

# Women's Legal Service

12 September 2014

State Economics Reference Committee,  
Department of the Senate  
PO Box 6100, Parliament House,  
Canberra ACT 2600

To: State Economics Reference Committee,

## **Affordable Housing Inquiry – Requested follow up from Women's Legal Service, QLD**

Thank you for the opportunity to meet with you on 10 September 2014, in Brisbane, to share our views on housing affordability and the impact women escaping from domestic violence.

We were requested to provide further information to the Senate Committee, regarding:

### **Rates of women placed in motels and their outcomes**

The figures in our written submission (633 women and 978 children between December 2013 and February 2014), and the figures from my opening statement (2318 women and 3700 children in the financial year 2013 – 2014), which relate to the numbers of women and children placed in motels, were obtained directly from the CEO of DVConnect, Diane Mangan.

In my follow up of this issue for your Committee I have communicated further with Diane Mangan CEO of DVConnect, who confirmed that these are internal statistics and have not been published at this stage. These statistics will be published in their upcoming annual report. Regarding the outcomes for women placed in motels Ms Mangan states that "at best less than half of those placed in a motel would have gone onto refuge. However, some were in transit to family, but, mostly it is because of the lack of refuge spaces in the areas that we need".

DVConnect are in the process of collating data relating to motel accommodation and outcomes, however it is not yet available. I have attached with this letter, DVConnect's previous annual report for 2012-2013, which refers to motel placements as "emergency accommodation". The annual report states that of those women provided with a crisis intervention, 25% were placed in emergency accommodation (motels) compared with 41% placed in refuge. The remaining 34% were assisted with transport to access other accommodation eg, family / friends (DVConnect Annual Report 2012/13 page 11).

### **Update to the estimate of the economic cost of domestic violence to the Australian economy**

In our submission and opening statement I referred to the 2009 KPMG study "The Cost of Domestic Violence Against Women and their Children" for the National Council to Reduce Violence Against Women and Their Children.

We were asked whether there have been an update to this figure. I can provide an updated



Women's Legal Service Inc. [www.wlsq.org.au](http://www.wlsq.org.au)

Address: 387 Ipswich Road (cnr Ponsonby Street) Annerley Qld 4103 | PO Box 119, Annerley Qld 4103

Administration Line: 07 3392 0644 | Fax: 07 3392 0658

Legal Advice Line: 07 3392 0670 - 1800 677 278 | Email: [admin@wlsq.org.au](mailto:admin@wlsq.org.au)

estimate of \$14.7 Billion USD at 2013, based on CPI increases. This figure was provided by Liz Forsyth, Deputy Chairman of KPMG Australia, who was involved in the original research and she presented on the topic at our Thought Leader Forum in May 2014. I have attached her Powerpoint presentation.

**Federal funding cuts to Community Legal Centres and State funding of TAAS Services.**

I would like to take this opportunity to expand on my responses to questions from Hon Senator Jan McLucas and Senator Larissa Waters regarding funding cuts to the CLC sector and TAAS services in QLD.

Regarding the de-funding of the Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service (TAAS) in QLD, I would like to add that the loss of the TAAS services was a significant loss for Queenslanders, and a backward step in addressing homelessness in Queensland. On numerous occasions I have referred clients to TAAS services for their specialist knowledge and advocacy skills. This specialist knowledge is now lost and the work will fall to community and support workers without the necessary skills and knowledge. Without support more Queenslanders will face eviction and homelessness. TAAS were effective in preventing homelessness through their direct advocacy and also by educating tenants on their rights and responsibilities to manage future tenancies. TAAS services were often co-located within other community services which reduced their overheads and ensured they were accessible to the most vulnerable people. This was a service which was value for money for the services they provided as well as the savings in avoided costs of crisis responses to homelessness.

In August 2014, I attended the National Assoc. of Community Legal Centre (NACLC) conference in Alice Springs. There I felt a growing concern within the sector about the Federal cuts and the impact of the inevitable reduction in services on some of the most vulnerable members of the community. Of deep concern is the changes to service agreements which now exclude law reform activities. Community Legal Centres have a strong tradition of translating direct work with clients into improving legislation and legal systems to better respond to the community. CLCs are not-for-profit, independent, and often assist the most disadvantaged people in the community. Therefore CLCs have rich information about the experience of government's most vulnerable constituents.

Yours faithfully,

Lulu Milne  
Principal Social Worker  
Women's Legal Service



## 2012-13 ANNUAL REPORT





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# ***DVConnect - Be heard Be safe***

## **In Brief...**

DVConnect is the 24/7 statewide crisis telephone response service for people experiencing domestic and family violence.

We offer professional and non judgemental telephone support and advice to thousands of callers every year and coordinate immediate safety for those having to leave the violence in their homes from anywhere in the state.

DVConnect Womensline receives almost 50,000 calls and assists around 8,000 women and children to safety each year.

Through our Pets in Crisis program we are able to assist a further group of women and children, constrained by the fear that their pets will become victims if they are left behind, by offering emergency shelter for between 12 and 20 pets per month.

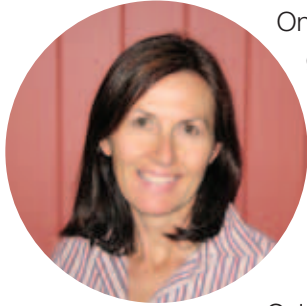
DVConnect also helps around 350 men each month via our Mensline. In addition Mensline provides face to face court assistance to a further 150 men each month who attend court in relation to domestic violence protection orders.

DVConnect also provides the Statewide Sexual Assault Helpline and assists 300 women and men in relation to recent and past sexual assaults.

***‘A woman in Australia is more likely to be killed in her own home by an intimate partner than anywhere else or by anyone else’***



## *A Message from the Chair of the Board*



On behalf of DVConnect, it is my great pleasure to present to you our 2012/ 2013 Annual Report.

This report provides an insight into the range of services and projects we are involved in and our many achievements this year.

Celebrating our 10th year in service provided a wonderful opportunity to reflect on not just this last year's achievements, but also the tremendous contribution our organisation and particularly our dedicated team of workers has made to the lives of thousands of Queensland women and their families, including their pets over the past 10 years.

