



Australian Government
Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commission

2025–29



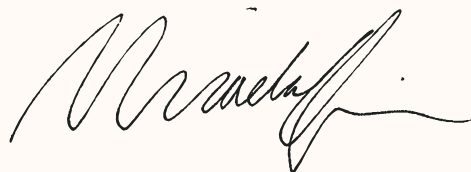
Corporate Plan

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Statement of preparation

I, Micaela Cronin, as the accountable authority of the Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commission (the Commission) present the Commission's *Corporate Plan 2025–29*. The Plan covers reporting period financial years 2025–26 to 2028–29, as required under paragraph 35(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act) and in accordance with section 16E of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014* (PGPA Rule).



Micaela Cronin
Commissioner
31 August 2025

Commissioner's foreword



Three years on from the establishment of the Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commission (the Commission), our purpose is clearer than ever.

We were established to help drive the change needed to end violence against women and children in one generation, and to hold governments accountable for making that change happen.

Our *Corporate Plan 2025–29* sets out how we will work towards that goal. It reflects both the progress we have made and the lessons we continue to learn from listening deeply to people with lived and living experience, from engaging with frontline workers and sector leaders, learning from research and analysis of processes and data and from examining advice about where systems are failing and where they are succeeding.

We strive to ensure that the experiences and perspectives of people who have been directly affected by domestic, family and sexual violence are at the centre of our work. Their advice is not an optional input to policy, it is essential to designing responses that will genuinely prevent harm, improve safety and promote healing.

In the year ahead, we will focus on strengthening national coordination, ensuring more consistent monitoring and evaluation of the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032* (the National Plan) and amplifying voices from across diverse communities. This includes deepening our partnerships with First Nations leaders to address the impact of violence on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children. We will continue to have a key focus on working with those who are disproportionately affected by domestic, family and sexual violence including culturally and linguistically diverse communities, LGBTQ+ people, women with disability and others whose perspectives must be part of national decision-making.

We will continue to challenge ourselves and others to take a whole-of-system view. Domestic, family and sexual violence does not exist in isolation, it intersects with issues such as housing, health, education, justice and economic security. To make a lasting difference, we must work across these policy areas and across jurisdictions to create coherent, person-centred systems that do not leave people to navigate gaps or silos.

The Commission continues to build a strong and agile capability base, grounded in trauma-informed practice, inclusive engagement and cross-sectoral knowledge. We will continue to refine our systems, invest in our people and strengthen our partnerships to maximise our influence and impact. We are committed to continuous improvement, system learning and using our growing networks to drive meaningful, coordinated and accountable action on gender-based violence.

Ending gender-based violence in one generation is an ambitious goal, but it is the right one. The work is complex, and the pace can be frustrating, but there is expertise, courage and commitment in every part of the system. Our task is to harness that and keep us all focused on the change our communities need and deserve.

Micaela Cronin
Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence
Commissioner

Acknowledgement of Country

The Commission acknowledges the traditional country throughout Australia on which we gather, live, work and stand. We acknowledge all traditional custodians, their Elders past and present, and we pay our respects to their continuing connection to land, waters and community.

The Commission acknowledges and honours the work of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to end domestic, family and sexual violence and is committed to partnering with First Nations communities in this work.

We acknowledge that we have a great deal to learn from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of working. The Aboriginal concept of Dadirri informs our approach (Atkinson 2002). Dadirri refers to a deep contemplative process of listening to one another in reciprocal relationships. The word Dadirri is of the Ngangikurungkurr people of the Daly area of the Northern Territory. The activity of Dadirri has an equivalent in many other First Nations communities across Australia.

Acknowledgement of people with lived and living experience of domestic, family and sexual violence

The Commission acknowledges the individual and collective expertise of people with experience of domestic, family and sexual violence. The Commission recognises their vital contribution at all levels and values the courage of those who share this unique perspective for the purpose of learning and growing together to achieve better outcomes for all.

The Commission values the unique experiences, protective factors and strengths of children and young people and acknowledges they are also affected by domestic, family and sexual violence.

Note on terminology

The language we use when we talk about domestic, family and sexual violence matters.

Terminology used to discuss domestic, family and sexual violence, gender-based violence and violence against women and children highlights the ongoing complexity of working in the space, as definitions vary within and across jurisdictions. We recognise that not all terminology will reflect the lived experience of all people, and we will seek to use the most inclusive language possible.

The Commission will always remain open to learning and updating its language as it grows and welcomes advice from people with lived experience.

Domestic, family and sexual violence

The Commission uses the definition of domestic, family and sexual violence as set out in the National Plan.

