

The Senate

Finance and Public Administration
References Committee

Domestic violence and gender inequality

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Chapter 1

Referral

1.1 On 25 November 2015 the Senate referred the following matters to the Senate Finance and Public Administration References Committee (the committee) for inquiry and report by 24 August 2016:

- (a) the role of gender inequality in all spheres of life in contributing to the prevalence of domestic violence;
- (b) the role of gender stereotypes in contributing to cultural conditions which support domestic violence, including, but not limited to, messages conveyed to children and young people in:
 - (i) the marketing of toys and other products,
 - (ii) education, and
 - (iii) entertainment;
- (c) the role of government initiatives at every level in addressing the underlying causes of domestic violence, including the commitments under, or related to, the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children; and
- (d) any other related matters.¹

1.2 The inquiry was not completed when the Senate and the House of Representatives were dissolved on 9 May 2016 for a general election on 2 July 2016. When Parliament resumed, the committee recommended to the Senate that the inquiry be re-referred in the 45th Parliament with a reporting date of 24 November 2016. This recommendation was agreed by the Senate.² The committee has decided to report early.

Previous committee inquiry

1.3 During the 44th Parliament, from June 2014, the committee undertook a comprehensive inquiry into domestic violence, reporting on 20 August 2015. The committee does not intend to replicate that inquiry but to focus on the issue of gender inequality as per the terms of reference. The committee's previous report is available from the committee website.³

1 *Journals of the Senate*, No. 129—25 November 2015, pp 3477-3478.

2 *Journals of the Senate*, No.7—15 September 2016, p. 225.

3 See Senate Finance and Public Administration References Committee, *Domestic Violence in Australia*, August 2015, available at http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Finance_and_Public_Administration/Domestic_Violence.

Conduct of the inquiry

1.4 The committee advertised the inquiry on its website. In addition, the committee invited submissions from individuals, organisations and government departments by 31 March 2016, although the committee accepted submissions after this date.

1.5 The committee received 76 public submissions. A list of individuals and organisations which made public submissions, together with other information authorised for publication by the committee, is at Appendix 1.

1.6 Submissions may be accessed through the committee website at: www.aph.gov.au/senate_fpa.

Acknowledgements

1.7 The committee thanks those individuals and organisations who made submissions.

Chapter 2

Gender inequality and domestic violence

2.1 This committee has previously inquired into domestic violence in Australia. In that report the committee noted that there is a complex range of social and personal factors that can contribute to the incidence and severity of domestic violence. As part of that report, the committee discussed the gendered nature of domestic violence.¹

2.2 The terms of reference for this present inquiry focus on specific aspects of that discussion. This committee has been asked in particular to inquire into and report on:

- (a) the role of gender inequality in all spheres of life in contributing to the prevalence of domestic violence;

2.3 This chapter summarises the evidence received that was responsive to this first part of the terms of reference.

2.4 Our Watch explained the term gender inequality:

Gender inequality is a social condition characterised by unequal value afforded to men and women and an unequal distribution of power, resources and opportunity between them. It often results from, or has historical roots in, laws or policies formally constraining the rights and opportunities of women, and is maintained and perpetuated today through structures that continue to organise and reinforce an unequal distribution of economic, social and political power and resources between women and men.

Gender inequality is [also] reinforced and maintained through more informal mechanisms, many of which are strongly characterized by their reliance on gender stereotypes. These include, for example, social norms such as the belief that women are best suited to care for children, practices such as differences in childrearing practices for boys and girls, and structures such as pay differences between men and women.²

2.5 The South Australian Premier's Council for Women expanded further on the consequences of gender inequality in society:

Social norms and gendered expectations shape the roles of men and women, defining what is considered appropriate behaviours for each sex. In many societies, women are viewed as subordinate to men and have a lower social status, allowing men control over, and greater decision-making power than, women. These differences in gender roles create inequalities and unless

1 Senate Finance and Public Administration References Committee, *Domestic Violence in Australia*, August 2015, pp 2-3.

2 *Submission 66*, p. 10. Our Watch is an independent, not-for-profit organisation established by the Victorian and Australian Governments to focus on the prevention of violence against women and their children. Since its establishment the South Australian, Northern Territory, Tasmanian and Queensland Governments have also become members.

challenged, over time they become entrenched and we, as a society, begin to accept that unequal power and status is fair and just the way things are. These beliefs become values that build attitudes; for example, that girls and women are less important, that they think less and feel more than men, that men are leaders, women caregivers. Paying women less for their work or assigning most or all of child care to them, making it harder for them to get education and job training, or keeping them out of 'good-paying' jobs (or any jobs at all) are tactics, sometimes deliberate and sometimes unconscious, to keep the existing power structures as they are.³

2.6 Submissions outlined the connection between gender inequality and domestic violence:

Family violence is gendered in nature. While both men and women can be victims and perpetrators of family violence, the overwhelming majority of family violence is perpetrated by men against women. Further, family violence experienced by women is usually more frequent and severe.⁴

2.7 Likewise, the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) observed:

Gendered violence is rooted in the structural inequalities between men and women. It is both a cause and consequence of gender inequality.⁵

2.8 The AHRC referred to, and quoted from, the United Nations' *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women* (1993) (Declaration), which recognises that:

[V]iolence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women, which have led to domination over and discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of the full advancement of women, and that violence against women is one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position compared with men.⁶

2.9 VicHealth, the Australian National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) and Our Watch all referred to the findings on gender inequality in

3 *Submission 6*, p. 2.

4 Victorian Council of Social Service, *Submission 27*, p. 2. See also: Women's Health Victoria, *Submission 38*, pp 9-10.

5 *Submission 41*, p. 4.

6 *Submission 41*, pp 4-5, quoting from the United Nations' *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women* (1993).

Change the Story, which is a shared primary prevention framework.⁷ Part of the work for *Change the Story* involved identifying the drivers of violence, including gender inequality:

There is now consensus in the international research that examining the way in which gender relations are structured is key to understanding violence against women. Studies by the United Nations, European Commission, World Bank and World Health Organization all locate the underlying cause or necessary conditions for violence against women in the social context of gender inequality.⁸

2.10 The Tasmanian Government's submission also commented on the connection between gender inequality and domestic violence:

While there is no single cause of violence against women and the relationship between gender and violence is complex, it is now widely recognised that gender inequality is a key driver of family violence, often in intersection with other social inequalities such as age, race[,] ability and social class.⁹

2.11 VicHealth reproduced a graph by the United Nations Development Fund for Women demonstrating the relationship between the prevalence of violence against women and gender equality (see Figure 1). The data, based on global indices of gender equality shows that as equality decreases, prevalence of violence against women increases.¹⁰

7 See Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth) *Submission 16*, pp 3 and 8-13; ANROWS, *Submission 24*, pp 2-4; Our Watch, *Submission 66*, pp 9- 12. See also Our Watch, Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) and VicHealth, *Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia* (2015) (*Change the story*), pp 22-31. Our Watch explains 'Change the story brings together international research, and nationwide experience, on what drives violence against women and their children and what works to prevent it. It establishes a shared understanding of the evidence and principles of effective prevention, and presents a way forward for a coordinated national approach', see <http://www.ourwatch.org.au/What-We-Do/National-Primary-Prevention-Framework>. *Change the Story* is discussed further later in this chapter.

8 Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth, *Change the story*, 2015, p. 22.

9 *Submission 1*, p. 1.

10 *Submission 16*, pp 10-11.

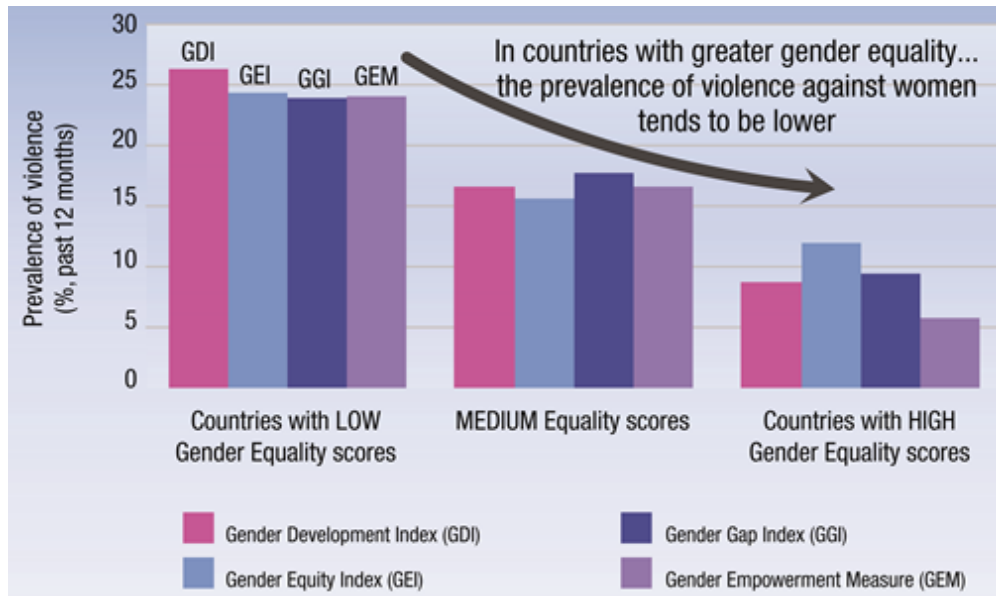


Figure 1: Physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence and measures of gender equality¹¹

2.12 VicHealth explained a socio-ecological model of violence against women showing the complex interplay between factors at various levels:

For example, at the societal and community levels, the risks of VAW have been found to be higher when resources such as education and income are distributed unequally between men and women, when women's economic, social and political rights are poorly protected and/or when there are more rigid distinctions between the roles of men and women and between masculine and feminine identities...

These factors which exist at the various levels of the socio-ecological approach associated with higher levels of violence against women include the ideas, values or beliefs that are common or dominant in a society or community – called social or cultural norms. Norms are reflected in our institutional or community practices or behaviours, and are supported by social structures, both formal (such as legislation) and informal (such as hierarchies within a family or community)...¹²

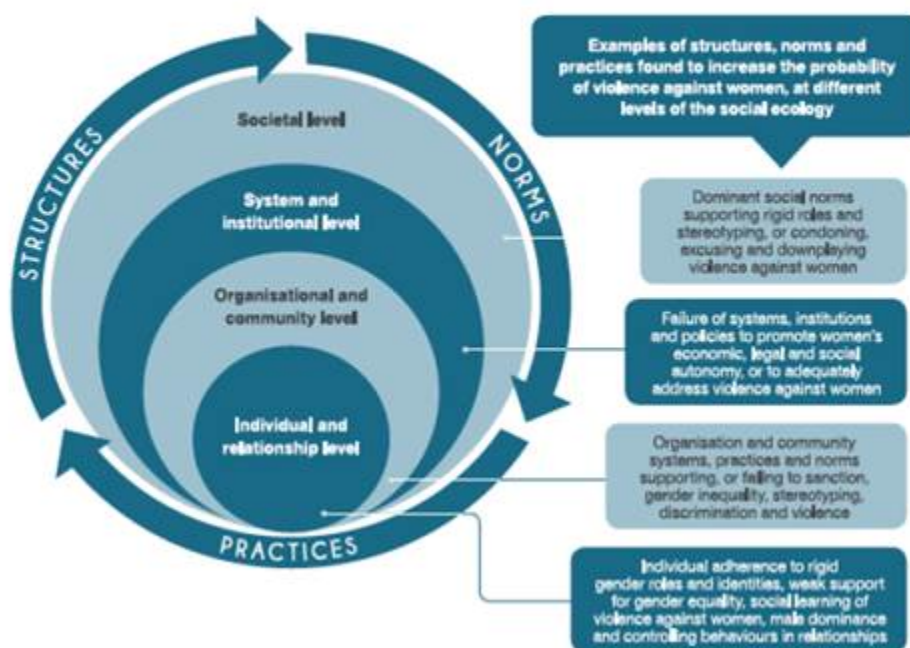
2.13 This is shown in Figure 2 below.¹³

11 VicHealth, *Submission 16*, p. 11, from United Nations Development Fund for Women, *Investing in Gender Equality: Ending Violence against Women and Girls*, 2010, p. 3.

