



# **SAFE HOMES, SAFE FAMILIES**

Tasmania's Family Violence  
Action Plan 2015–2020

## **RESPONDING AND REPORTING**

Achievements in the delivery of  
Safe Homes, Safe Families  
and Future Directions



Tasmanian  
Government

# SAFE HOMES, SAFE FAMILIES

Tasmania's Family Violence  
Action Plan 2015–2020



**\$26 million** in additional funding to take action against family violence

**1,144** recommendations provided by the Safe Families Coordination Unit to better support victims of family violence and hold perpetrators to account

**162** high risk family violence incidents mapped by the Safe Families Coordination Unit

**795** at risk children identified and **464** notifications made by the Safe Families Coordination Unit to schools to support students experiencing family violence

**78** clients provided with support, counselling and referral options by the new Safe Choices service  
*(1 July – 31 December 2016)*



**3** Tasmanian Government Departments accredited as White Ribbon Workplaces, with over **1,600** employees in 2016

Over **37.8 million** online views of the *Stop It At The Start* national campaign video



**6** additional psychologists and social workers appointed to Child and Family Centres to support children affected by family violence

**76** additional children and young people received counselling services provided by CatholicCare *(1 December 2015 - 31 December 2016)*

**122** additional hours of counselling and service provision for children and young people provided by the Australian Childhood Foundation  
*(1 October - 31 December 2016)*

**282** additional hours of counselling services for adults provided by Support, Help, Empowerment (SHE)  
*(1 July – 31 December 2016)*

**30** additional houses made available for families experiencing family violence



**312** additional clients provided with legal assistance by Women's Legal Service Tasmania and Community Legal Centres

**78** calls to the Men's Referral Service

# FOREWORD

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## Eliminating family violence remains a top priority for the Tasmanian Government.



In August 2015, my Government launched the nation-leading *Safe Homes, Safe Families: Tasmania's Family Violence Action Plan 2015-2020* (Safe Homes, Safe Families).

Under Safe Homes, Safe Families we committed an additional \$26 million to fund new and direct actions to address family violence in Tasmania.

We have made strong progress against each of the actions during the first eighteen months of implementation. Key achievements are highlighted throughout this document.

We are keeping our promise to respond to emerging family violence issues and to learn from new evidence. As a result, we are building on our initial commitment by introducing new actions in this Report. These new actions will provide additional support to victims and improve their safety at home, and will promote understanding of family violence within the service system.

We will continue to take a responsive approach, and to take account of new evidence as we continue to deliver Safe Homes, Safe Families.

By taking strong action we have sent a clear message that family violence is unacceptable in our community.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Will Hodgman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

