

2023–24 to 2024–25

Women's Safety and Justice Reform Priorities

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Overview

The Women's Safety and Justice Reform Priorities document (the Priorities document) provides a high-level overview of upcoming key reform initiatives addressing domestic, family and sexual violence, the experiences of women and girls in the criminal justice system, and strengthening police responses to domestic, family and sexual violence.

Queensland's reform agenda is driven in large, by the government's response to three independent reports:

- **Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce Report One:** *Hear Her Voice Report One: Addressing coercive control and domestic and family violence in Queensland*
- **Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce Report Two:** *Hear Her Voice Report Two: Women and girls' experiences across the criminal justice system*
- **Commission of Inquiry into Queensland Police Service responses to domestic and family violence final report:** *A Call for Change*.

The Queensland Government is committed to a long-term, collaborative reform agenda to end domestic, family and sexual violence in Queensland. This Priorities document sets out the key reforms to be implemented by government over two years (2023–24 to 2024–25). It outlines the important interconnections and sequencing across the government's response to the three reports, as well as scheduled delivery of key milestones.

This Priorities document highlights a subset of key reform initiatives, rather than providing a complete list of all change activities.

Scheduled timeframes are indicative and are subject to change due to emerging needs and priorities and the complexity of the reform being undertaken. Timeframes for delivery do not necessarily include preparatory work relating to planning, research, and development, nor do they include post-delivery activities relating to ongoing implementation and embedding initiatives.

The document will be updated and released every two years until implementation of the government response is complete.

Further details can be found at:

www.justice.qld.gov.au/initiatives/queensland-government-response-womens-safety-justice-taskforce-recommendations/our-reform-priorities

Our foundation

In March 2021, the Queensland Government established the independent Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce (WSJT) to examine coercive control and review the need for a specific offence of 'commit domestic violence,' and the experiences of women and girls across the criminal justice system.

The WSJT released two reports, *Hear her voice – Report One – Addressing coercive control and domestic and family violence in Queensland* and *Hear her voice – Report Two – Women and girls' experiences across the criminal justice system*, making a total of 277 recommendations for whole of system reform.

The Queensland Government released responses to both reports in 2022 (Report 1 in May 2022 and Report 2 in November 2022), supported by a \$588 million funding commitment to implement the recommendations.

As part of its response to WSJT recommendations in Report One, the Queensland Government established an independent Commission of Inquiry to examine policing responses to domestic and family violence to ensure public confidence in the ability of Queensland's Police Service to protect victims and hold perpetrators to account.

A Call for Change: Commission of Inquiry into Queensland Police Services responses to domestic and family violence (COIDFV) was released in November 2022, containing 78 recommendations to provide improved support and protections for victims of domestic and family violence and to address cultural issues within the Queensland Police Service.

A further \$100 million in funding was committed to implement select priority reforms from the COIDFV.

*WSJT – Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce

*WSJTR1 – Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, *Hear Her Voice – Report one, Addressing coercive control and domestic and family violence in Queensland*

*WSJTR2 – Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, *Hear Her Voice – Report two, Women and girls' experiences across the criminal justice system*

*COIDFV – *A Call for Change: Commission of Inquiry into Queensland Police Service responses to domestic and family violence*

*DFSV – Domestic, family and sexual violence

*DFV – Domestic and family violence

*QPS – Queensland Police Service

*Rec – Recommendation

*SV – Sexual violence

*R – Report

What we have achieved

Since the release of the Government responses to the WSJT reports and COIDFV, significant progress has been made, including:

