

Now that Coercive Control is to be made a crime in NSW, training and education must begin in earnest.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 30 JUNE 2021

The NSW Parliamentary Committee examining Coercive Control in Domestic Relationships has handed down a unanimous recommendation to make coercive control a criminal offence.

Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia (R&DVSA) welcomes the Committee's findings which reflect the overwhelming majority of submissions made to it earlier this year.

"This is a landmark moment in our collective struggle for safety and justice for people impacted by sexual and domestic violence, whose voices were the catalyst for this reform." Hayley Foster, CEO.

"It is a win for those with lived experience of violence and abuse, many of whom have stood up and spoken out about the psychological impacts of this most dangerous and damaging aspect of their experiences."

The Committee recommended the establishment of an implementation taskforce to manage the introduction of a criminal offence of coercive control.

Ms Foster said this is critically important:

"We have to ensure the implementation of these laws is expert-led. This must include representation of people with lived experience, diverse backgrounds and experiences, and most essentially Indigenous women and communities. This is critically important."

R&DVSA's submission to the Inquiry focussed on the need for the new offence to be accompanied by comprehensive training and professional development for key personnel such as police and the judiciary so they fully understand coercive control and effectively operationalise the law, and for widespread community education and consultation. This was similarly a key emphasis of the Committee Report.

Ms Foster said this must be a top priority, and like the law itself, must be done well.

"Now that we will be recognising coercive control as a crime, we need to prioritise meaningful investment in training and professional development for first responders so they implement it effectively," said Ms Foster. "And we need to bring the community along, so we have a common understanding of what coercive control is, how to respond to it, and where to get expert help when we need it."

"R&DVSA stands ready to assist the NSW Government and key partner agencies in this task, and support anyone who has experienced coercive control or any form of domestic violence via our 24/7 trauma counselling services."

Media enquiries

For further information or comment, contact Hayley Foster phone: 0477 442 122
email: ceo@rape-dvservices.org.au

About Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia (R&DVSA).

Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia supports people affected by sexual, domestic or family violence. We believe they deserve to be listened to and supported in their recovery.

We offer expert, confidential telephone, online and face to face counselling to people of all genders who have experienced sexual, domestic or family violence, and specialist help for their supporters and those experiencing vicarious trauma.

We offer professional training and support to organisations seeking to improve their workplace policies and responses.

We also advocate with governments, the media and the community to prevent and end violence, and to improve their response when it occurs.

Our phone lines are open 24/7

NSW Rape Crisis 1800 424 017

For anyone in NSW impacted by sexual assault (including friends, families and supporters).

Sexual Assault Counselling Australia 1800 211 028

For adult survivors of childhood institutional sexual abuse. Supporting anyone accessing the Redress Scheme and alternative compensation, nationally.

Domestic Violence Impact Line 1800 943 539

For anyone in Australia whose life has been impacted by domestic or family violence (including supporters experiencing vicarious trauma).

LGBTIQ+ Violence Services 1800 497 212

For anyone from the LGBTIQ+ community whose life has been impacted by sexual domestic and/or family violence.

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Department of Social Services and NRMA Insurance
ABN 58 023 656 939

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