going to provide more for the sector as a whole. What is left for a sector that has already been competing with itself for so long to try and get the crumbs of funding from government? What is that saying when you say, "Well, now we're not going to commit to giving you actual extra funding for frontline services, and also we're going to do some recommissioning process where we may be taking funding away from some of you"? Again, we come back to the workforce strategy that I don't think you've released yet. How is that supposed to build a strong, resilient workforce? It's almost cruel.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Uncertainty is an aspect of the issues in relation to workforce. There are multitudes of different issues in relation to workforce. As I said, domestic and family violence—dealing with it

and reducing it and supporting victims is an absolute priority for this Government. There is no doubt about it. That is why we made the announcement last year about the emergency package. While it might not have provided everything that the domestic and family violence sector was asking for at the time, it was a darn sight better than what was being received previously.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** It was somewhat better. I give you that. But we still haven't seen an increase in frontline funding for five years. This is a very long time. It's very difficult to understand how you can say that it's a priority and not give any funding to it. Julia Gillard was famous for saying, "Budgets are about choices." They are about choices and they show what a government prioritises. When you have a budget the size of New South Wales's budget, when you're giving so much money to big business, when you're not taking revenue from places where you could be taking revenue like other States and Territories do and then crying about, "Oh, we gave \$70 million to something that we view as a priority", it doesn't add up. Do you understand that, looking from outside the Government inwards—you can say that it's your priority but, if there's no funding for it, how can we believe you?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** There is funding for it. Certainly, when we made that announcement in relation to the emergency package, Domestic Violence NSW was certainly supportive of it.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Of course everyone is very happy for any money when you're this underfunded.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Full Stop Australia was certainly supportive of it. No to Violence was supportive of it as well. They acknowledged that it's an improvement. We are coming from behind.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** But, with respect, Minister, to say, "Well, everyone was really glad we gave them a tiny percentage of what they were asking for—

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** That's not what I was saying.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** But of course they're going to be happy for any funding. But what they're consistently asking for is far more than that. Again, it's about priorities. When you're giving such a small amount—I think DCJ provided a line item in its annual report, which I was really grateful for, around domestic and family violence funding. It was like \$290 million. Compared to everything else that this Government spends money on, that is nothing. You're relying on the goodwill of these workers and then also not giving them any certainty that they're even going to continue to have their particular service funded. I don't understand the rationale for doing a recommissioning at this time. Was it your decision, Minister, to do the recommissioning?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** We made the commitment to five-year contracts.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Yes. Where is that, though?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** We extended the existing contracts for an additional year so that we can go through a process of ensuring that there are five-year contracts in place across all of our SHS services.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Let's move to something different. The workforce development strategy was supposed to be released last year. Where is that?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** It will be released very soon. It is currently in the final stages of consultation. I think it's got a bit delayed because we were wanting to get some further feedback from Domestic Violence NSW. My understanding is that it is going through final approvals now. I'm not quite sure about what time frame we're working on with that, but certainly going through final approval, so it's close.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** That's what you said last time, with respect. You said it was coming soon. In fact, the actual words were a bit more buoyant than that, but that's been quite a significant delay. Has the recommissioning project impacted on that delay? Was there anything else that impacted—any other sort of changes that came along?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I can just add to that too. We're also looking at the same time around the actual strategy for implementing the workforce strategy. We're trying to look at those to link. There's one thing to produce the results of a workforce survey, which we have socialised with DVNSW and key groups, which we've had feedback on—but also looking at how it informs a strategy for New South Wales going forward.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** The primary prevention strategy, which everyone has welcomed, has been released. Domestic Violence NSW called for \$100 million over four years to be committed to the implementation of that strategy. Why have a strategy if you're not going to implement it? That makes perfect sense. The New South Wales Government announced just \$38 million for the implementation of the plan, plus a separate \$8 million for the All In program. Will you be committing to invest that additional amount required to ensure that it is effectively implemented?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** My understanding of that \$38.1 million for the primary prevention strategy is that it's a figure that was arrived at in consultation with Our Watch for the work that has been developed as far as the prevention strategy. That is a reasonable figure based on work that we did with Our Watch.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Is it commensurate with other States and Territories? I don't understand where this number comes from, from speaking with just one organisation, when you've got other organisations telling you that's it's not enough.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I think part of the funding also includes looking at what works and the evaluation. We have built that into this particular funding package, which is the first time we've had a strategy within New South Wales, so it's still early days. Subject to how effective it is and does it actually impact, we'd be looking at what we do going forward.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** It seems that this Government is hanging its hat on this idea of prevention being a panacea. Prevention is absolutely a huge part of the puzzle. We know that. But it was something that the previous Government did as well—this idea that if we teach people not to be abusive, the whole problem will go away and there'll be no need for refuges or frontline services. I know that's not what you think on this, Minister, but the idea that we are giving \$38 million for the implementation of what is supposed to be the pinnacle of what this Government is doing—how does that gel? That's loose change for a government like this. How is that all that we are spending? We couldn't even take it to \$100 million over four years?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Obviously that's not all the Government is doing in relation to stopping domestic and family violence now and into the future. There are the legislation reforms, the bail reforms, the strengthening—

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** The proof will be in the pudding on that one. We'll wait and see.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** As it is with all of these things.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** But \$38 million over four years is, like, \$9 million a year.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** And the proof in the pudding, that's what Ms Campbell was indicating. We need to make sure that there is evaluation done on what we're doing so that we know that we're spending money on things that work so that we can make sensible decisions.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** I hate to harp on about it, but we know—we have been told for decades—that having somewhere to go when you are fleeing violence is the number one thing for stopping people from being killed or being severely harmed and continuing to not leave. You can't say there is no evidence base for funding frontline services, yet we're somehow reluctant to give them the funding they need.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** We are increasing the funding that is being spent on frontline services. There is no doubt about that. That is through the increase in numbers of refuges across New South Wales. At the moment, I think we've got 89—

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** But what about the workers? What about the people?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** —and we're going to have an additional 49.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** What about the people working in these services, who are dealing with women and children coming to their doors every single day and having to turn them away? We know that works. Why aren't we funding it?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** We are providing more refuges, and inside those refuges will be more workers. There will be an additional 49 refuges once all of the new refuges are built.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** Good morning, Minister, and to you all. I'm very pleased that we are now talking about refuges and providing those safe places for women and children to go when escaping domestic violence. You have just mentioned the figure of 49 refuges. I would point out that in 2022 it was the previous Liberal-Nationals Government that announced \$426.6 million for the Core and Cluster program. How many of the sites have seen construction commence?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Construction commenced right now—I'd need to check with Ms Campbell as to whether we've got that detail. We've certainly got eight of those that have opened and are currently operating. There might be a couple more that have come on line recently. We're certainly expecting another five, if they haven't already opened, to be opened very soon.

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** If I can assist, in totality, three tranches of recruitment have been completed, with 49 projects being awarded funding. Of those 49, 36 are in regional areas and nine have been delivered in



regional New South Wales, in Bathurst, Wagga, Port Macquarie, Gunnedah and Dubbo. The refuges will increasingly become operational up until June 2026. In addition to the eight new Core and Cluster refuges, there are a further 89 women's refuges across the State funded by the New South Wales Government.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** Minister, your release on 27 November 2024 says, "The Core and Cluster program, which has to date delivered 39 refuges across New South Wales"—so 39 haven't been completed or delivered. At this point we're at eight.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** There are 39 contracts.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** So the refuges haven't actually been delivered as yet. In terms of what has been delivered, that's eight around New South Wales. Is that accurate?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** There are eight up and running at the moment.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** The Queanbeyan refuge was announced in August 2022. Where is that project at?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I'd need to take that on notice. I'll come back.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** The information that I have to hand is that the current timeline is suggesting that construction is going to start in perhaps 12 months. Minister, you have been in government for almost two years. Why are we still nowhere near a shovel in the ground for a Queanbeyan refuge that was announced in August 2022?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** As Ms Campbell indicated, the detail of that one we'll have to take on notice. What I can say is that where there have been delays, they have been for a number of reasons. A lot of them have been to do with planning issues and overcoming particular planning issues.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** And they are planning issues that your Government is dealing with as well?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Where there are planning issues that have come to light through DCJ's conversations with the providers and where there are particular planning issues that can be resolved by Planning, we certainly have worked with councils on overcoming those planning issues. There have been issues in relation to notification that the Minister for planning has been quite clear on. I have also written to all of the specialist homelessness services that have been successful in the Core and Cluster tenders to let them know about issues in relation to notification, how they should properly be dealt with and what to do if there appears to be issues.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** Since, realistically, construction won't start for yet another year on the Queanbeyan refuge, will the original budget cover the expected construction costs as of 2026?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I can't comment on it because I'm not sure about—

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** So you'll take that on notice to let us know?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I can certainly take that on notice. I don't have the information that confirms that timeline that you're giving.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** You'll take that on notice.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Yes, we can take that on notice.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** Is it true—have you had conversations with various communities about refuges, not just Queanbeyan which was obviously not a conversation? Has it been relayed to you that some providers are going to have to be fundraising to cover the gap because of your Government's delays in delivering these projects?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I think right through the Core and Cluster model from the very start, these refuges have frequently been a partnership between government and non-government organisations. Non-government organisations, right through from the first tranche, have fundraised to provide additional funds so that they can provide a refuge.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** But are you hearing concerns that some of these groups are concerned that their fundraising is not going to be enough to cover the shortfalls? So can I ask you, Minister, given these delays have cost domestic violence assistance providers, ultimately affecting women and their families, will you ensure that all costs are met and that these projects are going to be delivered as quickly as possible?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** We certainly have the budget for Core and Cluster. That was the \$426 million that was announced by the previous Government. I certainly at that time made no criticism of the program because I recognised as a shadow Minister at the time that it was a really important aspect of response to domestic and family violence. We'll work with individual providers on exactly what the issues are, and we do.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** Great. So you commit to that?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** DCJ officers are regularly meeting with each of the tenderers to understand any issues that they might be facing and how they can be overcome.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** You've talked about the further 10 refugees to be delivered by 2026. How much extra funding has been allocated to those extra 10 refugees?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** The total funding for the Core and Cluster program is \$426 million.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** That's the total that was announced in 2022 by our Government for 39. For the 10 extra refugees to bring that to 49, was there not additional funding allocated?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** No. The original announcement by the previous Government was \$426.6 million. I think the original announcement by the previous Government was also that it was going to build 75 new refugees. That figure ceased to be used by the previous Government because it became very obvious that wasn't going to build 75 new refugees. The total budget for the entire program—

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** Of 49.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** No.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** Of 85, I'm sorry. Is that the figure that you're referring to?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** The total budget for the three tranches was \$426.6 million.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** For a total number of how many refugees?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** For beds for an additional 2,900 women and children every year.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** But actual physical refugees?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** The previous Government announced 75 and then stopped using that figure.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** What figure are you using for the number of refugees?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** It will now be 49 refugees.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** So it is the 49 that we're referring to. Thank you for clarifying that. You stated on 27 November 2024 that they're going to be all delivered by 2026. That was your media release stating that, I understand, Minister. Considering Queanbeyan is not going to have construction begin until that year, is that a realistic number and figure to be putting forward, that these are all going to be completed by 2026?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** As I said, I'm not sure about Queanbeyan. We need to find that out.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** That's just one; you have 49 that you have committed to delivering by 2026. Is that realistic?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** The intention is to provide a safe place to go for an additional 2,900 women and children who are leaving domestic and family violence every year by June 2026.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** So you're still sticking to the commitment, Minister, that all 49 refugees will be completed by 2026, as your media release states?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** That is what we're working to.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** We'll move it along. This year, the NSW Seniors Festival Comedy Show is being held in Sydney city and Port Stephens. Is that correct?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** That's right.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** And the Premier's Gala Concert is also in Sydney.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** That's right.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** Are you aware that many seniors from regional New South Wales are not able to travel to Sydney or Port Stephens to attend, particularly now the rail network is reduced to bus services and, of course, with cost-of-living pressures?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** It is obviously easier for people who live in the Sydney metropolitan region to get to the Seniors Gala. However, there are people from regional New South Wales who travel to Sydney. That is why we hold the seniors Christmas concerts. Last year we had, I think, four locations, including Broken Hill, Moree, Cessnock and there was one other. But those seniors Christmas concerts are in recognition that regional and remote people can't get to—

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** They are indeed and are very warmly welcomed events that go on in our regions—when they go on in the regions. So you're aware that in areas such as Myall Lakes, which has the second oldest demographic in the State, for the past two years it's the great local member Tanya Thompson who has personally paid for seniors concerts at a cost of \$22,000 because otherwise they don't happen?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I wasn't aware that was the case.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** So Tanya Thompson as the MP for Myall Lakes has never approached you about assistance to potentially fund these seniors concerts that she is paying for out of her own pocket?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** She has approached me for funding through a discretionary fund.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** So you were aware of it.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I don't have a discretionary fund. Also, people who can't get to the seniors concerts for whatever reason, the Premier's Gala Concerts, can also view them through live streaming.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** It's not quite the same, though, is it, Minister, as being on the ground. Whether you were at Woodstock or went to a Rolling Stones concert, it is not quite the same vibe as streaming.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** No, and that's why, as I said, we have the Christmas concerts in the regional and remote regions and we don't have them in the Sydney area. Each member of Parliament in the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council has an allocation of up to 10 tickets for local people to be able to attend.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** There are lots and lots of those regional seniors who would love to attend—that would far surpass 10 tickets. I'd also like to point out that those concerts in Myall Lakes have raised \$50,000 to help with local charities such as palliative care and mental health services. That's a really important thing across the board to be supporting.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** That's great to have the member for Myall Lakes supporting her local community in that way.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** It is, and to have that MP doing that. You also provided the information to Tanya Thompson, when she did approach you about the potential for discretionary funding—and we understand that you don't have that available to you—advising her that she would have to apply for grants. Obviously, MPs can't apply for grants. I'm just wondering whether the same advice was provided to the member for Port Stephens to have the Seniors Festival Comedy Show take place there. Has that come under a grant? How was that decision reached?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** That decision was reached by the Seniors team within DCJ. I don't believe it was subject to a grant. It was a decision taken by the Seniors team. That is exactly what happened.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** You've agreed with me how important these regional seniors festivals are to the regions. Will you commit to making shows and concerts accessible to all seniors by hosting events and supporting events to be held across regional New South Wales?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** And that is what this Government is doing.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** But clearly it isn't, Minister, because this year you're in Port Stephens and Sydney city, with the Premier's Gala Concerts in Sydney, and you've got MPs who are staging their own seniors concerts. Will you commit to ensuring that as many regional areas as possible have these concerts and shows available to regional seniors—not just streaming it but actually being able to be there on the ground? Can we have that commitment from you?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I can certainly commit to ensuring that as many seniors as possible can participate in seniors events during the Seniors Festival. There are a number of local events as part of the Seniors Festivals that this Government funds through the seniors grants process, and I think that is what I indicated to Ms Thompson, the member for Myall Lakes, in relation to. You're right. There's no ability for an MP to apply for those grants, but there is certainly an ability for local councils to apply for the seniors grants, to hold events during

the Seniors Festival. Councils do, right across New South Wales, apply for those grants successfully and hold very successful events.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** Thanks, Minister. Can I quickly ask you about websites? The Premier has a website and the Deputy Premier has a website in their capacity as local members. Why does your jodieharrison.com no longer exist? In fact, when you look it up it goes to a Thai lottery page.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** That is my MP website. It is not funded through my portfolio at all.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** No. You no longer have a website—a personal MP website—because it goes to a Thai lottery website when you put Jodie Harrison—

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** That's not an issue that's related to my portfolio. I'm quite happy to answer questions about my portfolio.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I have a couple of questions. Do you know the average length of time that women and children can stay in a refuge?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** The ideal is 12 weeks. Often it is longer than that. Often the reason for that is because there needs to be accommodation for them to go to.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I've heard reports that in some areas people are saying six months to 12 months. What work have you done to ensure that there is a permanent place for women and children who are currently in refuges to go to?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** After refuge, housing is dealt with by—it's actually Minister Jackson's portfolio. However, I speak with her regularly about the need for places for housing for women and children leaving refuge, and she completely understands what the issues are. The Government is looking at issues like "meanwhile use". Certainly the increase in the number of social housing properties that will be built—8,400 new social housing properties with \$5.1 billion; the largest investment in social housing—