- Establishment of the First Nations Justice Office and appointment of Queensland's inaugural First Nations Justice Officer to address over-representation of First Nations peoples in Queensland's criminal justice system and meet Queensland's Closing the Gap justice targets (WSJTR1 Rec 1).
- Strengthening of the Respectful Relationships Education Program, available to schools, with updated resources and training materials to deliver age-appropriate respectful relationships education to students on topics including consent, where to seek help and reporting of sexual assault, ethical decision-making, coercive control, forms of abuse and drivers of gender-based violence (WSJTR1 Rec 10).
- Establishment of a new High-Risk Team in Townsville to improve the safety of victim-survivors at risk of harm from DFV (WSJTR1 Rec 18).
- Establishment of specialist DFV Courts in Brisbane and Cairns (WSJTR1 Rec 50).
- Commencement of the *Domestic and Family Violence Prevention (Combating Coercive Control) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2023* (WSJTR1 Recs 52–60 and 63–66).
- Introduction of legislation into Parliament to establish a new court based DFV perpetrator diversion scheme (WSJTR1 Rec 74).[^]
- Introduction of legislation into Parliament to make coercive control a criminal offence (WSJTR1 Rec 78).[^]
- Appointment of an Independent Implementation Supervisor to provide impartial oversight of implementation of WSJT and COIDFV and ensure government accountability (WSJTR1 Rec 88 and WSJTR2 Rec 188).
- Appointment of an interim Victims' Commissioner to ensure the voices of victims of crime are heard and that enduring systemic improvements continue to be made (WSJTR2 Rec 18 and COIDFV Rec 78).
- Introduction of legislation into Parliament for an affirmative model of sexual consent and recognition of 'stealth' as rape (WSJTR2 Rec 43 and 44).[^]
- Commencement of changes to legislation which removed the prohibition of identifying accused rapists and defendants charged with other prescribed sexual offences before committal (WSJTR2 Rec 83).
- Delivery of further specialist DFV training to frontline police officers (COIDFV Rec 17).
- Establishment of a private, safe secure area in QPS stations for persons presenting for DFV matters (COIDFV Rec 29).
- The First Nations Justice Office established domestic and family violence (DFV) as a key priority and allocated resources to adequately support this (COIDFV COI Rec 65 and 66).

Where we are now

This Priorities document sets out the key activities to be progressed by the Queensland Government over 2023–24 to 2024–25. It highlights the key reform activities, rather than a complete list of all reform work underway, including:

- Co-designing a whole of government and First Nations community strategy and action plan (WSJTR1 Rec 1).
- Developing and implementing a plan for the primary prevention of violence against women in Queensland (WSJTR1 Rec 9).
- Establishing a DFV Peak Body to represent the DFV service sector (WSJTR1 Rec 17).
- Establishing a new High-Risk Team in Redlands (WSJTR1 Rec 18).
- Developing a trauma-informed, evidence-based training and change management framework for government and all DFV support services (WSJTR1 Rec 23), and exploring options to embed this training (WSJTR1 Rec 24).
- Trialling and evaluating a suite of youth perpetrator interventions (WSJTR1 Rec 25).
- Developing and implementing a DFV specialist services Workforce Capability Strategy to attract, recruit and retain a skilled workforce to deliver DFV services (WSJTR1 Rec 30).
- Trialling and evaluating collaborative co-response model between QPS and a DFV specialist service provider in Cairns (WSJTR1 Rec 37).
- Planning and designing infrastructure upgrades to improve safety of victim-survivors attending courts (WSJTR1 Rec 49).
- Developing a statewide approach to specialisation of DFV response in courts including by supporting registries to enhance stakeholder coordination and engagement (WSJTR1 Rec 50).
- Developing a whole of government Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence System Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (WSJTR1 Rec 85, WSJTR2 Rec 184) to monitor progress and outcomes.
- Developing a state-wide professional victim advocate service (WSJTR2 Rec 9).
- Expanding the model of integrated response to sexual assault to two more regional locations (WSJTR2 Rec 11).
- Appointing a permanent Victims' Commissioner (WSJTR2 Rec 18 and COIDFV Rec 78).
- Developing a whole of government strategy for women and girls in the criminal justice system as accused persons and offenders (WSJTR2 Rec 93, 108, 141 and 175).
- Trialling and evaluating outcomes of body-scanning technology at the Brisbane Women's Correctional Centre (WSJTR2 Rec 136).
- Delivering a housing and support pilot program for women on remand to assist them with their housing needs to prevent them from being detained in custody longer than necessary (WSJTR2 Rec 164).
- Implementing a system to measure QPS demand and effectiveness of police responses to DFV (COIDFV Rec 1).
- Reviewing QPS resourcing demand and allocate funding and positions to provide effective DFV response (COIDFV Recs 2 and 3).
- Establishing DFV Vulnerable Persons Units in each district (COIDFV Rec 7).
- Embedding specialist DFV workers in police stations (COIDFV Rec 10).
- Improving QPS DFV training programs (COIDFV Rec 28) and requiring designated QPS roles to undertake specialist DFV training (COIDFV Rec 17).

