

## Community Protection and Public Child Sex Offender Register (Daniel's Law) Bill 2025

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Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee  
Parliament House  
George Street  
Brisbane Qld 4000  
[JICSC@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:JICSC@parliament.qld.gov.au)

To the Honourable Martin Hunt MP

**Re: Submission to the Community Protection and Public Child Sex Offender Register (Daniel's Law) Bill 2025**

The Sexual Violence Research and Prevention Unit (SVRPU), situated within the University of the Sunshine Coast, welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission on the Community Protection and Public Child Sex Offender Register (Daniel's Law) Bill 2025.

**About the SVRPU**

The [Sexual Violence Research and Prevention Unit](#) (SVRPU) is based at the University of the Sunshine Coast (UniSC), and leads research, consultation, co-design and evaluation activities that advance the development, and refinement of, sexual violence prevention strategies across diverse settings. The SVRPU aims to reduce victimisation and address perpetration by challenging the field, introducing novel ideas, advocating for continuous improvement, and promoting innovation. The SVRPU team is recognised internationally as interdisciplinary experts in sexual violence and abuse prevention, working collaboratively with academic and industry partners to generate high-quality research to guide policy and practice. Knowledge translation with real-world impact is at the heart of the SVRPU research agenda.

The Unit's collective contributions to evidence-informed prevention and intervention are demonstrated by over \$4 million in externally funded research projects. Academic contributions include over 100 peer-reviewed publications (journal articles, books, book chapters, and Government reports), which document research, best-practice, and consultancies. Together their work has led to changes in government agenda setting, policy, and practice frameworks, bridging the gap between research and practice.

The SVRPU's expertise spans several key research themes including innovations in prevention; advancing responses to diverse populations such as female perpetrated abuse and First Nations Peoples and Communities; technology-facilitated abuse; intervention and program evaluation; and legal responses. This submission falls within the SVRPU's expertise in legal responses.

**Our Expertise**

**Associate Professor Dominique Moritz** is a law and criminology academic at UniSC and Core Member of the SVRPU. Dominique holds a PhD in law. She is an expert in children's law issues. Her extensive expertise spans criminal law and regulatory concepts with a particular interest in sexual violence criminalisation. She has published 20 peer reviewed articles in high quality journals including several articles on child sexual exploitation and has a track record of leading

successful and impactful projects receiving almost \$1 million in external grant funding. Her work has been published internationally and contributed to legislative change. Dominique is a qualified lawyer, being admitted to the Supreme Court of Queensland in 2013. She was also a police officer employed by the Queensland Police Service prior to entering academia.

**Laura Dodds** is an Associate Lecturer at UniSC, in the School of Law and Society, and a Core Member of the SVRPU. Laura also maintains registration as a Social Worker. Prior to entering fulltime academia, she was a highly sought Single Expert Witness, having written more than 1000 reports for the Family and Federal Circuit Court of Australia. She has worked in child protection and risk assessment roles for over 21 years. Her expertise includes identifying, assessing, and interviewing children who are alleged to have experienced sexual abuse, amongst other child abuse issues. Laura is ICARE trained and her former experience as a child protection worker has resulted in a long history of interviewing victim-children alongside police, responding to allegations of child sexual exploitation, providing support to victims and understanding perpetrator accountability from child safety and family court settings. Laura's doctoral thesis explores children's rights within decision-making in the existing adversarial family court system in Australia.

## Submission

Child sexual abuse is a serious and pervasive issue. Child sexual abuse affects a significant proportion of Australians, with the Child Maltreatment Study finding 28.5% of Australians had experienced child sexual abuse, and females are twice as likely to report the abuse than their male counterparts (Mathews et al., 2023). Most child sexual abuse cases occur in domestic settings and are perpetrated by someone known to the child; these perpetrators are primarily other young people including siblings, parents or caregivers or other known adults (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2023). Family dysfunction is a key risk factor for child sexual abuse, often influenced by low socio-economic status, challenges related to health, housing, and employment, as well as problematic substance use (Pacella et al., 2023). There are short-term and lifelong consequences for victim-survivors following child sexual abuse including post-traumatic stress, low self-esteem and suicidal ideation (Dassylva et al., 2025). The SVRPU commends the Queensland Government's commitment to "protecting the lives and sexual safety of children" (Queensland Government, 2025, p. 1).