As demand has regrettably increased over time so has our stamina and determination to be there when we're needed most and to rise to the increasingly complex challenges of domestic and family violence on a daily basis.

It is a sad indictment on communities around the world that in 2013 one in three women is still expected to experience some type of violence in their lifetime.

Every year in Australia, 80 to 100 women die at the hands of their male partners, often after a long, escalating pattern of violence. Last year in Queensland, 14 people lost their lives as a result of Domestic and Family Violence. Unfortunately, this saddest of all forms of violence, is a serious problem in the wider community, in every cultural, socio-economic and faith group in Australia and around the world. The right for all people to live free of violence and abuse is a fundamental value of our organisation. This is the driving force that fuels our passion to continue to do our work which for the large part goes unnoticed in the community.

While you read this report, one of our team will be assisting someone in Queensland who needs help. Without a dedicated, professional and highly skilled team of people we couldn't achieve what we do.

I would like to thank them for their unwavering commitment, particularly our CEO, Diane Mangan, who

continues leading our organisation with passion and energy. Diane and the whole team are determined to assist those in the community who reach out for support in their time of crisis.

Our support extends beyond the practical services we provide. We also provide a voice to those who suffer in silence, by raising awareness of their plight at community activities throughout Queensland, such as during domestic and family violence prevention month each year in May. During the last year, DVConnect has also been active in raising awareness about domestic and family violence through corporate and other community presentations. We are thankful for the continuing support we receive from government agencies, particularly the Department of Communities, for the core funding of our organisation, including the Sexual Assault line. As well as being our main funder, the Department is an active partner with DVConnect and we have built a strong working relationship with them over the past decade. We also acknowledge Legal Aid for the grant that allows us to provide court assistance to more than 2,000 men every year. In addition, thank you to all our very generous corporate and private donors who contribute vital funds and services and volunteer their time. In particular, RSPCA Queensland and Queensland Rail for their generous support of our struggle to get families and their pets to safety throughout the State, and Queensland Country Women's Association and Greyhound Australia for their work in sourcing, collating and distributing our care packs to families in crisis. Thank you also to the very generous and talented group of ladies who staged a 3 night performance of play *The Vagina Monologues* and contributed almost \$6,000 for our *Pets in Crisis*.

I would like to acknowledge the generous work of our Advisory Committee members who provide valuable input to our organisation. Finally to my fellow Board members, thank you for your time, commitment and the expertise you bring to our organisation.

**Janet Collier**

**Chair, DVConnect**

## Where we started

In 1980 a State-wide telephone crisis service was established by the then Department of Communities Crisis Care program and this number 1800 811 811, has been in operation ever since ... subsequently it was run by the Domestic Violence Telephone Service Inc, a non-government community agency. In 2002 following a successful tender to the Department of Communities DVConnect Limited commenced operation of DVConnect Womensline and DVConnect Mensline.

In 2003 an amendment to the Domestic Violence Act saw the inclusion of Family Violence (extending to elder abuse and informal care relationships) as a core component of the domestic violence telephone service, further extending the reach of our services; and in 2008 the Sexual Assault line was added to our list of core services.



## Where we are now

DVConnect now employs 54 staff including a small management and administration team and almost 50 counselling staff all of whom work varying shifts to cover our 7 day 24 hour telephone service.

In 2012 / 2013 DVConnect responded to almost 60,000 calls across all lines and provided crisis intervention and telephone support across a number of services including:- emergency responses, evacuation and emergency accommodation placement for families, telephone counselling for men, women and victims of sexual assault, education and support for men, prison and court support, homelessness support network, community education and arranging care for pets of families experiencing domestic violence.

## Our Mission

To enable the seamless passage from violence to safety by delivering a range of support services to those in crisis as a result of domestic and family violence.

## What we value

- The right of all people to live free from violence and abuse
- The health and safety of staff and clients
- Planning and decision making that reflects justice, equity, integrity and collaboration
- The diverse needs of marginalised and disadvantaged groups
- Responsiveness, adaptability, innovation, creativity and an openness to change when attempting to address the needs of those affected by domestic and family violence





# Where we're going

## Our Vision

### Be heard Be safe

DVConnect is committed to the right of people to be safe from violence both within their families and their communities. Our response to those affected by domestic and family violence strives to be professional, flexible and empowering which includes collaborative processes with other support services throughout Queensland.

We are committed to these objectives:

- Ensuring that no Queenslanders will be more than a telephone call away from professional support and information with which to sustain him or her through the domestic and family violence impacting his or her life;
- Protect the caller's privacy and confidentiality while within the law and the policies of this organisation;
- Taking into account all our callers cultural and special communication needs when they phone in;
- Continuing to be a key part of a seamless and coordinated system within the support service sector of Queensland, that is both supportive and meaningful for people affected by domestic and family violence;
- Developing and providing administrative structures that ensure accountability of service and support for the organisation.

## Our Goals

- To be the leaders in crisis response for the Domestic and Family Violence Sector in Queensland;
- To be financially sustainable;
- To strive for improved refuge and crisis accommodation;
- To be an effective, safe and supportive workplace;
- To provide a high quality and effective crisis service
- To deliver a best practice and contemporary service
- To develop productive partnerships;



## Message from the CEO

2012 – 2013 was the year we celebrated our 10th anniversary and we have had another busy and eventful year.

I am very proud of what the team at DVConnect have achieved not only in the past 12 months but also over the past 10 years!

Our team of dedicated and skilled counsellors are the bedrock of the organisation. It is they who rise to the challenge on a daily basis and 'get up and do it all again' to make sure we are here and enthusiastic about assisting the almost 60,000 incoming calls we respond to every year. They also make more than 66,000 outgoing calls to provide a front line response for the 8,000 women and children that needed urgent and immediate help to get to safety. With the advent of police assisted referrals to us via SupportLink we are seeing an increased demand on our service, both to Womensline and Mensline. We are more than happy to receive these referrals from police because they have been alerted to the home because of domestic violence. These referrals allow us to help people who may not have called us themselves.