Where we are going

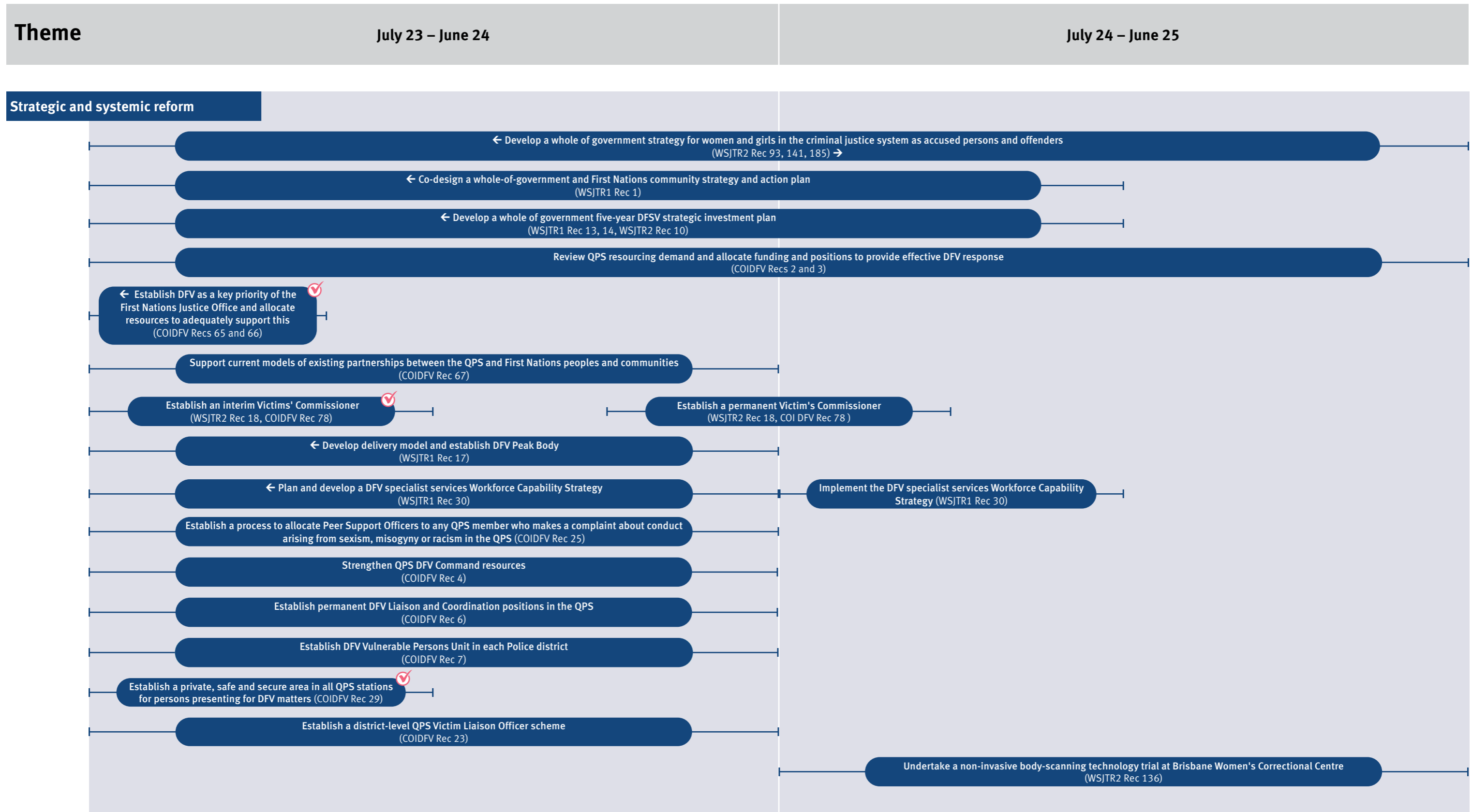
From 2025–26, we will build on our achievements focusing on the next phase of the reform program including key reform activities:

