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Australian Government

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

**ANDREW FISHER BUILDING
ONE NATIONAL CIRCUIT
BARTON**

Reference: MS25-000472

Kate Bryant
Coroner's Registrar, Coroners Support Services
Coroners Court of Victoria
cpuresponses@coronerscourt.vic.gov.au

Dear Registrar

Thank you for your letter of 6 June 2025 regarding the Coroners Court of Victoria's investigation into the death of Ms HRZ (reference number: COR 2020-007005).

On behalf of the Australian Government, I extend my sincere condolences to the family of Ms HRZ for their loss. I also thank Coroner Giles for her findings and recommendations.

I acknowledge that the Finding into Death without Inquest recommends that the Government commits to long-term funding for the development and maintenance of critical infrastructure for the primary prevention of violence against women and family violence as well as for those agencies that play a key role in influencing the quality, reach, impact and coordination of prevention activities at a national level; and that the Commonwealth Government work closely with the family violence sector to ensure the family violence funding allocated in the 2024 federal budget and future budgets provides appropriate and adequate support for migrant and refugee women experiencing family violence, including through investment in targeted prevention programs.

The Government is committed to ending family, domestic and sexual violence in a generation. The National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032 provides short, medium and long-term actions over the next ten years across prevention, early intervention, response, recovery, and healing. Over \$4 billion has been committed to these initiatives since the October 2022–23 Budget, including \$534.5 million already provided to support the delivery of key National Cabinet priorities to end gender-based violence. To further accelerate efforts, \$21.4 million over three years from 2025–26 has been provided for immediate, targeted measures to improve victim and survivor engagement with the justice system.

The Australian Government also committed \$6.9 million over two years from 2024–25 for domestic and family violence support to refugee and migrant women supported through the Settlement Engagement and Transition Support (SETS) program. This funds prevention initiatives and specialised responses through crisis intervention measures, education for women about options and available services, appropriate referrals, assistance with reporting incidences of violence, and group information sessions.

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There are a range of measures employed to address violence against women beyond community, family law and family violence service systems. These include protective measures such as improving women's economic independence and security, easier access to early childhood education and care, and improved access to medical support. This also includes response activities such as access to affordable housing, social security payments, and greater access to legal support.

While the Commonwealth reserves its position on whether it is bound by section 72(3) of the *Coroners Act 2008* (Vic), noting and recognising the important role of the Coroners Court of Victoria in investigating and preventing deaths, the Government provides the following voluntary response to the recommendations.

I hope this response is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Walter', with a stylized flourish underneath.

Andrew Walter
First Assistant Secretary, Government Division
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
3 September 2025

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COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT RESPONSE INVESTIGATION INTO THE DEATH OF MS HRZ

RECOMMENDATION (IV)

That the Commonwealth Government commit to long-term funding for the development and maintenance of critical infrastructure for the primary prevention of violence against women and family violence as well as for those agencies that play a key role in influencing the quality, reach, impact and coordination of prevention activities at a national level, as outlined by Our Watch in Change the Story: A Shared Framework for the Primary Prevention of Violence Against Women in Australia. These include:

- (i) Our Watch (to provide independent national leadership on primary prevention)*
- (ii) Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) (to deliver the National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey and the prevention elements of the national research agenda)*
- (iii) Australian Bureau of Statistics (to deliver the Personal Safety Survey)*
- (iv) Workplace Gender Equality Agency.*

RESPONSE

The Government notes this recommendation.

The Government is committed to ending gender-based violence in a generation. In its first term, the Government has invested over \$4 billion to address gender based violence and has increased support to frontline services for women experiencing domestic and family violence, including:

- signing a renewed five-year Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence Responses Federation Funding Agreement (FDSV FFA) that provides over \$700 million in new matched funding from Commonwealth and state and territory governments, with the Commonwealth contributing \$365.8 million. The renewed FDSV FFA supports greater flexibility for states and territories to direct funding to meet local needs and provides stronger transparency and accountability mechanisms. It also includes a focus on nationally coordinated approaches to support prevention activities through frontline services. Further information on this and other National Cabinet commitments can be found here: www.pm.gov.au/media/meeting-national-cabinet-7
- funding to enhance and expand frontline service to support specialist services for women, services to children and young people exposed to family, domestic and sexual violence to heal and recover; and working with men, including behaviour change programs for perpetrators
- legislating 10 days paid family and domestic violence leave
- setting up the permanent new Leaving Violence Program, and
- providing support services to people leaving intimate partner violence.

The Government is also providing ongoing, increased funding for culturally safe legal assistance and non-legal support services, including through specialist Women's Legal

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Services and Family Violence Prevention and Legal Services, as well as Legal Aid Commissions, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services and Community Legal Centres, under the new \$3.9 billion National Access to Justice Partnership 2025-30 which commenced on 1 July 2025.