12 VicHealth, *Submission 16*, p. 11.

13 VicHealth, *Submission 16*, p. 12.

Figure 2: Socio-ecological model of violence against women (Our Watch et al., 2015a)



2.14 Despite the research on the interaction between gender inequality and domestic violence, according to the South Australian Premier's Council for Women:

Across most sectors there is a poor understanding that gender inequality in all spheres of life contributes to the prevalence of domestic violence and other forms of violence against women.¹⁴

Gendered drivers of violence

2.15 *Change the story* notes:

Research has found that factors associated with gender inequality are the most consistent predictors of violence against women, and explain its gendered patterns.¹⁵

2.16 *Change the story* explains further the effect of these so-called 'gendered drivers':

The gendered drivers arise from gender discriminatory institutional, social and economic structures, social and cultural norms, and organisational, community, family and relationship practices that together create environments in which women and men are not considered equal, and violence against women is tolerated and even condoned.¹⁶

14 *Submission 6*, p. 2.

15 Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth, *Change the story*, 2015, p. 23.

16 Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth, *Change the story*, 2015, p. 23.

2.17 *Change the story* identifies the following drivers as those consistently associated with higher levels of violence against women:

- condoning of violence against women;
- men's control of decision-making and limits to women's independence;
- rigid gender roles and identities; and
- male peer relations that emphasise aggression and disrespect towards women.¹⁷

2.18 *Change the story* also refers to another group of factors, the 'reinforcing factors':

[Reinforcing factors] while not sufficient in themselves to predict violence against women, [can] interact with the gendered drivers to increase the probability, frequency or severity of such violence.¹⁸

2.19 Those reinforcing factors are:

- condoning of violence in general;
- experience of, and exposure to, violence;
- weakening of pro-social behaviour, especially harmful use of alcohol;
- socio-economic inequality and discrimination; and
- backlash factors (when male dominance, power or status is challenged).¹⁹

2.20 The Change the Story framework provides more detail on the role of rigid gender roles and identities:

Levels of violence against women are significantly and consistently higher in societies, communities and relationships where there are more rigid distinctions between the roles of men and women – for example, where men are assumed to be the primary breadwinner and women to be primarily responsible for childrearing – and between masculine and feminine identities, or what an 'ideal' man or woman is.²⁰

Gender inequality in Australia

2.21 Women's Health West noted that in 2015, Australia ranked 36 out of 145 countries on a global index measuring gender equality.²¹ Submissions compared this

17 Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth, *Change the story*, 2015, p. 23.

18 Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth, *Change the story*, 2015, p. 26.

19 Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth, *Change the story*, 2015, p. 26.

20 Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth, *Change the story*, 2015, p. 25.

21 *Submission 10*, pp 6-7, referring to the World Economic Forum, *Global Gender Gap Report 2015*. See also Victorian Council of Social Service, *Submission 27*, p. 7; Women's Health Victoria, *Submission 38*, p. 15.

to previous years when Australia ranked 15th out of 115 countries in 2006; 24th out of 136 countries in 2013; and 24th out of 142 countries in 2014.²²

2.22 The Victorian Council of Social Service (VCOSS) explained that gender inequality adversely affects women across all aspects of their lives:

[I]ncluding their educational and training pathways, employment opportunities, work-life balance, opportunities to take positions of formal leadership, health and safety, economic security, and social inclusion. Gender inequality maintains the power and privilege held by men, and reinforces negative messages about the value and status of women, increasing the likelihood of experiencing violence.²³

2.23 VCOSS continued:

In financial terms, women continue to do the bulk of unpaid work across society, including caring for children, older parents or relatives with disability or long-term health conditions, and housework. As a result women of all ages have substantially lower labour force participation rates and when they do engage in work it is more likely to be in part-time, lower paid, insecure work. Even when working full-time, women earn lower average wages than men. A gender pay gap of 18 per cent exists between full-time male and female employees, equivalent to men earning an additional \$284.20 per week.

Combined these factors place women at risk of financial and housing insecurity, both while working and in retirement. Women are more likely to live in low economic resource households, be unable to raise \$2,000 in an emergency, have little or no superannuation coverage or be financially insecure in retirement.²⁴

2.24 The Tasmanian Government referred to the lack of women in senior roles:

Women are underrepresented in leadership roles in both the private and public sectors, in boardrooms and in parliaments, despite the fact that women outperform men in higher education.²⁵

2.25 The AHRC echoed this point, providing the following context:

The percentage of women on ASX 200 boards was 21.9 percent, as of 31 January 2016. As of 2012, women held 9.7 percent of executive key management personnel positions in the ASX 200; there were seven female CEOs in the ASX 200; and in the ASX 200, women's representation in line

22 See Women's Health West, *Submission 10*, pp 6-7; Victorian Council of Social Service, *Submission 27*, p. 7; Women's Health Victoria, *Submission 38*, p. 15; Fighting for Justice Foundation, *Submission 47*, p. 3; Australian Psychological Society, *Submission 54*, p. 5.

23 *Submission 27*, p. 7.

24 *Submission 27*, p. 8.

25 *Submission 1*, p. 2.

management positions was 6.0 percent and in support positions, 22.0 percent.²⁶

2.26 The Women's Health West added:

In the current Federal parliament, only six of the 21 cabinet ministers are women. In total, there are more than twice as many male federal parliamentarians, compared to women (71 per cent male compared to 29 per cent female). The disparity is even wider in the number of men compared to women holding ministerial positions (83 per cent male compared to 17 per cent female). In 2015, women held only 39 per cent of the 2570 board positions on Australian Government boards and bodies, and 30 per cent of Chair and Deputy Chair positions on Australian Government boards.²⁷

Vulnerable groups

2.27 Gender inequality affects all women, but it does not affect all women equally:

The intersection of multiple inequalities creates significantly different lived experiences for women. Serious efforts to address domestic violence must place gender inequality against a wider context of power and multiple forms of inequality, including racial inequalities.²⁸

2.28 The National Torres Strait Islander Legal Services (NATSILS) informed the committee that any analysis of gendered stereotypes in family violence must also pay attention to how gendered stereotypes intersect with racial stereotypes:

Thus when acknowledging oppression associated with gender, it is vital to also acknowledge that for many women this also intersects with oppression caused by both historical and contemporary racism, often in complicated and complex ways. Without such recognition, it is easy to forget that gender stereotypes are not monolithic and that women from non-dominant ethnic communities face additional challenges in terms of stereotypes. Assuming that 'women' have a coherent group identity prior to their entry into social relations, ignores how the ideologies of masculinity, femininity and sexuality are inherently racialised.²⁹

2.29 NATSILS highlighted that gender inequality is a contributing factor to family violence rates in ATSI communities:

...gender inequality can be a factor which both contributes to and compounds the victimisation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. For example, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are significantly disadvantaged in terms of entry into and promotion within the labour market, which can leave these women marginalised, discriminated

26 *Submission 41*, p. 5.

27 *Submission 10*, p. 7. Note: as at 15 September 2016, six of the 23 cabinet ministers are women. See <https://www.pm.gov.au/your-government/cabinet> (accessed 15 September 2016).

28 National Family Violence Prevention Legal Services, *Submission 21*, p. 9.

29 *Submission 52*, pp 8-9.

against and financially dependent on partners. As has often been acknowledged, economic dependency can make it extremely difficult for women to leave an abusive partner.³⁰

2.30 Women from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds face additional barriers in the pursuit of gender equality and a reduction in domestic violence. The unique challenges facing CALD women were outlined by the Women's Legal Services Australia, including:

- *Migration status.* Women who are on temporary visas are particularly vulnerable during domestic violence situations. They are often isolated, without family support and entirely reliant on their abusive partner. They may be fearful of leaving a violent relationship because of the consequences for their migration status. Accessing legal advice, finding employment and navigating the complexities of an unfamiliar court system are regular challenges.
- *Knowledge of family law, family violence law and child protection.* Women often come from countries where their legal systems are vastly different. They may have differing understandings on custody of children, divorce settlements, dowry payments and legal protections against domestic violence. Without timely access to legal information and advice that is in a form that is understood by women, women are unable to effectively access justice.
- *Access to interpreters.* Women are often unable to access appropriate interpreters once in the legal system. In some instances the same interpreter must interpret for both parties. Women who require interpreters of specific dialects or come from a small community where the interpreter is known face even greater barriers.³¹

Attitudes to gender inequality and domestic violence

2.31 In its submission, VicHealth referred to the findings of the 2013 National Community Attitudes towards Violence Against Women Survey (NCAS):

This research found that the strongest influence on attitudes towards violence against women among young people is their understanding of the nature of violence and their attitudes towards gender equality.³²

2.32 The NCAS investigates four areas:

30 *Submission 52*, p. 4.

31 *Submission 58*, p. 26.

32 *Submission 16*, p. 15. The 2013 National Community Attitudes towards violence against Women Survey (2013 NCAS) is one of the studies designed to monitor the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022*. The 2013 NCAS was carried out by VicHealth in collaboration with the Social Research Centre and The University of Melbourne. The 2013 NCAS involved more than 17 500 twenty minute phone interviews with a cross-section of Australians aged 16 years or older. The aims and areas of investigation of the 2013 NCAS were discussed in the committee's previous report, see Senate Finance and Public Administration References Committee, *Domestic Violence in Australia*, August 2015, pp 45-46.

- community knowledge of violence against women;
- attitudes towards violence against women;
- attitudes towards gender roles and relationships; and
- responses to witnessing violence and knowledge of resources.

2.33 The NCAS' findings in relation to attitudes towards gender roles and relationships are particularly relevant to the terms of reference for this inquiry. These findings are summarised below. In addition, Table 1 sets out the findings for these areas compared to findings in the 2009 NCAS.

Attitudes towards gender roles and relationships

2.34 The 2013 NCAS notes some 'encouraging results' in relation to attitudes towards gender roles and relationships, namely:

Most Australians support gender equality in the public arena such as workplaces.

Most acknowledge that women still experience inequality in the workplace.³³

2.35 However, there were also 'areas of concern':

More than a quarter [27 per cent] believe that men make better political leaders.

