



# The Office of the Independent Implementation Supervisor

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Women's Safety and  
Justice Taskforce reforms

**Progress Report (December 2022)**

## Acknowledgement of Country

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21 December 2022

The Honourable Shannon Fentiman MP  
Attorney-General and Minister for Justice,  
Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence  
1 William Street  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

The Honourable Mark Ryan MP  
Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services  
1 William Street  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Attorney-General and Minister for Police and Corrective Services,

In accordance with a letter of advice from the Premier of Queensland and Minister for the Olympics and Paralympics, the Honourable Annastacia Palaszczuk MP dated 21 November 2022, I have been appointed as the interim Independent Implementation Supervisor in line with the following Report recommendations:

- Recommendation 88, Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce's *Hear her voice: Report One- Addressing coercive control and domestic and family violence in Queensland*, regarding oversight of the recommendations from the report.
- Recommendation 188, of the second report of the Taskforce *Hear her voice: Report Two-Women and girls' experiences across the criminal justice system*, regarding oversight of the recommendations from the report; and
- Recommendation 76 of the Commission of Inquiry into Queensland Police Service responses to domestic and family violence *A Call for Change* regarding oversight of the recommendations from the report.

As required by my terms of engagement, I am pleased to provide a report outlining the progress and adequacy of implementation of the Government Response to *Hear her voice – Report One – Addressing coercive control and domestic and family violence in Queensland*. The report also outlines the engagement I have had to date with key stakeholders across Government and a high level indicative workplan for early 2023.

Yours sincerely,

Linda Apelt  
Interim Independent Implementation Supervisor

## Executive Summary

Since assuming the role as interim Independent Implementation Supervisor (IIS) on 28 November 2022, I have familiarised myself with [Hear Her Voice Reports One and Two, A Call for Change](#) and the associated Queensland Government responses. I have engaged with key stakeholders including the Honourable Shannon Fentiman MP, Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, and had useful briefings with both the Program Management Office (PMO) established within the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, and the Special Coordinator for Police and Emergency Services Reform (SCPESR) established to coordinate the implementation of all major transformational activities within the Queensland Police Service (QPS).

The PMO is currently coordinating formal Queensland Government reporting on Report One, and I thank them for providing me with advice about interim progress and achievements in the first six months of delivering the Government's response (refer to pages 5 and 6 of the Progress Report for details). The interim update indicates that:

- 60 of 89 recommendations have commenced (67 per cent)
- 14 of 89 have already been delivered (16 per cent)
- 15 of 89 have not yet commenced (17 per cent), largely due to a direct dependency on another recommendation or the requirement that recommendations be delivered sequentially.

I have prioritised talking directly with the Queensland Government agencies tasked with responsibility for overseeing, leading, or supporting implementation of the Government Response to the 89 recommendations of Report One.

I have heard from them about their approach to implementation and their views on challenges and opportunities. As noted above, the first formal Government reporting round for Report One is currently underway, and as a result this Progress Report has been primarily informed by those discussions and supplementary material provided by agencies. (Refer to pages 6 - 8 of the Progress Report for details).

I have also met with Mr Scott McDougall, Queensland Human Rights Commissioner in relation to Recommendation 12 in *A Call for Change* which requires the QPS to engage with the Queensland Human Rights Commission.

## Key findings and conclusion

In considering the progress and adequacy of implementation of Report One, I am satisfied from my initial discussions that lead and supporting agencies:

- have a clear understanding of the scope of their implementation responsibilities in relation to Report One
- are enacting or considering appropriate agency and/or project level governance arrangements
- are strongly committed to achieving meaningful reforms through their approach to implementation
- are alert to the challenges and opportunities associated with delivering the reforms
- are prepared to work with the IIS in the spirit intended and comply with any reasonable requests for information.

Agency representatives generally indicated they were approaching implementation of Report One recommendations within the context of their existing efforts and commitments towards preventing and



responding to domestic, family and sexual violence. They are mindful of the need to identify interdependencies and connections with recommendations from several relevant reforms.

Regarding agency views about implementation challenges and opportunities, common themes raised include:

- workforce capability and capacity
- difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff
- the need to balance 'doing' with 'reporting'
- consultation fatigue
- the time needed to achieve sustainable, long-term cultural and behavioural change
- the benefits of applying a thematic approach to like recommendations from the various reports under consideration
- the importance of mapping, making connections and coordinating initiatives within and across agencies
- the opportunity presented by bipartisan commitment
- the opportunity to build on existing reforms.

I was pleased by their willingness to engage in an open and frank manner with the IIS, and that they welcomed my intention to work with them early to identify blockages and areas for improvement, as well as problem-solving, identifying best practice and sharing when things are going well.