Demand for assistance through our Pets in Crisis Program has not waned, and without the unwavering support of RSPCA Qld we would not be able to provide this absolutely essential service to women who otherwise may not leave home. This year we offer heartfelt thanks to a special group of Brisbane women who volunteered and produced a 3 night showing of Eve Ensler's play The Vagina Monologues and raised over \$5,000 to help sustain the program. We are ever thankful to those supporters who regularly make donations to the program and continue to appeal for further financial support in order to sustain this vital and highly valued program.

Along with the provision of our core telephone based service delivery we also provide some services on a face to face basis. These include court assistance at a number of the magistrate courts in and around Brisbane for both men and women and a Womensline and Mensline co facilitated support program for female prisoners at the Brisbane Women's Correctional Centre at Wacol.

Because of our State-wide connections in the fight against domestic and family violence, DVConnect regularly travels to different parts of the State each year to improve understanding of each other's practices. In 2012/13 we were fortunate to have an extended grant from the Mary McKillop Foundation allowing us to again send workers to the Torres Straits.

We were also pleased to have been able to visit Mt Isa, Mackay, Innisfail, Cairns, Weipa, Pomporau, Kowanyama and Aurukuun and meet face to face with these communities; to assist us to better support services in regional and remote areas and help them to provide local solutions for women and their children escaping violence.

My gratitude goes to the our board who give their time, expertise and cool heads to govern this vital and dynamic organisation, especially our Chair, Janet Collier who after 8 years of valued service and support is retiring to pursue personal interests overseas at the end of July. Stepping into Janet's very large footprint; we are pleased to welcome and are very much looking forward to working with Michelle Farr, a woman of enormous energy and enthusiasm.

As I said at the beginning, DVConnect is a frantically busy service but one with a consistently high standard of response and this is because of the mammoth efforts of the crisis counsellors and their leaders. This response is because of the unshakable single focus of this organisation which is about making the lives of those living with domestic violence and sexual assault safer.

**Diane Mangan, CEO – DVConnect**



## What we do

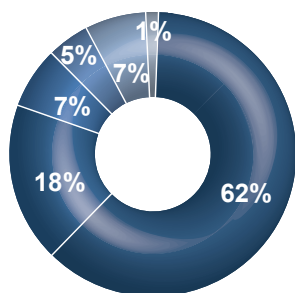
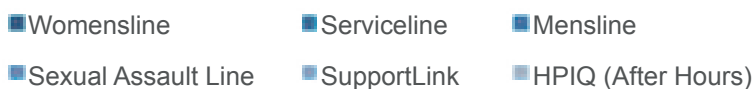
DVConnect responds to domestic and family violence in Queensland via three public lines: Womensline, Mensline and Sexual Assault Helpline. Our 'Serviceline' is reserved for communication with external and sector services.

We not only work with almost every specialist and community service throughout Queensland around the safety needs of women and children but we also have the unique position of having a 'helicopter view' of the sector as a whole. This often allows us to see the gaps in the system enabling us to make decisions and take swift action. The physical and psychological safety of women and children living with domestic violence is the overriding focus of our work both on Womensline and Mensline.

### Demand on the service

Last year the three crisis lines of DVConnect responded to nearly 60,000 incoming calls for assistance from people all over the state because of domestic violence, family violence or sexual assault.

### BREAKDOWN OF INCOMING CALLS





## Womensline

DVConnect Womensline is the 24/7 crisis response service for domestic and family violence throughout the state and responded to 48,544 incoming calls to both the 1800 and 1300 lines last year.

While Womensline receives many calls looking for information, crisis counselling and support around legal issues in relation to domestic violence, responding to the immediate safety needs of women and children, is by far the most demanding of the services DVConnect provides. Every month around 350 - 400 of the callers to Womensline are women in fear of their violent partners or family members and need a place of safety for themselves and their children and sometimes their pets. Womensline arranges all the travel and accommodation needs for the family until they have reached their destination be it one of the many domestic violence refuges throughout the state, family or friends elsewhere in the state/country/overseas or other accessible housing. Providing this outcome for women fleeing the violence at home can be very complicated and demanding on workers because of the short time frame to work within and the limited options available as evidenced by more than 5,500 outgoing calls a month.

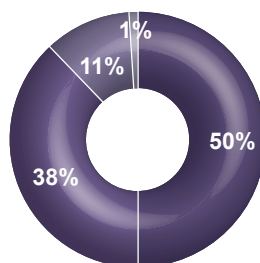
The response by Womensline is supportive and non judgemental and understands that women often leave domestic violence a number of times before making a final move. We understand that throughout this period of uncertainty women are

often painfully working through what they need to do for themselves and their children. We are also aware of some women who are suffering psychological and emotional trauma after a long history of abuse sometimes beginning in childhood and not presenting as articulately as they would wish. Some may also present in ways that indicate some form of mental illness and or substance abuse often also related to an extensive history of violence.

We know and recognise that it takes a great deal of courage for the women who phone in for help for themselves and their children as they come to terms with having to leave their homes, belongings and lifestyle behind. ***Their courage and sacrifice cannot be understated.***

## WOMENSLINE SERVICES PROVIDED

- New Intakes
- Information, counselling & Safety Plan
- Crisis Intervention
- Face to Face Court Support



**Police Referrals to Womensline via SupportLink**

SupportLink referrals are non urgent requests by Queensland Police and sent out via email for agencies to make follow up calls to people they have been called out to in relation to domestic violence; and who they may have particular concerns about or may feel would benefit from speaking with a professional counsellor. Whilst most SupportLinks are managed by Mensline, our Womensline service also handles referrals.

Last year, DVConnect received and followed up with phone calls to 4,000 referrals from this service.