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** How many of those have been allocated specifically to support women and children escaping domestic violence, considering it was in the joint press release that would be a target group, along with older women?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Of those, 50 per cent will be prioritised for women who are leaving domestic and family violence.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** How many for older women?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I'd need to take that on notice. Certainly there was a very clear priority for 50 per cent of them to be prioritised for women experiencing domestic and family violence.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I've got it as 5,400 new social housing homes. Is that correct? So half of those will be for women and children?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I'll just check the figures—8,400 social homes: 6,200 will be new homes and 2,200 are replacement homes and at least 50 per cent of these will be prioritised for victim-survivors.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** At this stage it hasn't been broken down as to whether it's new or repurposed for women and children?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Not to my knowledge. That's probably a question that would be better asked of Minister Jackson.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** There were the three announced programs in the emergency funding from May last year—or three components of that emergency funding: \$48 million to expand Staying Home Leaving Violence and also to increase the number of Integrated Domestic and Family Violence Services, and \$48.1 million to secure and increase funding for specialist workers for children in refuges. They are the three programs that are also being recommissioned, according to that answer to questions on notice. How are we announcing funding for three programs that then we are also recommissioning or going through a recommissioning process with at the same time?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** The contracts for these new services will align with the recommissioning process.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Does that mean none of that money has already been spent?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** No, the money has been spent but the contracts are in alignment with the timing for recommissioning.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** So how much has been spent? Has all of that money gone out the door?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** No, it hasn't.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** How much has gone out the door?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I can't tell you the actual dollar figure, but I can tell you where we're at with rolling out—with getting additional services in place.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** I'm really curious as to how much, because it was emergency funding, which implies that it would have gone out the door. You could maybe come back on notice as to how much has still not been spent.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** What we've done with the emergency package is recognise the work that it takes, both from DCJ and through services when they have to put in a tender, and allocated the timing for each of those parts of the emergency package so that there isn't all of the workload all at once. We haven't seen the spending of the funding all at once because it would just be an incredible amount of work for services. For services like Staying Home Leaving Violence, we've been able to see that there are existing services already operating in the area and we've been able to extend their contracts through direct negotiation. In other areas there has been no presence whatsoever and so there have been limited tenders. We've tried to bring in that emergency package in a staged approach so that we don't create an incredible workload in actually getting tenders and contracts signed.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Just to add to that too, the funding is over four years, so we've got a breakdown of what funding is for each of those particular services as well.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Right. I always think about it as being \$70 million or whatever it was for one year, but of course it's not: it's over four years. It's even worse.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Minister, what additional funding is provided to support women's refuges outside the Core and Cluster?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Certainly there are additional workers that are being put in place now. There are specialist children's workers that are being put in place as well.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Has any additional funding been provided to the service providers?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** There's also some Aboriginal co-design models for domestic and family violence. There's been a co-design that's been operating with Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly. That's for the delivery of four of those sorts of models.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Minister, you'll be aware that the Minister for Homelessness, and Minister for Housing, announced the Homelessness Innovation Fund. Only two out of eight of the SHSs in that first round were funded to support women escaping domestic violence. Do you think the Government should be doing more to support women's refuges that are supporting women specifically escaping domestic violence?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** We do. We provide support to women's refuges. We're expanding the number of women's refuges that are across New South Wales.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I'm asking outside of the Core and Cluster. I'm asking, first of all, have you made representation to the Minister for Homelessness to provide greater support to women and children escaping domestic violence through SHSs?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** There is additional support that will be provided as a result of our increased housing commitment.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** But you said before that 50 per cent of that housing commitment will go to women and children.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Yes.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** From what we've seen in the last round with the Homelessness Innovation Fund, clearly less—it was less than 25 per cent of that funding—went to support women and children escaping domestic violence. Have you spoken to the Minister about this?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I'd need to look at those figures. I speak with Minister Jackson regularly about issues in relation to accommodation for women and children who are leaving domestic and family violence,

and indeed everybody who is experiencing domestic and family violence. These are issues that are regularly on the agenda of discussions that I have with Minister Jackson.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Do you have a firm commitment in the timeline of when social housing properties will be made available to support women and children escaping domestic violence, out of that 50 per cent? Do you have a time frame of how many, when, and where they'll be delivered?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I think that's an issue that is currently being worked through by Minister Jackson and that's a question that should be asked of Minister Jackson.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** But aren't you interested to know—

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Absolutely I am, but I'm not going to provide you—

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** —considering you have people staying in refuges for over six months because they can't transition to permanent housing.

**The Hon. EMILY SUVAAL:** Point of order: It is 10.46 a.m., so we are into Government time now.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Feel free to ask that question.

**The Hon. EMILY SUVAAL:** We have no questions. We are very satisfied with the Minister's fulsome answers.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** We will return at 11.15 a.m. to resume questions. Thank you very much.

**(Short adjournment)**

**The CHAIR:** We're back on the air. Ms Boyd?

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** The most recent DVSAT discussion paper details a quite high level of involvement from BOCSAR on the New South Wales police tool. There seems to be some concern in the DV sector around the over-reliance on BOCSAR in the DVSAT redesign evaluation and not enough specialist knowledge and peer-reviewed qualitative empirical research coming in from the DFV sector. Are you aware of those concerns, and where is that process up to?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I know that from the sector there has been incredible interest in DVSAT and what it looks like and whether it fits with their view of what needs to be assessed in risk. As far as where the DVSAT redesign is at at the moment, certainly the police—part A, the police tool has been finalised. There are 11 questions that police will be considering in their immediate risk assessment. The support service DVSAT is currently being finalised, and that will align with the police but will be expanded, ANROWS is being consulted heavily in the redesign of that part B as well.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** From BOCSAR's perspective, from a statistician's interest in having particular questions in there and having the tool look a particular way for their ongoing reporting, it is one distinct interest. But then in terms of the purposes of the domestic and family violence sector and using it for those purposes, do you think that sufficient input has been given to the process from the DV sector, more broadly?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I think the key issue is that DVSAT has to provide an assessment of all of the relevant risk factors to enable the person who's using it to work out how to best support the person that it's being used to analyse the risk of. Whether that is to a safety action meeting or whether it is to other supports, it is really about assessing the level of risk and the threats so that a victim-survivor can be made safe.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** In circumstances where BOCSAR has suggested a certain input into that review but the DV sector is saying something different, how are you resolving those differences in the design?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I might ask Ms Campbell to answer that.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes, there has been quite a lot of consultation over the last year, particularly with DVNSW but also with Legal Aid. Those concerns came up probably early last year. I think where we've landed is we're looking at implementing it from the middle of this year, both tools, and there seems to be agreement. But we're also going to include an evaluation after 12 months of operation to make sure that we pick up any concerns or issues in relation to both the new tools—so both the police one as well as the one being used by Legal Aid.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Is the BOCSAR views being prioritised at this point over the views of the sector?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I think what BOCSAR has done—and I can come back to you this afternoon—is really look at what the evidence base is and obviously is trying to minimise the number of questions so it ensures that we have the best information to make a determination of risk. They've looked at—both overseas and nationally—what tools are in place. It started with a really long list and has actually shrunk over the period of time. But I can come back with a more specific response to that question.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Yes, that would be good. I think consultation is one thing, but actually how you then take into account those conflicting bits of input is more interesting for our purposes here.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Just to add further to the DVSAT more generally, once both parts of the DVSAT are implemented, and they will be implemented at the same time, there will be a review of the DVSAT 12 months after the implementation as well. There will certainly be further opportunities, although it has taken some time, as you and I both know, and hopefully concerns and issues will have been addressed through the considerable time that it has taken to get to where we are now.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Would you agree, though, that there is a danger in preferencing purely quantitative evidence versus qualitative expertise and evidence? We've seen that with BOCSAR before where there have been reports that, on the face of the data, might look a particular way but when you actually understand it from a more ingrained perspective, because you've lived it, you understand why certain things are occurring.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Yes, I understand the concern. I think that the consultation is genuine consultation. This is genuine consultation. This is a tool that is really, really important, and we want to get it right.

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** I think your question—to my mind, at the heart of BOCSAR's capability is that sharp—as you characterise—quantitative capability. That needs to be informed and instructed by the experience of the sector. If we can refine the balance on that, we're very open to it.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** One of the issues that I've spoken at length with you in previous estimates—and in a lot of different estimates, actually, as I pop around the different Ministers—is in relation to the culture with the police when it comes to dealing with domestic and family violence issues, but more particularly the prevalence of police perpetrators of domestic and family violence. I spoke to you at last estimates about the high number of police officers who are perpetrators. I'm told as of 17 February year, there are 56 currently serving police officers who have been charged with 163 domestic and family violence offences in the past—so either currently unresolved or they've been charged in the past—and 21 officers who have been charged with a combined 46 sexual violence offences. Have you met with the police Minister at all to talk about that particular issue and how that impacts on the willingness of victim-survivors to come forward to police?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** The police Minister and I talk about domestic and family violence, and police approaches to it, on a regular basis. I know that there's a considerable amount of work that's being done in relation to training up police in identifying domestic and family violence. Part of that is understanding what it looks like and how to support victims. Yes, there's a huge amount of skilling up and training occurring to ensure that police fully understand the impact of domestic and family violence in the community and—

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** But if you've got this many police officers sitting in the Police Force still with a history of charges for domestic and family violence and sexual violence, and given you only have to pick up the paper to read the latest story about someone who has been subjected to domestic and family violence from a cop and how that is different to other perpetrators, do you think we need to do something more—a zero tolerance approach to having perpetrators of these crimes within the force?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** This Government has a zero tolerance approach to domestic and family violence, full stop.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** But these are people who have been charged. We have a number of them who have been found guilty of these charges and are still employed within the Police Force. In the last estimates when I asked the police commissioner about this, I was told that they couldn't tell me that one of these people with these convictions wasn't sitting behind the front desk when a victim-survivor walks in. Do you think that's acceptable or should we be saying, "If you've got a history of these sorts of crimes, you shouldn't be in the Police Force"?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I think I recall the police commissioner also making comments about the issues of offenders who are police. As I said, the police Minister and I have discussions about domestic and family violence and policing on a regular basis. It's really a matter for the police Minister. She understands where I'm coming from and she certainly understands the views of the sector. The police Minister needs to be allowed to do her job.

**The CHAIR:** Minister, I have just a small thing. I'll get this handed up to you. We noted, after doing some research, that you put out an excellent media release on 10 February dealing with the NSW Women of the

Year 2025 finalist announcements. Reading through it, I marked up in yellow "Ones to Watch, ages 7-15". That pierced my interest because at the same time I was listening to the radio talking about the anti-street harassment campaign that the Government is running, and it just seemed to me that the wording was a little bit unfortunate. Have you got any comment to make on that?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** That category, Ones to Watch, is about indicating that these are young women who—

**The CHAIR:** I get the context of this, but in relation to people who are reading it—someone like me, for example, and some of my staff in the office—we just thought the wording, in the context of the anti-street harassment campaign that the Government is running at the moment about not wolf-whistling, invading space, ogling and all that sort of thing, just seemed a little bit out of touch, that's all.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** It hadn't been something that had come to my thinking, but certainly we can go away and have a think about that.

**The CHAIR:** Maybe it takes a particular frame of mind listening to that campaign in the morning, that's all. Minister, in relation to domestic violence, it has been wonderful to see the work by the current Government on violence against women, and we acknowledge recent raids done by the New South Wales police. But it remains, according to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, that one in 14 men have experienced sexual or physical violence from a partner, 7.8 per cent have suffered economic abuse at the hands of a partner and, most worrying, 14 per cent of men have suffered emotional abuse from a current or previous partner. I see this constantly in my office when men are expelled from relationships and dragged through the courts.

DV happens in hetero and homosexual relationships. Due to the stigma attached to male victims, it still goes under-reported and men are three times more likely to commit suicide. Today's estimates focuses on women and domestic violence but, even though men's reported rates are less, they remain still too high. Last year I called on the Government to appoint a men and boys Minister but, of course, was deflected. Minister, how many arrests of perpetrators were made in the last 12 months in situations where men were the victims of domestic violence?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I don't have the arrests figures. That's something I would have to get from the police. There is certainly no doubt that anybody can be a victim of domestic and family violence. I don't deny at all that men can be a victim of domestic and family violence and sexual violence. We provide services to support men who are victims of domestic and family violence.

**The CHAIR:** Can you outline those services to me?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Yes, local support services are a service that provides the equivalent of WDVCS, basically. They provide male victims with information and threat assessment. They provide safety planning for men and referrals to other services. Local support services also provide case management to men who have more complex needs who are victims of domestic and family violence. In the 2023-24 year, local support services received 47,994 referrals and supported 8,653 male victim-survivors. The figures are really clear. I don't deny that men can be victims as well. Women are more likely to be victims. The figures show that women are more likely to be victims, but anybody can be a victim of domestic and family violence.

**The CHAIR:** Do you have men dealing with men's problems in relation to domestic violence on men?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** As in—

**The CHAIR:** You just talked about support programs for men. Are men employed by your department to do that support process or is it all exclusively women?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** The majority of providers of local support services are actually non-government organisations. Relationships Australia is one, Orana Support Service is another, Orange Local Aboriginal Land Council. The Family Centre up at the far North Coast do a huge amount of work in relation to working with men. CatholicCare Social Services Hunter-Manning provide services for men in the Hunter and on the Central Coast.

**The CHAIR:** Obviously, you must be supportive of funding those organisations, right?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Yes.

**The CHAIR:** Are you able to actually provide information or stats on how much of those funds are directed towards men's support in those organisations?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** All of these are men's support services. Local support services are domestic and family violence services for men. Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Services is the first port of call through our Safer Pathway system. When a victim first wants to reach out for support, they can reach out to



the 1800RESPECT line or the NSW Domestic Violence Line. If they're a woman, they get referred to Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Services. If they're a male victim, they get referred to local support services.

**The CHAIR:** Minister, how is the Government ensuring that the coercive control legislation signed into law last year protects everyone, including children and male victims?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** It applies equally—to men, to women.

**The CHAIR:** But how is that being done? I know it applies equally, but how is it actually being applied in relation to children and male victims?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I don't think I have the figures in relation to reports for coercive control that have been made to police. But there have been, I think, four charges and two withdrawn.

**The CHAIR:** Do you want to answer the question, Mr Tidball?

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** Yes, if I can help, hopefully. There is qualitative evaluation being undertaken by BOCSAR in the next report, due in March. There is a second piece of qualitative work that Dr Tonkin, the Women's Safety Commissioner, will be undertaking. That work is currently in a phase of development. In terms of scoping that work, if there was an appropriate aspect that should be covered off in relation to men, I think—

**The CHAIR:** Sorry, I didn't quite catch that. Appropriate what, sorry?

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** If it were appropriate that men should be considered within that research, I think that, in terms of the specification of that research, that is something that could be considered but has not specifically been considered to date.

**HANNAH TONKIN:** It's very broad, the scope of the qualitative research. It will start in approximately July this year—fairly extensive qualitative research project on the impact of domestic and family violence in the criminal justice system and the experiences of victim-survivors going through the criminal justice system. It's an extensive project. Procurement is about to start. BOCSAR is partnering with my office to lead that. That will look at a wide range of different victim-survivors. It's not limited to women.

**The CHAIR:** It looks at all survivors; is that what you're saying?

**HANNAH TONKIN:** Yes.

**The CHAIR:** We'll get some data from that.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** I asked questions on notice to the police Minister about the protocol of police interacting with DV services, because there have been some reports of police turning up unannounced at refuges and people obviously being a little alarmed at the lack of a trauma-informed approach. The answer provided was:

Police will respond to all DFV incidents in a trauma-informed manner, including interacting with victim at women's refuges and other frontline services ... Police are mindful of the impact their presence may have ...