Domestic violence refers to any behaviour within a past or current intimate relationship (including dates) that causes physical, sexual or psychological harm. Family violence is a broader term that captures violence perpetrated by parents (and guardians) against children, between other family members and in family-like settings.

Sexual violence refers to sexual activity that happens where consent is not freely given or obtained, is withdrawn, or the person is unable to consent due to their age or other factors. It also occurs any time a person is forced, coerced or manipulated into any sexual/sexualised activity.

Sexual violence can be non-physical and include unwanted sexualised comments, intrusive sexualised questions or sexual harassment.

Gender-based violence or violence against women and children

The National Plan uses the terminology 'violence against women and children' to acknowledge the high prevalence of men's violence against women and children.

Wherever possible, the Commission uses the term 'gender-based violence' to recognise the impact of domestic, family and sexual violence on people of all ages, genders, sex characteristics and sexualities. This language recognises gendered violence is primarily perpetrated by men against women, while recognising higher rates of domestic, family and sexual violence experienced by LGBTQ+ communities and other cohorts are underpinned by patriarchal norms.

People with lived experience or victim-survivors

We recognise and respect the terminology used by people who identify as victims and/or survivors of domestic, family and sexual violence. This language acknowledges the strength and resilience of people experiencing violence and is a powerful tool for advocacy. Where people are comfortable being described in such terms, we will do so.

We also recognise that there are many people who may have experienced domestic, family and sexual violence but do not identify with the terminology of victim-survivors.

The Commission recognises that there are many perspectives of the experience of domestic, family and sexual violence, and in using the term 'people with lived experience' we seek to be inclusive of the breadth of experiences.

People who use violence or perpetrators

The phrase 'people who use violence' refers to the individual who uses domestic, family and sexual violence to cause harm to another. People who use violence are sometimes referred to as a 'perpetrator' at legal and policy levels.

The term perpetrator aims to hold people who use violence accountable for their behaviour, and we respect the broad use of this term in the sector. The term can also be alienating and a barrier to healing and recovery for some people who use violence.

The Commission chooses to use the term 'people who use violence' where possible.

About the Commission



OUR PURPOSE



The Commission's core purpose is to amplify the voices of people with lived experience of domestic, family and sexual violence, providing evidence-informed policy advice, and promoting coordination and accountability towards ending gender-based violence.

Our story

The Commission is a national body dedicated to addressing and ending violence against women and children in all its forms. The Commission was established as a non-statutory executive agency within the Australian Government Department of Social Services under the *Public Service Act 1999* on 1 July 2022, and as a listed non-corporate Commonwealth entity on 1 November 2022 (C2022G00246).

Australia is one of only 3 countries in the world to have established such a Commission.

On 4 June 2020, the House Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs (the Committee) adopted an inquiry into family, domestic and sexual violence. The Committee's final report was published on 1 April 2021, and it made 88 recommendations that sought to inform the development of the National Plan. Recommendation 23 was that the Australian Government establish as an independent statutory office a National Commissioner for the prevention of family, domestic and sexual violence.

The executive order establishing the Commission, issued by the Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia on 17 March 2022, sets out the following functions:

- provide strategic policy advice to the Minister for Women's Safety
- promote and enhance coordination across Commonwealth, state and territory governments, and the not-for-profit and private sectors
- promote coordinated and consistent monitoring and evaluation frameworks by all governments for the National Plan
- develop and maintain a supportive and structured approach to victim-survivor engagement
- inform priorities for policy, research and data collection in cooperation with jurisdictions and relevant organisations and agencies
- promote the objectives of the National Plan across all parts of Australian society.

The Commission is not a statutory office; it is an executive agency. As an executive agency, the Commission is independent from the Department of Social Services (the Department). This enables the Commission to fulfil its function in monitoring the progress of the National Plan.

How we work

The Commission is focused on practical and meaningful ways to measure progress towards the objectives outlined in the National Plan, informed by what is important to people with lived and living experience and what the research, data and frontline workforce are telling us. We work in partnership with relevant government and non-government actors and people with lived experience to hold space for these national conversations.

Principles for action

Five principles for action underpin the Commission's approach to everything we do. The principles reflect the complexity of the challenges the Commission faces, and the approaches necessary to tackle them across our diverse country:

- **Inquiring:** we will approach challenges with curiosity and openness, and use insights, evidence, and expertise to inform strategic advice.
- **Collaborative:** we will facilitate coordination and connection across communities, sectors, and governments.
- **Responsive:** we will maintain flexibility to respond to emerging issues and needs.
- **Dignity:** we recognise our actions contribute to people with lived experience being heard, understood, safe and supported.
- **Influence:** we will influence positive change and inform priorities for policy, research, and data collection.