Up to 28% of Australians endorse attitudes supportive of male dominance of decision-making in relationships, a dynamic identified as a risk factor for partner violence.³⁴

33 VicHealth, *Australians' attitudes to violence against women: 2013 National Community Attitudes Towards Violence against Women Survey – Research Summary*, September 2014, p. 6, available at: <https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/media-and-resources/publications/2013-national-community-attitudes-towards-violence-against-women-survey>.

34 VicHealth, *Australians' attitudes to violence against women: 2013 National Community Attitudes Towards Violence against Women Survey – Research Summary*, September 2014, p. 6.

	2009	2013
Attitudes towards gender roles in public and private life (% agree)		
Men make better political leaders	23	27**
When jobs are scarce, men have more right to a job than women	11	12
University education is more important for a boy	4	5
A woman has to have children to be fulfilled	11	12
It's okay for a woman to have a child as a single parent and not want a stable relationship with a man	60	66**
Attitudes towards decision-making in relationships (% agree)		
Men should take control in relationships and be the head of the household	18	19
Women prefer a man to be in charge of the relationship	27	28
Attitudes towards the status of women (% agree)		
Discrimination against women is no longer a problem in the workplace in Australia	11	13**

Table 1: 2013 NCAS findings on attitudes towards gender roles and relationships.³⁵

Attitudes towards violence against women

2.36 In terms of the attitudes of violence towards women, the 2013 NCAS noted positive trends:

Only 4% to 6% of Australians (depending on the scenario) believe violence against women can be justified.

Since 2009 there has been a decrease in the proportion of Australians who believe that domestic violence can be excused if the violent person is regretful afterward.

Most do not believe that women should remain in a violent relationship to keep the family together or that domestic violence is a private matter to be handled in the family.

Since 1995 there has been a decrease in those who believe that women who are sexually harassed should sort it out themselves.

Most support the current policy that the violent person should be made to leave the family home.

35 Source: VicHealth, *Australians' attitudes to violence against women: 2013 National Community Attitudes Towards Violence against Women Survey – Research Summary*, September 2014, p. 6, available at: <https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/media-and-resources/publications/2013-national-community-attitudes-towards-violence-against-women-survey>. (** indicates that a the difference between 2009 and 2013 is statistically significant).

Most agree that violence against women (both physical and non-physical) is serious.

Since 1995 there has been an increase in the percentage recognising non-physical forms of control, intimidation and harassment as serious.

There has been a 7% decline since 2009 in the proportion of young people who hold attitudes that support violence against women at the extreme end of the spectrum. The decline is 10% in young men. Young people have been the target of recent efforts to prevent violence against women.³⁶

2.37 However, the NCAS also identified a number of areas of concern in relation to attitudes towards violence against women:

Sizeable proportions believe there are circumstances in which violence can be excused.

There has been an increase in Australians agreeing that rape results from men not being able to control their need for sex, from 3 in 10 in 2009 to more than 4 in 10 in 2013.

Nearly 8 in 10 agree that it's hard to understand why women stay in a violent relationship.

More than half agree that 'women could leave a violent relationship if they really wanted to'.

Compared with physical violence and forced sex, Australians are less inclined to see non-physical forms of control, intimidation and harassment as 'serious'.

More than half agree that women often fabricate cases of domestic violence in order to improve their prospects in family law cases and nearly 2 in 5 believe that a lot of times women who say they were raped led the man on and later had regrets.

Up to 1 in 5 believes that there are circumstances in which women bear some responsibility for violence. There has been no change since 2009.³⁷

2.38 Further information on the findings of the 2013 NCAS on attitudes towards violence against women, including comparative results from surveys in 1995 and 2009, is set out in Appendix 2.

2.39 In summary, the 2013 NCAS made the following observation:

It is important to note that attitudes towards women are fairly consistent across the population, regardless of your education, where you live or what

36 VicHealth, *Australians' attitudes to violence against women: 2013 National Community Attitudes Towards Violence against Women Survey – Research Summary*, September 2014, p. 5.

37 VicHealth, *Australians' attitudes to violence against women: 2013 National Community Attitudes Towards Violence against Women Survey – Research Summary*, September 2014, p. 5.

job you do. The survey found virtually no differences between respondents in rural, remote, urban and regional areas or between states and territories.³⁸

2.40 However, the report continued:

[T]here are some differences in particular groups and places. Groups who are most likely to endorse violence-supportive attitudes and who have the poorest understanding of what constitutes violence against women are:

- men, especially young men and those experiencing multiple forms of disadvantage
- younger people (16-25)
- people from counties in which the main language spoken is not English, especially those who have recently arrived in Australia.³⁹

2.41 In its submission, VicHealth noted the work to be done on improving attitudes to gender inequality and violence against women:

The research indicates that significant efforts are required to address young people's beliefs about gender roles in the family, household and intimate relationships and also to provide skills for the development of more equal and respectful relationships.⁴⁰

National initiatives

National Plan

2.42 In its previous report on domestic violence in Australia, the committee set out in detail the National Framework to address domestic and family violence, specifically the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022 (the National Plan).⁴¹

2.43 The National Plan was endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) and released in February 2011. It is being delivered through four three-year action plans. The First Action Plan operated from 2010-2013. The Second Action Plan: Moving Ahead 2013-2016 was released in June 2014.⁴²

2.44 The Second Action Plan advanced the issue of gender equality through:

- national schemes to improve women's economic independence, such as paid parental leave and access to child care;

38 VicHealth, *Australians' attitudes to violence against women: 2013 National Community Attitudes Towards Violence against Women Survey – Research Summary*, September 2014, p. 7.

39 VicHealth, *Australians' attitudes to violence against women: 2013 National Community Attitudes Towards Violence against Women Survey – Research Summary*, September 2014, p. 7.

40 *Submission 16*, p. 15.

41 Senate Finance and Public Administration References Committee, *Domestic Violence in Australia*, August 2015, pp 19-21.

42 Department of Social Services, *Submission 3*, p. 1.

- national and local efforts to support women's leadership in government, business and the community;
- male champions and leaders speaking out against domestic and family violence and sexual assault, and promoting the broader principles of gender equality.⁴³

2.45 In its submission, the Department of Social Services (DSS) informed the committee that work was underway to develop the Third Action Plan, which was due for release in mid-2016:

The Third Action Plan marks the half-way point for the National Plan and will progress activities commenced during the First and Second Action Plans. The Third Action Plan will continue to focus on the drivers of violence, including gender inequality.⁴⁴

Other initiatives

2.46 More broadly, in terms of the steps being taken to address domestic violence, DSS advised the committee of the following government funding announcement:

On 24 September 2015, the Australian Government announced increased funding to address domestic and family violence through the Women's Safety Package. This \$100 million package contains a set of practical measures to help keep women and children safe. This includes delivering better frontline services, leveraging innovative technologies and providing education resources to help change community attitudes to violence.⁴⁵

2.47 DSS also reported on a national campaign to influence the attitudes of young people towards violence:

In addition, a \$30 million national campaign, jointly funded with the states and territories, to reduce violence against women and their children is expected to be launched in 2016. The campaign will focus on galvanising the people (such as parents, other family members and peers) and communities (such as schools, sporting and community groups) that surround young people to positively influence their attitudes to violence and gender inequality.⁴⁶

2.48 DSS also mentioned the role of the COAG Advisory Panel:

The issue of domestic violence in Australia was elevated to the highest political level and reducing violence against women remains a priority for the Council of Australian Government's (COAG). An Advisory Panel was established to support COAG, with full membership announced on 14 May 2015. The COAG Advisory Panel is providing expert advice on how all

43 Department of Social Services, *Submission 3*, p. 2.

44 *Submission 3*, p. 3. Note: The Third Action Plan 2016-19 was launched on 28 October 2016, see <http://plan4womenssafety.dss.gov.au/the-national-plan/third-action-plan/> (accessed 3 November 2016).

45 *Submission 3*, p. 3.

46 *Submission 3*, p. 3.

Australian governments can address violence against women and their children most effectively.⁴⁷

2.49 Our Watch indicated its view that the current challenge for governments at all levels is to:

...scale up and systematise proven and promising, yet small-scale, programs to the population level – enabling them to reach and impact far greater numbers of people, and create the potential for the kind of whole-of-population change that is needed.⁴⁸

Primary prevention framework

2.50 As noted above,⁴⁹ in addition to the National Plan, Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth have developed *Change the Story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia*.

2.51 In November 2015, *Change the Story* was released. The framework:

...reinforces the direction outlined in the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022, and seeks to consolidate and strengthen the action already occurring around the country to address the issue.⁵⁰

2.52 The framework includes five actions to address the gendered drivers of violence against women:

- challenge condoning of violence against women;
- promote women's independence and decision-making in public life and relationships;
- foster positive personal identities and challenge gender stereotypes and roles;
- strengthen positive, equal and respectful relations between and among women and men, girls and boys;
- promote and normalise gender equality in public and private life.⁵¹

2.53 Five supporting actions are also included:

- challenge the normalisation of violence as an expression of masculinity or male dominance;
- prevent exposure to violence and support those affected to reduce its consequences;
- address the intersections between social norms relating to alcohol and gender;

47 *Submission 3*, p. 3.

48 *Submission 66*, p. 27.

49 See para 2.9.

50 Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth, *Change the story*, 2015, p. 7.

51 Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth, *Change the story*, 2015, p. 33.

- reduce backlash by engaging men and boys in gender equality, building relationships skills and social connections;
- promote broader social equality and address structural discrimination and disadvantage.⁵²

2.54 Following the release of the framework, Our Watch has indicated its intention to develop a dedicated resource to guide the prevention of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children, which will be released as a companion document to the framework.⁵³

52 Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth, *Change the story*, 2015, p. 34.

53 Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth, *Change the story*, 2015, p. 3.

Chapter 3

Gender stereotypes, government initiatives, and other related matters

3.1 The second part of the terms of reference asked this committee to inquire into and report on:

(b) the role of gender stereotypes in contributing to cultural conditions which support domestic violence, including, but not limited to, messages conveyed to children and young people in:

- (i) the marketing of toys and other products,
- (ii) education, and
- (iii) entertainment;

(c) the role of government initiatives at every level in addressing the underlying causes of domestic violence, including the commitments under, or related to, the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children; and

(d) any other related matters.

3.2 This chapter describes the evidence received by the committee that was responsive to this part of the terms of reference.

Education

3.3 The Primary Prevention Framework notes that there are particular stages of life which present significant opportunities to address the drivers of violence against women:

Experiences in childhood and adolescence have a particularly strong influence and can impact development and future life paths.¹

3.4 As with the committee's previous inquiry into domestic violence, submissions expressed support for programs targeted to young people.² The progress of some of these programs is outlined below.

Respectful relationships

3.5 The Second Action Plan of the National Plan states '[s]upporting and educating young people to build respectful relationships is paramount to preventing

1 Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth, *Change the story*, 2015, p. 37.

2 Senate Finance and Public Administration References Committee, *Domestic Violence in Australia*, August 2015, pp 71, 73-75, 80.

domestic and family violence and sexual assault in the future'.³ The Second Action Plan details work being undertaken in this area:

Schools and organisations deliver a range of respectful relationships programmes in a number of different ways. Under the First Action Plan, we explored and evaluated the effectiveness of different approaches to respectful relationship education in school and non-school settings.

