

Response to question on notice

Questions on Notice Paper No 10

19 September 2025

Question No. 641

Ms Deborah Morris MLA: To ask the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services –

1. What key performance indicators are being used to assess the effectiveness of the Domestic, Family and Violence Intervention Unit (DFVIU).
2. What have been the measurable impacts of the DFVIU on case outcomes or victim support in the Brindabella electorate since its establishment.
3. Has the DFVIU implemented any specific initiatives or reforms in Brindabella; if so, what are the evaluation results to date.

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

1. Consistent with all portfolios across ACT Policing, the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the Domestic, Family and Violence Intervention Unit (DFVIU) are encapsulated within the overarching Performance Measure Framework outlined in the 2022-26 Purchase Agreement.

While there are currently no formal key performance indicators established specifically for the DFVIU, feedback from ACT Policing's partner agencies strongly indicates the positive impact of the unit's work. In particular, partner agencies have reported an increase in victim satisfaction among those whose cases are managed by the DFVIU. This is particularly noteworthy given that the DFVIU typically handles some of the most complex and high-risk domestic and family violence cases.

ACT Policing maintains a strong collaborative relationship with sector partners to ensure the ongoing refinement of the holistic investigations model employed by the DFVIU. The feedback provided by these partners is actively used to drive continuous improvements, ensuring the processes and support mechanisms are responsive to the needs of victim-survivors and reflect best practice on the frontline.

2. The impacts of the Domestic, Family and Violence Intervention Unit (DFVIU) on case outcomes and victim support are not measured with a specific focus on the results of individual electorates. Instead, the approach is applied consistently across the entire Territory. This ensures that the response to domestic and family violence (DFV) matters is standardised throughout all regions,

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including Brindabella. By applying a uniform framework, the DFVIU delivers equitable services and support to victim-survivors, regardless of their location within the Territory.

The ACT Policing DFVIU has been established with a focus on responding to the Territory's highest-risk DFV cases. By adopting an innovative holistic DFV investigation model, the DFVIU goes beyond the traditional incident-based approach, instead examining the complete history and dynamics of family violence relationships. Key benefits for victim-survivors include:

- Consistent Point of Contact: Victim-survivors are provided with a single, consistent point of contact throughout the investigation process, which fosters stability and ongoing support.
- Building Trust: This approach allows victim-survivors to build trust with their investigator, encouraging them to disclose the full extent of offending within the relationship.
- Trauma-Informed Practice: The need for victim-survivors to repeatedly retell their story to police is significantly reduced, which supports a more trauma-informed response.
- Consolidated Investigations: The same case officer is responsible for the investigation of both current incidents and any historical offending, as well as the proactive management of ongoing risk.
- Contextual Understanding: Offending is considered within the broader context of the relationship and offending history, enhancing police understanding of risk and helping to reduce the risk of misidentification.
- Collaborative Approach: There is improved collaboration and information sharing on high-risk cases with DFV sector partners, including the Domestic Violence Crisis Service (DVCS), the Family Violence Safety Action Program (FVSAP) within Victims Support ACT (VSACT), Children Youth and Families (CYF), and ACT Corrective Services (ACTCS).

Since its inception, the DFVIU has investigated 117 matters under the holistic DFV investigations model. These investigations have resulted in the laying of 194 criminal charges. Notably, the majority of these charges would not have been possible under a traditional, incident-based response model for DFV, demonstrating the effectiveness of the holistic approach in holding offenders to account and improving outcomes for victim-survivors.

In addition to these direct case outcomes, the DFVIU plays a critical role in broader coordination and quality assurance across ACT Policing's DFV response, particularly in support of General Duties officers.

The DFVIU has established a clear referral protocol, underpinned by the mandatory use of the academically validated Family Violence Risk Assessment Tool (FVRAT) by General Duties officers in all intimate partner DFV cases. This ensures that cases posing the highest risk of lethality or repeat violence are identified and escalated for DFVIU investigation, while also providing technical advice and support to patrol sergeants.

The DFVIU investigates not just single incidents, but the entire relationship continuum, including unreported and historical offending. This approach reduces the risk of repeated DFV and supports victim-survivors in achieving long-term safety.

Ongoing assistance and subject matter expertise is provided by the DFVIU to General Duties and Criminal Investigations teams, particularly in complex DFV themes. By reviewing borderline and complex cases, the DFVIU helps ensure accurate risk assessment and reduces the risk of misidentification of primary aggressors.

Supported by the Domestic & Family Violence Coordination Team the DFVIU, leads the delivery of enhanced training, policy development, and quality assurance for ACT Policing's DFV response. This includes training on trauma-informed practice, risk assessment, and best practice investigative techniques, contributing to a sustained capability uplift across the organisation.

The DFVIU leverages partnerships with external agencies to ensure timely support for victim-survivors and adopts a *no wrong door* approach to referrals, further strengthening the safety net for those affected by DFV.

3. ACT Policing has not introduced any specific DFVIU initiatives or reforms that are exclusive to the Brindabella electorate. Instead, the DFVIU's capabilities and approaches are being implemented consistently across the entire Territory, ensuring a standardised response to domestic and family violence matters throughout all regions, including Brindabella.

Approved for circulation to the Member and incorporation into Hansard.



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

29/10/25 Date:

This response required 3hrs 50mins to complete, at an approximate cost of \$407.74.