Empowering people with lived and living experience

Underpinning our approach will be ensuring that people with lived and living experience of domestic, family and sexual violence are centred in policy development and implementation decisions – because we know that the people best placed to inform change and improve system reform are those that have needed it most in the past.

This approach takes time.

By upholding the dignity of people with lived and living experiences, we strive to ensure that everyone who engages with the Commission feels supported, safe and empowered to contribute in the most effective way possible. Everyone's story is different. When we talk about statistics, we are talking about individuals who each have uniquely intersecting experiences, needs and perspectives. We need to hear these perspectives to make the best decisions and drive change.

Alignment with the National Agreement on Closing the Gap Priority Reforms

The Commission is committed to the 4 Priority Reforms outlined in the National Agreement on Closing the Gap (the Agreement):

1. formal partnerships and shared decision-making
2. building the community-controlled sector
3. transforming government organisations
4. shared access to data and information at a regional level.

The Commission will work to support the Australian Government's commitment to reduce by at least 50% the rate of all forms of family violence and abuse against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children, as progress towards zero (outcome 13, target 13 of the Agreement). As a part of the National Plan, the Australian Government committed to delivering a stand-alone First Nations National Plan to address the complex and sensitive factors contributing to violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, children and communities. The Commission will be led by, and work in partnership with, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to ensure the Australian Government delivers on its commitment.

Government expectations of the Commission



The Australian Government has provided direct guidance to the Commission by detailing priorities and expectations in the executive order that established the Commission:

● **Strategic policy advice:** Provide advice relevant to the Australian Government's strategic priorities in women's safety and broader portfolio, identifying where there is a priority need or emerging issue, and to target specific areas for government focus.

● **Promoting and enhancing coordination:** Foster enhanced collaboration and coordination across government and community in relation to women's safety. This is to assist all governments to develop person-centered, coordinated and integrated family, domestic and sexual violence service systems, in line with the cross-cutting principles of the National Plan.

● **Consistent monitoring and evaluation:** Work with Commonwealth and state and territory governments to develop consistent monitoring and evaluation frameworks to effectively measure impact. This is to ensure progress against the National Plan can be tracked accurately.

● **Victim-survivor engagement:** Amplify the voices of people with lived and living experience of domestic, family and sexual violence and support the Australian Government to draw upon this knowledge in shaping policy design and service delivery.

● **Inform priorities for policy, research and data collection:** The Department has primary responsibility for the National Plan, including national women's safety policy development, program and service design and liaison with other Australian Government agencies with programs that support the National Plan. The Commission and the Department will continue to develop practical mechanisms for collaboration that assist the Commission to inform the Department of relevant issues and information affecting women's safety or the broader portfolio without compromising the independent role of the Commission. The Commission will also build and maintain productive relationships with state and territory governments and stakeholders in the sector to execute the Commission's functions and to support the implementation of the National Plan.

● **Promoting the National Plan:** Promote the objectives of the National Plan through all activities to ensure this information is shared to all parts of the Australian society. This will require ongoing participation in public forums, media, and engagements to ensure the objectives of the National Plan remain on the national agenda.

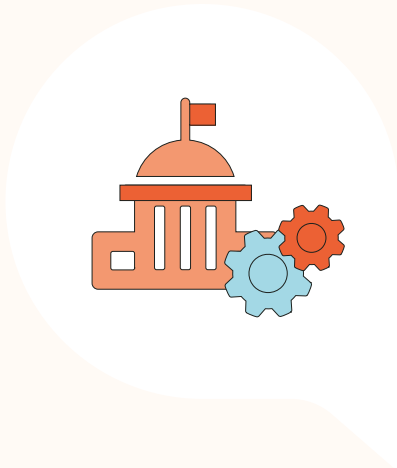
Pathways to impact: our strategic objectives



Four overarching objectives drive how the Commission makes a difference. These objectives are derived from:



The functions outlined in the executive order establishing the Commission



The Commission's role as described in the National Plan



Consultation and engagement undertaken by the Commissioner with over 130 stakeholders in the initial establishment phase



Independent consultation with over 100 people through in-depth interviews and small-group discussions, conducted by WhereTo between March and June 2023 to support the development of the Commission's communication and engagement approach.

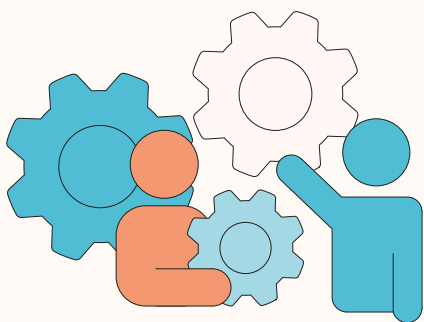


Objectives



1. Promote the National Plan objectives to end gender-based violence and monitor impact

The Commission will continue to create platforms for nationally important conversations by bringing together key government and non-government stakeholders and lived experience advocates to discuss priority issues.