Under the Second Action Plan, governments will work together to develop and test a suite of good practice tools and resources to strengthen and support the delivery of high quality respectful relationships education in schools, homes and communities. This will build on findings from the evaluation of the First Action Plan's national Respectful Relationships programmes.⁴

3.6 Specifically, the Second Action plan details the following project:

Our [Watch] is funded by the Victorian Government to undertake a Respectful Relationships in Schools project across selected areas in regional and metropolitan Victoria. The project will be evaluated to document best practice examples to be used across jurisdictions.⁵

3.7 In addition:

Following endorsement of the Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education by Education Ministers at the Standing Council for School Education and Early Childhood, states and territories can commence incorporating respectful relationships education into their local curricula and syllabi, building on work already undertaken by states and territories in this area.⁶

3.8 For the Third Action Plan, Our Watch recommended that there be further support for schools:

...to embed whole-school approaches to Respectful Relationships Education and ensure the full benefits of the new Australian Curriculum reach every child.⁷

White Ribbon

3.9 White Ribbon Australia, established in 2003, is a male-led primary prevention campaign to end men's violence against women.⁸

3 Second Action Plan 2013-2016 of the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children, p. 22.

4 Second Action Plan 2013-2016 of the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children, p. 23.

5 Second Action Plan 2013-2016 of the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children, p. 23.

6 Second Action Plan 2013-2016 of the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children, p. 23.

7 *Submission 66*, p. 37.

3.10 White Ribbon Australia runs the 'Breaking the Silence' schools development program for principals and teachers. Their submission states that the program supports staff to:

...embed models of respectful relationships in school culture and classroom activities. These models give students the opportunity to learn and experience respectful relationships, preventing the perpetration of violence against women and girls.⁹

3.11 White Ribbon reported that since its 'Breaking the Silence Schools' program commenced in 2009, 203 schools have completed the program, reaching over 220,000 students.¹⁰

The Line

3.12 *The Line* (established in 2010 as part of the primary prevention approach of the First Action Plan), is a national social marketing campaign aimed at young people aged 12-20 years. *The Line* encourages young people to discuss what constitutes reasonable behaviour in relationships in order to create long term changes to attitudes that can enable violent behaviour.¹¹

3.13 Our Watch outlined that from July 2014, they have been responsible for the delivery and management of *The Line*. In its submission, Our Watch recommended increased funding for *The Line*, through to 2018-19:

...in order to support activities that target the different attitudinal segments of young people identified by current campaign research, as well as raise broader awareness of *The Line* and support the COAG campaign.¹²

Higher education

3.14 The National Union of Students (NUS) explained that conventional gender roles are present in the higher education sector.¹³

3.15 The NUS suggested that:

8 *Submission 65*, White Ribbon Australia Annual Report 2014-15, p. 7.

9 *Breaking the Silence Schools Program, Strengthening the culture of respectful relationships through Australian Schools*, <http://www.whiteribbon.org.au/schools> (accessed 23 August 2016).

10 *Submission 65*, p. 25.

11 The Senate Finance and Public Administration References Committee, *Domestic Violence in Australia*, August 2015, p. 83.

12 *Submission 66*, p. 7. Note: In April 2015, COAG agreed to take collective action to reduce the level of violence against women and their children. The COAG Campaign is a national campaign to encourage the community to change the attitudes of young people to violence. The campaign builds on the latest research and efforts already underway by states and territories. For more information, see *Council of Australian Governments* at <http://www.coag.gov.au/node/535> (accessed 26 August 2016).

13 *Submission 13*, p. 5.

This divide between the areas in which women and men study does itself not reflect the epidemic of violence against women. However, it does show that the Higher Education sector is compliant in the societal perpetuation of gender roles, which underpin gendered violence.¹⁴

3.16 Universities Australia (UA), the peak body representing Australia's 39 universities, indicated that 'the higher education sector is committed to improving gender equality more broadly'. UA also welcomes further discussion on how the higher education sector can contribute to the National Plan.¹⁵

3.17 In relation to its workforce, UA is in the process of developing a Strategy for Women 'as part of the sector's commitment to equity and diversity.' The strategy will focus on:

...a broad range of gender equity issues within universities, including addressing the career pipeline for the advancement of academic and professional women staff, flexible and equitable work, gender pay equity, and supporting staff with families. The strategy will also encourage action plans in universities to tackle gender inequity. UA also supports UA Executive Women, a group that aims to increase participation of senior academic and professional women in Australian universities through mentoring programs, cross-sectoral professional development for women, and increasing awareness of the underrepresentation of women and unconscious bias in the human resources departments of universities.¹⁶

Employment

3.18 The gender pay gap is the difference between women's and men's average weekly full-time equivalent earnings, expressed as a percentage of men's earnings. The Workplace Gender Equality Agency has released information showing that the gender pay gap in Australia is currently 16.2 per cent and has been between 15 and 19 per cent for the past two decades.¹⁷ The agency highlighted that the gender pay gap is influenced by:

...a number of interrelated work, family and societal factors, including stereotypes about the work women and men 'should' do, and the way women and men 'should' engage in the workforce.¹⁸

14 *Submission 13*, p. 5.

15 *Submission 51*, pp 2-3.

16 *Submission 51*, p. 2.

17 See <https://www.wgea.gov.au/addressing-pay-equity/what-gender-pay-gap> (accessed 19 September 2016).

18 Workplace Gender Equality Agency, *Gender Pay Gap Statistics Fact Sheet*, https://www.wgea.gov.au/sites/default/files/Gender_Pay_Gap_Factsheet.pdf, p. 3 (accessed 25 August 2016).

Workforce participation

3.19 The 2015 Intergenerational Report indicates that for all age groups (other than those aged 15-19 years) the total workforce participation rate for men is higher than for women. In 2013-14, 71 per cent of men and 58.6 per cent of women participated in the labour force.¹⁹ It noted that Australia's female participation rate is about four percentage points lower than in New Zealand and Canada.²⁰ The Intergenerational Report includes an estimate from the Grattan Institute that if Australia's female participation rate reached that of Canada, Australia's GDP would be a permanent \$25 billion higher.²¹

3.20 Treasury projected that in 2054-2055, the participation rate will be 68.1 per cent for men and 56.8 per cent for women.²² The Intergenerational Report states:

Labour force participation rates for females in most age groups have increased significantly over the past 20 years, and are expected to continue increasing over the projection period. This is attributed to the increased levels of educational attainment among women and continued better access to childcare services and more flexible work arrangements.²³

3.21 The Intergenerational Report also notes the reasons for the increase:

The increase in female participation rates resulted from increased levels of education, changing social attitudes towards gender roles, declining fertility rates, better access to childcare services and more flexible working arrangements.²⁴

3.22 The Women's Information and Referral Exchange (WIRE) also pointed out higher education levels for women:

More women than men now go to university. Women make up 55.5% of the student population but this has not reduced the gender pay gap nor removed prejudices that still act as barriers for women obtaining and maintaining decent and secure employment. For women's financial security to be addressed, Australia needs to lead behavioural change in the workplace and in the home.²⁵

3.23 However, data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics on labour force participation shows that:

19 Commonwealth of Australia, *2015 Intergenerational Report Australia in 2055*, p. 138.

20 Commonwealth of Australia, *2015 Intergenerational Report Australia in 2055*, pp 20-21.

21 Commonwealth of Australia, *2015 Intergenerational Report Australia in 2055*, p. 21.

22 Commonwealth of Australia, *2015 Intergenerational Report Australia in 2055*, p. 99.

23 Commonwealth of Australia, *2015 Intergenerational Report Australia in 2055*, p. 138.

24 Commonwealth of Australia, *2015 Intergenerational Report Australia in 2055*, p. 19.

25 *Submission 15*, p. 21.

Part-time work was the most common form of employment for mothers with children of all ages in Australia.²⁶

3.24 Women's Health Victoria outlined:

Though workforce participation by women has increased over time, women do an average of 33.75 hours of household work (including caring for children as well as domestic activities) compared to 18.3 hours for men. Australia also has one of the lowest employment rates for mothers in developed countries at 62%.²⁷

3.25 WIRE advised that taking time out of the workforce to undertake caring responsibilities can have a detrimental effect on employment:

Long career breaks impacts a woman's ability to re-enter the workforce. Often women are forced to return to roles that are part-time, lower paid, casualised, lack security and offer less opportunities for progression.²⁸

3.26 The Tasmanian Government also commented that women are more likely than their male counterparts to have interrupted work patterns which can affect career progression:

Particularly following the birth of a child or caring for family members. The majority of unpaid caring work is undertaken by women...

...and they spend almost three times as many hours each week looking after children compared to men.²⁹

3.27 Some submitters, including Women's Health West argued that a lack of affordable childcare hampers women's ability to re-enter the workforce:

A lack of childcare and the unequal distribution and availability of affordable childcare further entrenches gender inequalities by reducing the economic participation of women and subsequently increasing their dependence on government support and/or their partners.³⁰

3.28 Childcare and its effects on workforce participation has been the subject of a number of inquiries, including the Productivity Commission's 2014 inquiry into childcare and early childhood learning.³¹ There have also been a number of Senate

26 Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Labour Force Participation- an International Comparison*, <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/0/0CBA37179F1B71BACA25732C00207901?opendocument> (accessed 25 August 2016).

27 *Submission 38*, p. 40.

28 *Submission 15*, p. 23.

29 *Submission 1*, p. 2. See also Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006, *How Australians Use Their Time*, <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/4153.0> (accessed 25 August 2016).

30 *Submission 10*, p. 1. See also WIRE, *Submission 15*, p. 11.

31 Productivity Commission, *Childcare and Early Childhood Learning*, 31 October 2014 available at <http://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/childcare#report> (accessed 25 August 2016).

inquiries into childcare.³² The committee will not replicate the work of these inquiries here but urges those interested to review the reports.

3.29 The inability to participate in networking or training activities was considered a further barrier exacerbating the inability to gain promotional opportunities for employees with caring responsibilities and/or flexible work arrangements.³³

3.30 The Australian Government has developed the *Balancing the Future: The Australian Public Service Gender Equality Strategy 2016-2019* (the Gender Equality Strategy). The Gender Equality Strategy identified that:

[F]emale employees are less likely to have informal networking opportunities extended to them than their male co-workers—missing out on the connections and confidence these offer.

Flexible work arrangements are available in most APS agencies, but are accessed overwhelmingly by women and hardly at all by senior leaders. Flexible work is seen largely as an accommodation for women, and as incompatible with working in a leadership role. Workplaces that take a flexible approach to how, where, and when work is done attract the highest-calibre employees—and keep them in the long term.

The case for change is clear. Without recognising gender equality as a business imperative, agencies risk being left behind.³⁴

3.31 It has been pointed out that structural and cultural obstacles can also hamper men's ability to take on feminised careers or family responsibilities:

These include entrenched beliefs about the types of roles that are suitable for flexible work, a belief that flexible work is only for women with small children, inconsistent implementation by supervisors, workforce planning issues and the negative stigma attached to flexible work.³⁵

3.32 WIRE commented on the impact of this perception:

Men are twice as likely as women to be denied flexible hours at work, making it harder for men to take on unpaid caring role. Men fear that if they become primary carers or take on flexible work arrangements in order to care for dependents, they will be seen as not being career focussed.³⁶

32 For example see: Senate Education and Employment References Committee, *The immediate future of the childcare sector in Australia*, 16 July 2014; Senate Education and Employment References Committee, *The delivery of quality and affordable early childhood education and care services*, 16 July 2014.