- Establishing a new High-Risk Team in Rockhampton (WSJTR1 Rec 18).
- Constructing upgrades to court infrastructure in Maroochydore, Brisbane, Cairns, Mackay, Rockhampton and Toowoomba to improve the safety of victim-survivors attending court (WSJTR1 Rec 49).
- Developing and implementing an integrated inter-agency response to support victim-survivors of sexual violence through the criminal justice system (WSJTR2 Rec 14).
- Funding and undertaking a pilot restorative justice program for adults who commit DFSV offences to provide victim-survivors with a voice in the criminal justice system (WSJTR2 Rec 92).
- Developing and implementing a range of trauma-informed, gender-responsive and culturally capable training modules for staff in all youth justice services. The modules will support staff in providing practical guidance for managing girls in the youth justice system who have experienced sexual violence, physical violence, and domestic and family violence (WSJTR2 Rec 140).
- Exploring opportunities for the delivery of programs and services to support women and girls prior to and following their release from custody (WSJTR2 Rec 171).
- Developing and implementing a monitoring and evaluation plan to measure outcomes of the whole-of-government strategy for women and girls in the criminal justice system (WSJTR2 Rec 185).

Footnote

[^] On 11 October 2023, these amendments were introduced into the Queensland Parliament in the Criminal Law (Coercive Control and Affirmative Consent) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. Once introduced into Parliament, amendments are subject to Parliamentary and other processes before passage and commencement can occur. These amendments will, if passed, commence on a day to be fixed by proclamation.

Schedule of Key Priorities 2023–24 to 2024–25



WSJTR1 Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, *Hear Her Voice – Report one, Addressing coercive control and domestic and family violence in Queensland*

WSJTR2 Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, *Hear Her Voice – Report two, Women and girls' experiences across the criminal justice system*

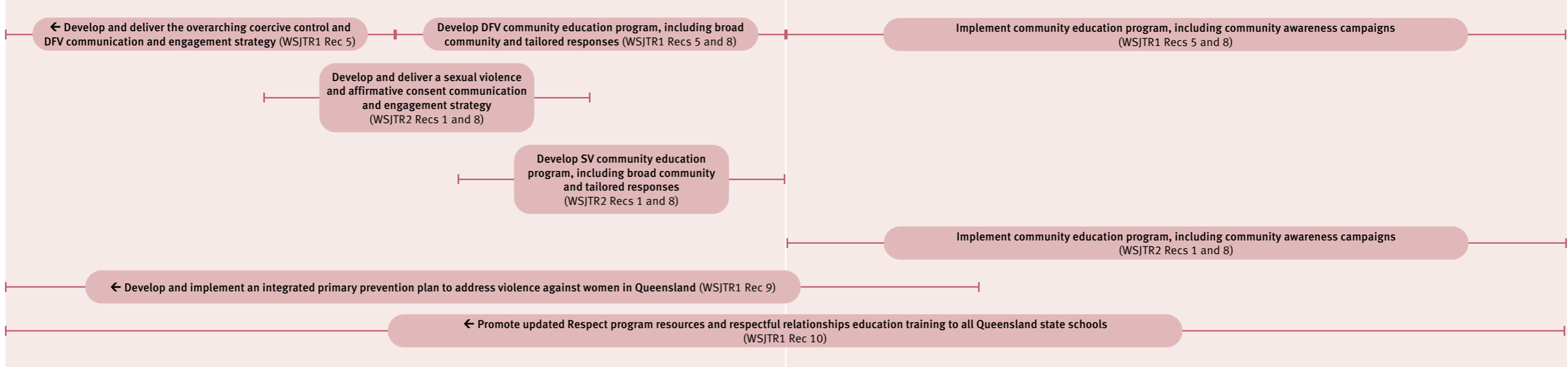
COIDFV *A Call for Change: Commission of Inquiry into Queensland Police Service responses to domestic and family violence*

