

For Immediate Release

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NSW Government to Criminalise Coercive Control

The NSW Government has announced coercive control in current and former intimate partner relationships will be outlawed.

“We are supportive of the government’s announcement to criminalise this hidden and insidious form of abuse,” says Delia Donovan, CEO of Domestic Violence NSW. “We are especially gratified it will be implemented with an educated, evidence-based and consultative approach to ensure it doesn’t cause any further harm for those it’s designed to help.”

The announcement comes as part of the government’s response to the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee on Coercive Control. It supports 17 of the Committee’s 23 recommendations, with six of the recommendations still under review. The recommendations are the result of the 2020/2021 Inquiry into coercive control which saw over 150 submissions and numerous days of public hearings opened by DVNSW.

DVNSW made seven recommendations after extensive consultation with key members and victim-survivors, with the majority only supporting criminalising coercive control if there’s a thorough consultation process with the specialist DFV sector. Further recommendations included suitable training and adequate resourcing for the sector and training for police and the judiciary. You can read DVNSW’s full submission [here](#).

“DVNSW believes introducing coercive control as a criminal offence provides an opportunity to improve the safety of victim-survivors in NSW,” says Ms Donovan. “However, it needs to be enacted following comprehensive consultation, including a whole-of-community and government approach and extensive investment in the domestic and family violence prevention and response sector.”

DVNSW especially welcomes the supported recommendations from the report that focus on increasing resources for domestic violence services providers, housing service providers and women’s domestic violence court advocacy services, including in regional and rural areas.

Primary prevention also features strongly in the new recommendations. Training and public awareness campaigns on coercive control will be developed and delivered in consultation with communities and stakeholders, including culturally and linguistically diverse and First Nations communities and organisations.

“It’s important that experts and those with experience are consulted beyond this announcement, in order to introduce measures that are successful and safe when implemented to achieve the aim of reducing risk of harm and death,” says Ms Donovan.

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Domestic Violence NSW is the peak body for specialist domestic and family violence services in NSW. DVNSW provides a representative and advocacy function for specialist services and the women, families and communities they support. Their mission is to eliminate domestic and family violence through leadership in policy, advocacy, partnerships and the promotion of best practice.

If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence help can be found via:

- **1800RESPECT** or 1800 737 732 which offers a national counselling helpline, information and support
- **NSW Domestic Violence Line** 1800 65 64 63 which offers a state-wide counselling helpline, information and support
- **Men's Referral Service** 1300 766 491 for men, or friends and family of men using violence