Does it concern you that there doesn't seem to be an actual protocol or even any prohibition on police officers who themselves have a charge of domestic and family violence attending these sorts of refuges unannounced?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I haven't heard the feedback about police attending refuges unannounced.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Should there be a protocol, though, of basically laying out for police how they should be interacting with their local domestic and family violence services?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I think women in refuges need to feel safe and workers in refuges need to feel safe. I think that's the fundamental issue. As Minister, I think that's really, really important. That's what we need to be working to.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** I'm delighted to hear your commitment to what is a bi- or, I suggest, bipartisan commitment to zero tolerance for domestic and family violence. We all know the work that everybody is engaged in in building a culture of respect for women, a culture of consent, because that's the ultimate answer. In light of that important cultural work, have you had occasion to talk to your colleague Minister Hoenig about his TikTok account?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I haven't.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Have you seen, for example, the TikTok video that he posted of a visit of Tempe High School legal study students to this Parliament? The backing track was Freaky Nasty's 1997 track *Da' Dip*—I must admit I'm not particular with his oeuvre. Apparently the tracking song says of teenage girls, "I put my hand upon your hip, when I dip, you dip, we dip." The song apparently continues "G-string havin' oh so much fun" and other sexually inappropriate lyrics that I don't think I need to repeat to this Committee. How

does that sort of TikTok video from a senior Minister of your Government build a culture of respect for women and girls?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I haven't seen those TikTok videos. I don't have a TikTok account myself. I don't know—I can't explain another Minister's choices in relation to their social media. I could probably suggest other music. For example, some Taylor Swift or some Lizzo. Artists like that are much better for female empowerment.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** As Minister for Women, how can you lead your Cabinet colleagues to create a total all-of-government, all-of-society culture of respect?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** That's a question for Minister Hoenig. As I said—

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Surely, as Minister for Women it's a question for you—your leadership in this capacity.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Ms Carter, I haven't seen those TikTok videos. I don't have TikTok. I will speak to Minister Hoenig and suggest some other soundtracks because I think I've got some much better soundtracks in relation to women's empowerment.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Is the question soundtrack or is the question culture of respect expressed in soundtracks? Because that is not an isolated example from the Minister. For example, there was another video marking a visit to a school construction site in Green Square, where the backing track included the lyrics:

Hey little mama with that tight dress on  
I got a small proposition for you  
You look kinda sexy got it going on  
Here's what I want you to do

At a school construction site, Minister.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** As I said, I haven't seen Minister Hoenig's TikTok account. They are certainly not lyrics that I—

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** It was reported in the media today. You don't have access to *The Daily Telegraph*?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I was preparing for budget estimates this morning.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Do you have a role in encouraging your colleagues—in fact, all the Government—to have a social media use policy that expresses respect for women?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** As I said, I'm going to suggest some alternative songs to Minister Hoenig.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Alternative songs or a culture of respect? Because they are different things.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** This Government is absolutely committed to respect for women, respect for diversity in all of its forms and that includes respect for women.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Every single Minister? Because it doesn't look like that TikTok account expresses respect for women.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** That's a question for Minister Hoenig. This Government is absolutely committed to respect for women and respect for diversity across community.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** What is your role as Minister for Women in leading the growth of that culture of respect?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** My role as Minister for Women isn't to keep an eye on individuals' TikTok accounts. My role as Minister for Women is to take a cross-government approach so that agencies across government—my role is to lead the work of the women strategy. That is the key work and that is across government.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Do you speak up for women in Cabinet and encourage all your Cabinet colleagues to respect women?

**The Hon. BOB NANVA:** Point of order: My point of order goes to relevance. Even allowing for wide latitude with this line of questioning, this is an inquiry into the estimates of expenditure from the Consolidated Fund and into budget papers and related documents. A lot of latitude has been given on this line of questioning. Chair, I just ask that you pull it back into order on the basis of relevance in the procedural fairness guidelines.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** To the point of order: As has been the precedence over many years, wide latitude is given during budget estimates and this is specifically related to her portfolio as the Minister for Women and the role that she's taking as the senior woman in the Cabinet.

**The Hon. BOB NANVA:** Further to the point of order: I would suggest that a lot of latitude has been provided with respect to this line of questioning.

**The CHAIR:** There has been a lot of latitude provided but please continue to ask the questions.

**The Hon. EMILY SUVAAL:** Point of order: I raise a further point of order. It's a separate to the one—

**The CHAIR:** Can we deal with them one at a time?

**The Hon. EMILY SUVAAL:** Yes, this is a new point of order. The Hon. Susan Carter is continuing to interrupt the Minister as she is part way through an answer. I ask you to instruct her to allow the Minister to finish her answer before she asks the subsequent and follow-up question, particularly as they relate to things like respect—affording the Minister courtesy under the procedural fairness resolution.

**The CHAIR:** Do we acknowledge that?

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** I'm happy to acknowledge that, yes. Perhaps one final question, Minister, and then I will move on. Will you commit to working with your Cabinet colleagues to develop a social media code of use that expresses respect for all persons in New South Wales, especially women?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I'll commit to working within my Cabinet and with my Cabinet colleagues to ensure that the diversity of New South Wales, including the rights of women, are respected across the State.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** If we can go back to the Commonwealth-funded domestic violence workers—and I understand this morning you indicated that, of the 148.4 Commonwealth-funded domestic violence workers, 140 of those are actually now employed and in the field?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** That's right.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** And the remaining 8.4, when will those positions be filled?

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** Of the remaining eight, five full-time equivalent have an offer being made or start date agreed. Two FTE are at interview stage.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** That leaves us with 1.4, if my maths is right.

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** Yes. Recruitment has commenced in relation to that last one.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** How long was the Commonwealth funding for these workers?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** It's for—

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Five years, I think.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** —five years.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Four or five. I'll come back.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Have you started thinking about planning for what happens when the Commonwealth funding ceases? We have got roughly 150 workers in the field. If the funding is only for a limited period of time, what happens to the services that they're working in?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Hopefully whoever is in government at the time continues to work with the New South Wales Government to ensure that domestic and family violence victims get the support they need.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** So the plan is to talk to the Federal government. During the last estimates, we were advised that there was specific intention by your Government to target ACCOs. In other parts of the State, there was an open tender. How did you determine which organisations would proceed by open tender and which would be ACCO targeted?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I'd need to go to DCJ on that. In regard to your previous question for funding for the new workers, the funding is for four years.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Is that four years from when they were meant to start last September or four years from when they hit the field?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** It's four years in total.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Given the delay, that does become a significant practical question, doesn't it?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** The funding is for four years for those workers.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** From when they start or from when they were meant to start?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** The funding is part of the national partnership agreement. It is a total of \$48 million.

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** It is 48.837.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** It's \$48.837 million for 148 workers over four years. That's what the funding is for.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** How many Aboriginal business round tables have been held to support ACCOs delivering domestic and family violence services?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I'm not sure of that answer.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Are you able to get back to us on that?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** What specific round tables are you referring to?

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Round tables that would support ACCOs delivering domestic and family violence services.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I can take that on notice and come back this afternoon.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** That would be great. Of the national partnership agreement funding, how much was allocated to domestic and family violence initiatives in New South Wales over the past three years?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Of the national partnership agreement funding?

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Yes.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Over the last three years?

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** How much national partnership agreement funding was allocated to domestic and family violence initiatives in New South Wales over the past three years? This was not intended to be a difficult question.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** There are a couple of national partnership agreements running in tandem. There's some funding that has been carried forward.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Perhaps while you're looking, you can also let us know how or if that funding changed year on year and what the intentions are with respect to allocations going forward. Is it intended to increase or decrease the amount of funding? Perhaps that all needs to be taken on notice.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I can probably talk to some of it. For 2021-23 it was \$80 million over two years. That was during a period off the back of COVID as well, so there was an additional enhancement. And then 2023-25 is \$47.8 million over two years. In addition to that, as the Minister indicated, there was \$48.8 million for new workers. And then there has also been the innovative perpetrator responses, which is \$3.37 million over five years, from 2022-27. Currently, we're negotiating with the Commonwealth on the national partnership agreement. I don't know, Minister, if you wanted to say anything.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** When do you expect those negotiations to be finalised?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** We're in the final moments of finalising that with the Federal Government now.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** So before the Federal election is called?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I hope so.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** If we go into caretaker, that'll damage those negotiations, I would think. That's why I wondered how far along they were. If we can turn to the Staying Home Leaving Violence program, last year in estimates we learnt that additional resources were announced to extend the Staying Home Leaving Violence program on 8 May 2024. Minister, you and Ms Campbell indicated that tenders for the first round of services would open in October. Did they open in October? How many providers were successful?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes, they did open.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Absolutely.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** And they closed when?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I'd need to double-check that, but with the expansion of the existing contracts, seven services were extended to cover 14 new LGAs. We're currently doing the procurement of 13 new services, covering 23 LGAs.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Sorry, the tender process was for existing services to cover additional areas?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** That's right. We wanted to get those services up and running quickly. It was in expanding the locations where this particular program was available.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** And you're now looking at 13 new services. Is that right?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Correct.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** New services or new locations?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** New services and locations.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** In terms of locations, the seven that operated additional services, what were those locations?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I have got it in here. I can come back to you.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Those 13 new ones, are they in a tender process or are they operating?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** They're in a tender process.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** You definitely know the areas in which they will be operating?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes, we do.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Perhaps you could give us those areas too, when you get a chance. Are you able to advise which LGAs have no access to Staying Home Leaving Violence services?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Once we have completed this procurement, we will have covered all 128 LGAs across New South Wales.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** When will that procurement be completed?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** The funding, as you know, with the emergency package, is over four years. It will incrementally come up, but it should be next year.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** So the 13 services that you're discussing now will be operational next year?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes. Hopefully starting this year.

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** This year. Imminently.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** In April.

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** Yes, in April.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** I'm aware that some LGAs are very large. Are there LGAs where there will be partial coverage? By that, I mean where women may be located more than an hour and a half away from services.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I'd need to take that on notice.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** If you could, thank you. It is relevant for a lot of the areas that we're talking about. How many actual workers in the field are we talking about?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** It would vary. I'd be guessing, but lots.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Are you able to check that and provide the figures?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** We don't usually capture data on individual inputs.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** That's not part of the tender process, how many workers each service will have?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** No, not specifically. It could be a range.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** If it's not a part of the tender process, how do you know how they're covering their areas?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** We look at volume and we look at need. Then the NGOs, when they put in—

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** How do you test capacity to serve the need if you don't know the worker numbers?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I'll come back to you on that. We certainly don't go out and say, "In this location, there is going to be 20 workers." It's often not just about the workers; it's about brokerage and it's about safety.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Just from first principles, it would seem to be a basic capacity question to check that that service actually has the capacity to meet the predicted need in a particular area. If you can get back to us, it's a very relevant question for access for women.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Perhaps you will have difficulty with this question, but how many additional workers for the Staying Home Leaving Violence program were added in November last year?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes, I'd have to take that on notice.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** How do we measure unmet demand? Do you have any measurement of unmet demand? Minister, do you have ideas about this?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Certainly. There are obviously the BOCSAR figures for each area. We also incorporate feedback from services themselves, because some services are able to report to us what their level of unmet demand is. The local commissioning parts of DCJ have intelligence on the ground as well.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** So your office has a role as an overall gathering of all of this data. How often would you look at unmet demand figures and make plans to address that?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** The Department of Communities and Justice looks at that data.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** How often do you speak to them about the issue of unmet demand?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** We regularly talk. I have fortnightly meetings with the Department of Communities and Justice.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** But about this specific issue? Sometimes in programs we can focus on the running of the programs but we're perhaps not seeing the hole in the doughnut and we need to be addressing the hole in the doughnut. Unless we quantify that hole, it is very difficult to address it. So I'm asking how do we quantify the unmet demand? How regularly is that considered? And how do we plan to address it?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I might ask Ms Campbell to respond to that because, as I said, I meet with DCJ on a regular basis.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** But not about this specifically?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Not on a fortnightly basis talking about this.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** How do we quantify, Ms Campbell?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Through a range of sources. We collect data from SHS, specialist homelessness services, that tells us about unmet need.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Who is responsible for pulling it all together and escalating it to the Minister in terms of, "This is the demand we need to get funding for, we need to meet"?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** That would be my division, which is strategy, policy and commissioning, and I also have BOCSAR and FACSIAR, which is on the child and family, so between those two we would get data from that. We also get data from the Commonwealth.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Every budget process, Minister, you would be advocating for funds to meet this unmet demand for women?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Every budget process—every opportunity, in fact—and that's how we were able to get the announcement in relation to the emergency package.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** How often do you find out about unmet demand so that you can make a targeted, quantified approach as part of the budget process to say, "We have an x-sized unmet demand and we need a y-sized dollar to fill that"?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** It would be regularly.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** So you can't be more particular than, "I regularly think about it"? You can't quantify it for us now, but we need to trust you can quantify it as part of the budget process on behalf of women?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** As I said, I regularly meet with the Department of Communities and Justice to get updates on where we're—

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** But you've also said not about the specific issue of unmet demand and you're unable to tell us how you quantify unmet demand, and we can never meet what we can't quantify.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Ms Carter, I was able to tell you what was unmet demand.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Sources but no metric.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I'm happy to let you know that whenever there is an opportunity to start talking about where we need to start focusing on new programs and new services, one of the key things that comes to me—and I'm really keen to see this—is that identification of where the areas of most need and unmet demand are.

**The Hon. EMMA HURST:** Good morning, Minister. I have a few questions around the link between domestic and family violence and animal abuse. I'm just wondering what measures are being developed and implemented within your department to promote research and the knowledge translation on animal abuse as a form of domestic and family violence, to ensure that program's policy and legislation reform is informed by that evidence on how to actually best support people who are in these violent situations but also living with animals and experiencing that link that we know so much about.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** As I think we've talked about before, animal abuse is a red flag in domestic and family violence. It's something that's considered in legislation, particularly in coercive control, as an indicator. I'm not sure about discussions in relation to the DVSAT. We're finalising that at the moment. As far as research goes into the link, as I said, it is certainly an indicator. Animals are not only used or can be used as a precursor, but they can be used against victims as well. As far as research that we're formally doing—

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I need to take that one on notice.

**The Hon. EMMA HURST:** I'm happy to get any further information about that, so thank you for that. But I guess the question was more about the research that already exists and the information that we have, and how we're making sure that the policy and legislative reform is being informed by the evidence that we already have in this space so that when there are policy reviews happening in this space, we're ensuring that link is included. I appreciate that when I first was elected this was something that was overlooked quite a bit, and that was six years ago. I think we've come a long way since then, but I just want to know how we're making sure that the research—and the most recent research—is actually being incorporated and used in all the policy and legislative work in this space.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** An example is the design of the new Core and Cluster refuges. They're required to have the capacity to be able to take pets. There's always a risk assessment undertaken about the appropriateness of which pets, so that's an issue because, depending upon breeds and all those kind of things, you want the animals to be safe together as well. That's a really key response, because often the reason that someone may stay in a violent relationship is that they're worried about what might happen to the family pet, particularly if there are children involved. It's a key part of the design for Core and Clusters and for the responses for tenderers.

**The Hon. EMMA HURST:** I know we talk a lot about companion animals being sort of pulled into this violence within the home. Violence is perpetrated against companion animals, assisted animals but also, for example, farmed animals, and the situation can become really complex where you're looking at a large number of animals that are particularly vulnerable. To give an example, somebody trying to leave a violent situation that has six large horses, for example, is very different to somebody living in Sydney with a cat or with a dog. It becomes much more complicated to try to protect those animals and protect that person who's trying to leave the violent situation when you're talking about six large animals that need a particular level of care. How are we incorporating those situations into how we ensure that strong commitment to responding, with good policy initiatives and programs that have been developed and implemented, to these really complex situations?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Obviously it is a very different circumstance to have refuges that suit that, but there is other work that's being done. Mr Tidball?

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** Mr Tidball is going to refer to Dr Tonkin. I'm just mindful that there is I think some depth in terms of consideration of animals in—

**HANNAH TONKIN:** Yes, in some of the legislative reforms. Animal abuse is incorporated in coercive control laws. According to the latest data, in the first three months of the coercive control offence there were four coercive control incidents with animal abuse recorded, so it's actually being monitored as well. It's also now a specified red flag under the Bail Act and must be taken into consideration and part of the definition of "domestic abuse". It's in a lot of the really key laws as well, which is an important recognition.

**The Hon. EMMA HURST:** Minister, how are we then taking that information and making sure that future policy initiatives and programs are being developed and implemented to ensure that responses to DFV consider the safety and wellbeing of people with animals who are impacted by these situations?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** How are we actually doing that?

**The Hon. EMMA HURST:** No, sorry. How are we making sure that future policies and initiatives are being informed by this information and the work that has already been done?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Any of the future policies that are developed are developed with consideration of those issues and consideration of the crime data and the lived experience of people.

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** I spoke earlier about the quantitative research being undertaken in relation to the coercive control reform and then being followed by the qualitative work, which is being led by Dr Tonkin. This question would most likely arise in the context of that lived experience qualitative work.

**The Hon. EMMA HURST:** Is that limited to the data around animals as coercive control specifically, which is part of this whole issue of the link between domestic violence and animal abuse, but obviously not the whole issue. Animals can be used as a form of coercive control but also, as the Minister said before, it can be a form of violence in and of itself or a red flag or some of these other aspects. Is that the coercive control data we're using, or are we expanding beyond that?

**HANNAH TONKIN:** Coercive control monitoring, the quantitative monitoring, is focused on the coercive control offence, but the qualitative research project that will start later this year is more broadly looking at victim-survivors of domestic and family violence. So it's not just limited to the coercive control offence; it's much broader.

**The Hon. EMMA HURST:** Do we have a timeline for that study?

**HANNAH TONKIN:** Yes. It's going to start—the research—in July. That's the goal, because we wanted to leave a full year between the new coercive control offence coming into effect and the research starting. Coercive control will be an important part of it, even though it's not the only focus, so we wanted to leave a full year. The goal is for it to start some time around July, or soon after, this year.

