



Options for legislating against coercive control and the creation of a standalone domestic violence offence

Submission to the Queensland Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce

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Our Commitment to Inclusion

The Salvation Army Australia acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet and work and pay our respect to Elders, past, present and future.

We value people of all cultures, languages, capacities, sexual orientations, gender identities and/or expressions. We are committed to providing programs that are fully inclusive. We are committed to the safety and wellbeing of people of all ages, particularly children.

Our values are:

- Integrity
- Compassion
- Respect
- Diversity
- Collaboration

Learn more about our commitment to inclusion:

salvationarmy.org.au/about-us

The Salvation Army is an international movement and our mission is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and to meet human needs in his name without discrimination.





About The Salvation Army

The Salvation Army is an international Christian movement with a presence in 128 countries. Operating in Australia since 1880, The Salvation Army is one of the largest providers of social services and programs for people experiencing hardship, injustice and social exclusion.

The Salvation Army Australia provides more than 1,000 social programs and activities through networks of social support services, community centres and churches across the country. Programs include:

- Financial inclusion, including emergency relief
- Homelessness services
- Youth services
- Family and domestic violence services
- Alcohol, drugs and other addictions
- Chaplaincy
- Emergency and disaster response
- Aged care
- Employment services

As a mission-driven organisation, The Salvation Army seeks to reduce social disadvantage and create a fair and harmonious society through holistic and person-centred approaches that reflect our mission to share the love of Jesus by:

- Caring for people
- Creating faith pathways
- Building healthy communities
- Working for justice

We commit ourselves in prayer and practice to this land of Australia and its people, seeking reconciliation, unity and equity.

Further Information

The Salvation Army would welcome the opportunity to discuss the content of this submission should any further information be of assistance. Further information can be sought from Major Paul Hateley, National Head of Government Relations, at government.relations@salvationarmy.org.au or on 0413 830 201.





Introduction

The Salvation Army thanks the Queensland Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce (**the Taskforce**) for the opportunity to provide a submission on the options for legislating against coercive control. The Salvation Army provides a wide range of services and support to people across Australia as part of realising our vision and living our values.

Services offered by The Salvation Army

Moneycare, The Salvation Army's financial wellbeing and capability service, has been operating for over 30 years and has helped thousands of people experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, financial and social exclusion. Services are free and confidential, and include financial counselling, financial capability support, financial literacy and capability workshops and microfinance.

Doorways provides emergency relief and case management for people in crisis and helps them meet immediate needs, from unexpected bills to food vouchers. Doorways also works closely with other Salvation Army programs to assist individuals to regain control of their finances. We provide early education and prevention strategies for people who may be at risk of financial hardship.

Family and Domestic Violence Services provide support around Australia to women impacted by family and domestic violence and their children. This support includes refuge, children's and parenting services, counselling, men's programs, accommodation and advice.

This submission has been informed by our extensive frontline experience working with people seeking support – from financial counsellors from our Moneycare services, case workers and emergency relief workers or volunteers from our Doorways services, and social workers and managers from our family and domestic violence services.

This experience has led us to the following conclusions:

- **Any decision around policy or legislative responses must be driven by the actual lived experience of coercive control.** To this end we encourage the Taskforce to continue to proactively seek the views of victim-survivors in a way that ensures that providing evidence will not endanger or re-traumatise the victim-survivor. Defining acceptable and unacceptable behaviour is critical – to provide the best services we can, we have developed a list of behaviours we do not consider would be present in a healthy, 'ordinary' relationship (refer Appendix A). We do not know what criminal culpability should attach to these behaviours, but we do know that they cause harm. We offer our practical experience in these behaviours to assist the Taskforce in defining the problem to be addressed.



- **In considering criminalisation, we would draw attention to the experience of criminalising modern slavery activities and the experience of other jurisdictions.** The critical factor in this evidence is that criminalisation is likely to only be effective if other broad-based supports, appropriate training for police and frontline workers, and community reinforcement of acceptable behaviours is provided.
- **Community education is critical to addressing coercive control.** We believe that improved education around healthy relationships in primary and secondary schools, education around financial literacy for adults, and inclusion of coercive and controlling behaviours in all risk identification, assessment and management practices would assist in addressing coercive control.
- **Any legislative response needs to be coupled with a significant increase in funding to the specialist family and domestic violence service sector.** Any legislative changes will inevitably increase demand for family and domestic violence specialist services and must include dedicated funding to address the needs of children. The service system must be bolstered to meet this demand.
- **Any policy or legislative response needs to be monitored and evaluated.** This is especially needed in relation to victim-survivor safety, wellbeing and recovery, and perpetrator accountability and rehabilitation.



Defining Coercive Control

Behaviours

Coercive control must be more than just a single incident, it is a pattern of abusive behaviour over time. Underlying the abuse is the factor of control and compelling or forcing a person to do something that they do not want to do, or to refrain from doing something that they want to do. It is the complete loss of an individual’s autonomy, self-esteem and independence.



