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27th October 2022

Committee Secretary
Legal Affairs and Safety Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Q 4000

LASC@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE (COMBATTING COERCIVE CONTROL) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2022

We write to you as the Queensland Domestic Violence Service Network (QDVSN), representing 19 Queensland regional domestic violence services and the Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research, the Immigrant Women's Support Service and DVConnect. QDVSN works collaboratively and strategically to:

- Advance understanding of, and to eliminate gender, structural, political, economic, legal and cultural inequalities and inequities, which result in gender-based violence in all its forms
- Provide peer support, information sharing and debriefing within our membership
- Be a change agent by providing education, a reference point and a collective voice to Government, Non-Government and member services on State and National issues relating to domestic and family violence.

QDVSN Members are committed to engage, advocate and support the work of Government and other bodies to systemic issues of concern and to ensure the voices and experiences of our clients are considered in the formulation of policy and legislation that impacts on domestic and family violence victims in Queensland.

QDVSN members are specialist partners and advisors to the Department of Justice and Attorney General and several other departments across local, state and federal governments, local communities, health networks, industry bodies, unions and academic institutions, who depend upon our advice, insights and professional expertise in strategic innovation, clinical practice, operational management and evaluation of DFSV services.

We are regularly called upon for courageous leadership when there is public spotlight on domestic violence and we are depended upon to assist government and its various agencies, prevent, identify, prepare for and respond to high risk in the context of domestic, family and sexual violence and intrafamilial homicide every day. Therefore, well placed to provide a response on these issues.

We understand that the Queensland Sexual Assault Network (QSAN) have provided a comprehensive response and we wholeheartedly agree and support their recommendations outlined in their submission. In addition to their recommendations, QDVSN members would like to highlight and reinforce the following recommendations:

1. DFV jury directions

QDVSN Recommendation –

To find your nearest DFV service please visit our website: www.qdvsn.com



Include a mechanism for ensuring a consistent approach to directing Juries – develop a script to clearly support the jury to better understand and be aware of what may occur or identifiable in a DFV case – and not simply what one Judicial Officer decides is relevant.

2. Expert Evidence

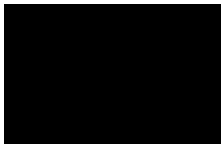
QDVSN Recommendation –

There will be embedded processes to ensure the safety of Protected Witnesses (for example employees from DFV Services providing specialist analysis or evidence).

An Expert Witness should be able to demonstrate their work and the evidence they are providing to the Court is aligned with the preamble of the DFV Act 2012 which embeds the gendered nature of domestic violence in this legislation.

If you require any further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Warm regards,



QDVSN Secretariat

On behalf of the Queensland Domestic Violence Services Network (QDVSN)