

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE NO. 5 - JUSTICE AND COMMUNITIES

Wednesday 11 September 2024

Examination of proposed expenditure for the portfolio area

WOMEN, SENIORS, PREVENTION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT

CORRECTED

The Committee met at 9:15.

MEMBERS

Ms Sue Higginson (Acting Chair)

The Hon. Mark Buttigieg

Ms Abigail Boyd

The Hon. Susan Carter

The Hon. Anthony D'Adam

The Hon. Dr Sarah Kaine

The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones (Acting Deputy Chair)

PRESENT

The Hon. Jodie Harrison, *Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault.*

The ACTING CHAIR: Welcome to the fourth hearing of Portfolio Committee No. 5 - Justice and Communities for the inquiry into budget estimates 2024-2025. I acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, the traditional custodians of the lands on which we are meeting today. I pay my respects to Elders past and present, and celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal peoples and their ongoing cultures and connections to the lands and waters of New South Wales. I also acknowledge and pay my respect to any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people joining us here today. My name is Sue Higginson, and I am the Acting Chair of the Committee for today. I welcome Minister Harrison and accompanying officials to this hearing. Today the Committee will examine the proposed expenditure for the portfolios of Women, Seniors, and Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault.

I ask everyone in the room to please turn their mobile phones to silent. Parliamentary privilege applies to witnesses in relation to the evidence they give today. However, it does not apply to what witnesses say outside of the hearing. I urge witnesses to be careful about making comments to the media or to others after completing their evidence. In addition, the Legislative Council has adopted rules to provide procedural fairness for inquiry participants. I encourage Committee members and witnesses to be mindful of these procedures. Welcome, and thank you for taking the time to give evidence today. All witnesses will be sworn prior to giving evidence. Minister, I remind you that you do not need to be sworn as you have already sworn an oath to your office as a member of Parliament. I also remind Mr Tidball, Ms Campbell and Ms McKenzie that you have already been sworn before the Committee during this inquiry and therefore you do not need to be sworn again.

Mr MICHAEL TIDBALL, Secretary, Department of Communities and Justice, on former oath

Ms ANNE CAMPBELL, Deputy Secretary, Strategy, Policy and Commissioning, Department of Communities and Justice, on former oath

Ms HANNAH TONKIN, Women's Safety Commissioner, Department of Communities and Justice, affirmed and examined

Ms GILLIAN WHITE, Deputy Secretary, Social Policy and Intergovernmental Relations, The Cabinet Office, sworn and examined

Ms TANYA SMYTH, Director, Women NSW, The Cabinet Office, affirmed and examined

Ms KATHRYN McKENZIE, Acting NSW Ageing and Disability Commissioner, NSW Ageing and Disability Commission, on former oath

The ACTING CHAIR: Today's hearing will be conducted from 9.15 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. We are joined by the Minister for the morning session from 9.15 a.m. to 1.00 p.m., with a 15-minute break at 11.00 a.m. In the afternoon we will hear from the departmental witnesses from 2.00 p.m. to 5.30 p.m., with a 15-minute break at 3.30 p.m. During these sessions there will be questions from the Opposition and crossbench members only, and then 15 minutes allocated for Government questions at 10.45 a.m., 12.45 p.m. and 5.15 p.m. We will now begin with questions from the Opposition.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Good morning, Minister. Who is the Premier's NSW Woman of Excellence for 2024?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Good morning, Ms Carter. Firstly, I would like to acknowledge country as well. The Woman of Excellence for 2024 is Jess Hill.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Can you tell us the priority areas in the NSW Women's Strategy?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: They are economic empowerment, health, and participation and empowerment.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: They have informed the preparation of the gender equality statement in the budget, I believe?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: They have.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: You were involved in the preparation of the gender equality statement, as Minister for Women?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I was. The Treasurer's office and I were involved, and my office.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: What's the leading cause of death for women in New South Wales? That would be dementia, Minister.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Right.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: It's interesting because when we look at the section for health and wellbeing, it has nothing at all to do with dementia, which is the leading cause of death for women in New South Wales. I'm wondering why that's not reflected in the gender equality statement with the focus on health and wellbeing.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: The gender equality statement is really aimed at identifying the key issues that the Government is working on during this budget to deal with gender inequality.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Key cause of death for women—not important?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: It certainly is important. That's probably a question for the Minister for Health, though. Unfortunately, we can't cover everything that relates to women in the gender equality statement. They are the key issues that the Government is focusing on, though, and that we think the community certainly would be wanting to hear about.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I understand. I notice under health and wellbeing at page 43 that you point to an allocation made for the Disaster Response Legal Service. Do women have particular and unique legal issues following disasters?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Women certainly have unique needs during disasters. They are more likely to be affected in disasters due to the roles that they play.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: In what way are women uniquely affected by disasters in ways that men are not?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Women are disproportionately affected during disasters because of the role that they play within their families.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Sorry, could you explain that a bit more?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Quite often, women are the primary caregiver and therefore, when disasters occur, they are required to pull the family together more.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: And that gives rise to unique legal needs, which is why it's in the gender equality statement?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I'd have to take that on notice.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I'm just wondering about the selection of priorities and whether they're uniquely to do with women. Thank you very much for that, Minister. Perhaps we can turn to—

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Can I just clarify, the issues in here that are identified as relating to women are not necessarily uniquely relating to women, but they are certainly issues of importance to women and to a certain extent more important to women.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: So the programs identified there would be available to anybody, but women may also access those programs.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Programs within the budget equality statement are not necessarily available to everybody—to people of all genders. However, they may be.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: The Disaster Response Legal Service—is that unavailable to men?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I'll need to take that on notice. I don't think so, but I'll need to take that on notice.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: And the money given to the Strata and Property Services Commissioner to support the growing number of renters—is that also unavailable to men?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: No, it's not unavailable to men.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: But it is in the gender equality statement.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: It is. There are a lot of things in the gender equality statement.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: If we can turn to Staying Home Leaving Violence, Minister, on 6 June you told the House that in relation to Staying Home Leaving Violence, and specifically to the tragic circumstances to do with Ms Molly Ticehurst:

The Cabinet Office has been tasked with undertaking a review of all interactions Molly Ticehurst had with New South Wales government agencies and domestic violence services in the lead-up to her death.

Has that review been completed?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: It has been.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Have you seen the review, Minister?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I have seen it.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: What changes have been made to the Staying Home Leaving Violence program as a result of that review?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Prior to receiving the report in relation to the review, we made a commitment to expand Staying Home Leaving Violence right across the State so that where there are gaps, victims of domestic and family violence will be able to access Staying Home Leaving Violence. That was part of the additional \$48 million that the Government committed in the emergency package in May and was locked in in the budget.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: You said that was made prior to receiving the review. What changes were implemented as a consequence of the review?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I can't go into the details of what is in the review. What I can tell you is that the Government made a significant, as you know, commitment into investment into domestic and family violence of \$245 million not as a result but because we know that there needs to be further investment in domestic and family violence. There is, rightly, national focus on domestic and family violence right across the country now. Certainly that initial package of \$245 million was part of our approach to dealing with the scourge of domestic and family violence.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I appreciate the general system statements that you've made, but specifically in relation to the review, it's very clear that Molly Ticehurst was failed. What is going to change as a result of her death so that the system will not fail another Molly?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I can't go into the detail of the Cabinet Office review.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Minister, I'm asking you for the fruits of that.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I note also that there will be a coronial inquest and that the death of Molly Ticehurst—which is tragic and, I'm sure, affected everybody in one way or another, especially Molly's family—is subject to criminal investigation and charges. I don't want to say or do anything to put that at threat.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Minister, I understand all that. There was a review. There was a problem. The problem was identified and there was a review. Will the review change anything?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I can't go into the details of what was in the review so I can't tell you whether it will change—

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Minister, with respect, I'm not asking that. I'm asking for the fruits of the review. How will women be safer because of that?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Yes, and by asking for the fruits of the review, you're asking for what the content of the review said. I cannot go into what the review said. I cannot prejudice a criminal investigation and a criminal case. I will certainly not prejudice that. I will not prejudice a coronial investigation and I won't prejudice a Domestic Violence Death Review Team investigation. We have taken the review into account. We have certainly made, prior to the review, a significant increase to domestic and family violence expenditure and supports for people who are experiencing domestic and family violence. I make absolutely no apologies for the Government taking action at the time that it did in relation to increased investment.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: With respect to that increased investment, Minister, of the \$48 million that was announced on 8 May to roll out Staying Home Leaving Violence statewide and to expand the Integrated Domestic and Family Violence Service, how much of that money will be allocated to Staying Home Leaving Violence?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I think there is about—\$48 million has been invested into Staying Home and Leaving Violence and the Integrated Domestic And Family Violence Service.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Yes, that's what I said. How much of that goes to Staying Home Leaving Violence as opposed to the Integrated Domestic And Family Violence Service.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Yes, I have got it here. It is about \$30—

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Do you need to take that on notice, Minister?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: No, I just need to add up these figures because I've got it over four years. I will take that on notice, though, because I've got the figures combined with the Integrated Domestic And Family Violence Service. I think it's about half.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: If it's possible to provide that later today, I'd be very grateful.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Can I just go back to the changes that have been made since the review?

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I'm a little confused because a moment ago you said you couldn't possibly tell me about the changes and now you want to tell me about the changes.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I want to point out that we've got significant changes to the Bail Act.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: That was as a result of that review?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: That was undertaken at the same time as the review.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: So contemporaneous with the review but not resulting from the review, is that what I'm understanding?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Well—

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Thank you, Minister. No, that's very clear. On 27 June you said, "The Department of Communities and Justice has commenced analysis to support the expansion of Staying Home Leaving Violence, including identifying demographic need and availability of specialist domestic and family violence and general services". Given that the Department of Communities and Justice took 11 months to analyse where the additional Commonwealth-funded domestic violence workers should be placed, have you given that department a deadline for providing you with this analysis? If so, what is that deadline?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: That analysis has been done. We will have the first part of Staying Home Leaving Violence—you're after the new workers figures?

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: The first step was to be the analysis. I'm asking when that was done and then, if it's been done, when will women in LGAs where there is no current access to Staying Home Leaving Violence start to see benefit from that new money that was announced in May?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I think the first round will be in October.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: You think or you know?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: November. The first round will be in November.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: The first? The 30th?

ANNE CAMPBELL: It will open in October, the tender.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: It will open in October, so is it October or is it November?

ANNE CAMPBELL: It's October.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Which date?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: The tenders will be opening in October. I can't give you an exact date right now.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: So you don't know yet when the tenders will open.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: The tenders will open in October.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: With an expectation that they will be filled and workers will be in the field when?

ANNE CAMPBELL: By mid-2025.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: That's the whole lot.

ANNE CAMPBELL: Yes.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: So women should start to see a benefit from the 8 May money by June 2025, 13 months from the announcement?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I think there are two. There are two tranches to the Staying Home Leaving Violence expansions.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: And the first tranche will be available when?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: The first tranche should be available within a couple of months after October. We'll have the closing of the tenders and then there'll be recruiting.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: So the tenders open on a date to be specified in October. They will close when?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: They close in November.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: They'll close in November.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Yes.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: They will be decided and workers will be in the field when?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I've got the actual details here. An additional 14 LGAs will be negotiated through contract variations with existing Staying Home Leaving Violence providers. It's expected that these additional workers and Staying Home Leaving Violence—these services—will be operational by November 2024. On top of that—

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: So that's not the tender process. This is a separate process, yes?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: These are contract variations with existing Staying Home Leaving Violence providers for expansions.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: You're confident that those services have enough workers in place to accommodate the extra work you're asking of them?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Part of the reason that there's been a bit of time taken in the rollout is to identify with providers that they are likely to be able to get workers on the ground quickly. Then on top of those 14 LGAs there will be 12 new Staying Home Leaving Violence services covering 24 local government areas, and that will be through a tender process from October. We expect that those services will become operational by mid-2025. By mid-2025 we expect that all local government areas in New South Wales will have a Staying Home Leaving Violence service.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Could you provide on notice, Minister, the 14 LGAs where the contract variations will occur and the 24 LGAs where there will be new services rolled out by the middle of next year?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: The 14 LGAs where the contract variations are occurring and the 24 LGAs—

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: If you could provide those on notice, that would be great.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Yes, we can provide that on notice.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Thank you very much. Minister, on 8 June 2023 you signed the national partnership agreement with the Commonwealth providing funding for 148.4 new domestic violence workers, 118 of whom were to be in place before 2024-25. How many of these new workers are, as of today, in place and actually working?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: As of today? Sorry, I've got it as of yesterday.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: As of yesterday will be fine.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: There are 57 workers on the ground.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Okay, so on 9 September you answered a question on notice and said that there were 35.8 FTE in place. So they've jumped from 35.8 to 57 in a day?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Sorry, did you say on 9 September?

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: In answer to a question on notice received on 9 September, which said that you had 35.8 FTE in place across New South Wales. Then you're saying as of 10 September there were 57 workers in place. Is that correct?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: The numbers are coming in very, very quickly and I can go through that with you.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I'm just checking that you jumped 21.2 FTE in a day. That's great news, if it's true.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: We wouldn't have jumped 21 workers in a day, but I can go through with you the speed at which they are coming in.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: So the remainder—so that's 118 minus 57. They roughly have to double, a bit over double. Are you confident that number of workers will double by the end of September?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I expect that we will be very, very close to filling those 118 positions, because—

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: What is the contractual requirement? Very close, or filled?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Obviously we are not going to push services to have recruitment done by a certain date, otherwise we'd invalidate their contracts and have to go right back to square one, and trying to negotiate new contracts. We are in that process—

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Isn't there some urgency about getting domestic violence workers in the field?—

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Absolutely, and I can go through it with you.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Yet you say you don't want to push this process.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: As at 3 September—because I don't have the detail of this particular part any more recently—we had 35.8 FTE recruited on the ground.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: So therefore if you had that many on 3 September, as of 10 September—in seven days you've put on 22? Is that right?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: As far as recruitment stages go—and this goes to the question you just asked—31.4 positions were finalising recruitment, 36 positions were at interview stage, and 14.8 positions recruitment was underway. The reason those figures are progressing so quickly is because of that pipeline that is currently in place.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Why did it take 11 months from June 2023 to May 2024 before tenders were issued in relation to these workers?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I can give you those figures as at 10 September, if you like?

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: No, I'm asking you why it took 11 months before tenders were issued in relation to these workers. Is there no urgency?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: There is absolutely urgency, and we are complying with everything that we are required to do by the Government. I'm quite happy to take you through the timeline of the NPA and how we've got to where we are, if you'd like?

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: It's at the discretion of the Chair because my time has expired, so perhaps we might need to pick this up later.

The ACTING CHAIR: Yes, perhaps we can come back to that.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Good morning, Minister, and all the long-suffering officials, many of you have been at a number of these estimates already. Just as a bit of context, as a crossbencher I have some awareness of the longer term when it comes to the workforce issue. I sat here for a very long time when the Opposition were in government, trying to get them to improve the workforce strategy for frontline domestic violence workers. I know that concerns were raised by the sector for a very long time that if we didn't do something to improve workforce conditions, we were going to end up with not having enough people to hire when we did have the money to hire them. That seems to be the position we are now in. Is that your understanding, Minister?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I think I am quite comfortable with the way we are recruiting for the additional workers for the NPA. There is an ongoing issue with workforce, of course, as there is with huge parts of industry right across New South Wales, but particularly in the caring industries. It is something that I have conversations with stakeholders, including Domestic Violence NSW, on an ongoing basis. As you know, we are in the process of developing the workforce strategy. I might ask—

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Just before we do that, I guess what I'm trying to say is that it does seem like you inherited a huge amount of this problem. Do you think, given what has been happening in terms of the national conversation around employing these workers, that we are going to meet the targets? I understand already we are behind where we thought we would be. How bad is the issue? Does the Government need to do something a bit more extreme to try and attract workers back into this sector?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: The progress report we gave the Federal Government in relation to the recruitment of workers, which was dated April this year, indicates that we will have the 118 positions filled by the end of this year. I believe we are on track to do that. I believe that, certainly, we will be on track to fill the remainder by the end of this financial year, which is what the agreement requires.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: So when will the workforce development plan be released?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: There will be an approvals process in October this year, then it will be public after that, obviously.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: So why the delay, I guess?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: The approvals process requires the domestic violence board, and then ministerial approval.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: It's been 18 months that Labor has been in government. I appreciate the mess that was inherited, but why the delay on something as important as this?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I suppose there has been a huge focus on needing to get increased investment out, and so there has been some diversion of resources in relation to that, but I might ask Ms Campbell about that.

ANNE CAMPBELL: I'm happy to. I'm not sure it's going to necessarily answer your question, but the survey closed 20 November 2023, so it's not that long ago.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: It's almost a year.

