

Notes and costing assumptions continued:

the SVLOs will gather evidence and information from the victim in a manner that contributes to the investigation.

The total impact over the forward estimates is projected to be \$1.8 million.

The policy specifies that the cost should be met within existing resources. The policy specifies that the funding will come from within the NSW Police Force's (NSWPF) existing resources. The costs of the policy could be adequately covered by NSWPF's recurrent budget (\$5.0 billion in the 2022-23 Budget). Hence, the Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO) has costed the policy at nil over the forward estimates.

However, NSWPF has advised that this can only be achieved by re-prioritising funding away from existing service delivery. The PBO notes that absorbing the costs could be difficult in practice and may affect the delivery of some services.

Assumptions

It is assumed that the five officers will be existing staff who will be taken away from their current duties to undertake roles as SVLOs. Hence all support costs (including equipment and travel) and recruitment costs will be met by NSWPF's existing budget.

The policy costs are broken down in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Breakdown of estimated cost

Subcategory	2023-24 \$'000	2024-25 \$'000	2025-26 \$'000	4-year Total \$'000
Wages for 5 Detectives (including Higher Duties Allowance and Overtime)	451	464	-	915
Wages on-costs	33	35	-	68
Motor vehicles (Including running cost expenses and lease payments)	26	26	-	52
Program set up costs (including initial set up and initial intensive training costs*)	225	225	-	450
Costs for Review, reporting and program evaluations	-	300	-	300
Total Expenses	735	1,050	-	1,785

- It is anticipated that the pilot program will commence on 1 January 2024 and run for the 12 months to 31 December 2024.
- Evaluation costs of \$300,000 will be incurred from 1 January 2025 to 30 June 2025.
- As the SVLOs will be required to undertake investigations, the five officers will be entitled to higher duties or detective allowances (\$16,600 per officer annually).
- As the five officers will not be performing their current duties to be SVLOs, NSWPF will incur overtime costs to cover the work performed by these roles. NSWPF has estimated this as 8,740 hours at around \$103 per hour, for \$900,000 over the 12 months to 31 December 2024.
- Program set up costs include the cost of ongoing training sessions to equip the SVLOs with the required trauma-informed approaches and expertise in investigating complex matters. The \$450,000 for 12 months to 31 December 2024 includes travel, accommodation and sundry expenses.

Extension of the pilot of Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service Hearing Support for another 12 months

The policy proposes to extend the pilot Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (WDVCAS) Hearing Support program for another 12 months and also expand the pilot to 15 locations to include the Illawarra.

Notes and costing assumptions continued:

The cost of the policy is \$6.5 million over the forward estimates. This includes the cost to continue the program at existing locations, to extend the program at new locations, and to cover brokerage expenses.

The policy specifies that the funding will come from within the Stronger Communities Cluster's existing resources. The WDV CAS is a program operated by the Legal Aid Commission of NSW (Legal Aid). The costs of the policy could be adequately covered by Legal Aid's recurrent budget (\$482.0 million in the 2022-23 Budget). However, Legal Aid has advised that this can only be achieved by re-prioritising funding away from existing service delivery. The Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO) notes that absorbing the costs could be difficult in practice and may affect the delivery of some services.

Key assumptions

The PBO has consulted Legal Aid in costing the policy.

- The current pilot started on 1 November 2022 and will end on 31 October 2023. Hence, extending and expanding the existing program for 12 months will be from 1 November 2023 to 31 October 2024.
- Legal Aid advised that the cost of extending the pilot for 12 months to existing sites (see *Background*) is dependent on the staffing at these locations.
- Legal Aid has provided the cost of staffing in 2021-22 dollars, to compare against existing funding (see *Background*):
 - Each site has one or more full-time equivalent Grade 5 employee under the *Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award*.
 - The cost of staffing at existing sites has been estimated as \$3.2 million in 2021-22, as aligned with the cost of the existing pilot.
- Legal Aid has advised that there are 13 remaining WDV CAS locations to be covered by the current pilot. These are detailed in Table 2.

