

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO**  
**2016-2017 Additional Estimates Hearings**

**Outcome Number: 2.1 Families and Communities**

**Question No: SQ17-000264**

**Topic: National Action Plan**

**Hansard page: Written**

**Senator Louise Pratt** asked:

The Government's Third Action Plan clearly states that "The National Plan is a long term collaboration for action by Commonwealth, state and territory governments aimed at achieving: a significant and sustained reduction in violence against women and their children?" What work have you done on how best to achieve a significant and sustained reduction in violence against women and their children?

**Answer:**

In developing the Third Action Plan 2016-2019 of the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and Their Children 2010-2022*, the Department of Social Services drew on available evidence on how to best achieve a significant and sustained reduction in violence against women.

The COAG Advisory Panel on Reducing Violence against Women and Children (COAG Advisory Panel) engaged extensively with stakeholders and experts both domestically and internationally over a period of 10 months to deliver its final report on 1 April 2016. This report outlined the need for a new approach to achieve lasting change, including six key areas for action:

- national leadership to challenge gender equality;
- women should be empowered to make informed choices;
- children and young people should be recognised as victims of violence against women;
- perpetrators should be held to account;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities require trauma informed responses to violence; and
- integrated responses are needed to keep women safe.

The six national priority areas under the Third Action Plan reflect the key areas for action highlighted in the COAG Advisory Panel final report.

In addition, as part of the development of the Third Action Plan, the Department undertook extensive consultations with over 400 non-government organisations, academics and businesses to determine if the priority areas and draft actions, developed jointly by the Commonwealth, and state and territory governments, would make the best contribution towards the long-term aim of achieving a significant and sustained reduction in violence against women.

Feedback received during these consultations identified the importance of ensuring that the issue of sexual violence is not hidden or diminished within the broader framework of domestic violence. Consequently, the Third Action Plan has a sharper focus on sexual violence. Consultation feedback has also resulted in the inclusion of a specific priority to better respond to children living with violence. A summary report on the roundtables held to inform the Third Action Plan was delivered by WestWood Spice on 18 July 2016.

In developing the Third Action Plan, the Department also considered its international obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, as well as a number of the recommendations from the Australian Human Rights Commission report to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.