ANNE CAMPBELL: We had about 2,500 survey responses. We've received the draft survey finding reports, which were provided to us in December 2023, and which are currently being reviewed and finalised. Members of the Aboriginal reference group for the survey have provided feedback, so we are seeking feedback from particular key stakeholders. We're expecting, as the Minister said, to have a final report in October of this year.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: It shocks me that we are already in September, but that is actually quite a long time since the survey was done. But also in the context of a sector that is incredibly mobilised and expert when it comes to giving advice to government. We know that they have been letting government know for a long time what we need to do to increase the quality and longevity of the workforce in this area. Minister, do you think it's good that it's taken that long? I don't understand—was it just a lack of focus and priority on that aspect? I've never been in government so I don't know how it works, but how does something like that take so long?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I think consultation takes a long time.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Does it, though?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: It can take a long time. But also, particularly in this space, there has been a need to ensure that when we get additional resources, which we've got—to the tune of \$245 million—that we actually work with the sector to ensure that we are implementing that money in the best possible way. We have been working with the sector on the priorities that we have. I'm sure that while the workforce strategy remains a priority, they're really pleased that we've been able to work with them in getting this investment committed to and getting it identified in the right places, in the areas of most need and unmet need.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: One of the key issues that was identified by stakeholders and by the sector before the election, not just in domestic and family violence but in a lot of the community and caring sectors, was in relation to the duration of contracts and funding being given to frontline services in particular. I know that was being reviewed. Have we got to the point where we are offering people five-year and 10-year funding contracts? That's one of the main reasons people were leaving, because the doors were almost closing constantly. Has that come through?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: In some cases we do currently have five-year contracts in the domestic and family violence area. That piece of work is, obviously, a wider piece of work right across government and is still ongoing, being led by, I believe, Minister Washington. It is one of the reasons for the new national partnership agreement. In National Cabinet we were strong on wanting to have a long-term national partnership agreement—a five-year national partnership agreement.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Sure. They go hand in hand. It doesn't matter how much funding you have if you can't deploy the funding because there is no-one to hire. Just so you understand where I'm coming from, Minister, it feels like work is being done but not to the extent required or quickly. We all acknowledge that the domestic and family violence crisis is here and present and needs to be dealt with, but it feels a little like I'm sitting in my lounge room, my child comes in and tells me there is an imminent danger outside and I say, "Yes, I'll be on it in a minute" and then I start playing with my phone. If it was an emergency, I would leap up and do everything I could. But instead we are having review after review, and delay after delay. At what point do we see the Government begin to act with the urgency required on these sorts of issues?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I think characterising it as "having review after review, and delay after delay" is unfair.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Well, you tell me, because I don't understand why it would take so long.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: We have seen a major increase in financial investment in domestic and family violence in recent—

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Not in frontline workers.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: It is in frontline workers: Staying Home Leaving Violence caseworkers; the specialist children's workers are caseworkers; and Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Services provides casework for complex cases.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Minister, I'm not going to criticise the investment in WDVCS. I think that's fantastic. You say that the other money is for workforce—

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Staying Home Leaving Violence money is not brokerage; it is caseworkers.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: For new workforce, not for the existing?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: It is a combination.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: How many of them have been employed? Has that money been deployed and are there now more people servicing Staying Home Leaving Violence?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: As you know, the budget was brought down in June. There has been work done to work out where we can expand existing Staying Home Leaving Violence services into areas that aren't covered.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Although we have increased the coverage of Staying Home Leaving Violence, we haven't increased the amount given per location, have we?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Yes.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: We have?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Well, it will be a combination.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: How much is each service increasing by? That's not the feedback that we're getting.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I can't give you the detail of that. The purpose of the \$48 million was predominantly to expand into new areas, and there may well be uplifts—

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Is there, though?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: —of existing where they are likely to result in better results for adjoining areas.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: I asked about this in debate on the budget when it first came out, and the answer I got was that we didn't have an uplift in areas. But if we do, I'd love to hear about it.

ANNE CAMPBELL: Yes, we definitely have. As the Minister said, for the additional 14 LGAs we're varying their contracts to cover other LGAs, and that includes additional staffing. But I can get some more—

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: But is there, anywhere, an existing service that's doing Staying Home Leaving Violence work and their money has been increased?

ANNE CAMPBELL: Yes.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: For the area that they currently service?

ANNE CAMPBELL: No, new locations.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Exactly. Given that the review into Staying Home Leaving Violence identified all of the different areas that need to be improved, and given that workers are telling us they're already overworked and are unable to do that work properly, why is there no additional funding being given to those people so that they can do the Staying Home Leaving Violence work better in their existing area?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: We have additional investment with caseworkers for Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Services.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: That's not Staying Home Leaving Violence.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: No, but it's frontline workers for WDVCS, and we've got the—

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: That is a very particular part, but what about the people who are dealing with women in crisis at that moment? The Staying Home Leaving Violence program shows great promise if it is funded properly. What we're hearing is it's not being funded properly. I appreciate there is a review into what happened with Molly Ticehurst, but why is there no additional funding being given to existing services? We are seeing that across the board. Domestic Violence NSW has been asking for ages for an uplift in core funding for frontline workers. They have just said, "We need at least 50 per cent more." They were disappointed at the last budget. It is always new funding for new programs and expanding things. Given we're trying to retain our workforce, why aren't we giving more money to existing services?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: That is why we've provided additional money to Staying Home Leaving Violence across the State and why we're funding—

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: But you haven't. You've expanded the service. You have not increased the funding for existing services for Staying Home Leaving Violence.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: To be honest, I think it would be better, if we have additional investment as a first step—which is what that announcement was—to invest in areas where there are no services.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Okay, but we want it done properly.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: And I said, "As a first step". We said, with that emergency announcement back in May that was committed in the budget in June, that that was a first step. We need to fill the gaps.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Seeing what has happened since Victoria put a significant investment into dealing with the domestic and family violence crisis—it is a crude number, but seeing the number of women being killed every week coming down in Victoria and the number of domestic and family violence incidents coming down in Victoria—do you think it's appropriate that New South Wales is still only funding this problem to one-half or to one-third of what Victoria is?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: The Premier has said that we do not invest as other States do—

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: No, you certainly don't.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: —particularly Victoria and Queensland. I don't think their rates are going down, but they are not going up in the way that ours are.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: No. They are going down, by the way.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: The Premier has clearly said that we need to do better, and that's exactly what we intend on doing.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: But we don't want words; we want some money.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: There is \$245 million additional in the budget this year.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: I'm really glad we could get that, but there was still none for frontline services. Again, it brings us back to the workforce issue. You are sitting there telling us that, "We're trying to secure this money under the national partnership agreement so we can hire more workers" and "We're behind on hiring these workers, but we're going to do it." How can we do that? We have a workforce that is so overworked and under-resourced already, that has been crying out for an increase in core funding for frontline services, and your Government keeps refusing to give it. How is that appropriate?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: We are working to increase the investment that we have in domestic and family violence. There are lots of things that this Government inherited that will take time to bring to fruition.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: I appreciate that. But do you think it's being honest to then say, "But we're doing all of these things"?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I think we need to recognise—

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: To clarify, I'm not saying you're not being honest. I'm saying the Government as a whole is telling us on the one hand, "We've inherited these problems. We know it's an issue. We give you our word, this is a big commitment," but then the actual money expended is not what is required. It is not even a smidgen of what is required. Is it that the case that your Government is much happier to give money to new projects and new services than it is to actually fund existing services that impact on the bottom line in the budget?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I think that's not a correct characterisation of what the Government's intention is to do. Can I say as well, in pulling together the emergency package prior to announcing it, the Government consulted with Domestic Violence NSW, consulted with No to Violence, consulted with—

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: What does "consulted" mean in that context, though? Does that mean listening to the feedback and adapting and changing, or does it just mean "we spoke with them beforehand"? Because, with respect, a lot of the Ministers that I've spoken to, when they say "consulted", it just means that they talked to them about it beforehand. It didn't mean that they actually took on their views, but it is used—this "consulted with"—as though it means "paid attention to the views of".

Ms JODIE HARRISON: We said, "This is the span of the package that we're looking at doing. This is the funding envelope that we've got. This is the span of the services that we're proposing to invest in. Does that look right to you?" And the feedback was, "Yes." Can we do more? Yes, we can always do more.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: They didn't ask for more base funding?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: It was in that funding envelope that we were talking about.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Did they ask for more baseline funding?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I think Domestic Violence NSW will always ask for more baseline funding.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Because they know that that is critical to keeping a workforce that you are then able to deploy, and to get more people in, in order to then spend the money coming from the NPA, which brings us right back to the beginning. How can we be encouraging a strong, resilient workforce in this sector if we continue to underfund core services? These people are so overworked; they're exhausted. They're turning people away. They've got people sleeping on their porches, and they've got people sleeping in nearby car parks that they're trying to service. They just need an uplift in funding. I appreciate that you have inherited a lot of this problem, but you've been in now for 18 months and we still don't have an uplift in that core funding. Is that acceptable, Minister?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: There is an uplift in the core funding.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Not for existing services. Only for—

Ms JODIE HARRISON: By expanding services there will be some relief to existing services.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: How?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: That will be through increased Staying Home Leaving Violence caseworkers. That will be through increased—

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: But you're increasing the amount of work they have to do as well. For Staying Home Leaving Violence, you're saying, "You now have to service a broader area so we'll give you extra money to do that extra bit of work, but we're still not giving you the money you need to do the work you were already doing at a level that allows you to have respite, that allows you to go and have training and that allows you to actually think that you're making a difference." I'm sure you've spoken with them.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: That is exactly what we did with WDVCAS, because they—

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: I've appreciated that. WDVCAS, as you know, is a separate part of the front line. I appreciate what's been done there, and I think it's great. I'm talking about the other frontline workers who are having to turn people away, who are working 15- or 16-hour days every day and who cannot take a break because there's no-one to cover for them. Those people haven't had an uplift in their base funding. Do you appreciate how stressful that is for people, and why people don't want to then come into this workforce?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: The work that the people within the domestic and family violence sector do is absolutely incredible. I know that sounds like just words, but it's truly heartfelt. I am very keen to see increased funding across the board in domestic and family violence now and into the future. I completely intend on continuing to push for increased funding. I think we've heard from the Treasurer, and we've heard from the Premier, that the emergency package was the first step.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Minister, it's been reported that multiple women's shelters across the State have been deemed ineligible to apply for Commonwealth funding to receive new domestic violence workers as "priority has been given to Aboriginal controlled organisations". Are you aware of this issue?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I am. I am aware that, with the national partnership agreement, there were requirements put on the State. I am also aware that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are absolutely disproportionately affected by domestic and family violence. I'm aware that the Productivity Commission has also said that the best way to get good outcomes for Aboriginal people is by supporting Aboriginal community controlled organisations.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Can you point to the actual provision within the funding agreement that precludes some organisations from applying?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Off the top of my head? No, I can't.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Could you take that on notice and provide a copy of that from the agreement?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I think you've probably already got a copy of the agreement but, yes, I can take that on notice—not a problem.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Minister, given that in New South Wales it was, as you pointed out this morning, 57 full-time positions out of 118 committed, will you intervene to ensure that tendering criteria for these roles does not unnecessarily burden the rollout of essential positions?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I don't need to intervene because that recruitment is occurring rapidly. I'm very comfortable with the speed at which it is occurring.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Minister, we all agree that building the capacity of ACCOs is very important. Are you concerned that shifting funding exclusively to ACCOs will lead to a reduction in accessibility and quality of services to remote communities, particularly where areas are lacking alternative service providers?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: We want to provide opportunities to Aboriginal community controlled organisations and provide uplift to them so that they can support Aboriginal people. Where that is not possible, we will certainly be negotiating and wanting to hear from organisations that are not ACCOs. In fact, we have been doing exactly that through this process.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Just on supporting ACCOs, can you outline—what have you put in place to actually empower ACCOs?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: There's been significant support given to Domestic Violence NSW to create uplift in ACCOs through the Core and Cluster process. That's the one that jumps to my mind.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: You're funding DVNSW to do it? It's not your job to empower and support ACCOs.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: We are funding Domestic Violence NSW, through contracts, to support Aboriginal community controlled organisations in uplift.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Since you've been Minister, how many new ACCOs have been supported through this funding?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I'd have to take that on notice.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Minister, you said that you are aware of some organisations that have been disadvantaged in being able to apply. I wanted to refer to CatholicCare—which has precluded them from applying for funding to expand into a number of geographical areas. That is CatholicCare Wilcannia-Forbes. Was this an intended consequence of your guidelines?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: CatholicCare Wilcannia-Forbes were not invited to tender for a particular area. That is because there were seen to be, at the time, ACCOs that could fill that contract. I have since offered a one-on-one meeting with CatholicCare Wilcannia-Forbes to meet with me to work that through. They have not taken up that offer. They have met with me with an ACCO in Dubbo when I was recently there. They're working with this particular ACCO in the area of Bourke, and they're quite happy to continue to do so.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Are you confident that, because of the changes in the tendering guidelines and the prevention of CatholicCare Wilcannia-Forbes from applying, every single woman is being supported in the region?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I think that no government could ever say that every single woman experiencing domestic and family violence is definitely being supported. There will always be gaps, but I am confident that the way that the tendering for new workers in that area has been undertaken has provided the best possible outcomes for the most people possible. I also would point out that CatholicCare Wilcannia-Forbes has been successful in getting three new workers in the areas that they cover.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: At the Great Lakes Womens Shelter, over 50 per cent of their clients are Aboriginal. They have also been unable to apply for new funding because of these guidelines. What do you say to the people in that area?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I am sure that people who work in the domestic and family violence area understand that Aboriginal people are disproportionately affected by domestic and family violence and that we need to do better than what we have been doing for the decades that we've been doing it, in providing better outcomes for Aboriginal families in their experience of family violence. I'm happy if Great Lakes shelter would like to meet with me to discuss it. I'm happy to meet with them. I have visited the Great Lakes shelter in the past, and I am happy to continue to have discussions about the best way for them to support local people.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Minister, before you made the decision to preclude these organisations from applying, did you actually assess whether or not there was capability with local ACCOs to be able to service the need for those communities?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: There was assessment of that done, yes. Did I personally do it? No, because a Minister doesn't personally do those things. But DCJ certainly did that.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Minister, you indicated that part of your Government's response to the tragedy in Forbes and Ms Ticehurst was the package of bail reforms that were rolled out, part of which included electronic monitoring of serious DV offenders who are granted bail. Is that electronic monitoring in place?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I think you asked the question to the Attorney General last week.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I did.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: And I back up his question. At the moment, it isn't.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: When will it begin?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: My understanding is that it will begin in early October.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Who's responsible for the implementation of this law?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: The Attorney General is.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I understand from the Attorney General that there is some type of either working group or taskforce, or some other type of cooperative group in place, looking at how this could be implemented. Do you have a representative on this taskforce?

GILLIAN WHITE: I'm actually the chair of that taskforce from the Cabinet Office. Wearing my ordinary Cabinet Office hat, I'm here because I also have responsibility for Women NSW.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: That is Cabinet Office representation. Is there anybody, Minister, who works specifically on women with you who's on that taskforce?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Yes. The Women's Safety Commissioner is on it.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Are you confident that this taskforce represents all necessary parties?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Yes, I believe so.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: You don't share the concerns that are expressed by police that there should be some operational police on there as well as police prosecutors?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I'd have to refer that to the police Minister. I haven't heard those concerns.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: But in your thinking about the taskforce and the implementation of this tremendously important response to Molly Ticehurst, you haven't thought about issues with the taskforce. What input did you have into the composition of the taskforce?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: It was led by—

GILLIAN WHITE: I'm happy to take that, Minister.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I'll ask Ms White.

GILLIAN WHITE: As is ordinary practice for any cross-government initiative, we went to the relevant agencies that might have a role in policy and operational detail and asked for representatives that had sufficient authority to make decisions or to corral decisions across their agency.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Did the Cabinet Office speak directly to the Minister, or was it all done without the Minister's input and knowledge?

GILLIAN WHITE: Not specifically to Minister Harrison.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Is there a reason that the Minister for Women was not involved in the formulation of this taskforce to implement this incredibly important domestic violence reform? I will take an answer from anybody who can give me one.

MICHAEL TIDBALL: There is a process of a weekly meeting with the Minister, at which the Minister is briefed in relation to various elements. The elements in the bail package, as I recall it, have been in process of periodic briefing. Anything that comes out of that meeting that needs to align with other processes being undertaken by the department, notably the implementation of EM, has been taken on board.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Who's driving the process? Minister, are you? The Attorney General didn't seem to feel he was driving it. Or is it, in fact, just a process that has been put in train and we wait until the process runs its course?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: If I can assist, operationally, Corrective Services, who have quite some experience with operating electronic monitoring, are undertaking the operational work, in close sync with but coordinated by the work that—

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Mr Tidball, does the corrections Minister actually take responsibility for the implementation of this program?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: We, as officials, are charged with the implementation. There has been a decision made by the Government that EM is to be implemented. We are coordinating to ensure the delivery on the ground.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Who's responsible around the Cabinet table if this is delayed? I think I have my answer. Thank you very much.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: We're collectively responsible.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Collectively responsible?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Yes.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Who takes individual responsibility? Who doesn't shove it off onto another collective Minister? Who sits there and says, "I will make sure that women are safe in New South Wales"?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Again, this is an issue that the Premier is very strong on, and—

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: So it's the Premier's responsibility, is it, to make sure this is implemented?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: No, it's Cabinet's responsibility. I am responsible for prevention of domestic and family violence. The Attorney General is responsible for the legislation surrounding it. Corrections is responsible for the issues in relation to—

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Who's responsible to make sure that women are safe in New South Wales, and that domestic violence offenders will be subject to electronic monitoring on bail?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: That—

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: This is a very sad answer. Sadly, I think I have my answer.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: That women will be subject to electronic monitoring while on bail?

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: No, that accused domestic violence offenders will be subject to domestic violence offending on bail. I think we'll move on. Minister, are all DV bail matters decided by a magistrate? That was part of the package, wasn't it?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Not currently.

MICHAEL TIDBALL: I can assist with that. There is a process being worked out in close cooperation with the police at the moment, coordinated by DCJ, where we are looking across the State to ensure that the arrangements are in place for registrars to discontinue hearing those matters. Those arrangements are advancing, and we expect that work to be completed by the end of the year, with anticipation of that provision commencing by the end of calendar 2024.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Who's the Minister responsible for the implementation of that part of the DV package?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: The Attorney General.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Minister, how often do you discuss implementation of this measure with the Attorney General?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I have frequent conversations with the Attorney General. I have regular meetings with all of the Ministers that have overlaps with my portfolios. The Attorney General and I meet more regularly than that, and our offices do as well.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I'm pleased that you discuss matters with him frequently. How often have you had discussions with the Attorney General about this particular issue and the implementation of this particular measure?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: We would be discussing this on a weekly basis.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: You're happy with the process of the implementation, then?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: With the resources that were—

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: That your Government has provided?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: —that were already available, and with gearing up for the new legislation, yes, I am.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Do you support the call from the police in budget estimates that implementation should be staged or even delayed?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I'd have to take that on notice.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: You have to take on notice whether or not you support that call?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I would have to have a discussion with the police Minister on that. I don't know the detail of exactly what that call was.

MICHAEL TIDBALL: If I can assist the Committee, I can indicate that the police commissioner and I have had recent discussions about the implementation of the removal of registrars and the imperative around AVL facilities, and the practical elements that need to be put in place. We have both agreed on the timetable which I've outlined to the Committee.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: That timetable has a definite calendar date for implementation?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: We've got the entire State to cover off, and a number of locations, and that is quite detailed work. We have agreed that that work can be completed by the end of 2024.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: So 31 December 2024 it begins?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: I said by that time. Can I just say, I think this is a provision, in terms of its actual commencement, where you want everything working before it goes live. That is the approach being adopted.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I entirely agree. I also think that for that to work, somebody needs to accept responsibility to drive the process at a ministerial level, and that has been the focus of some of my questions.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Minister, how many people have been charged with coercive control offences since the commencements of the laws?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I believe two.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Who's responsible for the education campaign to build awareness of the new offence?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: That is something that sits under the Attorney General, but I take a very, very keen interest in it.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: How often have you met with the AG about the campaign?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: About the coercive control education campaign?