33 Australian Government Office for women, *The Leadership Challenge, Women in Management*, 2008, p. 10.

34 *The Australian Public Service Gender Equality Strategy 2016-2019* (the Gender Equality Strategy) p. 4.

35 *Cultural Change: Gender Diversity and Inclusion in the Australian Federal Police*, Elizabeth Broderick & Co, 2016, p. 67.

36 *Submission 15*, p. 24.

3.33 The Gender Equality Strategy focusses on changing the Australian Public Service (APS) attitudes towards gender roles:

The APS workforce must reflect contemporary reality— one in which men, as well as women, have both caring and work responsibilities, and where everyone is given the same opportunities to develop and to lead.

The APS must set the pace for a contemporary Australian workforce. APS leaders at all levels must be accountable for driving progress in their agencies, their divisions, their branches and their teams.

The APS will not achieve gender equality until both women and men are seen as capable and credible leaders; until both women and men can work flexibly without risking their career progression; and until outdated assumptions of 'women's work' and 'men's work' are identified and eradicated.³⁷

Industrial segregation

3.34 WIRE pointed out that although caring for dependents is an important role, it is not one which is usually valued by status or remuneration and it is a 'role that has typically been thought of as unskilled women's work'.³⁸ WIRE explained the implications for employment in this area:

Feminised work is undervalued by society and thus professions such as childcare are poorly paid. This leaves those in the industry working hard but struggling to get ahead financially.³⁹

3.35 However, there is gradual change in this area. In 2012 Fair Work Australia ruled that 270,000 commonwealth workers in the non-government community services sector should receive significant pay increases of between 19 and 41 per cent:

The wages umpire had earlier ruled that these workers had been underpaid partly because the majority of them are women.⁴⁰

Boards

3.36 Women are underrepresented on boards and in leadership positions across both the public and private sectors.⁴¹ On 31 December 2015, women made up 58.7%

37 Australian Public Service Commission, *Balancing the Future: The Australian Public Service gender equality strategy 2016-2019*, p. 3.

38 *Submission 15*, p. 24.

39 *Submission 15*, p. 21.

40 Fair Work Ombudsman, *Equal Remuneration Order*, <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/pay/minimum-wages/social-and-community-services-industry-pay-rates>, (accessed 26 August 2016), ABC, *The World Today*, 1 February 2012, <http://www.abc.net.au/worldtoday/content/2012/s3420387.htm>, (accessed 26 August 2016).

41 Tasmanian Government, *Submission 1*, p. 3. See also Workplace Gender Equality Agency, *Australian Census of Women in Leadership*, <https://www.wgea.gov.au/fact-sheets-and-research-reports/australian-census-women-leadership> (accessed 25 August 2016).

of the APS population, but only 41.8% of the Senior Executive Service.⁴² In comparison, in the private sector, Catalyst research found:

...26.7% of board positions at ASX50 companies are taken by women. While this is more than the overall proportion of female directors of companies included in the ASX200 (21.9%), ASX300 (20.0%) and All Ordinaries (16.6%), it nevertheless means that only about one in four ASX50 board positions are occupied by women.⁴³

3.37 In 2015 Senators Xenophon, Lambie, Lazarus and Waters sponsored the Australian Government Boards (Gender Balanced Representation) Bill 2015 (the bill). The bill sought to implement existing policy regarding the equal representation of gender on government boards into legislation by requiring government boards to consist of at least 40 per cent men and at least 40 per cent women, with the remaining 20 per cent unallocated.⁴⁴ The bill was referred to the Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee for inquiry and report but the committee recommend that the Senate not pass the bill.⁴⁵

3.38 However, with effect from 1 July 2016, the government has committed to:

...a new gender diversity target of women holding 50 per cent of Government board positions overall, and women and men each holding at least 40 per cent of positions at the individual board level.⁴⁶

3.39 States such as South Australia, Tasmania and Victoria are following the Commonwealth's lead with a commitment to gender equity in public sector boards and court appointments.⁴⁷

42 Australian Public Service Commission, *Balancing the Future: The Australian Public Service gender equality strategy 2016-2019*, <http://www.apsc.gov.au/publications-and-media/current-publications/gender-equality-strategy>, (accessed 25 August 2016).

43 Catalyst CSR Dashboard, *Gender Equality at work, March 2016*, http://catalyst.org.au/documents/Gender-dashboard/Gender_Equality_at_Work_-_Report.pdf (accessed 25 August 2016).

44 Explanatory Memorandum (EM), p. 1.

45 Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee, *Australian Government Boards (Gender Balanced Representation) Bill 2015*, 10 November 2015.

46 Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Gender Balance on Australian Government Boards*, <https://www.dpmc.gov.au/office-women/leadership/gender-balance-australian-government-boards>, (accessed 25 August 2016). Note: The Australian Government Office for Women prepares the annual *Gender Balance on Australian Government Boards Report*.

3.40 In addition, the *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012* requires non-public sector employers with 100 or more staff to submit a report on gender equality indicators to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency.⁴⁸

Male champions of change

3.41 The Victorian Women's Trust Limited outlined that achieving gender equality cannot be left to women alone. Proactive action by men's groups is needed to support women:

...that goes beyond being an 'ally' or a 'feminist' or saying that 'violence against women is wrong.'⁴⁹

3.42 In April 2010, the then Sex Discrimination Commissioner Elizabeth Broderick AO met with a group of senior Australian men to form the Male Champions of change. The organisation was established as:

In most nations, men largely occupy the seats of power. Relying exclusively on women to lead change on gender equality is therefore illogical. We need decent, powerful men to step up beside women to create a more gender equal world.

The Male Champions of Change strategy is about male leaders advocating for and acting to advance gender equality.⁵⁰

47 Women's Health Victoria, *Submission 38*, p. 32, Government of South Australia Office for Women, *Boards and Committees*, <https://www.officeforwomen.sa.gov.au/womens-policy/womens-leadership/women-on-boards-and-committees> (accessed 25 August 2016), Tasmanian Government, *Tasmanian Government Committed to 50% representation of women on boards*, http://www.premier.tas.gov.au/releases/tasmanian_government_committed_to_50_representation_of_women_on_boards (accessed 25 August 2016), ABC News, *Women to make up half of judiciary, government board appointments, under new Victorian rules*, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-03-28/women-to-make-up-50-pc-of-vic-boards-under-new-rules/6355282>, (accessed 25 August 2016).

48 Women's Health Victoria, *Submission 38*, p. 15. Companies subject to mandatory reporting requirements are non-public sector employers with 100 or more employees in Australia for any six months or more of a reporting period. All employees (headcount, not full-time equivalent) should be counted. This includes full-time, part-time, casual and temporary employees of the employer (including all of its subsidiaries employing employees in Australia). From 2016, independent contractors will not be included in the headcount. For corporations which are part of a corporate group, the 100 or more employees' threshold is applied to the combined total of employees in Australia of the parent corporation plus the employees in Australia of any subsidiaries.

49 *Submission 26*, p. 9.

50 Male Champions of Change, *A message from Elizabeth Broderick*, <http://malechampionsofchange.com/message-from-elizabeth-broderick/> (accessed 26 August 2016).

Superannuation

3.43 This inquiry did not receive detailed information on this area, however, the committee notes that on 17 August 2015, the Senate referred an inquiry into the economic security for women in retirement to the Senate Economics References Committee. The committee's report was tabled on 29 April 2016 and covers relevant issues such as narrowing the gender pay gap, women's working experience and superannuation. The committee encourages those interested in this area review this detailed report.⁵¹

Entertainment

3.44 A number of submissions contemplated the significance of the entertainment industry.

Toys

3.45 Play Unlimited, in its submission noted the important influence of toys on early development, including the formulation of ideas of gender norms and stereotypes:

Toys are among the earliest and most influential technologies with which children come into contact. As such, they transmit to children, in concert with other cultural apparatus, particular views of gender relations, examples of appropriate behaviour, and character models. They can also be a windows [sic] to broader phenomena extending beyond the toy-box.⁵²

3.46 Dr Kaye Quek, RMIT University, reported on the academic evidence demonstrating a significant link between the promotion of traditional gender roles and stereotypes and attitudes conducive to male violence against women.⁵³

3.47 Dr Quek further explained:

To the extent that some toys convey to children that dominance and aggression are 'natural' to boys, and submissiveness and domesticity are the appropriate behaviour of girls, they uphold cultural conditions that facilitate the lesser treatment of women, enacted through behaviour such as domestic violence.⁵⁴

3.48 Dr Quek, acknowledged that addressing the problem of gender stereotyping in the toy industry will not, in itself solve the issue of male violence against women.⁵⁵

51 Senate Economics References Committee, *Economic security for women in retirement*, 'A husband is not a retirement plan', 29 April 2016.

52 *Submission 35*, quoting Dr Wendy Varney, pp 1-2.

53 *Submission 49*, p. 1. The evidence referred to is Flood, Michael and Pease, Bob (2009), 'Factors influencing attitudes to violence against women', *Trauma, Violence and Abuse*, 10(2): 125-142.

54 *Submission 49*, p. 2.

55 *Submission 49*, p. 2.

3.49 The Illawarra Forum argued that current marketing strategies promote boys and girls adopting roles where females are subservient and males dominant.⁵⁶

3.50 The Australian Toy Association (ATA) outlined how toy manufacturers and retailers are becoming more gender inclusive in their advertising in an effort to respond to community concerns regarding toys and gender:

Toys "R" Us has opted to remove labels denoting gender in its catalogue and website, and Myer, Target and Big W have removed online options to shop by gender, instead listing toys by their function and brand.⁵⁷

3.51 The toy industry's steps have been recognised by organisations such as the Australian Women Against Violence Alliance (AWAVA):

The industry should be praised for taking steps to respond to changing sentiment that supports gender equality.⁵⁸

Media

3.52 A number of submitters were concerned about how gender roles and stereotypes can be reinforced and sustained through popular culture and media,⁵⁹ such as through:

- (a) the sexualisation of women and girls;⁶⁰
- (b) the depiction of gender stereotypes that reinforce the power disparities between men and women⁶¹ (such as that of the male breadwinner⁶²); and
- (c) the prevalence of glorified and gendered violence.⁶³

3.53 Junction Australia and the Southern Domestic Violence Service Inc, in a joint submission to the committee, put forward the view that despite the existence of the Australian Communication and Media Advisory Council and the Advertising Standards Bureau:

...very little is being done to counteract the continued stereotyping and objectification of women in Australian media and entertainment.⁶⁴

56 *Submission 42*, pp 4-5.

57 *Submission 25*, p. 2.

58 *Submission 60*, p. 4.

59 See research cited by The Australian Women Against Violence Alliance, *Submission 60*, p. 4; The Victorian Women's Trust Limited, *Submission 26*, p. 5.

