



Victoria Police and family violence

It was early 2002 and Assistant Commissioner Leigh Gassner found himself in an inner-city women's family violence service getting a severe dressing-down. The workers meeting with him were angry and frustrated at what they saw as a lack of police action on family violence. They cited numerous instances where officers had failed to respond sensitively or adequately to callouts, sometimes with devastating consequences. Gassner knew there were issues but there was also a high level of antagonism. Yet there was hope for change. In late 2001, Police Commissioner Christine Nixon had announced her intention to address family violence and set Gassner the task of improving the police approach and inter-agency co-operation. It soon became obvious to Gassner that this would involve bringing a disparate group of government and non-government agencies together, many for the very first time.

A serious social problem

Family violence (often referred to as domestic violence) was one of the most endemic yet hidden social problems facing Victoria. It was estimated to affect almost one in four women in long-term relationships during their lifetime and each year since 2000, Victoria Police had recorded more than 20,000 incidents.¹ This, according to experts, was only the tip of the iceberg; research suggested that as many as 80 percent of cases went unreported. The vast majority of victims were female and perpetrators were most likely to be a current or former male partner. Victims were typically aged between 25-34 and pregnant women or mothers with young children were particularly vulnerable.² Women were more likely to be killed by a male partner or ex-partner than by any other person and these killings accounted for approximately 20 percent of all homicides.³ Meanwhile, injuries sustained during non-fatal attacks could be horrific and permanently debilitating. Women were at greatest risk of harm just after leaving an abusive relationship.

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¹ 'Victorian Family Violence Database: Five Year Report 1999-2004' Victorian Community Council Against Violence, September 2006, p. 16.

² *ibid*, p. 2.

³ *ibid*, p. 9.

Family violence incorporated a wide range of acts including:

“violent, threatening, coercive or controlling behaviour in current or past familial, domestic or intimate relationships. This encompasses not only physical injury but direct or indirect threats, sexual assault, emotional and psychological torment, economic control, property damage, social isolation and behaviour which cause a person to live in fear.”⁴

Some of these behaviours were covered by criminal codes, others were not but offenders often utilised a range of both to intimidate and manipulate victims, eroding their self esteem. Victims would often remark that the emotional torment was far more damaging than any physical scars. Family violence was closely associated with child abuse and even where children were not the primary victims, it still had profound psychological and social repercussions. Family violence occurred in every sector of society and services were particularly stretched in economically disadvantaged areas.

Victoria Police

Victoria Police was one of the state’s largest public sector organisations with a workforce totalling some 13,000 members serving a population of 5 million. It was responsible for law enforcement across the state, operated more than 320 police stations and had an annual budget in excess of \$1 billion. Family violence was one of the most confronting and complex aspects of police work. It was responsible for approximately 30 percent of police callouts; more than a third of those were repeat visits. But former Region One Commander Leigh Gassner was amongst the first to admit that the police response often fell short:

“There was no coordinated response and it was probably a very paternalistic way that we looked at violence against women. They often say that police reflect the community. Unfortunately they can reflect the negative bits. People just did not want to know about sexual assault, child abuse, violence against women and family violence. In a nutshell, our response, the nicest way to put it, was less than desirable. At the other end of the spectrum you could say it was disgraceful in many respects – it was fairly ad hoc ... police often put it in a lesser category. I’d often say to members that if someone was being beaten up in the street you’d probably do everything to catch the offender. In a house the injuries are no less; in fact murders happen in the house. But the whole mindset was that it’s ‘just another domestic.’”

When police were called out to an incident the approach police took was often “fairly superficial” and focused on calming the immediate situation. “Typically police would separate the couple, say to the man: ‘lay off your wife’ and pacify them until the officers involved finished their shift,” said Gassner. Some officers attempted to do more but frequently became frustrated by victims who would later withdraw complaints. “Even with all the best intentions it was easy for a young constable to get discouraged, especially with all the other things they had to do,” said Gassner.

“At a higher level, it wasn’t regarded as a core part of policing when in actual fact, people die from family violence – what else makes it core policing? But it just wasn’t recognised as such.” Even though police had the capacity to take out intervention orders against offenders themselves, there were legal hurdles and considerable paperwork; it wasn’t an option that was routinely pursued. Where offenders breached existing intervention orders, they frequently

⁴ *ibid*, p. 8.

weren't investigated or prosecuted. Incidents were often considered in isolation, without considering the history of the relationship or the needs of secondary victims such as children.