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Yes.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I haven't met directly with him in the last month or so.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Prior to that, in the development of the campaign?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Our offices had regular meetings regarding it, and I had a couple of meetings on it.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Is the education campaign separate from or related to the consent education?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: The coercive control education campaign is separate to the consent education—the Make No Doubt campaign.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: In your discussions with the Attorney General, have you had any discussions around ensuring that courts are properly resourced to hear the matters in a timely manner?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: The Attorney General and I have discussed court resourcing, yes.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: What was the outcome of those discussions?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: As you know, there are additional magistrates going into courts as a result of the budget that this Government brought down.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: How much has been spent on implementing the coercive control legislation?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I would have to take that on notice.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Minister, can I just ask a follow-up question in relation to the additional magistrates. They were initially announced to assist to ensure that all bail matters were to be heard by a magistrate rather than a registrar, and then there was evidence given in the Attorney General's estimates that they would be available across the court system generally to deal with delays. Now I think I heard you say that those magistrates were to assist with the additional court time we could expect with the very complicated coercive control matters. Exactly what are those magistrates employed to do?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I'd defer to the Attorney General on that.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Therefore, they're not coercive control support; they are for the general court system. Minister, are you aware that sexual assaults in Moree have increased by 112 per cent in the past two years?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I'm aware that there have been increased sexual assault figures in Moree, yes.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Your Government introduced a number of measures in Moree to respond to crime issues there, and they focused on break and enter and car theft. What have you done to address the increase in sexual assaults in that area?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I haven't done anything to increase the number of sexual assaults in that area.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Sorry, I didn't mean to suggest that you would. What have you done with respect to that increase in sexual assaults? You acted for car theft and break and enter. What's the response to the increase in sexual assault?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: The Government made an active choice to focus—as the Attorney General said on a number of occasions in question time, I believe—on the issues relating to car theft and break and enter. The issue of sexual assault across New South Wales, including in Moree, is an issue that we are dealing with through education, through our primary prevention strategy—through a range of predominantly educational focuses. It's a statewide approach.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: So it's an education focus rather than a legal focus for sexual assault?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: At this point there have been no legislative changes in relation to sexual assault, with the exception of—the bail laws also relate to sexual assault.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: That we've discussed, yes, but that are yet to be fully implemented.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Yes. There's also increased funding to NSW Health for sexual assault nurse examiners so that every health district has access to sexual assault nurse examiners. That's an issue being led by the health Minister. Full Stop Australia has received increased funding to support their helpline. That was an election commitment of ours. I can provide further information in relation to that on notice.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: The "post and boast" offences which you introduced only apply to break and enter and car theft. Why don't they also apply to sexual assault?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: That was a decision that the Government made at the time.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Were you happy with that decision?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: That was a decision that the Government made at the time.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: As Minister for Women, was your voice heard in these discussions?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: My voice was heard. There was a very clear focus from the community on the need to deal with the issue that those laws go towards, where young people—frequently underage people—were breaking into people's houses, stealing cars and putting other people's lives at risk.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: The community weren't equally concerned by a 112 per cent increase in sexual assault?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: There are different approaches for different types of offences.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Thank you, Minister. It's time for my colleague.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: We'll go to questions from the crossbench.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Thanks for filling in while I jumped between different hearings. Minister, I understand that, when I was out, there was discussion in relation to the coercive control advertising campaign. I want to check what the process is for evaluating that. Is that entirely with the Attorney General, or is there some input from yourself in relation to that?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I take a really keen interest in that education campaign. Was the question particularly relating to evaluation of the education campaign?

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Yes. What's the process for evaluating it?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: The implementation evaluation taskforce for the coercive control offence has oversight of, obviously, all of the aspects in relation to the offence. The implementation and evaluation taskforce, and particularly the reference groups, are currently looking at what their roles are going to be in relation to the monitoring of the offence.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: What piqued my interest is I was looking at the third statutory report from the taskforce from 1 June 2024. In the back, there's an appendix that lists the issues that reference groups have raised and how the taskforce dealt with it. One of those shows that there was concern that, although the advertising campaign might increase awareness, it might not necessarily then lead to measuring behaviour change. The response from the taskforce was that:

The Taskforce further notes advice from DCJ that raising awareness and understanding of coercive control were the objectives of the campaign as market research demonstrated an immediate need to raise awareness about coercive control. Further attitude and behaviour change may be considered for potential future campaigns.

Minister, were you involved in that advice coming from DCJ that this advertising campaign was not about changing behaviour but instead about raising awareness for the concept?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: No, I don't believe that I was involved in advice from DCJ, but I can certainly—

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Can someone—maybe Ms Campbell or someone else?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: I'm chair of the taskforce, Ms Boyd, and I will own that was stridently the view of the taskforce at that stage, so that's a matter of fact in that sense. In terms of the evaluation and where we go now, it will be timely. There is an initial evaluation report due within six months of the implementation of the law. I think all of those things and the appropriateness of the campaign need to come into scope and, of course, it will be reviewed.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: When will we have a campaign that's actually designed to change behaviour?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: I chair the taskforce and I've clearly owned what the purpose was of the first round of advertising. I do not want to commit the taskforce. I'm, of course, able to undertake to actively interrogate that issue with the taskforce and with the taskforce as it reaches out to the sector.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Mr Tidball, can I ask if you've read the white paper that was produced by Jess Hill and Michael Salter in relation to prevention?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: I know of that paper. I will always be careful in evidence what I say about papers because I read a lot of things.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: That's fine.

MICHAEL TIDBALL: I have cursorily looked at that paper. It would be inaccurate in my evidence to say—

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: I've only read it once. I'm not going to grill you on what the details are.

MICHAEL TIDBALL: I'm aware of it. I have not read it in close detail.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: One of the striking things from that paper, from my perspective, was the research it had brought together from previous public health campaigns that was basically saying you can't just design a campaign to make people aware of a thing; it doesn't change behaviour. To change behaviour, you actually need to do a far more detailed piece of targeted outreach. As someone who was keenly pushing for us to put coercive control on the agenda, the whole point was to get people to change their behaviour, not necessarily just put a law

in place. That's why I'm asking. I come back to you, Minister. Where is the funding for that actual behaviour change piece when it comes to coercive control?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I think the behaviour change piece is not just relating to coercive control, because it relates to everything in relation to behaviour around relationships and what's acceptable and what we expect.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: But we know that 99 per cent of domestic homicides have coercive control in them, so it's effectively the same thing.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Absolutely. It is about changing—we do need to change attitudes. As you rightly said, the education piece around the legislation is about informing people of the legislation. We've got to do more, though. As has been identified in that report that you referenced, it is not just about doing an education campaign to prevent gendered violence, but to prevent coercive control, which is so often the early stages of gendered violence. We need to educate from an early age, not only an education campaign. We need to educate in our schools. We need to educate in our sporting fields. We need to educate right across community. We need to educate and create conversations within employers, as well—a range of things.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Yes, so long as those—it's evidence-based education programs that lead to behaviour change.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Absolutely.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Just to that, there was an odd one that came up last week, I think. There was an announcement that the New South Wales Government had given \$1 million to a one-year program to get the Central Coast Mariners to teach people about domestic and family violence. Do you know about this one?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I was actually at that launch.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Was there an evidence base for what they're doing in relation to that program?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: They're working with the University of Newcastle.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Is there already an evidence base for that program? It seems to be run by a company called Enrichd, which seems to have no real experience in this. I understand you say they're working with the Newcastle uni, but again, in the context of there being so many evidence-based programs and services needing support, why are we giving \$1 million for a photo op with the Central Coast Mariners?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: There will certainly be an evaluation of that program undertaken at its completion. That particular commitment was in addition to the \$38 million that we've committed for the rolling out of the primary prevention strategy.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: It just seems like a very strange use of money, don't you think, Minister—\$1 million? It's very flashy. I think there were something like six Ministers there to hang out with the players for that announcement. Do you really think that \$1 million on a program like that for a one-year program that has no evidence base yet was a good use of what we're being told are really scarce resources to dedicate to this issue?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I think there's a range of ways. There's certainly a place for sport and sporting organisations in raising awareness—sorry, not raising awareness, but in education and appropriate behaviours. It's good.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: No-one is saying that it's not, but we're talking about priorities. We keep being told there are limited funds and that not everyone can have everything. There are all of these services crying out for money and yet we're giving \$1 million to something that six Ministers turn up to a press conference for. It looks a little on the nose. Do you think it's defensible?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I think it's important that we do have sporting organisations involved in raising awareness and being part of conversations to change attitudes towards domestic and family violence. The role that they play in schools is important—the education in schools is really, really important. Respectful relationships education in schools is incredibly important.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Where does this \$1 million come from—which part of funding?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I believe it comes from the Office of Sport.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: When will the New South Wales Government release the strategy for the prevention of domestic, family and sexual violence 2024-27?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: It is imminent.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Why the delay?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: We worked really, really well with Our Watch. Our Watch provided the draft. In addition to the consultation that was undertaken in the production, we wanted to go back to key stakeholders and make sure that they were comfortable with what was going to be the final adoption. And then it's taken time to get through the taskforce, the domestic and family violence board, Cabinet—it's imminent.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: It sounds like a good reason for a delay, if you had something and you need to consult more. I guess we're still somewhere off having an actual date for its release.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: It's very, very imminent.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: DVNSW has called for \$100 million over four years to be committed to that strategy. The New South Wales Government announced \$38 million, I think, over four years plus a separate \$8 million for the "All In" program.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: That's right.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: That's \$54 million less than what was asked for. I think, again, the pace of change seems a bit slow. What are you doing to advocate for that additional money—that additional \$60 million—to be delivered so that this can be done properly?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I'll just clarify that the \$38 million plus the \$8 million for "All In" does not include respectful relationships education, which occurs in schools, which will be a major part of the education, or a key component of the education as well.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: How much has been dedicated to that?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I don't have that figure. That would have to be from the education Minister.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: It's great that we now have that as part of the curriculum, but I understand that that's a bit of a slow, nebulous process as well. Is there going to be direct input from you and your office into how that gets rolled out, and trained and implemented?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Myself and my office have had discussions with the education Minister's office on this matter. There has been a review of the curriculum in relation to respectful relationships education. I think the key thing is to ensure that teachers feel comfortable when that education is provided, and the model of how it's rolled out is, to my understanding, still actually being worked through.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: It's a big ask for teachers.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Absolutely.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: It's necessary, but a big ask. I know that there was some discussion of Core and Cluster, but I understand tranche 3 is not yet finalised. When we have 39 refuges for the Core and Cluster tranches 1 and 2, plus what's planned for tranche 3, are you able to tell us how many refuges in total you expect will have been built under that program?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I can't tell you how many refuges, but the expectation is that we will have beds and pillows for an additional 2,900 women and children every year.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Will there be 36 refuges included in tranche 3?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: No.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: The initial goal was 75 new refuges in total. That's not going to be the case now?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: No. The previous Government moved away from that 75 figure.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: So the 75 went down to—

Ms JODIE HARRISON: The previous Government moved away from providing a number of refuges with that Core and Cluster and moved to the target of 2,900 women and children being supported every year.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: How many Aboriginal-led refuges are in that amount of new Core and Cluster?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I can give you what we've got in tranches 1 and 2, I think. I obviously can't give you tranche 3 yet. I might come back after the break with that answer for you.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: That would be good. How many of the organisations contracted to deliver Core and Cluster services were already providing specialist domestic and family violence services prior to the tender process versus those that didn't?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I'll need to take that on notice, I think.

ANNE CAMPBELL: I think pretty much all of them have had some exposure to delivering domestic and sexual violence services.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Okay.

ANNE CAMPBELL: Just in terms of the ACCO, there are five ACCO-led projects among the 39, so tranche 1 and tranche 2.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Are there going to be 16 Aboriginal-led refuges in tranche 3?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: That's highly unlikely.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: The previous Government had a target of 21 Aboriginal-led refuges across the three tranches. Did they abandon that goal as well, or is that—

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I think tranches 1 and 2 were really done in a market-led way. That has been part of the challenge with tranche 3. Certainly the figures that were given at the original announcement in relation to Core and Cluster—because it was done through a market-led process, tranche 1 and tranche 2, that's a significant part of the investment for Core and Cluster, which I think is a really great investment. A significant part of that investment was spent using a market-led approach which meant that targets were really going to be very difficult to achieve in relation to particular types of providers.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: For the 2,900-bed target, are you saying that we will get to that point with tranche 3?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: We're certainly expecting that we will by the end of 2026.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Were any of the organisations contracted to deliver Core and Cluster services lacking experience in providing specialist domestic and family violence services?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: No, they wouldn't have been contracted to do so.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: None at all?

ANNE CAMPBELL: No. In terms of the criteria, you had to have—I can't remember the exact criteria in terms of the selection, but it was very much demonstrating their experience and expertise in delivering these sorts of services.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: There was another report yesterday of needle spiking in nightclubs. This is an issue that I've raised previously. It goes beyond drink spiking to women being spiked with needles, with similar intention, by men in clubs. Is this an issue you're aware of, and have you done anything in response to that specifically?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I haven't seen the reports from yesterday.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: It was an issue that came up a lot, not last year but the year before. It seemed to have stopped being reported as often, and now we've got another spate of them. I'm trying to find a copy of the article. Maybe we can come back to that after the break as well and see if there is anything that you can update us on.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Yes.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: We've come to the end of questions from the Opposition and crossbench. Are there any questions from Government members?

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: Not at this stage.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: We will break for morning tea and come back at 11.15 a.m.

(Short adjournment)

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: It now being quarter past 11, we'll commence with the next session. Minister, who is the 2024 Senior Australian of the Year for New South Wales?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: 2024 Senior Australian of the Year?

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: For New South Wales, yes.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Dr John Ward.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: At what age are New South Wales permanent residents able to apply for a Seniors Card?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: At the age of 60.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: How many Seniors Cards are there?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: We have 1,852,333 as at 28 August.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: How many types of Seniors Cards are there?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: There are two.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Minister, in the Budget Speech the Treasurer gave, he didn't mention seniors or ageing. Is this a priority for your Government, supporting seniors in New South Wales?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Absolutely, and it is something that I'm quite happy to be Minister of.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: My question is that in the budget the Treasurer didn't refer to seniors at all. We have a cost-of-living crisis that is impacting all people across New South Wales and there do not seem to be any measures to support seniors in this year's budget.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: There are measures to support seniors in this year's budget; they just didn't make it into the Treasurer's budget statement.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Minister, the *Ageing well in NSW Action Plan 2023-24* comes to an end at the end of this year. How does the New South Wales Government expect non-government organisations to suggest and then implement new initiatives for the next action plan without any new funding?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I'm sure the previous governments didn't have new strategies ready to go on the day the previous one expired. We are in the process of putting together the revised ageing strategy and—

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: What's the time frame for that?

ANNE CAMPBELL: It'll be reviewed later this year, with a report to be published in early 2025.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: And to be implemented in 2025?

ANNE CAMPBELL: Yes.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Minister, are you aware that 65 per cent of all voluntary assisted dying administrations in New South Wales have been in regional areas—

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I wasn't aware of that, but thank you.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: —and that only 30 per cent of the population lives in the regions? Is it a concern that seniors have larger uptake of voluntary assisted dying in the regions?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I think voluntary assisted dying is not exclusively a seniors issue. Voluntary assisted dying relates to people with terminal illnesses.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Do you know what median age of people who have been administered voluntary assisted dying in New South Wales is?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I can't give you that figure right at the moment but I'll take it on notice.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: It's actually the 70 to 79 age group. Is that a concern to you? Again, I ask about seniors and their uptake of voluntary assisted dying, particularly in regional areas.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: As the Minister for Seniors, my role is to ensure that seniors can live as full a life as they can. The issue of voluntary assisted dying goes across so many different areas and it is certainly not exclusively a seniors issue.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Have you met with the Minister for Health regarding section 180 of the Voluntary Assisted Dying Act?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I'll need to take that on notice. I've had multiple meetings with the Minister for Health. I'll need to take that on notice.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: That section actually refers to the training, information and other resources about identifying risk factors for pressures or duress, including elder abuse and abuse of other vulnerable persons. Have you met with the health Minister in regards to that?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: No, I haven't met with him specifically on that part of the legislation.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Is there any work that you're currently undertaking in relation to ensuring that seniors have proper information to prevent elder abuse?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: The previous Ageing and Disability Commissioner I know raised concerns in relation to the potential use of voluntary assisted dying. My understanding is that the reviews that will be undertaken of the legislation will certainly look at the potential for that issue.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Minister, that was raised in, I believe, November estimates last year by the former commissioner. Have you done anything since then?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: In relation to speaking to the Minister for Health on that issue?

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: And also the issues that were raised by the commissioner at last year's estimates, which were the potential concerns around elder abuse when it came to the implementation of voluntary assisted dying.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: The commissioner raised those issues at the time and they are issues that will be considered as part of the review of the legislation.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: When does that review commence?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: It will be the statutory review, I believe. I'll need to confirm that.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: But you're doing nothing between last year when it was first raised and when a review will commence?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: The issue of voluntary assisted dying is definitely a Health issue. It is led by Health. While all members of the Cabinet have discussions in relation to each of their portfolios, it is a Health issue, the issue of voluntary assisted dying.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: But you are the Minister for Seniors and these are statistics that you've been given and concerns that have been raised.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: That's right. As I said, as the Minister for Seniors my role is to ensure that seniors have as full a life as they possibly can do.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Yet you've done nothing to address the concerns that have been raised or the statistics that are showing the average—

Ms JODIE HARRISON: No, that's not true. Through the Ageing and Disability Commission, there is capacity for any complaints in relation to the misuse of that legislation to be dealt with through the elder abuse complaint line.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Minister, how much has been allocated in the budget to volunteers and carers?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: The total budget for carers is \$5.3 million.