IN 2025–26 THE COMMISSION WILL:

- use public, sector and government engagements, and national conferences to promote the objectives of the National Plan and build a strong network of stakeholder relationships to support the Commission's ongoing work
- work with the Lived Experience Advisory Council to co-design and convene roundtables on key priority issues, including children and young people and sexual violence
- work with governments to ensure a consistent and appropriate monitoring framework which complements the existing reporting mechanisms available
- identify gaps and opportunities to improve achievement of the National Plan objectives.

2. Amplify the voices of people with lived and living experience for meaningful engagement in shaping policy design and service delivery

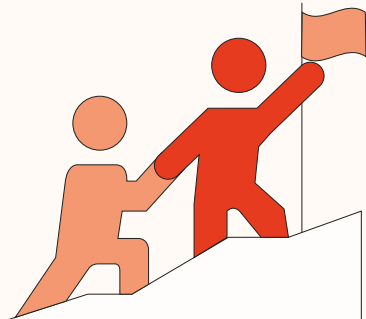
Underpinning the work of the Commission is ensuring that people with lived and living experience of domestic, family and sexual violence are supported and centered around policy development and implementation decisions. The Commission will continue to work in partnership with the Lived Experience Advisory Council to amplify the voices of people with lived and living experience of domestic, family and sexual violence at the national level and to embed the voices of people with lived experience into all aspects of the delivery of the National Plan.



IN 2025–26 THE COMMISSION WILL:

- support the current Lived Experience Advisory Council to develop tools to support good practice in incorporating lived experience expertise aimed at agencies designing and implementing policies and programs, as well as people with lived experience who want to engage with agencies
- work across government to promote and facilitate engagement with people with lived experience in policy and program design and implementation
- co-design Commission events in meaningful partnership with lived experience advocates and experts
- work across government to both seek out, and respond to, opportunities for lived experience co-creation and consultation on policy design and service development
- promote best practice in engaging with people with lived and living experience, both within the Commission and with external agencies, holding ourselves accountable for implementing promising practice.

3. Foster collaboration and coordination across government and communities to enhance connection, reduce fragmentation to improve outcomes



IN 2025–26 THE COMMISSION WILL:

- continue to work closely with the Australian Government and states and territories to understand issues, systems and structures and highlight areas for greater coordination and collaboration to drive improved outcomes
- work across governments to provide avenues for sharing knowledge and promoting lived experience during policy development processes and program implementation
- work with Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) to develop best practice principles of evaluation to promote coordinated, consistent evaluation of the National Plan and its initiatives
- bring together government, sector, business, research and lived experience stakeholders to discuss issues that cut across portfolios and focus on whole-of-government solutions.

4. Provide strategic advice to inform strengthened policy and practice, and improved outcomes



IN 2025–26 THE COMMISSION WILL:

- provide a yearly report to Parliament outlining progress towards the objectives of the National Plan and priorities for the year ahead
- provide strategic advice to governments on priority policy areas under the National Plan identified in the 2025 yearly report, including sexual violence, systems harm, engaging with men and boys, and children and young people
- continue to develop mechanisms for stakeholders to contribute to the work of the Commission on priority policy areas
- continue to develop and implement further mechanisms for providing policy advice to government, sector and community stakeholders.

Strategic priorities



The Commission outlined key areas of priority in its yearly report to Parliament in 2024.

Progressing the National Plan

The Commission will continue to focus on governance of the National Plan's implementation and efforts to assess and measure progress. We will draw on the available reporting mechanisms once established.

Embedding lived experience

Governments have recognised the critical role of lived experience in policymaking. Lived experience engagement needs to be embedded across all aspects of policy design, implementation and evaluation, prioritising a co-design approach.

Improving the capacity of our systems

Governments have invested significant public funds to address domestic, family and sexual violence. Despite this, services and systems are overwhelmed by community need.

System governance: integration, sharing and learning

Governments need to improve collaborative governance mechanisms across all systems, ensure robust monitoring and accountability, and drive greater integration, sharing and learning from one another. Governments need to ensure their systems are not causing harm to people experiencing domestic, family and sexual violence.

Engaging men

Men must be a part of every aspect of ending violence. Governments must support efforts to redefine masculinity and engage men effectively. More intervention options for men using or at risk of using violence are needed, which take a trauma-informed approach, improve information sharing, and risk assessment and management.

Building workforce capability

Workforce capability development needs national leadership, prioritising the specialist domestic, family and sexual violence workforce. Since addressing domestic, family and sexual violence is a key element of work across many sectors, capability development and integration with these workforces is an opportunity to improve system responses.