Part of the problem, according to Wendy Steendam (then Senior Sergeant in charge of the Sexual Offence and Child Abuse Unit) was that while there were specialist units to deal with sexual assault and clear cases of child abuse, family violence was usually handled as part of normal police duties. Officers varied considerably in their attitudes and awareness. Some still held to outmoded notions that family violence was not only "less serious" but also that victims were somehow complicit in their abuse or "provoked" offenders. Others appreciated the gravity of the offences and culpability of perpetrators but not why victims persisted with such dysfunctional relationships. "There was a lack of understanding amongst police about the victimology of family violence and how in the cycle of violence it's actually normal for victims who are abused to not necessarily want to go forward," noted Steendam. "Often, the only emotional attachment victims have is to their partner," added Gassner. "Their self esteem is at a point where they see it as their fault they got hit. They feel guilt about removing their children from their father." Many also feared and/or experienced retaliation for reporting abuse; others wanted to protect their partners from criminal charges.

The situation was even more complicated when victims lived in rural or remote areas. Indigenous victims, non-English speakers or those from cultures which stigmatised divorce also faced additional obstacles, not to mention those with disabilities or addiction issues. Police weren't always sensitive to a victim's circumstances and, observed Gassner, the prevailing male culture of the organisation meant that it didn't make a great deal of difference whether attending officers were male or female. But how police dealt with victims during initial encounters could have a huge impact on their willingness to report future incidents or pursue charges further down the track. What many police didn't realise, explained Gassner was that women often "didn't want to end the relationship but they wanted the violence to stop." It typically took victims multiple attempts before they would finally leave an abusive relationship – something that support services also had a hard time reconciling.

"We thought that providing refuge accommodation and support was effective and that women would leave the relationship, and then start another life," said Rhonda Cumberland. "Of course, it is not that simple – the process of leaving occurs in stages and women go backwards and forwards." Cumberland had spent several years as Director of the Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service Victoria, a leading non-government agency (NGA) dealing with family violence. She observed that victims' needs tended to vary:

"For some women, police on the doorstep is the last thing they want. For others, charges and arrest are expected. Police have to work within the context of each relationship to get the best results, especially when women are fearful and not ready to take action themselves."

But as it stood, the choice for victims of family violence was either to go to police "and get a fairly poor response", or to go to an NGA for usually short term support. Two pathways and two different systems meant women and children's safety could easily fall into the gaps between. (When Cumberland joined the sector in 2000, there were no operational links between police and crisis support for women.) Family violence was typically reported to police by friends, relatives or neighbours; there were very few self-reports because victims had "absolutely no belief that anything would be done to perpetrators," Cumberland remarked. But Christine Nixon was determined that something would happen.

Nixon's agenda

In late 2001, new Police Commissioner Christine Nixon announced three key areas she wanted to focus on: burglary, motor vehicle theft and violence against women. She assigned Leigh Gassner the latter area – specifically family violence and sexual assault. He soon recruited Steendam and colleague Lisa McKeeken to examine the issues and how Victoria Police might improve its response. After conducting some preliminary research, Gassner made the decision to speak to community-based agencies before consulting widely within the organisation. This was because he believed that no progress could be made until their critics had been heard. And they had plenty to say, recalled Steendam:

“From an external perspective, particularly with service providers, we were seen as extremely deficient in what we were doing and how we did it. The fundamental issue was that we were still treating family violence as if it were a domestic issue instead of a crime. They cited many case studies where we had let women down in terms of our response and failed to hold people to account over their behaviour. We were attending incidents but we weren't particularly good at doing something when we attended which tacitly sent the message that because we weren't taking action that it wasn't really a police issue. The term 'domestic' in itself is really fraught because there is a whole range of connotations – that it's private, that it's not something that other people should be interfering with.”

The following story from a victim was sadly all too commonplace:

“The neighbours must have called the police. Two women cops came, they came in together. ..No, they didn't separate us. They asked me in front of him if there was a problem...What am I going to say? They left and he left to go to the shops... I went outside and stopped them in the cop car. They asked me if I wanted to lay charges...I don't really know what that means...it seemed to me it would make it worse. How was he going to be stopped from coming to get me? So I said no. I went inside and he came back, he had seen me talk to the police, he smashed my face. I screamed as loud as I could...what else could I do? He hit and hit me. The neighbour must have called the police again. This time two men came. They stood up to him. They asked me again in front of him if everything was OK...don't they get it? Don't they see this every day? What am I going to say?