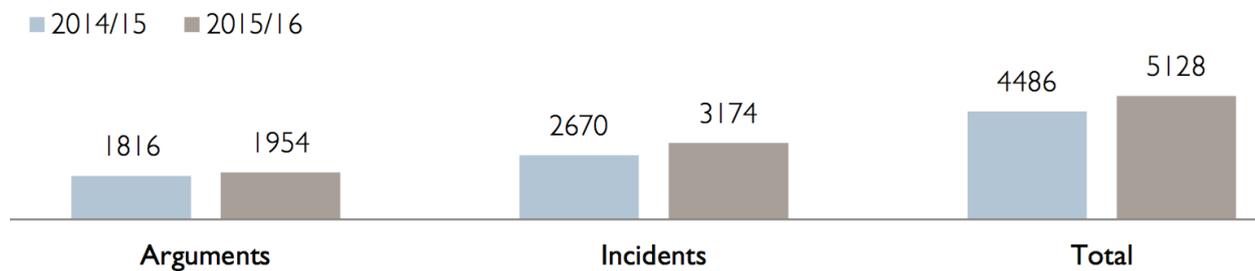
The Hon Will Hodgman MP  
**Premier**

# FAMILY VIOLENCE IN TASMANIA

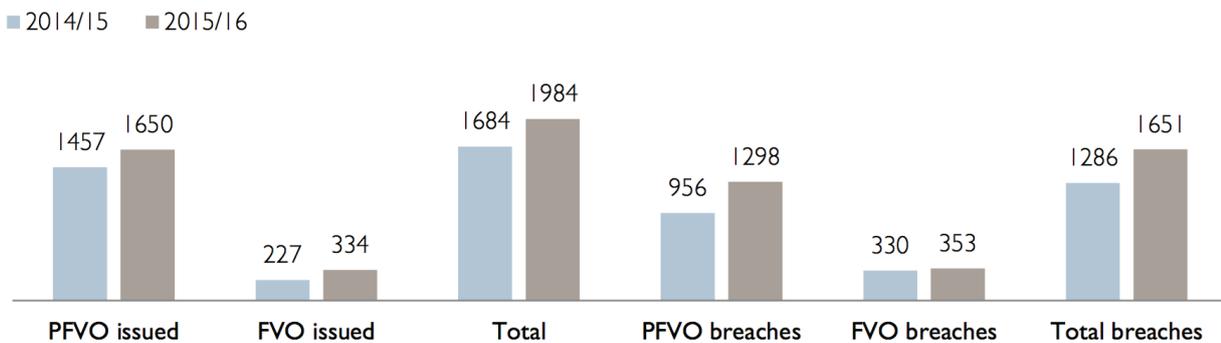
When Safe Homes, Safe Families was released, it was acknowledged that greater community awareness and intolerance of family violence would help victims to feel more confident to report offences, which may lead to increased reporting.

Tasmania Police data from the 2015/16 financial year (1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016) shows a 14.3 per cent increase in the reported incidence of family violence in Tasmania.<sup>1</sup>

Tasmania Police attended 5,128 family violence arguments and incidents, compared with 4,486 in 2014/15.



Also in the 2015/16 financial year, 1,984 Police Family Violence Orders (PFVOs) and Family Violence Orders (FVOs) were issued, compared with 1,684 in 2014/15; an increase of 17.8 per cent. There were 1,651 breaches of PFVOs and FVOs, compared with 1,286 in 2014/15; an increase of 28.4 per cent. The figures for FVOs only include applications made by Police and do not capture private applications.



Reported breaches of PFVOs and FVOs are attended by Tasmania Police. The three additional police prosecutors appointed under Safe Homes, Safe Families, are ensuring the consistent and specialised prosecution of family violence offences, including breaches.

Preliminary data from the Department of Justice indicates that in the 2015/16 financial year, there has been an increase in the number of defendants found guilty of breaching FVOs and PFVOs under s35(1) of the *Family Violence Act 2004* (Tas).

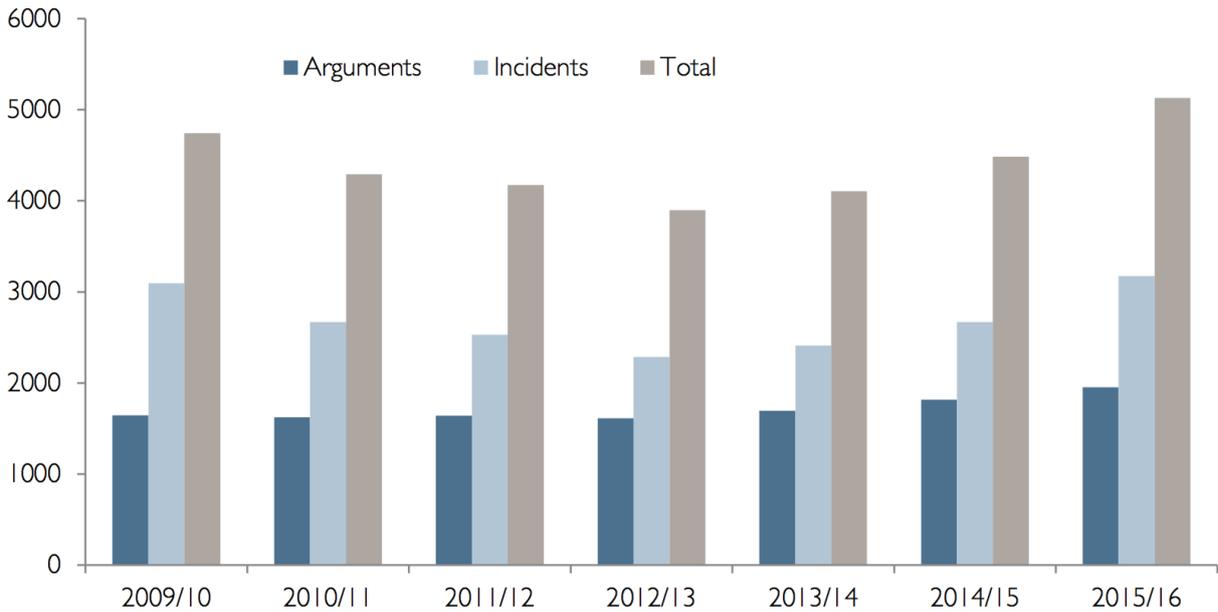
<sup>1</sup> Data sourced from the June 2016 Tasmania Police Corporate Report, available at [www.police.tas.gov.au](http://www.police.tas.gov.au). Please note data for the 2014/15 financial year was revised in June 2016.