**Services provided by Womensline**

The service provided by Womensline is largely broken down into four main categories, such as Information and Support, Crisis Counselling and Safety Planning, Face to Face Court Support and most importantly, Crisis Intervention. The latter is where Womensline is required to arrange an immediate place of safety for women and children escaping the violence at home. Last year, Womensline arranged emergency accommodation for over 8,000 women and children throughout the state. 5,721 women and children were transported to safety including 99 air flights from the Torres Strait and other remote areas. The number of flights represents a significant reduction on previous years and reflects our success in working with and supporting local

services and communities to find alternative pathways for women at a local level

**Regional and Cultural Breakdown**

Womensline calls are received mostly from the south east corner of the State. Whilst only around 9% of calls are from the Far North, most of these are from the Torres Strait Islands and tip of the mainland where the only transport to safety is by plane. Of the women from the various cultural groups calling the service:

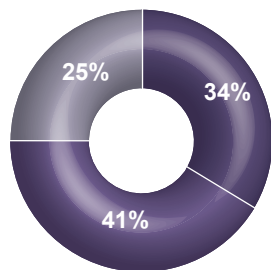
- 83% were Anglo Australian;
- 10% were Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander – but this rose to 26% of those needing immediate assistance to leave the violence at home;
- 7% were from a Non English Speaking Background (NESB) but this increased to 11% for those that required crisis intervention. Of these, 40% requiring crisis intervention also needed an interpreter.

Languages most requiring the Telephone Interpretation Service last year were:

Amharic, Arabic, Burmese, Cambodian, Cantonese, Croatian, Dari, Dinka, Farsi, Filipino, French, Gujarati, Hindi, Indonesian, Japanese, Khmer, Kirundi, Korean, Lao, Mandarin, Persian, Punjabi, Portuguese, Russian, Samoan, Spanish, Sri Lankan, Swahili, Tagalog, Tamil and Vietnamese.

**TRANSPORT PROVIDED VS. REFUGE & EMERGENCY ACCOMM PLACEMENTS**

■Refuge ■Transport ■Emergency Accom





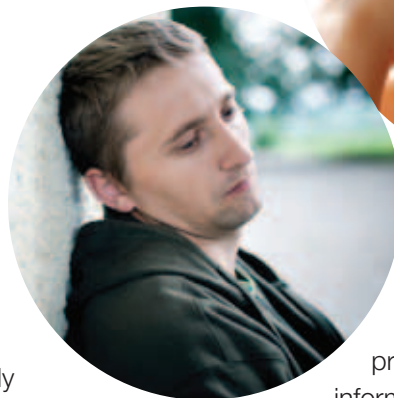


## Sexual Assault Helpline

DVConnect has been providing the state-wide Sexual Assault Helpline since 2008 and every year we assist more than 4,000 women, men and young people. Last year, calls relating to sexual abuse in childhood accounted for 3,135 of the calls with the remaining calls coming from victims of acute/recent sexual assault.

DVConnect offers crisis counselling and support mainly but also information and referral for those needing urgent assistance and/or face to face counselling and support.

The impact of sexual violence can be considerable and may include experiences of anxiety, depression, flashbacks and panic attacks, feelings of guilt and worthlessness and a myriad of other health and social issues. Our counsellors

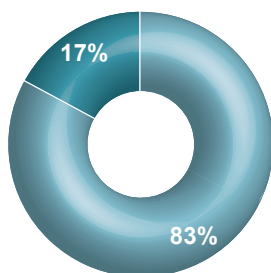


provide validation and support, information on forensic and general medical processes, accurate information on making a complaint to police, referral phone numbers for further support in the caller's local community and some strategies around self care and keeping safe.

The Sexual Assault Helpline also responds to SupportLink referrals from police.

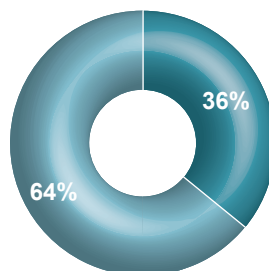
## GENDER OF CALLERS

■ Female ■ Male



## PRESENTING ISSUES

■ Acute Sexual Assault  
■ Present or Past Sexual Assault on a Child/Adolescent





## Mensline

DVConnect Mensline provides counselling and referral to men who are violent to their partners and other members of their family and also to those who are victims of domestic and family violence. Last year Mensline provided this assistance to 6,516 Queensland men either by phone via the Mensline helpline or in person at one of the seven magistrate's courts in and around Brisbane.

Mensline is available from 9am to midnight, seven days a week and is covered by a dedicated team of male and some female counsellors. Whilst they do not provide legal advice, our Mensline team do also provide assistance to men appearing in one of the seven magistrate's courts in relation to Domestic Violence Protection Orders. We spend time with the men before they enter court preparing them for the court process around these applications. Mensline provided Court Assistance to 1,954 men, either in person or over the phone.

All of the assistance by way of counselling and practical support that is provided to men either by phone or at court is done through the lens of family safety. Mensline uses every opportunity to work with individual men whose actions create an environment of fear for their partners and children. Our resolve is to highlight the impact of abusive behaviours, challenge those who use violence

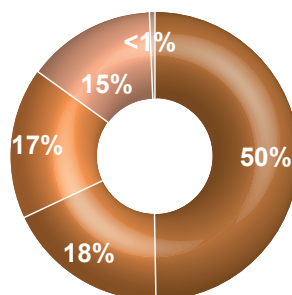
to take responsibility for their actions and encouraging them to contact services to help them change.

### How Court Support works

*A 38 year old father from New Zealand appeared at Ipswich Magistrates Court for a first mention of a police application for a Domestic Violence Protection Order. The magistrate realised the man did not understand the order and stood the matter down, requesting he see the Mensline worker. Our Mensline worker then fully explained the domestic and family violence application and discussed with the police prosecutor what conditions are being sought. The client consented to the order which he now fully comprehended. The subject of his alcohol abuse become predominant in a follow up discussion with our worker, who, with the client's consent, initiated a call to the Alcohol and Drug Info service and had a three way discussion on speaker, about responsible drinking." Without the support from*

## MENSLINE - SERVICES PROVIDED

■ New Intakes ■ Counselling ■ Information/Referral ■ Court Support ■ Crisis Intervention



***DVConnects Mensline this man's interactions at court and subsequent outcomes could have spiralled with negative consequences, instead we were able to work collaboratively with the Magistrate, Police Prosecutor and Alcohol and Drug Info service to achieve a safer outcome.***

A much smaller percentage of men who call Mensline do so because of the violence they are experiencing within their relationships often by another male partner or family member. Sadly, Mensline also supports men at court who are seeking a protection order from their adult children. An even smaller number of men call Mensline because of violence from a female partner or family member. Often this violence is on a very different level to that experienced where the male is the perpetrator of violence. Most of these situations do not have the element of fear

in these relationships but Mensline is very responsive to these situations and provide support and practical assistance where required.