“They turned to leave. I decided this was my last chance. I really believed he would kill me. So I rushed up to them and said: 'I have to go with you.' They didn't get it in the beginning. I just stood in the middle of them and said: 'I am going with you'. My husband was furious, but they finally got it. I went with them to the police station and the police called the refuge....and here I am. Nowhere to go, no family and it seems like the only person who cared was a neighbour I didn't see much, but who called the police and a young policeman once I got to the station. It was Christmas Eve...I have no doubt if my family find me, I will be dead. It is really unbelievable in Australia this can happen.”⁵

Gassner, along with Steendam, spent considerable time visiting NGAs and, especially initially, did very little talking. Recounted Gassner: “We usually had an hour of them venting their frustrations first. It was very important to listen, particularly in such an emotionally charged environment where the police didn't have a good name.” Added Cumberland: “The NGA sector thought it was battling the problem on its own, that it was a buried social problem of no concern to the community. Why else would so many women and children be

⁵ From *Reforming the Family Violence System in Victoria*, Report of the Statewide Steering Committee to Reduce Family Violence 2005, p. 25.

at risk? Years of advocacy had not been listened to or acted on.” But this time, Cumberland sensed not only a willingness to listen but a determination to act:

“One point of difference in the past was how much support police should provide when the violence was not criminal. After long discussions and exchanging views, police and women’s services agreed that family violence, even if it is not criminal, is extremely dangerous and harmful. The police were prepared to make changes. This was the foundation of a joined up response to family violence in Victoria.”

Although many groups were wary, even somewhat hostile at the outset, Gassner and his colleagues made significant headway during the first half of 2002. “What really helped,” added Steendam, “was that we were really open and honest in our analysis, in putting the spotlight on ourselves first and saying that our house is not in order and examining what we needed to do in terms of service provision. Because we were open and transparent in wanting to do better it was a good way of engaging people and taking on their experiences and expertise.”

For Gassner, improving the police response meant enforcing the law more vigorously but also providing a more nuanced, flexible approach. But firstly it meant articulating what that was. “Several years earlier,” began Steendam, “a Code of Practice for sexual assault had been introduced and this had been successful in defining responses, roles, interaction with other agencies etc. The NGAs wanted something similar for family violence. But it also became clear from consultations that NGAs did not fully understand what the police could and could not do in cases of family violence.”

Because of their limited contact, many service providers believed that the police had much more extensive powers than they did, powers that they were simply choosing not to exercise. Agencies were frustrated that while they were attempting to assist women and children, they couldn’t do anything about the perpetrators. Conversely, noted Steendam, many police were also frustrated by the fact that they were usually the only 24-7 agency at the frontline and one not properly equipped to handle complicated psycho-social issues.

While Gassner was conducting these consultations, he also approached the head of the Office of Women’s Policy (located within the Department for Victorian Communities (DVC), (now the Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD))⁶ about a joint effort to bring government and non-government agencies involved in family violence together. The DVC was also keen to pursue the idea and, because of its relatively small size within government, welcomed police involvement. Recalled Gassner:

“I said: ‘You’ve got the strategic environment but you don’t have the legs to put it into place and we do, so why don’t we create a steering committee to bring all these disparate groups together?’”

Through their respective Ministers the two government agencies then went to the Social Policy Committee of Cabinet and asked for two statewide steering committees to be formed: one on reduction of sexual assault; and the other on family violence. The Committee agreed to both and gave police and the Office of Women’s Policy the leadership role on the latter.

⁶ DVC (later to become DPCD in 2007) is the state government department responsible for developing and implementing programs to promote liveable communities and foster local partnerships aimed at achieving agreed social, economic or environmental outcomes.

The NGAs were keen to be involved: “I remember getting the call from Victoria Police – an invitation to join the committee,” recalled Cumberland, “and I thought then that this is a serious attempt, this is not a quick fix. This was a breakthrough.” And to the surprise of police, the NGAs were happy for the police to head the project. “I asked them: ‘Why would you want the police to lead the steering committee?’” recounted Gassner, “They said: ‘Because you’re a 24 hour service, you’re state-wide, and if you’re aware and serious about doing something about it, then others will do something serious about it as well.’” Added Cumberland:

“Christine Nixon is a leader – if she is batting for your issue, no matter how unpopular, she can change culture around it, not just in her own organisation but more broadly. And having the police at your table, means you have an extremely important partner. As NGAs, we didn’t understand this at the beginning. We had been fighting police – they were the problem, the enemy. But once they are at the table, they bring media; they bring government, the magistrates, and the courts. They bring the decision makers. And if they value your partnership, success is almost guaranteed.”

Building bridges

During mid-2002, work began on the Statewide Steering Committee to Reduce Family Violence. The aim was to achieve a multi-agency and integrated response to the issue. (Meanwhile, the police began work on producing a Victoria Police Code of Practice for investigating family violence.) The first, and in some respects the most difficult task was deciding how many participants to bring in and who they should be. “When Leigh Gassner and I started doing this analysis we weren’t aware of the extent of the fragmentation of service provision and it became one of the biggest issues to delivering an integrated service response,” noted Steendam. There were literally hundreds of different service providers, some with only four-figure grants and each with its own perspective. Explained Cumberland:

“What tended to happen was that NGAs were solving problems locally which meant that no two responses to women were the same. This approach would never address the widespread and brutal culture of family violence. The family violence sector has always thought that it was battling it out on its own. There were poor relations right across the board really reflecting a broken service system.”