ANNE CAMPBELL: And volunteers \$200K.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Is any of that new money?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: It is around about the same as previous budget allocations.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Minister, are you aware of the "Performance and Wellbeing – Consultation Paper" that your Government has put out?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Yes.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: There are around 120 outcomes listed and carers haven't been included. Why have been forgotten by your Government?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: That's currently out for consultation so if organisations and individuals have particular views on needing to be included, we're quite welcome to hear.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: But Minister, you're the Minister for carers. You're meant to be the strongest advocate for them and yet you didn't raise with the Premier or the Treasurer to actually include one line item.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: If I recall, the previous Government had the Premier's Priorities, if I remember. Health and wellbeing—

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Minister, we're talking about a document your Government puts out. As the Treasurer said, Minister, this represents the Government's "values and priorities". What this shows is that carers in New South Wales are not a priority for you.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: That is an incorrect assertion. I certainly reject it. The framework that is being led by Treasury and Finance is a new way of looking at the wellbeing, from a social perspective, of New South Wales. We welcome feedback as part of that document that is currently out for feedback.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: What is the feedback you give to the Treasurer now?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: The Government will listen to the views of the community and the people of New South Wales in relation to what needs to be included in that. We can't do everything all at once. This is the start of a new way of measuring government performance.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: And of 120 items, not one is for carers? And you have no message for the Treasurer or the Premier today to say that carers matter in New South Wales?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: There are probably many issues that this Government deals with that are not actually listed in that document.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Minister, are you aware of a literature review conducted by the University of New South Wales for the Ageing and Disability Commissioner? It was released this year, and it found that, for some carers, the key factors for abuse were high levels of burden, stress and social isolation, which also impacted on both their physical and mental health. I ask you again: What is the Government doing to support carers and to prevent neglect and abuse?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Of carers?

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: No. The study found that carers were experiencing high levels of burden, stress and social isolation, which led to neglect and abuse of those they were caring for. I asked you what your Government is doing to support carers who are feeling stressed and burdened.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: We have a very strong partnership with Carers NSW, who we fund to provide various programs, including supporting carers in employment, including young carers.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Have you met with any young carers?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I have.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Have you attended any of the young carers awareness training sessions?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I haven't.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Do you intend to?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I'll certainly look at when they are being held and, if I'm available, I would certainly like to attend them.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: I might move on. This year, youth volunteering was focused on the National Volunteer Week. Other than releasing the *NSW Youth Volunteering Guidelines*, what has your Government done to attract youth participation in volunteering?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: This Government works with the Centre for Volunteering to increase the number of volunteers throughout New South Wales. Those guidelines are a really important part of our approach to enhancing and increasing the support that volunteer-involving organisations provide to young people, and increasing the numbers of youth volunteers within their organisations.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Minister, what programs or initiatives does your Government run to recruit, train and recognise Indigenous volunteers in New South Wales?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I'd need to take that on notice.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Are you aware of any?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I'll take that on notice.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Minister, do you support the need for safe spaces for women?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: For safe places?

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Safe spaces for women.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Absolutely I support the need for safe spaces for women.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Do you think these should be both online and in person?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Do I think safe places for women should be both online and in person?

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Yes. Should there be safe places online for women and safe places in person for women?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I think women should be able to be safe.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Are you familiar with the Tickle and Giggle decision, Minister? Have you been briefed on that?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I haven't.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: It's a decision now under appeal which ruled that Giggle, which is a women-only social media site, was breaching the Sexual Discrimination Act by not permitting somebody who was biologically male to join their website. Does this decision present a challenge for the maintenance of women-only spaces online?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I think that all women deserve to be safe and to feel safe in the spaces they are in. I understand that is a particular issue in relation to a transwoman. I think that all women deserve to feel safe in the places that they are in, whether they be physical places or whether they be online.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: So you think then this decision presents a challenge for online safe spaces where women feel that they can be comfortable with each other?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I'll have to ask for further advice on that, but I'll just reiterate that all women need to be safe and feel safe in the places they inhabit.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Do we need legislative change to protect women-only spaces?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I'll have to seek advice on that.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: You'll get back to us on that?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I'll take advice on it.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: So, you'll take that on notice?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I'll take that on notice.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Is there funding in the budget to protect women-only spaces?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Not to my knowledge.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Do you think that there is any need for that?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I think that all women deserve to feel safe in the places they are, whether they are in person or whether they are online. I think there are lots of ways that women, no matter whether they were born women or whether they identify as women—I think there are ways of overcoming issues that are coming to light now so that all women can feel safe.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: This is an issue that you are providing thought leadership on? Because it is a difficult issue that we need to work through as a community, isn't it?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: There is a taskforce that is being led within the Premier's Department on this very issue.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: So it's not being led through you, Minister? It's being led by the Premier?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: No, because I am—this issue goes further than what has traditionally been identified as being a women's issue.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Can you tell us more about what exactly this Premier's taskforce is working on?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I'll ask Ms White. I'm happy to take that on notice, because it's not within my portfolio. Actually, I would ask that you refer that to the Premier.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I guess I'm struggling to understand why an issue dealing with women is not within the portfolio of the Minister for Women—

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Because it's a health issue.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: —and, frankly, why a male Premier has taken it on rather than the Minister for Women?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Because this is an important issue that—

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Too important for women to handle?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: It is of such import that it needs to be dealt with by the essential agency, and it has effects right across multiple portfolios.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: A key portfolio like Minister for Women is not engaged at the core of these discussions?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I am engaged but I am not leading this work, and I have no problems with that.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: So you are aware of exactly what the taskforce is discussing?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I am not regularly briefed on it.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: So you are not engaged in the discussions, but you are told occasionally what the Premier is thinking about the role of women in the twenty-first century.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I think that is an incorrect suggestion.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Well, I would be delighted if you could correct me about the work of the taskforce, Minister.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: It's being led by the Premier and the Premier's Department, so I would suggest that you ask them.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: And the central issue that is being considered is?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: It is not within my portfolio responsibilities as the Minister for Women.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: So issues about how we navigate spaces where women feel safe are not within your portfolio issues as the Minister for Women. Is that right?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: No, that's an incorrect suggestion. I think you're conflating the issue of trans people with women. I stand by what I previously said. All women need to be able to feel safe and to be safe in the spaces that they work in, that they live in, that they socialise in, that they exercise in, and online.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Thank you for your firm stance that all women are women. It doesn't seem that hard, does it? Minister Harrison, I spoke with you and some of the Liquor and Gaming folks at the previous estimates about drink spiking. We have made progress on building drink spiking into training for bar staff and others who need to be aware of it. But one of the issues I started raising questions about a couple of years ago is in relation to needle spiking, because there were reports of it happening around Newcastle. In yesterday's news it was reported that it was happening at the end of last year in Byron Bay as well. This has become a difficult issue in the United Kingdom, where hundreds of people are being needle spiked in bars. Is this an issue that you have been made aware of, and is there anything that you are already doing in relation to needle spiking?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Specifically relating to needle spiking, within my portfolio, no. But needle spiking, particularly if it's used as a way of perpetrating violence, is certainly a gendered violence issue.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: And it's emerging, so I'm not expecting you to have necessarily been all over this, but I understand that New South Wales doesn't yet keep any data in relation to this either. Is this something that you would look into?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I'll just refer to Ms Campbell about this, because I believe that she has some information on it.

ANNE CAMPBELL: Yes, I have some information from BOCSAR. The crime data shows New South Wales police recorded 16 assaults in the 12 months to March 2024 where the weapon used was recorded as a syringe. The equivalent number in the previous year to March 2023 was 15. Of the 16 incidents last year, none were recorded as occurring in a nightclub, but four were in a hotel or a pub.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Interesting. Similar to drink spiking, we are being told by victims' organisations that this is something that people feel is difficult to come forward about because there is a bit of stigma around what may happen once you have been drugged. What we're hearing is that the police are not necessarily well trained on this and that bar staff aren't either. Could I ask you, Minister, to begin to highlight this issue with the police Minister and with Minister Harris in terms of his responsibilities for liquor and gaming, to see if there is something more we can do on this, similar to what we've done for drink spiking?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Yes. In relation to licensed venues and, basically, anywhere where there are workplaces and where there are places of service, again, people need to feel safe. Within SafeWork there is a Respect at Work Taskforce that works on ensuring that employers, places of work, are complying with their new responsibilities to be proactively acting to make sure that their workplaces are safe workplaces. That doesn't particularly go towards the needle-spiking issue.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: No.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: But it goes to certain industries. The Government is keen to do further work in that space.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: I'll come back to that issue in a minute. Ms Tonkin, are you aware of the increasing awareness around needle spiking? Is this an issue which has come to you and is there anything that you have been doing about it in your role?

HANNAH TONKIN: I'm aware of the issue. We're just following it generally. We don't have anything proactive. We can look at that, certainly, in my office. We have been working on the drink-spiking issue in general in the past, but we can certainly look more closely at the needle spiking.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: I would appreciate that. Maybe this is one of those issues we can get ahead of before it balloons, like it has in the UK. Minister, there have been relatively recent revelations about the workplace culture in certain parts of our night-time economy—in certain nightclubs and restaurants and things. It has been alleged that some workplaces have a culture of sexual harassment and assault, where it's accepted to a degree. I asked Minister Harris and Minister Graham about this in their respective roles. In your role, will you be involved in the response to that, that I understand the 24-Hour Economy Commissioner is running?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: My understanding is that SafeWork NSW is doing some investigations into those issues.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Ms Tonkin, are you part of that?

HANNAH TONKIN: Yes. I have been speaking to Commissioner Rodrigues over the past couple of weeks about that. We're working on that in partnership, and looking at training for the industry as well, and some of the things that have been put together in the past and how we can improve the implementation of that as well.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: I put this to Minister Graham the other day. It seems to me there are two parts of this puzzle and perhaps one of them is stickier than the other. There is the workplace safety aspect and making sure that employers are very aware of their obligations in relation to creating a culture that is free from sexual harassment and assault, and also responding to it appropriately. But then there is also what I refer to as the stickier issue, which is a general culture around the service industry where misogyny can take a bit of a front foot. The customer is always right. You get people in an environment where they're drinking and who feel that as a customer they are able to harass or assault a woman who is in that service position. That, to me, seems like a broader societal issue, but government could play a role by coming in with a very strong education campaign around treating those workers with respect, to try to change that cultural norm. I will go to you first, Ms Tonkin. Is that something that you will be looking at as part of this review with Commissioner Rodrigues?

HANNAH TONKIN: We can certainly look at that. There is also, as part of the work for the primary prevention strategy, some funding for campaigns as well. That's over four years, but we can certainly look at that issue as part of the various campaigns that we are looking at.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Minister, is that part of your role or part of your portfolio responsibilities as well—and it has no easy answer—that sort of directed, targeted education around women's safety?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Absolutely. As Commissioner Tonkin mentioned, the primary prevention strategy is a key part of that. The Government also has a Domestic and Family Violence Corporate Leadership

Group, which we are currently expanding—refreshing the membership on. There is, certainly, a need to ensure that cross-industries are represented on that so that there are some good leaders on that group to feed into government what is happening out there, and what good work is happening out there, and what more we can do to facilitate improved actions by places of employment.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Turning to a different topic, I was really—I think I can say the word—upset to learn that the Ageing and Disability Commissioner has still not been funded to the level that they have been asking for for a very long time now. Are you aware that the ADC put in a submission for greater funding to allow them to do their work to the department? Did you pass that on to the Treasurer as part of the budget considerations?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I am aware that there was a proposal from the Ageing and Disability Commission for increased funding, and I'm aware that it didn't get through Cabinet.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Did it not get through at the department level, though? Did it not get through Cabinet?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I don't recollect exactly where it didn't get through, but I know that there was a proposal. I do know that there's been some additional funding granted to the Ageing and Disability Commission for this financial year within the DCJ budget.

MICHAEL TIDBALL: If I can assist, Ms Boyd?

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Please.

MICHAEL TIDBALL: There is core funding of \$4.03 million. There is a gap in excess of \$2 million. As has happened over the past two years, where that money is not forthcoming through enhancement, the department will fund that gap.¹

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Will that then meet the budget bid, though, or will that just keep things afloat?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: I can't recall what the full ask was. It will certainly, I think, deal with the core needs as well as, as I understand it, specific needs for the neglect project, the research for the DFV victim-survivor experience of the criminal justice system and \$200,000 for responding to elder abuse of older women and women with a disability, which are specific projects.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: I understand that budget bid was for \$14 million over four years to address the core work plus the OCV scheme and then to provide for some growth.

MICHAEL TIDBALL: It would be more than that. On the figures I have, over three years I think that the total funding required is over \$7 million a year.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: So maybe that was \$14 million additional that was requested.

MICHAEL TIDBALL: Possibly, yes.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: And of that we didn't get the full amount. How much of that \$14 million additional was given then?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: I am happy to check this on notice because I want to be pristinely accurate in what I say. My understanding is the funding that has been available has been continued, and the shortfall would need to come from DCJ. That is the gap or shortfall which, as I said, we've done in the last two years that we will fund.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Is that now the intention, though, to keep doing that top up? I don't understand why Treasury wouldn't fund it to at least its core level.

MICHAEL TIDBALL: I cannot speak to those processes.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: No, you can't.

MICHAEL TIDBALL: I recognise the vital interconnection that the ADC does with so much of the work of DCJ. It does vital work. It does important work. The independence of the commission, obviously, is important. It has a clear statutory mandate, which I completely respect and get. As I am emphasising, the department will commit to funding that gap.

¹ In [correspondence](#) to the committee received 9 October 2024, Mr Michael Tidball, Secretary, Department of Communities and Justice, provided a clarification to his evidence.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Minister, when this was set up five years ago—I understand there's been growth of around 66 per cent, which is what you would expect. I thought that it was underfunded to begin with, but when you look at the way these things work—once people learn that there is a service that they can contact, you would expect the demand for that service to increase. I know that the previous commissioner, Mr Fitzgerald, talked a lot about the need for a demand-based funding model which, unfortunately, was never accepted by Treasury. Do you think it's appropriate that we continue to underfund the ADC when it's something that we want to be successful and to be growing?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I certainly want to reiterate the work that the Ageing and Disability Commission does as being really important work. Elder abuse is an issue that there is becoming more and more awareness of, which is partly what that increase in calls are about. It would be lovely to be able to have demand-based funding on all of our services. It's tricky to do that within budgets. The Government will continue to look at the work done by the Ageing and Disability Commissioner and look at whether we can better support it into the future. It is difficult within budgets. The Treasurer has made it clear to not come asking for additional funds, unless there is definitely not the capacity to be able to fund things from within already, with Government changing priorities.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: It's very difficult when we have services being forced to turn people away. It seems to be, I guess, impinging directly on their statutory functions to be able to perform and do everything that was required. Maybe this is a question for the Treasurer, I guess, as to whether there is any intention to reassess the way that these services are funded.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: That would be a question for the Treasurer.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Can I ask you about the PWDA Building Access project? In the last estimates I asked you about this. You weren't familiar, at the time, with it and the findings about just how inaccessible domestic and family violence services are for people with disability. I think there were zero services that they'd found to be fully accessible, which was pretty extraordinary. I see that you have since met with the PWDA. You met with them in April. What has been done in relation to that building access project and getting funding to allow full accessibility for domestic and family violence services?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I think that funding actually sits within Minister Jackson's portfolio, but I'm happy to take that on notice.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: That would be very useful, thank you.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Within the design specifications, accessibility is a really important part of Core and Cluster. If I recall correctly, at least one of each of the units in each Core and Cluster unit is required to be fully accessible—ideally all, but there is a requirement for at least one to be fully accessible.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: This is something I keep asking every Minister about, but it's definitely relevant within your portfolios: The issue of why New South Wales is one of only two States not to sign up to the National Construction Code minimum accessibility standards for new builds. This is obviously not just an issue for people with mobility issues but anyone who wants to age in place. It's a big concern for older people. Have you been advocating in Cabinet to get New South Wales to finally adopt those standards?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Certainly there have been discussions with Minister Chanthivong about that. I know that the Ministerial Advisory Council on Ageing has met with him as well to advocate along those lines. So, yes, there is certainly advocacy occurring.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: You acknowledge that that lack of accessibility of our housing stock is impacting particularly on women with mobility needs trying to flee domestic and family violence relationships?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: As I said, under Core and Cluster and the new builds, we are certainly making sure that at least one is fully available. I note that the ageing in place issue isn't quite as much of an issue in refuges because of their short-term accommodation, but we really want to have them as accessible as possible. In relation to existing refuges, as I said, I'm not quite sure about the funding for that.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Minister, your Government cancelled the regional seniors travel card and implemented instead a 4¢ discount on fuel with United Petroleum. How many seniors have signed up for this discount card and received the 4¢ discount?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: The 4¢ discount wasn't actually implemented by this Government to replace the regional seniors travel card. The 4¢ discount is provided by United Petroleum, who has signed up to the Seniors Card and Senior Savers Card to provide discounts in relation to fuel. I would welcome any fuel provider to sign up to the seniors cards to provide exactly the same discounts, to provide it as widely as possible. As far as actual

numbers who have signed up for that 4¢ discount, I would have to take that on notice because that information is held by United Petroleum.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Do you or the department receive any information about the uptake and the locations of where it is used?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: The locations of where it's used is publicly available because it's at any United Petroleum station, not just within New South Wales but right across Australia. Seniors who are travelling across Australia can participate in that. As far as ongoing reporting, I'll just ask if Ms Campbell knows.

ANNE CAMPBELL: No. I'll take that on notice. I might be able to come back this afternoon.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Have you had any discussions with other petrol stations or providers like BP or Caltex?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I personally have not. These are organisations that voluntarily sign up to provide discounts. They might be fuel companies; they might be vet companies; they might be grocery stores. In fact, there are all of those kinds of organisations who have signed up to the Seniors Card discounts. DCJ is regularly seeking new organisations to sign up to it.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: But you've done no proactive work in encouraging various organisations to jump on board to provide discounts in support to seniors?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I have not personally done that, no.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Minister, on 6 September 2024 National Cabinet met specifically to discuss men's violence against women and children. What policy positions did New South Wales bring to those discussions?

GILLIAN WHITE: I'm happy to start off and then the Minister might want to add some more.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: The key ask out of those discussions was that we wanted to see a long-term domestic and family violence national partnership agreement and we wanted to see improved funding.

GILLIAN WHITE: Absolutely. There had been an early National Cabinet, which had led to a series of taskings. There was the report-back on all of those, and the New South Wales Government was progressing work. Then there were the really significant funding commitments announced by the Prime Minister and the Premiers.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Did New South Wales seek any concessions from the Commonwealth in relation to the commitment to roll out 118 frontline DV case workers by June this year?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Did we seek any concessions to rolling—at National Cabinet?

