

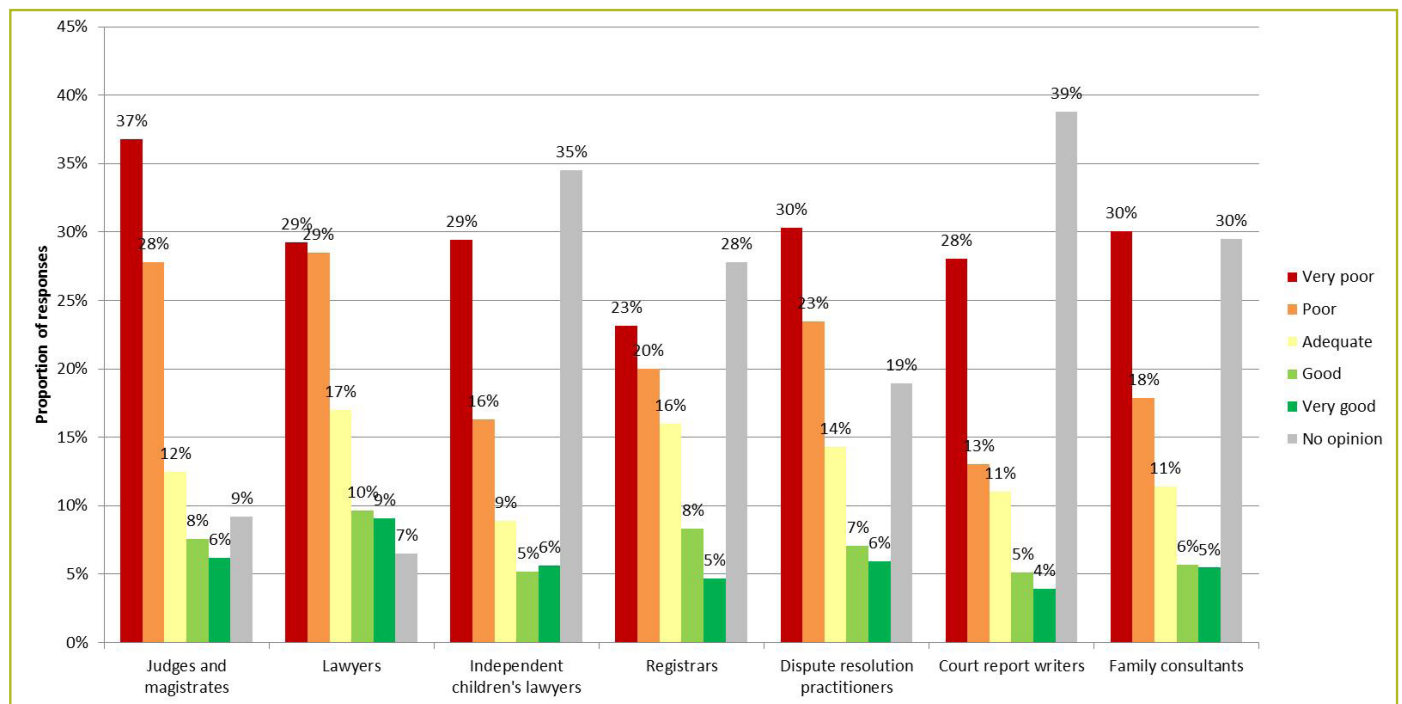
Snapshot 4 - Areas for Improvement

27 October 2017

The inquiry's questionnaire was online for six months and in that time we received 5,490 responses. The Committee thanks everyone for taking the time to share their individual experiences. This final snapshot compiles some data and responses about areas for improvement respondents identified in the inquiry's questionnaire.

Capacity of family law professionals

Families' experiences with the family law system are greatly influenced by the capacity of the professionals working within that system. Reflecting on their own experiences, respondents were asked to rate the level of understanding of professionals in relation to family violence and the needs of families affected by family violence:



PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY INTO A BETTER FAMILY LAW SYSTEM TO
SUPPORT AND PROTECT THOSE AFFECTED BY FAMILY VIOLENCE

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Improvements

Respondents were also asked how family law professionals' understanding of family violence could be improved. The following suggestions were made:

- » *More training around the dynamics of family law.*
- » *Lawyers should be better informed to support and guide the victim for a better outcome.*
- » *There needs to be a careful examination of domestic violence allegations.*
- » *They should spend more time considering the risks.*
- » *There needs to be more education for professionals.*
- » *They need to know what is appropriate language and supports to use with victims.*
- » *Compulsory training that equips them with the investigative skills, techniques and assessment tools to identify and record all forms of abuse not just physical violence.*

How to better protect families affected by family violence

The questionnaire also asked for suggestions on how the family law system can better protect people affected by family violence. Some respondents' answers are below:

- » *Have real and mandatory counselling so people understand how family violence starts and how it can be stopped.*
- » *Have more video linked court rooms so victims and perpetrators do not have to appear in the same [room] together.*
- » *The whole process is just too painfully slow. Three or four year[s] is not acceptable to get to a final hearing.*

Some respondents' answers focussed on the needs of children:

- » *Put the welfare of children first... don't just sweep them under the carpet.*
- » *More refuge facilities for parents who have to leave with their children, when I left there was no facility available.*
- » *I'd love to see 'child advocates', social workers or psychologists that work explicitly with the children and gather as much information from the child's world (ie from teachers, sports coaches etc) to gain a true understanding of what the child wants.*

The Committee thanks everyone who completed the questionnaire and took the time to share their personal experiences. For inquiry information, please visit our website: www.aph.gov.au/fvlawreform

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