“In the end,” said Gassner, “we tried to pick those peak bodies that could represent as much as possible the agencies that were on the ground dealing with family violence. It was hard because at a certain point we had to draw a line in the sand otherwise we would have needed the Rod Laver arena for meetings.” Nonetheless, there were still many voices to be heard and reaching a common understanding of the issues was proving to be incredibly challenging. For example, the No to Violence group which worked with male offenders had a frosty relationship with women’s services and conflicting ideas about addressing family violence. Other agencies had differing views of when and how they should intervene. Groups were also very protective of their funding arrangements and what they considered to be “their patch”.

At the same time, Gassner and his colleagues worked to get more government agencies on board. Initially, there wasn’t a great deal of enthusiasm. Said Gassner: “Government agencies really found this a difficult concept to think about – that we would go into a committee environment with NGAs, particularly on such a highly charged emotional issue where there

was a lot of friction between the Department of Human Services (DHS)⁷ and the NGAs who were largely funded by DHS.” The Department was also worried about NGAs driving the agenda. Added Steendam:

“The beginning of our journey was about building relationships because there was a lot of mistrust from the service providers. And the challenge was often around having government and NGAs on a committee which is trying to come together on a model that you want to put forward to government. But some of those representatives are also service providers, so they have a vested interest as well as wanting to get good outcomes for women and children. I think there was a lot of uncertainty within the government agencies about how you work in a collaborative way without raising expectations that might not be met.”

The Department of Justice⁸ was the other main government participant to join the Steering Committee, along with the Departments of Human Services and Victorian Communities. Justice shared many of Human Services’ concerns about working with NGAs. Nonetheless, Nixon and Gassner got them around the table. Cumberland, meanwhile, recalled the early days of the Committee: “Initially there was just a lot of hurt and misunderstanding; everyone telling their stories; it was a very sensitive time and people wanted to be heard.”

Gassner quickly realised that getting everyone to reach a common understanding was going to take longer than he thought. The two-hour monthly meetings soon extended to three. Said Gassner:

“These issues involve so many disparate viewpoints and perspectives about how they should be handled and they’re all right to an extent but there was a need to bring them together. At meetings I used to forget the agenda because it just got to a point where I realised that certain discussions had never been had before. And I just had to let it run. Some of the people from government agencies were very personally affronted by what they were hearing but it needed to get out.”

Added Cumberland: “We were surprised that an officer in Gassner’s position could pick up people’s needs very quickly and steer the relationship building as well as he did.” Gassner discovered that many agencies were working under false assumptions, not only about what the police could do but what other services did. To improve understanding of the police role and powers, he invited an instructor to come out from the Police Academy to address participants. While talks were opening up participants and creating a collaborative spirit, there were still many obstacles. Agencies complained of being chronically underfunded and unable to deliver services when they were most needed. Meanwhile, government agencies were concerned that a new model for cooperation and a police Code of Practice would increase demand for services and put additional pressure on an already stretched system.

However, Nixon was adamant that Victoria Police had the right to determine how it would provide its services and that the new Code would be implemented regardless. Another issue, recalled Steendam, was the structure of DHS. Various sections of the Department were involved to some extent with family violence, for example, both the Office of Housing and Office of Children had funding responsibility for aspects of family violence. “DHS had to

⁷ DHS is the state government’s largest department and responsible for the delivery of health, welfare and community housing services.

⁸ DoJ is responsible, among other things, for the administration of the civil and criminal justice system in Victoria including the courts and the Office of Public Prosecutions (OPP).

make some adjustments internally to work through this,” she noted. NGA mistrust of DHS lingered because of its funding role and past attitudes.

A new way of working

In August 2004, Victoria Police released the Code of Practice for the Investigation of Family Violence. Steendam recalled that Victoria Police looked at a number of different jurisdictional models including the ACT approach which took a mandatory arrest stance and the Queensland response which was to focus more on civil remedies. In the end, Victoria Police opted for a mandatory action policy instead of mandatory arrest, so as not to discourage women who might be uncomfortable about entering the criminal justice process. Although pro-arrest, it still allowed police the flexibility to use civil options as well as take a hybrid approach according to the victim’s circumstances and police risk assessments. If no formal action was to be taken, police were now required to provide referrals to the appropriate support services. Police were also required to complete a report after attending a family violence incident, regardless of the action taken. Most importantly, noted Gassner, it made police accountable for taking some form of action and justifying their decisions. The key facets of the policy were that it was focused on the safety of victims and children and breaking the cycle of violence (*Exhibit A*). Added Steendam:

“The Code of Practice helped to clarify roles (especially, interactions with other agencies) and how we dealt with victims. This involved putting victims at the centre of our process and decision-making to make it a more positive experience, instead of the system continuing to abuse them through the reporting process. The Code of Practice is only articulating what good practice should have been. For people who were responding well to family violence, this was not a difficult challenge to actually achieve the outcomes ...it was just good policing practice. The trouble was we didn’t have everybody doing that.”