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Yes.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: No.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Following that meeting, it was announced within the new agreement that there will be "greater flexibility for States and Territories to direct funding to meet local need, and will be accompanied by stronger transparency and accountability mechanisms". Following your failed rollout of the 118 frontline DV workers—

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I don't believe that is failed. I believe that that is on track.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: You have 57.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: By 30 December this year.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Did you push at the time for any changes, knowing that you would not be able to deliver what was required?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: We have provided and met all of the time frames that have been agreed with the Commonwealth. The progress report that we provided, which was made public in April this year—which I believe that you probably would have had a copy of—very clearly stated what our intentions were, and the Commonwealth accepted that progress report.² We reported on page 3 of the progress report that we expect

² In [correspondence](#) to the committee received 10 October 2024, Hon Jodie Harrison MP, Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault provided a clarification to her evidence.

awarding of contracts to complete in quarter one of 2024-25. We made that and then some. We are then hopeful the service providers will be able to get the majority of employees recruited and deployed by end of quarter two 2024-25. We are well and truly on track to do that.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: But, Minister, Minister Rishworth stated on 5 September this year that States and Territories now "need to deliver" on the agreements they signed up to, and you still say you haven't failed to deliver.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Minister Rishworth said that States now need to deliver on the agreements that they've signed up to. That's exactly what we are doing.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: You're 57 out of 118.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: We are exactly delivering on the agreement that we made with the Federal Government.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: When do you think it will be time for the Commonwealth to take over the tendering process, considering you're failing to deliver case workers?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I totally reject the assertion that we have failed meeting the time frames. We are meeting the time frames totally in compliance with what has been agreed by the Federal Government.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Minister, the Domestic Violence Death Review Team *Report 2021-2023* was tabled on 8 August this year. When will the Government table their response?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: The Domestic Violence Death Review Team's response—the DVDRT reports to the Attorney General, but I'll just see if I have information on when the response will be provided. It will be provided within six months of the tabling of the report.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: In response to the 2019 to 2021 report, you stated—this has come from you—as part of the next steps:

I will be reviewing work underway across government to progress outstanding and implementable recommendations made by the DVDRT to support the shared goal of positive systems and service improvements. This will include seeking advice on challenges with implementation and where required, alternative methods of implementation.

You just said the AG is responsible for the latter report. However, you were for the 2019 to 2021 report. Has that changed?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: According to the allocation of Acts, the Domestic Violence Death Review Team is established to report to the Attorney General. That is the reference that I was making. I am the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault and, obviously, I have a keen interest in issues in relation to prevention of deaths that the DVDRT raises. I lead the work that is for the prevention of domestic violence. I believe that the Women's Safety Commissioner is currently working on identifying the actions that haven't been—no, sorry, not the Women's Safety Commissioner. We provided an additional \$2 million in this budget for increased capacity for the Domestic Violence Death Review Team. That doubles their staff. Part of that work will be identifying which recommendations are yet to be implemented and which—

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: And this is for 2019 to 2021, not 2021 to 2023?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: This is for all of the work that the Domestic Violence Death Review Team has done.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Both reports?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Yes.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: How many recommendations are outstanding and implementable from the 2019 to 2021 report that you referred to?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I would have to take that on notice. I think that's the work that's being currently worked through.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: You said there was \$2 million in this budget?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Yes.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Minister, can I take you back to our previous discussion where you said—and I would agree with you—that all women should be able to feel safe at all times. We are seeing situations at the moment, however, where all women don't feel safe at all times. I'm thinking particularly of situations in relation to sport, and I'm thinking particularly of situations in relation to community sports participation, where

we've seen examples where all-female teams have removed themselves from competition and forfeited because they haven't felt safe in competitions where there have been a number of trans players. We need to have an inclusive society where trans people can play sport, but we also need to make sure that other women feel safe. How do we navigate through these issues, and what leadership are you showing in relation to these issues?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Firstly, I'll just go back to a question that you asked before in relation to the break-up of Staying Home Leaving Violence and integrated domestic violence, if you like.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I'm sorry, could we deal with this first?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Okay. While I have it in my head—\$25.9 million. There is work being done within the Office of Sport to work with teams or to work with codes to identify how they can best respond to the issues that come up in relation to trans people in sport, because it will impact different sports in different ways. That is work that's being done by the Office of Sport, and my understanding is that that is being dealt with in a sensitive way for all parties, as it should be.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: And there's no specific representation of your ministry in those discussions? Because this is an issue that particularly concerns women. It's certainly an issue that I have received an enormous number of representations from women in relation to.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I have not played a strong, active part in that. But having said that, I'll go back to my previous statement that all women deserve to feel safe, no matter where they are.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Minister, I agree, but is this an issue that can be solved with platitudes like that? If you've got women coming to you and saying, "My daughters are leaving sport because they don't feel safe in their competition"—nobody wants that. How do we manage these competing interests? We have to respect everybody in society, but we really need some very nuanced thinking about this issue. I'm looking to you to provide thought leadership on this, Minister.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: You're right; we do need nuanced thinking on this issue, and that is why it is important that the sporting codes themselves work through the nuances—with government leadership, of course.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Where is that leadership coming from? Where are women's interests being protected in this discussion? Frankly, what's the point of resourcing additional change rooms for women's sport to encourage women's participation if we're hearing messages that women actually don't feel safe participating? This is a very difficult issue we need to work through. We actually need to work through it, rather than just throwing up our hands, saying platitudes and hoping for the best.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: We're certainly not throwing up our hands. We're supporting sporting codes in—

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: What are you doing, Minister? What work are you leading on this?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: This is an issue, particularly in relation to sporting codes, that is being led by the Office of Sport.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: And you don't believe that this is also a women's issue in which you should be actively engaged?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: It's an issue that I will have input into, but it is not an issue that I will lead. It is an issue that goes right across government.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Is the work that's being done by Sport different to the work that's being done by the Premier's taskforce?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I believe so.

GILLIAN WHITE: I'm happy to answer—apologies that I wasn't quite on top of your question before. But in terms of the work that's being led by the Premier's Department, that's the establishment of the LGBTQI+ Advisory Council. The status of that is that's not yet—

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: That would affect some women but wouldn't affect all women.

GILLIAN WHITE: Correct. That will be focused on the development of broader inclusion strategies when it comes to LGBTQI+ communities. In terms of more broadly for women, alongside what the Minister has spoken to, the Minister chairs a women's council which has a range of diverse women's perspectives.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Is sport on the agenda of that council?

GILLIAN WHITE: Not at the last meeting, but the agenda of that is formulated both by Women NSW's secretariat but with significant input from the members. If this became a topic that that council wanted to deliberate on and speak with the Minister about, that would be another forum available, alongside collaboration with the Minister's colleagues.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I understand the Premier is leading work in relation to LGBTQIA+, and the Minister for Sport is leading work in relation to sport. But in terms of women's concerns about continuing participation in sport, you're not doing anything, Minister?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: The work that I'm doing is in relation to the NSW Women's Strategy. As Ms White referred to, I also take advice from the Women's Advisory Council and women who I meet with on a regular basis. This is not an issue that has been raised as one of the key priority issues, to me, across New South Wales.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: From the correspondence I've had, I find that surprising, but I accept that that's your experience. Minister, can I just take you back to the review following the death of Molly Ticehurst. Can you confirm the date on which that Cabinet Office review was completed?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I'm not sure if I have the actual date with me. It was 5 August 2024, I'm advised.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: What was the date that you first read the review?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I think it was a few weeks before that.

GILLIAN WHITE: I think it's been considered by Government, so you would have read it in the lead-up to that discussion and that meeting—so before that date.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: What was the date it was considered by Cabinet? Can you confirm, Minister, that you have read the review?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I have.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: You have read the review?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I have.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: When?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: It would have been shortly after receiving it—after it was received.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: So sometime in August you read the review.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: It would have been early August. If it was received on 5 August, it would have been early August.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Did you brief Cabinet in relation to that review?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: The review was led by Cabinet Office, I believe.

GILLIAN WHITE: Yes.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Which Minister briefed Cabinet during Cabinet discussions about the review?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I can't go into the detail of discussions.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I'm asking you who is responsible for raising it. Which Minister sitting around the table said, "This review is important. Let's look at it"?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I just want to get advice on what I am allowed to say and what I'm not allowed to say in relation to what is being considered by Cabinet. It is a Cabinet matter. I was briefed. The Cabinet deliberations—I was briefed of it beforehand.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Can I clarify—you were briefed on it, or you read the report?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I was briefed and I read it.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Then Cabinet considered it?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Cabinet considered it.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: What changes have been made to the Staying Home Leaving Violence program as a result of that review?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: None.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: No changes have been made as a result of that review? What, then, was the purpose of the review, Minister?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I can't go into the detail of what the review—

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: With respect, you advised the House—I believe it was on 6 June this year—that the review was taking place. If you can advise the House, I think you can advise this Committee what the purpose of the review was.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I'll ask Mr Tidball to assist.

MICHAEL TIDBALL: If I can make this comment, if I may. That is that the strong advice of the DPP is that there is a risk that any public commentary on the substance of the review could hamper both the ongoing police investigation into the alleged offences and the prosecution of the accused.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Was the DPP asked specifically to advise on whether discussions of a review that was made public by the Minister on 6 June, which was a review about a program, could prejudice charges against a particular accused? Because the accused isn't accused of breaching the program, but of part of the criminal law.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Can I just clarify—

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Mr Tidball, can you advise on that? Can you answer that question?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: All I can respond by way of further comment is that the review will be made public in due course.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: What's "due course"?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: I'm sorry; I do not know. I'm not able to give you a specific response.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Sorry, Minister. What did you want to add?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: The review was a review of support services provided to Molly Ticehurst prior to her alleged murder.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: So it was a review of the Staying Home Leaving Violence program—

Ms JODIE HARRISON: It was a review of support—

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: —and a review of the fact she had been told 14 days before she died that she'd get a security review.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I can't go into the details of what the review said, but I can tell you that the review was of support services provided to Molly Ticehurst prior to her alleged murder.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I believe you also told the House that it was a review of all interactions Molly Ticehurst had with New South Wales government agencies and domestic violence services in the lead-up to her death.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: That's right, so it wasn't a review into a particular program. It was a review—

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Ms Ticehurst wasn't engaged with the Staying Home Leaving Violence program?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: It was a review of support services provided to Molly Ticehurst prior to her alleged murder.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Which would have included Staying Home Leaving Violence.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Mr Tidball has made very clear the advice that the DPP has provided the Government in relation to this matter. I can tell you that the review was of the support services. I can also tell you that it wasn't in relation to the program of Staying Home Leaving Violence.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Mr Tidball, when was the DPP's advice sought and why?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: I do not have that date and I do not have more specifics with me.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Is it usual that the DPP is asked about government reviews and whether they can be discussed?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: There's nothing more that I'm able to add to my evidence.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Just a few additional things from me, Minister. The response from the Government to the disability royal commission recommendations—did you have direct input into that?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: The recommendations as they related to domestic and family services, yes.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: The New South Wales Government responded to recommendation 8.24, which was in relation to a disability inclusive definition of family and domestic violence, with the statement "subject to further consideration". What is that further consideration? This is the definition that at the moment only applies to intimate—well, not quite. It's broader than that. I don't have it in front of me, sorry. Effectively, it's connected to this issue that we had with coercive control being related only to intimate relationship and not carers and everybody else. When it was stated that that was under consideration, what's the process for that?

ANNE CAMPBELL: I can answer that.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I'll ask Ms Campbell.

ANNE CAMPBELL: That particular action, from memory, was for both the Commonwealth and State to respond to that particular recommendation. There's engagement at the moment with States and Territories and the Commonwealth to work through that particular recommendation.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: So the Victorian Government accepted that recommendation and committed to undertaking detailed analysis in relation to it, but we just said, "subject to further consideration"?

ANNE CAMPBELL: And analysis, of course, as well.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: We will be doing that analysis, then?

ANNE CAMPBELL: We will be looking at it, yes.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: When will that be done by?

ANNE CAMPBELL: I'd need to take that on notice.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: I'm going to ask a couple of questions in relation to pet-friendly accommodation. We've talked about the additional 2,900 beds for refugees. What percentage of that accommodation will be pet-friendly and enable women to bring their dog or their cat with them?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: It's my understanding that the design specification brief required there to be the capacity for all of them to be pet friendly. Obviously, there may be some circumstances where different families' pets don't get on. That's likely to be an issue, potentially, in the future. That will be something that will need to be worked through in each individual refuge—exactly what that looks like.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Animal-inclusive design is an important part of the picture. Is there any additional funding to be provided to effectively support families who are bringing their animals with them? Their animals may require additional support and funding to make that work.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I might ask Ms Campbell about the breakdown of the capital versus operational funding for Core and Cluster.

ANNE CAMPBELL: There would be brokerage money that's available in the service support. That would be dependent on each woman's and child's circumstances. Obviously, if there was an issue in terms of specific pet care et cetera, that would be factored into the case plan for that particular family.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Minister, are you aware of where in the State, how many and where the gaps are when it comes to people being able to find a safe refuge for their animal if they are forced to flee somewhere where they can't take their animal with them? In Victoria they have a great program, I think as part of their RSPCA funding, where they've got dedicated spots—various pounds and things—for people with domestic and family violence circumstances that they're fleeing. Do you have visibility over where the gaps are in New South Wales and what needs to be done?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I personally do not. We're busy trying to fill in gaps of where refuges are with the program. I know the RSPCA does some really great work in relation to supporting victim-survivors in relation to keeping their pets and being able to financially support them when there is a crisis. I'm not quite sure at the moment whether we have detail of any gaps of pet-friendly accommodation, unless that can be answered—

ANNE CAMPBELL: No, I'll take that on notice. I might be able to come back to you this afternoon.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: That would be good. It reminds me, coming back to that discussion we were having before about the NCC minimum accessibility standards and how that impacts on women fleeing domestic and family violence—it's not just the refugees. If you're in a situation where you've decided to leave but the rental market is as it is and you can't actually find a place that is pet-friendly or, in the case of what I was talking about before, accessible for people with disability, that's where your role comes in to ensure that there is more accommodation of that kind. When it comes to the NCC standards, there's a very clear link with domestic and family violence, and it's something that the Older Women's Network has been making a lot of good noise about as well. Will you be advocating to your colleagues that we accept that minimum accessibility standard as an urgent matter?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Certainly as far as the new builds that we're undertaking, my understanding of the work that has been led by the Minister for Housing, and Minister for Homelessness is that all of the new builds—

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: For social housing.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: —for social housing—

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Yes, but not for the market as a whole. Every other State and Territory except for Western Australia and New South Wales has mandated it for everybody. For some reason, we seem unable to do that in New South Wales. I am yet to get a clear answer or any justification as to why that would be the case. But given how important it is for seniors, for people with disability, for people fleeing domestic and family violence, it just seems like a no-brainer to me. And yet, we've got this hold-up. Will you be advocating for that standard to be implemented urgently?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I'll continue to have the conversations that I've been having in relation to particularly the silver standards.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: One of the other issues I think we discussed last time was in relation to what I would call the stubbornness of the Police Force in not implementing the recommendations of the Auditor-General in the Audit Office's report into police responses to domestic and family violence and also the LECC recommendations when it comes to police being able to investigate people from the same command when it comes to domestic and family violence incidents. At the moment we have a situation where, basically, the station command or the command sergeant—I always forget the terminology—has the discretion to say, "That involves one of our officers. We'll get a different command to investigate it." But it's not mandatory, and so one of the recommendations from both the LECC and the Auditor-General was that it should be a mandatory thing. Again, there has been no movement in relation to that. Have you been advocating for the police Minister to require that to happen?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I've been talking with the police Minister on a huge range of matters in relation to domestic and family violence. I've been out to the domestic and family violence registry a couple of times. I think the work that they are doing, while I don't have an intimate knowledge of what they are doing and will be doing, will go a long way to overcoming—will go some way, rather, to overcoming some of the issues that have been raised by both of those reports.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: This one is pretty extraordinary, I think, in terms of would it pass the pub test? When I tell friends that aren't involved in politics that if you are being abused by a person who happens to be a police officer, you are not guaranteed that their mates won't investigate them if you complain about them, that is a pretty extraordinary thing for most people to grasp. Do you think it's appropriate that victims approaching the police for help have to basically take it on faith that the person in charge of that command may, in those circumstances, transfer it to someone else for investigation—but maybe they won't? That would really impact on whether or not you would actually try to get the police's help in the first place if you were being abused, don't you think?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Yes. I think it's incredibly important that any police investigation is thorough and done professionally. Whether or not the complainant is a police officer or whether it's a member of the community, everybody expects our police to be dealing with complaints made to them professionally and thoroughly. I do think having the domestic and family violence registry having oversight of the issues in relation to domestic and family violence across the Police Force will be helpful. There is a lot of work being done. I've got to say that I think the Police Force has become more open to working with people and organisations outside of their own expertise in recent times. I think that's a really good thing.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: I do too. I think it is still extraordinary, though, that they're not taking what both the LECC and the Auditor-General, who are independent organisations, who have been put in these very important roles in our democracy to hold people to account—they have made a very clear recommendation, both of them, that police should not investigate each other when it comes to claims of domestic and family violence. And yet the Police Force is stubbornly saying, "We're going to just keep doing what we do because we know better." How is the public to have faith in the police when that is the response?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: My understanding is that there is ongoing work to work through, particularly the LECC report.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: One of the other issues that I keep raising with the police Minister is in relation to the numbers of currently serving police officers who have been convicted of a domestic and family violence offence. There are a huge number who have been charged with domestic and family violence offences. There are a number who have then been found guilty, but no conviction because of their standing as a police officer or whatever. And then there are those police officers who have been convicted and continue to keep their jobs. Given the Police Force is supposed to be in our society on the front line of dealing with domestic and family violence incidents, do you think it is appropriate that we continue to have tolerance for officers who are also committing that offence?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I think perpetrators of domestic violence—people who use domestic violence in relationships—should be held to account. I talk about perpetrators being held to account. I talk about perpetrators being held accountable, and police are no different.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: When I asked the other day, 54 currently serving police officers had been charged with 91 domestic violence related offences. Two currently serving police officers had been convicted of domestic and family violence offences. It was taken on notice how many are guilty without a conviction recorded, but as at 6 March we had 11 found guilty without a conviction recorded and they're all still working in the force. Given the need to restore confidence in the police's ability to deal with domestic and family violence, do you think we should be adopting a zero-tolerance approach to people who have themselves been found to have committed a domestic and family violence offence being in the police?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I think there are certain requirements to being a police officer. I think all police should have to adhere to those requirements, including whether they have criminal convictions.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Exactly. But you don't think that there is a perception problem if we have—it's not without context. We have police sitting there with convictions and we have police being able to investigate each other for these offences? Do you think we need to shake that up so that, from a victim-survivor's perspective, they can walk into a station and think that they're going to be dealt with in the appropriate manner?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I do think it needs to be shaken up. The LECC report clearly said it needed to be shaken up. I honestly do believe that the police Minister and the police commissioner are working through shaking that up.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: I asked for current numbers at the police estimates as well, and I'm waiting to get back the details on notice, but as at the last estimates on 5 March 2024 we had 18 currently serving police officers who had been charged with 39 offences relating to sexual violence. These are not the ones who are found guilty of domestic and family violence; we're talking now just about sexual violence offences in isolation. There were 18 currently serving police officers as at 5 March. I understand five of them have now been let go. I don't know, because I don't have the numbers to compare it to exactly yet, but as at that 5 March number, of those 18 currently serving police officers with 39 offences, two of the charges were of sex with a person under 10—still serving in the police force—and five of the charges were of sexual offences with children between 10 and 16. I don't understand how you can be charged with an offence—a sexual offence with a child—and still get to sit in the Police Force. Do you think that is appropriate?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I think sexual offences are absolutely abhorrent, obviously. I think the police in New South Wales should be above reproach.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: You can understand how people are not very trusting to come forward. It's another one of those issues where victims of sexual violence find it incredibly difficult to disclose in the first place, and if you don't have a guarantee that the person behind the desk isn't also being charged with an offence, that's an added obstacle. Do you think we should have a zero-tolerance approach to police that have been charged with a child sex offence, at least, even if we don't get to the adult sex offences?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: I honestly believe that every single one of our police officers should be above reproach.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Ms Tonkin, your role is still relatively new. How is it going? Have you got a full staff on board now? What are you currently focused on as a priority?