Queensland has a critical opportunity to champion innovative child sexual abuse responses, placing the rights, wellbeing, and voices of children centrally in the criminal justice system. Perpetrator accountability must evolve to include evidence-based rehabilitation, safe community reintegration, and culturally responsive approaches. Queensland must invest in these innovative models, explored further below, while avoiding punitive responses, like sex offender registries, that undermine rehabilitation and may ultimately increase risk to the community.

### 1. Sex offender registries are not evidence-based

Community reintegration of sex offenders is uncomfortable for the community. Community reintegration refers to the support offered to perpetrators, who have previously been incarcerated, to re-enter the community after their release. Community members can experience fear from the possibility of perpetrators reoffending, often fuelled by media portrayals and misunderstandings about perpetration as well as a preference for more punitive criminal justice responses (Tuschick et al., 2025). We understand the proposed register for sex offenders is a

response to that community discomfort and an attempt to address the catastrophic levels of child sexual abuse in the community. However, sex offender registries do not generally reduce or prevent child sexual abuse despite their long-term use in many international jurisdictions (Zgoba & Mitchell, 2023).

When sex offenders are released into the community, they face barriers which registration fails to alleviate, and which can actually lead to recidivism. There are individual and structural barriers for reintegration, namely self-motivation and social or economic disadvantages (McAlinden, 2016). Sex offenders can have difficulty securing employment, maintaining stable housing, rebuilding personal relationships and managing social stigma (Cardoso et al., 2025). Registered sex offenders can experience Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) from the registration requirements (Levenson & Harris, 2024). First Nations People who perpetrate child sexual abuse offences also face unique reintegration barriers, including dislocation from community and Country; racism; and ostracism (Bennett et al., 2025).

Family members are also impacted by sex offender registration. Family members of registered sex offenders can also experience PTSD “as hidden and unrecognized victims of the ripple effects of crime”, needing to “confront the shock, stigma, betrayal, and shame experienced upon discovering that a loved one has committed a sex offense” and experiencing “judgmental or rejecting reactions within their communities, from friends and relatives” (Levenson & Harris, 2024, p. 590). The perpetrator, and their family members, can also be targeted by acts of vigilantism (Christensen et al., 2022; Janus, 2016).

The barriers which sex offenders face upon community registration can lead to reoffending. Sex offender registration excludes and vilifies perpetrators (Duwe, 2015). Levenson and Harris (2024) recognise how the “registrants’ own choice to victimize others has led to the traumatizing conditions in which they now find themselves” (p. 590). Notwithstanding, those traumatising conditions should be a significant consideration for legislators who aim to prevent child sexual abuse offending from recurring. Social isolation has a strong correlation with recidivism (Tidefor et al., 2019) because it can cause feelings of hopelessness and depression, and perpetrators lose the motivation to live a productive life (Cardoso et al., 2025). In fact, registration specifically prevents community reintegration because the perpetrators remain separate from the community (Sharma & Kewaliya, 2024).

Labelling practices can be problematic for successful community reintegration and are especially evident in sex offender registration (Walton, 2021). Labelling occurs when the community assigns a label to perpetrators because of their past actions and those perpetrators, especially young people, act in accordance with the label because they are fulfilling the community’s expectations of themselves, increasing the risk of recidivism (Bosetti & Fix, 2024). In fact, labelling has been found to be obstructive to successful reintegration (Farmer et al., 2016). Labels, such as registered sex offender, can be perceived as stigmatising and reduce the labelled person to the label assigned, therefore undermining efforts towards rehabilitation and cessation of offending behaviour (Willis, 2018). For a perpetrator on the sex offender registry, their public registration can influence their identity and behaviour, resulting in reoffending (Mingus & Burchfield, 2012).

Sex offender registration causes fear without preventing child sexual abuse or reducing recidivism. It only captures those perpetrators who have been detected and convicted, which is a smaller cohort than the perpetrators who have committed child sexual abuse. Registries rely upon *perceptions* of safety without necessarily reducing community fear levels (Napier et al.,

2018). Apart from a small deterrent effect for first-time perpetrators, an Australian Institute of Criminology study found public sex offender registries do not reduce recidivism (Napier et al., 2018). Another United States of America study conducted a meta-analysis over a 25-year period and found registration did not deter or decrease sexual offending behaviour (Zgoba & Mitchell, 2023).

