



VICTORIA POLICE

POLICING HARM, UPHOLDING THE RIGHT:

VICTORIA POLICE STRATEGY FOR FAMILY
VIOLENCE, SEXUAL OFFENCES AND
CHILD ABUSE 2018-2023





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MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER



ON BEHALF OF VICTORIA POLICE, I AM PROUD TO PRESENT OUR VISION AND PLAN FOR THE NEXT PHASE OF REFORM TO ADDRESS THE SIGNIFICANT HARM CAUSED TO VICTORIAN COMMUNITIES BY PERPETRATORS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE, SEXUAL OFFENCES AND CHILD ABUSE.

This strategy reflects our ongoing commitment to reducing the prevalence of these crimes in our community and the harm caused to victims.

Victoria Police has come a long way in developing its responses to these crimes.

In the last 15 years we have made significant progress in improving our approaches. We have also been much more focused on raising community awareness about these crimes and challenging attitudes supporting violence.

We have undergone significant organisational change to place victims at the centre of our understanding and our service delivery, particularly in relation to violence against women and children.

While we are proud of what we have achieved, there is still more we can do.

This strategy builds on what we have learned so far.

We are committed to continuing to improve how we understand, police and ultimately prevent these crimes, standing alongside our government and sector partners to deliver lasting and wide-reaching change.

The strategy focuses on protecting the safety and wellbeing of all victims. We want to ensure that everyone who experiences these crimes has access to high quality police responses, and these responses meet the varied needs of our richly diverse community, particularly the most vulnerable.

We will also expand our specialist and investigative capability to accurately identify offending, and use enhanced intelligence and technology to identify those posing the greatest threat of harm so that we can intervene before a crime is committed.

We will continue to integrate our responses to family violence, sexual offences and child abuse in recognition of the cumulative harm caused when these crimes are linked or co-occurring.

And we will ensure the safety and wellbeing of Victoria Police employees who are undertaking this important work, or are impacted by these crimes.

I am pleased with the substantial work Victoria Police has already done in reforming our response to family violence, sexual offences and child abuse. But we cannot rest. This strategy sets our direction for the future, and will ensure that we maintain our momentum going forward so that we can help to keep Victorians safe.

Graham Ashton AM
Chief Commissioner

A NOTE ON LANGUAGE

IN LINE WITH THE VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT'S *ENDING FAMILY VIOLENCE: VICTORIA'S PLAN FOR CHANGE* AND THE GENDER EQUALITY STRATEGY *SAFE AND STRONG*, VICTORIA POLICE RECOGNISES THAT AT ITS CORE, FAMILY VIOLENCE IS A DEEPLY GENDERED ISSUE, GROUNDED IN STRUCTURAL INEQUALITIES AND AN IMBALANCE OF POWER BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN, AND ANY GENDERED LANGUAGE USED THROUGHOUT THIS DOCUMENT REFLECTS THIS UNDERSTANDING.

We acknowledge the Victorian Government's use of 'victim survivor' in recognition of the strength and resilience shown by victim survivors, and we recognise the experience of these crimes is only one part of a victim's life and it does not define who they are.

The word family has many different meanings. Our use of the word 'family' is all-encompassing and acknowledges the variety of relationships and structures that can make up a family unit and the range of ways family violence can be experienced, including through family-like or carer relationships.

Throughout this document, the term Aboriginal is used to refer to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Use of the terms 'Koori', 'Koorie' and 'Indigenous' are retained in the names of programs and initiatives and, unless noted otherwise, are inclusive of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Diversity within the Victorian population is increasing as people express multiple forms of identity and belonging. Diverse groups frequently contend with intersectional risks when experiencing family violence, sexual offences and child abuse. Intersectionality describes how characteristics such as gender, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion or age, can interact on multiple levels to create overlapping forms of discrimination and power imbalances which compound the risk of experiencing family violence, sexual offences and child abuse.

We use the term 'perpetrator' to describe people who commit family violence, sexual offences or child abuse. Our aim is to ensure safety, accountability and to end the individual's use of violence and abuse.



REDUCING HARM FROM FAMILY VIOLENCE, SEXUAL OFFENCES AND CHILD ABUSE: OUR COMMITMENT, EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

VICTORIAN COMMUNITIES CONTINUE TO STRUGGLE AGAINST THE HARM CAUSED BY FAMILY VIOLENCE, SEXUAL OFFENCES AND CHILD ABUSE.

Victoria Police forms a key component of a state-wide effort to take action, respond to, and ultimately prevent these crimes.

Victoria Police's role is to ensure a safe, secure and orderly society by serving the community and upholding the law. We do this by preserving the peace, preventing offences, detecting and apprehending offenders, protecting life and property, and helping those in need of assistance.

Police who respond to these crimes not only provide protection for victims at a time of crisis, but, particularly in relation to family violence, are often the first contact that a victim has with the service system.

Police are in a unique position to contribute to the reduction of repeat and escalating offending, having significant interaction with family violence, sexual offences and child abuse perpetrators.

Over the past 15 years, Victoria Police has worked hard to improve the experiences of victims affected by these crimes, and increased our focus on perpetrator accountability. An outline of the key achievements and milestones for police responses to family violence, sexual offences and child abuse is found on page 26.

We have significantly improved the way we understand and respond to these crimes. Through the establishment of Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Investigation Teams (SOCITs), we have developed specialist expertise and understanding of sexual offending and child abuse offences, along with the most effective ways to assist victims through empathy, support and empowerment to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Through the establishment of family violence teams, we have begun to increase our specialist knowledge, skills and experience through integrated responses to family violence, underpinned by expanding our understanding of family violence dynamics including power, control and coercion.

We have built strong relationships, developing integrated responses essential to progressing further change, and we have played a key role in drawing community attention to violence against women and children, and the devastating impact these crimes have on our communities.

This strategy sets out the next stage in Victoria Police's reform agenda. We're building on our progress to date and acting on the intent of the Royal Commission into Family Violence (RCFV)ⁱ and the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (RCIRCSA)ⁱⁱ, driving state and system-wide reform that acknowledges that eliminating these crimes from our community is a shared responsibility.

Significant change is well underway and Victoria Police is strengthening our commitment to ensure there is no place for these crimes in the communities we serve.



CONSULTATION FOR THIS STRATEGY

This strategy is based on extensive consultation within Victoria Police, and with our external partners and stakeholders. It is also informed by the co-design outputs of the Victorian Government's response to the RCFV, and the criminal justice recommendations of the RCIRCSA.

By working collaboratively with our community sector and government partners to implement reform, while responding to emerging evidence and trends, we will improve our understanding, culture and service delivery to successfully contribute to prevention, early intervention and response objectives across the state. In this way, Victoria Police will identify offending, reduce repeat offending and improve community safety.