HANNAH TONKIN: It's going well. Thanks for asking. I released my strategic plan in March. That had six broad, overarching priorities. They're pretty wideranging. The first one is to put people with lived experience—victim-survivors—of domestic, family and sexual violence at the centre of everything we do. I'm doing a lot of work in my office around that priority. That's really at the centre of everything else. The second priority is about oversight and monitoring of the New South Wales plans. That's all that work on increasing collaboration and coordination across government, improving governance. That's a big focus, as well, of my role. The third priority is strengthening responses—making them safe, accessible—looking at justice responses as well as frontline services. Primary prevention is the fourth priority. That links in with the primary prevention strategy and a lot of the awareness raising and changing attitudes and changing behaviours. That's a big piece of work and a big focus.

The fifth priority is workforce. That links into some of your questions earlier and what's needed for frontline workers and for everyone across the sector in New South Wales within government and outside of government. The final one is women's economic safety and security, specifically in the context of domestic and family violence: what women need to leave abusive relationships; economic abuse, financial abuse—raising awareness of those issues; supporting women through healing and recovery; and their economic wellbeing. They're the six priorities in my strategic plan. My office now is basically fully formed. We're still doing a little bit of recruitment but I have my office established now, so it's going well.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Excellent. During the budget process one of the frustrations I had, particularly with the previous Government, was that you get these issues like something as important as women's safety but then it then gets split between so many people that we end up having every Minister being notionally a bit responsible but then no-one being wholly responsible, and so things actually get missed. I think a great part of your role was to be that glue to make sure there was a more coordinated approach. Did that come into play during the budget process at all, given that there were multiple different competing bids going in to Cabinet? Were you involved at all in putting some sort of overarching review of that package of different reforms that came out?

HANNAH TONKIN: Not really on the budget side. I actually provide oversight and monitoring more on the overarching policy framework and strategy and the governance, not so much all the different funding aspects of it. That's really the focus of the department. I'm quite deliberately trying to stay a bit independent of that process as much as possible.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: I'm honestly trying to work out the mechanisms of government and where the gaps still are. A really good example that was brought to me was that there was effectively a funding cut for the charitable organisations under the POCTA Act—RSPCA and AWL—who do quite a lot of work, and could do a lot more if they were funded, in terms of that link between domestic and family violence and animal cruelty. It was put to me that if you were looking holistically at the budget, even though there's some money going over here, if you're reducing it in these other areas you can still be having a net negative on the issue that we're trying to solve, in terms of domestic and family violence, because you've taken a service away somewhere else. It's all so connected.

Is there any way of casting that women's safety lens over the whole of government? Maybe that's a question for you, Minister—whether it's something you've thought about as well. I know in other jurisdictions they have a gender lens on budgets and other things. But is there a need for that more holistic approach when it comes to something like prevention of domestic and family violence?

Ms JODIE HARRISON: We do have a gender lens across certainly parts of our budget and that's becoming wider, particularly on new project proposals. The domestic and family violence taskforce has been established to do a couple of things: to drive the implementation of the emergency package, to have a look at the existing strategies and frameworks that we have in relation to domestic and family violence across government and across other jurisdictions, and to provide advice to government on future phases of those whole-of-government reforms. That taskforce will have a key role in looking at that whole-of-government—how do you juggle those competing priorities. I would imagine there'll be some pretty robust discussions happening within that taskforce about those priorities.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Any questions from Government members?

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: None from us.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: That concludes the morning session. Thank you very much, Minister.

(The Minister withdrew.)

(Luncheon adjournment)

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Welcome back to the afternoon session. We'll start with questions from the Opposition, and then the crossbench. This morning we touched on the tendering process for the DV positions. I just wanted to have a better understanding of how the funding decisions were made when it came to non-ACCOS tendering for contracts.

ANNE CAMPBELL: Ms Maclaren-Jones, is that for the new workers? The 118 workers?

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Yes.

ANNE CAMPBELL: I probably need to put in context that we had quite a lot of prescription that was allocated to the States and Territories from the Commonwealth. I've been involved in a lot of tendering processes over the years and this was the most complicated one, I've got to honestly say.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: It's always good to blame the Feds.

ANNE CAMPBELL: I'm not blaming our colleagues—just to say they could maybe simplify things a little bit. But, essentially, the Commonwealth had particular priority cohorts that we had to target. That included rural, regional and remote communities—69.5 FTE had to go into those locations; culturally and linguistically diverse communities, 21.3; First Nations communities, 20.5; LGBTIQ+ communities, 5.5; and women with disability, 4.6 FTE. They also specified specific locations as well, across New South Wales. The funding was to support both a mix of trainees as well as experienced workers. So that made it a very complex process.

Then the actual allocation methodology for those positions—obviously, we looked at the quantitative data from the New South Wales bureau of crime statistics and researched local government area level information on domestic and family violence rates, sexual assault rates, First Nations domestic and family violence rates, population diversity and density data, settlement data, and domestic violence victimisation data on young people under 18 years of age. So that was overlaid with information on the existing domestic and family violence footprints across the State.

We then consulted with our Transforming Aboriginal Outcomes team in DCJ and DCJ districts. We also did external consultation with sector peaks, so DVNSW, No to Violence, ACON, People with Disability, Yfoundations, Settlement Services International. The Aboriginal Women's Advisory Network was also consulted. Then it was a mixture of either direct negotiations, once we'd done the market analysis across the State on the gaps, and looking at the data. There were some specific intentions by this Government to, obviously, target ACCOs. So we did do a market assessment of ACCOs that potentially could take that up, so it may have been a direct negotiation in parts of the State, and then an open tender in other parts of the State.³

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: The criteria was quite broad. What work is being done to build the capacity, whether it's an ACCO or a cultural and linguistically diverse background or youth, or whatever the category was that you know you need to find or identify staff to work in?

ANNE CAMPBELL: There has been some work done with ACCOs in the domestic and family violence space. For example, out in Murdi Paaki region—western New South Wales—we're co-designing an Aboriginal model out there, because what works for Aboriginal communities is likely to be different for the broader community. Similarly, we are looking at different service models, particularly with the new funding to really look at more of that co-design, particularly in western New South Wales, where there is a scarcity. We do have some excellent ACCOs out there. Through the previous Core and Cluster, which was the Core and Cluster that was announced a couple of years ago, we did a specific investment in ACCO development as well to build some of the capability, but there is a lot more to do.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: What about the CALD community?

ANNE CAMPBELL: There was the election commitment for the multicultural and domestic and family violence service in south-west Sydney, which opened this year. That works specifically with women and children from culturally diverse backgrounds.

³ In [correspondence](#) to the committee received 9 October 2024, Ms Anne Campbell, Deputy Secretary, Strategy, Policy and Commissioning, Department of Communities and Justice provided a clarification to her evidence.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Thank you.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I have a couple of questions, Ms Campbell, about that multicultural centre. Could you just tell us a bit about how it's actually working?

ANNE CAMPBELL: Yes. I think it's working very well. It's being led by the Muslim Women's Association. It's actually called the New South Wales Multicultural Service and Centre of Excellence for Domestic and Family Violence and Sexual Assault. Sorry, I should have said a contract was awarded for Settlement Services International. I've used the wrong NGO.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Settlement Services—they are people who assist migrants to the country?

ANNE CAMPBELL: Correct, and we fund them for other things within government. It's been operational since April 2024, and it was launched in May 2024, this year. So it's \$4.4 million over three years and three months. We actually enabled a three-month set-up to fully deliver on those services. So it includes primary prevention, early intervention, response, recovery and healing, and system enablers. It also services some regional locations, which includes Armidale, Coffs Harbour, Narellan and Hamilton.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Sorry, is Narellan regional?

ANNE CAMPBELL: Campbelltown.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Is Campbelltown regional?

ANNE CAMPBELL: I don't know. It's in my notes. I could question Campbelltown being regional.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Sorry, could you just give me those again? Armidale, Narellan—

ANNE CAMPBELL: Coffs Harbour and Hamilton.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Where is Hamilton?

ANNE CAMPBELL: In Newcastle, or near Newcastle.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: So nothing in the south-west of the State, then? Nothing south-west of—

ANNE CAMPBELL: Yes, it is in south-west Sydney. They are based in south-west Sydney.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: No, of the State. So Narellan is Campbelltown. There is nothing in the south-west of the State?

ANNE CAMPBELL: No.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Nothing in Cooma, Deniliquin—

ANNE CAMPBELL: No, not at this point.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: How would people from those areas be able to interact with the centre?

ANNE CAMPBELL: I would need to take that on notice to find out their reach. Obviously they've got a specific funding allocation of \$4.4 million, so it would depend on resourcing, how far they could reach across New South Wales. But happy to take that on notice.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: If you could take that on notice, and perhaps also—I don't know whether this is possible—if they have been reaching out to people, an indication of what geographical areas they might have been reaching out to; and also whether there is any possibility or any thought being given to the ability for regional groups to perhaps collaborate with the centre and learn from and extend the footprint and the reach of the centre, that would be great.

ANNE CAMPBELL: Happy to take that on notice.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Just on that, if you can also ask them what their forward plan is on being able to reach out to all the districts, or however it's divided up, and the time frame of that.

ANNE CAMPBELL: I do have a note here that says the centre also participates in 25 networks and communities, with a focus on domestic and family violence in multicultural communities. So I'll take that on notice, because I suspect they probably do have a bit more detail.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: And if we could get a list of the networks—I assume they are localised organisations, but if it's possible for them to provide that.

ANNE CAMPBELL: Happy to take that on notice.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: When you were talking about all of the different groups that the Commonwealth Government had said needed to be targeted with the 118 workers, I didn't hear whether there was any particular concern about domestic violence in seniors. Is that an area of concern, or there is no workers in that area if there's no need for workers in that area?

ANNE CAMPBELL: It wasn't called out, but obviously it would pick up seniors accessing those services as well.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: But are there any specialist services for seniors?

ANNE CAMPBELL: No, not that I'm aware of.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Is there a perceived need for any specialist services for seniors and domestic violence?

ANNE CAMPBELL: Probably, but I will take that on notice.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: I might move to carers and volunteers, the same sort of questioning around budgets and budget allocations. Of the funding that has been allocated for the volunteers and carers portfolios, how much has been allocated to peaks?

ANNE CAMPBELL: For volunteering, the New South Wales volunteering centre gets \$17,000. That's within a \$200,000 budget. It is a relatively small budget. Within that budget, there is also the New South Wales volunteer recruitment portal, which is \$32,000; the New South Wales volunteer awards, \$70,000; the NSW Community Sports Awards, \$5,000; the NSW State of Volunteering research institute gets \$50,000; there is nearly \$4,000 for Volunteers' Week; and then, I think, about \$22 million for additional resources.⁴

With the carers, there is the Carers Investment Grant Program. That gets \$3.1 million over two years, so that's 2024-25, 2025-26. The round opened on 12 August, with funding to be in place by March of next year. For this year it's obviously \$1.56 million and then the following year another \$1.56 million. There is then the Carers + Employers program, which is \$300,000 over three years. That's delivered by Carers NSW. Carers NSW gets \$6.5 million over five years. We've actually just entered a new five-year contract from 2024-25 to 2028-29, and that's \$1.3 million per annum. Then there is Carers Week, which is in October, which is \$400,000 over two years.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: What is the criteria for the investment grants?

ANNE CAMPBELL: I don't think I've got the actual criteria here, Mrs Maclaren-Jones, but I can take that on notice.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: That would be great. Thank you very much. This morning I asked a question about programs and initiatives supporting Aboriginal participation in volunteering, which was taken on notice. Depending on what the answer is, if there are program and initiatives, how much funding has been allocated to those?

ANNE CAMPBELL: I'll take that on notice. It might be in the grants that have been allocated over last year and this year.

MICHAEL TIDBALL: Can you please repeat that question? Sorry, what was the request?

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: This morning I asked specifically about programs and initiatives to support training, recruiting and to recognise Indigenous volunteers in New South Wales.

MICHAEL TIDBALL: I don't have it.

ANNE CAMPBELL: No, I don't think you do.

MICHAEL TIDBALL: I thought I might. Sorry.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: That's fine. In relation to the portal, I'm just clarifying, that is managed through DCJ?

ANNE CAMPBELL: I understand that's the case, but I'm happy to correct it on the record if it's wrong.

⁴ In [correspondence](#) to the committee received 9 October 2024, Ms Anne Campbell, Deputy Secretary, Strategy, Policy and Commissioning, Department of Communities and Justice provided a clarification to her evidence.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Do you track those who register to access the portal? What sort of data is gathered from it?

ANNE CAMPBELL: I'd need to take that on notice.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: That's fine. I note that \$2 million has been allocated in the budget this year for Return to Work, as part of the carers action plan. Is there any indication of how many women are likely to be supported? Is there a target?

ANNE CAMPBELL: I'd again need to take that on notice.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Okay. In relation to the recruitment of the Ageing and Disability Commissioner, have any funds been allocated to the recruitment process?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: No. There would be funding for recruitment processes generally, because it would be anticipated in the course of any given year that there would be positions at PSSE level and the like that would require funding but, beyond that, nothing specific for the Ageing and Disability Commissioner.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Could you outline what the recruitment process has been?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: The recruitment process remains on foot. The position has been advertised and interviews have taken place.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Is there a timeline for when the position will be filled?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: It's not a secretary's appointment, so it's not really my place to comment.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I understand. I don't believe that the New South Wales strategy for the prevention of domestic, family and sexual violence 2024-27 has been released yet, or am I wrong?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: Which one, sorry?

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: The New South Wales strategy for the prevention of domestic, family and sexual violence 2024-27. Has that been released?

ANNE CAMPBELL: The primary prevention strategy, no.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: It's September.

ANNE CAMPBELL: It's imminent.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: By Christmas?

ANNE CAMPBELL: I would hope so.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: So then does it become false advertising, because it is 2025-27?

ANNE CAMPBELL: I think the Minister this morning talked about it being imminent. I think that was a truthful answer.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Why the delay? What's the hold-up with getting it out?

ANNE CAMPBELL: I think we also wanted to consider what's happening at the national level as well, particularly in terms of the rapid review, and to make sure that we've included—and particularly, given the experiences in New South Wales this year, to make sure we've got it right.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: What about the 10-year workforce development plan for domestic and family violence? Where is that at?

ANNE CAMPBELL: We're hoping for that to be published towards the end of the year, November.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: What happens with funding? Is there funding then committed for that?

ANNE CAMPBELL: There is some funding, I'm pretty sure, in the emergency package for that. But obviously we're going to need to consult, and that's what we'll be doing. Just to go back to some earlier questions today from Ms Boyd, I believe, in terms of why it's taken so long to get this workforce strategy, given that we got the report in December—it's actually a very complex report. I've just recently seen a draft of the analysis that the team has done. It does really look at different parts of the general workforce across New South Wales, so it sort of breaks it down by cohort, like people who work in the child protection space, health specialist workers. So it is complex. We want to make sure that we consult properly in terms of what's going to be the implementation plan around that workforce strategy.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I have a general workforce question. You may not be able to help me. I'm aware that most of the workforce is actually contracted out to various service providers. I'm wondering what conditions there are in those service contracts. If you think about the sort of work that we are asking these frontline workers to do and the issue of vicarious trauma, are there requirements in place in all of the service agreements? Are we supporting our frontline workers appropriately?

ANNE CAMPBELL: I think we can always do more to support our frontline workers. I think some of the funding certainty for those specialist domestic and family violence services is really critical. That's why it was really welcomed at National Cabinet that the Commonwealth Government, particularly in terms of the national partnership, has agreed to five-year contracts, which is fabulous. That's point one. I think that most of our specialist domestic and family violence services do provide supervision and support, but I think they would also argue that there could be more investment in that space. I think that's what we'll see when we get the workforce strategy about how we can get support that workforce.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: A quick question in relation to the Drug Summit, which you may or may not be able to help me with: Given the clear link between substance abuse and domestic violence, is this an issue that will be considered at the Drug Summit?

ANNE CAMPBELL: I'd need to take that on notice.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: It would be disappointing if domestic violence was completely brushed from something as important as that.

ANNE CAMPBELL: I might just clarify an answer I provided before. In terms of the volunteering portal, it is funded by DCJ, but SEEK Volunteer actually manage it.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Therefore DCJ or the Government can't access the data because it's managed—

ANNE CAMPBELL: We may be able to do that. I'll take that on notice.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: I'm just going back to that return to work \$2 million. I just want to clarify if that is for a focus on the carers plan return to work action item, or is it a separate return to work for women in general, not women as carers?

TANYA SMYTH: I think this is in the Women portfolio. It's the Return to Work Pathways Program. Carers NSW received a grant for just under \$250,000.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: That is just for carers, and the rest of the funding is for—

TANYA SMYTH: For different focus communities. Exactly.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Does that include, also, the Return to Work Toolkits as part of that?