**The Hon. EMMA HURST:** Do you have a proposed time that will—

**HANNAH TONKIN:** It's going to go for at least a year after that, so it's quite a lot, and then further into the future as well.

**The Hon. EMMA HURST:** Will you be consulting with people who work in this space as well around that?

**HANNAH TONKIN:** Yes, we are. We've got a research advisory group that we've already formed. We've met already. We've received written comments, so it's really cross-cutting across government and the sector, including legal experts.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Just to add to that, I've met with Lucy's Project. My office has met with Lucy's Project as well. In short, they're feeding into that as well.

**HANNAH TONKIN:** And I spoke at their conference last year in October as well.

**The CHAIR:** With the growth of banking and financial scams, older Australians are disproportionately represented as the victims of phone and internet scams. Up to \$2 billion has been scammed out of people of all ages last year, but seniors are victims more often due to their accumulated wealth and lower understanding of technology. Scammers also scour dating sites, looking for older people who have recently been divorced or lost a partner. Minister, what strategy is the New South Wales Government employing to protect older New South Wales residents from falling prey to scammers?



**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Certainly the issue of financial abuse of older people is something of concern to us. We've provided additional funding to the financial abuse service that is run out of Redfern Legal Centre. Having said that, scamming sits within financial institutions, and that's predominantly Commonwealth work. While we're on the topic of seniors and the potential for financial abuse and elder abuse, before I forget, I want to recognise Kathryn McKenzie, who has been the Acting Ageing and Disability Commissioner for the last 12 months, and the incredible work that Kathryn has done in that role and the steady hand that she has played in that role for the last 12 months. I just want to really indicate my appreciation for the work that Ms McKenzie has done.

**KATHRYN McKENZIE:** I would say, if I can add to what the Minister was saying about financial abuse of older Australians or certainly seniors in New South Wales, that's a large part of what the Ageing and Disability Commission does. Scams, unfortunately, feature highly in reports to the ADC about older people in New South Wales. There's a lot of material and there's a lot of support that's available—funded through the Commonwealth, as the Minister flagged—through the ACCC and others. But we also deal with a large proportion of those matters and work with individuals, as well as using opportunities like the lead-up to Valentine's Day to try to get more attention on scams and on higher vulnerability points, including for older people.

**The CHAIR:** Further to your answer, are social media and dating apps being monitored to hold these people to account when they're putting these scams up?

**KATHRYN McKENZIE:** That's not part of the—sorry.

**The CHAIR:** Not part of what you do. Minister?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** It's certainly not part of the Seniors portfolio. What I can say, though, is what we're also doing from a New South Wales Government point of view, we run a program in conjunction with Telstra called Tech Savvy Seniors. It is aimed at increasing the digital literacy of our seniors across New South Wales. A part of that program deals with scams and safety online. It provides our seniors with upskilling in their use of things like mobile phones, iPads, computers, use of email—all those kinds of things. It also helps them identify where there may be a scam or something inappropriate happening on a dating app.

**The CHAIR:** Minister, that sounds good but how does the Government support seniors who are scam victims? Are you working hand in hand with the technology and the banking sector to get this done?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Some of our systems can be used by scammers, and Service NSW works with people who are victims of scams, and where data has been mined, as well. In fact, although I'm not a senior, I've been a beneficiary of some support from Service NSW where there has been scamming of data. Service NSW works with the Commonwealth in helping everybody, including older people, including our seniors, to overcome scams.

**The CHAIR:** Minister, in the past few years we got to a low point in women's sport as we have seen trans women—biological men—invade these competitions, putting women in danger, and allowing them into change rooms and toilets. Locally the Flying Bats women's soccer team dominated the competition because they had four biological men on their team. That caused some parents to pull their daughters out of the league, fearing for their safety. There are already cases of rape in women's prisons and women's toilets overseas as a result of allowing biological men who identify as women in women's spaces. In a courageous and fitting move in February this year, the NCAA in America prohibited transgender women from competing in women's sports. This includes student athletes who were assigned male at birth who have started hormone therapy. There are other moves afoot to prevent biological men from competing in women's sport at the Olympic level to make women's sport about women and not have them usurped by men. How is the Government ensuring that biological women are protected from competing with biological men in women's sport and risking injury?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** It's our view that the sporting codes themselves are in the best place to make decisions about the inclusion of trans people in their codes and whether they can play in men's teams or women's teams. If it's an issue of physical capability, which is part of what the argument is about—

**The CHAIR:** With due respect, you're not answering the question. How many women who are transitioning to men actually participate in men's sport? Very few, I would consider to be the case; yes?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I don't have the figures for that. The sporting codes may have; I don't know. It is in our view the sporting codes—if it is an issue about physicality—

**The CHAIR:** Isn't it an issue of women's safety?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** If it's an issue about whether someone can safely play on a field in competition—

**The CHAIR:** Or in a boxing ring.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** It's our view that it's about the technical decision that is made about whether a person can play that sport and who they can play it against. That's why, in boxing, for example, you have different weights. It's our view that it's the codes themselves who are best placed to make those decisions.

**The CHAIR:** You're saying the Government doesn't have a position. What the Government is doing is pushing it down to the sports bodies themselves and letting the administrators make those decisions.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** It's our view that the sporting codes themselves have the best technical capacity to make those decisions.

**The CHAIR:** Minister, how is the Government ensuring that women are safe to change or use toilet facilities without privacy and safety being threatened by biological men?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I think the issue that is being alluded to is whether somebody has the ability to perpetrate a crime in a particular place and the Government is very firm that if a crime is committed, that crime should be reported.

**The CHAIR:** With respect, the question is not about a crime being committed; it is about preventing a crime being committed by the Government having a policy that says men are men and women are women, and biological men should not be allowed in women's spaces, especially toilets and change rooms—long before a crime is committed in those places, surely.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** There are women's change rooms and there are men's change rooms. Certainly, to us, if somebody identifies as a woman, then they should feel free to use women's change rooms. If somebody identifies as a man, they should feel free to use men's change rooms. That does not mean that someone can perpetrate a crime or should perpetrate a crime. We're really strong: If there is a crime committed, then we'll take action. It should be reported to police and the police will take action.

**The CHAIR:** That is your position then, that trans women are allowed into women's change rooms regardless of how real women feel about them being in there.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** It's our view that women are entitled to go into women's change rooms. Men are entitled to go into men's change rooms.

**The CHAIR:** Of course, women are allowed to go into women's change rooms. We don't have any doubt about that. But what you're saying is that trans women have just as much right to be there as women.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** What we're saying is that people who identify as women should be able to go into women's change rooms. Men who identify as men should be able to go into men's change rooms.

**The CHAIR:** So biological women come second to people who imagine themselves, or are transitioning from men, to be women. Does that sound like a logical situation? You're setting up a situation for a crime to be potentially committed, aren't you? That's how you started to answer the question, about a crime being committed.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I'd have to look at BOCSAR stats to see whether there's any evidence on whether trans people perpetrate crimes—I think the majority of people who perpetrate crimes against women are actually men. They're men. They identify as men.

**The CHAIR:** So you're saying that, if they identify as a woman, they don't commit crimes in women's change rooms or toilets?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I don't know. I'd have to look at the data on that. But I certainly know that the majority of people who commit violent crimes and sexual assaults against women are men. And they identify as men.

**The CHAIR:** At the end of the day, Minister, my question is not about whether crimes are committed or not. My question goes to the appropriateness of what is actually being allowed to occur. Do you agree with that? Is it appropriate? You're saying it is.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** It's our view that people who identify as women should be able to use women's change rooms and men who identify as men should be able to use men's change rooms.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Minister, your Government announced that Community Justice Centres will close on 30 June. What advice have you received about alternative arrangements for voluntary associations?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I haven't received advice because that sits within the Attorney General's portfolio.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Minister, you'd be aware that there are a number of voluntary organisations, like Men's Sheds, that use the model constitution prepared by NSW Fair Trading to engage with CSC in relation to internal dispute resolution. As Minister for volunteering, I am interested to know what is the alternative arrangement for these organisations.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Again, that sits within the Attorney General's portfolio. The issue of CJs sits within the Attorney General.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I'm aware of that, but you're the Minister responsible for volunteering and, if a volunteering organisation can no longer go to a CJC to deal with internal disputes, what is your advice to volunteer organisations?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I would have to look at the decision. I can't predict what decision the Attorney General is going to make.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** The decision has already been made that these will be closed. I am asking what your advice to volunteer organisations is. Will you consider providing financial support to these organisations to deal with disputes?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I would have to get advice from the Attorney General on alternatives. Mr Tidball, do you have further information?

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** I am mindful that I'm potentially straying into the Attorney's envelope tomorrow. If I can just indicate briefly, though, the outcomes considered in the context of the level of funding—there actually was a real question of the resolution of matters not justifying the investment. That is the core issue. There is then, I acknowledge, a question of access to justice for those organisations and discussions which are on foot about ensuring that there are alternative pathways that underwrite access to justice in consultation with the legal professional bodies in relation to that.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Minister, turning to the prevention strategy that you announced, could you outline the actual implementation? You have in the strategy that the government structure is the New South Wales Domestic and Family Violence Taskforce; a New South Wales Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Board; and the New South Wales Primary Prevention Advisory Council. Could you outline the difference between those three bodies?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** The Domestic and Family Violence Taskforce is a time-limited taskforce that has been established to really drive some of the changes and expansions that we're implementing in New South Wales. The domestic and family violence board oversees the implementation of the strategy. They really make sure that they look at the business as usual aspect of the strategy. The primary prevention council—we've had our first meeting—is co-chaired by DVNSW, by Delia and Hannah. That council's role is really oversight of the primary prevention strategy, but also to bring together good ideas that are happening across New South Wales.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Are the members of the taskforce, board and council from the public or are they departmental officials?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** The members of the taskforce are Cabinet Office—

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** Co-chairs are myself, as secretary of DCJ, and the secretary of the Cabinet Office. We co-chair.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** In that there is also the secretary—

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** For each department?

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** Additionally, the secretaries of Health, Education and the police commissioner—and other invitees as experts.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** In relation to the board and the council, are they department officials or general public?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** The board are departmental officials, and the council are—well, they are experts in the field. They're predominantly external.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** So that's the only one that is external. Have you already selected the members of that council? I think you said that it has already met.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** There is an interim primary prevention council in place. There'll be a wider recruitment strategy being undertaken in coming months, but I was really keen to get that council in place so we have an interim council.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Minister, one of the areas of focus is building a safe and respectful workplace culture within the New South Wales Parliament. Have you met with the Presiding Officers about protecting women's safety, including that of visitors, here in Parliament?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** No, I haven't met with them to talk directly on that.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Is any work being done in that space?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I certainly believe so. That is work that's being led by the Presiding Officers.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** But, Minister, it's actually one of the priorities in your prevention strategy. I go back to the question my colleagues were asking before in relation to Minister Hoenig: Will you commit to actually developing a SafeWork code of conduct in regard to ministerial use of social media?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I refer to my previous answer.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Minister, in regard to expanding access to men's behaviour change programs, you announced recently \$11 million in funding. Is that in addition to the \$10 million you announced in the budget last year?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Sorry, could you just repeat that, Ms Maclaren-Jones?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Recently the Minister announced \$11 million for the expansion of access to men's behaviour change programs to seven new locations. In last year's budget, that figure was \$10 million. I'm interested to know if it's the same announcement or an additional \$11 million.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** It's the same announcement.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Why has it taken you so long to actually roll this out?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** As I was explaining to Ms Boyd and as I mentioned earlier in estimates, what we have been very keen to do is to not bombard the sector with request for tenders. Also, when there's a significant commission in progress—and this one was, particularly given the fact that there was quite a bit of an analysis to be done on where gaps were—we needed to take time, and we wanted to get it right. We've done this through consultation with the sector itself.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** Minister, I presume you've seen in the media awful situations such as the 76-year-old woman in Kempsey who has been broken into 17 times and had 20 cars stolen. She has been threatened on multiple occasions and is now too scared to even pick up the phone to call the police for help. I'll draw your attention to another example. Jane—not her name, because she's too frightened to use her own name—in northern New South Wales has had several break-ins in her street over the last few weeks. On multiple occasions, offenders have attempted to gain entry into her home, waving a large knife in her security camera. Since the break-in attempts, she hasn't been able to sleep and, as a result, has had to take leave from work as a nurse. In your capacity as the Minister for Women, what support are you advocating for specifically around helping ensure that these women feel safe not just in regional, rural and remote New South Wales but in their own homes as the regional crime crisis continues to escalate?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I have heard a number of terrible, terrible experiences that not just women but community members—but certainly women—have experienced as a result of crime in particularly regional and remote New South Wales. The Government has been quite clear on strengthening laws in regard to that, and the Attorney General has led those law changes.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** But support for women in these situations, Minister—in your capacity as the Minister for Women, what support are you advocating for to ensure that women feel safe in these communities and in their own homes?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** The legal changes that this Government has brought in.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** That's what you're standing behind?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Absolutely. This is an issue of crime.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** It's also an issue of victims, Minister.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** The people who are undertaking these crimes may well be targeting people who are vulnerable, and certainly the experience of people who are victims of these crimes is terrible. I've heard

of people moving from where they live because they don't feel safe, changing their living circumstances. Terrible, terrible experiences. I'm really clear that, as a government, we're taking really strong action in relation to strengthening laws and supporting—

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** I think regional areas beg to differ on that, Minister. I'll quickly move on, because I know that my colleague has questions as well. Finally, in the Tweed electorate, the one United Service Station that offered the 4¢ per litre discount to the New South Wales seniors card holders has rebranded to an Astron service station, no longer offering the fuel discount to New South Wales seniors card holders. What steps have you taken to provide, at the least, a comparable fuel discount to New South Wales seniors—in fact, any consideration to a cracking idea like a regional seniors travel card, as so successfully rolled out by our former Liberal-Nationals Government?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Unfortunately, United Petroleum makes business decisions that I don't agree with. Certainly if they've closed a petrol station as a result of a business decision, which has been negative for local seniors—

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** So steps towards helping to fill that gap—

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** —I'm deeply disappointed with that, as I was—

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** Yes, you've said that you're deeply disappointed. But as an solution or an alternative for seniors, Minister, are you advocating or have you got any plans for how you might fill that gap?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** We are always looking at new ways of attracting businesses to the seniors card discount system. In fact, the seniors team—is it the seniors team or the card?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Seniors card.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** The seniors card team has written to businesses, in partnership with Service NSW, to encourage them to become part of the seniors card discount scheme. We've had an additional 400 businesses added to that as a result of the work that the seniors team has recently done in the last 12 months with Service NSW, and we'll continue to take as many opportunities as we can to expand the discounts that are available to seniors through the seniors card.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** Great. Thanks, Minister. I'll hand over to my colleague .

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Minister, last October, when we were discussing the Cabinet Office's review of the circumstances surrounding Molly Ticehurst's death, you indicated that you couldn't point to anything specific that came out of that Cabinet Office review. Has anything specifically happened to improve the safety of women as a result of that review in the months since October?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** All of the changes that this Government has made in relation to domestic and family violence—

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Since October, Minister. What are the ones you'd point to?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** We had changes in relation to strengthening laws in the last—

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Since last October, Minister.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Yes, in the last sitting fortnight.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Can you explain those? Can you tell us what laws you passed to protect women in the last sitting fortnight as a result of the Cabinet Office review of Molly Ticehurst's death?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** We have made significant strengthening of bail laws in relation to—

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** That was not as a result of this Cabinet Office review. We discussed that last time. That was contemporaneous with, not consequent upon, that review.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I think it's good that a government can actually take actions—

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** I'm not disagreeing with that. I'm asking about what—

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** —while there may be a review operating in tandem.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** I'm asking about the fruits of that review. You indicated last time, Minister, that the report would be made public "in due course". Can you advise now when the report will be made public?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** That's a matter for the Premier. It's the Cabinet Office—

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Have you had conversations with the Premier as to when it will be made public?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I'm not going to go into the detail of conversations that I've had with the Premier on particular issues.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** I'm not asking about details. You indicated last time it would be available in due course. I'm just asking you when "in due course" is on the calendar.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** At that time, it was clear that that review was a review that was being overseen by the Premier and myself.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** With significant public interest.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** At the moment, it's a matter for the Premier as to whether that gets released.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** So it's not up to you; it's up to the Premier.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** It's a question for the Premier.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Taking you to a different topic, what specifically are you doing to protect against the exploitation and trafficking of overseas women into commercial surrogacy to support the aspirations of families in New South Wales?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** We have laws in relation to that.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Which laws deal with protection of overseas commercial surrogates trafficked into surrogacy slavery? The 97 women that the Anti-slavery Commissioner warned us about in the equality debate trafficked into slavery in a clinic used by New South Wales families, from Moldova, Estonia and other European countries—what is being done to protect those women from slavery?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I'll take that on notice.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** I assume nothing then.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I said I would take that on notice.