Children and young people

Children and young people experience high rates of domestic, family and sexual violence with devastating consequences. The Commission has consistently heard the need for a more specific and comprehensive response to children and young people experiencing domestic, family and sexual violence – one that is developed and delivered in partnership with them.

Sexual violence

The national conversation on sexual violence needs to be elevated – how it is defined and understood and the different ways it impacts on people within the community. Despite the efforts of many, there is currently not a single domain in which the needs of people who experience sexual violence are being met by systems. The Commission is an important mechanism to share opportunities for improvement and elevate issues of importance.

Operating environment



The Commission is part of a significant national reform agenda in which all jurisdictions acknowledge the importance of addressing the challenges of domestic, family and sexual violence in a concerted and visible manner.

The Commission undertakes this work in a complex strategic and operating environment that requires coordination among and within jurisdictions and across sectors.

Domestic, family and sexual violence as a national priority

National Cabinet held 2 meetings in 2024 focused on gender-based violence: in May and in September.

In the September meeting, First Ministers agreed that ending the national crisis of gender-based violence, including violence against children and young people, will remain an ongoing priority for National Cabinet. First Ministers acknowledged that a coordinated approach across all states and territories is required to address this national crisis.

National Cabinet is committed to maintaining a central focus on missing and murdered First Nations women and children and agreed that all government commitments on gender-based violence must explicitly consider the needs and experiences of First Nations people and be delivered in genuine partnership with First Nations communities.

National Plan

The National Plan was released on 17 October 2022 and commits to 10 years of sustained action across sectors and governments towards ending gender-based violence in one generation. It provides a national policy framework to guide the work of governments, communities, businesses, policy makers and frontline organisations.

The National Plan is supported by the *First Action Plan 2023–2027* and the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan 2023–2025* (the Action Plans) detailing with specific actions and investment by governments across the 4 domains of prevention, early intervention, response, and recovery and healing. The Australian Government is currently moving into development of the second action plans, which will continue to embed the National Plan in the work of governments.

The Commission has been tasked with providing a yearly report to Parliament on progress against the National Plan, to help hold government accountable. The Commission is committed to ensuring the efforts across sectors and all levels of government are progressing towards ending violence against women and children in Australia in one generation.

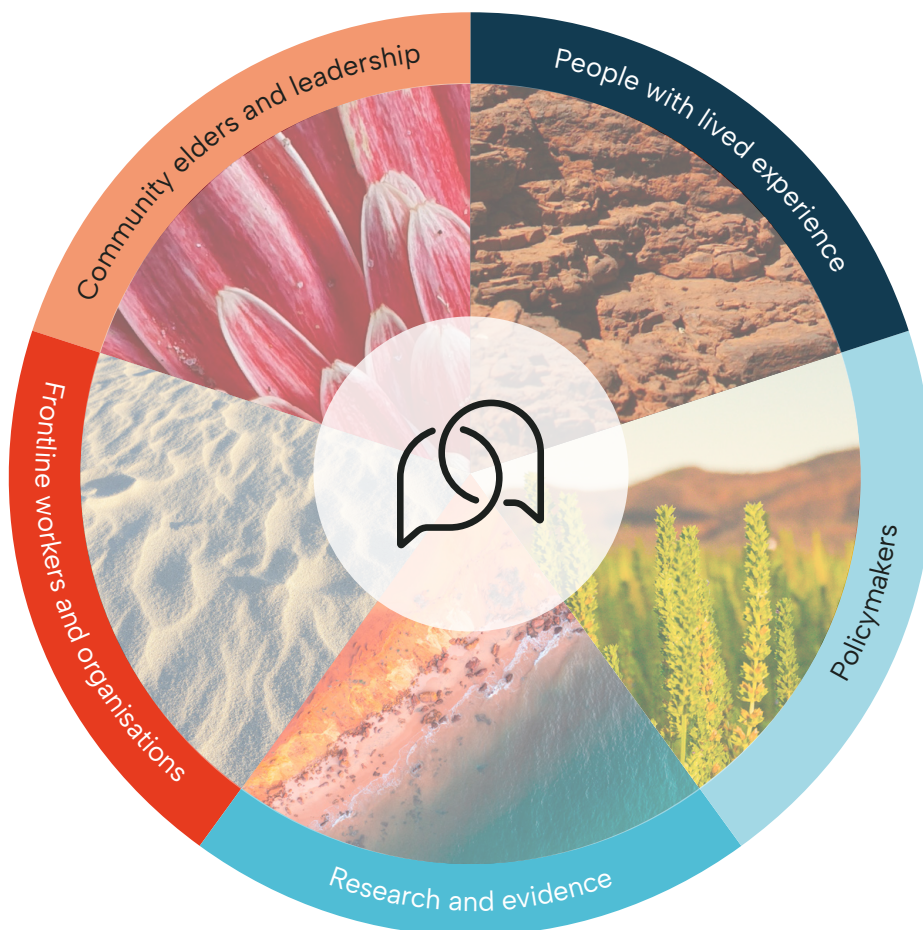
In addition, developing a stand-alone First Nations National Plan, *Our Ways – Strong Ways – Our Voices: National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Safety Plan*, is a key election commitment for the Australian Government to address the complex and sensitive factors driving violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, children and communities. The First Nations National Plan is due to be delivered in 2025–26.

