

# Victorian Government Response

Parliamentary inquiry into capturing data on people  
who use family violence in Victoria

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# Introduction

## **The Parliamentary Inquiry into capturing data on people who use family violence in Victoria**

The Parliamentary Inquiry into capturing data on people who use family violence in Victoria (the Inquiry) was referred to the Legislative Assembly Legal and Social Issues Committee (the Committee) in March 2024. It was tasked with considering the mechanisms for capturing data on the profile and volume of people using family violence in Victoria and barriers to achieving a fuller understanding of this cohort.

The Inquiry heard from 72 individual stakeholders via written submissions and seven days of public hearings. Stakeholders were from across government, the family and sexual violence service sector and peak bodies, experts, and people with lived experience of family violence.

The Inquiry's final report *Building the evidence base Inquiry into capturing data on people who use family violence in Victoria* (the report) was tabled in Parliament in April 2025. The report includes 71 findings about the complexity and inconsistencies in what, when and how data on people using family violence is collected and used. It also makes 61 recommendations to the Victorian Government about how current data collection, linkage and sharing could be improved, and how to build greater understanding about the profile, motivations and behaviours of people who use family violence in Victoria.

## **The Victorian Government welcomes the Inquiry's findings and recommendations**

The Victorian Government welcomes the recommendations made in the Inquiry's final report, and thanks the Committee for its valuable work to build a more holistic understanding of people who use family violence in Victoria. We thank the many stakeholders who participated in the Inquiry and provided their time and expertise. In particular, we are grateful to the victim survivors of family and sexual violence who shared their lived experience and acknowledge their ongoing advocacy to further improve Victoria's family violence service system.

The Victorian Government is committed to improving the collection, linkage, sharing and use of data on people who use family violence. Of the 61 recommendations made by the Committee in the Inquiry's final report, we support 18 in full, 27 in principle, 6 in part, and there are none we do not support. The remaining 10 recommendations are under review.

This response provides a detailed outline of how the Victorian Government will address these 61 recommendations. It has been prepared in consultation with the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, Department of Premier and Cabinet, Department of Treasury and Finance, Department of Health, Department of Justice and Community Safety, Department of Education, Victoria Police, Safer Care Victoria, and Court Services Victoria.

The Victorian Government notes that the terms of reference for the Inquiry were particularly broad. The Inquiry's recommendations subsequently lay out an ambitious agenda for short, medium and long-term action that extends well beyond data capture to also cover information sharing, risk assessment and management, outcomes measurement, systems oversight, workforce development and public reporting. Given the breadth and complexity of these recommendations, our response highlights where their implementation would require significant additional funding, cross-jurisdictional and cross-sector coordination, and potential legislative change.

# **The Victorian Government continues to build a greater understanding of people who use family violence and improve service responses**

The Victorian Government is committed to keeping people using family violence in view, accountable and motivated to change their behaviour. Perpetrator interventions must be targeted and effective in driving down rates of family violence and keeping victim survivors safe.

Since the Royal Commission into Family Violence delivered its report in 2016, the Victorian Government has made nation-leading investment in establishing programs, strategies and services focused on people who use family violence. This includes a suite of perpetrator interventions underpinned by the nation-leading [Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management \(MARAM\) Framework](#), the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS) and the Central Information Point (CIP), which enable a range of services to collaborate and share information to effectively identify, assess and manage family violence risk.

The Victorian Government's focus on people who use violence continued through the 2023-24 and 2024-25 State Budgets, which respectively allocated \$23 million and \$41.6 million over four years for perpetrator responses.

In May 2024, the Victorian Government announced the Strengthening Women's Safety Package, which provided funding for a new suite of reforms, including the delivery of a landmark perpetrator study. This study will explore the latest research, evidence and data on the behaviours and motivations of people who use family violence. It will also establish a monitoring and evaluation framework for improved impact and outcomes measurement and will include recommendations for strengthening Victoria's perpetrator data collection approach.

The 2025-26 State Budget provided additional funding to continue the Changing Ways pilot program, which provides an intensive tailored intervention for adults using family violence who pose a serious risk of harm to victim survivors.

In September 2025, the Victorian Government released [Until every Victorian is safe: Third rolling action plan to end family and sexual violence 2025 to 2027](#) (the *Third Rolling Action Plan*) that sets out 106 actions that will guide the next three years of family violence reform, including in relation to collecting, analysing, sharing and using data on people who use family violence. The plan builds on the first and second rolling action plans under the Victorian Government's 10-year plan, [Ending Family Violence: Victoria's Plan for Change](#).

Through these initiatives, the Victorian Government continues to build Victoria's understanding about the profile, motivations and behaviours of people using family violence.

## **Acknowledgment and commitment to self-determined data practices**

The Victorian Government acknowledges First Peoples as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the lands across Victoria and pays respect to Elders past and present. We recognise the strength of First Peoples led responses to family violence and the need for self-determined data collection practices that empower communities to prevent, respond to and heal from family violence.

The Victorian Government recognises Indigenous Data Sovereignty as a vital element of self-determination and is committed to supporting relevant First Peoples governance groups to determine the most appropriate mechanisms to implement Indigenous Data Sovereignty principles for family violence research and data collection across various departments, portfolios and advisory bodies.

# Detailed response

## Theme 1: Moving towards a more purposeful approach

### Recommendation 1

The Victorian Government undertake a data mapping project to precisely identify existing datasets relevant to people using family violence in Victoria. This project should:

- outline the information these datasets hold, or could provide
- explore the questions that can or cannot be answered through data analysis and linkage
- define the scope and nature of existing gaps.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in full.*

The Victorian Government recognises that mapping family violence datasets supports the improved use and interpretation of data about people who use family violence across all relevant sectors, including by researchers, analysts, policy makers, practitioners and the media.<sup>1</sup>

The Landmark Perpetrator Study initiative funded under the Strengthening Women’s Safety Package, will undertake data mapping and linked data analysis to identify data gaps and build our understanding of the motivations for behaviour change and pathways in and out of using family violence. It will also include the development of a monitoring and evaluation framework for improved impact and outcomes measurement, including recommendations for enhancing Victoria’s perpetrator data collection approach in future.

The Victorian Government will continue efforts to address gaps and improve the collection and analysis of data through the Family Violence Outcomes Framework (FVOF),<sup>2</sup> The Orange Door, the Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM) Framework,<sup>3</sup> the Central Information Point (CIP),<sup>4</sup> the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS) and the Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS).<sup>5</sup>

### Recommendation 2

The Victorian Government develop and distribute resources to assist stakeholders and researchers to consider nuance and context in data collection, sharing, linkage, use, analysis and research about people who use family violence, including how to recognise the limitations of data (for example, structural inequities or invisible and historically hidden violence) and involve people with lived experience and expertise to understand the complexities.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in principle.*

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<sup>1</sup> ‘People who use family violence’ and ‘person using family violence’ are used in this response to refer to people causing family violence harm. These terms aim to support the agency of people using family violence for change, their engagement with service systems and whole-of-person approaches within service systems. The term ‘perpetrator’ is used in relation to systemic legislative and policy responses that keep perpetrators in view of the service system, in line with its use at a legal and policy level in Victoria.

<sup>2</sup> [Family Violence Outcomes Framework](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework](#)

<sup>4</sup> [The Central Information Point](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme; Child Information Sharing Scheme](#)

The Victorian Government supports the intent of this recommendation, which aligns with ongoing work across government to improve family violence data collection, sharing, linkage, use, analysis and research.

This includes time-limited funding to peak bodies, including No to Violence, Safe and Equal, Sexual Assault Services Victoria, and the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare, to build the capability of workforces across their respective sectors to interpret and use family violence-related evidence and data through the expansion of the Outcomes, Practice and Evidence Network (OPEN) Platform. This expansion has seeded the establishment of a shared Family Violence Sexual Violence Knowledge Hub, delivery of joint sector knowledge translation events (such as forums or webinars), and creation of additional resources and research to support evidence-informed practices.

The Victorian Government will continue to work with peak bodies to identify where additional resources could assist stakeholders to better interpret and analyse data about people who use family violence, noting that further investment would be required to develop and distribute these resources.

The Victorian Government is also committed to continuing to support sector and government engagement with lived experience advocates, including members of the Victim Survivors Advisory Council, to build a better understanding of the complexities and limitations of data and evidence about victim survivors and people who use family violence.

### **Recommendation 3**

The Victorian Government prioritise the implementation of Indigenous Data Sovereignty for family violence research and data collection and adopt the Maiam nayri Wingara, the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Data Sovereignty Collective, Indigenous Data Sovereignty techniques and principles, while concurrently enhancing information sharing where appropriate.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in principle.*

The Victorian Government is committed to the implementation of Indigenous Data Sovereignty for family violence research and data collection. In line with its commitment to self-determination, the government will work with relevant First Peoples governance groups, such as the Dhelk Dja Partnership Forum, the Aboriginal Strategic Governance Forum, and the Aboriginal Justice Forum, to determine the most appropriate way to implement this recommendation.

The Victorian Government's commitment to Indigenous Data Sovereignty is also reflected in the existing priorities of several First Peoples governance forums and action plans. For example:

- In response to Priority Reform 4 of the 2020 National Agreement on Closing the Gap, which relates to shared access to data and information in the regions, the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) is establishing the Priority Reform 4 Working Group. This group will bring together representatives from the Aboriginal Strategic Governance Forum, DFFH executive sponsors and other relevant DFFH governance forums to develop agreed definitions and a department-wide strategy for information sharing and Indigenous Data Sovereignty.
- Under the second *Dhelk Dja 3-Year Action Plan (2023-2025)*, the Victorian Government is working with the Dhelk Dja Partnership Forum to develop a shared understanding of Indigenous Data Sovereignty, strengthen the capacity of First Peoples communities and services to monitor, evaluate and lead evidence-based practice, provide First Peoples communities and services with meaningful access to data about family violence in their communities, and build an evidence base of what

works to support First Peoples and communities to prevent, respond to and heal from family violence.<sup>6</sup>

- Phase Four of the Victorian Aboriginal Justice Agreement establishes a partnership between the Victorian Government and First Peoples communities that emphasises greater self-determination in the justice sector, a key outcome of which is increased First Peoples community ownership of and access to data. The agreement outlines several strategies for achieving this outcome, including making up to date justice data more readily available to the First Peoples community, and ensuring First Peoples input into all aspects of the evaluation of the agreement, including the design, ownership of data, data interpretation and publication of findings.<sup>7</sup>
- Further work to enhance data sharing with First Peoples communities through the Department of Justice and Community Safety will be developed through Phase Five of the Aboriginal Justice Agreement, which is currently under development.

#### **Recommendation 4**

The Victorian Government support First Nations organisations to:

- build capacity to monitor and evaluate family violence data, family violence prevention and intervention initiatives and invest in First Nations-led family violence research
- work with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations in Victoria to actively promote the value and learnings of these activities.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in full.*

The Victorian Government recognises that building the capacity of Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) to collect and evaluate family violence data will enable evidence-based decision making about family violence prevention and intervention activities, improve the identification of community-specific needs, and strengthen community-led research.