Police predicted that as a result of the Code and other initiatives the number of family violence reports would rise as victims became more confident that meaningful action would occur. However, they estimated that after approximately seven years, the incidence of family violence would actually begin to decrease. In terms of the Steering Committee to Reduce Family Violence, the Code of Practice served to mobilise participants, noted Cumberland, and compelled them to think about how they could improve their service delivery. In particular, DHS looked at ways of improving cross-sector collaboration between child protection services and family violence groups. “We realised that it was a whole of government question,” said Cumberland, “and that no one agency was going to solve it alone, so we couldn’t just keep going back to our separate corners like the old days. The system was the priority and we were all responsible for making it work.”

As time went on participants on the Committee began documenting the problems and working on possible solutions in a report entitled: *Reforming the Family Violence System in Victoria*. Despite the growing connections and sense of common understanding, preparing the document was still “a long, tortuous process” according to Steendam. NGAs were still struggling to enunciate their aims and principles and incorporate them in a model. There were also more tensions on the horizon. One of the aims of the report was to secure funding from the Government to support the new model, raising the possibility that some groups might miss out.

However, the case for increased funding was becoming stronger. Nixon’s decision to make family violence a priority raised awareness and increased research into the area. Two

significant reports were released in 2004 which changed the way the Government in particular viewed the significance of family violence. One report by Vic Health,⁹ supported by DHS, looked at the contribution of family violence to Victoria's disease burden and the results were startling. It found that intimate partner violence accounted for nine percent of the total disease burden for women aged 15-44, contributing more than obesity, illicit drugs and alcohol (*Exhibit B*). Intimate partner violence had a considerable impact on mental health outcomes such as anxiety, depression and suicide. The other report, by Access Economics, estimated the total cost of domestic violence to the Australian economy during 2002-2003 was in the region of \$8 billion (*Exhibit C*). This included costs to future generations. It was estimated that there had been more than 400,000 victims of domestic violence who bore the greatest share of the costs, however, the expense to state and federal governments was placed at over \$1 billion that year.

For Committee members, the results of these studies reinforced the importance of their work. It also created momentum around the issue and Gassner hoped that this, plus the Code of Practice would make the government positively predisposed towards releasing funds. In February 2005, the Committee finally released its report entitled: *Reforming the Family Violence System in Victoria*. It proposed an integrated service delivery model (*Exhibit D*) and the establishment of a state-wide Family Violence Advisory Committee along with regional and local Governance Committees to facilitate cooperation and ensure consistency. The Steering Committee faced a setback when the Government declined the first funding application which disheartened members. But they were successful upon their second attempt. Even so, noted Steendam, there were still difficulties to overcome:

“The focus was for the ultimate good and the best system that we could get but there were different philosophical positions and ways they undertook their service delivery. So to arrive at a common approach or think about amalgamating services was very confronting for some services, especially if it meant losing an area of service provision. That was probably one of the biggest challenges in moving across to an integrated response to family violence. It became a significant tension point when funding was obtained and the rollout started to occur. The intention of the steering committee was not about defunding currently funded services but looking at getting the best outcome and service provision. By default that meant some services missed out, not a lot but some did.”

2005 and beyond

As predicted, the number of family violence incidents rose, reaching almost 30,000 during 2004-2005 according to police statistics. The following year, there was a slight decrease in incidents, then a rebound in reports in most regions during 2006-2007. Rhonda Cumberland reported that NGA feedback indicated that the police response had significantly improved. And at the coalface, individuals and groups were forging better linkages. Cumberland recalled that, “we saw new possibilities. We met at the local police station to develop a joint response to transporting unsafe women and children. Most women enter refuge services at night. Typically, they arrive by taxi and there were times when they were followed. Now we had made arrangements for women to be dropped off at 24 hour police stations, dramatically improving their level of safety.”

⁹ Vic Health – also known as the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation is a statutory authority established to work with organisations, communities and individuals to promote public wellbeing and prevent ill-health.