60 Women Everywhere Advocating Violence Elimination, *Submission 14*, p. 13.

61 The Victorian Women's Trust Limited, *Submission 26*, p. 5.

62 ANROWS, *Submission 24*, p. 4. Citing research from Webster. K. & Flood. M (2015), *Framework Foundations 1: A review of the evidence on correlates of violence against women and what works to prevent it*, p. 25.

63 Australian Council on Children and the Media, *Submission 33*, p. 5.

64 *Submission 22*, p. 12.

3.54 The Australian Council on Children and the Media also highlighted that Australia's National Classification Scheme for media 'does not include any classifiable elements relating to gender stereotypes and objectification'.⁶⁵

3.55 Under Our Watch, as an initiative under the National Plan, a National Media Engagement Project (NME Project) has commenced which:

...is engaging media to increase quality reporting of violence against women and their children and building awareness of the impacts of gender stereotyping and inequality.⁶⁶

3.56 The NME Project is being funded by the Commonwealth Department of Social Services and it has four components:

- Media capacity training for both future and practicing journalists: Our Watch is working with the Journalism Education and Research Association of Australia to develop training curriculum material for both university journalism students, and practicing journalists. The aim is to support a shift in newsroom cultures and practices around reporting on violence against women.
- Website portal with resources: A website portal, developed with the Women's Centre for Health Matters provides media with a range of tools for reporting. The site includes guides on how to approach the issue of violence against women, key facts, terminology, ethical reporting considerations and additional resources.
- A National Survivor's Media Advocacy Program: Our Watch is working with VicHealth and Women's Health East to develop a training package to help survivors of domestic violence to be more effective media advocates.
- A National Awards Scheme to recognise and encourage accurate reporting of violence against women: Our Watch launched a national awards scheme in 2015 to recognise and reward good reporting.⁶⁷

3.57 The four initiatives will be supported and informed by a national framework for engaging the media in the prevention of violence against women.⁶⁸

3.58 AWAVA acknowledged the challenges journalists face when reporting on violence against women as well as improvements already made and supported initiatives in this area including those detailed above:

65 *Submission 33*, p. 6.

66 National Media Engagement Project (National), <http://www.ourwatch.org.au/What-We-Do/National-Media-Engagement-Project> (accessed 23 August 2016).

67 National Media Engagement Project (National), <http://www.ourwatch.org.au/What-We-Do/National-Media-Engagement-Project> (accessed 23 August 2016).

68 See <http://www.ourwatch.org.au/What-We-Do/National-Media-Engagement-Project> (accessed 19 September 2016).

Initiatives such as the *Working with News and Social Media to Prevent Violence Against Women and their Children: A strategic framework for Victoria (2015)* and those under the National Media Engagement (NME) Project, particularly the Our Watch Awards (built on the EVAs Media Awards and funded by VicHealth through Domestic Violence Victoria) have made positive steps to engage media to increase quality reporting of VAW and their children, raise awareness of the impacts of gender stereotyping and inequality and build an understanding of the links between sexism, gender inequality, community attitudes and this violence.⁶⁹

69 *Submission 60*, p. 5.

Chapter 4

Committee view

4.1 The committee notes that during the 44th Parliament the question of domestic violence was referred to the committee for inquiry. The terms of that inquiry were broad, and allowed the examination of a wide range of issues associated with domestic and family violence. The report from that inquiry *Domestic violence in Australia* was tabled in the Senate on 20 August 2015. It contained 25 recommendations. The government has not yet provided a response.

4.2 The terms of the present inquiry are considerably narrower, and refer the committee to a subset of questions regarding gender inequality, principally those associated with entertainment, toys and education.

4.3 The committee commends the report from the previous inquiry, noting that its broader terms of reference enabled a more thorough discussion of the complex relationship between gender inequality and violence than that possible with the present inquiry's terms of reference.

4.4 Notwithstanding this, having considered the evidence, the committee is of the following views.

4.5 The committee is encouraged by work undertaken to date to change gender roles and stereotypes. However, there is clearly more work to be done as evidenced by Australia's decline on the global index measuring gender equality from 15th in 2006 to 24th in 2014.¹

4.6 The committee can see areas of progress in the results of the National Community Attitudes towards Violence Against Women Survey with most Australians supporting gender equality in the public arena such as workplaces and most acknowledging that women still experience inequality in the workplace.

4.7 However, the committee is concerned that more than a quarter of Australians still endorse attitudes supportive of male dominance of decision-making in relationships which is identified as a risk factor for partner violence.

4.8 It is clear that work needs to start early and working with young people is important to embed long term societal change and establish healthy relationships. As in the committee's previous report, it continues to support programs which improve the ability of young people to form and maintain positive and respectful relationships.

4.9 The committee recognises the ways in which gender inequality can manifest itself more broadly in our society. In particular, the committee notes the continued underrepresentation of women in senior management roles in the private sector and the public service and on government and non-government boards. It commends work

1 Note: In 2015 Australia was ranked 36th out 145 countries. See <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2015/rankings/> (accessed 7 November 2016)

being undertaken to increase workforce participation for women and policies to increase female representation on boards.

4.10 The committee strongly supports access to flexible working arrangements such as part-time work and flexible working hours. Ensuring and expanding access to flexible working arrangements and changing the gendered expectations and culture of work are key elements to achieving workplace equality.

4.11 Wider access to affordable childcare and better sharing of unpaid caring and domestic work will promote women's workforce participation as well as reducing the rigidity of gender stereotypes.

4.12 The committee considers that the media and entertainment industry play an important role in shaping and changing community attitudes, standards and behaviours, especially for young people. The committee supports the National Media Engagement Project, an initiative under the National Plan which engages the media to build awareness of the impacts of gender stereotyping and inequality. The committee commends the steps taken by the toy industry to address community concerns regarding toys and gender.

4.13 The committee recognises that the achievement of gender equality in Australia in the areas touched on in this report is a long term challenge, a fact recognised in the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022. The National Plan includes key actions to advance gender equality: improve women's economic participation and independence; improve the participation of women in leadership positions; build and support legal literacy among migrants and refugees on Australian law and gender equality principles; and develop workplace measures to support women experiencing and escaping from domestic violence. The committee is of the view that support for the National Plan should continue.

Senator Jenny McAllister
Chair

Government Senators' additional comments

Introduction

1.1 Government Senators acknowledge that a complex range of social and personal factors can contribute to the to the incidence and severity of domestic violence and reaffirm that the government is committed to creating a nation that respects all people including women and children, and that violence against others is never acceptable.¹ The need to respect women in particular was recognised by the Prime Minister the Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP:

...disrespecting women does not always result in violence against women. But all violence against women begins with disrespecting women. We, as leaders, as a government, must make it and we will make it a clear national objective of ours to ensure that Australia is more respecting of women. Women must be respected. Disrespecting women is unacceptable. It is unacceptable at every level. At home, at the workplace, wherever. And I'd say that as parents, one of the most important things we must do is ensure that our sons respect their mothers and their sisters.

Because that is where this begins. It begins - violence against women begins with disrespecting women.²

1.2 Gender inequality can contribute to the prevalence of domestic violence, when gendered beliefs become values that build attitudes.³ However, government Senators recognise that gender inequality does not in-itself or alone cause domestic violence.

1.3 Government Senators note the prevalence of gender inequality in Australia, and are pleased to see that attitudes of violence towards women are gradually changing in Australia⁴ but recognise there is more work to do.

1.4 In addition to the government led initiatives outlined in the committee report, below are further programs the Commonwealth government is supporting to address gender inequality.

Education

1.5 As discussed in the committee report, the government continues to support initiatives such as the work of *The Line* in the Second Action Plan of the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children:

1 The Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP, Prime Minister, 'Transcript of Joint Press Conference: Women's Safety Package to Stop the Violence', 24 September 2015.

2 The Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP, Prime Minister, 'Transcript of Joint Press Conference: Women's Safety Package to Stop the Violence', 24 September 2015.

3 South Australian Premier's Council for Women, *Submission 6*, p. 2.

4 VicHealth, *Australians' attitudes to violence against women: 2013 National Community Attitudes Towards Violence against Women Survey – Research Summary*, September 2014, p. 5.

Successful social marketing campaigns, including The Line, have been able to support young people to change their attitudes and behaviours that contribute to violence. The Commonwealth Government will extend funding of The Line social marketing campaign until 2017 to ensure young people continue to have a safe place to discuss and debate relationship issues and form their own conclusions about what sort of behaviour crosses the line.⁵

1.6 Government Senators support national efforts to overcome the cultural, institutional and organisational factors that discourage girls and women from studying in typically masculine professions.

1.7 Government Senators note Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) findings that young Australian men and women are continuing to choose different educational pathways after school.⁶ The ABS shows that women tend to be under-represented in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education and training:

Of the 2.7 million people with higher level STEM qualifications in 2010-11, men accounted for around four-fifths (81%). This is in stark contrast to non-STEM fields, where women make up the majority (60%) of those with qualifications at the Certificate III level or above.⁷

1.8 This disparity was further articulated by the Australian National Innovation and Science Agenda:

Only one in four IT graduates and fewer than one in 10 engineering graduates are women.

Further, women occupy fewer than one in five senior researcher positions in Australian universities and research institutes, and around one quarter of the STEM workforce overall.⁸

5 Second Action Plan 2013-2016 of the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children, p. 22.

6 Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Perspectives on Education and Training: Australians with qualifications in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), 2010-11*, <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/4250.0.55.005~2010%E2%80%9311~Main%20Features~Demographic%20characteristics~5> (accessed on 6 October 2016), See also Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Gender Equality, Are we there yet?* [http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/4125.0~Feb%202016~Media%20Release~Gender%20equality%20--%20are%20we%20there%20yet%3F%20\(Media%20Release\)~1](http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/4125.0~Feb%202016~Media%20Release~Gender%20equality%20--%20are%20we%20there%20yet%3F%20(Media%20Release)~1), (accessed 6 October 2016).

7 Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Perspectives on Education and Training: Australians with qualifications in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), 2010-11*, <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/4250.0.55.005~2010%E2%80%9311~Main%20Features~Demographic%20characteristics~5> (accessed on 24 August 2016).

8 The Australian National Innovation and Science Agenda, *Opportunities for women in science, technology, engineering and maths*, <http://www.innovation.gov.au/page/opportunities-women-stem>, (accessed 6 October 2016).

1.9 Recognising the poor participation of young women in STEM fields, the Australian Government has provided \$13 million over five years to encourage women to choose to study and stay in STEM fields⁹ where the funding:

...builds on other National Innovation and Science Agenda initiatives designed to support girls and women.¹⁰

1.10 The government has also committed to investing:

\$31.2 million in internships and post-school career advice to increase support for women and girls to choose to study and work in science, technology, engineering and maths...¹¹

1.11 The government is providing \$2 million over four years to the Australian Mathematical Sciences Institute (AMSI) for its new national project: *Securing Australia's Mathematical Workforce*. A core component of this project is to deliver:

...support to strengthen participation of women and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in graduate programs in the mathematical sciences.¹²

1.12 The government is also encouraging women to participate and stay in STEM fields by supporting the Science in Australia Gender Equity (SAGE) Program which is:

A game-changing program that aims to improve the gender balance in Australian science....