This recommendation is consistent with the existing priorities for several First Peoples action plans and governance forums, such as the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing Aboriginal Strategic Governance Forum, the Aboriginal Justice Forum, and the Dhelk Dja Partnership Forum. For example, the Victorian Government promotes and supports First Peoples -led family violence monitoring, evaluation and research as part of the *Dhelk Dja 3 Year Action Plan (2023-25)*. This includes building the capacity of ACCOs and community groups to monitor and evaluate their projects (Action 5.2.4) and building the capacity of Action Groups and ACCOs to translate and interpret data with a First Peoples-lens, and to drive research rather than simply be participants in it (Action 5.2.3).

The Victorian Government will continue its work to promote First Peoples self-determination and support the critical role of ACCOs in family violence prevention, response and recovery. Recent funding for First Peoples-led programs includes:

- The Aboriginal Community Initiatives Fund (CIF) provides \$1.1 million to support community-led projects that educate, prevent, reduce, and respond to family violence in First Peoples communities across Victoria. The 2024-25 CIF is currently open for applications.

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<sup>6</sup> [Dhelk Dja 3 Year Action Plan 2023-2025](#)

<sup>7</sup> [Aboriginal Justice Outcomes Framework: Goal 4.1](#)

- Approximately \$40 million in community grants were provided in 2024 for a variety of First Peoples-led programs to improve First Peoples justice outcomes, a portion of which went to programs aimed at prevention and intervention initiatives for people who use family violence.
- The 2023-24 State Budget provided funding certainty to ACCOs by committing \$31.2 million over 4 years to continue delivery of frontline First Peoples family violence and Sexual Assault Services.
- The 2024-25 State Budget provided funding for First Peoples communities and services to deliver tailored interventions for First Peoples using family violence that are culturally safe and trauma informed. Programs include holistic healing services, Indigenous men's family violence group programs and case management services.
- The Victorian Government has been working in partnership with the Dhelk Dja Koori Caucus and ACCOs to establish a community-led approach for the allocation of Frontline Aboriginal family violence funding to support a sustainable specialist First Peoples family violence service system.

These initiatives collectively help build evidence about culturally safe responses, with service providers supported to undertake reporting, monitoring and evaluation activities to inform future investment and practice development.

#### **Recommendation 5**

The Victorian Government advocate at a national level for the 2020 National Agreement on Closing the Gap to be amended to include Indigenous Data Sovereignty, along with enhanced information sharing where appropriate, as part of the outcome statement for Priority Reform 4, accompanied by the adoption of the definitions of Indigenous Data Sovereignty and Indigenous Data Governance, as detailed in the Maiam nayri Wingara.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in full.*

The Victorian Government recognises that Indigenous Data Sovereignty and Indigenous Data Governance are vital platforms for driving self-determination. The government will work with relevant First Peoples governance forums to advocate to the Commonwealth for the inclusion of these platforms, as defined in the Maiam nayri Wingara, as part of the outcome statement for Priority Reform 4 of the 2020 National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

The Victorian Government will also continue to establish appropriate mechanisms for the implementation of Indigenous Data Sovereignty in relation to the collection of data on people who use family violence across relevant departments, portfolios and advisory bodies in Victoria. For example, in response to Priority Reform 4 of the 2020 National Agreement on Closing the Gap, the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) is establishing the Priority Reform 4 Working Group. This group will bring together representatives from the Aboriginal Strategic Governance Forum and other relevant DFFH governance forums to develop agreed definitions and a department-wide strategy for information sharing and Indigenous Data Sovereignty.

#### **Recommendation 6**

The Victorian Government continually review relevant plans, strategies, rolling action plans, outcomes, indicators, measures and reporting to ensure they better align with the Government's strategic approach to family violence reform and are easy to navigate, and regularly publicly report on actions taken. This includes linking the implementation of recommendations made in this Inquiry report to the Victorian Government's overarching strategies, frameworks and plans.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in full.*

This recommendation is consistent with the Victorian Government's existing work to regularly review and report on relevant family violence plans, strategies, indicators, outcomes and measures to ensure they remain fit for purpose. This includes reviewing the Family Violence Outcomes Framework (FVOF), completing the *MARAM Framework 5-year Evidence Review*, regularly reporting on MARAM implementation through annual reports to parliament (the MARAM Annual Report to Parliament), and developing updated rolling action plans under Victoria's 10-year plan to end family violence.<sup>8</sup>

The Victorian Government is held accountable to these plans, strategies, frameworks and reports through the existing whole-of-family violence reform governance arrangements, such as the Family Violence Reform Advisory Group (FVRAG), the Family Violence Reform Board (FVRB), the Family Violence Reform Policy Steering Committee, cross-government working groups, the Dhelk Dja Partnership Forum, statewide and regional Family Violence Integration Committees, and the Victim Survivors' Advisory Council.

The FVRB, comprising Deputy Secretaries from across government, provides the highest level of oversight and ensures strategic whole-of-government leadership of Victoria's family violence reforms. The FVRAG, made up of peak sector organisations and government agencies, provides expert advice on the design, implementation, and impact of key reforms to strengthen whole-of-system approaches to prevention and response. The FVRAG also ensures that critical sector perspectives are heard and addressed and provides a mechanism for supporting government accountability on systems gaps and opportunities. Together, these two governance bodies enable government to hold itself accountable to the sector for all family violence reform initiatives and strengthen the extent to which those initiatives are collectively delivering the intended outcomes in the FVOF.

The Victorian Government is also working to better align and improve coordination, oversight and accountability across the family violence system and its governance structures. This includes through the *Third Rolling Action Plan*, which combines and consolidates existing strategies and action plans to clearly outline the government's reform priorities for preventing and responding to family and sexual violence.

### **Recommendation 7**

The Victorian Government establish an effective whole-of-system family violence oversight and continuous improvement mechanism to ensure systems accountability and oversight of enhancements to data collection, sharing, linkage, use, analysis and research in relation to people who use family violence. Once established, the mechanism should review and publicly report on the actions taken in response to Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor's reports.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in part.*

The Victorian Government supports an effective approach to making enhancements to the collection, sharing, linkage, use and analysis of data in relation to people who use family violence. However, further consideration and consultation is required to determine the most appropriate oversight and continuous improvement mechanism.

The Victorian Government notes that a number of existing mechanisms are used for oversight and continuous improvement of family violence data collection and research, such as the Family Violence Reform Board and the Family Violence Reform Advisory Group. Whole-of-system oversight of family

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<sup>8</sup> [Five-year evidence review of the MARAM Framework and practice guides; MARAM Annual Reports](#)

violence data is also provided by the Family Violence Data Dashboard, published by the Crime Statistics Agency, which provides an annual update of many government datasets relevant to family violence, and includes linked justice system data and analysis. Linked family violence data is also available on the Victorian Social Investment Integrated Data Resource (VSIIDR).

Per the response to Recommendation 19, the Victorian Government is taking a meaningful but pragmatic approach to responding to the 84 actions proposed by the Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor (FVRIM) across seven topic-based monitoring reports. Rather than responding to the proposed actions individually, the actions have been grouped and analysed thematically to inform policy development, including through the *Third Rolling Action Plan* and the ongoing implementation and embedding of the MARAM Framework and information sharing reforms.<sup>9</sup> The progress of these reforms is reported on regularly through the MARAM Annual Report to Parliament.

#### **Recommendation 8**

The Victorian Government promote and recognise the expertise of services and practitioners by working with family violence service providers and stakeholders to improve policy and reform, including as it relates to data collection on people using family violence, by:

- consulting on the best methods to increase transparency with stakeholders about what data it collects and how it is used
- providing feedback opportunities on data utility to enable continuous improvement in data collection and sharing
- increasing dialogue and collaboration about the priorities and purposes of data collection for government, peak bodies and service providers
- communicating the defined goals and purposes of data collection about people who use family violence. For example, this could include creating a people using family violence experts panel or building on the work of existing stakeholder groups, like Family Violence Regional Integration Committees, to represent service providers working with people who use family violence.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in full.*

The Victorian Government’s family violence reforms to date have been characterised by close engagement with the family violence sector – including frontline practitioners – to ensure their expertise and practice wisdom informs the department’s work. This includes ongoing work to improve data collection, and system stewardship and contract management relationships with funded programs and services that engage with people who use family violence.

This engagement with family violence services is also enabled through existing family violence reform governance structures. For example, the Family Violence Reform Advisory Group is a key forum that supports dialogue and collaboration with family and sexual violence peak bodies and key service providers, including about the importance of data in understanding and responding to family violence perpetration.

The Landmark Perpetrator Study funded under the Strengthening Women’s Safety Package will inform the development of a targeted and effective suite of behaviour change interventions and provide insights into opportunities for practice improvements. The study will involve engagement with stakeholders, including

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<sup>9</sup> [The Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor; The MARAM and information sharing reforms](#)

with practitioners from across the justice system and community-based responses, as well as victim survivor advocates and other family violence advisory groups.

#### **Recommendation 9**

The Victorian Government improve and prioritise family violence program and service agreement reporting by:

- streamlining grant and funding agreement requirements (with particular focus given to any new programs)
- allowing data collection in formats that support research
- building consistent monitoring evaluation strategies into programs
- encouraging innovation and flexibility among service providers in the ways they report.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in principle.*

This recommendation is consistent with reporting requirements already in place for agencies receiving government funding to deliver family violence services, as well as the Victorian Government's ongoing engagement with these services to streamline funding agreements and improve data collection, evaluation and monitoring activities related to programs and services for people who use family violence.

The recommendation is also consistent with work underway across government to strengthen the use of the Family Violence Outcomes Framework (FVOF) to support continuous improvement over time, which aligns with Actions 103 and 104 of the *Third Rolling Action Plan*. Ongoing work to strengthen the use of the FVOF will inform all future program evaluations and program guidelines, which will promote data consistency and innovation.

The Victorian Government notes that additional consideration and consultation is required to inform further actions to address this recommendation. Special consideration will be given to the potential increase in administrative burden for government funded family violence agencies, to ensure that any changes to service agreements to improve data collection and reporting is considered in the context of required resourcing to facilitate this additional work.

## **Theme 2: Improving current data processes**

#### **Recommendation 10**

The Victorian Government:

- continue to enhance and promote training, resources and tools to help service providers embed the Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM) and improve understanding of MARAM responsibilities, including to improve the collection of data about people using family violence
- report publicly on actions taken in response to the MARAM Framework 5-year Evidence Review and the Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor's Legislative review of family violence information sharing and risk management (2023).

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in principle.*

This recommendation is consistent with current activities across government that align to Pillar 4 of the MARAM Framework, which relates to systems, outcomes and continuous improvement.<sup>10</sup> This includes work funded in the 2025-26 State Budget to continue to embed the MARAM Framework, the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS) and the Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS) across government and the sector to identify and share information relevant to family violence risk.

MARAM supports more than 400,000 professionals across justice, health, community services and education to have a shared understanding of family violence, and shared responsibility to identify, assess and manage family violence risk. Uniquely, MARAM is a legislated framework, with 6,500 organisations prescribed across the service system that are required to align their policies, procedures, practice guidance and tools. MARAM maintains evidence-based best practice through legislated 5-yearly reviews.