In 2005, Cumberland took up a position with the Department of Victorian Communities and was confident that there was a whole-of government commitment to genuine improvement. While Victoria Police still occupied an important leadership position, DVC had now taken a bigger role especially in coordinating the activities of larger government departments such as DHS and Justice. “The priority is the system, that it is strong and that it will do what it says it will do so that women can have confidence in it,” said Cumberland. She acknowledged that it was difficult to operate a system across departments but felt they were making good progress: “When we check our thinking against Australian and international standards we are ahead in some areas and behind in others. But we are quite pleased with how we are travelling. The government has provided continuing vision and leadership, knowing that we are seeking generational change.” She knew that funding of NGAs was still an ongoing issue and there were big problems around measuring performance, consistent standards, staff training and retention. But Cumberland had observed major improvements:

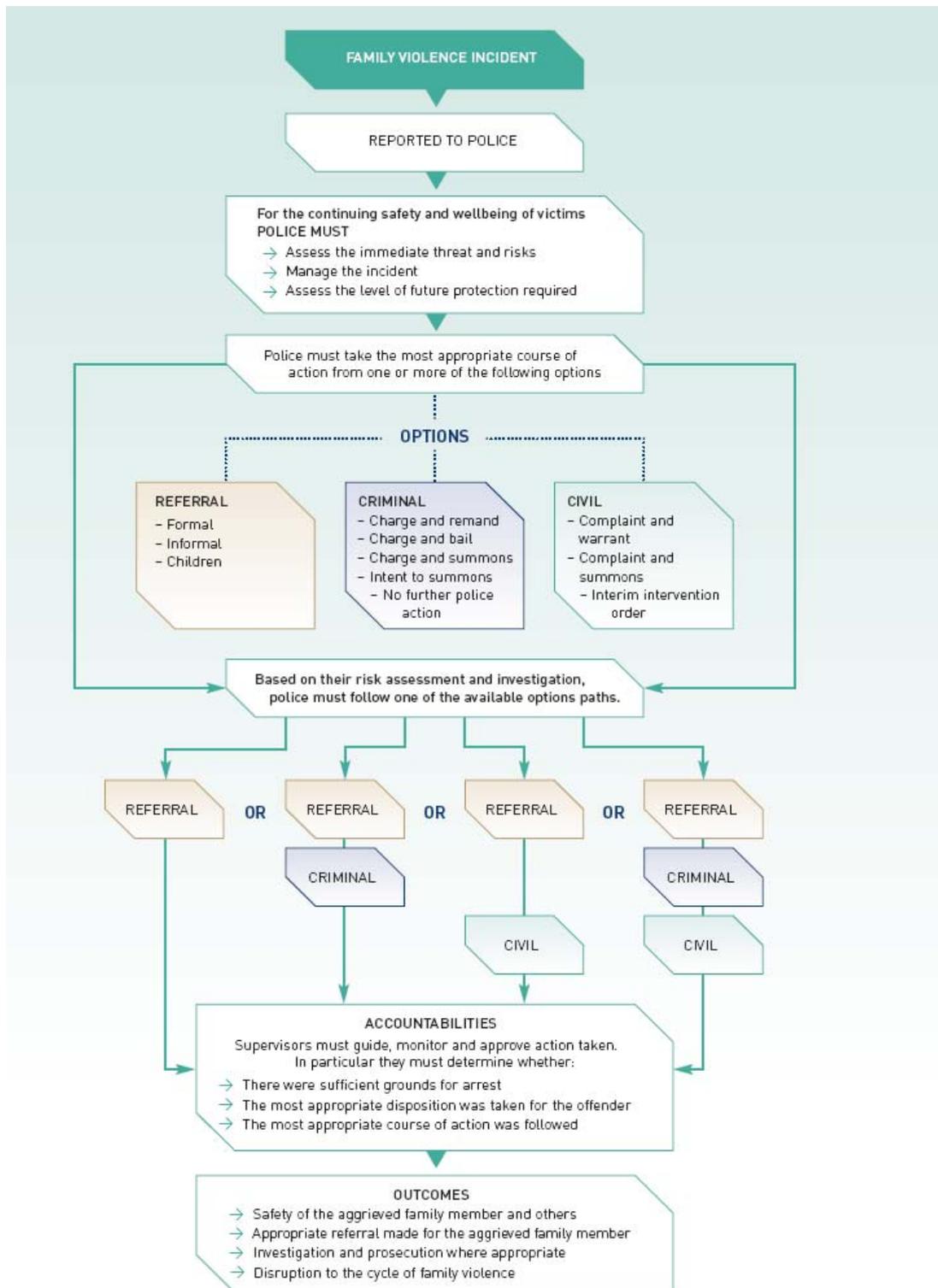
“You still hear haunting stories – police taking too long to respond, or high risk women returning home or the problems of indigenous communities where family and community violence intersect. But there is no turning back. The government has significantly invested in reform, the police continue to lead and support services are gradually changing. The courts too have pushed their own boundaries. There are still complaints about uneven responses but change is happening on the ground.”

Gassner also hoped for improved judicial responses including more streamlined process but that notwithstanding, he reported that police were now taking out significantly more intervention orders. The number of criminal charges laid was also up, jumping by 73 percent in the first year alone. Steendam noted in 2009 that since 2004 and the introduction of the Victoria Police Code of Practice there had been a:

- 168% increase in the number of intervention orders applied for by police;
- 153% increase in charges laid; and a
- 22.4% increase in offences arising from breaches of intervention orders.