Mensline also received over 4,000 police referrals via SupportLink this year. These referrals involve a follow up call to men who have consented to police for Mensline to contact them for ongoing assistance. These are instances where police have been called to the home because of domestic violence. Many of the men are pleased to have this support from Mensline and engage with the counsellor about strategies for the future prevention of violence within the home.

## Homeless Persons Information Queensland (HPIQ)

For the past six years Mensline has been providing professional support to the 24/7 statewide Homeless Persons line after hours. Cases that are generally referred to Mensline are those involving adults with children and particularly vulnerable adults all of whom who have been assessed as not capable of safely 'sleeping rough'. Mensline will often arrange overnight accommodation or transport to a safe place in these situations with a follow up back to HPIQ the following day. Mensline assist more than 500 homeless adults and children throughout the state via HPIQ every year.

## Prison Support Program

DVConnect continues to provide counselling to prisoners of the Brisbane Women's Correctional Centre (BWCC) at Wacol, most of whom have experienced childhood abuse, domestic violence and sexual assault throughout their lives. Prison statistics showed that 86% of the inmates experienced some or all of the above and many would be returning to this life upon release from prison.

The program has evolved into a series of information sessions followed by counselling. As part of our program of support, DVConnect has implemented a pathway for women who choose not to return to a violent home life by referring them to a safe refuge instead. Others are offered follow up by DVConnect for the purposes of continuity and a handing over to a local service for the ongoing support.

This is a valuable program for the women because many of them have lived lives of such deprivation and degradation that knowing they could leave this abuse and that there are services like DVConnect was not something they had any understanding of. Our hope is to reach as many women, in prison as we can, to offer some information about their experiences and options for their own future safety to help them break the cycle of abuse and violence in their lives



## Pets in Crisis

For any pet lover whose animal is part of the family, the thought of leaving them behind in an emergency is unthinkable!

DVConnect counsellors regularly speak to women whose intimate partners use violence or threats of it towards their pets in order to frighten and control them into staying.

Places available in refuges for the victims of domestic and family violence are scarce, and in Queensland none are able to accommodate pets.

Sadly, hundreds of women, children and their beloved pets across Queensland are constrained in violent and fearful relationships because the fear and practical challenges of leaving are just too overwhelming.

And for the children moving without their special companions, at this time, compounds the loss and makes the trauma they are facing in their family life that much more intense.

These already emotionally drained and mostly financially strapped women are torn between protecting themselves and their children and the increased risk that their dear pets will (if they are not already affected) become the victims of the violence if they leave them behind.

Pets in Crisis is an extension of the RSPCA Qld's foster care program that facilitates safe refuge for animals at risk until they can be reunited with their families.

Last year we assisted 171 animals with safe passage and since the program began, over 1,200 animals have been placed in the temporary care of RSPCA Queensland and on a much smaller scale, the Animal Welfare League on the Gold Coast.

This is one of the most valued support programs we offer and without exception beneficiaries of Pets in Crisis express their overwhelming relief and gratitude and we all cannot thank RSPCA Qld enough.

Pets in Crisis helps whole families!

Knowing that their pets will be cared for and that they can be reunited as soon as they can get back on their feet is sometimes the catalyst for many women having the courage to take that vital step towards leaving a violent domestic situation and protecting themselves their children and just as importantly their pets.





# Community Awareness and Engagement

Every month in Australia six women die at the hands of their intimate partner, at least one of them is from Queensland.

DVConnect combines with other services and individuals in the sector and the community to highlight the most preventable of all deaths for the obvious purpose of reducing or eliminating these ultimate acts of control.

Two significant community awareness events that DVConnect participated in were:-

- **Candle Lighting Vigils** which are held annually throughout the state and now around the country as simultaneous events of remembrance and awareness about those who have died because of domestic and family violence
- **Red Rose Rallies** which are called every time a person (mainly women) dies because of domestic and family violence in Queensland



## Candle Lighting Ceremony

The Candle Lighting Ceremony is a State-wide simultaneous vigil held on the first Wednesday of May (Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month) and in the past couple of years has gradually become a national event with vigils in every State and Territory.

This year's Candle Lighting Ceremony in Brisbane was once again a great success. With the Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services participating in the twilight walk from the city to the Cliffs at Kangaroo Point and joining than 150 supporters.

The very personal and emotional stories that were shared on the evening were a sad reminder to us all of the tragic consequences of domestic violence and why we were all gathered there.

## Red Rose Rallies

These silent rallies in Queensland are the initiative of the Domestic Violence Death Review Group (DVDRAG) and are held in the same location outside Parliament in Brisbane on Friday lunch time of the week that the alert about the death of a woman is circulated by DVDRAG.

Sadly in the year ended June 2013 we held 10 rallies for 14 women who died at the hands of their male partners.

The rallies are now growing to other parts of the state with Southport and Townsville also hosting them. It is expected that throughout the next year other centres will also hold them.

## Homeless Connect

Twice a year Brisbane City Council brings together community and government organisations as well as “hands on” services such as massages, haircuts, podiatry and optometry visits to provide direct support for the homeless people living in the inner Brisbane area. A free breakfast and lunch is also served and the DVConnect stall is always in hot demand with counselling sessions, by our Mensline and Womensline staff, often occurring on the spot.



## ***Sector Engagement and Development***

Every year staff from DVConnect travel to as many parts of the state as is necessary for the building of stronger working relationships with local services.

A specific area of interest in recent times has been Far North Queensland and Torres Strait Islands because of the high number of requests from women from the region for assistance to get to safety.

DVConnect assists many women and their children to escape the violence at home by flying them to other parts of the Torres Strait or the mainland to either family or refuge on Thursday Island or in Cairns. Because of the regularity of our work in this area we have made a concerted effort to have a closer working relationship with services, including police, in the area.