I intend that the next stage of work for the IIS during my appointment will be to finalise establishment of the small supporting Secretariat, continue analysing the Implementation Plan for Report One, develop an indicative workplan for the Office of the IIS (OIIS), and undertake 'deep-dives' into selected recommendations by engaging with key external stakeholders to ascertain their views on progress.

I consider the OIIS is in a unique position to be able to take a 'helicopter' view of progress. By adding value and going beyond the regular reporting expected to be undertaken by agencies, it will be able to provide advice to the Queensland Government where adjustments to the reform program are needed. Importantly, in fulfilling its role, I hope the OIIS will provide the broader Queensland community with confidence that the reforms are delivering the lasting change envisaged by the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, and that remedial action is being taken where needed.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge the breadth, scale, and complexity of the program of reform to be undertaken, as well as the extensive work already underway by agencies to deliver on the Government's commitments. Agencies do not have an easy task ahead – however my initial view is that they are making steady progress towards honouring the voices of everyone who told their story or contributed to the *Hear her Voice* and *A Call to Change* reports.

## Background

The role of the Independent Implementation Supervisor (IIS) is to provide oversight of the progress of implementation of the Queensland Government responses to the recommendations from the following three reports, and report directly to the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence: and the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and the Minister for Fire and Emergency Services:

- [\*Hear her voice – Report One – Addressing Coercive control and domestic and family violence in Queensland\*](#) (Report One)
- [\*Hear her voice – Report Two – Women and girls’ experiences across the criminal justice system\*](#) (Report Two)
- [\*A Call for Change: Commission of Inquiry into Queensland Police Service responses to domestic and family violence\*](#) (*A Call for Change*)

The IIS will also:

- undertake strategic communication and engagement with Queensland Government departments, central agencies, key external stakeholders, advisory and industry bodies regarding implementation to inform supervisory functions to report on implementation progress of the Government’s response to the three reports
- support continuous process improvement by supervising implementation of the Government’s reform program, informed by data, performance measurement, analysis that will be developed for implementation activities across the reform programs
- where appropriate, engage with government agencies during the planning and design phases of implementation to provide advice on the development of reform programs.

I am honoured to have accepted the role in an interim capacity until March 2022 while recruitment for the role is undertaken. As required by the terms of my engagement, the purpose of this report is to outline the progress and adequacy of implementation of the Queensland Government Response to Report One.

## Progress to date

### *Activities undertaken by the Office of the IIS (OIIS)*

Since assuming the role of the Interim Independent Implementation Supervisor on 28 November 2022 I have familiarised myself with *Hear Her Voice* Reports One and Two, *A Call for Change* and the associated Queensland Government responses and engaged with key stakeholders.

I have met with the Honourable Shannon Fentiman MP, Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence and attended the most recent meeting of the Women’s Safety and Criminal Justice Directors-General Steering Committee.

I have had useful early discussions with the Program Management Office (PMO), Department of Justice and Attorney-General, and the Special Coordinator for Police and Emergency Service Reform (SCPESR) established to coordinate the implementation of all major transformational activities within the Queensland Police Service (QPS).

Officers from the PMO and SCPEER have advised that a significant body of work is underway to implement the Government response to recommendations made in Report One while implementation planning is underway for Report Two. They have also provided information about their proposed governance frameworks and approach to monitoring, evaluating, and reporting on the *Hear Her Voice* Reports One and Two and the *A Call for Change* reforms.

I have prioritised engaging with the Directors-General of agencies with implementation responsibilities for Report One and have met with their nominated key contacts to discuss their approach to implementation, as well as challenges and opportunities. Meetings have been held with the following agencies:

- Department of Justice and Attorney-General
- Queensland Police Service
- Queensland Corrective Services
- Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs
- Queensland Health
- Department of Education
- Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy
- Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships
- Queensland Treasury

I have also met with Mr Scott McDougall, Queensland Human Rights Commissioner in relation to Recommendation 12 in *A Call for Change* which requires the Queensland Police Service to engage with the Queensland Human Rights Commission.

### *Progress update from the PMO*

The PMO is responsible within Government for monitoring, evaluation and reporting on whole-of-government implementation progress, outcomes, and impact of the Government response to the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce (WSJT) recommendations. The PMO is currently coordinating the first formal reporting round for Report One (as of 31 December) and interim updates have been received from lead agencies on all Report One recommendations. Results indicate that:

- 60 of 89 recommendations have commenced (67 per cent)
- 14 of 89 have already been delivered (16 per cent)
- 15 of 89 have not yet commenced (17 per cent), largely due to a direct dependency on another recommendation or the requirement that recommendations be delivered sequentially.