The MARAM Framework provides access to statewide risk assessment and management tools and templates, which promotes consistent practice, while also enabling consistent collection of data on experience and presentation of risk. The Victorian Government provides training and support to promote the consistency and accuracy of data collected on victim survivors and users of family violence. In 2021 and 2022, Victoria released the *Adult Using Family Violence MARAM Practice Guides and Tools*.<sup>11</sup> These underpin the program requirements and guidance for Risk Assessment and Management Panels and the Changing Ways program for serious risk users of family violence and are a requirement for all other perpetrator interventions in Victoria to align their practice to.

The Victorian Government is also making updates to the FVISS Ministerial Guidelines,<sup>12</sup> in line with the recommendations made in the Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor (FVRIM)'s 2023 *Legislative review of family violence information sharing and risk management*.<sup>13</sup> The project, which seeks to strengthen proactive and timely information sharing, is due for completion in mid-2026.

Through the MARAM Annual Report to Parliament, the Victorian Government will continue to publicly report on progress to embed the MARAM Framework and information sharing reforms, as well as actions taken in response to the FVRIM's *Legislative review of family violence information sharing and risk management* and the *MARAM Framework 5-year Evidence Review*.<sup>14</sup>

### **Recommendation 11**

The Victorian Government consult with service providers and people with lived experience of family violence, including victim survivors and people using family violence, about the best ways to:

- promote consistency and accuracy of data collection on people who use family violence by standardising data collection practices, methods, tools, templates and standards
- ensure use of accessible and inclusive data collection techniques

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in full.*

The Victorian Government is committed to embedding lived experience in all family violence reforms. This includes close consultation with the Victim Survivor Advisory Council and the continued involvement of

<sup>10</sup> [The MARAM Framework pillars](#)

<sup>11</sup> [MARAM practice guides for professionals working with adults using family violence](#)

<sup>12</sup> [Family Violence Information Sharing Guidelines](#)

<sup>13</sup> [FVRIM Legislative review of family violence information sharing and risk management](#)

<sup>14</sup> [MARAM Framework 5-Year Evidence Review Final Report](#)

people with lived experience and service providers in the process of co-designing and implementing programs, strategies and frameworks related to people who use family violence.

For example, victim survivors with lived experience of family and sexual violence were a central part of the Family Violence Research Program. Researchers funded under this program are required to engage with people with lived experiences throughout the design, delivery and translation of their research. Lived experience expertise and family violence service providers were also vital to the development of the Family Violence Outcomes Framework (FVOF).

Under domain four of the FVOF '*Preventing and responding to family violence is systemic and enduring*,' increasing the involvement of victim survivors with lived experience in the design and delivery of services and programs is a key indicator for ensuring the family violence service system is person-centred and responsive.

The Landmark Perpetrator Study initiative funded under the Strengthening Women's Safety Package will also involve consultation, including with victim survivor groups and people who have used family violence (subject to ethics approval). The study will seek to identify opportunities to improve data collection practices. The Victorian Government will consider the most appropriate approach to implementing the outcomes of the study following its completion..

### **Recommendation 12**

Following completion of Recommendation 1 to undertake a data mapping project, the Victorian Government develop and trial a minimum standard dataset, outlining the mandatory data that is to be collected by all service providers and agencies about people who use family violence. This minimum standard dataset should be developed within 12 months after completion of the data mapping project.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in principle.*

The Victorian Government will respond to Recommendation 1 through the Landmark Perpetrator Study initiative funded under the Strengthening Women's Safety Package, which will involve reviewing existing evidence and data on people who use family violence from across community based and justice system responses, and undertaking data mapping and linked data analysis to identify data gaps. Further actions to develop and trial a minimum standard dataset about people who use family violence to address this recommendation will be considered after the completion of the study..

### **Recommendation 13**

The Victorian Government prioritise training and upskilling of the specialist and core workforces (Tier 1 and Tier 2 in Family Safety Victoria's Responding to Family Violence Capability Framework) on best practice family and sexual violence data collection and uses.<sup>15</sup>

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in full.*

This recommendation aligns with existing work underway across government to improve the capacity and capability of specialist and core workforces to collect and use data related to family and sexual violence.

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<sup>15</sup> A revised Responding to Family Violence Capability Framework will be released before the end of 2025. As part of the review, the Capability Framework no longer uses the terms 'Tier' to refer to prescribed workforces. The workforce capabilities are now instead divided into MARAM prescription practice levels: Identification, Intermediate and Comprehensive. 'Tier 1 and 2' should therefore be referred to as comprehensive and intermediate aligned workforces instead.

For example, the Victorian Government is participating in a Commonwealth-lead project with the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare to undertake a data improvement project for agencies that use the Specialist Homelessness Information Platform (SHIP). The project seeks to improve data integrity across the service system and will assist government to develop a clearer understanding of client demand. It will also identify strategies to be used across other workforces that work with people using family violence.

The Victorian Government has also provided fixed term funding to peak bodies, including No to Violence, Safe and Equal, Sexual Assault Services Victoria and the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare, to promote and champion best practice in data collection and build the capability of workforces across their sectors to interpret and use evidence and data through the expansion of the Outcomes, Practice and Evidence Network (OPEN) Platform. This project promotes partnerships between peak bodies in areas of research, evaluation and practice, and provides resources and other opportunities for relevant sectors to collaborate and learn.

This recommendation is also consistent with current activities across government that align to Pillar 4 of the MARAM Framework, which relates to systems, outcomes and continuous improvement. This includes work funded in the 2025-26 State Budget to continue to embed the MARAM Framework, the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS) and the Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS) across government and the sector, including through the provision of training and resources on best practice family violence risk assessment and management and information sharing.

#### **Recommendation 14**

The Victorian Government work with service providers and communities to promote and support data collection about the family violence experiences of Victoria's diverse communities by:

- enhancing training on data collection for diversity and its purpose, and how to confidently ask sensitive questions
- ensuring the Family Violence Data Collection Framework reflects current practice and aligns with the Australian Bureau of Statistics Standards
- developing and distributing enhanced practice guidance
- ensuring translation services are used
- mandating cultural safety training tailored to different sectors
- reviewing how data on diversity is collected through its databases (for example, Integrated Report and Information System) to align data fields with best practice.

This work should be prioritised and reviewed on an ongoing basis.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in full.*

The *Everybody Matters: Inclusion and Equity Statement* (*Everybody Matters*) is the Victorian Government's ten-year commitment to build an inclusive, safe, responsive and accountable family violence system for all Victorians, and underpins all family violence reforms and service provision with a foundation of intersectionality and inclusivity.<sup>16</sup>

In line with *Everybody Matters*, the Victorian Government supports efforts to strengthen the collection of data on demographic profiles and family violence experiences of Victoria's diverse communities. This is consistent with work funded in the 2025-26 State Budget to continue to embed MARAM and information

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<sup>16</sup> [Everybody Matters: Inclusion and Equity Statement](#)

sharing across government and prescribed workforces, including service providers that support diverse communities, through the provision of training, practice guidance and other resources.

Other ongoing work across government to improve service responses and the collection and use of data on people who use family violence from diverse communities includes:

- The review of the Men’s Behaviour Change Program (MBCP) Minimum Standards, which will include considerations for ensuring MBCPs are inclusive of people from diverse backgrounds.<sup>17</sup>
- Government funding for seven innovative programs for people who use family violence from diverse cohorts and workforce training delivered by Intouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence, which will support more culturally safe and inclusive family violence services for multicultural communities.
- Ongoing opportunities to engage with the Family Violence Multicultural Working Group and the Family and Sexual Violence Disability Reference Group, to ensure that data considerations for multicultural and faith communities and people with disabilities continue to be considered in policy making and program implementation.

The Victorian Government notes that any additional work to upskill family violence service providers to promote and support data collection about diverse communities may increase administrative burden on their workforces. If additional work is identified in future, the government will work with relevant stakeholders to minimise the impact on service delivery and core organisational functions.

### **Recommendation 15**

The Victorian Government develop a clear system-wide process to correct misidentification in family violence records by 2027. This should include ensuring that service providers or agencies can validate information received and shared. Data on the prevalence of misidentification and the effectiveness of corrective actions should be collected to inform future reform.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in full.*

Enhancing the accurate identification of people who use family violence (the predominant aggressor) and improving rectification processes where misidentification has occurred is a key priority of the Family Violence Reform Board.<sup>18</sup> The Victorian Government is progressing a large body of work to address misidentification through the cross-departmental Predominant Aggressor Working Group (the Working Group), which is made up of members from the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, the Department of Justice and Community Safety, the Magistrates Court of Victoria and Victoria Police.

The working group aims for a whole-of-government approach to system improvements and practice responses to support the accurate identification of the predominant aggressor, including focusing on data on the prevalence of misidentification. The working group is currently finalising an approach to engage with internal and external stakeholders – including existing governance forums, such as the Dhelk Dja Partnership Forum and the Victim Survivors’ Advisory Council, and sector organisations, such as Victoria

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<sup>17</sup> [Men’s Behaviour Change Program Minimum Standards](#)

<sup>18</sup> The predominant aggressor in a family relationship is the person who exhibits a pattern of coercive, controlling and violent behaviour over time and is causing the greatest family violence harm. Failure to identify the predominant aggressor may result in the misidentification of the victim survivor as the perpetrator. Misidentification can lead to adverse system responses, have long-lasting negative consequences on the victim survivor and result in reluctance to report subsequent violence.

Legal Aid and Safe and Equal – which will inform next steps in progressing its workplan. As part of its workplan, the Working Group will consider this recommendation, explore the viability of implementation and, where appropriate, identify alternative proposals to address its intent.

The Victorian Government has also funded Djirra's community-led project on the misidentification of First Nations women as family violence perpetrators. Djirra had engaged RMIT's Centre for Innovative Justice to build an evidence base on the prevalence and nature of the misidentification of First Peoples women as predominant aggressors, program and systems-wide strategies to prevent misidentification, and approaches to rectify misidentification when it occurs. The findings of the project will be considered in the context of enhancements to support rectification and measurement of the prevalence of misidentification.

#### **Recommendation 16**

The Victorian Government publicly report by 2027 on how it will implement the suggested actions, including timelines, in the Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor's report *Monitoring Victoria's Family Violence Reforms: Accurate Identification of the Predominant Aggressor* (2021).

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in principle.*

The Victorian Government notes that the actions recommended in the Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor (FVRIM)'s 2021 report *Monitoring Victoria's family violence reforms Accurate identification of the predominant aggressor* are being implemented in principle through existing reforms to address misidentification, including the program of work being undertaken by the cross-departmental Predominant Aggressor Working Group and reporting to the Family Violence Reform Board.<sup>19</sup>

As outlined in the response to Recommendation 15, the Predominant Aggressor Working Group is made up of members from the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, the Department of Justice and Community Safety, the Magistrates Court of Victoria and Victoria Police. It aims for a whole-of-Victorian Government approach to system improvements and practice responses to support the accurate identification of the predominant aggressor and to correct the misidentification of people who use family violence where it has occurred.