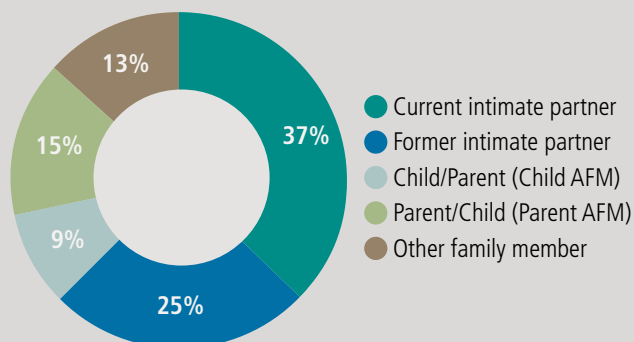
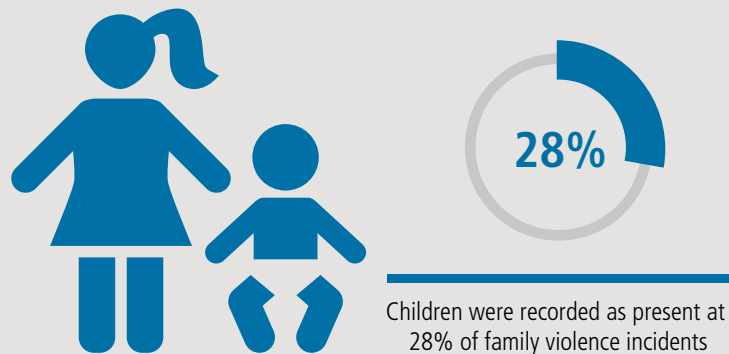
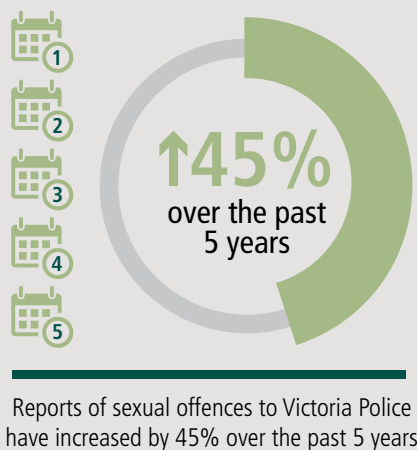
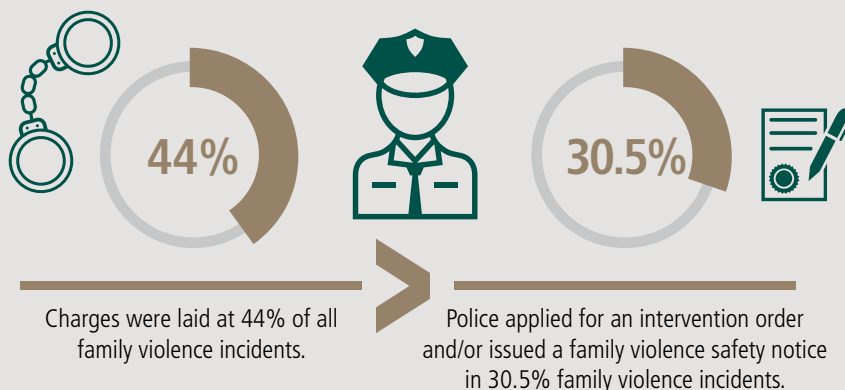
BUILDING ON STRATEGIES TO REDUCE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN

We recognise that these crimes are a violation of human rights. They arise from deeply gendered social and political issues that are grounded in intersectional structural inequalities and an imbalance of power.

Previous Victoria Police strategies have focused on the violence committed against the majority of victims of these crimes – women and children.ⁱⁱⁱ

This strategy builds on our understanding of responding to violence against women and children, and extends to ensure that we serve all victims, also reflecting our understanding that different experiences of these crimes require different responses.

POLICING FAMILY VIOLENCE, SEXUAL OFFENCES AND CHILD ABUSE IN VICTORIA 2016-17

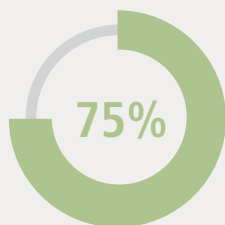




Victoria Police responded to **76,500** family violence-related incidents



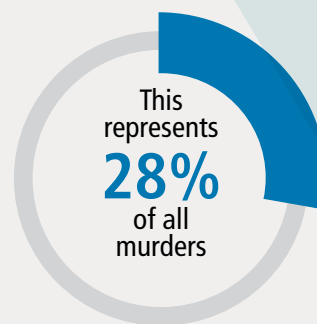
...this means police responded to an incident around **once every 7 minutes**.



Women and girls were the affected family members in 75% of all family violence incidents

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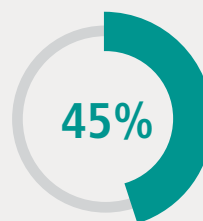
There were 16 family violence-related murders



This represents **28%** of all murders

1,613 (3%) perpetrators responsible

for more than 5 family violence incidents in the year were responsible for over 13% of total incidents.



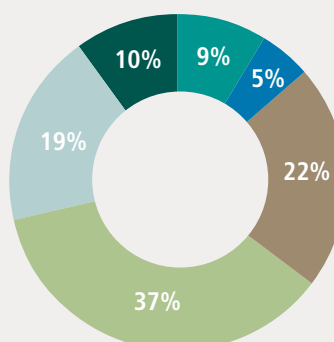
Offences arising from family violence related incidents accounted for 45% of all crimes against the persons

In **71.5%** of reported sex offences,

the offender was known to the victim.

In **35%** of offences,

the offender was a current or former intimate partner, or other family member.



- Current intimate partner
- Former intimate partner
- Other family member
- Known to victim (not family)
- Not known to victim
- Missing or unknown

FAMILY VIOLENCE

Responding to family violence is core business for Victoria Police. Every day and night, across our state, Victoria Police officers respond to family violence incidents – on average about one every seven minutes.

We know that one in four women, and one in thirteen men in Australia has experienced physical or sexual violence from a current or former intimate partner since the age of 15.^{iv}

In 2016–17 there were 53,660 unique victims (referred to as affected family members) recorded by Victoria Police. Overwhelmingly, these victims were women. In the same period, there were 49,995 unique perpetrators, mainly men, recorded (see figures 1 and 2).

A relatively small number of repeat perpetrators are responsible for a disproportionate number of family violence incidents attended by Victoria Police. Perpetrators who had five or more family violence incidents recorded in 2016–17 only made up 3.2 percent of unique perpetrators but accounted for 13.5 percent of all family violence incidents recorded.^v

A concerning number of perpetrators of family violence in 2016–17 were aged 19 years or under. The most common pattern was a male offending against their mother (over a quarter of these incidents); however, female offending against either parent was also represented in this data.^{vi}

Over the past five years, around 7,000 youth perpetrators of family violence were identified each year (see figure 3).

Family violence perpetrated by a child against a parent is less likely to result in the offender being charged with a criminal offence, possibly due to parents being unwilling to pursue investigations against their children, and the limited police options to respond to family violence in these cases.

The Victoria Police response to family violence is governed by the *Code of Practice for the Investigation of Family Violence*. In line with the Code, police responded to 76,500 family violence incidents in 2016–17, issuing 23,303 Family Violence Safety Notices (FVSNs) or applications for Family Violence Intervention Orders (FVIOs), and in 44 percent of these incidents, identifying criminal activity and laying corresponding charges (see figure 4).

FIGURE 1. UNIQUE AFMs RECORDED IN 2016-17 BY AGE AND GENDER (N=53,660)

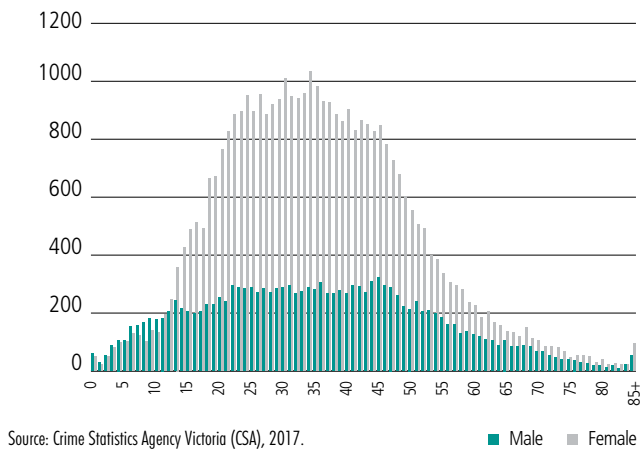


FIGURE 2. UNIQUE PERPETRATORS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE RECORDED IN 2016-17 BY AGE AND GENDER (N=49,995)

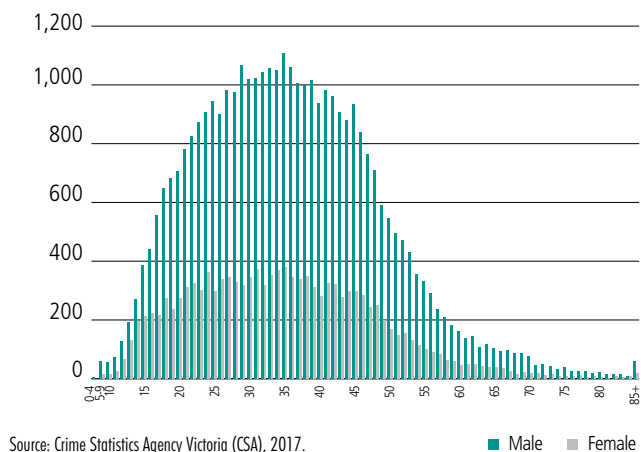


FIGURE 3. YOUTH PERPETRATORS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE RECORDED IN 2016-17 BY AGE AND GENDER (N=7,490)