TANYA SMYTH: The Return to Work Toolkits are an initiative of Women NSW that support women returning to work. They've both got the same objective, but they're not distinctly tied together.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: The return to work program is targeting supporting women who have been unemployed for 30 days or less.

TANYA SMYTH: That was the Return to Work Program, which was a program under the previous Government. The Return to Work Pathways Program is a little bit different. The Return to Work Program funding went to individuals. That was a COVID initiative where women received a \$5,000 grant. The Return to Work Pathways Program goes to organisations who then help women find employment.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I'd like to ask some questions about the SafeT pilot program at North Ryde. Is there anyone who can help me with those questions?

ANNE CAMPBELL: What was it called, sorry?

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: SafeT pilot program at North Ryde.

ANNE CAMPBELL: I'd have to take that on notice.

MICHAEL TIDBALL: We will need to take that on notice.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Okay. It's to help women and families transition out of domestic and family violence.

ANNE CAMPBELL: I need to take that on notice. I think that specific program—I'm happy to take that on notice.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: The essential question is that it's a case management program which will cease operation in December this year. I am wondering about continuing support for that program. It seems to be very cost-effective. It's largely self-funded, with a very small investment from Government, and with very good results, as I am informed.

ANNE CAMPBELL: What's the service called?

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: SafeT. It operates in North Ryde. It's principally self-funded. The Government's been providing 7 per cent of the funding, which is an amount of \$40,000. They need that \$40,000 to continue doing their work in relation to women and families. I wondered if somebody can help me in relation to implementation of the domestic and family violence Common Risk Assessment and Management Framework in schools.

ANNE CAMPBELL: In schools?

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: In schools, child protection responses and in housing and homeless services—ensuring staff have the capability to identify domestic and family violence and assess or manage risk. I'm just wondering how that framework is to be implemented.

ANNE CAMPBELL: We're currently in the process of developing, as you said, the Common Risk Assessment and Management Framework—we call it the CRAMF.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Sorry, what do you call it?

ANNE CAMPBELL: The CRAMF. We always have a good acronym in government.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: It makes sense.

ANNE CAMPBELL: It's really to provide guidance about DFV risk assessment across a range of specialist and non-specialist workforces that work with people experiencing DFV. It's currently being developed in partnership with the University of New South Wales. Since June 2024 consultation on the draft CRAMF has been held with about 90 organisations, both within government and non-government services. The final CRAMF, or risk assessment framework, will be delivered to Government for consideration in October or November this year. It's not a specific risk assessment tool, but it is an evidence-based framework to better link and align existing tools so there's a common language across both specialist and non-specialist services.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Is it thought that it's an area where you could have a one-size-fits-all approach, or is it designed to be a looser framework? Is that what you were saying?

ANNE CAMPBELL: It's meant to be broad but have the same principles. Obviously, if you're a very specialist worker, you're going to have other more tailored tools—like the DV safety assessment tool that's used in Safer Pathway by their specialist domestic and family violence workers—versus someone who might be in a childcare centre to be able to recognise the signs of risk in domestic and family violence. That, no doubt, will be supplemented with training as well. That's what we will need to look at: how we will target that to the different workforces. It probably links in with my earlier comment around the workforce strategy and understanding what needs, in terms of training, the whole workforce has in New South Wales, particularly the specialist domestic and family violence and the sexual violence workforces.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Have the consultations included CALD groups?

ANNE CAMPBELL: Yes.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Is there funding for this in place?

ANNE CAMPBELL: There is some funding to implement it. We're still working through those details at the moment.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: If you look at the breadth of the institutions across which the CRAMF is intended to be rolled out, how will you manage the training for childcare workers, TAFE teachers and school teachers? It's a very broad cohort, isn't it?

ANNE CAMPBELL: Yes. We're working with the other government agencies in terms of how we design and implement that training. We've got to get the actual framework completed, and no doubt with that will be an implementation plan about how we roll out that training and support.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Is coercive control captured in this framework?

ANNE CAMPBELL: It will be, yes.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Ms White, perhaps a question for you. You're Cabinet Office?

GILLIAN WHITE: Yes.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: If Cabinet Office sought legal advice about a Cabinet matter, who would they normally get that advice from?

GILLIAN WHITE: In respect of Cabinet confidentiality or those associated issues?

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Yes.

GILLIAN WHITE: It would depend on the context, but obviously we have a legal section and general counsel within the Cabinet Office. They are often the appropriate port of call. It is pretty context dependent, but that would often be the starting point.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: How often would you brief out to the DPP?

GILLIAN WHITE: In respect to that question, yes. When the Minister and Mr Tidball were speaking about that earlier, it was in respect of the fact that, in relation to Molly Ticehurst, there's obviously criminal proceedings on foot. It's not so much the specifics of the Cabinet discussion. It is about ensuring that there's not too much public discussion about matters that might relate to a criminal proceeding.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: It must be certainly not unusual, though, for there to be public policy discussions about policy issues which arise from a particular incident which may also be the subject of criminal charges.

GILLIAN WHITE: In general, of course. Within broad Justice portfolios and with Mr Tidball's other portfolio hats on, there's a range of stakeholder consultations. There are formal groups and then, obviously, specific discussions on a range of matters. In respect of Molly Ticehurst, that tragic death was sort of a galvanising moment for the State. In fact, I think it also galvanised the Prime Minister for a particular focus along with some other tragic instances. I think at those certain times there is another impetus for further work— not that we need further impetus when it comes to the tragedy of domestic and family violence. In the intro this morning, I should have explained that the reason why I'm here specifically today is that Women NSW is a specific portfolio that— in terms of the women's strategy and those things—was previously under the Premier's Department. The decision was made for this financial year to move those specific programmatic and gender functions to my area in the Cabinet Office, which I was delighted by. That's the reason why I'm here today, as well as obviously supporting the Premier in the Premier's estimates.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: The Premier's Department and the Cabinet Office—the Premier has responsibility for both of those entities?

GILLIAN WHITE: Correct.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: So the Premier is the Minister responsible for anything that happens in the Cabinet Office?

GILLIAN WHITE: Yes. We often call it a sister agency relationship. The Secretary of the Premier's Department and the Secretary of the Cabinet Office both report to the Premier and regularly brief him as to both the Premier's Department and the Cabinet Office teams.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Returning to the earlier discussion in relation to Ms Ticehurst and the review, and the need to ensure that there is a fair trial for the accused, the Minister this morning indicated that a Government response to that incident was the suite of bail laws, electronic monitoring and magistrates rather than registrars deciding bail matters, which was rolled out. There doesn't appear to have been any government sensitivity about discussing those matters very broadly or about issuing a number of press releases about those, even though the Minister indicated that it was entirely predicated and, in fact, spurred on by the tragic incident at Forbes. Yet this review is somehow not available to be discussed. I don't understand the difference.

GILLIAN WHITE: What I would say is the difference is that those were broad policy decisions to make changes to law and budget settings, whereas the specific review that you're referring to looked at a set of support services that Ms Ticehurst was offered. So it's more specific to her particular case.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Except the Minister's words in Parliament were very clear that the purpose of that review was essentially to see if those support services had worked or not and, if they had not, how they could be adjusted to support other women in future. I don't know, because we don't know the results of that

review. If the review disclosed that there were support services that had not worked, for whatever reason, when will they be recalibrated to protect the women of New South Wales?

GILLIAN WHITE: I think Mr Tidball—or perhaps it was the Minister—referred to a taskforce that we have established. That is co-chaired by Mr Tidball and the secretary—my boss—at the Cabinet Office, Kate Boyd. The purpose of that forum, as the Minister spoke to, is both focusing on the delivery and implementation of the budget package but, more broadly, looking at opportunities for systemic reform in domestic and family violence. That's the kind of forum, feeding into the Ministers, where if there was further reform to be had, it could be progressed.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: This taskforce has responsibility for electronic monitoring?

GILLIAN WHITE: We actually have a separate group that has been put together to work through the quite specific detail of that.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: What's the relationship of that taskforce to the one that you've just described?

GILLIAN WHITE: There would be updates provided to the broader DV taskforce but, because of the specific mechanics that needed to be worked through on electronic monitoring, we also have a very focused additional group.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: So we've got a DV taskforce, and we've got, related on one side, an electronic monitoring taskforce?

GILLIAN WHITE: Correct.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: They're both under the purview of the Cabinet Office?

GILLIAN WHITE: As I said, the domestic violence taskforce is co-chaired by the Secretary of DCJ and the Secretary of the Cabinet Office. The electronic monitoring taskforce is chaired by the Cabinet Office, but with senior representation of police, Corrections, the justice area of DCJ, Hannah—a variety of different relevant parties.

MICHAEL TIDBALL: In relation to the domestic and family violence taskforce, its role in bringing together heads of key government agencies has probably three components. One is to drive whole-of-government implementation of the Government's immediate domestic and family violence commitments. Secondly, it is to enhance agency coordination of domestic and family violence responses. Thirdly, it is to build on and connect the Government's reform agenda to existing State and national efforts on domestic and family violence, and child and family wellbeing. I would supplement my response by also adding that, clearly, where you have different taskforces doing work, they need to be talking to each other. There need to be bridges between those taskforces. We're very careful to ensure that that, indeed, happens.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: The taskforce you've just described has magistrates?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: No.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Who is responsible for implementation of magistrates hearing bail matters, then? Is that another taskforce?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: No. In relation to those various DV initiatives being implemented from the package—

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: And one of the DV initiatives was that bail matters would be heard by magistrates.

MICHAEL TIDBALL: Correct. For example, Deputy Secretary Paul McKnight from DCJ, who is very close to that work, attends. Similarly, I am very close to that work in relation to—

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Sorry, what does Mr McKnight attend?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: He attends this taskforce to communicate with it and remain briefed on matters relevant to—

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Sorry, who is responsible for making sure that magistrates make bail decisions?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: The Department of Communities and Justice, working with the Attorney, is working to implement the arrangements whereby registrars will no longer make bail decisions but those decisions

will be made by magistrates. There is an implementation plan being worked on by DCJ to, as I said in my evidence this morning, ensure that occurs by the end of 2024.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I understood from police that they were part of the working group associated with that.

MICHAEL TIDBALL: Yes, that is correct.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Where is police in terms of the DCJ taskforce that's doing this?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: There is very close and tight coordination with police in all of these activities. We are talking constantly.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Do I understand this: There is a domestic and family violence taskforce?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: Yes.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: And there is an AG's magistrates taskforce that has conversations with the police? And there is a separate electronic monitoring taskforce? Is this what's happening in this space?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: I'm just looking at Ms White. That's effectively—that's pretty close.

GILLIAN WHITE: Yes. Do you have a taskforce for the magistrate one?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: No, we don't have a taskforce.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: This is not a taskforce.

GILLIAN WHITE: That's just coordinated work.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: What do we call the Attorney General's magistrates? What do we call this?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: Well, there is coordination.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: We call this Mr McKnight's work, do we?

GILLIAN WHITE: It's just a body of work that's being—

MICHAEL TIDBALL: It's a significant piece of work.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: So this is Mr McKnight and the police.

MICHAEL TIDBALL: Yes.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: And you are across this. What work then is left in terms of implementation of the Government's current DV plan for this central taskforce to be doing?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: I've indicated the three heads of work that it has done.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: One of those heads was implementation of the Government's policy. The policy was to change the threshold for bail for show cause. That has been done. Magistrates don't sit in this taskforce. Electronic monitoring doesn't sit in this taskforce.

MICHAEL TIDBALL: Can I also indicate that a significant body of work being overseen, Ms Carter, by that group as well is in implementation of the Government's funding package.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: What is that funding for? That's for the workers that haven't been employed yet?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: No, that's—

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Who's supervising that work?

ANNE CAMPBELL: That taskforce, the \$246 million.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: This taskforce is implementing the Commonwealth funding?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: No, the New South Wales package.

ANNE CAMPBELL: The emergency package.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: This is the New South Wales funding.

ANNE CAMPBELL: Correct.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Where do I put the body that's implementing the 118 workers funded by the Commonwealth?

ANNE CAMPBELL: That's overseen by the taskforce as well.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: So this is also that 118.

ANNE CAMPBELL: Yes. It includes also the response by New South Wales to the National Cabinet. So it's informing a whole-of-government position.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Where do we put whatever Cabinet decided about the Molly Ticehurst review? Where do we put that?

ANNE CAMPBELL: That was a review undertaken, as Ms White said, by the Cabinet Office.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: And Ms White said that if there was work that was coming out of that, it would be looked at in this.

GILLIAN WHITE: If there were broader policy issues to be raised, that would be absolutely appropriate because, Ms Carter, what we're speaking about is—that taskforce is about whole-of-government coordination of both implementation of current budget initiatives and any deliberations about what else government should do. For example, we spoke before about the primary prevention strategy, and that would be a topic of discussion amongst that taskforce. What's the evidence base around primary prevention? What more should we be doing? What are the opportunities? Or perhaps some of the other matters today raised in terms of workforce or specific issues. Basically, we try to do the best version of whole-of-government coordination to get the best advice to government on policy and budget settings, but then specific issues of particular areas of implementation would either be just dealt with as day-to-day business of DCJ or have other coordination mechanisms, like EM.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: So the work of this central taskforce.

GILLIAN WHITE: Yes.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Which Minister takes this to Cabinet?

ANNE CAMPBELL: It's the Premier and the Minister for Prevention of Domestic and Sexual Violence.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: As between the two of them, who has ultimate responsibility, or do they share it? Does it ever fall between two stools, I suppose, is what I'm asking.

ANNE CAMPBELL: Not in my experience.

GILLIAN WHITE: No. I think we would say that it's really helpful when you get agencies collaborating effectively together. We've had discussions today about how there is always the risk of things falling through the cracks if there isn't that effective communication. These forums are an opportunity for people to share their inputs. Occasionally, in government—it's a very big place—you do have the "Aha!" moment of realising, actually, we could work better together on those issues. It's precisely for that purpose that we have forums like this.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Who takes electronic monitoring to Cabinet?

GILLIAN WHITE: In terms of the responsibilities, I think Mr Tidball referred to it in his evidence earlier. We formed a taskforce group specifically on that because the State of New South Wales had never electronically monitored in this context before. It was a new policy position, so we needed to get the right combinations of agencies together to work out what was the best approach to implementation. As discussed previously, that's being finalised.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: With respect, Ms White, you'll appreciate that this looks like a lot of taskforces but no Minister actually taking responsibility to implement Government policy. With respect, a lot of these things that were urgent matters for women's safety are taking month after month. It is very hard to understand what is being done by this Government to urgently protect women.

GILLIAN WHITE: I note your comment. I'd just add one extra point, which is that in a complex area of policy, it's very ordinary for there to be a range of ministerial responsibilities and different legislative accountabilities. We would consider it quite normal, in a package of supports for domestic and family violence, that there would be specific areas of responsibility for the Attorney General to take forward, specific areas for police and specific areas where Minister Harrison would play the leadership and coordination role. That's what we're seeking to do and, at an officials level, to support the range of Ministers so that they can use the levers that they have in their portfolios and their legislative responsibilities.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: So it was 11 months before a single contract for a domestic violence worker was put out to tender. There is no actual date for electronic monitoring, and legislation passed months ago.

MICHAEL TIDBALL: No, I—

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Can you say, "Electronic monitoring will be in force on the X of the X"?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: I, in my evidence this morning, indicated—

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Which date was it?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: I said early during the month of October.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: With respect, Mr Tidball, you can't say the first or the fifteenth or the thirtieth. With respect—

The Hon. MARK BUTTIGIEG: Point of order: The question has asked for a specific time frame. The secretary of the department has given a month, and you're persisting now with the political point of zeroing in on a date. I think it's highly unfair. The question has been answered thoroughly, and you should move on.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: To the point of order: The question was actually for a date, not a time frame.

The Hon. MARK BUTTIGIEG: A date can be a month or a day in a month. They've given as accurate a date as possible, and you're now pressing a political point based on the nuances of which day in the month.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: I uphold the point of order and also remind the member that witnesses can answer the questions as they see fit.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I think I have made the point. The Cabinet review into the interactions with government services leading up to Ms Ticehurst's death seemed to take a couple of months. Is that the normal time frame for this type of review? Ms White or Mr Tidball, who could help me with that?

GILLIAN WHITE: One observation I would make is that often in various forms of public inquiries, whether they are independent or undertaken by government, there would be reviews undertaken on specifics and broader policy. This was a reasonably specific one, so it seems like a reasonable time frame. As you've noted, these are complex issues, so they can be given longer or shorter time periods, honestly, depending on the context.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Just so I'm clear, if there was any work which flowed from that review which suggested that certain agencies could have functioned better or there could have been better communication, that would be undertaken by the overarching working group that Mr Tidball convenes. Is that correct?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: Yes, I would anticipate so. I can't recall whether we've actually called out, Ms Carter, the members of the taskforce. It's co-chaired by myself and Kate Boyd, the Secretary of the Cabinet Office, but also with the secretaries of Health and Education and the police commissioner as members as well. That is a pretty senior and critical group of leaders from across government.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: How often does the taskforce meet?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: I believe monthly.

GILLIAN WHITE: Monthly, and I think we're up to either our third or fourth meeting.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: When was it established?

GILLIAN WHITE: I'd have to take the exact date on notice. Either May or June.

MICHAEL TIDBALL: We'd be happy to do that, Ms Carter.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Who sets the agenda for the meetings?

GILLIAN WHITE: I have a team member who provides the secretariat support for the two secretaries, and that's done as a collaborative process. We have actions arising from the last meeting that might form the agenda. We take advice from DCJ as well.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: You may not be able to satisfy me here. I understand that if there was a specific issue about the review that would go to the guilt or innocence of the person who has been accused of the murder, discussion of that may prejudice the trial. But how can discussion of policy matters and interaction with government agencies of a person who is now deceased influence the outcome of a criminal trial?

GILLIAN WHITE: I think, overall, constantly in government we are looking at service mapping and journey mapping of how to reduce any gaps and think about the best service response to people. At that broad

level, Ms Carter, it will be factored into all of our deliberations. But the specifics of this review were quite focused, and so it is not being shared widely within government, let alone externally, while criminal proceedings are on foot. I think that's all we can really say at this stage.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I remain confused by that, I must say. Will that change if the accused opts for a judge-alone trial?

GILLIAN WHITE: I would have to take that on notice.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Will the report be made public eventually?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: This morning I indicated that is the intention, yes.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: I go back to some seniors questions to start. In relation to Seniors Card holders, do you have the number of people that hold a Seniors Card?