Drawing on insights and actions recommended by the FVRIM, a key output of the Predominant Aggressor Working Group is the development of a systems map, which highlights tracking and visibility across the service system. This work will focus on victim survivors' first points of contact with services such as Victoria Police and The Orange Door, including their current practice and responses to prevent and address misidentification. It will also consider what operational mitigations are in place to prevent and address misidentification, and ways to raise awareness of the relevant information pathways.

#### **Recommendation 17**

The Victorian Government review the Family Violence Outcomes Framework Measuring and Monitoring Implementation Strategy and Early Intervention Investment Framework to ensure family violence prevention and early intervention activities for people who use family violence are aligned and linked to quantifiable impact and outcome measures.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in principle.*

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<sup>19</sup> [Monitoring Victoria's family violence reforms: Accurate identification of the predominant aggressor](#)

The Victorian Government supports the use of quantifiable impact and outcome measures to ensure that family violence prevention, early intervention and response initiatives are as effective as possible. This is consistent with work underway across government to strengthen the use of the Family Violence Outcomes Framework (FVOF) to support continuous improvement over time, which aligns with Actions 103 and 104 of the *Third Rolling Action Plan*.

With growth in demand for acute services, the Victorian Government is working to address problems before they escalate. The government introduced the Early Intervention Investment Framework (EIIF) in the 2021-22 Budget – becoming the first Australian jurisdiction to embed early intervention into its budget process. The EIIF embeds a robust framework for measuring outcomes for Victorians and estimating avoided costs to the government from reductions in acute service use in budget decision making.

When initiatives are funded under the EIIF, government departments are required to track and report on specific, agreed outcome measures for all programs, which can help to quantify program-level impacts in terms of both avoided costs and client outcomes. For family violence initiatives funded through the EIIF, efforts have been made to identify outcome measures that are directly relevant to the FVOF. In this way, EIIF reporting complements insights from program monitoring and evaluation reports, as well as the FVOF.

While the Victorian Government is committed to continuous improvement of the EIIF as a whole-of-government framework underpinning evidence-based investment across a range of portfolios, it would not be appropriate to review it with a specific focus on family violence. Further, the government notes that primary prevention work is focused on whole-of-community activity to address the underlying belief systems and attitudes that drive family violence. As such, it is not possible to apply a framework that tracks outcomes at an individual level, such as the EIIF, to prevention work.

### **Recommendation 18**

The Victorian Government embed the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework and improve data collection on people who use family violence, across early identification points in mainstream and universal services, including through enhanced training and education.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in full.*

This recommendation is consistent with current activities across government that align to Pillar 4 of the MARAM Framework, which relates to systems, outcomes and continuous improvement. This includes funding that was allocated in the 2025-26 State Budget to embed the MARAM Framework and information sharing reforms across government and mainstream and universal services prescribed under MARAM, including through the provision of training, practice guidance and other resources.

Services prescribed under MARAM include community services, such as homelessness services, community-managed mental health services and state-funded aged care services; health services, such as community health services, public hospitals, publicly funded early parenting centres and general practitioners (for information sharing only); and education services, such as government and non-government schools.

As outlined in the response to Recommendation 13, the Victorian Government delivers MARAM training to these prescribed services using the Tools for Risk Assessment and Management (TRAM) platform – with policy and operational guidance provided to both TRAM and Specialist Homelessness Information Platform (SHIP) users on the unique risk assessment and management tools contained within each system – to promote the consistency and accuracy of data collected on victim survivors and users of family violence.

## **Recommendation 19**

The Victorian Government publicly report by 30 June 2026 on actions taken in response to the proposals in the Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor's report Early identification of family violence within universal services (2022).

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in principle.*

The Victorian Government supports the valuable work undertaken by the Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor (FVRIM) and is continuing work already underway to respond to the 84 actions it proposed across seven topic-based monitoring reports. The Victorian Government is taking a meaningful but pragmatic approach to grouping and analysing the FVRIM's proposed actions thematically to inform program and policy development. This includes informing actions in the *Third Rolling Action Plan*, and the ongoing implementation and embedding of the MARAM Framework and information sharing reforms.

The Victorian Government is accountable for the progress of this work through existing reporting and governance mechanisms. For example, the ongoing implementation and embedding of the MARAM Framework and information sharing reforms is reported on regularly through the MARAM Annual Report to Parliament. The Victorian Government is also accountable to the Family Violence Reform Advisory Group (FVRAG) for the progress of the *Third Rolling Action Plan*, which, through its Terms of Reference, agendas and deep dive topics, highlights connections to the FVRIM's reports to ensure these continue to inform the implementation of family violence reforms. This includes:

- The integration of recommendations from the FVRIM's report on reform governance, *Monitoring Victoria's family violence reforms Reform governance*, including a strengthened focus on Victoria's diverse communities, in the FVRAG's Terms of Reference.<sup>20</sup>
- A focus on primary prevention governance within government and across interconnected areas of family violence, violence against women, sexual harm, and elder abuse, in connection to the FVRIM's findings.
- Spotighting links to the FVRIM's reports and recommendations on accountability for people who use family violence and the importance of enhancing data and evidence to strengthen the 'web of accountability'.

## **Recommendation 20**

The Victorian Government support roles similar to Specialist Family Violence Advisors and Strengthening Hospital Responses to Family Violence Practice Leads, in the health sector and other mainstream and universal services interacting with people who use family violence.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in principle.*

The Victorian Government recognises the important role that family violence practice leadership plays in role modelling and knowledge translation in mainstream and universal services that engage with people who use family violence. Specialist Family Violence Advisors (SFVA) and Strengthening Hospital Responses to Family Violence (SHRFV) Practice Lead roles were established to strengthen the capacity and capability of health care professionals to identify, assess, and respond to family violence. Similar roles with family

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<sup>20</sup> [Monitoring Victoria's family violence reforms: Reform governance](#)

violence specialist expertise have also been established to support broader workforce capability uplift in courts, Child Protection, Victoria Police, The Orange Door and alcohol and other drugs services.

The Victorian Government is also supporting mainstream and universal services to engage with people who use family violence through the continued roll out of the MARAM Framework and information sharing schemes. This includes the ongoing development and embedding of practice guidance to support all prescribed organisations to identify, assess and manage family violence risk when working with people who use family violence. Principal Strategic Advisors are supporting local services to align their organisational policies and processes to the MARAM Framework, and Practice Leads within peak bodies and specialist service providers are building practitioner capability across specialist, mainstream and universal services.

The Victorian Government notes that establishing additional family violence practice leadership roles in other sectors that engage with people who use family violence would be dependent on substantial additional future investment, informed by a comprehensive assessment of where such roles would be most beneficial.

### **Recommendation 21**

The Victorian Government prioritise consultation on how to share information about family violence between public and private sectors, and how to best facilitate engagement with the private sector to collect and share data about people who use family violence.

*The Victorian Government’s response to this recommendation is under review.*

The Victorian Government supports engaging with the private sector to encourage the sharing of family violence risk relevant information between public and private sectors, where permissible under relevant privacy and information sharing legislation.

As part of responding to the Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor (FVRIM)’s *2023 Legislative review of family violence information sharing and risk management*, the Victorian Government will consider the potential prescription of private providers under the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS). In line with the findings of the review, consultation with Commonwealth-funded disability services and private mental health services will be prioritised ahead of other private services.

Further consultation is required to determine an appropriate approach to implementing additional actions to address this recommendation, with special consideration given to engagement with the Commonwealth Government, the potential for changes to Victorian legislation, and the significant additional resourcing which would be required.

### **Recommendation 22**

The Victorian Government business case to redevelop the Integrated Report and Information System and other systems:

- include consultation with service providers and peak bodies on key requirements for efficient data capture (including the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework risk assessments), storage and sharing to support a fuller and more accurate picture of people who use family violence
- meaningfully build on and bring together current and disparate databases used to collect data on people using family violence, to reduce the administrative burden and maintain the utility of existing data.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in principle.*

The Victorian Government will progress actions to address this recommendation through the development of the Communities and Families Transformation Program (CFTP) business case for the replacement of critical government data systems, including the Integrated Reporting and Information System (IRIS). The business case remains under development, with options to replace the core systems subject to future government consideration.

This work intends to streamline and improve data collection and reduce administrative burden for service providers and involves consultation with stakeholders across government and the children and families, family violence and sexual assault sectors. However, the development of any new client management system would require a significant financial investment, which would be dependent on corresponding availability of funding.

### **Recommendation 23**

The Victorian Government better promote the ability of service providers to adopt the Tools for Risk Assessment and Management online data system with inbuilt Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework tools, including the Adult Using Family Violence Comprehensive Assessment Tool.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in full.*

This recommendation aligns with the Victorian Government's existing work to expand the integration and use of the Tools for Risk Assessment and Management (TRAM) platform across The Orange Door and some community-based organisations that deliver family violence services. This includes running onboarding and training sessions with agency leaders and practitioners on how to use TRAM and the MARAM Adult Using Family Violence Comprehensive Assessment Tool and supporting agencies to add TRAM to their existing case management platforms.

### **Recommendation 24**

The Victorian Government explore ways to holistically and systematically upgrade service providers' databases to organise, extract and analyse data about people using family violence, including by supporting service providers to develop enhanced case or data management systems and tools.

*The Victorian Government's response to this recommendation is under review.*

The Victorian Government recognises the importance of upgrading data management systems to keep pace with changes to policy and practice guidance. However, further consideration and consultation is required to determine an appropriate approach to this recommendation, as there are likely to be significant implementation barriers to upgrading databases used by external agencies. These barriers include the need for significant additional resourcing to undertake upgrades, build the capacity of workforces to use them, and manage any ongoing additional administration burden for service providers. Further work will also be required to identify any contractual barriers for implementing this recommendation, including for service providers receiving both State and Commonwealth funding.

## **Recommendation 25**

The Victorian Government work to better align existing datasets and integrate and link existing government and service provider databases and data systems, for example through system overlays to connect and aggregate information and improved database interoperability to share data like Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management risk assessments and Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme requests directly between databases.

*The Victorian Government’s response to this recommendation is under review.*

The Victorian Government recognises the benefits of aligning, integrating and linking datasets about people who use family violence wherever possible to improve information sharing and reduce duplication and data errors. However, further consideration and consultation across government is required to determine an appropriate approach to addressing this recommendation, as a project of this scale would require significant investment and may require legislative change to permit the sharing of health information.

The Victorian Government notes that the intent of the recommendation aligns to recent work to link aggregated, deidentified data on family violence risk assessments completed on the Tools for Risk Assessment and Management (TRAM) platform to the Victorian Social Investment Integrated Data Resource (VSIIDR), enabling comparisons to government-held data across government.

## **Recommendation 26**

The Victorian Government explore automated information sharing about people using family violence or better linkage between agency and service provider databases.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in principle.*

This recommendation is consistent with activities across government to implement and embed existing information sharing regimes, including activities in response to the Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor (FVRIM)’s 2023 *Legislative review of family violence information sharing and risk management*.

The legislative review found that more work could be done to support proactive sharing of risk-relevant information under the MARAM Framework, the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS) and the Central Information Point (CIP), as permitted under the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic)*. In response, the Victorian Government is currently updating the FVISS Ministerial Guidelines to emphasise the availability and importance of proactive information sharing.

