

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

Department of Social Services

Support for Trafficked People Program Data for Victims of Forced Marriage

Forced Marriage Support Stream

The Support for Trafficked People (STPP) was originally developed in 2004 to respond to the needs of survivors of trafficking and slavery offences, who predominantly at that time were women being trafficked for sex. The STPP began receiving referrals for people affected by, or at risk of, forced marriage in 2014, soon after forced marriage was criminalised in Australia.

Under the STPP model, forced marriage clients could receive an initial 45-90 days of support, with further support being contingent on participating in the criminal justice process. In contrast to other clients on the STPP, the alleged perpetrators of forced marriage crimes are often family or community members, and survivors are reluctant to participate in a criminal justice process in these circumstances, particularly when they are young and living in the family home.

In 2018, the Australian Government announced a trial for the STPP to allow eligible survivors of forced marriage to access up to 200 days of support without having to participate in a criminal justice process. The Australian Red Cross was provided \$500,000 in 2017-18 to implement and evaluate the Forced Marriage Trial (FM Trial).

In December 2019, the FM Trial was integrated into the STPP on an ongoing basis as the Forced Marriage Support Stream (FMSS).

Clients on the FMSS are not required to participate in a prosecution or law enforcement action, however, are still required to be referred to the STPP by the Australian Federal Police.

The Department of Social Services does not track outcomes for clients once they exit the program. The STPP ensures that clients who have been supported on the FMSS, but have ongoing needs at the time of exit, are referred to other support services as required.

The following tables provide data relevant to the ongoing FMSS component of the STPP, in accordance with the request made through SQ19-000367.

Tables 1, 2 and 3 respond to QoN question 3, relating to the number of forced marriage victims supported on and referred to the STPP, and number of clients supported on the FMSS.

Table 1: Total number of forced marriage clients supported under the STPP each financial year since the start of the FM Trial

	Clients Supported			
	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21 (as at 31 Dec 2020)
Forced marriage clients	32	59	60	45
Percentage of total clients	33%	40%	32%	28%
Total clients supported by the STPP	98	149	188	163

Note: This data includes forced marriage clients supported across all streams of the STPP, including the FMSS.

Table 2: Total number of forced marriage referrals to the STPP

	Clients Referred			
	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21 (as at 31 Dec 2020)
Forced marriage referrals	13	37	27	16
Percentage of total referrals	29%	53%	31%	41%
Total referrals to the STPP	45	70	87	39

Table 3: Clients who have accessed the FMSS as at 31 December 2020

	Clients
Total clients who have accessed the FMSS since the start of the FM Trial (February 2018)	71
Clients moved to the Justice Support Stream during or at the end of the FMSS	6

Note: Forced marriage clients on the STPP who had not reached the end of their initial 90 days of support as at 31 December 2020 had not reached the decision point for moving to either the Justice Support Stream or the FMSS.

Table 4 responds to QoN question 10, relating to the number of forced marriage victims on the STPP who participated in a prosecution or law enforcement action through the Justice Support Stream.

Table 4: Clients who have participated in the Justice Support Stream as at 31 December 2020 (since 2009)

	Clients who participated in the Justice Support Stream¹	Clients who exited without participating in the Justice Support Stream
Number of forced marriage clients (since 2013)	25	77
Total STPP clients (excluding forced marriage)	173	88

¹ Clients move to the Justice Support Stream when AFP determine they are eligible and they provide consent. Forced marriage clients can move to the Justice Support Stream after their initial 90 days of support, or during or at the end of the FMSS.

There are no updates in response to questions 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12 and 13.