

# **DOMESTIC, FAMILY AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE COMMISSION**

## **Senate Estimates Opening Statement Final**

**30/05/2023**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a brief opening statement. I would like to start by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land upon which we meet, the Ngunnawal and Ngambri people, and pay my respects to elders past and present.

I would like to provide a short update on the progress of establishing and focusing the work of the Commission.

### **Establishing the Commission**

There has been a significant program of background work to establish the Commission in a sustainable way.

Our website and communication materials are in development and will be launched in the coming few months, in the meantime we are updating the existing landing page to better reflect the Commission's work.

Our first Corporate Plan will be released in July this year and our Annual Report tabled in October.

### **Engagement**

Amplifying the voices of people with lived and living experience of domestic, family and sexual violence is one of the foundational roles of the Commission.

I have been deliberate in my approach to engagement, recognising the importance of taking time to build trusted relationships with victim-survivors, frontline workers, sector leaders and policy makers.

I have undertaken more than 130 engagements since I commenced in November including attending and presenting at 10 conferences and forums to promote the National Plan objectives. Including, Australia's first Healing and Recovery Conference in Wollongong with victim-survivors, and the Family and Relationships Australia Conference with sector workers.

I have had the privilege to meet with many people who have long been dedicated to preventing, addressing and ending gender-based violence and really want to acknowledge their ongoing efforts.

Since my last appearance at Estimates, we have made significant progress on a number of aspects of the Commission's work.

### **Commission Objectives**

We have refined the strategic focus for the Commission, drawing on the priorities outlined in the National Plan, the Executive Order establishing the Commission, and what we have heard through our engagements.

The Commission's four objectives are to:

1. Amplify the voices of people with lived and living experience for meaningful engagement in shaping policy design and service delivery;
2. Foster collaboration and coordination across government and community to enhance connection and reduce fragmentation to improve outcomes;
3. Provide strategic advice to inform strengthened policy, practice and improved outcomes; and

4. Promote evaluation of the National Plan objectives, supporting progress on monitoring, targets and impact.

### **Amplifying the voices of people with lived experience**

Since the Commission was assigned responsibility for establishing the Lived Experience Advisory Council (Advisory Council) on 20 March we have consulted with lived experience advocates about the process for establishment of this National Council. One of the principles informing our approach is for people with lived experience to be taking the lead wherever possible.

I have been appointed co-chair of the Council - the other co-chair will be appointed by the group itself once established. A small guiding group made up of lived experience advocates has been appointed to advise the Commission in leading a transparent and inclusive EOI process, and the ongoing structures required to support Advisory Council members effectively.

I am also exploring other mechanisms to amplify the voices of people with lived experience beyond the Advisory Council, to ensure a diversity of experiences are informing government.

### **National Plan monitoring and reporting**

The Commission is focussed on practical and meaningful ways to measure progress towards the objectives outlined in the National Plan, informed by what is important to people with lived and living experience, and what the research and data is telling us.

As an independent body, the Commission will hold governments accountable for the delivery of effective policy and service delivery.

We are exploring a series of round table discussions to progress this work, the first of which will be a discussion about how we fulfil our role in measuring progress towards the objectives of the National Plan.

We will also be providing an Interim Statement towards the end of this year, and our first Yearly Report to Parliament one year after the launch of the Action Plans.

### **Collaboration and Coordination**

Given the breadth of existing National, State and Territory plans and strategies, I see it as a critical task for the Commission to provide a national focus and alignment of these efforts, bringing together the significant expertise, across governments, the community, academic and business sectors, to increase our collective impact.

We will work in partnership with relevant government and non-government actors to hold space for these national conversations and our approach will be to amplify and collaborate with existing work underway.

**In closing**, thank you again for the opportunity to provide this statement. I look forward to your questions.