Further consideration and consultation across government is required to explore automated information sharing and would be dependent on additional funding and resourcing.

## **Recommendation 27**

The Victorian Government consider rolling out access to Central Information Point (CIP) reports to all Tier one workforces and seek to include in CIP reports additional national and interstate data, intersectional demographic data, and data on how people using family violence engage with the service system, non-government entities, and tolerance and consumption of services.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> The recommendations speak to ‘tier’ workforces. Workforces are no longer referred to as being in varying tier levels, instead being referred to as Identification, Intermediate or Comprehensive workforces in line with the MARAM framework.

*The Victorian Government's response to this recommendation is under review.*

The Victorian Government acknowledges that services require access to timely and risk relevant information to deliver informed and impactful services. However, further consideration and consultation across government is required to determine the most appropriate mechanism through which to achieve the intent of this recommendation. Key issues for consideration include:

- Increasing access to the Central Information Point (CIP) would require a significant increase in investment and CIP capacity to meet the demand of additional information requests. Greatly increasing the number of requests and adding new sources of information without sufficient funding for this capacity uplift risks increasing delays in information sharing.
- Including new CIP datasets would require considerable technical development work and significant additional resourcing and may require legislative change as some datasets may not meet the legal threshold for information sharing under the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic)*.
- Information sharing protocols and legislation governing the sharing of national or interstate data need to be carefully considered, as they dictate what data can and can't be shared through the CIP.
- Information shared through the CIP is risk relevant information about a person using family violence for the assessment and management of family violence risk, and the addition of any further data should be considered on this basis.

The intent of this recommendation will in part be achieved through existing activities underway, in addition to the evaluation and improvements to the CIP noted by the Inquiry. These include:

- Activities currently underway to acquit the recommendations made in the Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor (FVRIM)'s 2023 *Legislative review of family violence information sharing and risk management*, including:
  - Amending the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS) Ministerial Guidelines to strengthen guidance about sharing risk-relevant information from CIP reports.
  - Updating available information about the CIP on the Victorian Government website.
  - Updating the CIP Requester Practice Guidance, which will encourage appropriate sharing of information to support risk assessment and management across the service system.
- Ongoing studies gathering data on how people who use family violence engage with the service system and the effectiveness of perpetrator interventions, including the Longitudinal Evaluation of Men's Behaviour Change Programs and the Landmark Perpetrator Study funded under the Strengthening Women's Safety Package.
- The sharing of information contained in CIP reports beyond existing CIP requesters, which is already enabled through the Victorian information sharing schemes. For example, CIP requesters from The Orange Door, Safe Steps, Men's Referral Service and Risk Assessment and Management Panels (RAMPs) can share information obtained from the CIP through referrals and/or MARAM risk assessments with relevant services prescribed under the FVISS and the Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS).

## **Recommendation 28**

The Victorian Government explore options to implement an integrated and secure mechanism to facilitate more timely and proactive information sharing (including Family Violence Information Sharing

Scheme requests and responses, and analysis of data on the profile of people using family violence) between service providers and agencies in the family violence sector to improve understanding of people who use family violence.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in principle.*

This recommendation is consistent with activities across government to implement and embed existing information sharing reforms to better support family violence identification, risk assessment and risk management. For example, in response to recommendations made as part of the Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor (FVRIM)'s 2023 *Legislative review of family violence information sharing and risk management*, the Victorian Government is currently updating the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS) Ministerial Guidelines to strengthen the emphasis on timely information sharing.

The Victorian Government is considering appropriate ways to provide practice guidance on this issue, including advice on what factors should be considered when determining the timeliness of a response. It will also consider measuring the timeliness of information sharing by centralised FVISS information sharing teams at MARAM prescribed organisations to address the intent of this recommendation.

Further actions to implement additional information sharing mechanisms and the associated upskilling of relevant workforces is likely to have significant resource implications and would therefore be dependent on future funding availability.

#### **Recommendation 29**

The Victorian Government progress and report publicly by June 2026 on actions taken in response to the Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor's Legislative review of family violence information sharing and risk management (2023) to promote timely and proactive information sharing. This includes in relation to the recommendations to:

- require Information Sharing Entities to respond to requests for information within a reasonable timeframe by amending Part 5A of the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008* (Vic)
- update content on proactive information sharing in the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme Ministerial Guidelines.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in full.*

Per the Victorian Government's response to Recommendations 10 and 28, updates to the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS) Ministerial Guidelines are currently underway in line with the recommendations made in the Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor (FVRIM)'s 2023 *Legislative review of family violence information sharing and risk management*. The project, which will strengthen the emphasis on proactive and timely information sharing, is due for completion in mid-2026 and the government will report publicly on its progress through the MARAM Annual Report to Parliament.

#### **Recommendation 30**

The Victorian Government develop protocols to promote information sharing about people who use family violence that:

- build consistent and evidence-informed understanding between different sectors on what is risk-relevant information that can be shared under the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme

- communicate whose responsibility it is to receive proactive information sharing reports
- implement consistent and transparent processes to share information
- support collaborative practice and relationship building between The Orange Door (TOD) Network and other family violence services providers, including by promoting the role of TODs in facilitating information sharing, and providing guidance on sharing victim survivor contact details and case information (with consent, where appropriate).

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in full.*

The Victorian Government notes that this recommendation is being achieved through the ongoing implementation of Victoria's MARAM and information sharing reforms, which aim to build a consistent and evidence-informed understanding of risk relevant information about people who use family violence that can be shared across sectors under the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS). As outlined in response to Recommendation 28, a review and update of the FVISS Ministerial Guidelines is currently underway. As part of this work, the guidelines will be revised to clarify and strengthen content on information sharing to ensure that the guidelines are clear and accessible to frontline workers and service providers and provide clarity on the operation of the FVISS and its relationship to other reforms.

Activities are also underway to strengthen monitoring and reporting capacity at The Orange Door. The Orange Door is currently working to enhance its client record management system to be able to collect information sharing data. Through ongoing monitoring and analysis of these data sets, these enhancements will strengthen information sharing practice and understanding across the sector.

### **Recommendation 31**

The Victorian Government review by June 2026 the Risk Assessment and Management Panels (RAMPs) program and share insights from data analysis on its effectiveness, profiles of people using family violence managed by RAMPs, and opportunities to expand RAMPs' role to include assessment and management of lower risk family violence cases to improve understanding of people using family violence.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in part.*

An independent evaluation of Risk Assessment and Management Panels (RAMPs) was completed in 2022, which identified the effectiveness of RAMPs in identifying and managing eligible serious family violence risk cases. The Victorian Government is progressing work to implement the evaluator's recommendations, including strengthening ongoing monitoring of RAMPs, improving data quality and completing periodic evaluations of RAMPs.

In response to the evaluation, the Victorian Government released new operational requirements in early 2024, following extensive consultation with RAMP members and key stakeholders. The new requirements clearly outline processes to be followed by RAMPs to strengthen consistency. As part of its core program oversight function, the government will continue to respond to opportunities to strengthen the operations of RAMPs.

Family violence cases are referred to a RAMP where serious risk cannot be mitigated through a standard service system response due to systemic and structural barriers, and intensifying, overt, calculating and immutable behaviour by adults using family violence. There is no intention to extend RAMPs to lower risk family violence cases.

Other family violence service system reforms, including the MARAM Framework and Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS) have already made it possible for services to collaborate and coordinate to manage risk. These reforms are continuing to improve the effectiveness of the management of lower risk family violence cases. Further, the Landmark Perpetrator Study will identify opportunities to strengthen responses to people who use family violence across the full spectrum of risk.

### **Recommendation 32**

The Victorian Government work to capture data on perpetrators' recidivism, including recidivistic behaviours that do not result in contact with the criminal justice system.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in full.*

The Victorian Government is committed to continuing to strengthen data capture on the repeated use of violence, including family violence that does not result in contact with the service system. Services that engage with people who use family violence already capture data on their continued use of violence through the completion of ongoing family violence risk assessments, as required under the MARAM Framework.<sup>22</sup> The Victorian Government's ongoing implementation and embedding of MARAM and information sharing reforms will continue to support service providers to improve their ability to accurately and consistently identify, assess and manage family violence risk.

Existing data on people who use family violence and have repeated contact with the family violence service system is provided by the Crime Statistics Agency (CSA) and the Victorian Social Investment Integrated Data Resource (VSIIDR). The CSA currently provides demographic data on people who use family violence and come into contact with Victoria Police. This includes data on the number of recidivist users of family violence, which is publicly available on the CSA's Family Violence Dashboard.

Additional data insights will be provided through the Longitudinal Evaluation of Men's Behaviour Change Programs (MBCPs) and the Landmark Perpetrator Study initiative funded under the Strengthening Women's Safety Package. The Longitudinal Evaluation will provide insight into the efficacy of MBCPs in Victoria and will inform the Landmark Perpetrator Study, which will also consider the behaviours and motivations of repeat offenders who have contact with the justice system or are engaged in services or interventions provided by community-based organisations.

### **Recommendation 33**

The Victorian Government work with service providers across the family violence, alcohol and other drugs, mental health, health and hospital, and community legal sectors to ensure that future database development and data collection protocols align with best practice family violence data collection standards.

*The Victorian Government's response to this recommendation is under review.*

The Victorian Government acknowledges that aligning all relevant data collection systems to best practice family violence data collection standards would contribute to a better understanding of people who use family violence. Further consideration and consultation across government is required to determine the

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<sup>22</sup> Recidivistic behaviour, in the context of the Inquiry, is understood to mean all repeated use of family violence, including ongoing violence that is unreported and/or does not result in contact with the criminal justice system.

most appropriate mechanism through which to achieve the intent of this recommendation, noting that any mechanism would require additional funding.

#### **Recommendation 34**

The Victorian Government enhance understanding of people using violence through collaboration and relationships between different sectors (both inside and outside of the public sector), including the alcohol and drug, mental health, health and hospital (such as GPs), legal and family violence sectors, to ensure a strategic and holistic approach to family violence (as well as other) data reforms. This should include creating a multi-sector taskforce to inform data reforms, analysing data to develop strategic partnerships and promoting information sharing and collaborative practice.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in principle.*

This recommendation is consistent with existing legislated requirements for community services, health services, and education services that engage with people who use family violence to appropriately align to the MARAM Framework to ensure a consistent and holistic approach to family violence risk assessment and management and information sharing across sectors. It also aligns with the Victorian Government's ongoing work funded in the 2025-26 State Budget to embed the MARAM Framework and information sharing schemes across government and MARAM prescribed workforces, including through the provision of training and resources on best practice.

While the Victorian Government supports the intent of a multi-sector taskforce to inform data reforms, this function is already carried out by existing family violence reform governance structures, such as The Family Violence Reform Board (FVRB) and the Family Violence Reform Advisory Group (FVRAG), which support a strategic and collaborative approach to all of Victoria's family violence reforms and seek to strengthen system-wide alignment and impact through their oversight of the Family Violence Outcomes Framework.

