

**BUDGET ESTIMATES 2022**  
**Supplementary hearings**

**Questions taken on notice**

**Portfolio Committee No. 5 Justice and  
Communities**

**Minister Harrison**

**Hearing: Friday 3 November 2023**

**Answers due: Thursday 30 November 2023**

## Transcript page 2

**The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR:** Minister, welcome to your first estimates. I am sure you will do smashingly well. I'm starting today, and I'm pretty sure you'll know what the first question I'm going to ask is here today. What I really want to know is when were you made aware that the NSW Regional Woman of the Year Award had been removed from the NSW Women of the Year Awards.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I received a brief from Women NSW containing recommendations as to how best to strengthen and ensure that the Women of the Year Awards were of high calibre, and that was really part of the reasoning behind the decision to amalgamate the Regional Woman of the Year and the Community Hero Award. I don't off the top of my head recall the date that I saw that briefing paper, but I can certainly take that on notice.

## Answer

I am advised:

30 August 2023

## Transcript page 3

**The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR:** Can you explain why your Government cancelled the regional seniors travel card on 7 July?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Yes, I can. As you know, Ms Taylor, the regional transport Minister has responsibility for that decision. But, of course, as Minister for Seniors, I have an interest in it. Also being a regional MP, I have an interest in it.

**The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR:** Why did you let them cancel it?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Because it was a poorly designed scheme.

**The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR:** Let's turn then to your scheme, Minister, to your replacement, which offers seniors 4¢ off petrol at United petrol stations. Sometimes people in the regions have to travel 200 kilometres to use that seniors travel card at a United petrol station. Do you think that's reasonable?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I need to clarify that that United Petroleum discount did not replace the regional seniors travel card. The United Petroleum 4¢ discount is available to Seniors Card holders and it is available to any of the 1.9 million Seniors Card holders across New South Wales to use right across Australia. It is available to Seniors Card holders; it did not replace the regional seniors travel card.

**The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR:** No, it couldn't possibly because it isn't nearly the scheme. But you did go out pretty hard in the media to say, "Here is our scheme that we're doing." My question, Minister, that you haven't answered is do you think it's reasonable then that people are driving sometimes 200 kilometres to get to a United petrol station to get the 4¢ off.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** To start off with, the Seniors Card and the discounts available to it are created by an open invitation to businesses who want to provide discounts to seniors in New South Wales.

**The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR:** Did United approach the Government with this deal?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Yes.

**The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR:** The Government didn't approach United?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I will clarify that because I actually wasn't part of that decision at all. I would need to refer to departmental staff about the detail of that.

**The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR:** Respectfully, Minister, we've got the department here all afternoon, so I really want to direct my questions to you. I'm really happy for you to take that on notice if you need to.

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

**The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR:** Just so that we get this right, you're not sure whether the Government approached United or United approached the Government? Would you like to take that on notice?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I believe there is an open invitation to businesses right across New South Wales to join the Seniors Card and Senior Savers Card, and I have just had it confirmed that that is how that occurred. There was an approach made by United Petroleum to offer a discount. And BP, or Caltex, or any—

### **Answer**

I am advised:

United Petroleum approached the Department of Communities and Justice with a discount offer for the Seniors Card program.

All businesses in NSW are able to join the Seniors Card program and offer a discount to seniors.

The Seniors Card website has an open invitation for businesses to partner with the NSW Government to participate in the program and advertise their promotions directly to members. The website promotes the benefits of joining the program and lists the program's terms and conditions, and the commercial policy.

### **Transcript page 7**

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** I want to start by talking about coercive control. Obviously this is a thing that this particular Parliament has been deeply involved—it's an issue with which we've been deeply involved for some time. Two years ago the joint select inquiry on coercive control in domestic relationships reported to the Parliament, and since then we had legislation put in place under the last Government. You will be aware that there were significant criticisms of that legislation. The legislation was very much reliant on a taskforce being established that could implement and oversee that offence before it came into effect. You have now been in office for six months, I think.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Seven.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Yes, seven. What is the current status of the implementation of that offence?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I can certainly give you some indication of where it's at. I work very closely with the Attorney General on this. The Attorney General has predominant oversight of coercive control legislation and its implementation. We've had discussions about issues in relation to coercive control, and I know that you're really keenly interested in exactly where we're at. The implementation taskforce has been meeting on a regular basis.

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** On eight occasions.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** On eight occasions since its implementation. The taskforce has established a three-stream work plan. Stream one is about training and education. Stream two is about operational systems and stream three is about community awareness. Sitting underneath the implementation and evaluation taskforce there were established 10 sector-specific working groups, which you would be aware of—

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Yes.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** —identified in the legislation. Those working groups have also been meeting. The last one established was the lived experience working reference group, and that was established in June, I believe, and has met.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** So can I ask perhaps a few questions about those groups?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I will try to give you information. I'm not sure that I will have the detail.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** How were the reference groups determined? Who came up with what those reference groups would be?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I'd need to refer that to departmental staff.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** That was undertaken under the previous Government by the then Attorney General.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Although I'm really pleased to see the inclusion of those with lived experience in the process, my understanding of the original intention is that those people would be embedded within the other reference groups as well rather than being a standalone reference group. Are there victim-survivors and those with lived experience sitting within the other reference groups as well?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I would think there probably would be, but I'd need to refer it.