Last year Womensline team leaders travelled to the Torres Strait Islands on two separate occasions to meet with local services and attend regional network meetings. This travel was again made possible by a generous grant from the Mary MacKillop Foundation

Staff also travelled to Cairns, Mackay, Innisfail and Mt Isa for the purposes of meeting with local services providers and attending network meetings.

### **Annual Indigenous Forum - Mackay**

Every year in May, DVConnect sends two workers to this forum which is hosted by the Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research Centre. The forum is specifically hosted for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers in the field and because of the state-wide reach of our service delivery we want to make contact with as many services and workers as we can throughout the state.

### **Symposium**

In 2012 we partnered with the Greater Brisbane Family Law Pathways Network, Child and Family Network and Women's Legal Service to present our first Symposium for the sector entitled 'Domestic Violence, Mental Health and Substance Abuse'.

### **Workshop for those who work with perpetrators**

In October we also co hosted a two day workshop with TAVAN Institute and Queensland Centre for DVResearch for those who work with perpetrators.

## DVConnect is governed by a Board of Directors

Besides providing a strategic framework that guides and supports the professional management team in the development and financing of the company's activities, our Board also acts as a reference point for specific issues that require expertise beyond the core capability of the company's professionals.

The Board undertakes its duties and obligations as required by the Corporations Act, our Service Agreement and other funding service delivery guidelines issued by the Department of Communities.

### **Janet Collier - Director/Chair**

*(resigned 16.7.2013)*

Janet is a senior management and finance professional with 30 years experience and has worked throughout Australia, United Kingdom and East Timor. She has a broad range of experience in not-for-profit, public practice, business and government organisations. She is a fully qualified Certified Practising Accountant (CPA) and has a Bachelor of Business (Accountancy). Janet also holds a Masters of Asian Studies (Research). Janet's current focus is capacity building projects in South East Asia, focusing on strengthening the management and financial capability of organisations in the not-for-profit sector. Her previous roles include Chief Financial Officer for DVConnect, Director and owner of Biz Dynamix Pty. Ltd, a consultancy providing business and management consulting services to the SME market and Partner at Peden, Lavis and Co, Chartered Accountants.

### **Natalie Ewin - Director**

Natalie has 12 years experience in project management in the government and non-government sectors. She is an experienced portfolio analyst and performance consultant who provides business planning advice to small business and also manages the Portfolio, Program and Project Management methodology in the Department of Communities. Natalie holds a Masters of Business Administration from the Queensland University of Technology and was presented with the Directors Award for outstanding academic achievement and recognised for excellence in business planning. She holds a Bachelors Degree in Biomedical Science from Newcastle University for which she was presented with a research scholarship for the regulation of mast cell secretion in Asthma.

During her time with the Queensland Police Service, Natalie worked as a Domestic Violence Liaison Officer, a Women's Advisory Group Coordinator and after being awarded Dux of the 51st Prosecutors Course, worked as a police prosecutor including prosecuting in the Brisbane Domestic and Family Violence Court.

### **Linda Dregghorn - Director/Company Secretary**

Linda is the Company Secretary and is also currently Company Secretary for Green Cross Australia and a Principal Arts Development Officer at Arts Queensland. Her previous roles include Company Secretary and Legal Counsel for Major Brisbane Festivals Pty Ltd, General Manager of Brisbane Festival 2006, Secretary and Director of the Secretariat of the Queensland Law Society Inc., Coordinator of Due Diligence for Sun Water's acquisition of major water infrastructure and Lecturer in Law at the Queensland Institute of Technology. Linda holds a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Laws from the University of Queensland and a Graduate Diploma in Company Secretarial Studies. She has practised as a solicitor in Queensland for over 20 years.

### **Dr Ron Frey - Director**

Ron is a psychologist who has lectured at the School of Psychology and Counselling at QUT for the past 20 years on topics of gender, human sexuality and developmental psychology. He holds a Bachelors Degree and a Masters in Special Education (1980) from Harding University in the United States, a Masters Preliminary Degree in Psychology (1985) from Sydney University and a Doctorate on The Nature of Gender from the School of Education and Social Work at the University of Queensland (2004).

Ron's vocational background includes youth work, child

protection, probation and parole and refugee assistance. For 13 years he worked with the Joint Churches Domestic Violence Prevention Program and contributed to the manual developed for this program – Domestic Violence and the Churches (1995). He has been active in Men Against Sexual Assault (MASA) and served on the Australian National Committee of Defence for Children International. He has also worked extensively with the preschool sector and with child protection issues in cross cultural communities. Ron is a full member of the Australian Psychological Society, a nationally registered psychologist and currently divides his time between preparing forensic psychological assessments for courts, working at a south side centre which specialises in working with children and families affected by all forms of family violence and lecturing at QUT.

#### **Heather Castledine - Director**

Heather is a proud Kamilaroi-Kooma (aboriginal) woman and is actively involved with many indigenous organisations in Queensland. She is the Aboriginal Chair for Reconciliation Queensland Inc., committee member for the Logan Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Elders and Board for Murrigunyah (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation for Women – a sexual assault service).

Heather works as an Indigenous Cultural Consultant to a team of clinicians for the Child and Youth Mental Health Service (CYMHS) of Queensland Health. She holds a Bachelor of Social Work, Certificate IV in Indigenous Leadership, Diploma of Community Services, Certificate of Attendance to Attachment Theory and Practice Relevance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Peoples, Statement of Completion A&TSI Cultural Awareness Facilitator Training, Outstanding Achievement for Reconciliation Learning Circle Kit, Certificate of Participation in Applied Suicide Intervention Skills and Statement of Attainment Senior First Aid and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people Mental Health First.

#### **Katherine Marnane - Director**

Kath is the Director of Kath Marnane and Associates, Pty. Ltd., an international development firm based in Brisbane. Kath has over 20 years experience working in vocational education and training and holds a Masters in Arts (Policy and Leadership), Graduate Diplomas in Public Sector Management and Business (Human Resources Management), a Diploma in Teaching and a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment. Kath is internationally experienced having worked in Australia, Asia, and the UK and in the Pacific. She has also held senior management roles in Government and has led Australian TVET missions internationally. Her consultancy business is internationally connected with business networks including international government ministries and agencies, industry and community organisations in countries such as Vietnam, Malaysia and Cambodia.