While registration is not intended to be punitive, there can be significant consequences for perpetrators, especially where those perpetrators are adolescents (Walker Sterling, 2015). We note the exclusion of perpetrators from the register who are under 18 at the time of the offending and who have not reoffended as an adult. Although legislative reforms that exempt young people from mandatory registration represent an important step toward aligning with developmental and rehabilitative principles, the existence of adult sex offender registries nonetheless have ongoing implications for young people who have offended. Research demonstrates that the threat or anticipation of future registration can shape young people's self-perception, identity development, and engagement with treatment (Batastini et al., 2011). Even when not placed on a register, young people are acutely aware of the stigma and social exclusion attached to sexual offending labels, which can undermine rehabilitation and contribute to shame, secrecy, and withdrawal from prosocial networks (Letourneau & Miner, 2005; Worling & Langstrom, 2006). Further, studies indicate that the collateral consequences associated with registration, such as employment, education, and housing barriers, may influence young people's longer-term trajectories by limiting opportunities and increasing the risk of marginalisation. Therefore, while exclusion from registries mitigate the most direct harms, the broader social context and public discourse surrounding registries continue to affect young perpetrators' psychosocial outcomes and future reintegration.

In response to Queensland's proposed three-tiered sex offender registration system, while it is not an evidence-based solution to sex offender reintegration, there are opportunities to facilitate it in a way that is likely to achieve better desistance outcomes which would be beneficial for the community. Desistance refers to an individual disconnecting from criminal behaviour (Purohit et al., 2024). We respond to each of the proposed three tiers, and other safeguards, below.

## **2. The Tier 1: Missing non-compliant offender website amplifies perpetrator disadvantage in situations of unintentional non-compliance and does not result in increased public-safety outcomes.**

The intention of Tier 1 is laudable because the Bill is attempting to address public safety challenges where dangerous perpetrators may have absconded. However, the Tier 1 website amplifies perpetrator disadvantage which can make successful community reintegration challenging. Sex offender registration, in general, produces detrimental consequences for perpetrators upon release from incarceration across employment, housing, social relationships, and mental health, which can impede successful reintegration and increase risk factors associated with desistance (Hamilton et al., 2022).

In relation to the Tier 1 proposal specifically, there is currently a very long waiting list for social housing and people released from prison are more likely to be homeless than the general population (Love et al., 2017). A lack of stable housing is a contributor to individuals moving around and potentially ending up on this register of 'non-compliant' people. Further, registered sex offenders may need rehousing because they face harassment or vilification in their existing housing where community members discover their location (McKernan, 2017). Registrants may not intend to be non-compliant yet that may be an outcome where they lack housing or there are

not opportunities for rehousing. The redaction of a perpetrator's personal image and information, after they have been located, does not mitigate the risks and harms already caused by its earlier publication.

If Tier 1 is introduced, we make two suggestions here:

- (1) that Tier 1 be amended so the Bill does not inadvertently capture individuals who are non-compliant due to lack of housing; and
- (2) there must be support, including housing and rehousing, provided for perpetrators.

Further details about additional supports needed for sex offenders has also been addressed further below.

### **3. The Tier 2: Locality search may invite a false sense of safety, impact property prices and influence victim-survivor reporting**

Having a locality search available to community members provides them with information relevant to the locality where they reside. In this way, it protects from unfettered access to all offenders on the register. This is an important safeguard. However, there are three significant concerns with the Tier 2 locality search.

Firstly, the Tier 2 locality search available in the register may invite a false sense of safety in community members. Where Tier 2 information is accessed and community members do not establish registered sex offenders living in their area, they may cease to be vigilant. The register records convicted sex offenders; adults who may be at risk of harming children, yet have not been detected or convicted, will not be identified and could still cause harm to children. Further, child sexual abuse perpetrators may not exclusively offend in the localities where they reside. Tier 2 will only protect community members from known perpetrators in the vicinity of their residences and community members may be less vigilant if they believe there are no sex offenders in their locality.

Secondly, there is also another unintended consequence which may arise in response to the Tier 2 locality search. There is a correlation between registered sex offender addresses and deflated property sale prices in an area (Napier et al., 2018; Caudill et al., 2015). Sex offenders being identified in areas of the community causes the perception of increased danger in that area and residents' property prices may be affected, which may also cause community activism.

Thirdly, the register may also have the unintended consequences of affecting victim-survivors. Because child sexual abuse perpetrators are overwhelmingly known to the victim-survivors (as outlined above), rather than strangers, sex offenders being on a register may identify the victim-survivor because of their association with the victim. Further, there may be an impact upon victim-survivor reporting because the victim-survivor might be concerned they will be identified or they may worry about the detrimental consequences for their perpetrator family member (such as going to prison) which could be compounded with the potential for them to be added to a register. So, while the policy objective for this Bill is to "put the rights of parents and families ahead of sexual predators" (Queensland Government, 2025, p. 1), the proposal might instead alienate victim-survivors.