Table 2. New proposed local courts to be covered under extended pilot

	WDV CAS	Local Courts proposed
1	Central North West	Walgett, Lightning Ridge, Bourke, Brewarrina, Cobar, Nyngan
2	Central West	Orange, Parkes, Forbes, Cowra, Lake Cargelligo, Bathurst, Lithgow, Oberon, Peak Hill, Blayney, Condobolin
3	Coffs-Clarence	Coffs Harbour, Grafton, Bellingen, Maclean
4	Cumberland	Parramatta
5	Illawarra	Wollongong, Port Kembla, Albion Park, Kiama
6	Macarthur	Campbelltown, Camden, Picton
7	Murray River	Albury, Deniliquin, Holbrook, Corowa, Finley
8	Murrumbidgee	Griffith, Leeton, Hillston, Hay, Narrandera, West Wyalong
9	Nepean-Blue Mountains	Penrith, Katoomba, Windsor
10	New England	Armidale, Glen Innes, Moree, Inverell, Mungindi, Boggabilla, Warialda, Tenterfield
11	Northern Sydney	Manly, Hornsby
12	South Coast	Nowra, Milton, Batemans Bay, Moruya, Narooma, Bega, Eden
13	Southern Sydney	Sutherland
	Total new courts	61

- Legal Aid has estimated that the cost of staffing at the above new locations will be \$2.4 million for 12 months in 2021-22 dollars (to be comparable to existing funding, see *Background*).
- We escalated all salary and wage expenses in 2021-22 dollars to 2023-24 and 2024-25 based on the *NSW Public Sector Wages Policy 2022*. We have then apportioned these as eight and four months in 2023-24 and 2024-25, respectively (see *Table 3*).

Notes and costing assumptions continued:

- Legal Aid has estimated that brokerage costs should also be included in the cost of the policy. These costs are reimbursed to Legal Aid clients and include such expenses as client transport costs to attend hearings.
 - Legal Aid has estimated brokerage expenses are an additional 10 per cent of the cost of staffing, that is \$555,500 in 2021-22.
 - We have escalated the 2021-22 amounts to 2023-24 and 2024-25 by Sydney CPI. We have then apportioned these as eight and four months in 2023-24 and 2024-25, respectively (see *Table 3*).

Table 3. Breakdown of policy costs

	2023-24	2024-25	Total
<i>Cost of extending pilot at 14 existing locations</i>	2,256,181	1,156,293	3,412,473
<i>Cost of expanding pilot to 13 new locations</i>	1,672,686	857,251	2,529,937
<i>Brokerage costs</i>	409,729	210,498	620,228
Total cost	4,338,596	2,224,042	6,562,638

Background

In 2022, the Australian and NSW Governments allocated \$3.2 million for a one-year pilot of a hearing support in 14 WDVCS locations, as part of the *National Partnership on Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence Responses 2021-23*.

This funding in 2021-22 included:

- \$3,190,000 for additional WDVCS staff in pilot sites
- \$50,000 for an independent evaluation of the pilot.

The pilot allows Hearing Support Workers to assist Legal Aid clients in defended hearings at local courts. The WDVCS Hearing Support program aims to improve victims' engagement with the court process and reduce the stress and trauma for victims associated with the court process.

The pilot across 14 WDVCS locations (see *Table 4*) started on 1 November 2022 and will end on 31 October 2023.

Table 4. Existing WDVCS pilot locations

	WDVCAS	Local Courts included in pilot
1	Burwood	Burwood
2	Central Coast	Gosford, Wyong
3	Far West	Broken Hill, Wilcannia, Wentworth
4	Hunter Valley	Cessnock, Kurri Kurri, Maitland, Muswellbrook, Raymond Terrace, Dungog, Scone, Singleton
5	Mid-Coast	Port Macquarie, Taree, Gloucester, Forster, Wauchope, Kempsey, Macksville
6	Monaro-Hume	Queanbeyan, Cooma, Goulburn, Yass, Moss Vale, Young, Bombala, Grenfell, Crookwell
7	Newcastle	Newcastle, Belmont, Toronto
8	North West Sydney	Blacktown, Mount Druitt
9	Northern Rivers	Tweed Heads, Byron Bay, Murwillumbah, Lismore, Casino, Kyogle, Ballina, Mullumbimby
10	Oxley	Tamworth, Walcha, Gunnedah, Quirindi, Narrabri, Wee Waa
11	Riverina	Wagga Wagga, Cootamundra, Gundagai, Junee, Tumut, Temora, Tumbarumba
12	South West Sydney	Liverpool, Bankstown, Fairfield
13	Sydney	Downing Centre, Newtown, Waverley
14	Western	Dubbo, Narromine, Gilgandra, Warren, Coonabarabran, Wellington, Coonamble, Mudgee, Rylstone, Gulgong, Dunedoo
	Total courts covered	73

The evaluation of the program is due to be completed by the end of March 2024.

Notes and costing assumptions continued:

Co-location pilot of Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service workers in police stations for another 12 months

The current 12-month pilot has Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (WDVCAS) workers co-located at five police stations across the State (see *Background*). The policy proposes the following:

- extend the pilot of WDVCAS workers for another 12 months, and
- expand the pilot to a further five sites.