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** No, there are not.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** There are not.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Not that we're aware of.

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** Not that I understand, Ms Boyd, but I'd be happy, if I need to clarify that, to take it on notice and confirm.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Were expressions of interest sought publicly for each of those reference groups?

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** Not to my knowledge, no.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I don't believe so, other than the lived experience group. I understand that was done through DVNSW through an expression of interest process, but I'm happy to take that question on notice.

### **Answer**

I am advised:

The Coercive Control Implementation and Evaluation Taskforce is overseeing the delivery of three workstreams to support the commencement of the coercive control offence on 1 July 2024.

The Taskforce has met eight times, most recently on 21 November.

The three workstreams are:

- Training and education for criminal justice agencies
  - NSW Police Force, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, Legal Aid NSW and the Judicial Commission of NSW are on track to have police officers, legal staff and judicial officers trained before the offence commences on 1 July 2024.
- Government operational systems updates
  - Standard updates to allow data entry and processing of criminal matters will be made before the offence commences.
- Community awareness campaigns
  - An educational website was launched on 30 August 2023, with a broad advertising campaign and tailored campaigns for First Nations and multicultural communities being developed for launch from April and May 2024 respectively.

The Taskforce and the delivery of its workstreams are informed by 10 reference groups:

- Domestic and Family Violence Service Delivery
- Legal
- Government
- First Nations Communities
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities
- LGBTQIA+
- People with Disability
- Older Persons

- Children and Youth
- Lived Expertise.

A regional reference group was initially established but was dissolved following a request from members. Those members are now represented on the other reference groups.

Section 54I(5) of the Crimes Act 1900 requires that the 'taskforce must establish reference groups'.

Section 54I(6) of the Crimes Act 1900 prescribes that reference groups must consist of members who have expertise in, or legal knowledge of, the subject matter for which the reference group is established.

Examples of sectors, groups and organisations from which members of reference groups might be drawn— the domestic and family violence sector, the legal profession, the Judicial Commission of NSW, Aboriginal organisations and groups, the culturally and linguistically diverse sector, LGBTIQ+ groups, the disability sector, youth and children's groups, victims and survivors of sexual or domestic and family violence and the families of victims and survivors.

Reference group membership was established by the Taskforce in consultation with the former Attorney General. The members provide expert legal advice or support to people experiencing domestic or family violence and many participated in Bill consultation.

The Taskforce continues to make decisions on the constitution of the reference groups on advice. New member agencies have been invited to join reference groups on recommendation of reference groups and by endorsement of the Taskforce.

The Lived Expertise group formed following an Expression of Interest process conducted by the Taskforce's Independent member and the Department of Communities and Justice.

The Lived Expertise reference group has made a significant impact since it began engagement on the reform, through members sharing their stories to inform training programs and community awareness campaigns.

Members of other reference groups than the lived expertise reference group have not been asked to disclose whether they have lived experience of DFV.

All members of reference groups have expertise in or legal knowledge of the subject matter for which the reference group is established.

## **Transcript page 8**

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** What was the selection process for membership of the reference groups?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** It was determined, as I mentioned before, by the former Government.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Can you tell me how they determined it?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I don't have that detail here.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Are you able to provide it on notice?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes. I can see what I can do.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Why is there no health-specific reference group?

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** There is a Health representative on the taskforce, Ms Deborah Willcox, who is a deputy secretary in the department of health, who does play a very active role in the work of the taskforce. Where Ms Willcox has been unable to attend, there has always been a Health representative. Within the department of health, from the department of health, there's been very active engagement.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** On the taskforce—

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** Yes.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** —but no separate reference group.

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** No standalone group. Correct.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** There is a representative on the government and legal reference group from Health.

### **Answer**

I am advised:

Reference group agency or organisational membership was determined by the Taskforce, who provided ongoing advice to the former Attorney General. Membership was identified in consultation with the Taskforce and Department of Communities and Justice.

The members provide expert legal advice or support to people experiencing domestic or family violence, and many participated in the Bill consultation process prior to the reforms being introduced to NSW Parliament.

An expression of interest process was undertaken for the Lived Expertise reference group by the independent member of the Taskforce and the Department. It was advertised on the Department's website and through DVNSW.

The Taskforce continues to make decisions on the constitution of the reference groups on advice of the current member agencies of the reference groups. New member agencies have been invited to join groups on recommendation of reference groups.

