




Speech By
Terry James

MEMBER FOR MULGRAVE

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DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PROTECTION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr JAMES** (Mulgrave—LNP) (11.25 am): I rise today to reflect on a series of reforms designed to support the Queensland Police Service and, most importantly, to better serve victims of domestic and family violence throughout our state. Under the previous government many victims were forced to wait hours, sometimes days, for help to arrive. This is simply unacceptable. The Crisafulli government is determined to change this. We are taking decisive action, starting with this bill, to restore safety to our communities and support victim-survivors at every turn.

The officer in charge of one of the busiest police stations in my electorate of Mulgrave has informed me that his area is among those with the highest rates of domestic violence incidents in Queensland; 90 per cent of his station's workload is related to domestic violence. The former Labor government failed to act on repeated recommendations during their decade of power, resulting in the number of domestic and family violence victims skyrocketing across Queensland. In fact, between 2012 and 2024 the number of calls for service to domestic and family violence incidents increased from 60,000 to more than 192,000, an increase of 218 per cent, with many victims left waiting hours or days for help. The data reveals it takes on average 4.6 hours for an officer to respond to each incident, exacerbated by the evolving and complex nature of domestic and family violence. However, it is important to remember that this issue is not solely about statistics or data trends. Behind every number is a real person, someone who could be our neighbour, our friend or even a member of our own family.

The definition of 'domestic violence' is any behaviour that is violent, threatening, controlling or intended to make you or your family feel scared or unsafe. Most disturbingly, it is an activity that is all too familiar within the communities where we live. Firstly, we are ensuring frontline police have the tools they need to act swiftly. Police protection directions, or PPDs, will give police the power to provide immediate 12-month protection to victims. These PPDs can include a range of conditions both standard, such as requiring good behaviour and prohibiting domestic violence, and non-standard, such as no contact or ouster orders. Before issuing a PPD, a police officer must seek approval from a supervising officer of appropriate rank, ensuring oversight and careful consideration. PPDs will be provided only after police have properly investigated the allegations and deemed it necessary to protect the aggrieved person. The safety, protection and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults are of the utmost importance in every decision.

Strict safeguards will be in place. For example, PPDs must not be issued where either party is a child or a police officer or where a DVO is already in place. These exclusions ensure fairness and protect the integrity of the process. Importantly, these measures help prevent misidentification and ensure support goes to the most in need. I understand that the opposition has foreshadowed an amendment to the bill as proposed. For accountability, the bill creates two pathways for reviewing a PPD—a police review and a court review. Individuals affected by a PPD may apply for a police review within 28 days or seek a court review at any time during the 12 months the PPD is in force. These processes provide important checks and balances, protecting both the aggrieved and the respondent,

and I believe will satisfy or remedy the oversight concerns of the opposition. Should the court set aside a PPD, it will be as though the direction was never issued. This is justice in action—fair, responsive and balanced.

We recognise that court processes can be traumatic for victim-survivors. That is why the bill expands the use of videorecorded evidence-in-chief, VREC, across all magistrates courts. This allows adult complainants to provide their main evidence by video statement, reducing the stress of appearing in court and reliving traumatic events. We are also streamlining the process—allowing statements to be taken when the victim is ready, permitting multiple recordings and simplifying the language around ‘truthful’ and ‘consent’. These changes put victims’ needs at the centre of the process.

I now want to highlight one of the most innovative aspects of the bill—the GPS electronic monitoring pilot for high-risk domestic and family violence perpetrators. We are delivering on our election commitment to pilot GPS-based monitoring, ensuring courts can impose electronic monitoring conditions on high-risk offenders. This means, for example, that where a respondent is subject to an ouster condition—prohibited from approaching a specific residence—the monitoring device can alert authorities if they come too close. The court will only impose such monitoring if it is deemed necessary or desirable for protection. The pilot will begin with 150 devices available to select courts. Victim-survivors will even have the option to carry their own GPS enabled safety device, adding another layer of protection. These measures are not permanent; they are subject to review after two years, ensuring we assess what works before further expansion.

It is our solemn duty to protect victims of domestic violence and we must hold perpetrators of these heinous acts to account, which is why we are embarking on this significant reform. The minister has advised that this is the first tranche of reforms and it is about giving victim-survivors immediate protections against offenders, stopping the retraumatisation of victims and helping our hardworking police get to more offences to protect some of the state’s most vulnerable people. This is just the start. The Crisafulli government is committed to the better protection of domestic and family violence victims and holding perpetrators to account. The Minister for Police and Emergency Services continues to tell us that the scourge of domestic violence is placing significant strain on our frontline police resources and impacting officers’ ability to address the growing number of calls for help. Quite simply, our victims deserve better and the Crisafulli government is committed to bringing in significant reform to fix this broken system.

As we move forward these reforms, it is essential to acknowledge not only the policy changes but also the profound impact they will have on the lives of Queenslanders facing domestic and family violence. By empowering police with immediate tools and enhanced legal frameworks, we are taking meaningful steps to ensure victims are protected sooner and perpetrators are tracked and held responsible. These initiatives mark a pivotal shift from reactive measures to proactive protection, reinforcing our responsibility as legislators to build a safer environment for Queenslanders. With continued commitment, collaboration and vigilance, we can break the cycle of violence and restore hope to those who have suffered in silence for far too long.

These reforms are just the beginning. We are determined to unravel Labor’s neglect over the past decade and rebuild a system that truly puts victims first. By empowering police, holding perpetrators to account, harnessing technology and supporting victim-survivors at every step of the way, we are creating a safer Queensland for everyone. Together we must continue to strive for a community where no-one lives in fear and where every Queenslander knows that help is there when it is needed most. The Domestic and Family Violence Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 is an important part of that journey. I support this bill.