# FAMILY VIOLENCE IN TASMANIA

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While an increase in the reported incidence of family violence following the release of Safe Homes, Safe Families was expected, reporting levels are predicted to stabilise over the next few years, in line with long-term trends.

The graph below shows the reported incidence of family violence over the past seven financial years.



**Living free from  
violence is everyone's  
right.**

**Taking action to  
prevent it is everyone's  
responsibility.**

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# SAFE HOMES, SAFE FAMILIES: TASMANIA'S FAMILY VIOLENCE ACTION PLAN

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*Safe Homes, Safe Families: Tasmania's Family Violence Action Plan 2015-2020* outlined 18 new and direct actions to address family violence in Tasmania. In line with our commitment to listen, learn and take a flexible approach, we have added new actions to further strengthen our response.

## **Establishing Safe Families Tasmania**

- 1a. Establish the Safe Families Coordination Unit
- 1b. Establish Safe Choices

## **Changing attitudes and behaviours that lead to family violence**

2. Develop and deliver a Respectful Relationships program in all government schools
3. Take a lead role in supporting the national campaign to reduce violence against women and their children
4. Join the national Our Watch organisation
5. Roll out White Ribbon's Workplace Accreditation Program across all Tasmanian Government agencies

## **Supporting families affected by violence**

6. Support children affected by family violence in government schools and Child and Family Centres
7. Support children affected by family violence in non-government schools
8. Extend counselling services for children and young people experiencing family violence
9. Provide additional counselling services for adults experiencing family violence
10. Invest in crisis accommodation
11. Provide supported housing options

## **Strengthening our legal responses**

12. Strengthen the legislative framework to address family violence
13. Extend legal assistance to people experiencing family violence
14. Appoint more specialist police prosecutors
15. Support perpetrator programs for low to medium risk offenders
16. Extend forensic medical examination to include victims of family violence
17. Develop a business case for a Criminal Justice Information Management System
18. Improve data collection and reporting

## **New actions**

19. Develop and deliver a Safe Homes, Safe Families training program for front line staff of the Department of Education (including LINC and TasTAFE)
20. Provide practical supports to enable victims of family violence to stay safely in their own homes
21. Develop a practice guide to support service providers working with clients impacted by family violence
22. Work with the Tasmanian Aboriginal community to support Aboriginal families experiencing family violence



The Premier; the Hon Will Hodgman MP, launching Safe Homes, Safe Families with Natasha Stott Despoja, Australia's Ambassador for Women and Girls and Chair of Our Watch and Rosie Batty, 2015 Australian of the Year, 13 August 2015.



The Premier, Jennifer Mullen White Ribbon Australia, Tony Ferrall, Department of Treasury and Finance, Greg Johannes, Department of Premier and Cabinet, Commissioner Darren Hine, Tasmania Police and the Hon Jacquie Petrusma MP, Minister for Women, celebrating the first three Tasmanian Government agencies becoming accredited as White Ribbon Workplaces, 25 November 2016.

# KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND FUTURE MILESTONES

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## Establishing Safe Families Tasmania

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### Key Achievements (13 August 2015 – 31 December 2016)

- Safe Families Coordination Unit established and fully operational on 27 June 2016 (Action 1a).
- Safe Choices face-to-face service in southern Tasmania and statewide phone service established and operational on 30 June 2016 (Action 1b).

### Future Milestones (1 January 2017 – 30 June 2018)

- Development and implementation of a revised risk framework for the Safe Families Coordination Unit by January 2018 (Action 1a).
- Independent review of the Safe Families Coordination Unit undertaken, with findings provided and addressed by 30 June 2018 (Action 1a).
- Safe Choices north west site operational by the end of June 2017 (Action 1b).
- Safe Choices northern site operational by the end of June 2018 (Action 1b).



