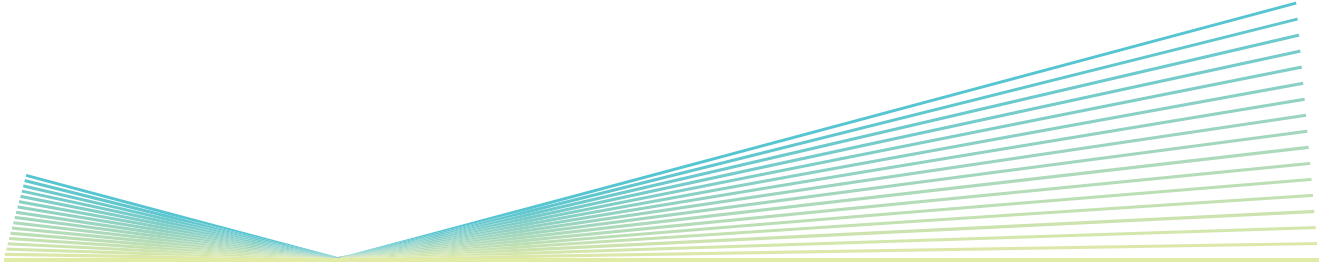


*Summary of report as at
1 November 2019*

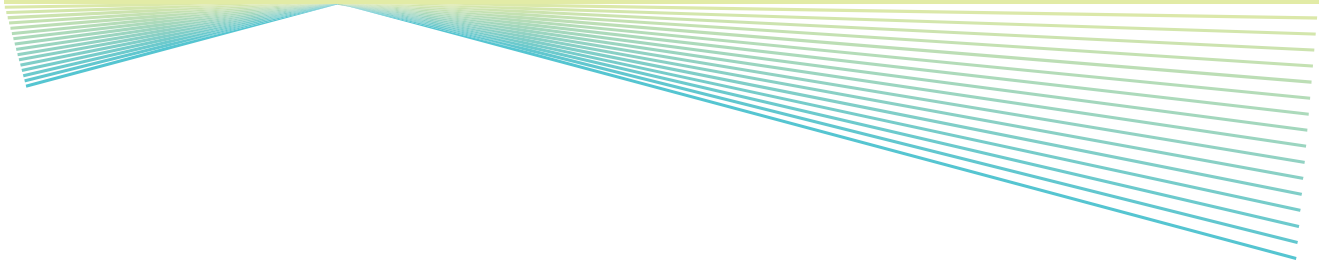
Jan Shuard PSM

For the full context and findings from our monitoring, we strongly recommend reading the report available at www.fvrim.vic.gov.au

Printed copies are also available, if required, by contacting our office on 03 9651 0043 or info@fvrim.vic.gov.au



Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor



Report Foreword



CLEAR OVERSIGHT AND DIRECTION

- Impressed by whole-of-government structures and reporting arrangements now in place across the reform program
- Enactment of new legislation to ensure key elements of the reforms are enduring
- Machinery-of-government changes to support implementation and delivery
- Reconfirmation of allocation of responsibility for remaining recommendations among 11 individual government Ministers.



PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

- Moved by the numerous partnerships with the Victorian community to embed a culture of co-design across the system
- Strong examples are the Victim Survivors' Advisory Council and *Dhelk Dja – Safe Our Way: Strong Culture, Strong Peoples, Strong Families* the Aboriginal community-led long-term partnership agreement and directions to ensure Aboriginal people can be free from violence.



DEDICATED AND FOCUSED GOVERNMENT BODIES

- Observed an active learning organisation in Family Safety Victoria with a structure that supports evidence-based policy, effective project delivery and co-design
- Clear role for DPC Family Violence Branch reporting on whole-of-reform activity, outcomes, expenditure, risk mitigation approaches and strategic direction setting
- The establishment in statute of Respect Victoria to contribute to primary prevention signifies the commitment to long-term generational change.



PRODUCTION OF THE 2019 REPORT

My grateful thanks goes to:

- Tim Cartwright APM and Simon Kent for their support and wise guidance
- FVRIM staff for their ongoing commitment during this time of changing Monitors
- Those in the government and non-government sectors for their assistance and cooperation with the Monitor's office.

Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor

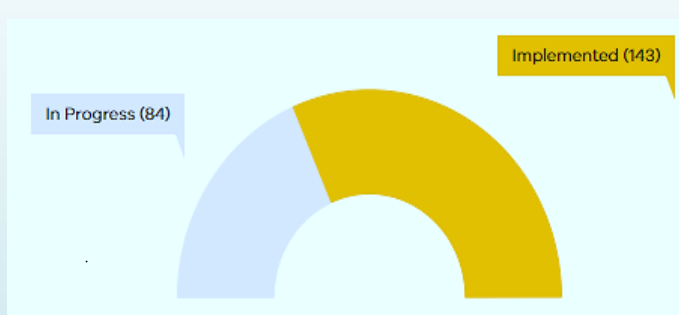
Acquitting the 227 Royal Commission's recommendations is akin to assembling the building blocks and cementing them into place. These represent the foundations, girders and walls of the structure designed to support a completely reformed service system. My role is to provide an independent account of progress made at this time and advise on the stability of the structure as the building blocks all fit together.

- I have felt **the dedication, commitment and drive** of those across government and its community sector partners to create the best possible service system responses for victim survivors.
- I have seen an **immense positivity** about the future, a **solid commitment** and **unprecedented investments** to deliver on the recommendations.
- This appears to me to be underpinned by **strong governance arrangements, transparent reporting** and **dedicated people** working together with a **strong and common purpose**.
- I intend to work closely with the government agencies responsible for implementation of these reforms and to maintain strong relationships with the sector so that we can continue to **listen to the voices of victim survivors**, as well as the dedicated professionals working tirelessly in this area.
- We could not do justice to our mandate without these **close alliances** and I look forward with pride and optimism to working alongside the designers of the system and their service delivery partners.

Context

Implementing the Royal Commission Recommendations

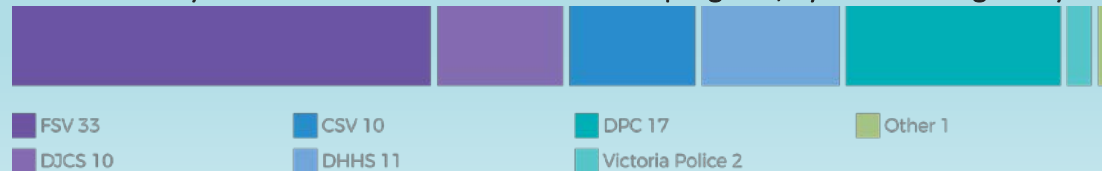
- In the past year, a further 23 of the Royal Commission's recommendations have been implemented.
- brings the total to 143 of 227 recommendations implemented, with 84 remaining 'in progress'
- responsibility is spread across Ministers and coordinating entities as shown below, with the largest number of recommendations with the Minister for Prevention of Family Violence (34) and Family Safety Victoria (33), an administrative office of DHHS established in 2017.



Number of Royal Commission recommendations 'in progress', by Minister responsible



Number of Royal Commission recommendations 'in progress', by coordinating entity



Major achievements

My report notes the major achievements in the reform over the past year against each of the government's four primary outcome areas.

These achievements include:

- 449 new schools have signed-on to implement the Respectful Relationships whole-school approach, a total of 1,483, which represents 78% of Victorian Government schools opted in
- African Communities Family Violence Leadership Program funded 15 African ethno-specific and community organisations
- 13 Aboriginal-led services funded through the Free from Violence Innovation Aboriginal fund to deliver family violence prevention projects
- Victoria Police commenced using Video and Audio Recorded Evidence for family violence matters
- Specialist Family Violence Court in Shepparton commenced operating
- The Orange Door at Inner Gippsland opened
- The Orange Door 2018 evaluation report completed
- Fourteen new sites acquired for family violence refuges
- Umalek Balit Koori family violence program has commenced at Melbourne Magistrates' Court and Mildura Law Court
- Ten perpetrator intervention programs trialled targeting diverse cohorts, with 250 people receiving a tailored intervention under the trials
- 208 new family violence specialist police deployed
- 21 new detective sergeants, 140 detective senior constables and 46 senior constable Family Violence Court Liaison Officers deployed.

Specialist Family Violence Courts

- Royal Commission recommended all family violence matters be heard in specialist family violence courts
- Funding has been allocated for five of 14 courts recommended; two have opened (Shepparton and Ballarat)
- Robust governance structure and coordinated program of work
- Active monitoring and management of risks
- Family Violence Contact Centre established in May 2018 now receives approx. 6,500 enquiries per month, providing more timely and accessible service to the public as well as freeing up staff time at local courts
- Umalek Balit ('give strength' in the language of the Wurundjeri people) works with Aboriginal people to guide them through the court process - implemented in Melbourne and Mildura and progressing well
- Significant steps to ensure voices of victim survivors are used, inc. a Victim Consultant role
- Consideration of the needs of children and young people has been flagged as a future area of focus - critical for responding to Royal Commission.