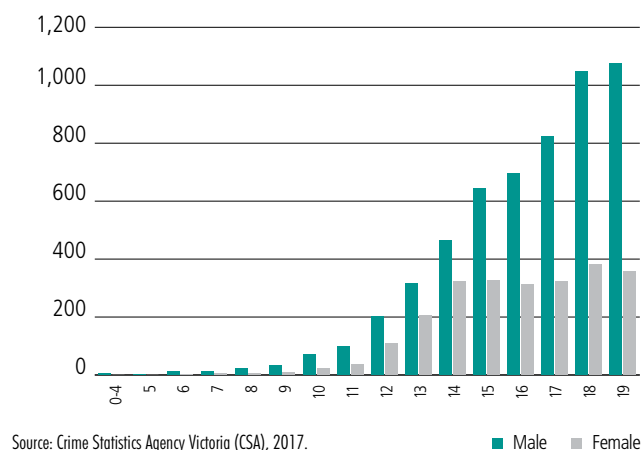


FIGURE 4. FAMILY INCIDENT REPORTS 2012-13 TO 2016-17

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Incidents where either IVO applied for and/or FVSN issued	16,456	19,285	20,731	22,895	23,303
% Incidents where either IVO applied for and/or FVSN issued	27.2%	29.6%	29.2%	29.4%	30.5%
Incidents where charges laid	23,264	28,035	31,094	34,907	33,680
% Incidents where charges laid	38.4%	43.0%	43.9%	44.7%	44.0%
Total family incidents recorded	60,545	65,179	70,902	78,006	76,500

Source: Crime Statistics Agency Victoria (CSA), 2017.

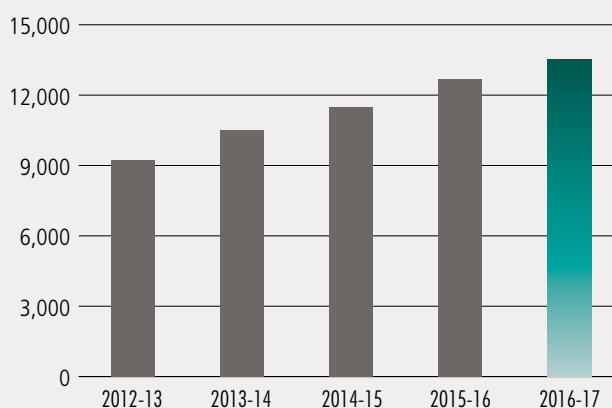
SEXUAL OFFENCES

Over the past year, 13,499 sexual offences were recorded by Victoria Police (see figure 5). Reporting of sexual offences has increased 45 percent over the past five years.^{vii} Rather than signifying an increase in perpetration of such crimes, this is believed to be due to shifting community attitudes towards sexual offending and an increased confidence in the quality of police response.

Despite improvements, sexual offences remain significantly underreported crimes. The Personal Safety Survey^{viii} tells us that over their adult lifetime, 1.7 million women and 428,800 men in Australia have experienced sexual violence. This is approximately one in five women (18.4 percent) and one in twenty men (4.7 percent). However, only one in ten women who have experienced sexual violence reported their most recent sexual assault by a male to the police.^{ix}

In the past, women who were assaulted by a stranger were more likely to report the offence to the police (34.9 percent) than if they were assaulted by a cohabitating partner (20.1 percent) or another known male (14 percent).^x

Women and children face many barriers when reporting to police, particularly when the perpetrator is known to the victim. We must continue to encourage and support victims to come forward.

FIGURE 5. SEXUAL OFFENCES RECORDED FROM 2012-13 TO 2016-17

Source: Crime Statistics Agency Victoria (CSA), 2017.

CHILD ABUSE

Gauging the prevalence of child abuse is difficult as victims may not disclose the abuse for many years, and some may never disclose at all.

Children are unlikely to report abuse while it is occurring, generally disclosing in adulthood.^{xi} The RCIRCSA identified that survivors took an average of 22 years to disclose their abuse after it began.^{xii}

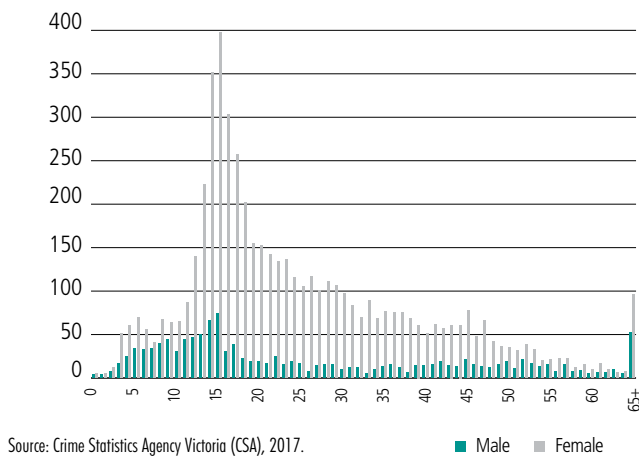
There is evidence to suggest that the relationships between police and the communities they serve, how well police build rapport with children and young people, and how well police manage allegations, all have an impact on reporting rates of child sexual abuse.^{xiii} It is therefore vital that we continue to improve our relationships with individuals, communities and services.

In 2016–17, Victoria Police recorded 6,996 unique victims of sexual offences. Of these, 41.2 percent were children aged under 18 years, 39.3 percent occurring within a family violence context.^{xiv}

Girls aged under 18 years are overrepresented as victims of sexual offences, making up almost a third (32.2 percent) of the unique victims who reported sexual offences in 2016–17. They made up 35.5 percent of victims in sexual offences perpetrated by a family member and 30.4 percent of victims in sexual offences that occurred outside a family context.^{xv}

Witnessing family violence can also affect children and young people as much as if they were the direct victims of such violence, with significant impacts on their development and future outcomes. Children who either witness violence or are subjected to violence themselves are more likely to adhere to violence supportive attitudes, placing children at higher risk of perpetration and victimisation later in life.^{xvi}

FIGURE 6. UNIQUE VICTIMS OF SEXUAL OFFENCES BY AGE AND GENDER, 2016-17 (N=6,996)



UNDERSTANDING THE LINKS BETWEEN FAMILY VIOLENCE, SEXUAL OFFENDING AND CHILD ABUSE

There are distinct links between family violence, sexual offences, and child abuse as many victims experience multiple forms of abuse either concurrently or historically.

In 71.5 percent of sexual offences reported to police in 2016–17, the offender was known to the victim. In over a third of these reports, the offender was either a current or former partner, or another family member.^{xvii}

Children and young people are at particular risk of being victims of family violence-related sexual offences, with a large proportion of victims (45.4 percent) being under 18 years of age. In particular, females under 18 years of age are vulnerable victims of family violence-related sexual offences, accounting for 35.5 percent of victims in 2016–17.^{xviii}

To meet victims' needs there needs to be better integration of family violence and sexual offence responses.

The RCFV recommended improving the immediate collaboration of family violence and sexual offence responses with a view to improved integration state-wide over the next five years.^{xix}

For these reasons, Victoria Police is delivering an integrated strategy that encompasses the work of all areas in the organisation responding to victims and perpetrators of family violence, sexual offences and child abuse, including child sexual exploitation.

WORKING TOGETHER

VICTORIA POLICE IS COMMITTED TO PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION, ENSURING THAT HIGH QUALITY, HOLISTIC RESPONSES SUPPORT IMPROVED OUTCOMES FOR PEOPLE IMPACTED BY FAMILY VIOLENCE, SEXUAL OFFENCES AND CHILD ABUSE.

We understand we cannot achieve these objectives alone. Victoria Police plays an integral role in conjunction with leadership, policy development and service delivery from the community sector, and our partners in government and the broader criminal justice system.

As the agency established to lead the implementation of key family violence reforms, Victoria Police is dedicated to working

closely with Family Safety Victoria on these initiatives, including establishing the Central Information Point, establishing the Centre for Workforce Excellence and 17 Support and Safety Hubs. Along with our government and community sector partners, we will make a significant contribution to system-wide reforms, improving responses and reducing harm from family violence, sexual offences and child abuse.

LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY CONTEXT

There are international, Australian and Victorian policy and legal frameworks that underpin and support Victoria Police's responses to family violence, sexual offences and child abuse.

INTERNATIONAL



- » *United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993)*
- » *United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979)*
- » *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990)*

NATIONAL



- » *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–2022*
- » *National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009–2020*
- » *Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse*

VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT SYSTEM AND LEGISLATIVE REFORMS



- » *Royal Commission into Family Violence (2016)*
- » *Ending Family Violence: Victoria's Plan for Change (The Victorian Government response to the Royal Commission into Family Violence) (2016)*
- » *Safe and Strong: A Victorian Gender Equality Strategy (2016)*
- » *Strong Culture, Strong People, Strong Families, Towards a Safer Future for Indigenous Families and Communities (2008)*
- » *Victorian Government annual Community Safety Statement*

VICTORIA POLICE



- » *Victoria Police Capability Plan 2016–2025: Capability Framework*
- » *Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC) Independent review into sex discrimination and sexual harassment, including predatory behaviour, in Victoria Police (2015)*
- » *Victoria Police Gender Equality Strategy and Action Plan 2017–2020*
- » *Victoria Police Mental Health Strategy and Wellbeing Action Plan 2017–2020*

OUR PLACE IN THE INTEGRATED SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM

Victoria Police responses to these crimes are built on a strong foundation of integrated service delivery and play an integral part in the frontline response to family violence, sexual offences and child abuse.^{xx}

Victoria Police aims to be a practice leader in evidence-based policing in these crime themes locally, nationally and internationally. Whole of government, multidisciplinary, and cross-agency approaches are required to provide holistic support to victims, keep perpetrators accountable and ultimately prevent these crimes.

To support this work and the broader objectives of the integrated service delivery system, Victoria Police relies on and contributes to a range of local collaborative and innovative approaches including Risk Assessment Management Panels (RAMPs), and embedding specialist family violence practitioners within police teams. Multidisciplinary Centres (MDCs) have taken these collaborative practices and co-location to a more established level, focusing on enhanced investigative capacity with the clear objective of providing seamless support to victims and their families who report these serious crimes.

ENHANCING VICTORIA POLICE CAPABILITY

This Strategy defines how we will mature our organisational capabilities to fulfil these responsibilities in line with the *Victoria Police Capability Plan 2016-2025*.^{xxi}

Our Capability Framework describes core capabilities which are delivered directly to the community, including our responses to family violence, sexual offences and child abuse, and our enabling capabilities, such as education, technology and workforce planning and development which support our service delivery.

In 2017 the Victorian Government made a significant investment in Victoria Police under the Community Safety Statement

to mature and maintain our capabilities. This investment, along with internal investment and commitment has enabled commencement of foundational reforms for police responses that will develop during the life of the strategy.

These foundational reforms include:

- » Establishment of a Centre of Learning for Family Violence to deliver tailored career-long education to police
- » Appointment of specialist investigators, analysts and educators
- » Employment of psychologists to support member health and wellbeing in these crime themes
- » Employment of police lawyers to support victims in specialist family violence courts
- » Enhancement of technology and infrastructure to support integrated responses from the frontline operational response through the criminal justice system processes.



THE STRATEGY

THE FOLLOWING SECTION DETAILS THE ORGANISATIONAL VISION, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES, ACTIONS AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES OF *POLICING HARM, UPHOLDING THE RIGHT: VICTORIA POLICE STRATEGY FOR FAMILY VIOLENCE, SEXUAL OFFENCES AND CHILD ABUSE 2018–2023*.

VISION

Our vision is that:

'Victoria Police plays an integral role in reducing, and ultimately preventing the harm caused by perpetrators of family violence, sexual offences and child abuse, by holding perpetrators to account and improving the safety and wellbeing of all victims.'

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

We have set four strategic priorities for reform to achieve our vision:



Each strategic priority has specific objectives to focus our efforts, key actions forming a two-year rolling action plan to further reform, and organisational performance measures to identify trends that will help us assess our progress.

These performance measures will be supported by service delivery indicators at regional, divisional and local levels to support decision makers to effectively review their service delivery.

Our reform agenda over the next five years builds on existing work such as reviewing the *Code of Practice for the Investigation of Family Violence*, and ongoing expansion of practice in multidisciplinary environments. New work will include establishment of new modes of career-long education, and developing contemporary approaches to changing attitudes and outcomes relating to family violence, sexual offences and child abuse.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY ONE: VICTIM SAFETY – SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVES THE SAFETY AND WELLBEING OF VICTIMS



WE AIM TO:

1. Deliver high quality, consistent responses for all Victorians, particularly those with additional vulnerabilities, based on best practice and evidence-based policing.
2. Improve gathering and use of evidence to reduce victim trauma.
3. Take a lead role in improving victim experiences and outcomes in the criminal justice system.
4. Effectively integrate responses through collaboration and co-location of specialist teams within multidisciplinary environments to improve responses.

SO THAT:

- » Victims are safe, and have confidence in police responses to family violence, sexual offences and child abuse.
- » Victims are encouraged to engage and stay engaged with the justice system throughout the process.
- » Responses effectively meet the diverse needs of victims from all Victorian communities, particularly Aboriginal communities.

REFORMING OUR SERVICE DELIVERY TO IMPROVE VICTIM EXPERIENCES AND SAFETY

Victoria Police will continue to prioritise the safety and wellbeing of all victims of family violence, sexual offences and child abuse, providing victim-centric responses that are respectful, effective and based on a deep understanding of how these crimes impact victims across the community.

This understanding will be further developed at all levels of the organisation through significant investment in family violence education from the frontline to specialist and supervisory police roles, and ongoing support for the Whole Story Investigative Framework currently practised by SOCITs.

Victoria Police will mature our specialist investigative capabilities. Our experience in establishing SOCITs has demonstrated that sexual offences and child abuse require a strong focus on investigation management, together with a specialised victim-centric approach that minimises re-traumatisation and helps victims to recover.

The establishment of Family Violence Investigation Units (FVIUs) will bring a similar specialist response to high risk, repeat, escalating, or cold case family violence crime. Trained specialist investigators will understand the complexities of family violence, ensure effective risk assessment, evidence collection and use, and accurately identify primary aggressors.

EFFECTIVE POLICING IN THE INTEGRATED SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM

Improved service integration is key to responding to the needs of diverse communities, building understanding and linking to specialist services to improve outcomes for victims from all communities across the state.

We will continue to contribute to ongoing reform across the integrated service system, including the redevelopment of the common risk assessment and management framework, ongoing participation and leadership in Risk Assessment and Management Panels (RAMPs), and establishment of the Central Information Point and Support and Safety Hubs.

Victoria Police will continue to work towards expanding the MDC model and other multidisciplinary or co-located initiatives at local levels, developing collaborative practice models as we progressively integrate the service response to these crime themes.

We will establish strong and clear links between the Support and Safety Hubs and MDCs, based on opportunities associated with co-located and collaborative responses. In particular, we will work to integrate responses to provide coordinated services for victims according to their needs.

More broadly, we will continue to work closely with our interstate and federal counterparts to respond to crimes relating to human trafficking and forced marriage.

A new family violence information sharing scheme will be introduced across the family violence system which will enable police and other agencies to share information to assess and manage family violence risk. This scheme will allow police to work closer with partner agencies to ensure that interventions are informed by the best information held by agencies working across the system.

MEETING THE NEEDS OF DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

We understand that high quality responses can mean different things to different communities in metropolitan, regional and rural areas of Victoria. Victoria Police responses will also endeavour to meet the needs of Victoria's diverse communities including culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, LGBTI communities, people living with a disability, seniors, and young people.

