

Government Senators' additional comments

1.1 Government Senators note that domestic and family violence is a national priority. As a society we are witnessing unprecedented momentum in relation to combating the scourge of violence against women and their children.

1.2 The Commonwealth Government has taken a number of steps to lead this national effort, including the provision of significant funding and elevating the issue to COAG. It remains critical that we all – as governments, service providers, business, communities and individuals – work together in developing a national response.

1.3 For these reasons, Government Senators have worked hard to ensure that this report is, for the most part, bi-partisan. There were, however, some areas of departure as follows:

- **Recommendation 1:**

1.4 The Fair Work Act 2009 already provides for a right to request flexible working arrangements, including for employees experiencing or caring for someone experiencing domestic violence. If an employer wishes to provide additional entitlements, they can do so through enterprise bargaining. Government Senators believe that it is appropriate for employers and employees to consider specific leave provisions for domestic and family violence in that context.

- **Recommendation 3:**

1.5 Government Senators note that *the 2014-15 Annual Progress Report on the Second Action Plan* was released in June 2015 and highlights collective efforts to address violence against women and their children; from primary prevention and early intervention initiatives, to specialist services for women and their children, to effective perpetrator intervention and controls. Government Senators also note that funding information in relation to the Second Action Plan is regularly provided through media releases, the Budget and Senate Estimates processes.

