

SENATE ECONOMICS LEGISLATION COMMITTEE

INQUIRY INTO TREASURY LAWS AMENDMENT (YOUR FUTURE, YOUR SUPER) BILL 2021 [PROVISIONS]

QSUPER

RESPONSE TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

QUESTION:

Senator SHELDON: With some of that work that you're doing with domestic violence and Indigenous and regional members, what is some of the assistance that you're giving? Have you got some detail that you're able to provide? You can provide it on notice if you like.

Ms Bromley: We can certainly provide some detail on notice, but, at a high level, we have conducted multiple trips to remote communities to connect people with their superannuation. The cost of sending a team of QSuper staff to remote communities for several days may be greater than the value of any recovered superannuation for the QSuper members we assess while we're there. However, we strongly believe that the positive difference we can make in the lives of those members is well worth the expenditure needed to undertake that trip. We can certainly provide some more detail of the work with Indigenous communities and DV Connect on notice.

ANSWER:

Domestic Violence Prevention

Since 2016, QSuper has had a formal, meaningful and tangible focus on preventing Domestic Violence and in improving the lives and futures of people affected by it.

This has led to QSuper directly supporting a number of organisations in the Domestic Violence sphere including DVConnect and RizeUp.

DVConnect is the leading crisis response service that operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week throughout Queensland to support victims of domestic violence and their families.

Our partnership with DVConnect was our first formal entry into supporting the Domestic Violence cause and has been in place since 2016.

DVConnect is a registered not-for-profit charity that provides help to Queenslanders to find pathways to safety, away from domestic, family and sexual violence, and operates three helplines; Womensline and Mensline, and the Queensland Sexual Assault Helpline.

QSuper's direct support of DVConnect includes funding a full-time crisis counsellor to answer calls for assistance from Domestic Violence victims which enables an additional 4,000 calls for help to be answered every year. In addition, QSuper has supported smaller projects including helping to create new training that DVConnect will deliver to upskill organisations on how to recognise, respond and refer employees to a service that can help them if they disclose or show signs of domestic and family violence or sexual assault. A second project QSuper is

supporting is the production of materials that provide information to remote and regional women regarding the signs of financial abuse. QSuper has also provided “in-kind” support and donations such as assistance with business operations and donation of equipment.

In Financial Year 2019/20, QSuper signed a new three-year partnership with DVConnect.

RizeUp drives awareness of domestic and family violence by providing life-changing, practical support for the families affected.

QSuper has been a supporter of RizeUp since 2017 which has included providing resources (as part of our volunteer program) to redevelop the RizeUp website, regularly participates in donations collections for refuges and enables staff to assist RizeUp to furnish houses for Domestic Violence victims.

This work is of great importance to QSuper and our community. Many of QSuper’s members, either directly or indirectly, support victims of domestic violence and their families (e.g. police, nurses, emergency service workers, teachers), and the partnerships with DVConnect and RizeUp (and associated events such as the Candle Lighting Vigil which QSuper also supports) help to support our members and their communities in the work they do and the issues they face.

QSuper was humbled to be named in Queensland’s first Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Honour Roll in 2020 run by the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women. This celebrates our efforts to raise awareness and support of the Domestic and Family Violence sector.

QSuper is also an active member of the Queensland Government's corporate roundtable for domestic and family violence prevention.

Indigenous Communities

QSuper has identified that some members face significant and unique barriers that may prevent access to their superannuation. One of the groups identified by QSuper as potentially needing additional support are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in remote communities. To counter this, QSuper actively engages with these communities to help breakdown obstacles and provide fair and equitable access to their superannuation.

The table below outlines visits to remote communities undertaken by QSuper in recent years, either as part of a unique QSuper event or as participants in events arranged by other organisations (including ASIC).

At the visits to remote communities, QSuper assists with providing general explanations about superannuation via discussions with community members who may or may not be QSuper members (we do not discriminate nor withhold assistance for community members who are not QSuper members). For QSuper members, assistance is provided to them to understand and connect with their QSuper superannuation entitlements.

The positive impacts of these visits and related activities are hard to measure as it is not only in the dollars reunited with members but also in reducing the vulnerability of people by increasing confidence in not only their personal superannuation but arguably in the system. QSuper is of the view that it is the role of a superannuation fund to make sure that all members feel connected and confident with their superannuation, irrespective of where they live or of their personal circumstances.

Please note, QSuper has postponed a number of planned visits due to Covid-19. However, we are eager to re-engage with communities once issues relating to Covid-19 have been resolved, and to that end have commenced planning for future visits.

Date	Event	Location	Number of community/members attended to
Sep-14	ASIC Indigenous Outreach Program	Lockhart River, Qld	100+
2017	Big Super Day Out	Brisbane, Qld	50+
May-18	ASIC's Indigenous Outreach Program	APY Lands, South Australia	200+
Jul-18	Big Super Day Out	Cairns, Qld	40+
Jul-18	Big Super Day Out	Brisbane, Qld	200+
Aug-18	QSuper Community visit	Aurukun, Qld	100+
Aug-18	QSuper Community visit	Palm Island, Qld	70+
Oct-18	QSuper Community visit	Hopevale, Qld	100+
Nov-18	QSuper Community visit	Wujul Wujul, Qld	20+
Jul-19	QSuper organised Community event	Thursday Island, Qld	200+
Sep-19	QSuper was invited by the Queensland Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships to attend a "Meet the Services" event	Doomadgee, Qld	100+
Nov-19	QSuper was invited by Yarrabah Shire Council to attend a "Meet the Services" event	Yarrabah, Qld	20+
Jan-20	QSuper / Indigenous Consumer Assistance Network (ICAN) week-long road trip to far north Qld communities.	Seisia, Qld New Mapoon, Qld Bamaga, Qld Umagico, Qld Injinoo, Qld	200+

QSuper is an Impact Partner with First Nations Foundation's IndigenousSuper.com.au website, designed by Indigenous people for Indigenous people to make the most of their superannuation.