**The Hon. EMILY SUVAAL:** Point of order—

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** To the point of order: If a question about specific—

**The CHAIR:** Hang on. I haven't heard the point of order yet.

**The Hon. EMILY SUVAAL:** The Minister has very clearly taken that on notice, so it's quite unreasonable for the member to then try and rephrase that answer back to her as if there is no—she's taken it on notice. She'll provide an answer.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** To the point of order: If the Minister has to take on notice what is being done to protect women from slavery, given that it's such an important topic, I would suggest that there's nothing that's been done.

**The CHAIR:** Order! I would think it's up to the media to pick that up.

**The Hon. BOB NANVA:** To the point of order: The procedural fairness resolution allows a Minister to take a question on notice—paragraph 11. That's what she has done. No insinuation or assertion can be made based on the fact that the Minister has availed herself of a right under the procedural fairness resolution.

**The Hon. EMILY SUVAAL:** It's a pretty grubby thing to do so, to be honest. Anyway, sorry. Continue.

**The CHAIR:** That's out of order.

**The Hon. EMILY SUVAAL:** Yes, I know. But anyway.

**The Hon. MARK BUTTIGIEG:** To the point of order: It's a clear attempt to put on *Hansard* that the Minister didn't answer the question, when she clearly said she would on notice.

**The CHAIR:** I think we've had enough of that.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Minister, have you met with the Anti-slavery Commissioner to discuss appropriate safeguards?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** No, I haven't. Instead of taking that previous question on notice, it's a question for the Attorney General.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** As Minister for Women, you aren't involved in discussions with the Attorney General about protection for women?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** We have Cabinet discussions.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** So because these women are overseas, they're not women that you advocate for?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** My role is as the Minister for Women. My role is as the New South Wales Minister for Women. The question in relation to trafficking should be referred to the Attorney General.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** You may be aware that section 17 of the Surrogacy Act requires that an application for a parentage order be supported by the report of an independent counsellor, which, amongst other things, must assess the consent of the birth mother. If the birth mother is overseas, how will that independent counsellor assess the adequacy of that consent?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** That's a question for the Attorney General.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** It's not a question to do with women as well as the Attorney General?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I'm not going to provide legal advice. I'm not a solicitor. You're asking me about a particular application of the law, and I'm suggesting that you should ask the Attorney General.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** I'm asking you about your advocacy on behalf of women. Are you engaged in discussions with the Attorney General about this issue of protection of women to ensure that any surrogacy arrangements are freely entered into and that they are not being forced into surrogacy slavery?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** My office, and myself in particular, participates in Cabinet discussions. That question is a question for the Attorney General.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Are you and the Attorney General discussing the development of appropriate safeguards?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I'm not going to go into details of discussions that may be occurring at a Cabinet level.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Is this an issue that is of concern to you as a woman?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Issues relating to women in New South Wales are deeply concerning to me.

**The CHAIR:** Minister, how is misogyny handled or treated in your portfolio?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** It's certainly my view, and I believe it's the view of the Government, that there is no place for misogyny in our communities.

**The CHAIR:** What programs is the Government implementing to ensure that there is less misogyny?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** The crime prevention strategy is a key aspect of that. What we don't want to do—we'll go back to square one. To change the experience in domestic and family violence, we need to change people's attitudes. There's a whole range of things that we need to do to prevent domestic and family violence, and there's a whole range of ways that we need to intervene, but key drivers are attitudes and behaviours. What we need to do is work with communities, men and boys in particular, in relation to attitudes and behaviours that may lead to and enable violence.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** I want to ask about the independent victims' services commissioner and where we are up to with establishing that.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** That is a question for the Attorney General. I know it's an issue that is of concern to people who are survivors of domestic and family violence and to particular advocacy groups.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** I understand that there was some conversation previously about a Government commitment to establish a domestic and family violence lived experience advisory group within government. What is the progress of implementing that?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** There is work being done with the University of New South Wales to determine the best way to establish that. It's work that Ms Tonkin is leading. That lived experience advisory group is a really key part of what will be our response into the future to domestic and family violence.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I'll go back to the strategy, Minister. One of the priority areas is establishing a domestic and family and sexual violence primary prevention network across New South Wales local governments. In addition, you're also wanting to see a rollout of primary prevention training and education in local government. Are you providing additional funding to councils for this rollout or is it an expense that will need to come from local government?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I believe that there will be funding for local government within the strategy.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes, we'll have to take that on notice and come back this afternoon.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Minister, in relation to the number of women in leadership positions across the public service, you said that you are committed to seeing an increase. What is the number now and what is your target?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** It's not high enough.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I'm happy for you to take that on notice. Do you have a target percentage that you wanted to increase by or a number?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** We certainly don't have a quota. There needs to be some flexibility. Having said that, there needs to be a better representation of women at senior leadership levels, not just within the public service but on boards that we have.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Minister, if you don't have a target, how do you aim to strive to achieve something if you don't know where you want to go?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Obviously, ideally, 50 per cent would be perfect. However, we need to have flexibility around that.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** When would that 50 per cent target be reached?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** We haven't got that formalised as a formal target. There is a lot of work being done in relation to gender equality, though, within the public service, particularly in relation to ensuring that there are gender equality action plans across all departments. That is for agencies to look within their own structures about what may improve participation by women in the workforce but also how to ensure that their services that they provide are meeting the needs of women as well.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Will all those Ministers report back to you, as the senior Minister for Women, about their action plans?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** That work is coordinated through Women NSW, my agency.

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** If I may, without going through the data, DCJ is the third largest department. This afternoon I can give you, if you would like, a breakdown of male and female executives. Adding to the Minister's response, it's clear the Public Service Commission has had a critical role in this as well.

**The CHAIR:** We now turn to the Government for their extensive examination of this Minister.

**The Hon. EMILY SUVAAL:** Chair, I do have one question. Minister, are you able to outline what support the Government has made available for Jewish women and children?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Yes. Certainly, we have really wanted to ensure that people who have been affected by antisemitic attacks and who are fearful at the moment receive support. Earlier this month the New South Wales Government committed \$200,000 to Jewish House for them to be able to provide support through the community support services that they provide. They provide crisis interventions such as mental health support and community assistance. We really wanted to provide that support to Jewish House as a result of the rise of antisemitism in New South Wales.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you, Minister, for attending the hearing. We are finished with your questioning. I note you took a number of questions on notice. The Committee will be in contact with you in relation to responding to those on a timely basis. Thank you very much for coming. We'll now break for lunch until 2.00 p.m.

**(The Minister withdrew.)**

**(Luncheon adjournment)**

**The CHAIR:** We might get started with questioning. Ms Boyd?



**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** I wanted to ask a few questions about the annual report figures and notes. Direct me wherever I need to go in terms of who wants to respond. I think there was a question earlier about the \$42 million underspend in Core and Cluster. Could I have an explanation as to why that is less than we thought it would be and what's going to happen with that amount of money?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I think I can answer that. I think that was to do with some of the delays in getting DA approvals and releasing the capital funding. Because there have been a few delays as a result of the DA approvals and a whole range of things, we haven't then allocated the service delivery component. That will be rolled over into the budget this year.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** That \$25.8 million underspend in the Commonwealth-funded domestic and family violence program—is that the workers? Or is that something different?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** No, it's probably a mixture of a couple of things under the domestic and family violence NPA. Again, we are able to roll that funding over from one financial year to the next as long as it's within the two years. So that money is available in the budget this year.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Are you able to tell me what that comprised and why it didn't go out the door?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I think it was timing in terms of funding allocation, but I'm happy to take that one on notice and come back to you.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** That would be really useful. This is for DCJ as a whole; I'm not sure which bit is related to this portfolio and which isn't. I'll ask the question and we'll see. Apparently there was a \$105.7 million decrease in employee-related expenses in DCJ compared to what was budgeted but a \$105.7 million overspend in contractor expenses. Effectively, we've spent less on employees but the same amount on contractors. Because of that, there's an \$18.4 million increase in payroll tax. Can you talk to why we are taking on more contractors than we thought we would and which department or areas that was in?

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** Ms Boyd, I'm really going to struggle to do that without taking it on notice. If I get the chance to look at what I have here through the afternoon and I can give you an intelligent response, I will. Otherwise I will take it on notice.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** The other one maybe you could take on notice is, I know that the Auditor-General picked up on this liability for lodged, not-yet-paid claims related to domestic violence and other offences. I think we had \$73.1 million unbudgeted victim service actuarial adjustment—this is probably one for the Auditor-General.

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** It is the Attorney. I can come with a response tomorrow on that one.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Ms McKenzie, I have a few questions for you. We've spoken before about the funding for the commission that's required and the fact that demand is going up, particularly with the number of elderly people knowing about the service and calling and trying to ask for help. How is that demand for the service looking—or success of the service, really, because it means that more people are knowing about it—versus your funding needs and how much you're asking for in this year's budget?

**KATHRYN McKENZIE:** Demand is continuing to increase. That year-on-year increase is continuing. What we're finding also, if I can provide slightly more context to that, is that part of it is, I think, success in letting more people know about, particularly, our helpline and contacting the ADC. Most of the reporters contacting us, it's families but it's also service providers—so staff working directly with older people and adults with disability—who are bringing matters to our attention and that have exposure to the work of the ADC. They then identify and then contact us in relation to adults that they're concerned about. We're really pleased about that.

The other part, though, is that an increasing proportion of the reports that we're receiving are higher risk reports. They're involving, for example, alleged serious neglect, really more serious domestic and family violence matters, some where the individual is in a really bad state at the point that the contact is made with the ADC. Increasing risks involved in the matters reported to us make it difficult for—it's not just a helpline matter; it involves response from our community supports and investigations area. A range of those matters stay with us for a longer period of time due to the level of risk.

As I think the Committee is aware, every year the ADC—in our small years of operation of 5½ years, every year we've relied on DCJ providing us with some top-up funds to enable us to fulfil our statutory obligations. This year is no exception. We've put in a budget submission again for next financial year. That will lift, if successful, our baseline budget. It won't address the demand though. We're in a continuing difficult position in terms of our budget.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Are you able to update us on how the recruitment is going for a new commissioner? Or is that something that perhaps can be directed—

**KATHRYN McKENZIE:** It's public information.

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** It's been announced.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** It's been announced? Apologies, I have missed that announcement. Can you tell me, then, if it's been announced?

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** Yes, sorry. Are you ready? Drumroll—it is Jeff Smith, who is the current CEO of a disability organisation, the name of which I forget. Prior to that, many years ago, he was principal solicitor at the Environmental Defenders Office.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** When do they start?

**KATHRYN McKENZIE:** On 21 April, so just after Easter.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Just on the appointment of the new commissioner, could you outline the process? It had taken quite some time. I'm interested to know why it took so long but also the actual appointment process and if there was a panel or anything like that.

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** Yes, there was a panel of myself, Ms White and Brian Woods, who is the current chief executive of Trustee and Guardian. I'm happy to say that we refreshed the recruitment process at a particular point because we believed the field needed to be larger. That added to the time it took to recruit.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** When you said "refresh", was that just broader advertising?

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** I'm happy, if my evidence is not precise, to further clarify this. My recollection is that on the second occasion, we used a recruiter.

**GILLIAN WHITE:** That's my understanding.

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** We used a recruiter. Can I just say this? It wasn't that there were not meritorious people in that field. Our view was that, given the importance of this role, we wanted a larger field. We, on that basis, advertised again and engaged a recruitment firm.<sup>2</sup>

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Ms Tonkin. I think it'd be useful if we got a bit of an update about how your role is going and on the work you've been doing. Then I've got a few specific questions for you after that. The cross-department work you've been doing is the stuff that I'm particularly interested in, if you could tell us how that works on a day-to-day basis.

**HANNAH TONKIN:** It was at the end of October 2023 that my role was established as a standalone role, so it's been about 15 months now. I have got a full team and the office is going well. We released my strategic plan in March last year. We went through that in the last budget estimates, so I won't take you through that again. It's coming up to a year since I released that strategic plan. There are six priorities. We've got different projects going under every priority and all the actions are in train. That's going really well. In terms of the cross-agency work, I do a lot of this. I have quite an external-facing component of my role, but also a lot of work internally to try to improve coordination and collaboration. We did a review of governance. That's one thing that we did last year. We've been working on some of the governance groups, supporting the new taskforce, improving the board and getting better input from the sector into the governance groups—so having a better connection between the board and another group we have called the Domestic Family and Sexual Violence Council, which has all of the sector representatives. I've been doing a lot of work in that space, which has really improved it.

We're also setting up the lived experience advisory group. That's almost ready to go. The EOI should go live in a couple of weeks. It's all ready. We had a very detailed process with UNSW. We had a lived experience forum at the end of November, which was really good. There has been a lot of consultation and a lot of care to make sure that we do this safely. It's really important to do it well. You can do a lot of harm if you don't do it well. And then we've got the online form ready to go for the EOI. We're also going to have some information sessions and make sure the whole process is as accessible as possible. I know there is a lot of interest. The Federal commissioner had more than 800 applications for her group. I'm not sure that we'll get that many, but I think we'll get a lot. Last night I had a big event at UNSW. Afterwards I had a line of women asking me how they could

---

<sup>2</sup> In [correspondence](#) to the committee dated 10 March 2025, Mr Michael Tidball, Secretary, Department of Communities and Justice, provided a clarification to his evidence.

reach out about the group. Every time I mention it, there's a hunger for this sort of group in the community. That's one of the big developments coming up soon.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Excellent. With those cross-agency groups—and this will come as no surprise because I ask about these at every estimates—there are three big issues that I'd like you to talk about. The first one—and it was very much a highlight at the last estimates—is around the revelations or the publicity surrounding sexual assault and harassment of people within nightclubs, bars, restaurants and things, particularly in Sydney. I know that, for instance, Full Stop has been calling for there to be a safe nightclub style of thing to be implemented. Has that been a feature of the cross-agency work that you've been doing?

**HANNAH TONKIN:** Yes. I've been doing quite a bit with the 24-Hour Economy Commissioner. We're planning to have a roundtable event that we'll co-host, which will include Full Stop Australia. It will include industry, especially hospitality industry representatives, unions, SafeWork NSW and Transport for NSW, with their Safer Cities Program. It's small but really targeted. We're planning that event for the next couple of months, and possibly some follow-on events so it's not just a one-off. We've also had other meetings with the 24-Hour Economy Commissioner, myself, SafeWork and Liquor and Gaming all together to talk through some of these issues and think about some concrete action.

I have also been in contact directly with some of the key victim-survivors who are quite open in the media about their experiences—the hospitality workers. I have been talking to them in parallel so that they know that they're supported by government as well and so it's not just industry that's meeting with government but also the survivors themselves. That has been really important. Hopefully we can see some concrete change. I've seen Full Stop's pre-budget submission, and there are some really important suggestions. They also had great suggestions in relation to sexual assault trials. There's a lot of food for thought there.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** A little bit related is the work that was being done around drink spiking, but also something that we've talked about before, which is needle spiking. I shudder every time at the idea of needle spiking. It seems to be related but also something in its own class in terms of the stories we hear about men going into nightclubs and spiking people with needles, potentially not for any particular reason. I find it extraordinary that they would just want to incapacitate a person. Has that been on your radar? Specifically, has there been any additional training or anything rolled out to police as to how they might respond? Are there any updates there?

**HANNAH TONKIN:** I think it's terrifying. I know we discussed this a bit at the last budget estimates. We've seen some of these incidents overseas. There were a few things during schoolies in Queensland. We haven't seen as much, as far as I'm aware, in New South Wales, but it's definitely a problem around the world. It may well be only a matter of time. I'm not aware of any active training, but it's something that I can follow up on with the police in my role and with other government colleagues. I'd be happy to do that.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** The final big cross-agency one that I was interested in was the issue around police perpetrators of domestic and family violence, particularly the way that police can use systems, knowledge and contacts to perpetrate domestic abuse, even after they are no longer in close proximity to their victim. I hear a lot of stories from people who are finding that they're unable to get anyone to believe them when that form of coercive control is being used. Is there any work being done around that yet at a cross-agency level?