In regard to NSW Health and reference groups, NSW Health is represented on the Taskforce and four reference groups:

- Deputy Secretary, Health System Strategy and Patient Experience is a member of the Taskforce.
- Deputy Secretary, Health System Strategy and Patient Experience chairs the LGBTQIA+ Reference Group.
- NSW Health representative from the 'Prevention and Response to Violence Abuse and Neglect' Unit is a member of the Government Reference Group and the DFV Service Delivery Reference Group.
- The Ministry of Health, Health and Social Policy Branch is a member of the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities Reference Group.

### **Transcript page 8**

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Okay, I'm aware of that person. Is there an overall strategic operating plan for the taskforce?

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** Yes, there is.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Are you able to provide it?

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** I would be happy to set that out and provide it to the Committee, yes.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Are you able to provide the minutes of the taskforce meetings that have been held so far?

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** From where I sit, yes, I'd be happy to.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** We may need to check with the Attorney General.

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** I do actually report to the Attorney General on this—wiser counsel from my right. Subject to consulting the Attorney General, I will take that on notice.

### **Answer**

I am advised:

The Taskforce endorsed its workplan at its 31 January 2023 meeting and noted that the workplan is a living document that will evolve.

The workplan, that includes the three workstreams, is outlined in the first report of the Taskforce, tabled in both Houses of Parliament in June 2023.

Further to my colleague's response, the minutes of the Taskforce and Reference Groups are not published to ensure robust discussions and policy implementation options are openly considered.



The Taskforce reports on its key considerations in its statutory reports. The first report was tabled in June and the second report is due in December 2023.

Taskforce members who chair the Reference Groups provide read-outs from each Taskforce meeting to reference group members.

### Transcript page 8

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Minister, during the joint select inquiry and the deliberations that we had in relation to the report, given that there was cross-party support for that process and it was a very involved and long-running process, it was very clear to us that if we were to get implementation of this legislation right we needed quite a long lead-up time—for example, so that we could have police adequately trained before the new offence came in and so that we could have judges and other judicial officers trained. From what I'm hearing, it's just not been possible for that to have occurred as yet. Are there any moves to delay the implementation of the offence—the start date of the offence?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** From my discussions with the Attorney General to date, there are no moves to delay the implementation of coercive control as a criminal offence. My understanding of the advice that the Attorney General is receiving through the implementation and evaluation taskforce is that training is underway. I can give you, if you like, Ms Boyd, a bit of an overview of what training has occurred to date.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Particularly police. My understanding is that there are—I forget the number— police who need to be trained who work in this area. It's been put to me that it's mathematically impossible for them to actually be trained in time in any significant way, even in a very superficial way, given the constraints on having to take some time off and having other people fill in. How many police have been trained in this offence so far and how many are left to go?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I know that all police have received some online training and there has been a second phase of training of police that has been provided to specialist police officers and identified select operational police, including ones that specialise in domestic violence. I'm sure Mr Tidball has further information.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** We know from experience overseas, though, that what is required for an offence like this to actually make a difference and not have unintended consequences is for police to have face-to-face multi-day training. Clearly, that's not occurred in this case, has it, Minister?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** That hasn't occurred. Multi-day training for all police—

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Face-to-face.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** —face-to-face has not occurred.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** No.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** That's correct. But Mr Tidball would like to provide—

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** Ms Boyd, can I just add, at the symposium held on 17 August there was a complete criminal justice system consultation and briefing on where we're at. At the briefing were police, the Judicial Commission, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions and Legal Aid and other stakeholders. In terms of the police, I agree that the rollout of training across such a large police force, particularly in regional areas, is challenging. I can take on notice what is happening. My understanding is that there is quite a detailed plan for police. I would struggle to brief on it today, but I'm certainly happy to provide you with the detail.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Thank you. That would be very useful.

#### **Answer**

Please refer to the responses provided by NSW Police at Budget Estimates 2023-24 initial hearings 7 November 2023.

#### **Transcript page 9**

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** So the offence has to begin by 1 July. We have at least 12,000 specialist police to be trained. The training that Ms Campbell just outlined—how many police have so far been trained?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I think we would need to take that on notice to talk to police.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** That's the concern because 12,000 police is a lot of people. How long is that training course to complete? How long is each police officer having to take out of their schedule to be trained?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I'm not aware. I'm happy to take that on notice.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** That's the bit where I have been told it's mathematically impossible for these 12,000 to be trained, given the way that their rosters work and needing to have cover during that time. Minister, if that training hasn't been completed—and that's just police. We're not even talking about all the other people who need to be trained before this offence comes into effect. If that can't be done by 1 July, do you think that this legislation should commence?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I would have to have discussions with the Attorney General about that.