#### **Michelle Farr - Director**

*(Director - appointed 21.1.2013 – appointed Chair 16.7.2013)*

Michelle is a certified practicing accountant with over 20 years experience in the small business and not-for-profit sectors. She has owned her own practice since August 2003. Having been involved in business growth advice, business planning, structuring, tax minimisation strategies, superannuation, capital gains implications, human resource management, compilation and implementation of policy manuals and procedure manuals, Michelle continues to provide business advice as well as typical accounting duties for many long term clients across numerous industries.

Michelle's qualifications include Certified Practicing Accountant, member of the National Tax and Accountant's Association, member of Australian Institute of Company Directors (MAICD), and is a registered Tax Agent. Michelle has a Business Degree from Griffith University (Accounting) and is a Commissioner for Declarations. She is currently completing her Diploma of Financial Planning.

Her passion for community involvement has seen Michelle actively involved in various community committees over the years, including successfully establishing a community not-for-profit kindergarten, and restructuring a school canteen for a local private school on the Gold Coast.

## Sector networks

### Sector Network Meetings

As the only State-wide 24/7 telephone service, DVConnect plays a pivotal and unique role in the overall response to domestic and family violence and sexual assault in Queensland.

**DFVCLAN (Domestic and Family Violence Crisis Lines of Australia)** CEO attended the annual meeting in Perth

**CWRG (Combined Women's Refuge Group: Southeast Queensland, Central Queensland and North Queensland)**

DVConnect attended the southeast CWRG each month and the northern CWRG twice in the past year. We believe it is vital that DVConnect maintains regular communication with regional services.

**SPEAQ (Services and Professionals for the Elimination of Abuse Qld)**

This network meets monthly by teleconference – mostly the practitioners. The managers meet annually.

**DVDRAG (DV Death Review Action Group)** initiated the Red Rose Rallies in Queensland that are held outside Government House at midday on Fridays, every time a person (mainly women) is killed because of domestic and family violence. Generally there are between 12 and 24 such deaths and rallies in Queensland each year.

**DVLON (Domestic Violence Liaison Officer's Network)**

Womensline and Mensline representatives attend these meetings every three months. This is the only network that involves police and is a valuable network for DVConnect.

**HIMP (Homelessness Information Management Program) Reference Group** This group was set up by the Homelessness Section of the Department of Communities to bring services from the Homelessness sector together around the improvement and streamlining of the service provision throughout the State.

**VISION (Victim Services Interagency Organisation Network)** Vision is a network of government and non-government agencies funded for direct service delivery for victims of personal (violent) crime in Queensland. The network, rather than providing service delivery itself, offers a networking and information sharing opportunity for agencies to discuss policy matters and areas of interest to victim services.

**QDVSN (Queensland Domestic Violence Services Network)**

This network is made up of the 12 regional specialist domestic violence services, the Centre for Domestic and Family Research, the Immigrant Women's Support Service and DVConnect and meets three times a year.

# Current Service Agreements/Other Grants

## Current Service Agreements

Funded by



- **Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services**

Funding for our core services comes from the Violence Prevention Team and our service agreement is covered by the Community Service Act 2007.

Funded by



- **Sexual Assault Helpline**

Funded through the Department of Communities

Funded by



- **Womensline Court Support**

Funding for this service is from Department of Communities for Holland Park Court.



- **Mensline Court Support**

This program is funded by and made possible by the Legal Practitioner Interest on Trust Accounts Fund (LPITAF) and is administered by Legal Aid

## Other Grants

### **Mary MacKillop Foundation**

A grant for DVConnect to travel to the Torres Strait Islands to meet with service providers on a number of islands to assess the capacity of the local services to provide safe outcomes for women and children in the Region.

### **Gambling Community Benefit Fund**

In 2012 funds were granted to develop a new and more responsive website.



## Our Partners and Supporters

DVConnect recognises the significant support and contribution made by the following Government, Corporate and Community Supporters. Without the invaluable support and fiscal contribution provided by these organisations our Statewide domestic and family telephone crisis lines would not be able to continue to provide and expand our essential services to the growing number of individuals and communities in need throughout urban, rural and remote Queensland.

### Partners and Supporters



- RSPCA Pets in Crisis program. A highly regarded and much valued program this year we assisted 235 animals to safety and in particular their coordinator of the Pets in Crisis program. We thank her for the amazing support she provides to our workers during some of the more challenging scenarios around ensuring animals can be moved to safety.
- Animal Welfare League QLD, who partner with us to foster animals in the Gold Coast area.



- Queensland Rail who is a major supporter of DVConnect in the free long distance travel they provide to our clients. This partnership was brokered through CEO Challenge.
- CEO Challenge who provide us a voice in the Corporate Sector and are tireless in their pursuit of financial and social support for domestic and family violence services throughout Queensland.



- The Queensland Country Women's Association who support us by making Carepack bags and providing the contents.



- Greyhound Australia who provide assistance to us by distributing Carepacks to various destinations throughout the State.



- Intimo Lingerie who have been a financial supporter of DVConnect for six years. In November each year, Intimo donates \$1 for every white bra sold to community organisations in each State. The money raised by Queensland Consultants is donated to DVConnect.



- Individual staff members who regularly make donations through the Workplace Giving program managed and supported by Accenture



- The many individuals who kindly and generously make regular and one off donations during the year to our appeals hosted through [www.givenow.org.au](http://www.givenow.org.au)

Special thanks this year must go to a fabulous group of ladies who put on a three night showing of Eve Ensler's play *The Vagina Monologues* at Brisbane's Bleeding Heart Theatre and raised almost \$6,000 for Pets in Crisis.

We are sincerely grateful to the many people who throughout the year contact us; wanting to help by making donations, organising events to fundraise or collecting items to assist women in rebuilding their lives. Thank you!!!