DFV Domestic and family violence
DFSV Domestic, family and sexual violence
SV Sexual violence
 ← Commenced prior to July 2023
 → Continues beyond June 2025

✓ Delivered

Theme	July 23 – June 24	July 24 – June 25
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Raising awareness and primary prevention



Legislative reform

- Commence the *Domestic and Family Violence Prevention (Combating Coercive Control) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2023* (WSJTR1 Recs 52–60 and 63–66)
- Introduce amendments to criminalise coercive control (WSJTR1 Rec 78)[†]
- Introduce amendments to provide for an explicit aggravating sentencing factor in specific circumstances (WSJTR1 Rec 79)[†]
- Introduce amendments to establish a new court based DFV perpetrator diversion scheme (WSJTR1 Rec 74)[†]
- Introduce amendments to legislate an affirmative model of consent (WSJTR2 Rec 43)[†]

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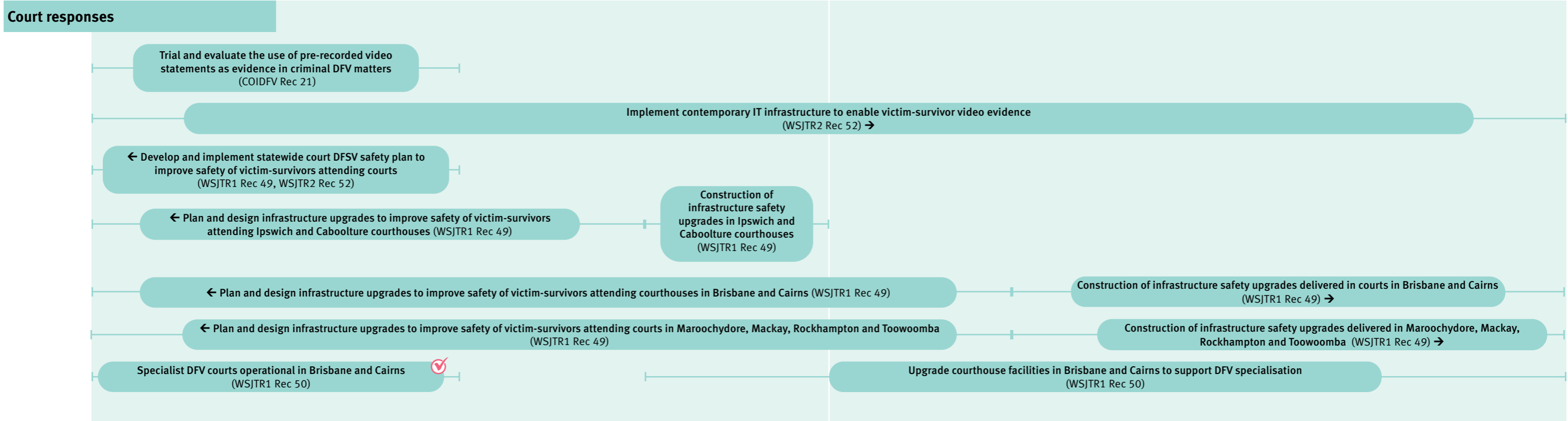
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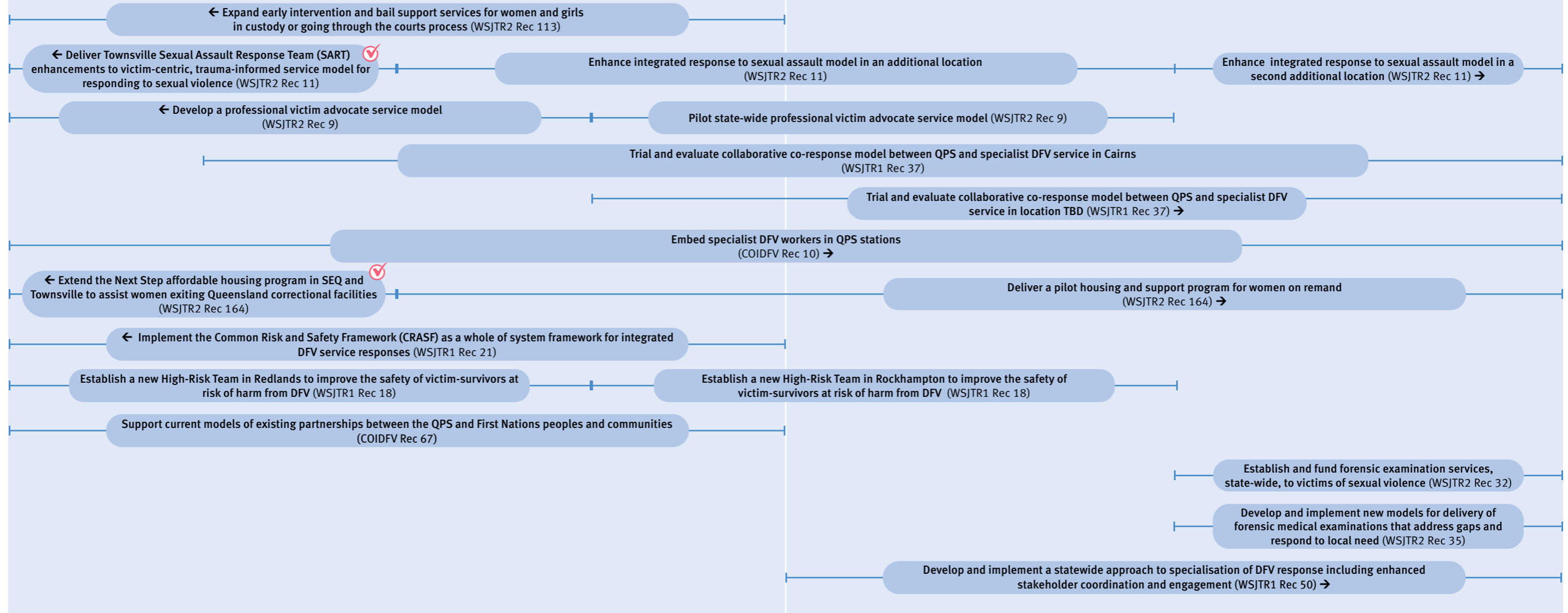
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Theme