In particular, we will continue working with Aboriginal communities to improve responses aligned with cultural safety, acknowledging that Aboriginal women and children are disproportionately affected by perpetrators of these crimes.^{xxii} Contributing factors include the history of colonisation, dispossession of land and culture and the wrongful removal of children from their parents. Violence is not part of Aboriginal culture, but intergenerational grief and trauma has resulted in the over-representation of Aboriginal people as victim survivors.^{xxiii}

Victims who are subject to additional structural discrimination and/or vulnerability, such as Aboriginal people, people with a disability, male victims, LGBTI persons, and seniors can face additional barriers to reporting.^{xxiv}

Based on this understanding, Victoria Police will continue to build police cultural awareness and understanding, and work towards expanding Koori Family Violence Police Protocols state-wide, and continue to foster effective relationships with communities to embed and expand these practices.

We will continue to build our understanding of trends and crimes impacting CALD communities, including forced marriage, human trafficking and exploitation. We will continue to work with communities facing additional vulnerabilities, and the specialist services that support them to ensure that we can develop, implement and monitor approaches that respond to emerging trends, and improve their safety.

Our performance measures will enable us to track progress achieving positive outcomes for communities with additional vulnerabilities.

ENSURING THERE IS NO PLACE FOR VIOLENCE WITHIN VICTORIA POLICE

Victoria Police is working hard to eliminate violence and harassment from its workplace. Building on the VEOHRC *Independent review into sex discrimination and sexual harassment, including predatory behaviour in Victoria Police*^{xxv}, we will improve responses and practice to respond effectively to perpetrators who are employees, and responses for employees and their family members who are victims of family violence, sexual offences and child abuse, understanding the barriers they may face when reporting these crimes.



SPOTLIGHT Multidisciplinary Centres (MDCs)

There are currently six MDCs across Victoria located in Mildura, Seaford, Geelong, Dandenong, Bendigo and Morwell, with a seventh centre to be established in Werribee by 2018.

MDCs co-locate a range of agencies in the one building including specialist investigators (SOCITs) alongside child protection practitioners, Centre Against Sexual Assault (CASA) counsellor advocates and community health nurses. The MDCs also have strong links to forensic medical personnel. In this way, the MDCs provide a victim-centred, integrated and holistic response to victims of sexual crime and child abuse.

Two of these centres are in the process of integrating specialist family violence responses, with a third planned to commence in 2018.

Independent evaluations of MDCs have identified the approach:

- » Improves the investigation of sexual crime and child abuse through service integration
- » Streamlines responses so victims access help more efficiently
- » Improves the range and quality of support for victims, their families and support people
- » Improves the capability of agencies to understand and respect each other's ability, share information and work collaboratively
- » Provides a welcoming environment for victims and families which is focused on their safety and wellbeing
- » Contributes to increased reporting of sexual crime to police and reduces the number of withdrawals from justice system processes
- » Leads to more just outcomes, often through the provision of higher quality investigation briefs
- » Provides commitment to continuous strengthening and improvement practices of partnerships

An evaluation of the integration of family violence responses in MDCs will commence in 2018. The evaluation will consider the effectiveness of the inclusion of family violence responses within MDCs and will also evaluate a pilot project operating within Dandenong MDC which aims to increase access to forensic medical examinations for family violence victims.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY ONE ACTION PLAN 2018–2020

Core capability: victim engagement

Fundamental input to capability:

Processes

- » Strengthen our risk assessment practices and associated responses in conjunction with the Common Risk Assessment Framework (CRAF) review
- » Implement Koori Family Violence Police Protocols to broaden coverage across the state
- » Develop and enhance appropriate responses for Victoria Police employees and families who are victims of family violence, sexual offences and/or child abuse
- » Develop methods for victim feedback to inform police practice and policy development and contribute to community confidence
- » Evaluate the first three MDCs that incorporate responses to victims of family violence as well as victims of sexual offending and child abuse
- » Commission research into the experiences of victims from diverse communities including those living with complex intersectionality or vulnerability

People

- » Implement a new model of Family Violence Investigation Units (FVIUs)
- » Support the integration of FVIUs into MDCs in Dandenong, Geelong and Werribee
- » Appoint additional Police Lawyers and Family Violence Court Liaison Officers to each headquarter Court in Victoria
- » Enhance the capability of the frontline, specialist investigators and divisional leaders via the Centre of Learning for Family Violence

Infrastructure

- » Continue to develop and roll out MDCs in Dandenong, Geelong and Werribee, and work towards establishing additional MDCs

Equipment

- » Trial the use of body worn cameras to collect secondary evidence and victim statements from family violence incidents

Technology

- » Launch the Aboriginal Family Violence eLearning module force wide
- » Publish information to encourage victim reporting, increase community confidence and change community attitudes

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The organisational outcome measures for this strategic priority are:

1. Victim experiences increasingly reflect best practice in line with the relevant Code of Practice and victims are increasingly likely to say they would encourage other victims to report (A) (B)
2. Number of reports per 100,000 population (A)
3. Reduced repeat victimisation
4. Reduced attrition rates for sexual offences

(A) Ending Family Violence: Victoria's Plan for Change – Family Violence Rolling Action Plan 2017–2020
 (B) Royal Commission into Family Violence
 (C) Luke Batty Coroners Report
 (D) Community Safety Statement
 (E) Betrayal of Trust Report / Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Abuse
 (F) Budget Paper 3 (BP3)

STRATEGIC PRIORITY TWO: OFFENCE AND OFFENDER MANAGEMENT – PERPETRATORS ARE ACTIVELY MANAGED AND HELD TO ACCOUNT



WE AIM TO:

1. Align our structures and functions to enhance investigations of perpetrators of family violence, sexual offences and child abuse by dedicated FVIUs, SOCITs and other relevant specialist roles.
2. Ensure the effective use of intelligence to identify perpetrator escalation points, establish predictive practice, and proactively intervene to reduce or prevent harm.
3. Ensure police responses, education, policy and practice are informed by a greater understanding of perpetrator patterns of behaviour and impact of perpetrator choices on the trajectory of abuse.
4. Contribute to preventing family violence-related homicide and suicide through increased attention to perpetrator characteristics and high risk patterns.

SO THAT:

- » Police can effectively identify crime and hold perpetrators of family violence, sexual offences and child abuse to account.
- » Police can effectively monitor high and escalating risk, and manage perpetrators, contributing to the prevention of homicide and serious injury.
- » Police can reduce repeat offending.
- » Communities are confident that police will hold perpetrators to account.

POLICE ARE UNIQUELY PLACED TO INTERRUPT THE HARM CAUSED BY PERPETRATORS

Responsibility for the harm caused by these crimes rests with perpetrators.

Within the service system, Victoria Police is uniquely placed to protect victims by charging and prosecuting perpetrators, and holding them to account for their actions.

We will improve our frontline capabilities in understanding perpetrator behaviours and identifying primary aggressors.

We will challenge violence-supportive attitudes, develop our investigative capability and increase visibility of these crimes, ensuring greater accountability of perpetrators through services only police can deliver.

MANAGING PERPETRATORS IS KEY TO KEEPING VICTIMS SAFE AND CONTRIBUTING TO PREVENTION

To reduce harm by perpetrators, Victoria Police will increase the emphasis on understanding and investigating the perpetrator as well as the offence(s).

SOCITs will continue to apply their expertise to investigations of

sexual offences and child abuse through specialist knowledge, consultation, training and skills.

FVIUs will establish investigative practice for family violence perpetrators in line with our standards and prioritisation for other crimes.

Specialist enhanced investigations of these offences will improve effective identification of historical offending, support ongoing management of perpetrators to prevent future offending and hold perpetrators to account to the best of our ability through the criminal justice system.

Dedicated intelligence support for FVIUs will underpin their work to understand what is driving perpetrator behaviour, and manage emerging trends with targeted resources. This aligns with other Victoria Police approaches to focus effort on those we know are committing crime (linking with other crime themes), as well as deploy resources using intelligence to better predict offending behaviour, deter further offending and encourage desistance from crime.

We will continue to work towards further integration with the monitoring of registered sex offenders to enable proactive management and prevent future harm.

This perpetrator focus requires integration *within* Victoria Police, ensuring that all relevant areas of the organisation understand the links between these crimes, and our responsibilities in responding proactively to improve community safety.