Reported achievements include:

- Introducing the first tranche of legislation—the **Domestic and Family Violence Protection (Combating Coercive Control) and Other Legislation Amendments Bill**— to Parliament on 14 October (Recommendations 52–60 and 63–66).
- Uplifting the existing **High-Risk Teams (HRT)** and commencing planning to expand the HRT model to include three new locations - Townsville HRT, Brisbane South HRT located in Redlands: and Rockhampton HRT (recommendation 18).
- Launching of the revised **Domestic and Family Violence Common Risk and Safety Framework** on 15 July 2022 (Recommendation 21).

- Launching the new **Prep to Year 12 ‘Respect’ program** to offer resources to help guide teachers and students so they benefit from the Respectful Relationships Education Program (Recommendations 10–11).
- Finalising the **Commission of Inquiry into Queensland Police Service Responses to Domestic and Family Violence**, with the final report delivered to the Government on 14 November 2022 and released on 21 November 2022 (delivering Recommendation 2).
- Undertaking activities to recruit the **First Nations Justice Officer** to deliver co-designed whole-of-government and First Nations community strategy to address over-representation of First Nations peoples in the criminal justice system (Recommendation 1).
- Finalising procurement of an external contractor to develop a **whole-of-government monitoring and evaluation framework** (Recommendation 85) and undertake subsequent annual system-level evaluations. In support of improved monitoring and evaluation, this procurement will also establish the foundational documents to **uplift data collection and reporting capabilities** across the domestic, family and sexual violence service sector and service system (Recommendation 86).

### *Agency approaches to implementation*

Representatives from agencies with lead or supporting implementation responsibilities under Report One outlined their approach to implementation in the initial agency meetings with the OIS and were invited to provide supplementary material. A summary is below:

#### *Department of Justice and Attorney-General (DJAG)*

- In addition to hosting the PMO, DJAG has responsibility for leading or jointly leading 74 Government responses to Report One recommendations. It also supports responses to recommendations led by other agencies.
- DJAG has established an internal Program Management Board to strategically connect streams of work and ensure a holistic, robust, and collaborative approach is applied to delivery of the suite of reforms and management of the associated additional investment and resources.
- The large program of work includes responses to recommendations relating to specialist courts expansion; legislative amendments; service system improvements; communication and awareness raising activities; as well as training, education and change management for the domestic and family violence and justice systems.

#### *Queensland Police Service (QPS)*

- QPS leads or jointly leads implementation of the Government responses for seven Report One recommendations and supports responses to recommendations led by other agencies.
- The SCPEER, with support of a small team, has commenced work on prioritising and program systemising the QPS allocated recommendation suite specific to the WSJT and the Independent Commission of Inquiry into QPS responses to domestic and family violence.
- There has been an early sprint which has included the allocation of 3 and 6-month time-bound recommendations to senior responsible action officers to mitigate time constraints noting the Christmas / New Year Leave period.
- Early engagement with QPS and DJAG is also underway to maximise efficacy with a standard reporting view across agencies which will prove beneficial as they progress in their specific scope. Standard reporting against the QPS recommendation suite is being established to achieve consistency across all elements of the broader Police and Emergency Services Reform Program.



### *Department of Education (DOE)*

- DOE leads implementation of the Government responses for two Report One recommendations (Recs 10 and 11) and advises their implementation is on track. They also support implementation of several recommendations.
- The *Respect* program and Respectful Relationships Education Hub were released on 7 October 2022. The *Respect* program is available to all Queensland schools, including youth detention centres and includes age-appropriate materials to support students with building healthy and respectful relationships. The Respectful Relationships Education hub provides parents, secondary school students and school staff with information on respectful relationships, domestic and family violence, consent, help-seeking and reporting sexual assault or harm.
- Dedicated staff will provide teachers with training to support best-practice delivery of respectful relationships education.

### *Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs (DCYJMA)*

- DCYJMA leads implementation of the Government responses for two Report One recommendations (Recs 12 and 22). They also support implementation of several recommendations.
- Work is underway to procure appropriate Respectful Relationships-based training materials for young people who are disengaged from schooling. The initial approach is to target several locations and services young people might attend such as youth support services, youth homelessness services, residential care services and youth justice services. After a provider has been engaged, they will work with these services to identify the most appropriate approach to implementation of the material for young people.
- The Safe and Together training continues to be embedded across the state. The Department is supporting 10 staff to undertake train-the-trainer to further enhance capacity to delivery and embed the training.”

### *Queensland Health (QH)*

- QH leads implementation of the Government response for one Report One recommendation (Rec 19) and supports implementation of several others. It also has a significant number of reform drivers in the domestic, family and sexual violence policy area.
- To ensure that the implementation is sustainable and achieves the reform goals they will be undertaking a stocktake of activities so far, and then theming and prioritising the implementation of recommendations of the *Hear her Voice* Reports One and Two, the Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board annual reports, Queensland Audit Office, and the Commission of Inquiry into Forensic DNA analysis.