Working together

Across Australia there are hundreds of community organisations, not-for-profit organisations, service providers, advocacy groups, businesses, researchers and research organisations, as well as government departments and agencies working to address domestic, family and sexual violence. All states and territories have strategies and priorities when it comes to domestic, family and sexual violence.

Ending gender-based violence is complex and challenging. The deep understanding of the problems, knowledge of what works and the impact of how laws, policy and services are implemented are not held by one person,

organisation or government. This knowledge is held by many people, in various places around the country, in different organisations and with varying levels of access to decision-makers. It will take all this knowledge and expertise to address such a complex challenge. As a new body created to provide a new national momentum, the Commission recognises this knowledge and expertise and seeks to amplify existing efforts. Through partnerships, collaboration and support of existing initiatives, the Commission will work to bring together, share and shine a light on this work to accelerate efforts to end gender-based violence.



(Adapted from the 'knowledge diamond' in the work of Professor Cathy Humphreys and colleagues on accessing historical out-of-home care records.*)

* Melissa Downing, Michael Jones, Cathy Humphreys, Gavan McCarthy, Cate O'Neill & Rachel Tropea (2013) 'An educative intervention: assisting in the self-assessment of archival practice in 12 community service organisations', *Archives and Manuscripts*, 41:2, 116-128.

Capability



Our people, systems and readiness for impact

People, systems and readiness for impact

The Commission is building a strong and agile capability base, grounded in trauma-informed practice, inclusive engagement, and cross-sectoral knowledge. Our people bring deep subject matter expertise across government, lived experience, service delivery, research and advocacy. To ensure we are fit-for-purpose to deliver on the National Plan, we are focused on strengthening four core areas:

Workforce capability and culture

We are continuing to attract and retain a multidisciplinary workforce with expertise in governance, social policy, stakeholder engagement and systems reform. Our internal culture is anchored in dignity, collaboration, responsiveness and curiosity – with lived experience at the centre.

Trauma-informed practice and wellbeing

Recognising the impact of this work on staff and communities, we embed trauma-informed and shame-sensitive principles into our daily operations. This includes tailored wellbeing supports, peer debriefing mechanisms and co-designed engagement protocols.

Data and evidence-informed advice

We are building data capability to better analyse systems impact and translate lived experience into actionable policy advice. This includes cross-agency data sharing and evaluation partnerships to strengthen our impact and performance frameworks over time.

System partnerships and strategic leverage

Our influence is amplified through deep collaboration – with lived experience advocates, governments, researchers, frontline organisations and First Nations leaders. These partnerships strengthen the Commission's unique value proposition as an independent voice for systems change.

Our capability journey will mature as the Commission evolves. We are committed to continuous improvement, system learning, and leveraging our growing networks to drive meaningful, coordinated and accountable action on gender-based violence.

Strategic Commissioning Framework

The Commission operates in line with the APS Strategic Commissioning Framework. Core work is done in-house in most cases, and any outsourcing of core work is minimal and aligns with the limited circumstances permitted under the framework.

Cooperation and collaboration



The Commission recognises the knowledge, experience, and expertise on domestic, family and sexual violence within lived and learned experience, government, peak bodies, frontline services, academia, research institutions and the community.

Through our partnerships, strategic engagements and collaboration we draw upon this knowledge to achieve our objectives.

The Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner and Commission staff attend and present at formal governance mechanisms for the National Plan, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Safety Plan Steering Committee, the Women and Women's Safety Ministerial Council, and the Women's Safety Senior Officials meetings.

Roundtables

During 2025–26, the Commission will continue to hold regular roundtables on priority topics, in partnership with organisations and individuals with relevant knowledge and expertise, particularly drawing on the work of relevant peak bodies. These partnerships support strong participation by a broad range of stakeholders and engagement from diverse perspectives.

All our roundtables centre the voices of people with lived experience. We ensure representation from diverse populations and individuals, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people with disability, people from migrant or refugee backgrounds, and people from the LGBTIQ+ communities.