In addition, Victoria Police had since employed eleven family violence advisors and rolled out a wide-ranging education program for officers. Gassner noted an attitudinal change shift from tolerating the Code of Practice to embracing it: “Many members understand it, know why it is there and are moving into it.” Steendam believed that although there was still a way for police to go yet, that the increased number of reports was an encouraging sign. But the next challenge was to reduce the number of repeat visits and free more families from the cycle of violence.

Exhibit A: Family Violence response protocol



Source: Code of Practice for the investigation of Family Violence, Victoria Police, August 2004, p.5.

Exhibit B: Impact of intimate partner violence

Figure 1: Health outcomes contributing to the disease burden of intimate partner violence in Victorian women

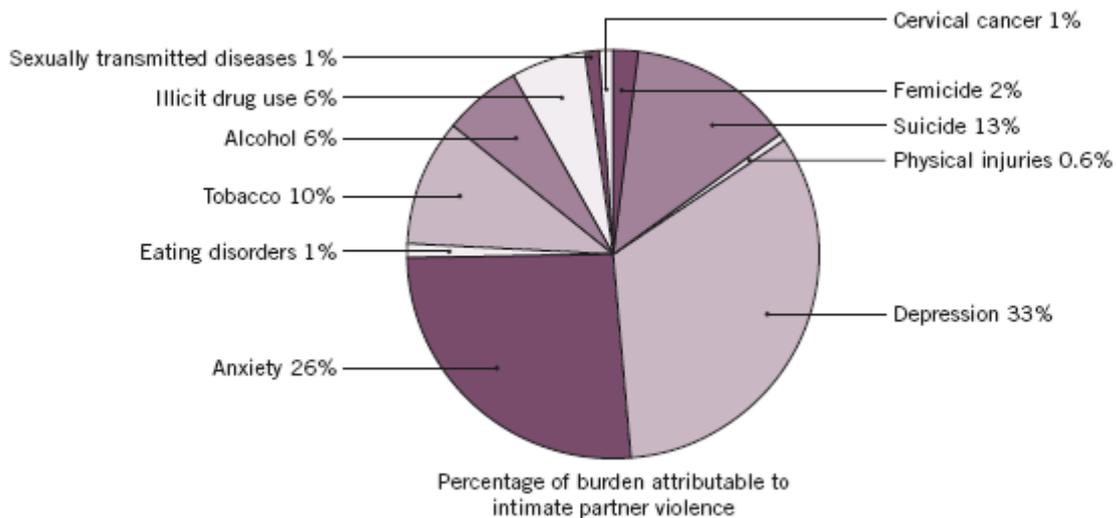
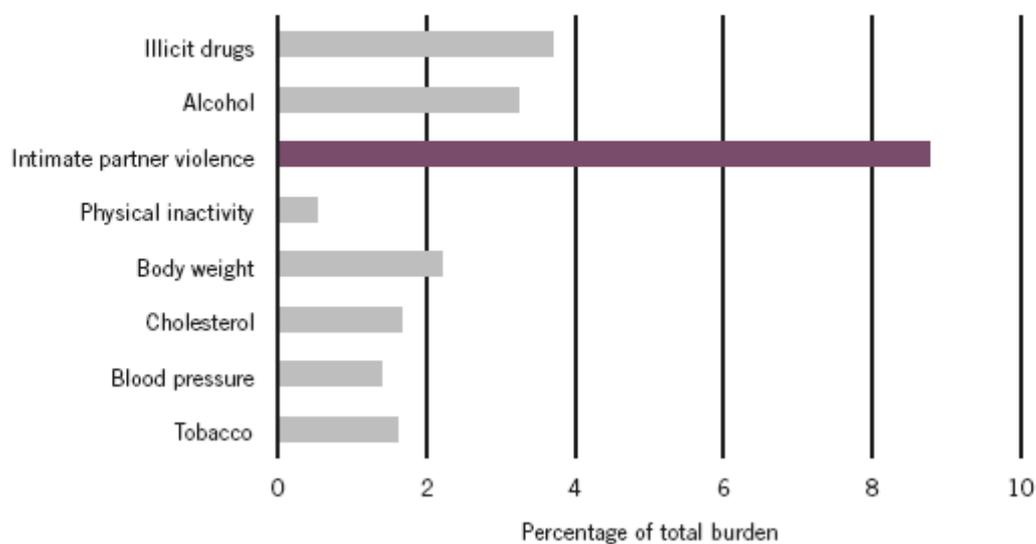


Figure 2: Top eight risk factors contributing to the disease burden in Victorian women aged 15–44 years



Source: 'The health costs of violence: Measuring the burden of disease caused by intimate partner violence' Vic Health, 2004, p.11.