PERPETRATOR ACCOUNTABILITY SHOULD REFLECT THE SERIOUSNESS AND PREVALENCE OF THE CRIMES

Between July 2011 and June 2017 11,558 perpetrators were recorded as having harmed three or more victims, and 1,404 were identified as having five or more victims – many of these perpetrators commit multiple forms of family violence, sexual offences and child abuse.^{xxvi}

We will learn more about and act on known risks and indicators for murder and murder/suicide and ensure our responses are commensurate with risk of harm, including responses to contraventions of FVIOs, to effectively manage escalating and repeat offending.

We will continue to challenge myths and misconceptions relating to these crimes, both within and beyond our organisation, to ensure our responses reflect the serious harms caused by these crimes, improving our initial risk assessment and responding to contraventions to identify escalating risk.

We will ensure consistent brief authorisation by standardising the factors that contribute to the authorisation of briefs of evidence.

We will continue to engage with stakeholders to share our experience and understanding to influence cultural change across the wider criminal justice system to support better victim outcomes. We will also continue to advocate for greater service support for perpetrators to change their behaviour.

Victoria Police will continue to improve perpetrator accountability for employees who are perpetrators of these crimes, building on the learning and success from initiatives such as Taskforces Salus^{xxvii} and Sano^{xxviii} to ensure there is no place for violence, harassment and predatory behaviour within our organisation.



SPOTLIGHT

Family Violence Taskforce

High risk family violence perpetrators are likely to display a combination of risk and vulnerability factors and may have a history of serious offending including sexual offences, serious assaults, attempted murder, stalking, abductions or similar.

The Family Violence Taskforce identifies and investigates high risk perpetrators responsible for serious family violence crime against multiple victims, which may include historical or unreported offences committed against multiple victims. Investigations incorporate a 'proactive victim approach' methodology which is modelled on best practice developed by the Scotland Police Family Violence Taskforce.

In 2017, the Taskforce investigated 22 complex and protracted serious family violence matters, involving more than 100 vulnerable and repeat victims. Eight serious family violence matters are before the courts totalling 271 charges. A number of high risk perpetrators are in custody awaiting court hearings at this time.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY TWO ACTION PLAN 2018–2020

Core capability: offender management

Processes

- » Develop best practice tools to support the management of high threat/high harm perpetrators of family violence
- » Increase the focus on management of perpetrators, including repeat offenders and emphasise active management of perpetrators
- » Introduce a new investigative model for family violence that aligns with the specialist investigative model used for sexual offences and child abuse
- » Improve the supervision of the service of FVIOs and explore alternative mechanisms for service options
- » Implement standardised proactive management and crime prevention strategies for targeted perpetrators, including sex offender management, high risk and serious and violent offenders and family violence perpetrators
- » Develop enhanced policy and practices for the management of Victoria Police employees who are perpetrators
- » Review the SOCIT charter
- » Assess the feasibility of state wide implementation of co-location of Registered Sex Offender Teams with SOCITs and MDCs

People

- » Enhance police education in behavioural characteristics and patterns of perpetrators to improve responses to protect victims, including accurately identifying the primary aggressor
- » Standardise brief authorisation decision-making
- » Broaden Whole Story Investigative Framework training on the nature of the offending relationship

Technology

- » Enhance information sharing through participation in the Central Information Point
- » Develop and implement a child sexual exploitation offender characterisation tool
- » Enhance intelligence tools to provide frontline and specialist roles with increased support for targeted investigations

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

1. Increased crimes recorded (family violence related crimes against property and crimes against the person) (F)
2. Increased contravention charges (B) (F)
3. Increased charges laid relating to family violence
4. Reduced repeat offending (B) (C)
5. Decreased incidents involving high threat/harm perpetrators (B)
6. Reduced family violence deaths (A)

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 (F) Budget Paper 3 (BP3)

STRATEGIC PRIORITY THREE: CHILD SAFETY IS FRONT OF MIND



WE AIM TO:

1. Make child safety and wellbeing a greater focus in initial police responses and investigations, especially in the context of family violence.
2. Ensure consistent police responses for children relating to gathering and use of evidence, and support for children to provide evidence to the court and be heard.
3. Improve early intervention options and processes for families at risk, proactively targeting offenders posing high risks to children.
4. Develop better understanding of the complexity around children who may be both victims and offenders.
5. Strengthen our partnerships and integration with other service providers.

SO THAT:

- » Children are recognised as a distinct victim cohort, kept safe and linked to the right support for their recovery.
- » Children are given a voice, supported by police within the justice system.
- » Victoria Police can meet the complex needs of children affected by family violence, sexual offences and child abuse and prevent future harm.

WHERE WE ENCOUNTER CHILDREN IN THESE CRIME THEMES

Children who are present during family violence incidents are at a higher risk of future revictimisation. In 2016–17, children were present at 28 percent of recorded family violence incidents^{xxxix}; however, the 2016 ABS Personal Safety Survey indicates children are likely to be present in a greater proportion of incidents.^{xxx}

Children can be seriously impacted by family violence even if they are not the immediate victim or do not witness physical violence themselves. The cumulative impact of a child's repeat exposure to family violence may be as serious as direct victimisation.^{xxxi} We come across these children and adolescents living with or as witnesses to family violence and/or sexual offending.

Despite accounting for less than a quarter of Victoria's population, more than four in 10 victims of a family violence sex offence in 2016–17 were children. Despite this overrepresentation, it is highly likely family violence related sexual offences are heavily underreported, particularly due to delays in reporting.^{xxxii}

The Victorian Government introduced Child Safe Standards for organisations with direct and regular contact with children. The *Reportable Conduct Scheme* aims to improve oversight of how organisations respond to allegations of child abuse and child-related misconduct by workers and volunteers. Policy and practice guidance and education will be provided to police who will be responding to a new range of reports arising from the scheme.

In the SOCIT context, investigations involving potential perpetration of a crime against children, or welfare issues for children, make up a substantial part of their work.

A key function of SOCITs is responding to Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) notifications of allegations of child physical assaults and sexual offending against children. Most of the proven offences are perpetrated by parents or other caregivers. Additionally, notifications of missing children, particularly from DHHS out of home care, present significant risks to child safety, and link with police responses to child sexual exploitation.

The Victoria Police Joint Anti-Child Exploitation Team (JACET) is made up of Victoria Police and Australian Federal Police (AFP) officers dedicated to investigating online child exploitation and identifying and protecting victims.

INCREASING THE VISIBILITY OF CHILDREN IN POLICE RESPONSES

Both the RCFV and the RCIRCSA identified that children are often 'invisible' in the criminal justice system.

An increased focus on children in our strategy reflects our understanding of the cumulative harm experienced by experiencing family violence, and the potential for police to contribute to early intervention and prevention of future harm.

SOCIT members are trained to interview children and keep child safety and wellbeing in mind. Victoria Police is committed to ongoing support for this practice, and will supplement the initial training to consolidate knowledge and experience.

We will deliver further education, policy and practice guidance to develop core knowledge for frontline and specialist police to ensure children are safe, protected and that crimes against them are investigated appropriately.

We will ensure that children and young people are recognised in risk assessments and responses as victims in their own right, consistently recorded, and sufficiently linked into appropriate specialist and children's services.

KEEPING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SAFE IS KEY TO SUPPORTING RECOVERY AND PREVENTING FUTURE OFFENDING

The Enhanced Response Model for Child Sexual Exploitation demonstrates the need to identify children and young people at risk of, vulnerable to, or experiencing sexual exploitation and intervene early.

Research has found a significant intersection between experiencing sexual abuse as a child and sexual assault and/or partner violence as an adult. Victims of child sexual abuse are often repeatedly abused, increasing their likelihood of experiencing sexual offences as an adult. Women who experience child sexual abuse are more likely than those who have not to experience partner violence in their adult relationships.^{xxxiii}

Our understanding of the complexity around children who may be both victims and perpetrators of family violence or sexual offences will inform our efforts to disrupt offending targeting children and contribute to ongoing reform to support diversions and suitable referral pathways for youth perpetrators, ensuring responses are aligned with therapeutic approaches and programs.

RESPONDING TO ADOLESCENT VIOLENCE IN THE HOME

At present, police options to respond to family violence are limited in cases involving child or youth perpetrators.

Family Violence Safety Notices and holding powers cannot be used due to the concerns with the impact on children if police exercise these powers. In many cases, police have no alternative but to leave a youth perpetrator in the family home with the victim. Family Violence Safety Notices and related exclusion clauses or holding powers can result in increased risk of further harm for these children.