...Diversity underlies innovation. This government support will enable us to grow the diverse, talented research sector that Australia needs to create, shape and maintain the innovative society we want in the future.¹³

Current national initiatives

Third Action Plan 2016-2019

1.13 On 28 October 2016, the government launched the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children, Third Action Plan 2016-2019, which is:

...part of a long term commitment by governments to work together to change Australia's attitudes to, and tolerance for violence against women and their children.

9 Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash, Minister for Women, 'Turnbull Government supporting women to succeed in STEM', *Media Release*, 19 August 2016.

10 Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash, Minister for Women, 'Turnbull Government supporting women to succeed in STEM', *Media Release*, 19 August 2016.

11 The Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP, Prime Minister, 'Supporting more women and girls into STEM careers', *Media Release*, 26 June 2016.

12 Australian Government Department of Education and Training, *Australian Maths Sciences Institute (AMSI)*, <https://education.gov.au/australian-mathematical-sciences-institute-project>, (accessed 6 October 2016).

13 SAGE, *Funding boost to make a difference for women in science*, 9 December 2015, <http://www.sciencegenderequity.org.au/sage-pilot/funding-boost-women-in-science/>, (accessed 6 October 2016).

The Third Action Plan outlines what all governments, communities, businesses and individuals can do to reduce violence against women and their children. It sets out 36 practical actions, across six national priority areas, to be undertaken over the next three years.¹⁴

1.14 Below is an outline of further national initiatives being championed by government through the Office for Women to progress gender equality.

Secretaries Equality and Diversity Council

1.15 As discussed in the committee report, in April 2016 the government released the APS Gender Equality Strategy.¹⁵ As part of the strategy, the Secretaries Equality and Diversity Council (the Council) was formed. The Council comprises of 'all APS departmental secretaries along with two external members to provide insights and experience from outside of the public sector'.¹⁶

The Council was formed to:

...drive initiatives to break down formal and informal barriers to ensure the APS provides an inclusive and respectful workplace for everyone. This includes a focus on removing employment-related disadvantage and/or barriers.¹⁷

1.16 On 21 July 2016, the first meeting of the Council took place. During the meeting the Council agreed that:

Each Secretary will develop their own action plan, including gender equality stretch targets, for their departments and measures to meet the G20 target to reduce Australia's workforce participation gender gap by 25 per cent by 2025. These targets will be published, and progress against these targets will be measured and published annually. The Council also agreed

14 Commonwealth of Australia, *National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and Their Children, Third Action Plan 2016-19*, 28 October 2016. See also Prime Minister, the Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP and Minister for Social Services, the Hon Christian Porter MP, 'Government strengthens investment to reduce violence against women and children', *Media Release*, 28 October 2016.

15 Australian Government, *Balancing the Future: The Australian Public Service Gender Equality Strategy 2016-19*.

16 Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Secretaries Equality and Diversity Council*, <https://www.dpmc.gov.au/office-women/secretaries-equality-and-diversity-council>, (accessed 7 October 2016).

17 Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Secretaries Equality and Diversity Council*, <https://www.dpmc.gov.au/office-women/secretaries-equality-and-diversity-council>, (accessed 7 October 2016).

to adopt the Panel Pledge, which will require us all to step up our advocacy for the higher representation of women at public and professional forums.¹⁸

Grants and Funding

1.17 The Office of Women has administrative responsibility for the Women's Leadership and Development Strategy (WLDS) which:

...provides funding and support to organisations aimed at improving gender equality and support for women's economic empowerment and opportunity, safety and leadership.¹⁹

1.18 In addition to providing grants to organisations which improve gender equality, the WLDS funds five National Women's Alliances:

The five National Women's Alliances (the Alliances) represent over 180 women's organisations. They bring forward the views, voices and issues of Australian women and, in particular, women from marginalised and disadvantaged groups. The Alliances take the lead in ensuring that the voices of as many women as possible are heard, especially those who in the past have found it difficult to engage in advocacy and decision making.

In line with their Funding Agreements, the role of the Alliances is twofold:

- bring together women's organisations and individuals from across Australia to share information, identify issues that affect them, and identify solutions
- engage actively with the Australian Government on policy issues as part of a better more informed and representative dialogue between women and government.²⁰

Helping working parents

1.19 The Australian Government has established the 'Supporting Working Parents Website' which contains information for employers and employees about issues such as understanding the legal framework, leave and returning to work.²¹

- 18 Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Communique – 21 July 2016*, 6 September 2016, <https://www.dpmc.gov.au/news-centre/government/secretaries-equality-diversity-council-communique-july-2016>, (accessed 7 October 2016). The Panel Pledge is a Male Champions of Change initiative that asks men, who are invited to speak at or participate in a professional forum to make a proactive effort to include women on the panel. Further information can be found at: <http://malechampionsofchange.com/commit-to-the-panel-pledge/>.
- 19 Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Office for Women, *Grants and Funding*, <https://www.dpmc.gov.au/office-women/grants-and-funding>, (accessed 10 October 2016).
- 20 Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Office for Women, *National Women's Alliances*, <https://www.dpmc.gov.au/office-women/grants-and-funding/national-womens-alliances>, (accessed 10 October 2016).
- 21 Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Office For Women, *Office for Women: reflecting on the year that was*, <https://www.dpmc.gov.au/news-centre/office-women/office-women-reflecting-year-was>, (accessed 10 October 2016).
See: <https://www.supportingworkingparents.gov.au/>.

Financial literacy

1.20 The government is working to ensure that women are able to access information to achieve greater economic security because:

Greater financial literacy has a direct link with boosting women's economic participation, including strengthening women's retirement incomes.²²

1.21 The government has now established several educational tools to boost financial literacy:

The Women's Money Toolkit is a free online resource providing practical tools for women to better manage their finances. The toolkit was developed in partnership with the Australian Securities and Investment Commission, who provide a number of other financial literacy tools on their Money Smart website.²³

1.22 Further, the government is working to address the financial abuse aspects of domestic violence:

In partnership with Good Shepherd Microfinance the Government has launched online training to help financial councillors to identify financial abuse and assist victims of abuse to access support.²⁴

Employment

Boards

1.23 The government is committed to the equal representation of gender on government boards. In September 2016 the Gender Balance on Australian Government Boards Report 2015-16 was released. The report shows that the government has achieved its target of women holding at least 40 per cent of government board positions.²⁵

1.24 Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash, Minister for Women, commented on the work to increase female representation on government boards and the achievements made by the government:

22 Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Financial Literacy*, <https://www.dpmc.gov.au/office-women/economic-security/financial-literacy>, (accessed 7 October 2016).

23 Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Financial Literacy*, <https://www.dpmc.gov.au/office-women/economic-security/financial-literacy>, (accessed 7 October 2016). The Women's Money Toolkit can be found at <https://www.moneysmart.gov.au/life-events-and-you/women/womens-money-toolkit>.

24 Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Financial Literacy*, <https://www.dpmc.gov.au/office-women/economic-security/financial-literacy>, (accessed 7 October 2016).

25 As at 30 June 2016, there were 332 boards with a total of 2,351 members, 953 (40.5 per cent) women. *Gender Balance on Australian Government Boards Report 2015-2016*, p. 5.

...the proportion of female board directors has increased from 39.1 per cent at 30 June 2015 to 40.5 per cent at 30 June 2016, exceeding the 40 per cent target for 2015-16.

The report shows that a concerted effort by Government to increase female representation on government boards is translating into meaningful results...Women comprised 46.5 per cent of new appointees over 2015-16, up 8 per cent from 2014-15. Encouragingly, the report also showed the number of women holding Chair and Deputy Chair positions has risen to 32 per cent.²⁶

1.25 On International Women's Day 2016, in an address at the National Press Club, Minister Cash announced new government targets:

...I am pleased to announce that the Government will now commit to increasing this target to 50 per cent representation across all Australian Government boards, with a minimum of 40 per cent on each board. Correcting the imbalance will require concerted efforts by all portfolio Ministers, including myself. I am very confident that with pro-active efforts by all Ministers, we can achieve this target.

The Government is taking a whole of government approach to increasing the number of women on boards.²⁷

1.26 To strengthen the government's ability to meet its new targets, the government has invested in the Boardlinks website, a database that 'connects Australia's industry leading women with opportunities to be considered for Australian Government board appointments.'²⁸

1.27 As outlined by Minister Cash, a revamped Boardlinks website is key in supporting the government to achieve this target:

This new website will mean candidates interested in applying for a Government board position can now create and update their individual profiles, enabling decision makers to access the most up-to-date information and find the best candidate for the position...

We want to make it as straightforward as possible to find suitably qualified women so we can continue to increase female representation on Government boards.²⁹

26 Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash, Minister for Women, 'Coalition meets target for women on Government boards', *Media Release*, 29 September 2016.

27 Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash, Minister for Women, 'Address to the National Press Club-International Women's Day', 8 March 2016.

28 Board:links, *Opportunity across the Board*, <https://www.boardlinks.gov.au/>, (accessed 6 October 2016).

29 Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash, Minister for Women, 'Coalition meets target for women on government boards', *Media Release*, 29 September 2016.

1.28 Government Senators acknowledge criticism in the media that not all government portfolios have women holding 40 per cent of board positions.³⁰ The Minister responded in relation to her own portfolio:

I had the opportunity to make one appointment and I did [appoint a woman]. The issue that I have had is that the majority of boards in my portfolio are nominated by external bodies, whether they are employer organisations or unions.

I have no discretion. I ultimately have to accept their appointment.³¹

1.29 The Minister announced that in an effort to address this issue:

From July next year, a gender breakdown of all externally nominated board appointments will be made publicly available in the hope transparency will drive change.³²

Addressing pay gap assertions

1.30 Government Senators refute assertions made in the media regarding pay equity in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet:

The pay gap under the leadership of Martin Parkinson is not imagined. It's explicit. Parkinson is not just the head of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, he is also a member of Male Champions of Change.

Yet an advertisement for Executive Level 1 advisers, in the divisions of Social Policy and Office for Women in PM&C offer different – and unequal – salaries for the women's jobs.³³

1.31 Government Senators support the response from the Secretary of Prime Minister and Cabinet, and Male Champion of Change, Dr Michael Parkinson:

There is a pay gap for comparable positions across my department. But the issues raised in relation to a specific position advertised in the Office for Women compared to other roles at PM&C are not related to gender.

Instead, they are driven by the reality that the Australian Public Service (APS) does not have a single employment agreement. There are many enterprise agreements across the APS, with different conditions and rates of pay.³⁴

30 Jessica Irvine, 'Minister for Women Michaelia Cash oversees department with lowest female representation on government boards', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 September 2016.

31 Jessica Irvine, 'Minister for Women Michaelia Cash oversees department with lowest female representation on government boards', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 September 2016.

32 Jessica Irvine, 'Minister for Women Michaelia Cash oversees department with lowest female representation on government boards', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 September 2016.

33 Jenna Price, 'Federal Coalition failing to walk the walk on pay equity', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 September 2016.

34 Australian Government, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Statement from Martin Parkinson – Gender equality and the office for Women*, 12 September 2016.