**HANNAH TONKIN:** I'm definitely aware of the issue. I've had members of the public write to me directly that they've had this experience, and also members of the sector have raised it with me. Of course, it was in reports, and I've met with the LECC commissioners about the range of recommendations in their reports, including relating to this. I'm definitely aware of it. It's something that I've started discussing with police, but we haven't yet had any concrete cross-agency work on it as far as I'm aware. I'm happy to keep pursuing those discussions.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Thank you.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I might start on understanding a bit better the role—this is in relation to the prevention strategy—of the taskforce, the council and the advisory bodies. Do they all report back to the Minister or to someone else? How is that all structured?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I can have a stab at it. The council reports to the Minister, and the Minister attends those council meetings. We actually had one the other day, on Tuesday. The DFV board is chaired by Michael Tidball, the secretary. We have sort of changed the focus of the DV board a little bit this year, partly because we've got the taskforce, which has carriage, which Michael co-chairs with Kate Boyd, who is the secretary of TCO. It has the police commissioner, the health secretary, the education secretary, reps from other government agencies at a deputy secretary level and Hannah, as the Women's Safety Commissioner for New South Wales. I have a nice diagram I could probably share with you to look at the linkages, because we're obviously adding to

it as we go. We're looking at the lived experience group that Hannah is setting up. There are clear terms of reference for each of those bodies, but they all do link in and they do report to the Minister.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** The taskforce says it's limited to 12 months. When did it begin and when does it end?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I think it started in June last year. It was meant to be for 12 months, but we're currently reviewing that given work that's happening at both the national level and in New South Wales, it being a priority for this Government.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Where does the Women's Safety Commissioner fit into all of that and the three other bodies?

**HANNAH TONKIN:** I'll start from the highest level of the group. The domestic and family violence taskforce, I attend that as a standing attendee, along with Anne. The actual members are just the five secretaries, but there is a number of standing attendees. I'm a member of the board, so the domestic family sexual violence board. That's more of a cross-government, much broader membership—domestic, family, sexual violence. That generally meets quarterly. At the moment it has been trying to focus on areas not covered by the taskforce to make sure that it's really tight, really complementary and has a much bigger focus on sexual violence. Because the taskforce is focused on domestic and family violence, we want the board for this period of the taskforce in existence to really elevate the issue of sexual violence, especially when that's not in a family violence context.

So I'm a member of that board, and my office also runs the secretariat. That's another connection; the secretariat for the board and for many of these governance groups, the council sits within my office. The administrative side of running the meetings and doing the work plan et cetera falls under me. The domestic family sexual violence council, which is non-government members, so that's members from the sector, academic experts, that's an advisory group to the Minister, and also the secretariat sits in my office. I attend those meetings. I'm not a member because it's a non-government group, but I attend the meetings and my team does the secretariat function.

What we've tried to do is develop for the board a really robust whole-of-government work plan and also a robust work plan for the council and to make them really aligned and complementary so that everything fits together really coherently and so that we have a much better connection between the sector and what's happening in government. We've also started having now a communique from the board after each meeting that goes to the council, a written communique, so that there's more transparency between what the Government is doing and its governance mechanisms and the sector reps.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Is that communique released?

**HANNAH TONKIN:** No.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Are there plans to release it?

**HANNAH TONKIN:** Not that I'm aware of. That was the first step. We haven't discussed anything further.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** In relation to the advisory council, are the members provided any financial support?

**HANNAH TONKIN:** No.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** So it's all voluntary from their perspective. How were they selected?

**HANNAH TONKIN:** There's an EOI process. They're generally all doing it in their professional capacity. A lot of them are CEOs of the main groups.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** So it's detached from the organisation?

**HANNAH TONKIN:** It's an individual appointment, but they're experts like the CEO of Domestic Violence NSW, CEOs et cetera, academics. They're doing it in their professional capacity, but it is an individual appointment based on EOI process.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I might move to some of the specifics in the actual domestic family violence plans and the report card that came out. I notice that there's a total of 41 plans and I think 14 sexual violence plans that are yet to be commenced. Is that correct?

**HANNAH TONKIN:** Do you mean actions?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Yes. Actions, not plans.

**HANNAH TONKIN:** The plans are both five-year plans. The actions were deliberately set up to be staggered over the five years. It was never intended that they would all begin at the beginning. It's deliberately staggered. It has been quite strategic, that whole plan, about what would begin when. So that's right that there are still actions that are still to be progressed, but they will be within the five-year frame.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** In total how many actions are there?

**HANNAH TONKIN:** There are 137.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** How many have commenced?

**HANNAH TONKIN:** There were initially 75 selected for implementation in the first 18 months. All of them have been completed or they're underway, so that's all on track. I think that's where we're up to in the first report card, is the 75 actions out of the 137. They were all underway or completed as of the end of 2023.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** How many are yet to commence?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** In my note it says 67 actions from the DFV plan have been identified for implementation in 2024-25.

**HANNAH TONKIN:** I think quite a few of them have commenced already. I'm not sure how many of those haven't actually commenced. Those are the ones that have been identified for this financial year, but I think many of them have already started.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes. Things like the common approach to risk assessment and safety has started. We're well down the track on that. The New South Wales domestic and family and sexual violence outcomes monitoring and reporting framework is expected to be launched in the first half of this year. There's a 10-year domestic and family violence workforce development strategy, which is in development, and, as we've mentioned before, the establishment of the lived experience advisory group is underway.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** So a total of how many are yet to be commenced out of that 137?

**HANNAH TONKIN:** If you want a number from today, I'd have to take that on notice, because what we have are the numbers from the report card, which is now a previous reporting period. I can take on notice the number from today.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** When is the next report card due?

**HANNAH TONKIN:** That will be, I think, at the end of this year.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** In relation to the review of kindergarten to year 10 syllabus, which is about ensuring age-appropriate content that is consistent with education on safe, healthy and respectful relationships, could I get an update as to whether the review has commenced and when it's likely to be finalised?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** There was some funding that came through the primary prevention strategies. That was \$8 million to develop and commence implementation of a holistic respectful relationships education curriculum.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Is that the All In pilot?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** No, that's different. That was funded under the emergency package, the All In pilot, but it's also part of primary prevention.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** The time frame in relation to the syllabus review and when it's intended to be implemented.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** The funding is across four years. I'll take that on notice and get an update from Education on that.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** If you could outline with the All In project, is that also \$8.1 million over four years?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes, that's \$8.1 million over the forward estimates, and it's funded to deliver workshops fortnightly, online learning sessions, resources and parent packs to support families and address gender equality, and a pilot has been delivered by Women's and Girls' Emergency Centre. There was a one-off grant

approved of \$500,000 by Minister Harrison to continue the All In project until March 2025, while we do the procurement process for the rest of the funding. The expansion will be contracted by April of this year.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** How much of that eight has already been—

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I need to take that on notice—500 at least, obviously.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Then April is when you're expecting to have an announcement about who would then roll it out across the State.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** Could I just come back to Ms Boyd's questions. She has asked about police perpetrators. This may have been covered in other estimates; however, it's for my own information more than anything. Police training and programs to assist them to be more adequately equipped to deal with victim-survivors, are those in place? Are we looking to that?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I could probably start with the coercive control. Police did a range of training. They did face-to-face and online sessions. I might hand over to Ms Tonkin, because she was involved in that as well.

**HANNAH TONKIN:** Yes, I had the opportunity to attend the face-to-face coercive control training, which was good. They did a package, which has—it's still ongoing—three phases. There's an online training for all police officers and then there's a face-to-face, which is more specialised, which selected officers do—detectives and various others who need to do that level of training. There's also the really more comprehensive training for the new recruits which they're implementing. That definitely had a focus on being more trauma-informed, and focused on looking at the whole context of the relationship and not just looking at a single incidence of violence but asking more questions, trying to understand the dynamics, trying to avoid misidentification of the predominant aggressor and trying to avoid unconscious bias. There was a lot of that content in their training. I understand they've also developed a new, more general domestic and family violence training as well, which is the basic training. I haven't seen that one, but I think they've done a lot of reform there as well. That is what I understand.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** That's great to hear. Will there be more of a crossover, more input around all of that, do you think?

**HANNAH TONKIN:** I'm hoping, and I'm sure I should be able to observe—I think they call it—the DV fundamentals course as well, at some point soon. I hope that there'll be an opportunity for input and dialogue.

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** If I can just add a supplement to that response. Across all of the strings of activity that we have with domestic and family violence, we have a very good relationship with the commissioner and with senior police—deputy commissioners and the like. Certainly with coercive control, there were learnings on the way through that. Police are genuinely responsive to that. In terms of the police commissioner's workforce, we've done a lot of work with coercive control. I do think that some of the questions, the police commissioner probably would be receptive to—as the Committee would benefit, perhaps, putting those questions to her in her estimates.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** That's good. Unfortunately, I won't be on that estimates in particular, even though I'm doing six of them in my first week.

**HANNAH TONKIN:** Could I add one thing from DCJ's perspective? DCJ held two training symposiums, which were really great. There was one in 2023 and one last year. This is for coercive control. They brought together the key government agencies—police, the Judicial Commission, DPP, Legal Aid—that had all introduced training programs in relation to the new coercive control reforms. They had all of them in a room with all the key representatives from the non-government sector, the members of the different reference groups, and people with lived experience. Then they had panel discussion and all the audience members had an opportunity to ask questions about the training. They then did it again last year. I think that was really well received and that was very positive in terms of this dialogue that you mentioned.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** I appreciate that, Mr Tidball. Many police officers that I've spoken with are very receptive to all of this, but I've also had many conversations with those who feel that they're not always adequately prepared or trained to know how to deal with those situations. So it is a really important thing that we continue to see rolled out, to empower them in order to facilitate all of this in a much more effective and empathetic way, I guess. If they feel that they're not receiving the tools they need, it's great to hear that we can be doing more of that. Unfortunately, I won't have that opportunity to put it to the police commissioner, but I appreciate that very much.

Mr Borsak referenced earlier today—I only just heard the advertisement this morning and know no detail about it, so I am truly asking for the broader background of it—the current street harassment advertising campaign. Can I have some detail around all of that? I believe that I caught the tail end of it, and it was something about it being funded by the department of transport, I think. I was just wondering again whether your department is working as part of this or some detail around it?

**HANNAH TONKIN:** It's not led by DCJ. I believe there was an opportunity for the sexual violence team to provide some comments on the draft campaign some time ago but—

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** You have no detail or anything on that?

**HANNAH TONKIN:** No.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** The ActiveStrongerBetter program—are you aware of that one in relation to seniors?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I'll need to double-check.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** It's in the Newcastle and Hunter region.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Is that funded under the connecting seniors program?

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** It's supported by NSW Health and managed by Hunter Ageing Alliance and NovaCare community services.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I'll need to take that on notice. It may be something delivered through NSW Health.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** Rather than through you specifically.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes, DCJ. We do have a number of grants, but that doesn't ring a bell.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** Again it may not be your question to answer but if we could add to that, if it is possible to furnish that information, whether funding for the program has been or will be extended beyond July 2025.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes. I am happy to take that on notice.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** If not, could you direct us where we might need to go with that? New South Wales Grandparents Day 2025—have New South Wales Government websites been updated with the date for the 2025 celebrations?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I'll need to take that one on notice.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** At this point when we were doing our preparation, it's apparently still stating "Sunday 27 October 2024". I just want to confirm that Grandparents Day 2025 will be taking place.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I'm pretty confident it will be.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** Excellent.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I will go back to the plans, pillars and actions and the action report that has come out. In relation to "ensuring the NSW Police Force refers adult and child victim-survivors of domestic and family violence to appropriate support services", is there an issue with referral or what has come about to need that as a priority?

**HANNAH TONKIN:** Sorry, where are you reading from?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** This is from your report card. Page 13, one of the actions is "ensure that NSW Police Force refers adult and child victims".

**HANNAH TONKIN:** Yes.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I'm wondering has there been a problem with referral?

**HANNAH TONKIN:** Those actions were in 2022, when the plans were developed. I don't think there have been any specific problems, recently, since then. I think that's just an ongoing effort to improve the referral processes and make sure everyone gets the support they need.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** In relation to the delivery and operation of new women's refuges, in particular the eight existing refuges of Core and Cluster, it refers to "children and young people and Aboriginal people". Are they specific Core and Cluster for young people under 18 or is it—this again is page 13.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Is that in Ms Tonkin's report?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Yes.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I can only talk about Core and Cluster where we do have specific ACCOs that have been contracted to deliver those services. In terms of young people, I'd need to take that on notice.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** On the app, we talked last year—and I think you touched on it this morning as well—about the co-design models. You used an example of one last year. In the new tranche, are there any new co-design models that have been identified or will be supported?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I need to again take that on notice. We're just negotiating contracts at the moment with the tranche 3 providers. But I can take that on notice.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Pillar 2 of early intervention and the \$10.5 million in grants under the Sexual Violence Project Fund to support 14 early intervention and response projects—I'm interested to know whether all 14 projects been funded and what's the time frame?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Is this under the primary prevention strategy that you're referring to?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** No, sorry.

**HANNAH TONKIN:** I think it's under the plan, the sexual violence—

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Yes. Pillar 2 of the plan, early intervention. Sorry, there's a lot of plans and strategies. I think I've covered about 12 now.

**HANNAH TONKIN:** The sexual violence grants—is that what you're asking about?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Yes. The Sexual Violence Project Fund, \$10.5 million.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes, I've got that here—raising awareness of sexual violence through the sexual violence fund, so, as you said, 14 early intervention and response projects that address sexual violence in high-priority groups. That included things like the release of the sexual harassment e-learning package for the retail and hospitality sectors by the Department of Communities and Justice—that was in partnership with the Australian Human Rights Commission—and the development of local resources and delivery of community activities as part of the NSW Health Aboriginal Family Wellbeing and Violence Prevention program. There has also been the release of a multi-agency public framework for preventing and responding to problematic and harmful sexual behaviours by children and young people by New South Wales Ministry of Health and the publication of *Safety in Action 2022-2024*, which outlines sector-wide collective actions to guide the implementation of the Children First strategy, which runs until 2031, by the Ministry of Health.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Is it possible to get a breakdown? Has it gone to 14 different organisations?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Could we get a breakdown of those 14?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes. I'll take that on notice.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Also, when they commenced and what the time frame is, whether it is two-year or four-year funding.

**HANNAH TONKIN:** They run until 30 June 2025 and all the Sexual Violence Project funds have been funded.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Are there plans for any of it to be rolled over or will they all just cease at 30 June?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I think we're working through that at the moment and, obviously, looking at what the outcomes were. They were specific grants. We'll take that on notice, but I think we're still in the planning phase.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** Just going back to my earlier conversation today about the very popular and well-received regional seniors concerts throughout New South Wales, I am wondering how many regional concerts are being planned or that we can look forward to?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I think, with the regional conferences, they do alternate across the State each year. But I'm happy to take that on notice and come back.



**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** That would be good. As MPs, we've been receiving feedback that approval for NSW Seniors Festival grants has been difficult and weighted towards larger projects. Can you talk to any of that?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Which particular grant program, sorry?

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** The NSW Seniors Festival grants.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I think I've got something here. There are almost 50 events across metro and regional areas. There are 360 affiliated events run by councils and community organisations. Just looking specifically, the Premier's Gala Concert will be held on 12 and 13 March at the International Convention and Exhibition Centre.

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** I think on the grants question we will need to take that on notice. There is nothing in our notes that covers that.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** You can take it on notice. Can we turn to elder abuse, please. The Minister said at budget estimates in February 2024 that we need to be doing everything that we possibly can in relation to reducing elder abuse. Could you outline what work has been done since February 2024?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes, I'm happy to have a go. The current initiatives in New South Wales that support elder abuse prevention are funding to the Older Women's Network Hear Our Voices for \$523,000, which has run over 2023 to 2025—

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** Sorry to interrupt, but you said \$500,000 for that?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** It's \$523,000 over two years.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** Thank you. I had it in the notes as \$200,000.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** That is to deliver improved service delivery to older women who have experienced sexual assault through the development of training materials which are co-designed by older women as part of New South Wales Sexual Violence Project funded grants. There is the Let'sTALK program delivered by Relationships Australia, and that is \$511,371. That's to deliver counselling and mediation services for older people and their families, to discuss age-related issues and disagreement, and respond early to instances of elder abuse.

There is then the NSW Multicultural Centre for Women's and Family Safety. That was an election commitment, which was \$4.84 million over three years. That was established last year and is led by the settlement services. There is then the Ageing and Disability Commissioner's neglect project, which is—and Ms McKenzie can correct me if I'm wrong—\$350,000. That's to examine the reports received by the ADC about alleged neglect of older people and adults with disability in their family home and community to identify gaps for further work in New South Wales. That project commenced in June 2023 and runs during this year. There is also the Ageing and Disability Commission elder abuse prevention collaborative. That is a partnership between local community and professional services working closely with NSW Health and New South Wales police to identify and improve our responses to elder abuse across New South Wales.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** Talking about responses, the number of reports to the Ageing and Disability Commission in 2023-24 was 12.9 per cent higher than the previous year, with 610 reports that were abuse-related. Is that correct?