## Changing attitudes and behaviours that lead to family violence

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### Key Achievements (13 August 2015 – 31 December 2016)

- Respectful Relationships Education Program, for birth to Year 12, developed for implementation in all Tasmanian Government schools (Action 2).
- Respectful Relationships Education Program trialled in selected schools (Action 2).
- National Campaign, Stop It At The Start, successfully launched on 24 April 2017 (Action 3).
- Tasmanian Government joined Our Watch and hosted a board meeting on 13 August 2015 (Action 4).
- The Departments of Premier and Cabinet, Treasury and Finance and Police, Fire and Emergency Management (Group One) achieved White Ribbon Workplace accreditation on 25 November 2016 (Action 5).

### Future Milestones (1 January 2017 – 30 June 2018)

- Respectful Relationships Education Program implemented in all Tasmanian Government schools in Term 1 2018 (Action 2).
- Community engagement initiatives to support Stop It At The Start rolled-out in 2017-18 (Action 3).
- The new Safe Choices Liaison Officer, co-located with the Child Safety Notification Assessment area in the Department of Health and Human Services, to manage referrals to the broader family violence service system [funded through the National Campaign] (Action 3).
- The Departments of Education and Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (Group Two) to achieve White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation by March 2018 (Action 5).
- Group Three Agencies (to be confirmed) begin the White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation Program - start dates subject to White Ribbon's intake availability (Action 5).

# KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND FUTURE MILESTONES

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## Supporting families affected by violence

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### *Key Achievements (13 August 2015 – 31 December 2016)*

- Six additional psychologists and social workers, based in Child and Family Centres in Bridgewater, East Devonport and Ravenswood appointed to support children affected by family violence (Action 6).
- Grant deeds developed with Independent Schools Tasmania and the Tasmanian Catholic Education Office to support children affected by family violence in non-government schools (Action 7).
- The Australian Childhood Foundation announced as the successful proponent to deliver additional counselling services for children and young people experiencing family violence on 22 June 2016 (Action 8).
- Support, Help, Empowerment (SHE) announced as the successful proponent to deliver additional counselling services for adults experiencing family violence on 22 June 2016 (Action 9).
- Site identified and secured for the new Hobart Women's Shelter. Architect engaged, design developed and a Development Application submitted in December 2016 (Action 10).
- A pool of 30 rental properties established for those impacted by family violence. A financial incentive introduced for Housing Connect providers to increase the number of properties available (Action 11).
- Forensic medical examinations at the Royal Hobart Hospital extended to include adult victims of family violence on 18 April 2016 (Action 16).

### *Future Milestones (1 January 2017 – 30 June 2018)*

- Projects delivered as outlined in grant deeds with Independent Schools Tasmania and the Tasmanian Catholic Education Office (January 2017 – December 2017) (Action 7).
- Projects under grant deeds evaluated in November 2017 and the next round of grant deeds finalised by February 2018 (Action 7).
- Construction of the new Hobart Women's Shelter commencing by mid-2017 and completed by 31 December 2017 (Action 10).
- Properties continue to be identified to establish a pool of 50 rental properties to house those affected by family violence (Action 11).
- Review of the Royal Hobart Hospital pilot of forensic medical examinations for victims of family violence by July 2017 (Action 16).
- Option of extending the pilot to the Launceston General Hospital, subject to the review, considered by December 2017 (Action 16).

# KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND FUTURE MILESTONES

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## Strengthening our legal responses

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### Key achievements (13 August 2015 – 31 December 2016)

- Family Violence Amendment Bill 2015 to strengthen the operation of the *Family Violence Act 2004* (Tas) passed by the Tasmanian Parliament in October 2015 (Action 12).
- Family Violence Reform Bill tabled in Parliament on 15 November 2016 (Action 12).
- Women's Legal Service Tasmania and the Legal Aid Commission of Tasmania announced as the successful proponents to deliver additional legal services in October 2016 (Action 13).
- Women's Legal Service Tasmania extended operations to the north and north east to offer dedicated family violence assistance statewide in December 2016 (Action 13).
- Three additional specialist family violence police prosecutors appointed; one in each region (Action 14).
- Relationships Australia Tasmania announced as the successful proponent to deliver a Men's Behaviour Change Program on 2 August 2016 (Action 15).
- No To Violence (Men's Referral Service) announced as the successful proponent to deliver the men's counselling and referral service in Tasmania on 2 August 2016 (Action 15).
- Additional Defendant Health Liaison Officer appointed in December 2016 (Action 15).
- Additional facilitator employed to reduce the waitlist for the Family Violence Offender Intervention Program (Action 15).
- Business case for the Criminal Justice Information Management System developed (Action 17).
- The Safe At Home Information Management System (SIMS) migrated to a new content management system in September 2016 (Action 18).