#### **Answer**

Please refer to the responses provided by NSW Police at Budget Estimates 2023-24 initial hearings 7 November 2023

**Transcript page 11**

**The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:** As Domestic Violence NSW reports, it's hard to quantify the devastating loss people are experiencing due to domestic violence. Minister, apart from the personal cost, what is the cost to the New South Wales economy?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I don't have that figure in front of me, I don't believe. I would need to take that on notice. But it is—

**The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:** I could direct you to your budget papers. This is the Gender Equality Budget Statement in your budget papers. It states: In addition to the personal cost, it is estimated that the escalation in domestic and family violence during 2020 will cost New South Wales \$3.3 billion between 2020 and 2025 And it continues. Any reflections on that—what's presented in the budget papers? The cost to New South Wales on this?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Absolutely.

**Answer**

I am advised:

In addition to the personal cost, it is estimated that the escalation in domestic and family violence during 2020 will cost New South Wales \$3.3 billion between 2020 and 2025, through reduced participation and productivity, private and public health costs, and increased consumption costs such as costs associated with property damage.

**Transcript page 12**

**The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:** How are we doing more, Minister?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** The New South Wales budget for 2023-24 in relation to spending on domestic and family violence is on track for \$417.2 million. That's a significant increase on previous years. We are doing a huge amount of work. Earlier this week I made the announcement that we were going to make the Women's Safety Commissioner a standalone position. It had previously been a position which was rolled in with another one, which was an executive director, operational position. We now have a standalone Women's Safety Commissioner whose role will be to provide oversight—

**The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:** Yes, so a government commissioner, a standalone position—thank you. And anything more?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Absolutely, Ms Merton. I'll talk about the budget. The budget for this year is \$417.2 million. That's what we're on track to spend in relation to domestic and family violence. In the previous year, when the Liberal-Nationals were in government, there was \$226.5 million. In the year before that, it was \$204.9 million. So

we're certainly well and truly increasing spending on domestic and family violence. We are seeing a rollout of a new style of emergency accommodation, which the previous Government brought in, which I was quite happy to see.

**The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:** Yes, I'm familiar with that.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** We are managing those contracts to make sure that by the end of 2016 there will be accommodation for an additional 2,900 women and children leaving domestic and family violence—

**The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:** What year was that, Minister? I missed that. I thought you said 2016.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I did. I apologise—2026. Importantly—

**The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:** Accommodation, lovely.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Absolutely. We're increasing accommodation. We're making sure that Staying Home Leaving Violence is available, both in metropolitan and regional areas. I'm sure Ms Taylor will be interested in the regional areas.

**The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR:** Always interested, Minister.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Absolutely. I know Ms Taylor.

**The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:** Thank you. She'll follow that, Minister, yes.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** But, importantly, what we need to do is we need to focus on primary prevention as well. We are in the process of doing that.

**The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:** Okay. Thank you.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** There are a number of things, on top of that, that this Government took to the election which we are very pleased to be implementing, and that is an additional \$8.1 million to the Redfern legal service to enhance and expand their current financial abuse service and an additional \$6.6 million in 2023-24 to provide specialist support for children who are in 20 refuges across New South Wales. That was funded initially under the national partnership agreement and funding ran out on 30 June this year. This Government made sure that there was funding to continue that really important program, because we know that domestic and family violence affects children, and that has been sorely not recognised up until recent years. It's important to provide support to children who have experienced domestic and family violence so that we can actually stop that cycle of violence. In addition to that, we're providing an additional \$6.1 million to extend and expand the Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service, the hearing support pilot that is occurring in courts. There was a pilot brought in by the previous Government in some courts; we have now expanded that so it is available at every court across New South Wales to provide important hearing support for victims of domestic and family violence.

We're also providing \$4.4 million over three years to establish a new specialist multicultural service for victim-survivors of domestic violence. That won't just provide direct support; it will provide support to general services out there so that everybody, all services, will be able to best support culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

**The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:** That's a good list of announcements.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** That's what we're doing.

**The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:** In term of implementation, what are we going to see on the ground? What time frame are we looking for on these? Is it rollout now? Is it announcement now?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I can provide you details.

### **Answer**

I am advised:

The implementation status of announcements made in the Budget are as follows:

- 12 community based prevention, early intervention and crisis response projects are all operational.
- Specialist Children and Young People's workers are successfully operating in 20 refuges
- The Pilot Project on Hearing Support Workers in Courts for victim-survivors of domestic and family violence is currently operating in 14 Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service locations covering 73 Courts. The pilot will expand to the remaining 13 locations in November 2023.
- The Pilot Project on co-locating Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service workers in five police stations is expanding to five new sites including Blacktown, Taree, Albury, Toronto/Belmont and Walgett. The contracts for services are being varied and sites are currently being prepared for expansion.
- Contract negotiations are underway with Settlement Services International to establish the new Multicultural Domestic and Family Violence Centre of Excellence.
- The Sexual Violence Helpline is currently operational. Implementation status of the funding uplift should be referred to the Minister for Health.
- The implementation status of piloting of Sexual Violence Liaison Officers in five Police Area Commands should be referred to the Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism.