**KATHRYN McKENZIE:** No, there's a much higher number of reports. In 2023-24 we received 4,806 statutory reports—and that was 13 per cent higher than the previous year—three-quarters of which involved older people and a quarter involved adults with disability who were not older people.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** I guess it is more difficult to ask you about why we're seeing these increases, but would you suggest, without answering the question on your behalf, more people are being more open about reporting these instances?

**KATHRYN McKENZIE:** Yes. Definitely what we've found is partly the success factor that I spoke to earlier about greater awareness about the Helpline and the ADC but also improving awareness of abuse of older people and adults with disability, which is positive. I think it's also, though, partly about increasing risk factors for individuals. Part of the growth, we know, and continuing growth is associated with the ongoing increase in the ageing population, not just in New South Wales but more broadly, but risk factors like difficult cost of living and housing crisis—they all feed into the matters that we receive. An obvious example is where adult children are moving back in with older parents and that relationship becomes, if it wasn't already, quite toxic and abusive towards the older person, but a lack of alternative accommodation options for that adult child to move out to.

There is a range of greater awareness, but also the matters that are being reported to us, as I mentioned earlier, higher risk matters, are also matters that, to be honest, probably have existed—certainly the matters coming to us, in the main, are not new instances of abuse. It's been there for a while. We are really pleased that those matters are coming through to us, that people are now identifying and raising them for attention and for action. But we know that there are increasing risk factors that are going to continue to drive reports to the ADC and increase the need for action to address abuse of older people.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** Would you say as part of that that the increasing instances that we are seeing are being impacted in a cost-of-living crisis—as you say, adult children moving home—and there are more instances of financial elder abuse as well as they try to get their inheritance early et cetera?

**KATHRYN McKENZIE:** Yes, that is definitely a factor. It's very rare for us to get a report that's only about one form of abuse; most involve multiple forms. The most common for older people is psychological abuse and financial abuse, often together, where there are threats against the older person—if they don't hand over money or sign over assets, they won't see the grandchildren again, they'll be put into residential aged care, the adult child will hurt themselves or the family pet or something that the older person cares about. It's very common to see psychological abuse and financial abuse together. We definitely see the impact of the broader social and economic pressures playing out in a range of these matters.

I think what is largely well known—and, again, not just in New South Wales but more broadly—is that we're at that early point of that largest intergenerational transfer of wealth. You have a lot of the wealth—not in all of the matters that we deal with—sitting with older people. You've got a younger generation that the only way they'll get access to housing and substantial funds, potentially, is via their older parent. So we definitely see that inheritance impatience playing out and seeking to gain access, either through psychological abuse and more abusive measures, or by just helping themselves to the bank account of the older person or misusing the enduring power of attorney that they've been given by the older person.

But what we also see and is less commonly talked about, in fact, is what we call inheritance preservation. It's where largely adult children are making decisions that the older parent will not access, for example, aged-care support. They're not paying for critical services and supports that they need because they want to preserve as much as possible to inherit, to get, at the end. Those broader social and economic pressures are definitely playing out in the matters that we're seeing and do present some challenges—not impossible—in terms of resolving those situations.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** Thank you. That's very informative.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Just an update.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** Another 10 minutes?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** We're still waiting on crossbench members.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** It's the Natasha and Nichole show today. We'll do everyone else's work.

**The Hon. EMILY SUVAAL:** I'll keep quorum.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** But it may mean you'll be finishing up early.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** That'd be good.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I only have a couple of other questions around the report cards. I'm mindful that it does cross over into Health. The sexual assault early evidence collection guideline associated training that will be rolled out across level 3 to 6 emergency departments, which hospitals has it been rolled out to and which ones are yet to have that rolled out?

**HANNAH TONKIN:** That would have to go to Health.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** When it comes to all the things within the strategy and the plan, is the Minister for Women ultimately responsible for ensuring that all of the action items are done, or are they matters to go to the individual Ministers?

**HANNAH TONKIN:** It's a whole-of-government plan. The different actions are assigned to different government agencies as responsible agencies for those actions, and then we just coordinate the reporting on those actions. We're not responsible for overseeing the details of what Health is doing in that regard, but we're certainly responsible for reporting on that.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** But is the Minister for Women responsible for ensuring that it does happen?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes, correct.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** The Aboriginal Women's Advisory Network, could you advise who is on that and how often it meets?

**BIANCA JARRETT:** I can answer that. The network is co-chaired by Wirringa Baiya and the Aboriginal Legal Service, and then there are other various women from community who make up the rest of the membership. I can provide you a list on notice.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** That would be great.

**BIANCA JARRETT:** I believe they meet quarterly, but I don't want to speculate, so I can provide you that on notice.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** That's fine. In relation to the NSW Aboriginal Domestic and Family Violence Plan, is that being developed at the moment?

**BIANCA JARRETT:** It is. Some consultation has commenced. We obviously need to develop that in partnership with our CAPO lead, which is the Aboriginal Legal Service. But we are also waiting on the release of the National Cabinet's Our Ways - Strong Ways - Our Voices national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander plan to end family, domestic and sexual violence, which I believe is due in June. We may be able to see a draft version in May. We really want to make sure that the New South Wales Aboriginal plan complements that broader plan and that it doesn't duplicate anything and also addresses any gaps that might be in that plan. So we have pushed the time frame for our plan out a little bit later in 2025.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Have any funds been allocated to that in this budget or the last budget?

**BIANCA JARRETT:** Yes. Out of the \$21.5 million of the NPA agreement, a portion of that was to go towards the development of the plan. We are in consultations with the Commonwealth Government at the moment about potentially carrying that over to the new year.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I assume all States and other jurisdictions are in the same position—that they haven't developed their plans?

**BIANCA JARRETT:** Yes.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** So that actual State plan, the funds for that, you're relying on the Commonwealth funds?

**BIANCA JARRETT:** Yes, under the NPA.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** So there's nothing allocated under the State budget?

**BIANCA JARRETT:** No, and that was just for the development but through the 2025-26 New South Wales budget allocation process, which, obviously I can't—it's Cabinet in confidence. We will be seeking funds, through that, for implementation of the plan.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** In relation to Core and Cluster. I just want to get a breakdown of how many were in tranche one, tranche two and then the final tranche three.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Tranche one, there were four projects funded and all four projects are fully operational. So that was in Port Macquarie, Bathurst, Penrith and Wagga Wagga. In tranche two, 35 projects were funded. Of those 35, four projects are fully operational. So that's in the Hawkesbury, Gunnedah, Dubbo and Cumberland. Tranche three, there are 10 projects recommended for funding. Of those 10 projects, eight projects have an executed community housing assistance agreement, one project is expected to be signed shortly, and one project is experiencing delays due to the original land identified now not being available, so we're working with that particular provider.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** You're confident that all will be up and operational by the end of the next financial year?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** In relation to the contracts, how many have operated specialist domestic violence and family violence services before?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I think I had that question last time as well.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Yes.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** When we do the actual selection, they have to be services that have experience in delivering domestic, family and sexual violence services. I can't recall my last response, but I think all of them would have some exposure. They may partner with a community housing provider, who does the build, and the specialist services then operate out of those particular locations.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I'm sure you will need to take this on notice. The average wait time for the domestic violence help line—or you may have that.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I might, actually. I did see that somewhere.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I knew you would.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Here we go. Of course it's at the back of the folder.

**GILLIAN WHITE:** Deputy Chair, while Ms Campbell is looking for that, I wanted to come back on a matter that you asked the Minister earlier, in terms of percentage of roles in the New South Wales public sector grades held by women. We have that data in the NSW Women's Strategy. We've published the first of a baseline report card, and there will be another one soon. In that latest baseline report card, 53 per cent of grade 11/12 positions in the New South Wales public service are held by women, and 42 per cent of senior executive positions are held by women.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Do you have that breakdown across each of the departments/agencies?

**GILLIAN WHITE:** I think we do have that data available to us. I don't think we've published the whole in this summary, because it's a summary across all three pillars of the Women's Strategy, with key datapoints. But we'll consult with the Public Service Commissioner and take that on notice.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I've found the note, but it doesn't have the answer that you want: the wait time. What I do know is that the line receives between 1,500 and 200 calls a month. If there had been issues in terms of the wait time, we would know about it. But I will follow that up and take that on notice.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** And if you have a comparison from a 12-month period?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes, we can do that.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I understand the Safe Places Inclusion Round closed in January. Do you know when successful applicants are going to be announced?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Are we back a topic?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Yes. Sorry, I'm jumping. I'm aware that it's Federal funding.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I would need to take that one on notice. It's probably here somewhere.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** The reason I ask is whether or not you envisage any issues with the rollout and the funds going to those applicants because of the election and caretaker, or anything like that.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I will take that on notice.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** My final question is in relation to the Carers Investment Grant Program, which was funded over a two-year period. I asked about this last year. You said the first allocation would be rolled out in March this year. I'm interested to know if that is on track. How many are in this round and how many will be in the second?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** It is on track. It's looking at both 2024-25 and 2025-26. It will operate over two years and the funding for that is \$3.122 million over the two years.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** How many applicants are in this first round and how many will be in the second?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Let me see if I've got that here. It hasn't launched yet, so I can't answer that.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Ms White, I wonder if I could ask you some questions flowing from last time. At the estimates hearing in September you indicated that you were the chair of the taskforce overseeing the implementation of electronic monitoring for serious DV offenders.

**GILLIAN WHITE:** Yes.

**The Hon. EMILY SUVAAL:** Point of order: My understanding is that Ms Gillian White is appearing in her capacity as Cabinet rep for women and not as DV, in terms of DV portfolio. So that might be a question that's better put tomorrow. That is my understanding.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** To the point of order: Isn't the Minister the Minister for Women, and the prevention of DV Minister? So this is a prevention of DV question.

**The Hon. EMILY SUVAAL:** Yes. I'm not quibbling with the Minister's portfolios. It is that Ms Gillian White, as I understand it, is attending today in her capacity as Cabinet Office rep for women and not the DV portfolio.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Ms White, are you available tomorrow?

**GILLIAN WHITE:** To clarify that, I'm a deputy secretary at the Cabinet Office. I have responsibilities for social policy and intergovernmental relations, but I am also the deputy secretary responsible for Women NSW as a portfolio. I'm here in the capacity for the Women portfolio, but I am happy to answer that question, take it on notice or direct it where appropriate.

**The CHAIR:** I'm glad you sorted that out because I didn't have a clue. So you're accepting the question?

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** So you're able to answer these questions?

**GILLIAN WHITE:** I'm happy to hear the rest of the question. Then if it strays too much into detail that's probably more appropriate for the portfolio, I'll let you know.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Further to the point of order: This arises from the fact that these were questions you answered last time without that point of order being taken.

**The Hon. EMILY SUVAAL:** I missed it last time. It ought to have been raised last time around. I'm advised that's the case.

**The CHAIR:** Keep talking.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Is that taskforce still meeting?

**GILLIAN WHITE:** We recently concluded that taskforce. There's more implementation work that is being undertaken, but that will be led within the Department of Communities and Justice from now on. The Cabinet Office took a leadership role alongside DCJ as the reform was announced and we had to set up bail electronic monitoring for the first time. Now we've moved that more into a BAU environment.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Who exactly is leading the balance of the implementation? To whom do we address these questions?

**GILLIAN WHITE:** It would be appropriate to raise them in the Attorney's estimates tomorrow because multiple of Mr Tidball's teams will be responsible for the next phases of that work.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Before the taskforce finished its work, did it have any judgement about the success of the implementation so far?

**GILLIAN WHITE:** Yes. The focus of that taskforce was ensuring agencies were collaborating on how to undertake the electronic monitoring in the first place, Ms Carter. Because although Corrective Services had lots of experience with electronic monitoring in a parole context, we had not undertaken bail electronic monitoring before. It was more about unpacking the issues with the police responsibilities, corrective's responsibilities, how data would be collected—all of those systems issues. The first phase of that work was concluded. Now the law is in effect, the electronic monitoring is occurring, and the DCJ-led work will be about continued refinement of the implementation of that policy.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Did part of the taskforce work—understanding that Corrections only did it in a parole context—involve looking at other models of bail electronic monitoring that were operating?

**GILLIAN WHITE:** Certainly, but there was a strong recommendation from Corrections about their experience in that work. There was confidence that although this was a different context for them to be operating in, the procurement issues were in place and the monitoring approach that correctives had undertaken was sophisticated and appropriate.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** But it did involve looking at the other models?

**GILLIAN WHITE:** There was some discussion, yes.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** For example, looking at what BailSafe was doing?

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** I haven't been at the meetings. I think the BailSafe proposition and those private providers are quite different to what was being considered in relation to DV.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** I'm not at all querying the decision that the taskforce came to, to follow the Corrections model. I'm simply asking whether, as part of the review process, it was, "Okay, Corrections does this in this capacity. Private providers are doing it in this capacity. Let's have a quick look at the private providers." That's all the question is.

**GILLIAN WHITE:** Absolutely, Ms Carter.

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** Yes.

**GILLIAN WHITE:** There were those preliminary lines of inquiry, and it was identified pretty early on in the taskforce work that Corrections was the most appropriate model.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** The legislation passed in June. Would it be correct to say the taskforce began meeting at, let's say, the end of June?

**GILLIAN WHITE:** I think I might have that information somewhere close by. I will come back to you, Ms Carter.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** I might leave my other questions until tomorrow.

**GILLIAN WHITE:** Apologies. We notified agencies that we were concluding the taskforce in February of this year. As the reforms had commenced in October, we did have a meeting after the commencement. I will have to take on notice when the first meeting was, but we had a series of meetings over that time period.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** After the commencement in October there was a subsequent meeting and then a transfer to the new body responsible for the rest of the implementation. Is that correct?

**GILLIAN WHITE:** Correct. That is often a pattern for the involvement of the central agency when something is starting up, to be a bit more involved and then to pass to BAU.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** The new BAU implementation group is also responsible for reviewing the success or glitches or problems that arise in the implementation. Is that correct?

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** Yes.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Is there a scheduled review date for "Is it working? What do we need to change?" Or is this an ongoing process?

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** There will of course be ongoing monitoring. We could give you more specifics on that on notice or at tomorrow's Attorney's estimates.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Perhaps I will put some questions on notice after tomorrow. That might be the easiest thing.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** In relation to an allocation of funding for the Seniors portfolio. There isn't one. Is that correct?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I'll just get it for you. There is a budget. The Seniors State budget for 2024-25 is \$9.7 million.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** But is that the Minister's discretionary fund?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** No.

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** No.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** Is there anything allocated for that?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes, it funds a number of things. I'll just find it for you. I do have that.

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** Do you want me to deal with the 9.7?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes.

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** The 9.7 is to allow continuation of key seniors programs and initiatives supporting seniors that are funded by the Department of Communities and Justice, including the Connecting Seniors Grant Program, the Seniors Festival, the seniors concert, the Seniors Card and the Seniors Savers Card.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** It also includes \$500,000 for the tech savvy program as well.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** The discretionary funding for the Minister, is there a figure attached to that?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** There isn't discretionary funding.

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** There is none.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** There isn't?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** No.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** Before I go to my colleague—even though we have been talking quite a lot—can you talk to us about the higher service delivery costs involved in domestic and family violence services in the regions?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Can you repeat that question?

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** It was about the higher service delivery costs; the fact that in our regional, rural and remote areas it actually costs more to provide domestic and family violence services, and the contributing factors to that.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Things would be distance, obviously, and the cost of labour, depending on what kind of service you are commissioning. I am happy to take that one on notice. I don't think it varies significantly in terms of the funding, but certainly we would look at things in terms of geography, distance, brokerage, what other services are available and those sorts of details. But I am happy to take that on notice.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** When it comes to the paper Impact Economics and Policy, it actually says, "DFV services are significantly more costly to deliver in regional and remote parts of New South Wales." There is greater difficulty attracting and retaining staff; higher travel costs; higher brokerage costs, as you mentioned; unique health and safety challenges; and higher heating and cooling costs, due to local climatic conditions. When it comes to regional, rural and remote areas, they also don't receive any additional funding or loading despite these additional costs, do they?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I would need to take that on notice. I do think that is factored into the mode of service delivery, particularly in remote areas of New South Wales. But I think all the other issues you have outlined are actually the right things in terms of attracting staff out in particular parts New South Wales, which is what we saw was difficult with the recruitment for the, dare I say it, 148 workers. We have now had a really good strategy to really encourage people to apply for those positions. But it is a struggle, I think, at times, and not just in the domestic and family violence workforce but right across the board, particularly in terms of human services in those locations. They do really difficult work too.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** They certainly do.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** You have to be a certain kind of person to live and work in really small communities in New South Wales.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** The crossbench have no further questions. If you are happy to, we will go through with the remainder of ours and then we will probably finish up for the day, if everyone is happy with that.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Perfect.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** There are another couple of busy weeks ahead. My question is in relation to the Volunteering Strategy report card and the due date for that.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** It's not at the front of my note.