Given that collaboration and relationships between different sectors is fundamental to the MARAM Framework and ensuring a strategic and holistic approach to family violence reform is a key priority of the FVRB and the FVRAG, the Victorian Government submits that no additional taskforce is required.

#### **Recommendation 35**

The Victorian Government work to establish memoranda of understanding with the Australian Government and relevant federal data custodians to enable access to federal data and datasets relevant to people who use family violence in Victoria, including for the Centre for Victorian Data Linkage and Crime Statistics Agency, to enable de-identified data linkage, and for service providers to inform risk assessment and management.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in principle.*

The intent of this recommendation is consistent with existing agreements that enable cross-jurisdictional family violence information sharing. This includes the National Strategic Framework for Information Sharing between the Family Law and Family Violence and Child Protection Systems (the National Framework), which facilitates nationally consistent, two-way information sharing between the Federal family law courts and State and Territory courts, child protection, policing and firearms agencies.

The Victorian Government is also responding to this recommendation through its participation in a Commonwealth-lead project with the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare to develop a new Family Domestic and Sexual Violence Integrated Data System (FDSV IDS), which links anonymised person-level

family violence data from community and health services. This project seeks to expand the dataset that has previously been available for analysis in the FDSV IDS, to build the evidence base about people using and experiencing family violence and facilitate research into family violence risk factors and outcomes.

The Victorian Government notes that expanding access to federal data to other Victorian agencies would require additional resourcing and agreement by the Commonwealth. Further consideration and consultation at the State and Commonwealth level is therefore required to determine the most appropriate mechanism, noting any mechanism through which to implement additional actions to enhance interjurisdictional information sharing would require additional investment.

### **Recommendation 36**

The Victorian Government strongly advocate at a federal level for the Crime Statistics Agency to have ongoing access to relevant family law data held by the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia to inform long-term analysis of family violence trends.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in principle.*

As outlined in the Victorian Government's response to Recommendation 35, this recommendation is consistent with existing agreements such as the National Strategic Framework for Information Sharing between the Family Law and Family Violence and Child Protection Systems (the National Framework), which already enables nationally consistent, two-way information sharing between the Federal family law courts and State and Territory courts, child protection, policing and firearms agencies.

Further consideration and consultation at the State and Commonwealth level is required to determine the most appropriate mechanism through which to implement additional actions to enhance interjurisdictional information sharing, such as expanding access to federal data and datasets to other Victorian agencies like the Crime Statistics Agency. The Victorian Government will continue to use existing inter-governmental forums to advocate for best practice approaches to cross-border information sharing that can be used to inform our understanding of long-term family violence trends.

### **Recommendation 37**

The Victorian Government advocate for and formalise cross-border family violence information sharing arrangements with other state and territory governments and the Australian Government, consider what legislative barriers may prevent this, and align family violence definitions, risk ratings and data collection standards.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in principle.*

The Victorian Government acknowledges the need for a coordinated response to family violence across jurisdictions. Using existing inter-governmental forums, the government will continue to advocate for best practice cross-border information sharing arrangements that allow sufficient flexibility for application in different local contexts. However, the government notes that changes to definitions, risk ratings and data collection standards are matters for other State, Territory and Commonwealth governments.

As outlined in the response to Recommendations 35 and 36, the intent of this recommendation is consistent with existing agreements like the National Strategic Framework for Information Sharing between the Family Law and Family Violence and Child Protection Systems (the National Framework), which already enables two-way family violence information sharing between Australian jurisdictions.

Additional work is also underway to develop national guidance on best practice family violence information sharing to support jurisdictions to develop or improve their own family violence information sharing functions, which will build off lessons learned from the development of the National Framework and is being modelled on the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS) in Victoria.

The MARAM Framework in Victoria is also being used to guide the development of national family and domestic violence risk assessment principles and model framework. It is anticipated that a shared understanding of family and domestic violence, across all jurisdictions, will be developed and agreed to through this program of work.

## Theme 3: Expanding knowledge about people who use family violence

### Recommendation 38

The Victorian Government, in consultation with the sexual violence services sector, implement a whole of government approach to better understand the co-occurrence of sexual violence with family or domestic violence. This should include the development of a strategy to improve data capture on people who use sexual and family violence and including sexual violence in a minimum dataset trial.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in principle.*

The Victorian Government acknowledges the importance of continued efforts to better understand and capture data on the co-occurrence of sexual violence with family violence and is committed to continuing to work with the sexual violence services sector on this work. This work aligns with the outcome of the *MARAM Framework 5-year Evidence Review*, which found that the framework could be expanded to more fully address sexual assault. This expansion is in scope for the next review of MARAM, which will commence in 2026.

The implementation of this recommendation will also be informed by the Landmark Perpetrator Study funded under the Strengthening Women’s Safety Package, which seeks to build a greater understanding of the behaviours and motivations of people who use violence..

Further consideration and consultation are required to determine the most appropriate mechanism through which to implement additional actions to capture data on the co-occurrence of family and sexual violence. This includes identifying implementation barriers, including that capturing data on people who use sexual and family violence generally relies on self-disclosure, as well as the required additional resources and workforce capability uplift that would be dependent on future funding availability.

### Recommendation 39

Given the rise of technology-facilitated abuse, the Victorian Government review by June 2026 how sexual violence and technology-facilitated abuse are covered in the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework and consider whether amendments are required to ensure the range and complexity of these forms of violence are being captured to achieve a fuller understanding of people using family violence. It is important that the Victorian Government work with Victoria Police and courts to share learnings from this review.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in principle.*

The Victorian Government supports building a better understanding of sexual violence and technology-facilitated abuse across government and the family and sexual violence sector. The *MARAM Framework 5-year Evidence Review* found that the framework could be expanded to more fully address technology-facilitated abuse and sexual assault. This is in scope for the next review of MARAM, which will commence in 2026.

The intent of this recommendation will also be achieved through pre-existing family violence reform governance mechanisms, such as the Family Violence Reform Advisory Group and the Family Violence Reform Policy Steering Committee, which both include membership of Victoria Police and courts membership, and provide a forum for cross-departmental collaboration and an opportunity to share learnings.

#### **Recommendation 40**

The Victorian Government undertake a regular review of the *Justice Legislation Amendment (Sexual Offences and Other Matters) Act 2022 (Vic)*. The first review should occur at the earliest opportunity and consider the impacts of the affirmative consent reforms, and the relationship between sexual and family violence.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in part.*

The Victorian Government has previously committed to reviewing the affirmative consent reforms that were introduced as part of the *Justice Legislation Amendment (Sexual Offences and Other Matters) Act 2022 (Vic)*. The Department of Justice and Community Safety is monitoring the operation of these laws in Victoria, alongside consideration of the impacts of affirmative consent laws in other jurisdictions.

The Victorian Government has not made a commitment to undertake a regular, formal review of the legislation. For a review to be effective, the affirmative consent model needs to have been applied in a sufficient number of cases. Due to the complexity of sexual offence investigations and prosecution, it often takes months or years for cases to be finalised in the criminal justice system.

#### **Recommendation 41**

The Victorian Government:

- develop a Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework tool specifically for elder abuse
- enhance the capacity of workers across the service system (such as at The Orange Doors, financial counselling services and in health and aged care) to better identify and collect data on elder abuse, including financial and emotional abuse, risk factors, intersectionality and long-term outcomes.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in part.*

The Victorian Government acknowledges the importance of addressing elder abuse as a unique form of family violence and recognises that there is still much to learn about violence against older people, much of which is significantly underreported.

The MARAM Framework, Practice Guides and Tools have been developed to respond to all forms of family violence, including towards older people. These tools and guidance were developed and tested for the

purpose of enhancing the capacity of workers to respond to elder abuse, and the *MARAM Framework 5-year Evidence Review* found them suitable for this purpose.

The Victorian Government is implementing recommendations from the review to improve the integration of guidance and tools for all communities, which will improve the overall visibility of guidance for responding to elder abuse in future. Future reviews may consider the development of additional content or resources on addressing elder abuse though this would be dependent on the availability of further investment.

The Victorian Government will also consider the broader intent of the recommendation through the implementation of the Elder Abuse Capability Building Program, which seeks to enhance the capability of specialist family violence workers to better identify and respond to violence against older people. Workers at both The Orange Door and specialist family violence services who undertake intake, assessment and case management will be targeted in the program.

#### **Recommendation 42**

The Victorian Government develop specific outcomes in relation to elder abuse in the Family Violence Outcomes Framework, including under Domain 3: Perpetrators are held accountable, connected and take responsibility for stopping their violence and Domain 4: Preventing and responding to family violence is systemic and enduring.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in principle.*

The Victorian Government notes that current work underway to understand and report on the impact of the family violence reforms on older Victorians and map data against existing outcomes in the Family Violence Outcomes Framework (FVOF) will achieve this intent without developing new outcomes.

While the FVOF does not make specific reference to elder abuse, outcomes across all its domains are applicable to any cohorts and forms of family violence, including all vulnerable or disadvantaged groups, such as older Victorians. Developing new outcomes will require extended time, resourcing and consultation with the family violence sector. Instead, the Victorian Government is taking a more streamlined approach by progressing work already underway to strengthen the use of the FVOF and improve cohort specific data as an immediate step forward to understanding the impact of family violence on older Victorians.

#### **Recommendation 43**

The Victorian Government collaborate with specialist family violence service providers and Victoria Police to review how data about children and young people who experience and use family violence is captured, used and understood. A related data collection, storage, linkage and reporting framework should be developed to:

- apply an age and development lens
- recognise experiences, intersectionality, capacity for change and the impacts of labels
- explore options to improve the L17 referral process to The Orange Doors to more easily identify young people.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in principle.*

The Victorian Government supports improving how the family violence system captures, uses and understands data about children and young people who experience and use family violence. This aligns with the government's ongoing work to develop child and young person-focused MARAM Practice Guides and

Tools, anticipated for release early 2026. These new resources will support family violence risk and wellbeing assessment and management for children and young people, including to support young people using or experiencing violence in the home and in intimate partner/dating relationships. This project will also support initial work to facilitate baseline consistent data collection for children and young people experiencing and/or using family violence.

The intent of this recommendation also aligns with Action 14 under the *Third Rolling Action Plan*, which involves developing a justice approach for adolescents who use family violence that ensures interventions and responses across the justice system are appropriate and effective for young people. The Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS) is currently in the early scoping phase of this work. To support the development of the approach, DJCS will engage with stakeholders such as Victoria Police and may contribute learnings to inform a data collection, storage, linkage and reporting framework as required.

The Victorian Government acknowledges that there are more opportunities to improve the way data is collected, stored and used in relation to children and young people as both victim survivors and young people who use family violence. However, further consideration and consultation between relevant government departments, sector stakeholders and children and young people themselves is required to determine an appropriate approach to implementing any additional activities to acquit the intent of this recommendation, as well as the additional resourcing and investment that would be needed to do so.

#### **Recommendation 44**

The Victorian Government:

- monitor, review and report back to the family violence sector on the impact of the child and young person Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework tool within six months of the tool being released
- increase information sharing between The Orange Door Network and youth-specific service providers to enhance the delivery of informed and nuanced support.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in principle.*

The Victorian Government supports the intent of this recommendation to enhance collaboration between service providers and promote best practice when sharing information in relation to children and young people. However, the suggested timeframe of six months to review the impact of the child and young person-focused MARAM Practice Guides and Tools is not feasible, as it does not account for the required workforce implementation and uplift and will not adequately enable impact to be measured.