The implementation status of the refurbishment for the Illawarra Trauma Recovery Centre should be referred to the Minister for Health.

**Transcript page 15**

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Minister, I will take you to something different: drink spiking. A petition was submitted by What Were You Wearing?, and I know there was a debate on this in the lower House in, I think, June this year. That petition was looking at the uptick in the reporting of drink spiking incidents. I understand that in the year between July 2022 and June 2023 there was an increase of 20 per cent on the previous year. It was calling for two things. The first one was a collaboration with venues to prevent drink spiking, involving training and other things, and the second one was to reduce the stigma placed on victims, given that less than a sixth of all incidents get reported to the police, and the research shows that that underreporting is put down to shame and stigma. Are you aware of what has been done by your Government in response to that campaign?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** That petition was led by one of the local women in my area, Sarah Williams, who I think was the Newcastle Local Woman of the Year this year.

**The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR:** We love the Women of the Year Awards.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** We love the Local Women of the Year Awards as well.

**The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR:** Sorry, Abigail.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** It's okay.

**The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR:** I'm very passionate.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** And it's regional.

**The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR:** And it's regional.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** The Minister who has general oversight of that is the Minister for Liquor and Gaming. My understanding is that there has been additional evidence of training required, but I would need to take that on notice. As I said, the Minister for Liquor and Gaming has responsibility for that.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** I understand. The Minister for Gaming and Racing put out a media release on 11 October in response, setting up a new campaign called Think Safe to Drink Safe. Were you consulted about that campaign at all?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Personally, I'm not aware of the details of that campaign.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Was the department consulted? Was Ms Tonkin consulted, given its impact on rates of sexual assault, particularly against women. Is anyone aware of whether the department was consulted?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I'd need to take that on notice, I think.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** There are 12 Think Safe to Drink Safe tips included. At least five of the 12 tips appear to have nothing to do with drink spiking or the drink spiking campaign, and appear to actually be leaning into the stigma around drink spiking. For instance, one of them says: Pace yourself. Count your drinks, try a low-alcohol

alternative, or have a 'spacer' of water between alcoholic drinks. Others say: Avoid shouts, drinking games or shots. Drink at your own pace, you don't have to join in every round and consider buying a non-alcoholic drink ..... Eat before or while you are drinking. If you have a full stomach, alcohol will be absorbed more slowly. ... Stay busy. If you have something to do, you tend to drink less, so have a game of pool or hit the dance floor. ... Consent and boundaries. Alcohol can lower your inhibitions. Be aware of this and set boundaries for yourself before going out.

These look very much like victim-blaming statements and something that is leaning into the stigma that is preventing people from reporting this. Does this cause you concern?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I would need to have a look that, Ms Boyd, and I'll come back to you.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** I understand you'll need to have a look, but on the face of it, do you wish you were consulted?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I have to say, there's absolutely no place for victim blaming in relation to sexual assault. Nobody ever asks to be sexually assaulted. Nobody ever gives cause to be assaulted. There is no way that blame should be placed on a victim of sexual assault, of any form of violence. I'm really, really clear on that. We need to be sure that we can be in safe places. That's a really key message and I'm more than happy to take that further on notice.

### **Answer**

I am advised:

The Women, Family and Community Safety directorate of the Department of Communities and Justice did not provide input into Liquor and Gaming NSW's 'Think Safe to Drink Safe' campaign.

Questions about the campaign and any related training should be directed to the Minister for Gaming and Racing who is responsible for Liquor and Gaming NSW.

### **Transcript page 17**

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** In terms of what the New South Wales Government can be doing in terms of prevention, from a systemic level, if we take a step back and look at this, it's a classic situation where we have women in a situation of losing their autonomy within this sort of aged-care facility and then also being less likely to be believed if they do come out and say something. Is there something we can do from a systemic prevention perspective? I'm worried that because of the uncertainty, or the gaps in jurisdiction, we are missing an opportunity to step in and provide more support.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** There certainly is. There are a couple of pieces of work that are currently being undertaken. The New South Wales Government is working with



Relationships Australia on a program that they have, called Let's Talk, mitigating the risk and responding early to elder abuse. In relation particularly to sexual violence against older women, particularly in aged-care facilities, I'm certain that there's a grant under the sexual violence grants that we have that particularly relates to the issue that you're raising. I'd need to take that on notice. I might be able to get you further information later today.

**Answer**

I am advised:

The NSW Sexual Violence Project Fund provided \$10.5 million in grants to support 14 organisations to deliver one-off and time-limited early intervention and response projects that address sexual violence. Under the Sexual Violence Project Fund, the Older Women's Network NSW received \$532,000 for their 'Improving System Capacity To Provide Trauma Informed Services To Older Women Who've Been Sexually Assaulted' project. They will deliver a co-designed training package for sexual assault services to recognise and respond to the specific needs of older women. NSW Sexual Violence Project Fund projects run until June 2025.