Perpetrators of family violence in this cohort have complex needs, often presenting with prior victimisation. While securing the safety of victims, Victoria Police is working to improve options and responses to ensure children and young people are not placed at risk of further harm.

Victoria Police is committed to strengthening referral pathways into adolescent family violence services and working with the family violence system to develop the necessary targeted youth services that acknowledge the growth in this cohort of perpetrators to ensure inter-generational cycles of family violence are not continued into the future.



SPOTLIGHT Enhanced Response Model for Child Sexual Exploitation

The Enhanced Response Model for Child Sexual Exploitation (the model) has demonstrated the need to identify children and young people at risk of, vulnerable to, or experiencing sexual exploitation and intervene earlier to prevent further sexual exploitation, maximise safety and minimise the risk of escalation, disrupt offending and hold perpetrators to account. Children and young people known to Child Protection, particularly those in out of home care are significantly vulnerable to exploitation. Vulnerability to sexual exploitation compounds when these children and young people disengage from school and supports, and are targeted by perpetrators of sexual exploitation.

The model has demonstrated when a child or young person is identified as being at risk of sexual exploitation the best results are when Child Protection, Victoria Police and community service organisations work together to share understanding of the risks posed for the young person, the responsibilities of each organisation, and the tasks required to address the offending and increase safety for the child or young person.

The evaluation of the model highlighted the following outcomes; a reduction in risk of child sexual exploitation for children, a more effective and proactive response to persons of interest, and a reduction in young people's offending and reduced episodes of 'missing'.

New advice and procedures as a result of the model strengthens the operational response to episodes of missing children, requiring child protection practitioners (with the support of police) to assess the missing behaviour as well as responding to it. In this way the new advice and procedure supports the existing advice regarding application for warrants and missing person reports.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY THREE ACTION PLAN 2018–2020

Core capability: prevention

Processes

- » Broaden the use of Video and Audio Recorded Evidence (VARE) in interviewing children when responding to family violence
- » Develop policy and procedures specifically to respond to adolescent violence in the home and increase referral options with partners including increased diversion and treatment options
- » Work with government and non-government partners on improving responses to Child Protection investigations and notifications
- » Include evidence based criteria for children in family violence risk assessment
- » Work with Child Protection to identify ways to respond to high risk families, particularly where children are notified multiple times to statutory services
- » Implement state-wide Enhanced Response Model for Child Sexual Exploitation
- » Standardise SOCIT responses to DHHS notification of child abuse reports
- » Establish dedicated divisional leadership positions to coordinate investigative and proactive functions in collaborative responses

People

- » Develop a child trauma-informed framework to underpin Victoria Police education and training building on the SOCIT Whole Story Investigative Framework
- » Strengthen understanding of the needs of specific demographic groups when police are investigating family violence, sexual offences and/or child abuse
- » Increase member awareness of the Child Witness Program

Infrastructure

- » Engage in Safety and Support Hub development to support a child-focused response

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

1. Increased number of child victims identified (e.g. family violence incident reports) (A)
2. Increased proportion of incidents where a child is present resulting in charges laid
3. Increased referrals for children who are both victims and perpetrators (A)

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 (F) Budget Paper 3 (BP3)

STRATEGIC PRIORITY FOUR: OUR PEOPLE – A SAFE, CAPABLE WORKFORCE



WE AIM TO:

1. Ensure education, supervisory practice and resourcing via Tasking and Coordination meets demand for family violence, sex offences and child abuse responses.
2. Provide career-long family violence education appropriate to role, rank, and specialisation through the Centre of Learning for Family Violence (with regional education options).
3. Drive and model leadership and culture change through our practice and the messages we send to communities.
4. Ensure our leadership and workforce is inclusive and respectful, and reflects the communities that we serve.
5. Encourage workplace flexibility and mobility for staff in family violence, sexual offences and child abuse to support wellbeing consistent with the directions in the *Victoria Police Mental Health Strategy and Wellbeing Action Plan*.^{xxxiv}
6. Support frontline police with enhanced technology and processes to improve access to information, evidence gathering and decision-making.

SO THAT:

- » Victoria Police can mature its capabilities to understand and respond effectively to family violence, sexual offences and child abuse, and influence community attitudes for long term change.
- » Victoria Police officers responding to these crimes are valued, supported and safe.

LEADERSHIP TO SUPPORT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

A dedicated response to reducing and ultimately preventing harm from these crimes requires a sustained and strongly-supported organisational approach that acknowledges the seriousness and complexity of these crimes.

Victoria Police will encourage its leadership and employees to value and leverage organisational knowledge, experience and professionalism to be local, national and global leaders in responses and attitudes to family violence, sexual offences and child abuse.

We are reshaping our culture in relation to understanding gender and the gendered nature of these crimes, particularly changing commonly held misconceptions about victims and perpetrators.

We are driving organisational change to reduce gender inequality and gendered harassment, shift our culture to build a respectful and inclusive workforce, and contribute to the Victorian Government plan for primary prevention of gendered violence.

FORCE-WIDE, CAREER-LONG LEARNING

Victoria Police has established the Centre of Learning for Family Violence (CFV) to underpin a range of other reforms for our organisation.

The CFV will deliver career-long family violence training tailored to rank, role and accountabilities, supported by state-wide, regionally-based dedicated training officers to boost accessibility and uptake.

Based on a comprehensive training needs analysis, CFV programs will build police understanding of the nature and drivers of family violence and improve capability to deal with the complexity and volume of family violence demand. Over time, the CFV will expand their focus to incorporate sexual offences and child abuse education components to support the integration of these themes.

Perpetrators of family violence, sexual offences and child abuse are often, but not always similar in their motivations and most of their drivers. Our education content and Codes of Practice will reflect both similarities and differences, and the diverse needs of victims.

Sexual offending, including sexually motivated homicide, is the crime theme where police most often need to respond to offences by strangers. To improve alignment and increase consistency of responses to sexual offences across the organisation, we will expand initial and refresher targeted training in the Whole Story Investigative Framework, including across FVIUs, Sex Crimes Squad and relevant taskforces.

Establishing career structures through specialist, supervisory and leadership roles will support this learning by enabling police to apply their understanding of these themes and expand their knowledge through supported on-the-job experience.

MATURING AND MAINTAINING OUR CAPABILITIES

We need to attract, recruit and retain people who are suited to the response to, investigation, and prevention of these crimes, and reflect the diversity of the Victorian community.

We will review our recruitment strategies to achieve these goals, and provide a new range of rewarding career pathways.

Increased specialisation in investigation; work in multidisciplinary settings; more focus on profiling perpetrators; proactive offender engagement; crime prevention; enhanced education and support; and promotional opportunities to supervisory roles will attract and retain a committed and capable workforce.

Stronger representation of family violence, sexual offences and child abuse through State and Divisional Tasking and Coordination processes responsible for deploying resources to meet the needs of responding to crime across all themes, will identify trends, benchmark performance, highlight good practice and indicate policy, training or practice issues.

To support police to achieve these objectives, specifically in response to the Royal Commission into Family Violence (RCFV), the Victorian Government has provided Victoria Police with significant resources to improve our capabilities, including education, specialist and investigative capability and technology and equipment to enhance our responses and support tasking and coordination processes to resource responses to these crimes appropriately.

SAFETY AND WELLBEING

Responding to these crimes can take its toll on employees. The identified stressors include the trauma or cumulative impact of responding to family violence, domestic homicide, psychological, physical and sexual harm to children, child sexual exploitation online or those who are homeless or in out of home care, suicides of perpetrators and victims, the sheer volume of responses and repeat visits in the family violence sphere and varied justice outcomes.

Many of these duties can act as 'trigger' events for those that have previously experienced trauma themselves.

We are committed to supporting police and other employees who respond to family violence, sexual offences and child abuse.

The Mental Health Review^{xxxv} demonstrated the need to improve in this area and SOCITs were particularly highlighted as needing a quality of supervision which considers and prioritises wellbeing and retention.

We need to establish trauma-informed organisational support for our own people.

In recognition, the Victorian Government has funded new mental health professionals to provide psychological services and interventions to regional and metropolitan SOCITs and FVIUs.

