




Speech By
Hon. Shannon Fentiman

MEMBER FOR WATERFORD

Record of Proceedings, 11 March 2021

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (10.00 am): We know Queensland women face barriers when reporting violence committed against them. From the time they report, and throughout their journey within the criminal justice system, we know that this process is often full of additional barriers and processes that add to their trauma. Like so many Queensland women, like so many Australian woman, I am angry, disappointed and frustrated with some of the events of the last month and about a system that still is not supporting women. It is clear to us just how far we still have to go. Enough is enough.

I am proud to be part of a government that has led the nation in tackling violence against women. I am so pleased that the Premier has today announced a wideranging review into the experience of women across the criminal justice system to be undertaken by the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, led by Hon. Margaret McMurdo. The first part of this work will look at criminalising coercive control. We will look not only at how we legislate against coercive control but also how we train our first responders to recognise and respond to this type of controlling behaviour. It is about gearing the system to intervene earlier to save women's lives.

The Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce will look into possible future areas of reform, including attitudinal change, prevention, service responses and, where necessary, legislative amendment. Each member of this task force has in-depth knowledge of women's experience across the criminal justice system and will be able to deal with the complexity of these issues from all perspectives. The members of the task force are: Tracy Linford APM, Deputy Commissioner, Queensland Police Service; Laura Reece, barrister-at-law; Di MacLeod, Deputy Director, Queensland Sexual Assault Network; Gillian O'Brien, manager of WWILD; Thelma Schwartz, Principal Legal Officer, Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Legal Service; Patrick O'Leary, Professor, Griffith University; Kelly-Ann Tansley, Manager, Brisbane Domestic Violence Service; Dr Nora Amath, Islamic Women's Association of Australia; Philip McCarthy QC, Acting Deputy Director of Public Prosecutions; and Alexis Oxley, solicitor.

I would like to acknowledge the work of the countless brave survivors who have used their voice to call for change. I speak of people like Hannah Clarke's parents, Sue and Lloyd, who have used their heartbreaking tragedy to educate all Queenslanders on the dangerous behaviours of coercive control; Grace Tame, our incredibly brave Australian of the Year, who is using her platform to discuss issues of child abuse with such passion and poise; and all of the countless others who also continue to fight for change. I say: we hear you, and we believe you.

I look forward to receiving the first report on coercive control in October and the full report in March next year.