For more information relating to the NSW Sexual Violence Project Fund, see: <https://www.dcj.nsw.gov.au/service-providers/supporting-family-domestic-sexual-violence-services/dfv-programs-funding/nsw-sexual-violence-project-fund.html> ..

**Transcript page 23**

**The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR:** Fantastic. Just going back, with respect to the Seniors team within New South Wales, how many people in that team are focused on ageing, in your team, in your Seniors team?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I'd have to take that on notice.

**The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR:** You don't know? Who does the team report to? Would you like to take that on notice?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I'll take that on notice or I can ask Ms Campbell.

**Answer**

I am advised:

In NSW, the Ageing and Disability Commission (ADC) has a primary role to better protect older people and adults with disability from abuse, neglect and exploitation. The ADC currently has 33.8 FTE staff, and there are nine FTE staff within DCJ dedicated to seniors policy and administration of the Seniors Card.



At least one member of the DCJ Events team is consistently available to support with Seniors Concerts, Seniors Festival and other events related to the Seniors portfolio.

### Transcript page 23

**The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR:** That's right. We can only hope. Who assesses the applications to the New South Wales seniors grant program? I note in the guidelines there is an assessment team and an assessment panel. Who is that comprised of? I'm happy for you to take that on notice, Minister.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I can take it on notice but I do have the answer here, if you'd like it.

**The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR:** I can follow that up in the afternoon if you like. Could you tell me how much the NSW Seniors Festival costs each year?

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

**The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR:** You want to take that on notice? Okay, no problem. Do you know how the overall cost of the festival is split across regional New South Wales and metro?

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

### Answer

I am advised:

1. In relation to grants assessments, the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) follows the process outlined by the Grants Administration Guide:
  - An Assessment Plan was created by subject matter experts from DCJ and staff from the Premiers Department outlining eligibility and assessment process in line with the Ministerial Approved Guidelines.
  - Each eligible application is assessed by two different assessors and recommendations sent to the Independent Panel for review.
  - Panel Recommendations are sent to the decision maker (Minister) for approval.
2. The annual budget for the NSW Seniors Festival is \$1.75 million.
3. Approximately 20 per cent of the budget is allocated to regional NSW. Events held regionally as part of the overall NSW Seniors Festival include three Christmas Concerts, one Seniors Festival Comedy Show and regional events that have been funded through the Seniors Festival grant program.

**Transcript page 24**

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** I would be interested to know if the department has already done any research on one of the issues that's come to my attention recently. There are real concerns that there is already and is going to be an increasing rate of domestic violence in those communities impacted by the transition out of coal and into renewables. When we're looking at that transition process around the world, there's been a need for additional community services, not just an upskilling and reskilling of workers coming out of coal and into other industries but also a need to really focus on workforce for those social services within those communities. Is that something that the department has been looking at or is there anywhere within government looking at domestic violence in the context of the transition?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I would need to refer to the department on that.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I think we would need to take that on notice. I'm happy to provide some information later today, if I can get it.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** That would be really useful.

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** If I may respond, if it is of assistance, on the question of people living in cars and the like, just to note that in the housing and homelessness component of DCJ, temporary accommodation arrangements have moved and shifted from two to seven days and the annual 28-day cap removed.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** I am sure you're aware of, Minister, and we've had a discussion previously about the funding request from Jenny's Place for a domestic violence resource centre. Is that something that the Government will be funding? Do we have a decision on that?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** That could be considered in the context of the additional specialist domestic violence workers.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Is there a time frame for when that will be agreed with the Federal Government?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I will refer to the department on exactly where that is at at the moment, if that's all right.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** We are just currently doing the procurement. We are hoping to get that process sorted by the end of this year. Just to note, too, just to your question about Hunter, you may or may not be aware but the Commonwealth set particular quotas for how many workers and they also looked at particular cohorts. They looked at First Nations, CALD, LGBTQIA+, disability, and children and young people. A number of those positions—I think about 99 of those positions—were determined by the Commonwealth in terms of locations and the rest by the State. As the Minister indicated earlier, we looked at the BOCSAR data and a whole range of different data sources. For the Hunter, the Commonwealth have identified six workers and New South Wales has

identified another seven, so that's 13. There is then Newcastle and Lake Macquarie, so the Commonwealth quota is 10 and the recommended allocation from DCJ is 11. That just gives you an idea of the proportion of positions. But we're certainly happy to provide that on notice.

### **Answer**

I am advised:

The Domestic and Family Violence Workforce Development Strategy will consider the need for workers in rural, regional remote areas.

The allocation of new frontline workers is based on rigorous quantitative BOCSAR local government area level information and qualitative data including existing domestic and family violence services in an area. The procurement process to award successful services new contracts or vary existing contracts is likely to take 10-12 weeks.