Exhibit C: Economic Cost of family violence

Table 1: Summary Of Annual Costs By Cost Category

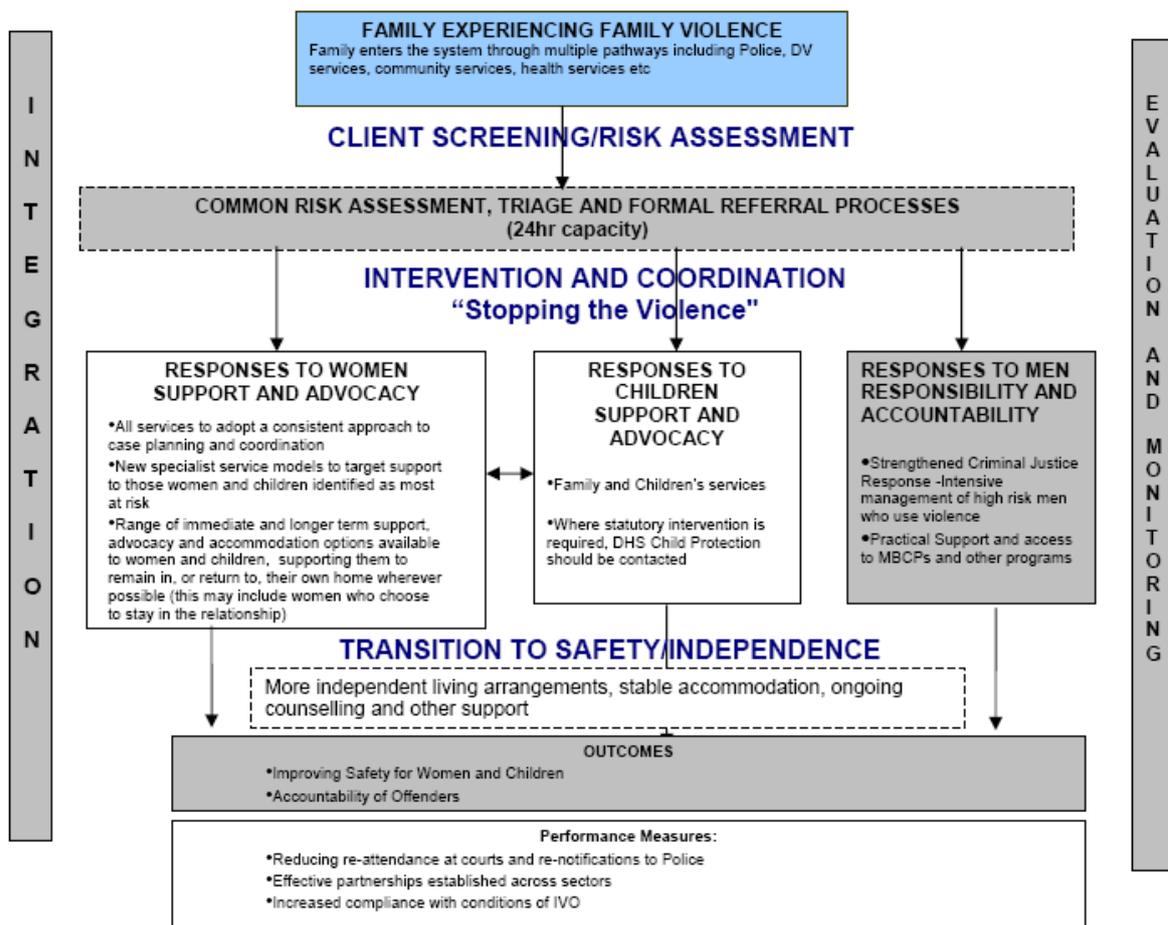
CATEGORY OF COST	ANNUAL COST IN 2002-03 (\$M)
Pain, suffering and premature mortality	3,521
Health	388
Production	484
Consumption	2,575
Administration and Other	480
Second generational	220
Economic cost of transfers	410
Total	8,078
Total (excl. pain, suffering)	4,557

Table 2: Summary of Annual Costs by Affected Group

AFFECTED GROUP	ANNUAL COST IN 2002-03 (\$M)
Victim	4,048
Perpetrator	555
Children	769
Employers	175
Friends and Family	7
Federal government	848
State/Territory government	487
Community	1,190
Total	8,078

Source: 'The Cost of Domestic Violence to the Australian Economy: Part 1' Access Economics, October 2004, p.vii.

Exhibit D: Proposed Client Service Model



Source: 'Reforming the Family Violence System in Victoria' Report of the Statewide Steering Committee to Reduce Family Violence, February 200, p.27.