Gendered workforce

1.32 There is consensus that accessing childcare is a barrier to women's workforce participation. In June 2016, the Prime Minister recognised this issue and announced:

Over the next four years, the Government will invest around \$40 billion in child care and early learning support - including more than \$3 billion in additional funding - under the Jobs for Families Child Care Package, to provide greater choices for families.³⁵

1.33 The government has also been making gains in addressing gendered workforce participation. This year, the government, in partnership with Master Builders, launched 'Women in Construction' to encourage women's participation in the building and construction industry. Mr Wilhelm Harnisch, Chief Executive Officer, Master Builders Australia, reported:

The Commonwealth Government will provide \$250,000 in funding over 12 months for this pilot program under its Women's Leadership and Development strategy to help increase the participation and employment of women in the building industry.³⁶

1.34 Minister Cash outlined the importance of government initiatives to change gendered workforce perceptions:

We know that at the moment just 11 percent of employees in building and construction are women and in terms of the exit rate from the industry, the rate of women exiting is 40 percent higher than men. That is why industry-led partnerships, like the Advancing Women in Building and Construction are just so important. In particular, though, as the Prime Minister has said, we need to see cultural change.³⁷

1.35 The government further described the overarching purpose of the program:

The pilot programme will encourage more women to enter into and lead successful careers in the overwhelmingly male-dominated sector.

Greater gender equality across industries will also help address the gender pay gap, which will remain entrenched so long as certain sectors continue to be dominated by either men or women.

35 See: <https://www.liberal.org.au/latest-news/2016/06/11/turnbull-coalitions-commitment-supporting-australian-women>, (accessed 10 October 2016).

36 Mr Wilhelm Harnisch, Chief Executive Officer, Master Builders Australia, *Boosting Women's Participation in Building Top Priority For Master Builders*, <http://www.masterbuilders.com.au/newsarticles/boosting-womens-participation-in-buildingtop-priority-for-master-builders> (accessed 7 October 2016).

37 The Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP, Prime Minister, 'Doorstop with Employment Minister Cash, Bert Van Manen MP, Senator Jo Lindgren', 27 April 2016.

The mentoring programme will match female senior industry leaders with female industry newcomers to support them in their pursuit of long-term and rewarding careers in building and construction.³⁸

Contributing to addressing gender inequality internationally

1.36 In 2014 Australia's Aid Policy established gender equality and women's empowerment as a priority for development and the target requires 80 per cent of all Australia's aid, regardless of objectives, perform effectively in promoting gender equality. In February 2016, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade released the Gender equality and women's empowerment strategy which outlines the government's efforts on gender equality.³⁹

1.37 The strategy will drive progress in three key areas: ending violence against women and girls; women's economic empowerment; and women's participation in leadership and peacebuilding.⁴⁰

1.38 Building on the government's efforts to prioritise gender equality across Australia's foreign affairs and aid work,⁴¹ in September 2016, Senator the Hon Concetta Fierravanti-Wells, Minister for International Development and the Pacific, launched the Gender Action Platform (GAP) which is a competitive grants program for non-government organisations promoting gender equality for women and girls in the Indo-Pacific region:

The Australian Government's \$10 million investment in the GAP will enable NGOs accredited under the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP) to develop and implement projects that empower and improve outcomes for women and girls.

The GAP builds on the Coalition Government's efforts to support initiatives that promote women's economic empowerment, women's participation in leadership and peacebuilding, and drive progress in ending gender based violence.⁴²

38 The Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP, Prime Minister, 'Supporting Women in Building and Construction', *Media Release*, 27 April 2016.

39 Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Gender equality and women's empowerment strategy, February 2016.

40 The Hon Julie Bishop MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs, 'Gender equality and women's empowerment strategy', *Media Release*, 29 February 2016.

41 Since 2014, the government has established a \$50 million Gender Equality Fund with a target requiring 80 per cent of Australian aid perform effectively in promoting gender equality. See also the Hon Julie Bishop MP, 'Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Strategy', *Media Release*, 29 February 2016.

42 Senator the Hon Concetta Fieravanti-Wells, Minister for International Development and the Pacific, 'Launch of the Gender Action Platform', *Media Release*, 5 September 2016.

Senator James Paterson
Deputy Chair

Senator Bridget McKenzie

Appendix 1

Submissions received by the committee

Submissions

- 1 Tasmanian Government
- 2 Dr Damien Riggs, Dr Heather Fraser and Dr Nik Taylor
- 3 Department of Social Services
- 4 Professor Suzanne Franzway, Professor Sarah Wendt, Dr Nicole Moulding, Dr Carole Zufferey, Professor Donna Chung, and Dr Alison Elder
- 5 Ms Gill Jeffery
- 6 Premier's Council for Women
- 7 Zonta Club of Adelaide
- 8 BPW South Australia
- 9 Australasian Centre for Human Rights and Health
- 10 Women's Health West
- 11 National Council of Women SA
- 12 Australian Baha'i Community
- 13 National Union of Students (NUS)
- 14 WEAVE Inc.
- 15 WIRE Women's Information
- 16 Victorian Health Promotion Foundation
- 17 Sex Workers Outreach Project Inc.
- 18 Dr Joan Garvan
- 19 The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists
- 20 Darebin City Council
- 21 National Family Violence Prevention and Legal Services Forum
- 22 Junction Australia and Southern Domestic Violence Service
- 23 Victim Support Service
- 24 Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS)
- 25 The Australian Toy Association
- 26 Victorian Women's Trust
- 27 Victorian Council of Social Service

- 28 Monash City Council
- 29 Coalition for Women's Refuges (NSW)
- 30 One in Three Campaign
- 31 International Women's Development Agency
- 32 True Relationships and Reproductive Health
- 33 Australian Council on Children & the Media
- 34 Melbourne City Mission
- 35 Play Unlimited
- 36 Mr Neil Sloan
- 37 Justice Connect
- 38 Women's Health Victoria
- 39 Victorian Gay & Lesbian Rights Lobby (VGLRL)
- 40 Burwood Council
- 41 Australian Human Rights Commission
- 42 Illawarra Forum
- 43 Bethlehem House Tasmania Inc.
- 44 Feminist Legal Clinic
- 45 Public Health Association of Australia
- 46 Australian Medical Association
- 47 Fighting For Justice Foundation
- 48 Mr Bruce Bickerstaff
- 49 Dr Kaye Quek
- 50 NSW Gay and Lesbian Lobby
- 51 Universities Australia
- 52 National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Legal Services
- 53 Good Shepherd
- 54 Australian Psychological Society
- 55 Change the Record Coalition
- 56 Sexual Violence Won't be Silenced
- 57 Ms Ludo McFerran and Ms Alexandra Heron
- 58 Women's Legal Services Australia
- 59 National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Women's Alliance
- 60 Australian Women Against Violence Alliance (AWAVA)

- 61 The Law Society of New South Wales
- 62 Mr Albert Liao
- 63 Victims of Crime Assistance League Inc. NSW (VOCAL)
- 64 Redfern Legal Centre
- 65 White Ribbon Australia
- 66 Our Watch
- 67 Name Withheld
- 68 Non-Custodial Parents Party (Equal Parenting)
- 69 Name Withheld
- 70 Fairness in Religions in Schools
- 71 Dr Chris Rikard-Bell
- 72 Collective Shout
- 73 Australian Christian Lobby
- 74 FamilyVoice Australia: A Christian voice for family, faith and freedom
- 75 NorMAC Nordic Model in Australia Coalition
- 76 Ms Paula Orbea

Appendix 2

Findings of the 2013 NCAS on attitudes towards violence against women

Findings of the 2013 NCAS on attitudes towards violence against women	1995	2009	2013
Circumstances in which violence towards a current/former partner can be justified (% agree)			
Partner admits to sex with another man	6	5	6
Partner makes him look stupid or insults him in front of his friends	n/a	3	5**
Partner ends or tries to end relationship	n/a	3	4
Against ex-partner to get access to children	n/a	4	4
If ex-partner is unreasonable about property settlement and financial issues	n/a	2	4**
Attitudes excusing violence (% agree)			
Rape results from men not able to control their need for sex	n/a	35	43**
A man is less responsible for rape if drunk/affect by drugs at the time	n/a	8	9
Domestic violence can be excused if people get so angry they lost control	n/a	20	22
Domestic violence can be excused if the violent person regrets it	n/a	25	21**
Domestic violence can be excused if the violent person was abused as a child	n/a	n/a	12
Domestic violence can be excused if the violent person is under a lot of stress	n/a	n/a	12
Domestic violence can be excused if the offender is heavily affected by alcohol	n/a	8	9

	1995	2009	2013
Attitudes trivialising violence (% agree)			
Where one partner is violent it's reasonable for them to be made to leave the family home	n/a	90	89
It's hard to understand why women stay	77	82	78**
Most women could leave a violence relationship if they really wanted to	n/a	54	51
Women who are sexually harassed should sort it out themselves	20	13	12 [#]
Domestic violence is a private matter to be handled in the family	18	14	17**
It's a women's duty to stay in a violent relationship to keep the family together	n/a	8	9
Attitudes minimising violence			
Violence against women is a serious issue	n/a	96	95
<i>Certain behaviours are serious (% agree)</i>			
Slaps/pushes to cause harm/fear	93	92	92
Forces partner to have sex	95	96	96
Tries to scare/control by threatening to hurt others	n/a	97	97
Throws/smashes objects to frighten/threaten	87	94	93 [#]
Repeated criticises to make partner feel bad/useless	72	84	85 [#]
Controls social life by preventing partner seeing family and friends	84	85	87 [#]
Tries to control by denying partner money	77	75	74 [#]
Yells abuse at partner	70	79	n/a
Stalking by repeatedly following/watching at home or work	n/a	96	94
Harassment by repeated phone calls	n/a	92	90
Harassment by repeated emails, text messages	n/a	86	86
<i>Seriousness/acceptability of tracking a female partner by electronic means without their consent (% agree)</i>			
Serious	n/a	n/a	85
Never acceptable	n/a	n/a	61
<i>Attitudes towards false allegations of partner violence and rape (% agree)</i>			
Women going through custody battles often make up or exaggerate claims of domestic violence in order to improve their case	n/a	51	53

Women rarely make false claims of rape	59	60	59
A lot of times women who say they were raped led the man on and later had regrets	n/a	n/a	38
If a woman doesn't physically resist – even if protesting verbally – then it isn't really rape	n/a	n/a	10

	1995	2009	2013
Attitudes shifting blame from perpetrator to victim (% agree)			
If a woman is raped while drunk/ affect by drugs she is at least partly responsible	n/a	18	19
Women often say 'no' when they mean 'yes'	18	14	16
If a woman goes to a room alone with a man at a party, it is her fault if she is raped	n/a	n/a	12
Domestic violence can be excused if the victim is heavily affected by alcohol	n/a	9	11

Table: 2013 NCAS findings on attitudes towards violence against women.¹

1 Source: VicHealth, *Australians' attitudes to violence against women: 2013 National Community Attitudes Towards Violence against Women Survey – Research Summary*, September 2014, pp 4-5, available at: <https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/media-and-resources/publications/2013-national-community-attitudes-towards-violence-against-women-survey>. (* indicates that the difference between 2009 and 2013 is statistically significant, # indicates that the difference between 1995 and 2013 is statistically significant).