July 23 – June 24

July 24 – June 25

Service system responses



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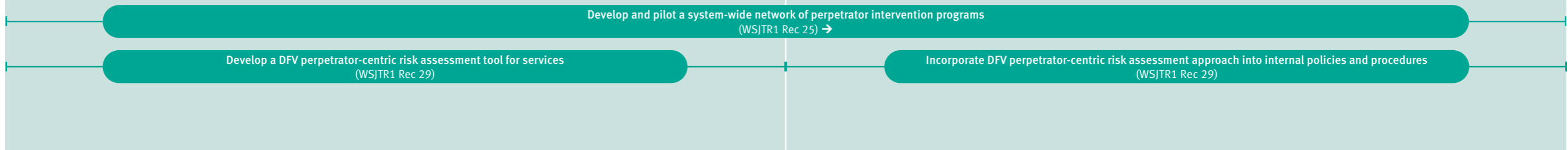
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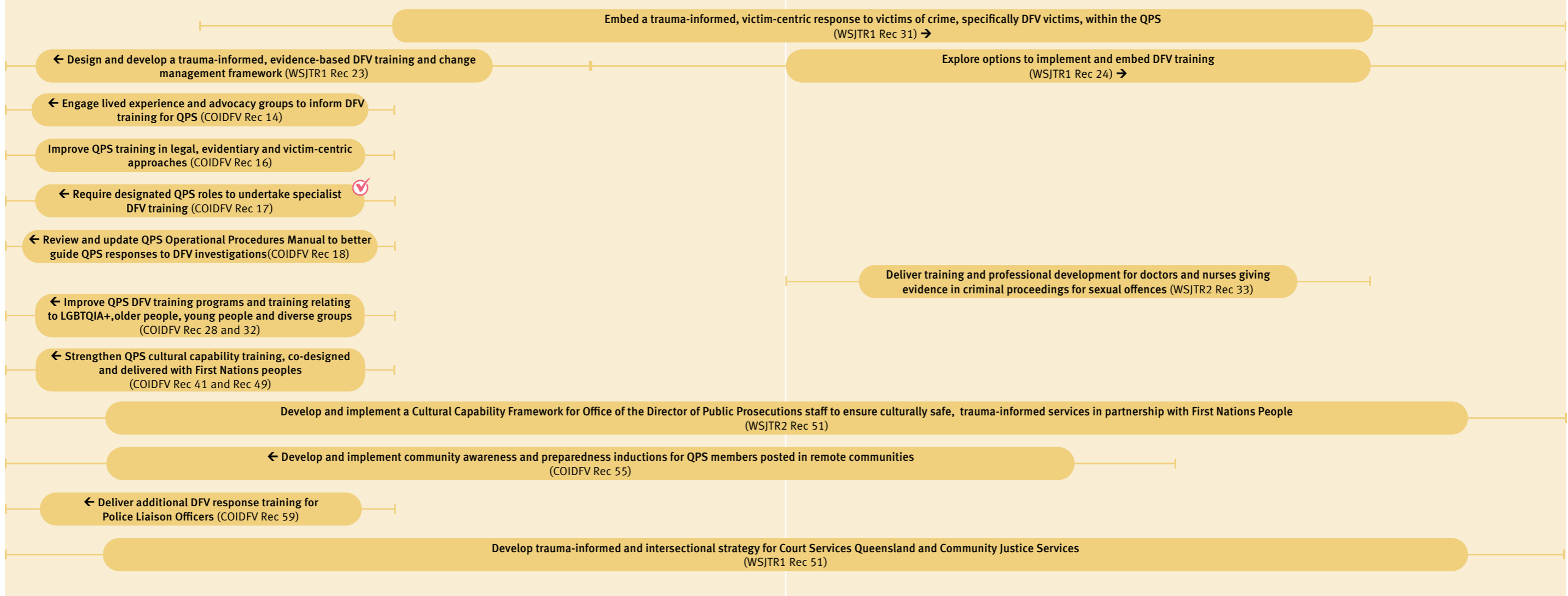
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Perpetrator accountability



Training and Education



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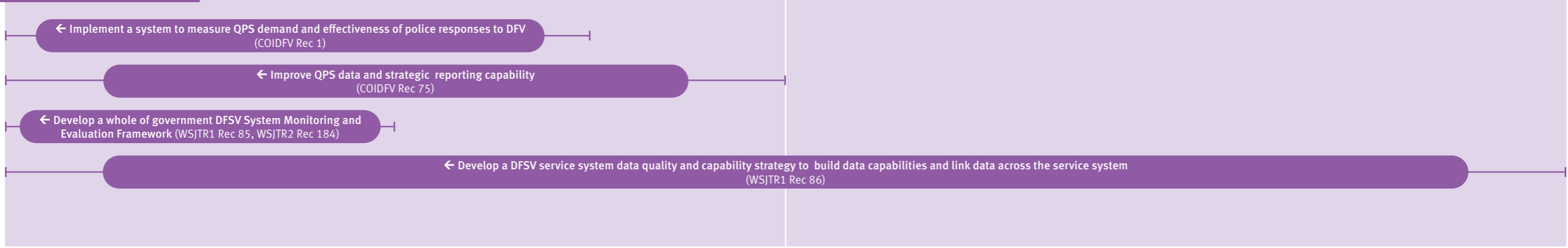
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Research, evaluation and reporting




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