

Question on Notice

No. 1739

Asked on 11 October 2016

MS FARMER ASKED THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER FOR JUSTICE AND MINISTER FOR TRAINING AND SKILLS (HON Y D'ATH) –

QUESTION:

With reference to the government's trial of a specialist domestic violence court at Southport —

Will the Attorney-General provide an update on key indicators on the effectiveness of the trial?

ANSWER:

I thank the Deputy Speaker and Member for Bulimba for her question.

The long term objectives of the trial specialist domestic and family violence court at Southport (Southport trial) are to provide a coordinated, fair, consistent and timely response to domestic and family violence matters; enhance safety for victims; ensure that perpetrators are more accountable and demonstrate behaviour change; and develop strong local service provider partnerships.

The in-house interim evaluation of the Southport trial (the interim evaluation) released in May 2016, found strong evidence of the Southport trial being on track in providing a coordinated, consistent and timely response to domestic and family violence matters and much evidence of being on track to provide enhanced safety of victims of domestic violence.

The interim evaluation of the Southport trial is available at <https://publications.qld.gov.au/dataset/the-trial-specialist-domestic-and-family-violence-court-in-southport/resource/9d8eb43e-dee6-49b6-907e-e88b79c1edb3>.

Griffith Criminology Institute is currently conducting an independent evaluation of the Southport trial, with in-depth analysis of 12 months of quantitative and qualitative data.

The evaluation's main objectives are to assess the short and medium term outcomes of the trial; assess the effectiveness of the model as it might be applied to diverse communities and provide a cost comparison for the model showing the outcomes which can be attained for the additional investment. Some of the short and medium term outcomes identified are: that victims and perpetrators know their legal rights and receive appropriate support and information; that tailored, appropriate orders are made that respond to safety needs and risks; that Magistrates have all the information required to make the most appropriate order; that there is effective coordination of matters and services to support the court; and that domestic violence matters are heard in a timely way, based on risk. Full details of the short and medium term outcomes are contained in appendix 3 to the interim evaluation.

The evaluation's methodology involves measuring how the Southport trial is tracking against each of the short to medium term outcomes, in comparison with another court which hears domestic and family violence matters without a specialist court model. Ipswich Magistrates Court is the comparison site. Griffith Criminology Institute has identified measures for assessing the achievement of each outcome. Data collection involving these measures is complete and includes 139 surveys of victims and perpetrators, 15 focus groups, 19 interviews including interviews with Magistrates, 300 case file reviews, and analysis of courts and police administrative data.