

Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs

Inquiry into Murdered and Missing First Nations Women and Children

20 February 2024

Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Legal Service

Question on Notice:

Senator Cox: Just a follow up question. In that vein—and thank you both for mentioning that—I think one of the other critical things is about policy and procedures. Are you aware of any research, practice or findings looking at specific codes of practice or operating procedures around the differences when we look at cases of missing and murdered women and children and responding to violence? Currently, most police jurisdictions operate on one code of practice, and they don't see any intersectional approach in that. Is that happening in Queensland? Is that something that you're pushing forward with that no-one's listening to? Or, if you hear of any other work in that area, are you able to shed any light on that?

Answer:

We are unable to provide the Committee with research, practice or findings which look at specific codes of practice or operating procedures that would require an intersectional approach between responding to violence and cases of missing and murdered women and children. Notwithstanding, we can advise that the final report of the Independent Commission of Inquiry into Queensland Police Service responses to domestic and family violence, A Call for Change, included a number of recommendations relating to reviewing the Queensland Police Service's (QPS) Operational Procedures Manual (OPM). Among the findings made by presiding commissioner, Her Honour Judge Richards, it was found that the OPM as it relates to the investigation of domestic and family violence is difficult to follow in the field and should be amended.

Of the 78 recommendations delivered by Her Honour Judge Richards on 14 November 2022, Recommendation 18 in particular stated that:

Recommendation 18

Within 12 months, the Queensland Police Service review the adequacy of the Operational Procedures Manual to direct and guide police responses to and investigation of domestic and family violence. The review is to include the involvement of a representative group of frontline officers, including a sample of Sergeants and Senior Constables who lead in the field.

As of November 2023, the first [Annual Report and Implementation Program of the Commission of Inquiry's 78 recommendations](#) notes that the QPS is still progressing implementation of this recommendation as part of a wholesale review of organisational policies and procedures relating to domestic and family violence recommended by the Commission of Inquiry and Queensland's Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce.

Canada's National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

[The Final Report into Canada's National Inquiry](#) outlined 231 calls for justice. We note that Calls for Justice 9.2 (Calls for Police Services) made references to the police services reviewing and revising all policies, practices and procedures to ensure culturally appropriate service delivery that reflects no bias or racism toward Indigenous Peoples.

9.2 Build respectful working relationships with Indigenous Peoples by knowing, understanding, and respecting the people they are serving. That includes:

- *Reviewing and revising all policies, practices and procedures to ensure culturally appropriate service delivery that reflects no bias or racism toward Indigenous Peoples.*
- *Establishing engagement and partnerships with Indigenous Peoples, communities and leadership who are resident within a police service's jurisdiction.*
- *Ensuring appropriate Indigenous representation on police services boards and oversight authorities.*
- *Training and education of all staff and officers so that they understand and implement culturally appropriate and trauma-informed practices.*

Despite the Canadian National Inquiry's final report being released on 3 June 2019, [a report card prepared by Canada's CBC News](#) found that no progress had been made on Calls for Justice 9.2, as of 5 June 2023.