Multi-Agency Risk And Management Framework (MARAM)

- Risk assessment is the process that frontline professionals engage in to assess the likelihood of future harm or death based on information related to past acts of family violence - a complex, comprehensive, ongoing and dynamic process
- Royal Commission directed its first three recommendations to risk assessment, and it is a key focus of the reform work in Victoria
- MARAM is a suite of policy, practice tools, training, legislation, regulation and formal reviews to change both practice and culture
- It will ultimately affect more than 355,000 staff in over 5,800 organisations (as shown at right)
- Strong legislative oversight and review process
- Significant progress in a short time: legislation, organisations prescribed, training commenced, practice guidelines and tools published
- Children are recognised as victim survivors of family violence in their own right, with specific risks and needs, including a dedicated assessment tool
- New information sharing legislation is being enacted in a phased manner, to give powers to request and provide information to prescribed organisations
- Information sharing schemes are dependent on strong risk management – sequencing of the two did not align as intended, and a gap emerged for some organisations in their risk management training and practice.

Group	Types of organisations	New information sharing powers	Number of organisations	Number of staff
Initial Tranche	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Child protection > Specialist family violence services > Sexual assault services > Child FIRST > Victoria Police > Magistrates' Court and Children's Court > Victims Support Agency > Corrections Victoria > Court-mandated men's behaviour change programs 	February 2018	249	4,931
Phase 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Other family services > Homelessness services > Out-of-home care > Youth justice > Maternal and child health > DHHS Housing > Mental health services > Alcohol and other drug services > Some other specific services 	September 2018	608	32,647
Phase 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Hospitals > GPs > Schools and other education organisations 	Due 2020	7,500	370,000

Source: FVRIM, based on information from Family Safety Victoria and Victorian Government, Regulatory Impact Statement: Family Violence Protection (Information Sharing and Risk Management) Amendment Regulations 2020, Final Report 17 October 2019. Available at engage.vic.gov.au/family-violence-maram-and-information-sharing-reforms (accessed 2 December 2019).

Implementing MARAM: Good practice examples

Department of Justice & Community Safety's Culture Change Strategy

- DJCS, with funding from FSV, worked with a private consultancy to develop a culture change strategy to support implementation of the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme based on proven change management evidence and informed by extensive consultations.
- The strategy recognised that each of the department's entities has a distinct sub-culture and identified specific priorities and initiatives tailored to each of these groups – corrections / prisons, health services for prisoners, community programs, victim support and youth justice.
- Included a maturity model, with six characteristics of successful information sharing and assessed each of the DJCS entities' maturity against each of these elements as embryonic, emerging or embedded, creating a baseline for monitoring implementation of the strategy.
- Assessed the importance, urgency and complexity of each of the proposed initiatives on a matrix prioritising actions and resources.

Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Limited (VACSAL)

VACSAL took an important and strategic approach to implementing MARAM by developing a family violence policy for the organisation. The policy addresses many complex but crucial issues, including:

- the historic and ongoing effects of colonisation, dispossession and racism in Aboriginal communities' experiences of and exposure to violence, as well as gender issues
- how it will manage emergency situations, staff who experience family violence, staff who disclose family violence, staff who disclose that they choose to use family violence
- self-care for staff working with family violence.

Developing this comprehensive policy greatly enhanced VACSAL's capacity to communicate clearly with its community around how and why it might need to share information about family violence with other organisations including Victoria Police, and its general approach to the complex issues around family violence in Aboriginal communities.

VACSAL advised that one of the key learnings is that it initially approached the matter as a compliance issue because the information sharing schemes were legislated before the broader MARAM training and resources were available, but it has since learnt that the risk assessment and management discussion through MARAM should come first.



Perpetrator accountability

The Royal Commission made eight recommendations about increasing the accountability perpetrators of family violence which focus on short- to medium-term changes with a view to:

- enhancing existing perpetrator interventions, such as men's behaviour change programs and counselling orders
- increasing the supply of existing perpetrator interventions to respond to demand
- improving research and evaluation to establish longer-term effectiveness in improving the design of men's behaviour change programs
- expanding the breadth of specialist perpetrator interventions to respond to perpetrators with complex needs and from diverse cohorts.

The Expert Advisory Committee on Perpetrator Interventions was convened in 2016:

- report (pictured, right) publicly released in October 2019
- 22 recommendations about how to improve the range, accessibility and robustness of perpetrator interventions available in Victoria
- a strategy is due for release in 2020.