If Tier 2 is introduced, we make the following suggestion:

- (1) that a clear warning is provided to users that there may be other sex offenders in the area that are not on the list and that no data appearing does not mean an area is safe.

#### **4. The Tier 3: Parent/guardian disclosure scheme requires educational resources**

The intended benefits of the parent/guardian disclosure scheme, as outlined in the proposed legislation, are commendable. Allowing parents/caregivers to access relevant information to make safety decisions regarding their children's unsupervised time with other adults could be incredibly beneficial for vulnerable groups (e.g. single mothers assessing the suitability of male partners to be introduced to their children); as well as those who are employing individuals to assist in the care of their children outside of formal childcare (e.g. hiring a nanny/caregiver for a child) where the current Working with Children Check is not required or unable to be accessed.

Despite these potential benefits, this proposed disclosure scheme also has some significant limitations which may unintentionally increase the risk of abuse of some children. Whilst not articulated explicitly within the legislation, it is assumed that this disclosure tier would only release information regarding offences which are finalised and recorded, consistent with other legislation with a similar purpose (e.g. Working with Children Check). Individuals who are being investigated for child sexual abuse or other sexual offences, those who are going through a court process, those whose charges have been withdrawn, and those who might have offences in other jurisdictions would not have their history included in the disclosure scheme information. Whilst these safeguards are essential for due process, failure to adequately educate the public on the limitations of the disclosure scheme elements is likely to create a false sense of security for parents/guardians that the subject adult is 'safe' to have unsupervised access to their child.

Additionally, this type of system also does little to help parents to understand and connect with the risk that lies outside of 'known' offenders. Given that less than 10% of all sexual offences are reported to police and less than 15% of those result in a conviction, there are very few individuals who have engaged in harmful sexual behaviour who will be subject to disclosure under this scheme (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2023; Bright et al., 2021). Further, most child sexual abuse perpetrators are known family members rather than being strangers (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2023). It is thus recommended that the application process for this information should also come with educational resources for parents regarding child safety in general (e.g. environmental risk strategies) and a clear articulation of the limitations of the information that can be provided. Providing false safety to parents must be avoided.

#### **5. The proposed offences for vigilantism are appropriate**

Public display of identifying information fuels online and offline shaming and social vigilantism: exposure of images and personal details markedly increases the risk of rapid, large-scale public shaming, harassment, doxing, property damage, and even physical attacks, outcomes well documented in studies of online shaming and registry impacts (Muir et al., 2023). To further reduce risks of harm, the legislative safeguards proposed which prohibit the misuse of registry information and include penalties for harassment or vigilantism are welcome and appropriate (Simmons, 2019). The accessibility of technology, and its extensive intelligence, make the risk of vigilantism high. As such, the legislative prohibition of vigilante behaviour will require active observance by police to ensure compliance within the community, and a willingness to prosecute when detected, all of which are likely to be resource intensive during the initial implementation of the legislation.



## **6. Additional perpetrator support is needed to accompany registration**

While sex offender registration is one proposed solution to address the child sexual abuse prevalence in the community, additional perpetrator support is needed for those perpetrators registered. Accountability and support programs recognise the “social context of offending”, promoting the “notion of ‘community’ as a powerful tool” (Richards & Biron, 2024). Without support, there is a risk of recidivism and the system will not achieve the Bill’s policy objectives. Integrating supportive reintegration measures, such as access to appropriate housing, employment, and therapeutic services, is crucial, as research consistently shows that desistance is more likely when individuals are socially supported rather than publicly shamed (McAlinden, 2006). As mentioned above, availability of social housing for sex offenders in the community is crucial to promote their desistance from further offending. While support will not necessarily be embedded into the legislation, a clear support plan should be articulated to accompany the Bill.

Sexual offender treatment programs, that accompany community reintegration, produce the best desistance outcomes for perpetrators (McKillop et al., 2022). Supported reconnection in the community gives perpetrators the best likelihood of success at desistance from offending (McAlinden, 2016; Walvisch et al., 2019). Further, social inclusion as a response to child sexual offending has a strong evidence-base (Birgden, 2020). The longer a perpetrator lives in the community without reoffending, the less likely it is that they will reoffend according to a United States of America study (Zgoba & Mitchell, 2021). As such community reintegration that allows perpetrators to forge strong social and relationship connection is preferred.