### **Transcript page 25**

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Yes. And my apologies to all social workers for forgetting something so simple. I couldn't remember the term. But you are absolutely right; there's a range of different specialists that we need in these centres. But I think the focus so far of this Government on some of our more identifiable essential workers has been really great and I have been really pleased to see, in particular, the extra focus on the pay of teachers and nurses. But it seems that community sector workers are not as visible to the Government. I'm wondering when we're going to get to that point of really focusing on that workforce as well. What's the time line, then, for that workforce strategy to come out?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I might just ask Ms Campbell to answer that, about the detail of when it's likely to be out.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes. The survey is open until 12 November. It's likely that early next year, the analysis of the findings, and then engagement with the sector about, well, what are the solutions. It's one thing to do a survey, but the key thing is to identify pipeline strategies to actually address the issues flagged. It may take some time but I'm happy to take it on notice.

### **Answer**

I am advised:

The Domestic and Family Violence Workforce Development Strategy is expected to be finalised by mid 2024.

### **Transcript page 26**

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Can you tell me what the status of the First Nations Women's Economic Participation Review is?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I will take that on notice.

**Answer**

I am advised:

This question should be directed to the Treasurer.

**Transcript page 28**

**The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:** You mentioned what the funding is. What is the dollar value again for the available funding?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** In relation to volunteers?

**The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:** Correct.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** There is an amount of \$200,000 for volunteering within the New South Wales DCJ budget. Then on top of that there is an allocation for The Centre for Volunteering as the peak agency, which I'd have to take on notice for you.

**Answer**

I am advised:

In the 2023/24 Budget, a total of \$200,000 has been allocated to the NSW Volunteering Strategy Budget within the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ).

The Centre for Volunteering, the state peak body for volunteer involving organisations will receive funding from the DCJ State Peaks Program totalling \$811,958 in 2023/24. This funding is separate to the funding available for initiatives under the NSW Volunteering Strategy.

**Transcript page 28**

**The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:** Minister, how many times have you met with the police Minister relevant to your portfolio responsibilities?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I'd have to take that on notice. I certainly provide—obviously, within my diary disclosure, I'm required to disclose meetings with external bodies. I haven't got a record of the number of meetings that I've had with the police Minister, nor the number of conversations that I've had with the police Minister, on me at the moment. I'll have to take that on notice.

**Answer**

Five.

### Transcript page 30

**The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:** Minister, could I ask you about the Staying Home Leaving Violence program, if that's the right word? How much was spent last year compared to this year?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** The total budget for Staying Home Leaving Violence for this year is \$19.3 million. I'll need to come back to you on the previous year.

### Answer

I am advised:

The actuals for Staying Home Leaving Violence in 2022/23 was \$14.8 million.

The budget for Staying Home Leaving Violence in 2023/24 is \$19.3 million.

### Transcript page 31

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Just on that point, I think there was a report at some point that Labor was planning a unit similar to, I understand, what we now have in the Federal Government on the back of the Jenkins report. That was supposed to be a group of people put in place to deal with parliamentary workplace safety and complaints. Are you aware of that?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** Sorry, could you ask the question again?

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Yes. There was a report and I was just put in mind of it—there was a media report that there was I think \$8 million or something. I'll have to find the exact figure, but it was reported that there would be the establishment of a particular unit within Parliament to deal with parliamentary complaints and culture. Is that something you're aware of?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I'd have to take that on notice. I know that there is. It's not firmly on my radar right at the moment.

### Answer

I am advised:

This question should be referred to The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.

### Transcript page 33

**The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:** Minister, if I could just return to volunteers very quickly in the remaining minutes—just wondering, have you met with any of the volunteer groups?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** All of the meetings that I have had with external groups are actually in my ministerial disclosure.

**The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:** The diary disclosure shows that you have not had any meetings with volunteer groups, hence my question today.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** In which case, I have had not had any formal meetings with any volunteer groups.

**The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:** The Minister with responsibility for volunteers—no meetings with volunteer groups. Minister, how many have requested a meeting with you?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** I'd have to take that on notice. As I said, there's 600-odd meeting requests that I have had and my office is in the process of going through them. While not having had formal meetings, I have been at events where volunteers well and truly have been there. In fact, some have been in this very Parliament when Parliament has been sitting.

#### **Answer**

I am advised:

My office has received a high volume of meeting requests from a range of organisations with interest across all of my portfolio responsibilities including volunteering.

#### **Transcript page 35**

**The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR:** Tell me about the centres like the one at Prince of Wales that is going to start and where we are up to there. When are we looking at having that up and running?

**TANYA SMYTH:** The menopause hubs are a NSW Health initiative, so I don't have a lot of information about that. I have been attending their project control group, so they are sort of kicking on with the planning of those.