Services will include coaching, counselling, case management and other therapeutic and organisational interventions on a diverse range of complex issues.



SPOTLIGHT

Centre of Learning for Family Violence (CFV)

Centres of Learning provide promotional and development programs for all Victoria Police employees. The Centres provide subject matter expertise for programs based around the key strategic learning themes of the organisation to develop the skills, capabilities and confidence for our people to professionally lead and influence the community. Training needs are dynamic and to ensure that they have currency, we continue to monitor and incorporate improvements across the profession.

The CFV has been established with external academic governance to improve family violence education at all levels in the organisation. The CFV will establish a contemporary learning environment and educational facility that identifies the synergies with current educational practice and tertiary learning.

The CFV links across the organisation to deliver the training and education components of the RCFV recommendations, the Community Safety Statement and Victoria Police strategic directions and priorities. Valuable links are also being constructed with key external agencies and stakeholders to ensure a holistic and consistent curriculum development.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY FOUR ACTION PLAN 2018–2020

Core capability: people management

Processes

- » Incorporate new FVIUs within Investigation and Response (I&R) structures managing investigation and response units, approaches and performance across the organisation, with supervisors overseeing FVIUs and SOCITs to implement an enhanced model of investigation force-wide, including dedicated specialist resources
- » Develop prevention and early intervention options specific to Victoria Police
- » Provide public leadership to encourage and influence community attitudes to violence against women and children
- » Enhance our understanding and knowledge of the experiences of victims from diverse communities including those living with complex intersectionality
- » Research the attrition of SOCIT members to improve practice, education and support member wellbeing and safety
- » Implement the Reportable Conduct Scheme and associated workforce practices and procedures

People

- » Establish the Centre of Learning for Family Violence
- » Develop an investigative model and training program for ‘the story of family violence’ to provide FVIUs with quality guidance such as that received by SOCITs in the Whole Story Investigative Framework
- » Provide proactive health and wellbeing support to SOCITs and FVIUs through the roll out of dedicated psychologists
- » Support organisational strategies to increase gender equality and diversity in Victoria Police’s workforce
- » Develop training to strengthen understanding of the needs of specific demographic groups when police are investigating family violence, sexual offences and/or child abuse
- » Support the workforce with training and development about new Sexual Offences legislation
- » Develop targeted recruitment strategies to attract SOCIT and FVIU investigators

Technology

- » Develop mobile technology for police

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

1. Organisation wide targeted learning in family violence, sexual offending and child abuse
2. Implementation of specialist family violence and SOCIT resources including FVIU investigators (F), regional training officers, family violence court liaison officers, family violence advisors, analysts, psychologists and police lawyers, as well as technology to support recording of evidence (F)
3. Police demonstrate a commitment to gender equality and prevention of violence against women (A) aligned with the objectives and indicators under the *Victoria Police Gender Equality Strategy*, and understand the dynamics of family violence and sexual offending (B)

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 (F) Budget Paper 3 (BP3)

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND MILESTONES

FOR POLICE RESPONSES TO FAMILY VIOLENCE, SEXUAL OFFENCES AND CHILD ABUSE

2001	Chief Commissioner Nixon announced a new focus on the incidence of violence against women as a major priority for Victoria Police. Victoria Police undertakes its first comprehensive review of police responses to Violence Against Women
2002	First <i>Victoria Police Violence Against Women Strategy: The Way Forward</i>
2004	<i>Code of Practice for the Investigation of Family Violence</i> launched. Over 6,400 police officers trained, and 10 Family Violence Advisor positions funded
2005	<i>Code of Practice for the Investigation of Sexual Assault</i> reviewed and re-released. Multilingual brochures developed
2006	Implementation of the Sexual Assault and Child Abuse Investigation Teams (SOCIT) pilot project
2006	<i>Reforming the Family Violence System in Victoria</i> report
	Legislative powers implemented – ‘holding powers’ to increase safety of victims and accountability of perpetrators
	Formal protocol between Department of Human Services and <i>Victoria Police: Family Violence Referral Pathways 2006-2008</i>
2007	Introduction of Family Violence Teams
2007	Victoria Police establishes multi-disciplinary centres (MDCs) in Frankston and Mildura. Since then, additional MDCs have commenced in Geelong, Dandenong, Bendigo and Morwell
2008	Victoria Police commences its Koori Police Protocols Pilot. Six sites selected, based on reported levels of FV incidents: Mildura, Ballarat, Darebin, Bairnsdale, Dandenong and Shepparton
2009	Launch of <i>Living Free from Violence: Upholding the Right – Victoria Police’s strategy to reduce Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC 2009-2014)</i>
2011	Launch of the <i>Enhanced Family Violence Service Delivery Model 2011-14</i> that rolled out Family Violence Teams across Victoria and developed strategies for repeat victims and repeat perpetrators
2013	Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse
2013	Establishment of Taskforce SANO to investigate allegations arising from the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into Child Abuse and then the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse
2014	Release of the 3rd Edition of the <i>Code of Practice for the Investigation of Family Violence</i>
2014	AFP (Child Protection Operations) and Taskforce Astraea merge to form the Joint Anti-Child Exploitation Team (JACET)
2015	Establishment of Family Violence Command and the appointment of a dedicated Family Violence Assistant Commissioner
2015	Royal Commission into Family Violence commenced
2015	Taskforce SALUS established to investigate allegations of sexual harassment and sexual assault including predatory behaviour made against current or former Police, PSOs and VPS staff
	Victoria Police-commissioned VEOHRC <i>Independent review into sex discrimination and sexual harassment, including predatory behaviour, in Victoria Police</i> report released
2016	Royal Commission into Family Violence releases its final report
2016	Implementation of 18 Risk Assessment and Management Panels (RAMPs) across Victoria commences
2016	New <i>Code of Practice for the Investigation of Sexual Crime</i> released
2017	Victorian Government releases first Community Safety Statement including significant investment in Victoria Police

ENDNOTES

- ⁱ Royal Commission into Family Violence (2016). *Final Report*.
- ⁱⁱ Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (2017). *Criminal Justice Report*.
- ⁱⁱⁱ This Strategy builds upon the work of the *Victoria Police Violence Against Women Strategy: The Way Forward 2002-2008* and *Living Free from Violence: Upholding the Right – Victoria Police’s Strategy to reduce violence against women and children 2009-2014*.
- ^{iv} Australian Bureau of Statistics (2017). *Personal Safety Survey 2016*.
- ^v Crime Statistics Agency (2017).
- ^{vi} Ibid.
- ^{vii} Ibid.
- ^{viii} Australian Bureau of Statistics (2017). *Personal Safety Survey 2016*.
- ^{ix} Ibid.
- ^x Cox, Peta (2015). *Violence against women in Australia: Additional analysis of the Australian Bureau of Statistics’ Personal Safety Survey, 2012*. ANROWS, Sydney.
- ^{xi} Shackel, R. (2012). *The dynamics of disclosure of child sexual victimisation*.
- ^{xii} Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (2014). *Interim Report Volume 1, page 6*.
- ^{xiii} Parkinson, S., Lewig, K., Malvaso, C., Arney, F., Katz, I. & Newton, BJ. (2017). *Child sexual abuse in institutional contexts: The reliability of police data, nature of allegations reported to police, and factors driving reporting rates*. Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, Sydney.
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- ^{xv} Ibid.
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- ^{xvii} Crime Statistics Agency (2017).
- ^{xviii} Ibid.
- ^{xix} Royal Commission into Family Violence (2016). *Report and Recommendations Volume 2, page 213*.
- ^{xx} Royal Commission into Family Violence (2016). *Report and Recommendations Volume 3, page 1*.
- ^{xxi} Victoria Police (2016). *Victoria Police Capability Plan 2016-2025: Capability Framework*.
- ^{xxii} Indigenous women are 34 times more likely to be hospitalised due to family violence related assaults than non-Indigenous people. Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision. (2014).
- ^{xxiii} Victoria State Government (2016). *Ending family violence: Victoria’s plan for change*.
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Acknowledgement of traditional owners

Victoria Police pay our respect to the traditional owners of lands on which we live and work.

We pay our respects to Elders and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who continue to care for their country, culture and people.

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