Our roundtables have created effective spaces for critical national conversations to occur and connections between agencies, government, researchers and those with lived and living experience, and support the Commission's strategic advice to government.

Lived Experience Advisory Council

The Lived Experience Advisory Council will continue to work closely with the Commission to provide advice to create and improve policy, systems and services, and report on implementation and progress towards the objectives of the National Plan for the remainder of their term.

Under the terms of reference, the Lived Experience Advisory Council will meet at least 6 times during 2025–26.

The Commission will conduct an expression of interest (EOI) process to establish its second Lived Experience Advisory Council during 2025–26. Current members will have input into the Commission's process of conducting the EOI and inducting new members, building the capacity and capability of the lived experience workforce.

Corporate services and systems

The Commission is a party to a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Department, enabling the Department to deliver corporate services and systems to the Commission. These services include office accommodation, human resources, financial, IT, security and information management. Performance of the MoU is monitored regularly and necessitates close working relationships between the Department and the Commission.

Risk oversight and management



Our risk management

Risk management is an integral part of the Commission's operations and decision-making processes proportionate to a small agency. The Commission promotes a positive risk culture where staff actively engage with and proactively manage key risks to deliver on our purpose.

The Commission's risk appetite recognises that risk is inherent in an ever-changing environment and, in certain instances, a higher level of risk acceptance may be beneficial in the achievement of strategic objectives. Although our appetite for risk may vary depending on the type of risk being managed, the Commission has a low-risk appetite for risks associated with integrity, our people, systems and data integrity, and non-compliance with the law.

During 2025–26, the Commission will continue to mature its risk management capability and culture.

Our risk governance

The Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner, and the Governance and Corporate Coordination team oversee our risk management, controls, and compliance arrangements.

Independent assurance on the appropriateness of the Commission's financial and performance reporting, system of risk oversight and management, and system of internal control is provided by the Audit and Risk Committee. This ensures conformance of the Commission's risk management framework with the Commonwealth Risk Management Policy and section 16 of the PGPA Act.

Our strategic risks

The Commission has identified 6 strategic risks that have the potential to impact on the Commission's objectives. These risks and associated mitigations are outlined below:

RISK	DESCRIPTION	RISK MITIGATIONS
Strategic advice to inform improved outcomes	The Commission is unable to fulfil its policy advisory functions under the executive order – including providing evidence-informed, independent advice to government – resulting in missed opportunities to strengthen policy, improve practice and drive progress towards the National Plan objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop and deliver strategic advice to government that is informed by robust evidence, data and ongoing engagement with people with lived and learned experience, all levels of government and the non-government sector.• Promote the National Plan objectives and identify priority areas for policy and service system reform, driving national consistency and better coordination through the yearly report to Parliament and other formal advice mechanisms.• Maintain strong intelligence-gathering processes, including systematic monitoring of sector developments, research and stakeholder feedback to ensure advice is timely and relevant.• Ensure effective engagement mechanisms are in place to leverage the expertise of the Commission's Lived Experience Advisory Council and other lived experience stakeholders.

RISK	DESCRIPTION	RISK MITIGATIONS
Engagement and partnerships	The Commission is unable to foster collaboration and coordination across government and community to enhance connection and reduce fragmentation to improve outcomes towards ending gender-based violence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to develop and implement mechanisms for engagement across existing silos – such as cross jurisdictional working groups to include government, non-government, peak bodies, service organisations, community groups, academia and research institutions. Continue to deliver roundtables to foster collaboration and coordination, and attend conferences and events to maintain and strengthen networks. Provide publicly available reports and briefings following such engagements.
Lived experience engagement	The Commission is unable to sustain safe, meaningful, and representative engagement with people with lived and living experience of domestic, family and sexual violence, including through the Lived Experience Advisory Council, leading to diminished quality and credibility of advice to government and potential harm to participants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement and maintain trauma-informed, culturally safe and inclusive engagement frameworks for all lived experience activities. Provide ongoing wellbeing supports and flexible participation options for Lived Experience Advisory Council members and other lived experience advocates. Establish clear governance and succession planning for the Lived Experience Advisory Council, including transparent selection processes and structured induction programs. Conduct regular evaluation of engagement practices to ensure they remain safe, representative and effective, and adapt them in response to participant feedback.
Integrity	The Commission is unable to maintain the highest standards of integrity, public service values and professionalism in the work we do.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt and implement APS integrity frameworks and processes that are in place to prevent misconduct, maintain public trust, ensure accountability, and promote a positive integrity culture. Continue educating staff on their responsibilities for maintaining integrity through the delivery of mandatory training on APS values, code of conduct, fraud awareness and corruption, employment principles and expectations, legislative compliance and assurance processes. Implement and regularly review assurance processes – including internal audits, compliance checks, and oversight mechanisms – to monitor adherence to integrity frameworks and identify emerging risks early.