**The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR:** Ms Smyth, because I ran out of time in Health because it was a bit full on, would you mind taking that on notice and providing the Committee with the update just for the rollout of the menopause hubs, how it's happening, where we're going to open them and things like that? That would be really great. I would be very keen to see that.

**TANYA SMYTH:** Excellent. No problems.

**Answer**

I am advised:

This question should be directed to the Minister for Health.

**Transcript page 40**

**The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:** In a similar line here, in the absence of a budget outcome statement, it's difficult to get detail on expenditure for each of the Minister's responsibilities that my colleague has just listed there as to where their home department is. I understand if this has to be taken on notice, but would it be possible to get the 2023-24 budgeted expenditure for Minister Harrison's responsibilities broken up for her positions, in terms of the Minister for Women, the Minister for Seniors, and the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes.

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** We can answer that now.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I think we can pull it together. I think the Minister this morning actually outlined—

**The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:** She outlined, correct.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** —the domestic and family violence. I think she outlined the 200k.

**The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:** Yes.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Let me just think what I'm missing—and the \$5.1 million, from memory, for carers—and 2.99 million for the Seniors Card program. If I've left anything off we can certainly provide that on notice.

**The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:** Thank you very much—and if we could include the volunteers, the carers and domestic violence.

**Answer**

I am advised:

The Centre for Volunteering, the State Peak body for volunteer involving organisations receives funding from the DCJ State Peaks Program totalling \$811,958 in 2023/24. This funding is separate to the funding available for initiatives under the NSW Volunteering Strategy.

For the domestic and family violence budget see response to transcript page 12 question taken on notice.

Volunteering budget - \$200,000

Carers program budget - \$5.1 million

\$5.1 million budget in 2023/24 supports DCJ's portfolio work for NSW carers, including:

- delivery of the NSW Carers Strategy: Caring in NSW 2020-2030
- support for the NSW Carers Advisory Council
- implementation of the Carers (Recognition) Act 2010.
- peak funding for Carers NSW (\$3.1 million of funding for the peak body, Carers NSW, for the delivery of peak activities over three years through to 30 June 2024)
- Carers NSW will also receive through to 30 June 2024 \$305,235 per year for the Young Carers Program.
- \$900,000 for the delivery of the NSW Companion Card Scheme

The internal budget allocation with the Premier's Department for the 2023-24 Women's Portfolio is \$20.310 Million. Expenses included in the internal budget allocation are employee related expenditure, general operating expenses and grant payments.

#### Transcript page 41

**The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:** If I could move to housing, is there assistance available from this budget to help victim-survivors buy a home, noting the importance of ownership for security?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** That probably fits a bit more in Minister Jackson's portfolio. I know the Aboriginal Housing Office has a particular program, in terms of purchase of homes. I'm happy to take that on notice. The commissioner can talk to the shared equity scheme.

**The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:** That would be helpful.

**HANNAH TONKIN:** Minister Harrison talked about this a bit this morning. Basically, there's a new shared equity scheme that will be extended to victim-survivors of domestic and family violence. The Government's investing \$13 million to expand that in a trial to include domestic and family violence victim-survivors.

**The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:** Which department is that in?

**HANNAH TONKIN:** DCJ.

#### Answer

The NSW Government Shared Equity Home Buyer Helper scheme trial is the responsibility of the Treasurer.

#### Transcript page 41



**The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:** If I could move to the Carla Zampatti fund. In the last budget, a venture capital fund to be named after the late Carla Zampatti was announced, \$10 million to be available for early-stage women-led startups. When announced, it was stated the fund will target opening applications by the end of 2023. Just checking if we might have an update on this.

**TANYA SMYTH:** That doesn't sit with Women NSW, but we can take that on notice and get a response for that.

#### **Answer**

This question should be directed to the Minister for Finance.

#### **Transcript page 42**

**The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:** It was spoken about earlier, I think, by my colleague Ms Boyd, just on the coercive control. I preface this by saying I'm aware that the legislation's due to take effect in July 2024. I'm wondering about the rollout of the coercive control laws. In term of community education, who would be leading that?

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** I can assist the Committee with that. I am the chair of the implementation taskforce. I am guided by a membership of that group, but that taskforce, pursuant to section 54 (5) of the Crimes Act, requires taskforces to establish reference groups. Those reference groups are, in turn, First Nations communities, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, domestic family violence service delivery and lived experience. In turn, there is quite a detailed program of work that has been, and is being, undertaken by those reference groups. The statute requires that the taskforce consults with those reference groups, which it is doing, particularly in relation to the public education campaign and a number of other things—which I can detail.

**The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:** In terms of the budget for funding the public education campaign?

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** There is an allocation. Off the top of my head, I can't recall what is. We're certainly happy to provide those figures.

**The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:** That's okay. You can take it on notice.

#### **Answer**

I am advised:

Funding of \$1.98 million has been allocated to the delivery of community education and awareness about coercive control. The campaign is funded with NSW Government funds under the Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence National Partnership Agreement.