## ***FINANCIAL REPORT YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2013***

DVConnect Limited has been endorsed by the ATO as a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) and has Authority to Fundraise in Queensland, under the Charity number 1459

DVConnect Limited ABN 66 101 186 476

<b>INCOME STATEMENT</b>	<b>2013(\$)</b>	<b>2012(\$)</b>
<b>REVENUE</b>	<b>3,176,912</b>	<b>3,121,573</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Administrative Expenses	130,571	112,735
Property Expenses	155,838	159,523
Depreciation	454	211
Employment & Contract Expenses	2,380,854	2,341,343
Client Related Expenses	332,733	373,262
Other Expenses	93,079	76,733
<b>SURPLUS</b>	<b>83,383</b>	<b>57,766</b>

*Special Purpose Financial Statements for the organisation for the financial year 2012-2013 were prepared by Lawler Hacketts Audit.*

	2013(\$)	2012(\$)
<b>BALANCE SHEET</b>		
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Current Assets		
- Cash and cash equivalents	959,235	862,716
- Trade & other receivables	5,632	9,143
Total Current Assets	964,867	871,859
Non-Current assets		
- Property, plant & equipment	3,181	2,112
- Total Non-Current assets	3,181	2,112
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>968,048</b>	<b>873,971</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Current Liabilities		
- Trade & other payables	290,873	259,484
- Provision for annual leave	123,496	126,584
- Other	4,361	33,194
Total Current Liabilities	418,730	419,262
Non – Current Liabilities		
- Provision for Long Service Leave	86,714	75,488
Total Non-Current Liabilities	86,714	75,488
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>505,444</b>	<b>494,750</b>
<b>Nett Assets</b>	<b>462,604</b>	<b>379,221</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>		
Accumulated surplus	169,924	86,541
General reserve	292,680	292,680
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>462,604</b>	<b>379,221</b>

**Domestic or Family Violence?**

**anyone can make the call.**

**1800 811 811**

**www.dvconnect.org**



**WOMENSLINE**

**1800 811 811**

Phone line for women, children  
& young people. 24 hours, 7 days



**MENSLINE**

**1800 600 636**

Phone line for men.  
9am - midnight, 7 days



**SEXUAL ASSAULT LINE**

**1800 010 120**

Sexual Assault Helpline 24 hours, 7 days









## **DVConnect Limited**

PO Box 10575

Adelaide St

Brisbane Qld 4000

Phone 07 3008 8294

Womensline 1800 811 811

Mensline 1800 600 636

Sexual Assault Line 1800 010 120

Email: [mail@dvconnect.org](mailto:mail@dvconnect.org)

[www.dvconnect.org](http://www.dvconnect.org)

Funded by





*cutting through complexity™*

# Cost of Violence against Women

**Women's Legal Service**

Queensland Australia

20th May 2014

- **Violence against women and their children remains a profound problem in societies around the world, and Australia is no exception.**
- **Addressing the causes and solutions to this violence is a great moral, societal and economic challenge.**
- **Nearly one in three Australian women experience physical violence and almost one in five women experience sexual violence over their lifetime.**
- **Violence cuts across all aspects of the Australian community – it knows no geographical, socio-economic, age, ability, cultural or religious boundaries.**
- **So what is the cost of this violence to our community?**

- Violence against women and their children is a significant cost to the Australian community.
- Such violence is estimated to cost **\$14.7 USD billion in 2013.**
- The cost of this violence is **roughly 1.1% of Australia's GDP or for every man woman and child – \$6500 USD per person.**
- Importantly these cost estimates are conservative as they are based on reported prevalence data.
  - A prevalence approach measures the costs associated with domestic violence in a specific year, based on the number of women experiencing violence in that year – it includes the costs of all domestic violence occurring in that year. The approach captures reported violence only – in other words, unreported violence is not included.

- **These costs include:**
  - **Direct or tangible costs** such as the provision of services, facilities and resources to women who experience violence
  - **Indirect or intangible costs** such as the pain, fear and suffering incurred by women and children who live their lives in violence.
  - **Opportunity costs** – that is the cost of opportunities forgone as a consequence of an individual being in or leaving a violent relationship.



- **The nature of these costs include the following cost categories:**
  - **pain, suffering and premature mortality costs** associated with the victims/survivors experience of violence. This is the largest cost category comprising **48% of all costs**.
  - **health costs** include public and private health system costs associated with treating the effects of violence against women. This cost category contains **5% of all costs**.
  - **production-related costs**, including the cost of being absent from work, and employer administrative costs (for example, employee replacement). This cost category contains **8% of all costs**.
  - **consumption-related costs**, including replacing damaged property, defaulting on bad debts, and the costs of moving. This cost category contains **23% of all costs**.

- **second generation costs** are the costs of children witnessing and living with violence, including child protection services and increased juvenile and adult crime. This cost category contains **2% of all costs**.
- **administrative and other costs**, including police, incarceration, court system costs, counseling, and violence prevention programs. This cost category contains **7% of all costs**.
- **transfer costs**, which are the inefficiencies associated with the payment of government benefits. This cost category contains **7% of all costs**.

## Why focus on the cost of violence?

- **Highlights the economic cost on businesses, government, not-for-profit organisations and individuals**
  - Provides an additional incentive to minimise VAW
  - Generates the political will to act
- **Places the issue of VAW at the forefront of the political and business landscape**
  - Allows the scale of the problem to be measured in the same 'currency' as other economic and social issues
- **Further reduces the social acceptability of VAW**
- **Provides a baseline measure to monitor the impact of changes in VAW over time**
- **Helps inform the potential benefits from interventions to reduce VAW and to improve the wellbeing of women experiencing violence.**

- **Regardless of the different settings, different cultural circumstances, data limitations and general analytical constraints there is benefit in commencing work on understanding the real economic impact of violence against women.**
- **The National Action Plan – led to Governments’ responding through a series of coordinated 3 year action plans involving Commonwealth and the States and Territories, the second plan is now due. This is a useful start.**
- **Yet without a national approach and tangible local multi-disciplinary strategies to address this issue on the ground – such costs will continue to grow**
- **This is something as a community we can not afford and must not allow to continue unabated....it is unacceptable and has significant implications for future generations.**

# Presenter

**Liz Forsyth**  
**Deputy Chairman**  
**KPMG Australia**