The Government continues to fund a range of critical programs to prevent violence against women, including:

- \$100.4 million over five years from 2022-23 for Our Watch to deliver the Primary Prevention Activities Program to address the drivers of violence against women and children including, preventing violence against women from migrant and refugee communities.
- \$4.3 million in 2024-25 for Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) to further build the evidence base on pathways into and out of perpetration of family, domestic and sexual violence. ANROWS has commissioned 14 research projects focused on perpetration which are published on the ANROWS website.
- The Department of Social Services funds the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) to deliver the Personal Safety Survey (PSS). The Department is providing \$21.9 million for delivery of the 2025-26 PSS.
 - The PSS is conducted approximately every four years and collects information from persons aged 18 years and over about the nature and extent of their experiences of violence, including detailed information about experiences of physical and sexual violence; violence, emotional abuse, and economic abuse by a cohabiting partner; stalking; sexual harassment; and childhood abuse and witnessing parental violence before the age of 15. Publications from the PSS present high level prevalence statistics and changes over time for the key violence types collected in the survey.

The Government remains committed to supporting the important role of the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA). This includes providing \$4.4 million over 4 years to WGEA to implement recommendations 42 and 43 of the Respect@Work report which resulted in WGEA collecting and reporting data on sexual harassment in Australian workplaces. Additionally, larger employers are now required to set and commit to achieving gender equality targets in their workplaces and report these to WGEA. Employers can select targets that include improving their policies and strategies related to preventing and responding to sexual harassment and access to paid family and domestic violence leave.

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RECOMMENDATION (V)

That the Commonwealth Government work closely with the family violence sector to ensure the family violence funding allocated in the 2024 federal budget and future budgets provides appropriate and adequate support for migrant and refugee women experiencing family violence, including through investment in targeted prevention programs.

RESPONSE

The Government notes this recommendation.

The Government is committed to providing national leadership and investment to end violence against women and children in all its forms, and deliver on the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032* (the National Plan).

Under the National Plan, the Government delivers specific support services for women and children from culturally diverse, migrant and refugee backgrounds. These include:

- \$3.4 million over three years from 2023-24 to deliver the FDSV Training for culturally diverse, refugee and migrant communities and faith leaders.
- \$985.7 million from 2021-30, to support state and territory frontline services under the FDSV FFA. This includes \$169.4 million over four years from 2022-23 to fund 500 new frontline and community service workers to support victim-survivors of FDSV across Australia. Of these 500 workers, 60 will support the specific needs of culturally diverse, migrant and refugee women and children.
- \$39.7 million over five years from 2022-23 to deliver the DV-alert program to educate health, allied health and community frontline workers on how to recognise and appropriately respond to the signs of family and domestic violence (FDV), including in culturally diverse, migrant and refugee contexts.
- \$32.3 million over five years from 2022-23 to improve access to, and enhance, the Support for Trafficked People Program, which assists victim-survivors of modern slavery.
- \$12.1 million over five years from 2024-25 for the Forced Marriage Specialist Support Program and \$2.2 million to extend Speak Now, an education and prevention activity.
- \$100.4 million over five years from 2022-23 for Our Watch to deliver the Primary Prevention Activities Program to address the drivers of violence against women and children including, preventing violence against women from migrant and refugee communities.
- \$925.2 million over five years from 2024-25 to permanently establish the Leaving Violence Program from 1 July 2025. The Leaving Violence Program provides eligible victim-survivors of intimate partner violence, regardless of visa status, gender or sexuality, with an individualised financial support package of up to \$5,000, and other supports including risk and safety assessments, and individual referral services. The

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Leaving Violence Program supports victim-survivors residing in Australia as Australian citizens, permanent residents or temporary visa holders.

- \$6.1 million over four years from 2024-25 (and \$1.6 million per year ongoing) for continued specialised support for visa holders experiencing domestic and family violence through the Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) visa support service.
- \$6.9 million over two years from 2024-25 for DFV support to refugee and migrant women supported through the Settlement Engagement and Transition Support program. This funds prevention initiatives and specialised responses through crisis intervention measures; education for women about options and available services; appropriate referrals, assistance with reporting incidences of violence; and group information sessions.

The National Access to Justice Partnership 2025-30 also provides ongoing funding for legal assistance services for temporary visa holders experiencing family and domestic violence.

The *Migration Regulations 1994* contain Family Violence Provisions (FVPs) which allow certain visa applicants to be granted permanent residence if their relationship has broken down and they have experienced DFV perpetrated by the sponsoring partner or primary applicant. The Australian Government allocated \$8.9 million in the 2023-24 Budget to expand the FVPs to most permanent visa subclasses and additional cohorts of Partner visa applicants. Expansion of the FVPs is being implemented in stages. As of 17 December 2024, the FVPs have been expanded in 20 visa subclasses.