### Future Milestones (1 January 2017 – 30 June 2018)

- Public consultation on further options to strengthen the legislative framework open from December 2016 to February 2017 (Action 12).
- Family Violence Reforms Bill 2016 to provide further protection to victims and witnesses debated during the autumn Parliamentary sitting (Action 12).
- Submissions to the *Family Violence: Strengthening Our Legal Responses Consultation Paper* evaluated to inform further legislative reform options (Action 12).
- Introduce legislation in the second half of 2017 to further improve the safety of victims (Action 12).
- Women's Legal Service Tasmania fully established in the north and north east of Tasmania by March 2017 (Action 13).
- Relationships Australia Tasmania commence delivery of the Men Engaging New Strategies (MENS) program in March 2017 (Action 15).
- Introduce the EQUIPS Domestic Abuse Program for medium risk male perpetrators and EQUIPS Aggression Program for violent perpetrators, including female perpetrators, as part of the Community Corrections suite of offender programs in March 2017 (Action 15).
- Safe At Home Information Management System (SIMS) data exchange with Australian Government Department of Social Services finalised (Action 18).

# KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND FUTURE MILESTONES

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## New actions

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### *Key Achievements*

- Safe Homes, Safe Families training program developed for all Department of Education frontline staff, including LINC and TasTAFE (Action 19).

### *Future Milestones (1 January 2017 – 30 June 2018)*

- The Department of Education to finalise activity and incorporate family violence awareness training for frontline staff into the Department's White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation Program work plan (Action 19).
- Risk assessments, safety planning and security upgrades available to support women experiencing family violence to stay safely in their own home, or a home of their choice (Action 20).
- Targeted consultation to inform the development of a family violence practice guide (Action 21).
- Family violence practice guide launched in June 2017 (Action 21).
- Build the capacity of frontline services to support Aboriginal women and children affected by family violence (Action 22).

# AN EVIDENCE BASED APPROACH

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Since the launch of Safe Homes, Safe Families, a number of developments have contributed new evidence and resulted in changes to the policy environment, including:

- the research findings published by Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS);
- the release of the Final Report of the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence (February 2016);
- the launch of the Final Report of the Family Violence Men's Education Project, co-authored by the Salvation Army and the University of Tasmania, *Increasing Men's Awareness of the Effects on Children Exposed to Family and Domestic Violence*, (March 2016);
- the release of the Final Report of the Council of Australian Governments' (COAG) Advisory Panel on Reducing Violence Against Women (April 2016);
- the launch of the Tasmanian Commissioner for Children and Young People's Report, *Children and Young People's Unique Experiences of Family Violence: Family Violence and Children and Young People in Tasmania* (September 2016); and
- the launch of the *Third Action Plan 2016-2019 of the National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children 2015-2020* at the COAG National Summit in Brisbane (October 2016).

In response to these developments, and informed by our learnings to date, we have developed new actions which further strengthen our response to family violence.



Rosie Batty and the Tasmanian Commissioner for Children and Young People Mark Morrissey at the launch of *Children and Young People's Unique Experience of Family Violence: Family violence and Children and Young People in Tasmania* in Hobart, September 2016.  
Source: ABC News



The Hon Jacquie Petrusma MP, with Dr Heather Nancarrow, Chief Executive Officer ANROWS, Dr Linda Murray, University of Tasmania and Dr Cathy Vaughan, University of Melbourne at the launch of the ANROWS ASPIRE Project Research Report in Hobart, December 2016.

# GOING FORWARD

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## Consultation

The Family Violence Consultative Group is comprised of representatives from key family violence service providers and community sector organisations. Consultation was an important aspect of the development of Safe Homes, Safe Families, and the Consultative Group has made a positive contribution by providing input and feedback during the implementation phase.

In recognition of the Consultative Group's positive achievements to date, in 2017 membership of the Group was extended to include representatives from the service providers that are contracted to deliver programs and services under Safe Homes, Safe Families.