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** I don't think it's in the note.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I'll need to come back. It's in my head somewhere but it's not coming up to the surface.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** That is fine. For the volunteer focus groups that were conducted across rural and regional volunteering, older persons, women and youth, what is the long-term plan?

There were quite detailed reports that each of those groups provided and a number of recommendations. What is the plan moving forward to incorporate those recommendations? Will the Government provide a response on it?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I will take that on notice. But I do know that there is quite a lot of additional work being undertaken as a result of those consultations. That includes the New South Wales volunteer recruitment portal and the volunteering diversity and inclusion grants, and part of the pilot round 23 projects to the value of about half a million dollars were funded and the projects have recently been completed. There is also the NSW Volunteer Charter and the NSW Youth Volunteering Guidelines, and the NSW Volunteering Taskforce tabled its report in December 2024. We are currently considering that information.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Can I just get on notice if the Government is going to be responding to the recommendations from each of those various groups and their reports?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I'll take that on notice.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** You mentioned the recruitment portal, and I asked about this last estimates. In the response you mentioned that you get monthly data around the visitor numbers and expressions of interest. I was wondering if you have that data. I am happy for you to take that on notice.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I think I will take that one on notice.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** And also if there are any year-by-year trends, depending on when it commenced.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Okay.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** In regard to the contract for State Peaks—and this was touched on briefly this morning—have all peaks for this portfolio been given three- or five-year contracts?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Three plus two years. With DVNSW, it's on a different trajectory because it got funding through the last budget. It has a funding agreement already in place. But for this portfolio's peaks, yes.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** In relation to the number of people employed in the department with disability, first of all, how many people are currently employed in the department who have a disability or identify as having a disability?

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** I am sure I have that on me. It is just going to take me a minute to—

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I am happy for you to take it on notice.

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** Hopefully I can give you an answer now. It has increased. In 2023-24, which is the most current figure I have, obviously, it was 6.3 per cent, up from 6.1 per cent in 2022-23.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** In regard to the Domestic Violence Death Review Team, I understand that we were advised there was \$2 million over four years to support the team to deliver research around risk factors, trends and impacts. I am wondering about the time frame when that research would be available.

**HANNAH TONKIN:** I can take that one. That money was allocated to my office to manage—\$2.1 million over four years. We have already recruited new staff and they have started already. We've got two new staff in the secretariat at the DVDRT—research analysts. We've got a data expert who sits in BOCSAR but is 100 per cent working on the DVDRT to have that structural connection with BOCSAR. He has also previously been working with BOCSAR. He has a history in BOCSAR. He is a real expert. He is helping them to develop—just to improve the way they manage their data. They're going to do a data dashboard. They're going to really look at their processes. I think it is going to be very helpful for the team.

Then, in addition to that, we've got a six-month project, so just temporarily someone in my office who is doing an external review of the team and their processes and the recommendations that they've made in the past to look at the implementation of the recommendations in a whole-of-government context and look at the spirit of the recommendations, because many of the recommendations in the past were made several years ago and the service system has changed a lot since then—so to reanalyse the situation of the recommendations in the current context and to have that slightly—not fully independent, but an external lens on that.

Then there was a little bit of extra money as well this year, which is boosting a project that I'd already started in my office, which is a partnership with UNSW to look at the DVDRT processes specifically in relation to Aboriginal communities, so homicides involving Aboriginal women, whether as a victim or a perpetrator, and trying to improve the processes, particularly with regard to cultural safety and data sovereignty. I'd already started



that project in my office in the last financial year and then we've given that just a bit of a boost to refine some of the processes. All the money is being very carefully thought out.

The final thing I'll add on that—we've developed quite a robust work plan for the DVDRT looking ahead with the new staff. So they need to do their case reviews and the next report. But, in terms of the research, which is what you asked about, they are going to do a deep dive into the relationship between domestic and family violence and suicide, which was a recommendation of the rapid review report last year. I think that's a really important piece of work, and the data expert in BOCSAR and other colleagues in BOCSAR will be supporting that as well.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** There has been an increase over the last two years in domestic-violence-related murders. Has any work been done already as to reasons or locations—any trends that have come out?

**HANNAH TONKIN:** Not by the DVDRT, because the DVDRT was reporting on the earlier incidence so it hasn't caught up yet with that more recent data. We'll be looking ahead at the next reporting periods to catch up on those more recent cases.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Can I just respond to an earlier question about Grandparents' Day, because I don't want anything happening. It's definitely on. It's 25 October this year. We're just checking all the websites to make sure that's correct, but it's certainly on our website. I think, Ms Maclaren-Jones, you had a question around the Commonwealth Safe Places Inclusion Round. Successful providers are aware and there haven't been any issues in rolling out the funding that we're aware of.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** This morning I asked the Minister about the 15 per cent increase in domestic violence assaults on young people under 17. What are the specific policies or work being done in that space to tackle that issue?

**HANNAH TONKIN:** So you're talking about where young people are the victims or where young people are the perpetrators?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** It's both. One is the victims—and sometimes perpetrators, because it's within that family or siblings.

**HANNAH TONKIN:** Because I think a lot of that data from BOCSAR is where it's family violence with a younger victim. It's not necessarily young person against young person. It's often an adult against a young person. I think it depends on the scenario.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Is any work being done looking at it from a sibling to sibling?

**HANNAH TONKIN:** There's the development of a strategy for the people using violence in New South Wales, which is happening at the moment. That will be looking—maybe Anne can talk to that more, but that will be doing more of a deep dive into people who are using violence and the different avenues, pathways into violence. My office is also supporting a research project with ANROWS and RMIT that was looking at intimate partner violence by young people specifically and how it differs from intimate partner violence used by adults. That will be a really important project. That has just started as well, led by RMIT. That's a partnership with my office, so looking at pathways into perpetration for young people, which I think will be really important.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** It was also a key feature of the child maltreatment study as well. Certainly in terms of people using violence or perpetrator strategies in New South Wales, we've been running consultations. We'll be looking at different cohorts. We should have some more information towards the end of this year.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** If I understand you, part of that study is looking at different pathways of intimate partner violence among young people and adults. Is that right?

**HANNAH TONKIN:** Yes, for young people, but how it differs from adults.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** As I understand from the research, pornography often plays a role in that. I wondered if you're doing any work on that and whether you had made a submission to the upper House inquiry into harmful effects of pornography, because that work would be very interesting to that committee.

**HANNAH TONKIN:** That work is not being run by my office; it's being done by RMIT. My office is just supporting it in conjunction with ANROWS. I'm not directly involved. It's an independent academic study by researchers at RMIT but, in terms of the pornography inquiry, I will be a witness. I've been called as a witness and I'll be appearing—it was postponed but I'll be appearing at the hearing.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Perhaps you may be able to reach out to the RMIT academics because, if they're doing work in this area, that would be very interesting to that committee.

**HANNAH TONKIN:** Sure, that is a good idea.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** Ms Campbell, you mentioned that there was no discretionary funding for seniors. Might I ask why that is the case?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** It's pretty typical in my experience, but happy to take that one on notice.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** Because the information that I received previously when I was here was that was not the case. You may again need to take on notice whether the Minister has discretionary funding for the other portfolios.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I don't think so.

**GILLIAN WHITE:** I can partly answer. There is a women's discretionary fund for the Minister.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** I'll also ask—again, it may need to be taken on notice—whether the Minister has requested a discretionary fund for seniors.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Not that I'm aware of, but happy to take it on notice and check with the staff.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** Are there any specific programs when it comes to women's safety in regional, rural and remote areas of New South Wales, given the escalating regional crime crisis?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** As part of the emergency package, quite a lot of the funding went out to regional New South Wales. It's over the forward estimates. I think this Government has acknowledged that there hasn't been as much investment in regional New South Wales so we made a very targeted effort to look at ensuring that those services got a priority, given that domestic and family violence, as we've heard earlier today, is quite prolific across New South Wales. I think programs like the Staying Home Leaving Violence program are great programs. They have an evidence base. We've particularly focused on young people, particularly young people in refugees.

We have children specialist workers who are experienced in domestic and family violence and, again, those workers are in regional New South Wales as well as metropolitan areas. Whenever we're doing commissioning of new services or adding to existing ones, we look at demand, we look at the statistics, but we also do a lot of local service planning on the ground to work with other providers to look at where services are needed for women and children escaping domestic and family violence but also services like men's behaviour change programs. That got funding through the emergency package as well and that funding has been rolled out. I think there are lots of good examples of really great programs out there.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** When it comes to the men's behaviour program, how is the funding going for that? Because, again, I've had anecdotal conversations, information that's been provided to me about men wanting to access these programs but, because of a lack of funding, they're just not available, and, again, in our regional, rural and remote areas, that they just don't have that opportunity to do so.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** We've just recently allocated new funding to seven new locations across four providers. That was \$10 million over four years and those locations were Nowra, Ulladulla, Lithgow, Forster and Gloucester. There are now 17 plus seven—about 20-odd programs across New South Wales.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** The \$10 million that you were just talking about—that's only for the new seven? Or is that for the total?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** The new seven.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** Over four years, you said.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes. And it includes—sorry, I missed out on Blacktown and Maitland as well.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** How were those locations selected?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Again, we'd be looking at what the demand data is telling us about—we're looking at BOCSAR rates of domestic and family and sexual violence. It's quite rigorous when we're looking at identifying locations.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I'm mindful that we still have to come back at 3.45 p.m. as per the resolution. We've got a couple of questions.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** I just have one.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I have one as well.

**The CHAIR:** We might break. You can have a scone and then you can come back and ask your questions.

**(Short adjournment)**

**The CHAIR:** We will recommence.

**BIANCA JARRETT:** Ms Maclaren-Jones, just coming back to you, the executive councils meet monthly, and DCJ has scheduled meetings with them every three weeks.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Thank you. I've got a couple of questions. One is following on from an answer to a question from last estimates regarding the two plans in relation to people with disability. The response was that the New South Wales plans contain targeted actions across the pillars—prevention, early intervention, response and recovery, and healing—to address the high rates of violence against people with disability. Could you identify what those are within the various pillars and actions?

**HANNAH TONKIN:** The different actions relating to people with disability?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Yes, exactly what is being done.

**HANNAH TONKIN:** You'll have to give me a moment to find that. It would be in the report card that you've got there.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I'm trying to work out what specifically is being done.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I've located it. Initiatives to support women with disability experiencing domestic family and sexual violence include a rollout of funding for 7.6 new frontline workers to specifically respond to women with disability experiencing domestic and family violence. That's through commissioning to non-government organisations. There's funding for People with Disability Australia's Building Access project to support accessibility improvements and specialised support for women with disability; Intellectual Disability Rights Service expansion of service delivery and case management; the Easy Read domestic and family violence awareness resources for people with intellectual disability; and resources to support people with intellectual disability who have experienced sexual violence, in addition to their families, support people and service providers.

There are a number of projects funded under the NSW Sexual Violence Project Fund, including the Northcott Society's Love Rights program, and projects funded under Responses Matter that seek to improve responses to disclosures of sexual violence by people with disability, including the Stepping Out program's trauma-informed responses to disclosures of child sexual abuse with the disability sector project. The Ageing and Disability Commission role is obviously to protect older people and adults with disability from abuse and neglect. I won't go through their role because I think you're well aware of it. They're just some of the examples.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** The additional seven frontline workers—how many were in place before that?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** They are new resources. That was part of the Commonwealth funding for the  
148—

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I was going to ask that. That's Commonwealth funding.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** The other is in relation to the New South Wales common approach to risk assessment and safety framework, which is being rolled out into schools, the child protection response and the housing and homelessness sectors. When is that going to commence? Will it be rolled out across all agencies or is there a priority list?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** It has been developed by DCJ with the University of New South Wales. It has been guided by an advisory group, which is made up of NSW Health, the Police Force, Corrective Services, Legal Aid, DVNSW and the Aboriginal Women's Advisory Network. There has been significant consultation across multiple sectors. It has also been informed by our literature review that the team has undertaken. That will be delivered to government in the first half of this year. We're obviously going to need to look at implementation and resourcing around that as well.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Have any funds been allocated to it now?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Not at this stage, no.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** On male behaviour change, I'm interested to know how the program is being measured and evaluated and if there is a report that will be produced.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Is that the Men's Behaviour Change Program?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Yes.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Let me find it. I know that we collect lots of data from the service providers. I'm just trying to find my note here. Of course it's at the bottom.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** If I could jump in, in terms of the data you're collecting, is it standardised in terms of what you want?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** So you can compare across.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes, that's right. What was your question again, Ms Maclaren-Jones?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** It was in relation to an evaluation and whether or not there'll be a report prepared.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes. ANROWS has been engaged to do the evaluation. That's due for completion in 2026. It commenced in late 2024.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I have two more. You mentioned the Easy Read rollout. Is that across all agencies?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** All government agencies, yes.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** How is that tracking?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I think that's probably for Minister Washington.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** The final one is the number of staff that are working within DCJ that are working from home and how many are back in the office.

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** The first thing I should say about DCJ and return to office in response to your question is DCJ is probably by character more of a frontline agency than a back-office agency. I do not have the current figures, but before the tweak MoG dealing with Corrective Services, 75 per cent of our staff were frontline staff, so we're very much talking here about the other 25 per cent. I will come to the pointy end of your question. When the secretary of the Premier's Department issued his circular on 5 August last year, on the same day I communicated with all DCJ staff and said that we want to work with our staff to bring them back to the office clearly in line with the requirement that they are principally in the office, but we want to do that and work with our staff, consulting with them and with the PSA. We have had a whole process that we have been working through. That work has pretty much now matured in a policy, but it is still in the final stage of consultation. Once that consultation is concluded, we will proceed with implementation.

Can I say, on the evidence that we have, we are starting to see through the week—so I think there are a couple of questions for us. One is, the movement back to the office. The second is trying to get some evenness in the distribution as to how that happens over the week. Our challenge is in part ensuring that we achieve that as well. In terms of the numbers and how that is tracking, if we look at staff attending 6 Parramatta Square, which is predominantly an office location, from information gathered via the internet protocol data, we are definitely seeing an upward trend following the Christmas shutdown and the return-to-school period, but it is not even. That's as specific as I can be at the moment. When we bed down and go live with that policy, we will be more able to track and report at that point.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Are you finding there is resistance from the PSA?

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** No.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Can I put that also to Ms Tonkin and Ms McKenzie about the percentage of people within your offices who work from home and within the office full-time?

**HANNAH TONKIN:** We have a hybrid model. At the moment it depends on the staff and what their arrangements are, but we are working towards the policy of coming back to the office as the principal place. But at the moment, we have a mix. I tend to be out and about a lot, so if you put me to one side and just look at my staff, three days maybe, two days from home, things like that.

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** Can I supplement my response by saying that we are being careful with staff with disability and primary carers to ensure that they have a workplace adjustment passport and that the movement in the policy is tailored to their needs so that they continue to be supported under the DCJ workplace adjustment policy.

**KATHRYN MCKENZIE:** We have a mix. From a fairly early point after the lockdown eased, we had a model where staff were expected to come back three days a week to the office. We also have a high proportion of frontline staff within our office who are out and about quite a bit. We have a bit of a split at the moment. There are flexible work arrangements, but there is a high proportion who are in the office three days a week.

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** Can I add one final thing. Over the summer I have tried to get out to the districts and the regions a bit more. What I find really interesting is in the regions—and I am very much talking anecdotally and from my own observations now—out in the country we are seeing that people really seem to want to be in the office, and it has been quite amazing to see how abuzz with activity those CSCs are in those centres in regional New South Wales.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** It's great for small business, which is outside this portfolio area.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** This question really arises from the point of order taken before, and it's I guess a process question. Maybe this is for Ms White or Ms Campbell or Mr Tidball. Is it possible to get some sort of road map so we know who is responsible for the implementation of what and therefore we can direct our questions to the right places?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes, we can do that.

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** We can do that, but can I also say that regardless of how you try to describe things, there is always at the edges—we are very comfortable to respectfully redirect to the appropriate estimates if we believe that is the right thing, so happy to do that. We're also happy to be agile.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Which I understand, but if we are being redirected to the Premier's estimates after that has occurred, that presents some difficulties for us. That is all. The intention is to ask the right person the right questions, but we don't always know who the right person is.

**The CHAIR:** Government questions?

**The Hon. MARK BUTTIGIEG:** No, I'm fine.

**The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL:** Are you sure?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Thanks for joining us. You got the good shift.

**The Hon. MARK BUTTIGIEG:** I think we have had enough entertainment in the other committee.

**The CHAIR:** Thanks very much for your attendance today. The secretariat will be in touch in the near future in relation to returning answers to questions taken on notice.

**(The witnesses withdrew.)**

**The Committee proceeded to deliberate.**