RISK	DESCRIPTION	RISK MITIGATIONS
Workforce capability and safety	The Commission is unable to recruit and retain the workforce capability needed, including managing the safety, wellbeing and development of staff and lived experience advocates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position the Commission as an employer of choice that offers the opportunity to make a meaningful contribution to an important area of public policy, a positive workplace culture, flexible working arrangements and training and development opportunities. • Leverage the Commission's reputation in recruitment processes and continue to recruit across jurisdictions to have the largest possible pool of talent. • Leverage the Department's work health and safety, wellbeing, human resources and diversity policies and arrangements, including the Employee Assistance Program.
Data integrity	The Commission is unable to maintain, protect and use its data effectively to support outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure appropriate systems are in place to store, protect, and secure the Commission's data in compliance with legislative requirements. • Manage data in accordance with the Department's data management processes and procedures. • Ensure staff mandatory training for records management, security awareness and privacy awareness.

Performance



Evolving our approach to performance reporting / strengthening our performance framework over time

The Commission acknowledges that measuring impact in complex social policy systems – especially in the context of lived experience and gender-based violence – requires thoughtful, adaptive and evolving performance approaches.

Our current performance measures focused key activities, outputs and stakeholder engagement. Over the life of this corporate plan, we will strengthen our performance framework in the following ways:

Shift from output-based to outcome-focused indicators

We will progressively refine our measures to assess the real-world influence of our work, such as the extent to which lived experience informs system design, or whether collaboration efforts reduce fragmentation in the service system.

Introduce qualitative indicators and case examples

To capture depth and nuance, we will supplement quantitative measures with qualitative indicators – including stories of change, engagement feedback and policy shifts influenced by our advocacy.

Co-design impact indicators with lived experience stakeholders

We will partner with the Lived Experience Advisory Council to define what meaningful success looks like from their perspective and incorporate these views into how we assess our effectiveness.

Use third-party insights and external feedback

We intend to include structured feedback loops with government partners, sector leaders and community advocates to test whether our advice is influential and fit-for-purpose.

Build system-level measurement partnerships

Over time, we will collaborate with other agencies and jurisdictions to explore shared indicators of progress under the National Plan, ensuring our reporting contributes to whole-of-government accountability.

This performance framework supports the Commission's obligations under the PGPA Act, particularly section 16E of the PGPA Rule. It consolidates the Commission's performance expectations into 12 core measures aligned with the executive order, the Ministerial Statement of Expectations, and the objectives of the National Plan.

The Commission's updated performance measures and targets for 2025–26 and beyond are outlined below. The measurement and assessment of these performance measures will be published in our 2025–26 annual performance statements.

Performance framework

Activity	Performance measure	Methodology and data source	2025–26 target	2026–27 target and beyond
Provide strategic and timely advice	Number of strategic advice briefs/submissions to government	Commission records, verified via governance register	≥ 6	Maintain or increase
	Number of policy snapshots published on DFSVC website	Website analytics and publication logs	≥ 4	Maintain or increase
	Number of place-based visits conducted annually	Travel records and engagement reports	≥ 6	Maintain or increase
Foster national coordination and cross-sector collaboration	Number of national roundtables convened with ≥ 3 sectors represented (government, NGOs, academia, lived experience)	Attendance records and sector classification list	4	Maintain or increase
	Roundtables/events include representation from priority population organisations/individuals (First Nations, CALD, LGBTQ+, disability)	Attendance records and self-identification optional	Baseline set	+10% from baseline
	Number of government-tasked roundtables/events delivered	Commission records	≥ 2	Maintain or increase
Promote visibility and accountability for the National Plan	Number of public forums, media engagements, and presentations promoting the National Plan	Media logs and event records	≥ 80	Maintain or increase
	Delivery of annual report to Parliament on progress towards the National Plan	Tabled copy in Hansard	By 31 Oct	By 31 Oct

Activity	Performance measure	Methodology and data source	2025–26 target	2026–27 target and beyond
Model and promote best practice engagement of lived experience	LEAC evaluation framework developed and implemented annually	Internal evaluation reports	Framework completed	Evaluation conducted annually
	% of roundtables with published reports on the Commission's website	Website records	100%	100%
	Number of best practice tools for lived experience engagement published online	Website analytics and publication logs	≥ 2	Maintain or increase
	Mechanisms established for bringing together national lived experience bodies	Governance documentation and participant records	Mechanism established	Maintain annually



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