Other progress in perpetrator accountability identified:

- Victoria Police has established 415 new specialist family violence police roles and 113 other specialist roles such as lawyers and intelligence staff
- new case management program for perpetrators was trialled in 2018 and funded ongoing in 2019-20 State Budget. Trials targeting specific 'minority cohorts' are also underway
- DJCS trialled interventions for five different groups of perpetrators with complex needs. An evaluation showed benefits for targeted cohorts including an improved understanding of the dynamics of family violence and its impacts on children
- FSV is also trialling new perpetrator interventions. Case management for 2,000 perpetrators over two years and seven community-based interventions targeting 'minority cohorts'.



The Orange Door

- The Royal Commission recommended that a ‘Support and Safety Hub’ be established in each of DHHS’s 17 areas to integrate and co-locate the three types of intake services in the family violence system.
- The Orange Door is currently operating in five areas:
 - Bayside Peninsula area, Frankston – opened 14 May 2018
 - Mallee area, Mildura – opened 31 May 2018
 - Barwon area, Geelong – opened 31 May 2018
 - North East Melbourne area, Heidelberg – opened 10 July 2018
 - Inner Gippsland area, Morwell – opened 20 November 2018.
- A further three are planned for opening during 2020, as shown on the map at right.
- The Orange Door requires three different workforces to work in an integrated way: services for victims of family violence, perpetrators and children and families.
- A clearer plan for how The Orange Door will upskill staff where they are required to do work outside their scope of practice would be beneficial – a strategy to support staff as the service model evolves was developed during 2019.
- This integrated practice challenge was a major focus of a position paper published by Domestic Violence Victoria in March 2019 – a new working group has been established to work through the implementation issues in the paper.
- An independent evaluation completed in 2019 recognised that it was very early in the implementation and the practice was still developing. It noted a very strong commitment from organisations and professionals involved to make The Orange Door successful.



Voices of victim survivors

- The Royal Commission recommended that the voices of victim survivors be heard and inform both policy development and service planning. Its conclusions discussed a need to directly inform service planning and evaluations of services' performance with a view to system improvement.
- The Victim Survivors' Advisory Council (VSAC) has 12 members with a variety of personal experiences of family violence – a range of supports is provided to them.
- In August 2019, Rosie Batty AM formally resigned as Inaugural Chair. A further eight original members have tenures that expired at end of 2019.
- VSAC are consulted on a large number of different reform activities. VSAC met with the former Monitor in May 2019 and they communicated some examples where they felt that they were being used as a 'gatekeeper' to consult and their input was not used, or they were not advised on how their input was used.
- FSV is developing a Client Partnership Strategy for The Orange Door. This work has drawn on good practice models from other sectors and also explores strategies for partnering with specific communities. Progressing this work will make a substantial contribution to implementing the Royal Commission's recommendation.

Good practice example: Evaluation of the therapeutic intervention trials

Twenty-six family violence therapeutic intervention demonstration projects were funded to trial new ways to provide intensive support to people and communities experiencing or recovering from family violence.

An evaluation of the trials was completed in January 2019, which included:

- interviews with 107 clients, including children and young people
- a substantial commitment from both the clients themselves, and the evaluators and government agencies, to ensure that the voices of victim survivors are heard in service review and development.

The evaluation was also significant because it was used to directly inform the approach to a substantial new investment, \$20.9 million over four years committed in the 2019-20 state budget to establish the state-wide platform for therapeutic interventions.

Together these undertakings represent a strong example of including the voices of victim survivors, including children and young people, into service and policy reform.

Whole-of-reform matters

- *Respect Women: Call It Out* campaign has been seen by Victorians more than 11 million times. Close to half of all Victorians are able to recall this campaign and its key messages unprompted, and 44% have taken further action. This has been followed by the *Respect Older People: Call it out* campaign which began in 2019 to target elder abuse.
- Demand for family violence services continues to grow, likely due in part to increased community awareness resulting from reforms. Workforce resourcing has been identified by government as one of the top five risks to the reform.
- *Building from Strength: 10-year Industry Plan for Family Violence's* 3-year action plan was released in November 2019 to address the workforce challenge.
- *Everybody Matters: Inclusion and Equity Statement* published in April 2019 is a 10-year commitment which responds to a series of Royal Commission recommendations.
- Important steps were taken during the monitoring period to identify the key strategic risks to the reform. (See detail at right).
- A new whole-of-government monitoring and reporting framework which includes overall reform progress reporting should make an important contribution to the reform. One change has been adding that the Interdepartmental Committee on Family Violence Reform now reviews and endorses all requests from agencies for extensions or implementation of Royal Commission recommendations, as shown below:



Strategic risk management

The Victorian Secretaries' Board Sub-Committee on Family Violence Reform considered the top five strategic reform risks at its meeting on 22 August 2019.