The Victorian Government notes that the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic)* requires that an annual report is tabled in Parliament on the implementation of the MARAM Framework. The consolidated report describes the key areas of progress and work being undertaken to align to risk assessment, management and information sharing across departments and the family violence sector. The package of child and young person-focused MARAM Practice Guides and Tools being developed by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing will be subject to this periodic review process. The government will also conduct earlier monitoring of this significant cultural and practice change, through implementation support processes, and the use of tools made available on Tools for Risk Assessment and Management (TRAM) and Specialist Homelessness Information Platform (SHIP) databases.

The Victorian Government supports improving how service providers capture, use and share data about children and young people who experience and use family violence. This aligns with The Orange Door's approach to practice, engagement and the collection of data about children and young people. As outlined

in the response to Recommendation 30, enhancements to The Orange Door's client relationship management system to enable recording and capturing data on information sharing will support the implementation of this recommendation. Additionally, enhancements to the client relationship management system will include capturing data on children and young people, the referral and support provided.

#### **Recommendation 45**

The Victorian Government support service providers, including schools and education providers, to better capture and analyse data on children and young people to prioritise early intervention, while applying an age and developmental lens, and recognising experiences, intersectionality, capacity for change and the impact of labels.

*The Victorian Government's supports this recommendation in principle.*

As outlined in the response to Recommendations 43 and 44, the Victorian Government supports improving how service providers capture, use and share data about children and young people who experience and use family violence. This aligns with the government's ongoing development of the child and young person-focused MARAM Practice Guides and Tools, which will promote best practice when sharing information in relation to children and young people and support initial work to facilitate baseline consistent data collection on this cohort. These guidance and tools are expected to be released in early 2026.

The Department of Education has significant existing supports in place to assist schools and other education providers in identifying family violence and referring or reporting impacted children and young people and their families to appropriate specialist services.

The intent of this recommendation also aligns with Action 14 under the *Third Rolling Action Plan*, which will aim to identify opportunities to strengthen justice service delivery and broader system responses to young people who use family violence – including ensuring responses are age appropriate and trauma-informed, with a focus on early intervention.

#### **Recommendation 46**

The Victorian Government implement and publicly report on actions taken in response to the Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor's suggested actions in the report Monitoring Victoria's family violence reforms – Service response for perpetrators and people using violence within the family (2023) by June 2026, including:

- creating a centralised platform or database to monitor perpetrator intervention waitlists and participant completions
- scaling up promising pilot interventions to meet demand (including therapeutic interventions)
- updating the Men's Behaviour Change Minimum Standards to reflect a broader range of programs and best practices.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in part.*

This recommendation is consistent with existing perpetrator accountability work underway across government that align with recommendations made in the Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor (FVRIM)'s 2023 report on *Service Responses for Perpetrators and People Using Violence Within the Family*. For example:

- The Victorian Government funded services for people who use family violence are currently required to maintain and report on waitlist and participation data and will continue to encourage better reporting and strengthening the use of existing systems to capture this data.
- The Victorian Government has allocated further funding to extend the Changing Ways pilot through to June 2027, which is trialling a new way of providing intensive, coordinated responses to adults who use violence who pose a serious family violence risk. An evaluation of Changing Ways is underway and will be completed following the completion of the trial.
- The Victorian Government has allocated further funding to the seven innovative programs for people who use family violence from diverse cohorts, enabling the programs to continue to support the same number of people per year through to June 2028. The learnings from these programs will be used across other services for people who use family violence to improve inclusiveness.
- The Victorian Government funds Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) to deliver culturally safe services tailored to First Peoples who use family violence, such as the Brother to Brother Crisis Line, Ngarra Jarranounith Place, and the First Peoples-lead component of the Changing Ways Program, delivered by Dardi Munwurro.
- A review of the Men's Behaviour Change Program (MBCP) Minimum Standards and Implementation Guide is currently underway. The updated standards and guidance will improve program effectiveness, including through ensuring MBCPs are inclusive.
- The Longitudinal Evaluation of Men's Behaviour Change Programs seeks to provide greater understanding of the current state of MBCPs in Victoria, their level of effectiveness in changing men's long-term behaviour and their ability to support the safety and wellbeing of partners and children.
- The Landmark Perpetrator Study initiative funded under the Strengthening Women's Safety Package will explore the behaviours and motivations of people who use family violence and identify opportunities to leverage and expand existing best practice, with a view to improve early intervention and perpetrator intervention programs and system responses.

As outlined in the response to Recommendation 19, the Victorian Government is taking a meaningful but pragmatic approach to responding to the 84 actions proposed by the FVRIM across seven topic-based monitoring reports. Rather than responding to the proposed actions individually, the actions have been grouped and analysed thematically to inform policy development, including through the *Third Rolling Action Plan* and through the ongoing implementation and embedding of the MARAM Framework and information sharing reforms.

#### **Recommendation 47**

The Victorian Government consult with the family violence sector to implement an integrated, consistent and strategic outcomes and evaluation framework for programs and interventions for a diverse range of people who use family violence that includes longitudinal and qualitative data from a variety of sources (including victim survivors). This framework should be aligned with the Family Violence Outcomes Framework, service delivery reporting requirements, federal frameworks on perpetrator interventions, Indigenous Data Sovereignty principles and enhanced information sharing where appropriate.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in principle.*

The Victorian Government supports the intent of this recommendation and commits to continuing existing work underway across government to apply an integrated, consistent and strategic approach to evaluating the outcomes of interventions for people who use family violence. This work is captured in the *Third Rolling Action Plan*. Targeted actions will be implemented to ensure that the impact of system-wide changes to end family and sexual violence are measured and used to deliver better outcomes for victim survivors and people who use family violence.

The implementation of this recommendation will also be informed by ongoing studies and reviews, including the Landmark Perpetrator Study funded as part of the Strengthening Women's Safety Package and the Longitudinal Evaluation of Men's Behaviour Change Programs (MBCPs). The Longitudinal Evaluation will provide insight into the current efficacy of MBCPs in Victoria and will inform the Landmark Perpetrator Study in understanding the behaviours and motivations of people who use family violence. The study will explore the latest evidence from a range of community based and justice system responses and will include the development of a monitoring and evaluation framework for improved impact and outcomes measurement, including recommendations for enhancing Victoria's perpetrator data collection approach.

As outlined in the response to Recommendation 5, the Priority Reform Four Working Group established in response to the 2020 National Agreement on Closing the Gap will bring together representatives from the Aboriginal Strategic Governance Forum and other relevant Department of Families, Fairness and Housing governance forums to develop agreed definitions and a department-wide strategy for information sharing and Indigenous Data Sovereignty. This work is intended to inform family violence outcomes and evaluation efforts through improved Indigenous Data Sovereignty principles and enhanced information sharing between government and the family violence sector.

## **Theme 4: Deepening understanding about the prevalence of perpetration**

### **Recommendation 48**

The Victorian Government support the capture, extraction and use of administrative and qualitative data collected during service provision for research and analysis (including Men's Referral Service phoneline data, and Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework and case file data), to inform evidence-based policy, a fuller picture of people using family violence, profiles and risk, and measuring the effectiveness of interventions.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in principle.*

The Victorian Government supports building a more contemporary and deeper evidence base on people who use family violence. This can be achieved through ongoing updates to existing data resources, such as the Victorian Social Investment Integrated Data Resource (VSIIDR) managed by the Department of Government Services.

The Victorian Government notes that data about people who use family violence from the Tools for Risk Assessment and Management (TRAM) platform and data from The Orange Door's client relationship management system has recently been added to the VSIIDR. This adds to the over 30 existing datasets in the VSIIDR from across government, including Integrated Reporting and Information System (IRIS) and Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS) data. Linked data in the VSIIDR can be used by Victorian Government agencies or organisations working in partnership with the government to conduct health and social policy research and analysis in the public interest, subject to formal approval and ethics processes.

The Victorian Government is also conducting a review that brings together data from completed MARAM risk assessments and the Victorian Homicide Register. This will compare characteristics and risk factor profiles between cases of non-fatal and fatal family violence to validate existing MARAM risk factors and identify emerging ones for later inclusion. The review is due for completion this year.

Further actions to address this recommendation, including adding Men's Referral Service and case file data to the Victorian Linked data system and making linked data more broadly available, would require further consideration and are dependent on the availability of additional funding and resources.

#### **Recommendation 49**

The Victorian Government invest in, and support:

- data collection and program evaluation to adequately capture experiences and impacts of services on people using family violence
- the use of this data to inform research and provide insight into family violence incidents, experiences, drivers, responses, impacts and outcomes to shape effective policies and improve systems.

*The Victorian Government's supports this recommendation in full.*

This recommendation is consistent with work already underway across government to support service providers to improve the consistent and reliable recording of data about people who use family violence and programs' outcomes. This work is key to improving the monitoring and evaluation of government funded programs for this client cohort and is strengthened by periodic, program specific, independent evaluations.

The Victorian Government has also recently invested in additional research projects, including the Longitudinal Study into Men's Behaviour Change Programs (MBCPs) and the Landmark Perpetrator Study funded under the Strengthening Women's Safety Package, which seek to deepen understanding about the behavioural drivers and service requirements of people who use family violence. The Longitudinal Evaluation will provide insights into the current efficacy of MBCPs in Victoria and will inform the Landmark Perpetrator Study in better understanding the behaviours and motivations of people who use family violence.

Together, this work will continue to ensure that community-based and justice system interventions for people who use family violence are contemporary, evidence-informed, victim survivor centred, targeted to the greatest impact and accessible to people from a range of backgrounds and experiences. The findings of these studies will complement insights from ongoing monitoring and evaluation of government funded family violence programs and initiatives.

#### **Recommendation 50**

The Victorian Government support new studies and research projects into people who use family violence, which centres practice-based knowledge and qualitative, longitudinal and multi-method approaches. Priority should particularly be given to people who use family violence who are not in contact with services.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in full.*

This recommendation is consistent with existing and planned research activities underway across government to improve understanding of the behaviours, motivations and service outcomes and

requirements of people who use family violence. This includes the Longitudinal Evaluation of Men's Behaviour Change Programs (MBCPs), which will provide insights into the efficacy of MBCPs in Victoria, and will help government to better target its investment to evidence-based interventions.

This evaluation will inform the Landmark Perpetrator Study funded as part of the Strengthening Women's Safety Package, which will examine and build on recent data, research and evidence across community based and justice system responses. It will leverage stakeholder engagement and best practice expertise, to inform the design and implementation of an effective range of contemporary, evidence-informed, victim survivor centred and targeted interventions for people who use family violence.

The Victorian Government is committed to building the evidence base to better understand the behaviours and motivations of people who use family violence through research and studies, including those who are not in contact with the service system. Ongoing work to better equip services to identify, assess and manage family violence risk is already increasing the visibility of people using family violence and contribute to this evidence base.