ANNE CAMPBELL: There are approximately 1.97 million Seniors Card and Senior Savers members in New South Wales.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Is it possible to get a breakdown by postcode?

ANNE CAMPBELL: I'm happy to take that on notice. I don't have that with me today.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Just to clarify, the Ageing Well in NSW plan—is that being reviewed and announced next year?

ANNE CAMPBELL: Yes, that's my understanding.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: But you don't have a date or a time frame?

ANNE CAMPBELL: I probably do in here, so I might be able to come back in a sec.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Also, how many new businesses have registered for the Seniors Card for 2024?

ANNE CAMPBELL: Seniors Card members have direct access to online discounts and benefits from more than 3,000 participating businesses across the State, and from legacy businesses that accept the card at the point of sale.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Do you know what the figure was for 2023?

ANNE CAMPBELL: I think it was similar, but I'm happy to take that on notice.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Do you also, then, have a breakdown of the types of businesses, and by location or postcode?

ANNE CAMPBELL: I'd need to take that on notice. I'm not sure how easy that is to get because some businesses operate across the State and may be in every geography. Others only work in specific locations.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: That's fine. The next one you might need to take on notice as well—in relation to the Young Carer Awareness Training and information sessions that were held over the 2023-24 period.

ANNE CAMPBELL: I'll take that on notice.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: And how many were located in schools and universities?

ANNE CAMPBELL: I'll take that on notice too.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: The other one is the carer employment program and the level of accreditation for DCJ.

ANNE CAMPBELL: I'd need to take that on notice. I know we do have policies for staff members who are carers, but I'm happy to take that one on notice.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: That's fine. In relation to the Homelessness Innovation Fund that was announced yesterday, I note that DVNSW was there as well. I'm wondering whether or not there has been an allocation of funds that will go to support older women and also for domestic violence victims.

ANNE CAMPBELL: I'm happy to take that on notice. It's obviously under Minister Jackson's portfolio, but we can come back to you.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: I move to a couple of questions for Ms McKenzie. In relation to the literature review that I asked the Minister about this morning, I was wondering whether or not you'd presented those findings to the Minister or her office.

KATHRYN McKENZIE: That's a piece of work that was actually done a little while back. We've just published the literature review, and also the research report that accompanies it, this year. I'd have to take that on notice to see whether the previous commissioner had discussed that with the Minister.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: That's fine. In it, I found that it was basically saying that there needs to be additional early intervention and supports that are needed for carers to prevent abuse. I want to know if you could elaborate on some of those findings and what the recommendations are, particularly for early intervention and then additional supports.

KATHRYN McKENZIE: There were a range of things that actually came out of that key research, ranging from—in some areas—inadequate support for family carers being a factor in relation to abuse of adults with disability and older people, but also a range of factors like some carers not being aware that their behaviour would constitute abuse or could be viewed through the lens of abuse, or carers not being aware of services that are available to them. We partnered with UNSW for the literature review and the research report, but also Carers NSW, for key aspects of the project. The parts where they assisted were the consultation with family carers themselves to inform the recommendations, but Carers NSW also provided us with their recommendations about what would be helpful for assisting carers in relation to a range of the findings that had come from that research. One of the things that we have done, on the advice of Carers NSW, in terms of development of resources or information for carers, is really to leverage as much as possible off the existing suite of programs and resources that Carers NSW has. Carers NSW is one of a number of agencies, for example, that provide carer support through funding from the Commonwealth and also through New South Wales Government.

Part of the piece that we've been working on is some upskilling for ADC staff around understanding the points at which—when we're having conversations with family carers—one, how best to have those conversations to assist carers to be more likely to take up support, as well as to appreciate the support that's available; the assistance that we can provide indirectly linking people to the supports that are available; and ADC staff, as well as service providers working with adults with disability and older people, better recognising signs of carer stress to be able to provide that early intervention and support to maximise the likelihood that, one, we're recognising that carer stress as a factor that may be contributing to abuse, and seeking to reduce those risks in order to get a better outcome for the individuals that we're assisting.

There's a number of strategies off the back of the work that Carers NSW has done with us in this space that are still being implemented—training modules for the ADC and also for service providers working with families, a number of resources designed to better illustrate indicators of carer stress—for our own staff, but also for us to use directly with carers, because a range of carers, as you may appreciate, don't necessarily recognise carer stress themselves or signs of carer stress in order to know when they need to reach out or that assistance would be useful. We've also, with the assistance of Carers NSW, developed some resources for carers directly about working with the ADC, again with a view to improving the success of some of that early intervention approach where the ADC is involved, and improving the likelihood that carers would be prepared to accept support or assist us to take a more supportive approach in response to the reports that we receive.

There's a number of other continuing pieces of work that Carers NSW are doing, still in relation to our project, but linked to other projects that they've got going—one, for example, that relates to restrictive practices. One of the things that came out of the research was—and links to the point that I made earlier about some carers not recognising that their actions or behaviours could be considered to be abuse—is the use of restrictive practices by a range of family carers, in some cases deliberate, but in a range of cases also just not knowing where else they get that support and responding in a way that they have found to be effective in addressing some of the behaviour concerns, and for them to provide support to the adult with disability or older person. There's a piece of work that's happening at the moment to look at how do we and Carers NSW best assist carers, in a very simple way, to understand what restrictive practices are—what that looks like and what the alternatives are, so where support is available, again, from a prevention lens but also in terms of that early intervention and support for carers.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: In relation to that research or any additional research, do you have a breakdown by age for carers? Whether it's adult or young carers—did it go into that level of detail?

KATHRYN McKENZIE: I have to take that on—it's a little while since I looked at the research report. There is quite a bit of detail in there. The area that that would be affected by—sorry, while I'm thinking of it, it's obviously reliant on the extent to which we've captured that data in our system. I know that our data in relation to the age of the adult with disability or older person is pretty good, but we don't always necessarily capture the age of what we call the subject of allegation. I can take that on notice and come back to you.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: That would be great. In relation to voluntary assisted dying, are you doing or have you done any further research into that, particularly the 70- to 79-year-old cohort that was referred to this morning?

KATHRYN McKENZIE: No. I appreciate the information that was provided. That's helpful for informing some of the work that we do. At this stage, in relation to voluntary assisted dying, we've got on our website information that we've put out to let the community know about matters that would be potentially reports to the ADC, that would fit within our jurisdiction and the scope of our legislation, and provide some examples of those, but also to provide some guidance about how we would respond to those reports. We would treat them like we do any other matter that comes in to us that relates, for example, to alleged coercion or undue influence of the older person or adult with disability.

If the allegations relate to paid staff, then our responsibility would be to get it to the agency that has responsibility for responding to those matters. If they involve criminal allegations, we would refer them to police like we do other matters that we receive. We focus primarily on allegations involving family members, informal carers and community members. Critically, like we do with all our other matters, our focus would be on understanding the views and wishes of the older person or adult with disability—the person at the centre of the matter.

We've put out information on essentially that: the types of matters that would be appropriate or that certainly the ADC could consider, how we would respond to those matters, and also to provide some key information about the central point that NSW Health has established to provide guidance to anyone, really, in relation to voluntary assisted dying. We have provided information also to that central point in NSW Health about our role and the types of matters that may be appropriate to provide to us. But at this stage that's been the extent of our work in this space. It's been a good prompt for me to have a look at—I'm not aware that we've actually received any reports relating to voluntary assisted dying, but we will have a look at them.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: In relation to the calls that you've received and any complaints that are made, what have been the areas or the trends for this year, in particular? Has there been a change from last year?

KATHRYN McKENZIE: The interesting thing about the data, particularly relating to reports about abuse and neglect and exploitation of adults with disability and older people, is there's a lot of consistency from year to year. One of those key areas of consistency has been the growth. We have, year on year, increase in demand—not just calls, but in the number of reports. One of the things that we are seeing that is not obviously reflected in just the data points is that the nature of the reports that we're receiving increasingly are about higher risk matters. There's an increasing proportion of the reports that we're receiving that are being handled by our community supports and investigations area.

Still the majority of the reports we receive are dealt with solely by our helpline providing information, support, advice, linking people to supports, but an increasing volume are going across to our community supports and investigations area, which does the more intensive and longer areas of work, which creates its own pressures. The increasing proportion of reports involving high-risk are, obviously, presenting some challenges for us in responding. One of the things that we have been particularly highlighting more recently is, I think—historically and still to a large extent—the case that abuse of older people is seen through the lens of elder abuse and abuse of adults with disability as abuse of people with disability, when, in fact, the majority of the reports that we are dealing with are domestic and family violence matters, but it's referred to as elder abuse and abuse of—it's actually not adequately recognised as involving domestic and family violence.

There's a disconnect on how some of the reports that we're handling are seen. We're seeking to improve some of our own communications on that to give better light to that. A key area for us that is actually endemic throughout our reports is coercive control—primarily, obviously, in a family context, because that's where the majority of reports that we deal with are centred, but also in intimate partner relationships. Around 14 per cent of the reports that we receive relate to abuse by spouses and intimate partners. We've done a lot of work as part of the coercive control reference group, but also just as part of the ADC. We've done a lot of work in the lead-up to the offence to try to increase the awareness of coercive control in our populations and to upskill also police and justice agencies about recognising not just coercive control, but how that plays out for our cohorts.

While many of the features are in common with coercive control for the broader population and obviously women, there are some particular additional features in relation to older women and women with disability. That's a continuing piece of work for us. But those trends aren't necessarily reflected—we don't have a specific form of abuse that we label as coercive control. It goes across. It obviously comprises a whole range of different forms of abuse. But the trends in relation to the reports that we receive are largely really consistent, including a heavy kind

of gender feature in relation to older people—that consistently about two-thirds of the reports that we receive about older people are about abuse of older women.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Just on the domestic and family violence, do you have the ability to split that data to say these actually should be treated as domestic and family violence? What's the process, then, to ensure that it's being addressed appropriately from a policy perspective?

KATHRYN McKENZIE: We've just been fortunate to engage a data analyst, who is going to be able to do much more sophisticated things with the data than what I personally am able to do. We know that the data that we hold is quite unique data, not just in New South Wales but also in Australia, and that it's really rich data. We report very consistent data points at the moment, but there's a lot of information. There's a lot more that we can be doing with our data and that we will start doing over the next year. That's one of the areas for us, I think: our own communication about the fact that actually a majority of these are domestic and family violence. There's a piece there for us to do, exactly as you have pointed to, which is to pull out of those matters. For us, the majority of them are that, so it's really pulling out the ones that are subtly different to that, that occur in a slightly different context.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: The other thing is in relation to where there's been an increase in complaints by geography. Are there any particular areas that there's been a spike?

KATHRYN McKENZIE: Yes. There's a piece of work that we have done previously, where we used our data over a three-year period, 2020 to 2022, and broke that down by LGA and did what we call community profiles. They're available on our website. We put out data reports that highlighted, for this particular LGA—or if the numbers were too low, across the region—this is the number of reports, and breaking that down by the proportion relating to older people, gender, Aboriginal and multicultural community status, and also linking that to what the census data say about the population in that LGA.

We just released our five-year data overall recently and we're just about to start that work to refresh those community profiles to reflect the data over that five-year period. It helps us in conversations, obviously, with local councils and those local communities around—as this Committee may be aware, we support, at the moment, 19 local community abuse prevention collaboratives, which are essentially inter-agencies that exist in local communities. That data—breaking it down by LGA—assists us to better understand where there's under-reporting, where there's a high proportion of reports and areas that may lend themselves to having an abuse prevention collaborative established that we can work with council and local health services on.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Do you have a time frame for the data that you're crossing over from your five-year to be more current. What's the time frame for that to be released?

KATHRYN McKENZIE: For the community profiles?

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: Yes.

KATHRYN McKENZIE: We're just about to start it, so certainly before the end of the year that data will be available. It'll be public. It'll be on our website.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Ms Campbell, this may be a question you can help me with, talking about longer time frames for funding. The Aboriginal Women's Advisory Network, I understand, was established two years ago. It works to improve the safety and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children. They're an initiative to support the Closing the Gap target 13. They currently receive short-term funding. Do you know if there's any opportunity for them to receive longer term funding to support the work they do?

ANNE CAMPBELL: They're being funded under the national partnership agreement. As I said earlier, that's typically been either one year or two years. That's where they've been funded through. Given the decision from National Cabinet last week, we're hopeful with a longer term funding agreement. Under the national partnership agreement, we'll be looking at all the services that are funded through that particular thing.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: The work that flows out of National Cabinet, that comes under the purview of your working group, does it, Mr Tidball?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: Yes.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: With respect to that, are you able to indicate whether all the members have been able to attend all of the meetings so far?

MICHAEL TIDBALL: Yes, I believe—I'm just thinking.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I understand; I can't remember what I did yesterday some days.

MICHAEL TIDBALL: I can remember where I've been. I'm just speaking on behalf of—looking around the room.

GILLIAN WHITE: I think that there's been a couple of occasions where a formal delegate has been provided but both the chairs have been at each meeting.

MICHAEL TIDBALL: I and Ms Boyd have certainly been at each meeting, yes.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: A question in relation to women and children with disability flowing from the disability royal commission. Has any consideration been given to broadening legislative definitions of family and domestic violence—picking up what Ms McKenzie was raising, in a sense—to include relationships in which people with disability experience family and domestic violence, which would include carer and support worker relationships, disability-based violence and abuse in all domestic settings, including supported accommodation such as group homes, respite centres and boarding houses. Has any thought or work been done around this?

ANNE CAMPBELL: I'm sure there's been a lot of thought around it. I'd need take on notice the specific response to that.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I would be very interested in the response because I completely understand why this would be appropriate, but you also don't want to dilute definitions either. I would be very interested with the response. I understand the centre in the south-west that we were talking about before, the contract is with Settlement International, I believe?

ANNE CAMPBELL: Settlement Services.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Is that the only place or service that focuses on domestic violence services for CALD and multicultural communities, or are there other services?

ANNE CAMPBELL: There would be other services.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Would you be able to, on notice, provide a list of what those services were and where they were located?

ANNE CAMPBELL: Yes, happy to.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: That would be great. Thank you very much. If I could, for clarity, circle back to an issue we were discussing this morning in relation to who's doing what work. Ms White, I understand that the Premier in the Cabinet Office has a taskforce that's looking at LGBTIQ+ issues and sport. Is that right?

GILLIAN WHITE: I think what the Minister was covering is that under the Premier's Department they're establishing an LGBTIQ+ advisory council. There's been an expression of interest processed that has recently been closed and they're working through the membership of that. That group will be tasked with providing advice and input on inclusive practice and inclusion strategy. In respect to some of your questions—

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: In sport or more broadly?

GILLIAN WHITE: More broadly, an overall approach. In your question you were asking specifically about sports issues, I don't have direct evidence on the Office of Sport programs or work, but the Minister provided advice that there was some specific analysis by the Office of Sport.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Are you or is somebody else able to take on notice—I think this is a difficult question, but it's a question that the community is asking us to think deeply about and provide appropriate frameworks—is there a consultative group of cisgender women that would feed into this policy-making process as well?

GILLIAN WHITE: What I spoke about earlier today was that the Minister also has a women's council and that has a diverse representation including cis women, as well as a range of representatives including CALD and Aboriginal representation. That group has a wide scope in the context of the women's strategy and key priorities in respect of women and gender.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I guess what I'm really asking is, is there anybody who's pulling all the voices together to try and work through this issue so that we can develop strategies where, as the Minister indicated, all women feel safe, because it's clear that at the moment not all women feel safe at all times. If we can develop those strategies, I'm wondering who, if anybody, is responsible for that work?

TANYA SMYTH: The Women's Advisory Council has developed a strategic plan. They went through quite a rigorous process of that and came up with probably 100 priorities they wanted to get through in the first year. This issue was not raised. In my time of five years as Director of Women NSW, we have received

campaign-type representations about this issue, but I cannot recall an individual making contact about a specific issue that they felt unsafe about or about sport, whether it was feeling unsafe playing against a trans person or feeling that they hadn't placed or won something because they were playing against a trans person. We don't have representations about this issue.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: So you're saying you don't believe that this is an issue?

TANYA SMYTH: No, I believe that people are saying they feel unsafe but I'm not getting any individual issues about specific matters that we can work through.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Would you have any information about the age bands of people who contact you about issues?

TANYA SMYTH: The majority of issues raised with us are about women's safety. It's specifically domestic and family violence, issues around employment and issues about starting a business. They're the sort of issues that we get representations about.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: This seems to be an issue, in my experience—a small sample space, admittedly—of great concern for young women in the 16-to-24 age group. I'm wondering whether that's a demographic that thinks to reach out to you. I'm wondering, how active are you in the social media channels that they use, advising that they can reach out to you about these issues?

TANYA SMYTH: We use Instagram. Women NSW has, traditionally, Facebook, which is an older audience. But we do use Instagram. When we consulted on the Women's Strategy we were very specific about ensuring that we connected with young women. Again, this definitely didn't come up as a top issue.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Am I correct to summarise that because this hasn't been flagged and because there is—I think you said 100 priorities?

TANYA SMYTH: No, I was saying they probably could have worked through 100 if we'd let them. I suppose what I'm saying is, of all of the issues that come to us, there are a staggering amount of issues to work through, and this hasn't come up as a significant priority.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Therefore there is a group within the Cabinet Office that will be informing the Premier about inclusivity for LGBTIQ+, but there isn't a group that will be speaking on behalf of cisgender women in the same space?

TANYA SMYTH: I don't think there is a group that will just be talking from the perspective of women who were born women, biologically. No.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: If we are going to have a real conversation about these issues, don't we need that?

TANYA SMYTH: I suppose that is what I am saying: It hasn't come up, or it's not coming to me as an issue or to Women NSW as something that we need to deal with immediately, or that there is a high priority to deal with this matter.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I entirely accept that advice. I find it intriguing, given what is coming to me. Thank you.

TANYA SMYTH: I'm happy, if you've got any specific issues, for those to be passed on for us to look at.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Thank you for that invitation.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: In relation to the definition of "domestic setting" for domestic and family violence, does that include group homes, respite centres and boarding houses?

ANNE CAMPBELL: I'd need to take that on notice to give you a 100 per cent accurate answer.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: That's fine. I think the rest can be done on supplementary. Crossbench have also finished their questions for the afternoon. Any questions from Government members?

The Hon. MARK BUTTIGIEG: No, I think we are all good. Thank you.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES: That concludes the hearing for this portfolio. Thank you very much, again, for coming. A number of you have appeared at a number of hearings, so thank you very much for doing so.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

The Committee proceeded to deliberate.