

Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Cross Agency Working Group - Communique

Meeting 21 of the Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence (DFSV) Cross Agency Working Group (CAWG) was held in Darwin on 5 December 2023. The meeting was attended by representatives from:

- the domestic and family violence networks in Darwin, Alice Springs, Big Rivers, Barkly and the Top End Remote Safe House network;
- the Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities (TFHC), the Department of the Attorney-General and Justice, Northern Territory (NT) Correctional Services, the Department of Education, the Department of Health, NT Police, Fire and Emergency Services (NTPFES), the Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet;
- the NT DFSV Aboriginal Advisory Board;
- the Northern Territory Council of Social Service (NTCOSS), Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance NT (AMSANT) and the NT Legal Assistance Forum.

Strategic discussion on future funding needs

The CAWG agreed to hold a workshop to discuss how to meet the gaps identified in the Mapping Report, plan for Action Plan 3, and respond to recommendations from the Coronial (expected around April). The workshop will include a briefing on existing funding allocations under AP2, a review of the gaps identified in the Mapping Report which were not funded (or not fully funded), and agreeing CAWG priorities for any additional funding that may be identified.

Implementation of sentencing reform

CAWG members discussed mandatory sentencing repeal and implementation, and raised issues including:

- How risk assessment will be conducted, and the role of the Common Risk Assessment Tool
- Opportunities for training for judicial officers
- Monitoring of the outcomes of sentencing reform in relation to domestic and family violence (DFV) offenders, and the impact on support services. It was agreed that regular data would be provided to CAWG by the Department of the Attorney General and Justice
- The need for consistent support for victim survivors through the court process.

Minimum Standards for Programs for People who have committed DFV

The CAWG discussed the draft document that had been developed, and provided feedback to improve the clarity, consistency and scope of the document. CAWG members also raised concerns about the timeframes provided for consultation on these important reforms.

It was agreed that the document would be further refined in response to the feedback provided, and that a final consultation round would occur. The document scope has been refined so it clearly covers Men's Behaviour Change Programs (MBCP), and focusses on the minimum standards required for MBCPs to be declared under the new reforms.

CAWG members were advised that the declaration process for the existing MBCPs is in train (enabling them to receive court ordered participants once the legislation commences), and that MBCPs will have time to comply with the standards.

Katherine Local Reference Group Tennant Creek Local Reference Group Top End Remote Safe House Network NT Legal Assistance Forum



CAWG Terms of Reference review

A review of the Terms of Reference has been completed and a paper provided to the CAWG for discussion. The review examines the size, function and membership of the CAWG, and makes recommendations. These require further discussion at the next meeting.

Next meeting

The next CAWG meeting will be held on 12 March 2024.

For more information about the CAWG, contact the Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Reduction Division on dfv@nt.gov.au