Undertaking treatment has a positive impact on preventing recidivism for perpetrators. Sexual offenders who engaged with treatment, whether or not they completed it, experienced the benefit of desistance and increased time to the next offence (McKillop et al., 2022). Treatment programs tailored to an individual perpetrator, in conjunction with community reintegration, provided the best desistance outcomes (McKillop et al., 2022). In fact, Rayment-McHugh and colleagues (2022) argue that understanding how programs work in “real world” settings is particularly important, given individual, program, and system factors can influence program success (p. 149). There are many examples of successful treatment programs reducing recidivism for sexual perpetrators, both domestic and international (McKillop et al., 2022; Olver et al., 2021; Prenzler et al., 2023). However, there are few examples of treatment programs specific to perpetrators of child sexual offences and no recent evaluations. Prenzler and colleagues’ (2023) evaluation of successful programs featured three programs for child sex offenders, and none of them were evaluated in the previous ten years, within this project’s timeframe. An area for further research includes recent evaluations of treatment programs for perpetrators of child sexual abuse offences.

Two initiatives that have been trialled in Australia and/or internationally, and which have positive perpetrator accountability outcomes, have been featured below. Circles of Support and Accountability and Cultural Mentoring Programs have been proposed as opportunities for perpetrator community reintegration. These innovative programs manage the risk of perpetrators in the community through supporting them to become productive citizens. Importantly, these programs all foster relationship development amongst perpetrators and rely upon community member involvement. Social support is essential for perpetrator reintegration (Braden et al., 2012). In this way, the programs *build* community as the community shares responsibility in reintegrating perpetrators and reintegration is done at a community level. Each of these programs will be explored further below.



### *Circles of Support and Accountability*

Connectedness is essential for successful community reintegration. Productive relationships, religion and support groups were found to contribute positively to reintegration (Tuschick et al., 2025). Relationships with others “form the bedrock of accountability” according to Mills (2015, p. 393) so perpetrators need to be able to form, and maintain, productive relationships. Family roles are considered “vital” (McAlinden, 2016, p. 17). Connectedness can also be created through broader support networks such as Circles of Support and Accountability.

A Circle of Support and Accountability (CoSA) is a restorative process that allows community reintegration with an element of surveillance for community protection. Using structured and regular meetings, a perpetrator (known as a “core member”) is mentored and supported by a team of volunteers who are further supported by other professionals. Richards and colleagues (2020) suggest CoSAs “challenge” perpetrator views about violence against children including child sexual abuse. CoSAs are a long-term strategy to reduce and prevent perpetrator recidivism (p. 6). In fact, they can operate for one to three years to provide support to an individual perpetrator. There are two main purposes of CoSAs: to support perpetrator reintegration into the community and to reduce the recurrence of sexual offending (Bartels et al., 2019). They have proven benefits of improving perpetrator emotional regulation, problem solving skills, self esteem and self regulation (Hoing et al., 2017).

Volunteers are a crucial element of CoSAs. Trained volunteers support the perpetrator to engage in community activities while also monitoring their behaviour and reporting concerns (Birgden, 2020). In fact, this surveillance role allows volunteers to report trigger behaviours so that extra support can be provided prior to offending (McCartan 2016; McCartan et al., 2014). Volunteers reflect community values and can represent those values more effectively than professionals working within the criminal justice system; volunteers also garner more trust from perpetrators than professionals (Richards et al., 2020). While there was a significant time investment for volunteers, research demonstrates volunteers generally had positive experiences (Lowe & Willis 2019).

CoSAs have been used in various international jurisdictions with a very high degree of success including across the United States of America, Europe, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. CoSAs have been used to successfully support perpetrators to transition from a prison environment back into the community (Roberts et al., 2024). In fact, Norway is known for a “Reintegration Guarantee” which encourages public institutions and services to work cooperatively to facilitate successful perpetrator community reintegration (Gisler et al., 2018, p. 31). Various international studies have demonstrated a 50 – 70% reduction in recidivism (McAlinden, 2017). One long-term randomised study from the US, over an eight-year period following the perpetrator’s release from incarceration, demonstrated an 88% lower rearrest rate for perpetrators involved in a CoSA (Duwe, 2018). A cost benefit analysis, in this study, also revealed CoSAs to be a cost-effective intervention for government because of the reduction in recidivism (Duwe, 2018). Some CoSA models in the United Kingdom systematically interact with law enforcement, social services, probation and prisons (McAlinden, 2017). They also have economic benefits for the criminal justice system in enabling desistance (McAlinden, 2016).