### *Queensland Corrective Services (QCS)*

- QCS is supporting implementation of several Government responses for Report One recommendations. It is establishing a dedicated PMO to deliver several implementation activities focused on improving outcomes for women in the correctional system.
- The PMO will manage both the QCS response to the WSJT recommendations, and the Transforming Corrections, Transforming Lives project in partnership with Griffith University which is focused on breaking the cycle of inter-generational offending through the provision of trauma informed rehabilitation and service delivery for women and children in custody.
- The QCS Transformation Office will provide oversight of all implementation activities, ensuring executive leadership has a continuous view of program delivery.

### *Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (DSDSATSIP)*

- DSDSATSIP is supporting implementation of several Government responses for Report One recommendations.
- It has established internal governance mechanisms to ensure the *Hear Her Voice* reforms are aligned with the intent of other significant reform initiatives including *Path to Treaty* and *Closing the Gap*.
- DSDSATSIP is also well-placed to support lead agencies connect with communities, particularly in relation to engagement and co-design of implementation initiatives with First Nations people and improving cultural capability.

### *Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy (DCHDE)*

- DCHDE is supporting implementation of several Government responses for Report One recommendations.
- It has internal governance arrangements in place to enable clear line of sight to relevant recommendations and continues to build the capacity and capability of frontline staff to recognise, respond and refer people experiencing or at risk of domestic, family, and sexual violence.

### *Indicative OIIS workplan for early 2023*

It is proposed that the next stage of activity for the OIIS will be to:

- Develop a proposed longer-term OIIS workplan.
- Consider the first formal Queensland Government report on implementation to be provided to the OIIS.
- Engage with key external stakeholders, advisory and industry bodies, including the Queensland Law Society, Legal Aid Queensland; the Bar Association of Queensland; and the Victorian Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor.
- Engage with key implementation stakeholders for selected recommendations and develop case studies of successful initiatives for inclusion in future reports.

## Key findings and conclusions

In initial meetings and material provided to the Office of the Independent Implementation Supervisor, Queensland Government agencies responsible for leading or supporting the 89 recommendations of Report One have demonstrated a strong and clear commitment to implementing the Government Response.

Agencies:

- have a clear understanding of the scope of their implementation responsibilities in relation to Report One
- are considering appropriate agency and/or project level governance arrangements
- are strongly committed to achieving meaningful reforms through their approach to implementation
- are alert to the challenges and opportunities associated with delivering the reforms
- are prepared to work with the OIIS in the spirit intended and comply with any requests for information.

Agencies indicated they were generally approaching implementation of Report One recommendations within the context of their existing efforts and commitments towards preventing and responding to domestic, family and sexual violence, and with an eye to interdependencies and connections with recommendations from a number of relevant reforms, including but not limited to Report Two; *A Call to Change*; the Review of Culture and Accountability in the Queensland Public Service; the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Forensic DNA Testing in Queensland; recommendations of the Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board; and the Queensland Audit Office report - *Keeping people safe from domestic and family violence*.

They raised common themes regarding implementation challenges and opportunities, including:

- workforce capability and capacity, both within government and the non-government sector
- difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff, particularly in regional and remote locations
- the need to balance 'doing' with 'reporting' - agency representatives indicated they would welcome reporting and governance rationalisation across the reform agenda to ensure that it is meaningful and drives real systemic change
- consultation fatigue – noting reforms are occurring at a national and state level
- the time needed to achieve sustainable, long-term cultural and behavioural change
- delivering recommendations in a short timeframe in addition to other reforms presents challenges, as the reforms take time to be implemented due to their wide ranging and systemic nature
- the importance of localised responses, having regard to Queensland's urban, regional, and remote communities
- the benefits of applying a thematic approach to recommendations
- the importance of mapping, making connections and coordinating initiatives within and across agencies
- the opportunity presented by bipartisan commitment to reforms
- the opportunity to build on momentum and existing reforms.

By adding value, ascertaining stakeholder views, and going beyond the regular reporting expected to be undertaken by agencies, the OIIS will be able to provide advice to the Queensland Government where adjustments to the reform program are needed. Importantly, if it fulfills its role as intended the OIIS will be able to provide the broader Queensland community with confidence that the reforms are delivering the lasting change envisaged by the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce.

The breadth, scale, and complexity of the program of reform to be undertaken is acknowledged, as well as the extensive work already underway by agencies to deliver on the government's commitments. Agencies do not have an easy task ahead – however they appear to be making steady progress towards honouring the voices of everyone who told their story or contributed to the *Hear her Voice* reports.