

Response to question on notice

Questions on Notice Paper No 11

26 September 2025

Question No. 674

DEBORAH MORRIS MLA: To ask the Minister for the Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence —

1. What factors has the ACT Government identified as contributing to the increase in domestic violence-related assaults in the Brindabella electorate from 308 in 2018 to 353 in 2024.
2. What targeted interventions are currently being implemented to address and reduce domestic violence-related assaults in the Brindabella electorate.
3. For the reported domestic violence-related assaults referred to in part (1) that did not proceed to prosecution, what were the primary reasons.
4. What measures are being implemented by ACT Policing or the Director of Public Prosecutions to improve prosecution rates for domestic violence-related assaults.

DR MARISA PATERSON MLA - The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

1. Domestic and family violence (DFV) is a complex problem with multiple contributing factors and no single cause explaining its prevalence. A range of factors can influence whether a DFV incident is reported to police,¹ and no specific data is available on drivers of reporting in the Brindabella electorate.
2. The ACT Government funds and implements a range of DFV responses on a Territory-wide basis. These responses are designed to be accessible by all Canberrans across the ACT to ensure people can seek the DFV services and supports most suitable to their needs. The [ACT Budget papers](#) and the [DFSV 2025-26 Factsheet](#) provide more information on responses to DFV funded by the ACT Government.

DFV remains a high operational priority for ACT Policing, with a pro-arrest, pro-charge and presumption against bail approach to incidents when matters are reported. ACT Policing's capabilities and approaches are being implemented consistently across the entire Territory, ensuring a standardised response to DFV matters throughout all regions, including Brindabella.

¹ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (30 July 2025), Family, domestic and sexual violence – FDV reported to police, accessible [here](#)

3. The Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) is an independent statutory officer and is responsible for making decisions about whether to prosecute certain charges based on informed expert judgment. All prosecution decisions are made in line with the DPP's [Prosecution Policy](#), which provides that the decision to prosecute can be understood as a two-stage process. First, does the evidence offer reasonable prospects of conviction? If so, is it in the public interest to proceed with a prosecution.

The Office of the DPP does not keep separate statistics on reasons why matters did not proceed to prosecution; however, it would be due to one or both of the above reasons – namely, either analysis of the brief of evidence has led to a determination the matter did not have reasonable prospects and/or the matter was no longer in the public interest to prosecute. The willingness of an alleged victim to give evidence, and any other issues such as 'misidentification' of the primary aggressor, can be considered in the public interest test.

4. ACT Policing is implementing a range of measures to improve prosecution rates for domestic violence-related assaults. These include:
- The ACT Policing high-risk domestic and family violence investigation unit (DFVIU) is a specialised capability staffed by officers trained in coercive control and technology assisted abuse. The DFVIU has enabled specialist investigators to focus on the highest risk domestic and family violence matters, as well as providing support and advice to frontline officers who are the first responders to those incidents. The DFVIU ensures that the most at-risk victim survivors get appropriate support and that offenders are engaged to ensure they are complying with court orders and other sanctions.
 - Increased training and capacity building:
 - ACT Policing is developing a new specific 3 tier DFV training package including revised training for recruits, frontline members and specialised detectives, in accordance with the Australia New Zealand Policing Advisory Agency's (ANZPAA) national guidelines for police training in DFV. Due for rollout from the first quarter of 2026, this incorporates funding provided in the 2024-2025 ACT Budget to support training to frontline agencies on identifying and responding to coercive control.
 - ACT Policing is also participating in national coercive control training delivered in partnership with the Commonwealth Attorney General's Department and ANZPAA. This will be delivered to approximately 400 frontline members in February 2026, and will be available for the remaining workforce via online delivery thereafter.

Approved for circulation to the Member and incorporation into Hansard.

M. Paterson

Dr Marisa Paterson MLA
Minister for the Police, Fire and Emergency Services

Date: 3/11/25

This response required 12hrs to complete, at an approximate cost of \$819.44.