## Evaluation

The Tasmanian Government will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of each action under Safe Homes, Safe Families and will adjust and add new actions as required to ensure that the actions continue to achieve the desired outcomes.

## Budget

Funding for actions under Safe Homes, Safe Families has been allocated over the forward estimates for the first four years, up to and including the 2018-19 financial year.

The Tasmanian Government is taking a flexible and evidence based approach to the development of new actions and the evaluation of existing actions. This approach will underpin decisions for funding from the 2019-20 financial year and beyond.

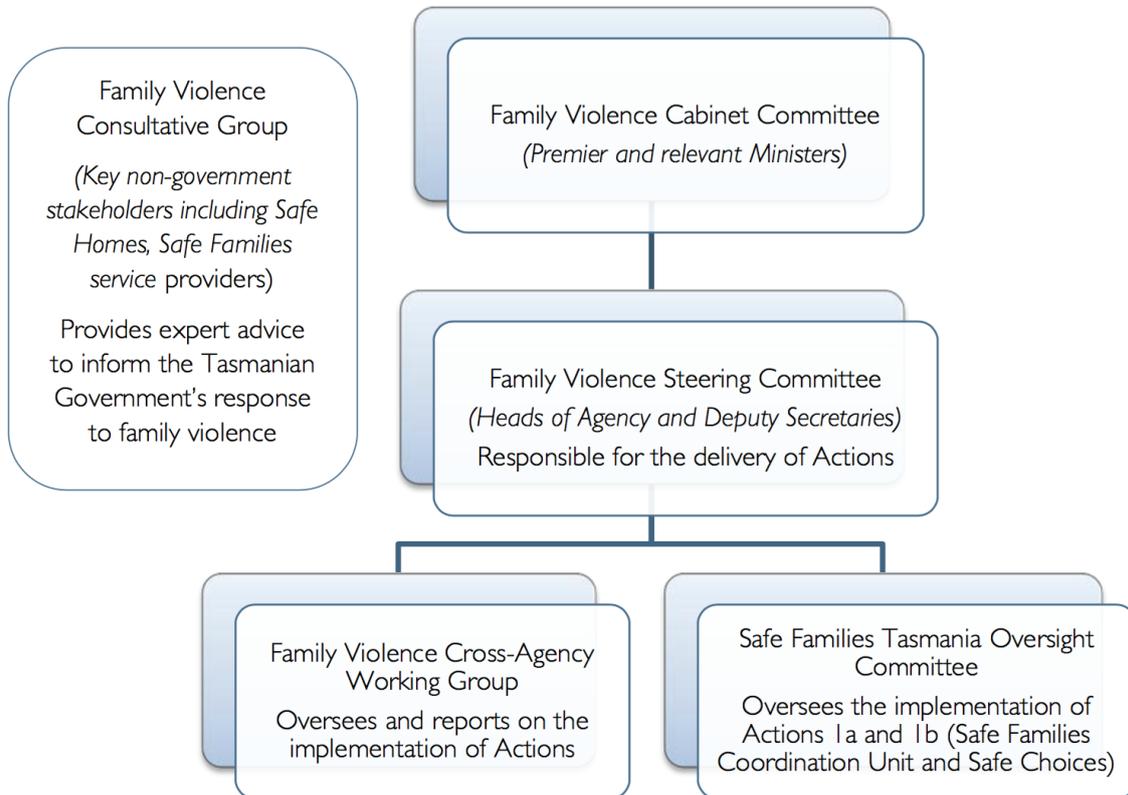
## Future reporting

Tasmanian Government agencies will continue to provide annual progress reports to Cabinet, outlining the progress of actions, achievements and future priorities.

# GOVERNANCE

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The implementation of Safe Homes, Safe Families will continue to be supported by a collaborative and coordinated governance structure.



**Thank you to everyone who has supported the implementation of Safe Homes, Safe Families.**

**Together we are driving real change in our community.**

**Together we can create a Tasmania free from family violence.**

**Department of Premier and Cabinet**

Email: [fvap@dpac.tas.gov.au](mailto:fvap@dpac.tas.gov.au) | Visit: [www.dpac.tas.gov.au](http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au)

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**If you or someone you  
know is impacted by family violence:**

Call the Safe at Home Family Violence Response and Referral Line on 1800 633 937

or visit [www.1800respect.org.au](http://www.1800respect.org.au)

**In an emergency, always call 000**