### **Recommendation 51**

The Victorian Government undertake a longitudinal research study to track people from different backgrounds and with varying levels of system contact to build a better understanding of family violence trajectories, protective factors, behaviour change over time, pathways in and out of perpetration, long-term impacts of behaviour interventions, attitudes, offending contexts and what increases or reduces risks of adverse outcomes.

*The Victorian Government's supports this recommendation in principle.*

The intent of this recommendation will be achieved through existing and planned research activities underway across government to improve understanding of the behaviours and motivations of people who use family violence, as well as the impact of behaviour change interventions over time. These activities include the Longitudinal Evaluation of Men's Behaviour Change Programs (MBCPs), which will provide insight into the current efficacy of MBCPs in Victoria and will inform the Landmark Perpetrator Study funded as part of the Strengthening Women's Safety Package.

The Landmark Perpetrator Study will examine the latest data, research and evidence across community based and justice system responses, with a view to improving system responses to people who use family violence in Victoria. It will consider the behaviours and motivations of people who use family violence, motivations for, including barriers to, behaviour change, and opportunities to better tailor responses to the diverse range of people who use family violence and to better understand and respond to intersectional needs, including mental health support, connection to community and other behaviours/ factors that impact change. Expanding these research activities would be dependent on, the availability of further investment.

### **Recommendation 52**

The Victorian Government promote and improve availability of linked family violence data in the Victorian Social Investment Integrated Data Resource for external research access, and once both The Orange Door and Tools for Risk Assessment and Management datasets are included, undertake a data linkage project to:

- better understand the journeys of people using family violence, including their systems interactions, and health and social intersections

- evaluate the effectiveness and outcomes of interventions and programs.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in principle.*

The Victorian Social Investment Integrated Data Resource (VSIIDR) is available for use by Victorian Government agencies or organisations working in partnership with the government to conduct health and social policy research and analysis in the public interest, subject to formal approval and ethics processes. While the Victorian Government supports improving the availability of linked family violence data, further consideration and consultation across government is required to determine options for increasing external access to the VSIIDR, as this may require legislative change to permit the sharing of sensitive information.

The Victorian Government notes that data about people who use family violence from the Tools for Risk Assessment and Management (TRAM) platform and data from The Orange Door's client relationship management system has recently been added to the VSIIDR. This adds to the over 30 existing datasets in the VSIIDR from across government, such as Integrated Reporting and Information System (IRIS) and Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS) data.

Existing research underway across government will support the intent of this recommendation by improving understanding about the journeys of people using family violence and evaluating the effectiveness of perpetrator interventions. This includes the Landmark Perpetrator Study initiative funded under the Strengthening Women's Safety Package, which will examine data, research and evidence across the justice system and community-based responses to better understand the behaviours and service interactions of people who use family violence. Findings from this study will complement insights provided by the Longitudinal Study into Men's Behaviour Change Programs (MBCPs), which will examine the current efficacy of MBCPs in Victoria, and will build on findings from ongoing program monitoring and evaluation activities.

#### **Recommendation 53**

The Victorian Government advocate at a federal level for a national population-based survey of people who use family violence that provides for state and regional-level data to shape evidence-based policies on preventing and responding to family violence at these different levels.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in full.*

The Victorian Government supports sharing data and evidence about people who use family violence between jurisdictions and will raise the development of a national population-based survey of people who use family violence for consideration at existing cross-jurisdictional forums. The Victorian Government notes that further consultation is required to determine how such a survey would align with federal research priorities.

#### **Recommendation 54**

In the absence of a national population-based survey, the Victorian Government pilot a state-level population-based survey aimed at people who use violence. This should incorporate learnings from the New South Wales pilot survey about what methodology would yield the most reliable and measurable data.

*The Victorian Government's response to this recommendation is under review.*

Per the response to Recommendation 53, the Victorian Government supports work to strengthen the evidence base about people who use family violence. However, further consultation and consideration is required to determine the additional resources required for this recommendation, as well as the most appropriate approach to implementation and governance that complements related work already underway across government.

#### **Recommendation 55**

The Victorian Government, in implementing Recommendation 2, provide guidance to researchers and service providers on how and when to ethically, consistently and safely undertake research on perpetration and with people using/who have used family violence

*The Victorian Government's response to this recommendation is under review.*

The Victorian Government recognises the importance of consistent and ethical research practices, as well as the prioritisation of the ongoing safety of victim survivors when conducting research on and with people who use family violence. However, further consideration is required to determine whether the existing mechanisms already address the intent of this recommendation.

Research involving or impacting people, including people using or experiencing family violence, is currently guided by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), which provides guidelines and support to ensure that ethical standards are maintained. This includes ensuring that research conforms to the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* (2007) and the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* (2007).

The Victorian Government's various ethics committees, such as the Human Research Ethics Committee, provide additional guidance and approval of ethics for research projects, in accordance with guidelines provided by the NHMRC. This includes guidelines that contain conditions and advice which apply to specific research activities, such as research into illegal behaviours. The government has also produced guidance for embedding lived experience in research to support the Family Violence Research Grants Program, as part of its commitment to implementing the Family Violence Lived Experience Strategy.

#### **Recommendation 56**

The Victorian Government, in implementing Recommendation 1 to undertake a data mapping project, identify and make publicly available, where possible, administrative and linked datasets on family violence.

*The Victorian Government's response to this recommendation is under review.*

As outlined in the response to Recommendation 1, the Victorian Government notes that the existing Family Violence Dashboard, published by the Crime Statistics Agency, provides an annual update of many government datasets relevant to family violence, and includes linked justice system data and analysis. The dashboard is continually developed to incorporate new datasets and measures as they become available.

Linked family violence data on the Victorian Social Investment Integrated Data Resource (VSIIDR) can also be accessed by Victorian Government agencies or organisations working in partnership with the government to conduct health and social policy research and analysis in the public interest, subject to formal approval and ethics processes. Further consultation and consideration is required to determine whether additional administrative and linked family violence datasets should be published in future.

## **Recommendation 57**

The Victorian Government support peak bodies, sectors and service providers who work with people using family violence and Family Violence Regional Integration Committees to:

- access family violence data and analysis
- promote research partnerships and collaboration between these bodies, government agencies, The Orange Door Network, researchers and research institutes.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in principle.*

The intent of this recommendation aligns with ongoing work across government to improve family violence data collection, sharing, linkage, use, analysis and research. This includes:

- Fixed term funding provided for peak bodies including No to Violence, Safe and Equal, Sexual Assault Services Victoria and the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare to build the capability of workforces across their sectors to interpret and use evidence and data through the expansion of the Outcomes, Practice and Evidence Network (OPEN) Platform. This project promotes partnerships between peak bodies in areas of data, outcomes, research, practice, and provides resources and other opportunities for relevant sectors to collaborate and learn.
- The family violence database, published by the Crime Statistics Agency, provides an annual update of many government datasets relevant to family violence, and includes linked justice system data and analysis. Linked family violence data is also available on the Victorian Social Investment Integrated Data Resource (VSIIDR).
- Family Violence Regional Integration Committees utilise data gathered from their membership, including government representatives, to undertake local-level analysis and inform the work of their local family violence service system.

Further consideration is required to determine the most appropriate approach to facilitating access to family violence data and analysis outside of existing and established data access and linkage processes, including the additional resourcing required.

## **Recommendation 58**

The Victorian Government support State departments and agencies holding data on people using family violence to prepare existing data for research and analysis and enable relevant service providers to contribute their data to social service datasets.

*The Victorian Government's response to this recommendation is under review.*

The Victorian Government supports efforts to improve the quality and accessibility of data on people who use family violence to inform research and analysis. However, further consideration and consultation is required to determine the most appropriate mechanism through which to achieve the intent of this recommendation, including identifying the additional funding and resources that would be required to implement it.

## **Recommendation 59**

The Victorian Government increase the Crime Statistics Agency's (CSA) resources and capacity to undertake research and analysis projects about people using family violence, and support CSA's work

to acquire additional family violence data sources and link social service data with more granularity to provide a richer picture of family violence perpetration pathways, connections and service use.

*The Victorian Government's response to this recommendation is under review.*

The Victorian Government supports the intent of this recommendation to increase understanding about pathways in and out of using family violence and the contact people who use family violence have with the service system. This intent will be achieved through existing work underway across government, including the Longitudinal Evaluation Men's Behaviour Change Programs, and the Landmark Perpetrator Study funded under the Strengthening Women's Safety Package, which will examine data, research and evidence across the justice system and community-based interventions, including linked data.

Existing linked family violence data is also available on the Victorian Social Investment Integrated Data Resource (VSIIDR), including person-centred but deidentified data. However, further analysis is required to understand whether more granularity is the most appropriate way to meet the intent of the recommendation, noting that there may be legislative or administrative barriers.

#### **Recommendation 60**

The Victorian Government support the Coroners Court of Victoria to better investigate and analyse the circumstances of all family violence-related deaths to build a more complete picture of the patterns of family violence perpetration and the context in which family violence related deaths occur (including the link between suicide and family violence) and code, analyse and disseminate associated data to relevant stakeholders for research.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in full.*

This recommendation is being implemented through the Coroners Court's Victorian Systemic Review of Family Violence Deaths (VSRFVD). The VSRFVD is established in legislation and in practice to conduct in-depth reviews and identify risks, contributing factors and trends in deaths suspected to have resulted from family violence, including homicides, suicides (of family violence victims or people who use family violence), bystander deaths, third party deaths and other family violence related deaths. Data from the VSRFVD is used to improve the MARAM Framework, including through the current data review as outlined in response to Recommendation 48.

The Coroners Court received funding in 2024 to increase efficiencies in the coding of data into the Victorian Suicide Register and provide a more comprehensive dataset to better analyse family violence cases and prevention opportunities. The Victorian Government continues to explore options to increase the capacity of the Coroners Court to undertake timely investigations and provide detailed data on family violence-related deaths.

#### **Recommendation 61**

The Victorian Government report on the Family Violence Research Agenda 2021–2024 outlining what research questions have been addressed and what gaps remain and then produce a research strategy or plan (aligned with the Victorian Government's overarching family violence strategies, frameworks and plans) that identifies research priorities to increase understanding of people using family violence. This should include a focus on efforts to improve data collection, linkage and integration of research into

practice, and articulate how current and planned research will be considered cohesively to build on existing evidence and identify future research pathways.

*The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in part.*

The Victorian Government supports this recommendation in part, noting that Family Violence Research Program 2021–2024, which delivered research aligned to the Research Agenda, will formally end on 31 December 2025. High level outcomes of the Family Violence Research Program will be publicly communicated through an updated website on the Research Program, which will provide links to the reports at the researchers' websites, where available.

Further consideration of a research strategy or plan is required, noting that it would require significant additional resourcing to identify and support research priorities. In the interim, the Landmark Perpetrator Study funded under the Strengthening Women's Safety Package, is likely to identify opportunities to improve data collection and linkage for the Victorian Government's consideration and may identify priorities for future research.

Victoria is also a member of Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) and will continue to work collaboratively with ANROWS and all jurisdictions to link its research agenda with Victoria's priorities and contribute to performance reporting under the National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022-2032.