CoSAs have not been widely adopted within Australia. South Australia’s model commenced in 2015 (Birgden, 2020) and provided opportunities for participants to forge “prosocial identities” (Richards et al., 2020, p. 105). While South Australia’s CoSAs were not mandated by corrections and did not have strict surveillance and monitoring like other programs, they do provide “social

support, growth and identity transformation”, (Richards et al., 2020, p. 105) and, therefore, can successfully run alongside other statutory supervision arrangements. According to Richards and colleagues (2020), victim-survivors were generally supportive of CoSAs because they focus on the future of reducing the risk of offending. Victim-survivors also understood that community-based reintegration programs, like CoSAs, play “a key role in protecting the community from sexual violence” (p. 106). Supporting CoSA implementation and evaluation in Queensland is an opportunity for further research to reduce recidivism for child sexual abuse.

Implementing CoSAs as a community reintegration measure in Queensland would require community education to address knowledge gaps and gather support. In a 2015 study, Richards and McCartan (2017) found community members did not generally support the program, which was an interesting finding given Richards and colleagues’ (2020) findings indicating victim-survivor support, outlined above. Community members believed victim-survivors should receive financial priority above perpetrator integration; they felt that perpetrators could not be rehabilitated; and they did not understand the purpose of the CoSAs, including believing they would be used as an alternative to incarceration in sentencing. Richards and McCartan (2017) suggested stronger communication is needed around the purpose and benefits a CoSAs. More specifically, their purpose is to prevent child sexual abuse by reducing the risk of recidivism; CoSAs do not replace incarceration but supplement it; and monitoring and accountability functions of CoSAs have value in conjunction with perpetrator support. The media could play an influential role in proper communication (Richards & Biron, 2024).

### *Cultural Mentoring Programs*

Cultural Mentoring Programs (CMPs) are a support and accountability opportunity for First Nations People convicted of sexual offences. Similarly to CoSAs, they are a reintegration opportunity for perpetrators. However, CMPs have a vital difference to a CoSA: they are First Nations-led and have a strong focus on culture (Bennet et al., 2025). Community reintegration for First Nations perpetrators requires:

- a holistic focus on social and emotional wellbeing, family and community, rather than an individual focus;
- recognition that many perpetrators are victim-survivors themselves and responses need to address their own trauma;
- community support and delivery from First Nations led organisations separate to government;
- trust and rapport building that should begin during incarceration and then extend into the community;
- Country and culture as central to program delivery;
- support to understand release conditions; and
- realistic and achievable Key Performance Indicators for organisations delivering outcomes with funding (Bennett et al., 2025).

There are few examples of programs supporting cultural reintegration. A CMP offered in Townsville, Queensland, is one such example. Richards and colleagues (2020) outline the cultural and spiritual support which CMPs offer to First Nations People, convicted of sexual offences, who have been released following a period of incarceration. Reconnection with First Nations culture is a key goal. Elders provide support and mentorship using cultural activities including connection to land, ceremonies, traditional arts and crafts and participating in community events.

## **7. A clear evaluation plan is recommended for implementation**

One of the significant omissions of this Bill, and accompanying documents, is that there is no measure of what success will look like beyond a very broad commitment to protecting children. Does success mean fewer people charged with child sexual offences? Fewer charges could be the result of victim-survivor barriers to reporting rather than a reduction in offending. Alternatively, does success mean less recidivism in the community? Until there is a clear articulation of the measure of success, the impact of the legislation cannot be measured. As such, the Queensland Government needs to indicate a target to measure success for this initiative.

In addition to articulating measures of success, the introduction of the Bill should be accompanied by an evaluation plan. Evaluation of the sex offender registration scheme will determine whether, and how, the initiative was successful in achieving policy objectives and protecting the lives and safety of children.

We also encourage an openness to modify the legislation in future if evidence is presented of the initiative's ineffectiveness if that is the case.

Ongoing research plays a critical role in ensuring the effectiveness and relevance of these interventions. Therefore, we strongly argue for increased research funding, specifically targeted towards evaluating the effectiveness of the initiative within Queensland's unique context.

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to provide a submission. Please let us know if we can provide any further information.

Yours sincerely,



***Associate Professor Dominique Moritz***

***Laura Dodds***

Sexual Violence Research and Prevention Unit

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