The PBO has costed the policy as \$1.7 million over the forward estimates.

The policy specifies that the funding will come from within the Stronger Communities Cluster's existing resources. The WDVCAS is a program operated by the Legal Aid Commission of NSW (Legal Aid). The costs of the policy could be adequately covered by Legal Aid's recurrent budget (\$482.0 million in the 2022-23 Budget). However, Legal Aid has advised that this can only be achieved by re-prioritising funding away from existing service delivery. The Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO) notes that absorbing the costs could be difficult in practice and may affect the delivery of some services.

Assumptions

The PBO has consulted Legal Aid in costing the policy.

- The current program ends on 23 October 2024 (see *Background*). Hence, the funding for the policy will be from 24 October 2024 to 23 October 2025.

Extending the pilot at existing sites

- Legal Aid advised that the cost of extending the co-location pilot for 12 months to existing sites (see *Background*) will be calculated as the cost of one full-time equivalent Grade 5 employee under the *Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award* per site.
 - Legal Aid has advised that this will be \$602,155 across the five sites, in line with the program funding provided in 2021-22 (see *Background*).
 - As this is the 2021-22 amount, we have escalated the salary and wages to 2024-25 and 2025-26, based on the *NSW Public Sector Wages Policy 2022*.

Expanding the pilot to new sites

- To expand the program to five new sites, Legal Aid has advised one full-time Grade 5 positions will be needed at each site.
 - The award for one full-time Grade 5 positions at each site (\$120,431 per person) in 2021-22 dollars.
- With the program expanding to new sites, an 0.5 FTE Grade 8 position involved in program management is also needed (\$70,000 for 12 months - \$350,000 for five sites in 2021-22 dollars).
- We escalated these salary and wage expenses in 2021-22 dollars to 2024-25 and 2025-26 based on the *NSW Public Sector Wages Policy 2022*. We have then apportioned these as eight and four months in 2024-25 and 2025-26, respectively.
- Hence, the cost of both extending and expanding the WDVCAS pilot is as follows.

Notes and costing assumptions continued:

Table 5. Breakdown of policy costs from 24 October 2024 to 23 October 2025

	2024-25	2025-26	Total
<i>Cost of extending pilot at existing locations</i>	436,531	223,722	660,254
<i>Wages for new Grade 5 employees at normal rates</i>	436,531	223,722	660,254
<i>Wages for new Grade 8 program management employees</i>	253,732	130,038	383,770
<i>Cost of expanding pilot to five new locations</i>	690,263	353,760	1,044,023
Total cost	1,126,794	577,482	1,704,277

Background

In 2022, the Australian and NSW Governments allocated \$652,155 for a one-year pilot where WDVCS workers were co-located at five NSWPF stations, as part of the *National Partnership on Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence Responses 2021-23*.

This funding in 2021-22 included:

- \$602,155 for additional WDVCS staff in pilot sites.
- \$50,000 for an independent evaluation of the pilot.

Under the existing pilot, one WDVCS worker is based at each participating police station (*Table 6*) between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday (as these are standard WDVCS operating hours). The WDVCS worker assists with walk-in clients, including women who visit the station to report or seek information regarding domestic and family violence.

The pilot program started on 24 October 2022 and will end on 23 October 2024.

Table 6. Existing WDVCS co-location sites

	WDVCAS	Local Courts included in pilot
1	Southern Sydney	Kogarah Police Station
2	South West Sydney	Fairfield Police Station
3	Murrumbidgee	Griffith Police Station
4	New England	Armidale Police Station
5	South Coast	Nowra Police Station

Continue and expand Redfern Legal Centre’s Financial Abuse Service NSW through \$2.3 million funding each year

The policy proposes that the Government will provide \$2.3 million funding each year to the Redfern Legal Centre’s Financial Abuse Service NSW.

The policy specifies that the funding will be inclusive of any funding already provided to the Financial Abuse Service NSW and should be met within existing resources.

The policy specifies that the funding will come from within the Stronger Communities Cluster’s existing resources. The PBO considers that the costs of the policy could be adequately covered by Legal Aid’s recurrent budget (\$482.0 million in the 2022-23 Budget). Hence, the PBO has costed the policy as nil over the forward estimates.

However, Legal Aid has advised that this can only be achieved by re-prioritising funding away from existing service delivery. The Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO) notes that absorbing the costs could be difficult in practice and may affect the delivery of some services.