The risks identified were:

- integration planning
- financial
- stakeholder engagement
- data and demand
- workforce resourcing.

These risks are a feature of the quarterly whole-of-government monitoring and reporting approach.

After these risks were identified, the Interdepartmental Committee on Family Violence Reform was directed to identify 'cross-cutting' mitigation actions for these risks and this work is underway.

More attention to some key areas will be beneficial

My report identifies some areas that will benefit from attention as the reform progresses.

Children and young people

- Formally incorporate into the specialist courts model how courts can better respond to the needs of children and young people
- Using the voices of children and young people in interventions for fathers who have used violence should be followed closely to understand the impact of this approach.

Communication with the sector

- Organisations working with perpetrators are eagerly awaiting the MARAM tools for risk assessment with perpetrators and are unclear about when they will be available
- Sector stakeholders want to be better informed about how and when The Orange Door will mature beyond the foundational model currently in operation
- Whilst broad engagement is a strength of the reforms, we need to closely watch the potential for consultation fatigue amongst the many governance committees to ensure stakeholders remain engaged.

Voices of victim survivors

- To fully respond to the Royal Commission's recommendation it will be important for agencies to keep developing experience and practice around working with victim survivors and ensuring their voices are informing policies and services
- Progressing the Client Partnership Framework initiatives for The Orange Door.

The Orange Door

- A clearer plan of how The Orange Door will upskill staff where they are required to work outside their scope of practice and training during peak demand would be beneficial
- The foundational documents including operational guidance are not well understood or used by practitioners – this will be an important matter to resolve
- The survey to collect client experience and feedback introduced in July 2019 should be used to inform the evolution of the service model
- The Orange Door Working Group of the Statewide Reference Group formed in 2019 needs its Terms of Reference to be clear about how it is connected to decision-making, either through relevant staff and executives as members or by clearly connecting it with those governance groups that have decision-making roles, or both.

Other

- Further planning and delivery of DJCS's *Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme Culture Change Strategy* will be beneficial to realise the potential of this high-quality strategy
- Improving data collection to measure what matters most, rather than adapting the outcomes measured to the available data, may take time but will be more effective.

Our 2020 Monitoring Approach



1. What has been achieved since the Royal Commission and what is still to be done, by whom?

- major achievements in past five years
- most significant areas still in progress and any barriers
- strengths and weakness of implementation approaches for key reform areas
- how has the service system changed? Focus on victim survivors' experiences, including a Call for Submissions from service delivery organisations.



2. Are there any cracks in the system that need attention for the whole reform to continue progressing? How are they being managed?

We are planning rapid deep dives into the following areas:

- financial sustainability
- service integration
- workforce
- housing
- children and young people.

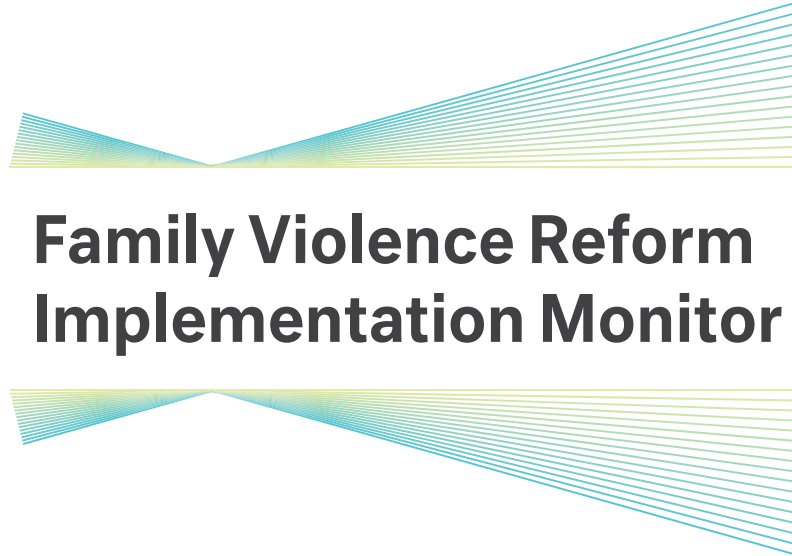


3. How effective has this monitoring function been?

Recommendations to inform ongoing monitoring of family violence reforms in Victoria, and any other monitoring functions that may be established.

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