“My husband was very controlling, he wouldn’t allow me to work or leave the house without his knowledge, he was abusive psychologically and emotionally, he was demanding in nature and generally left me feeling I had no choice in my life and had no prospects for the future”



- Person with lived experience from our service

The definition of coercive control must address a wide variety of abusive behaviours including social, financial, psychological and technology-facilitated abuse. This definition must also consider capture the full range of behaviours, which can include conduct directed towards people other than the victim themselves, including children and other family members, as well as animals or pets.

The Salvation Army has recently developed a comprehensive trauma-informed model of care for our specialised family and domestic violence services (**Model of Care**). This Model of Care was developed in consultation with experts in the family violence sector and is supported by a suite of policies, practice tools, training, client participation, and formal reviews that aims to drive both the practice and culture around how our organisation responds to family violence.

Our Model of Care defines family and domestic violence as behaviours that threaten, control, or dominate a current or former partner, family member, or person in a family-like or kinship relationship causing them to fear for their own or another person’s safety or wellbeing. The definition also recognises exposing a child, indirectly or directly to these behaviours or their effects.

We believe the Taskforce may find our family violence categories of behaviours helpful when considering a definition of coercive control. These behaviours include non-physical forms of violence: stalking/surveillance, financial/economic, spiritual/cultural, social behaviours, animal/pet abuse and technology-facilitated abuse and are listed at **Appendix A**.





Our experience identifies that verbal abuse, threats, intimidation and isolation are some of the more common demeaning behaviours, yet are also more difficult to demonstrate evidence of. An abuser uses these tactics to undermine a person's sense of reality by corrupting their version of events and confusing or changing decisions to assert power, depleting a victim's sense of self, causing a victim to hand over all liberties and enforcing social isolation. In our experience, people with disability and mental health are particularly at risk to these behaviours.

There are also cultural influences on controlling behaviours, which our Trafficking and Slavery Safe House in particular observes. These include the use of shame, family reputation and family pressure as forms of coercive control as well as threats and manipulation around visa status, migration and risk of early and forced marriages.

Our National Safer in the Home program registered a 40 per cent increase in surveillance and stalking behaviours during COVID-19. Concerns around technology abuse and surveillance also increased by 46 per cent. The Salvation Army family and domestic violence services has observed the extreme dangers of sophisticated technology-facilitated abuse from overseas. For example, our services have anecdotally heard of cases where young men, primarily aged between 25 and 35 years old, have recruited highly capable international hackers to access a victim-survivor's phone, accounts and personal computers. For this reason, the use of domestic and international third parties in facilitating abuse should also be considered in addressing coercive and controlling behaviours.

Evidence from our Moneycare and Doorways services suggests that definitions in relation to financial controlling behaviours should extend to the withholding of family intellectual property. The extent of this control encompasses bank statements, bills, wills, mortgage information, pay slips and access to government platforms such as myGov.

The people we support in Moneycare and Doorways frequently disclose financial abuse in all types of relationships. This includes immediate family members, carers, guardians, relatives and people within family groups recognised by various cultures and communities.

Other factors to consider – lack of a nationally consistent approach

There is no national definition of family and domestic violence that includes coercing and controlling behaviours. Queensland can demonstrate leadership by adopting a state-wide definition of family and domestic violence that includes non-physical forms of violence, which encompasses coercion and control.

The Salvation Army believes a nationally consistent approach to family and domestic violence will help avoid ongoing confusion within the community as to what 'defines' both physical and non-physical forms of violence; facilitate consistent responses to perpetrator accountability (for example, compliance with orders); and facilitate referral pathways and trauma-informed support that ensures that victim-survivors are not disadvantaged due to locality or situation.





Recommendations

We recommend the Taskforce advises the Queensland Government to:

- Seek out and consider the voices and experiences of victim-survivors with lived experience of coercive and controlling behaviours to inform any legislative or policy reforms.
- Ensure any definition of coercive and controlling behaviours encompasses a broad range of situations, cultural influences, vulnerable cohorts and abuse that occurs in all types of relationships.
- Address the comprehensive overview of physical and non-physical family violence behaviours (refer Appendix A).
- Demonstrate leadership for a nationally consistent definition of family and domestic violence that includes coercive and controlling behaviours.



Community Attitudes

Prevention, early intervention and community education

Prevention, early intervention and community education remain the most effective ways to address the underlying problem of patterns of coercive and controlling behaviours. Our frontline experience is that many victim-survivors living with coercive behaviour do not realise that what they are experiencing is actually family and domestic violence. Many community members are confronted with this realisation for the first time after speaking to our Moneycare financial counsellors, Doorways case workers or when presenting at one of our Doorways emergency relief centres.

As a community, we need to continue to empower all victim-survivors to identify all forms of abuse and to address discrimination, disadvantage and entrenched gender bias and exploitation in the home, in relationships and in the workplace. We wholeheartedly support the Our Watch 'Change the Story' policy approach to prevention and education.¹ We also advocate better awareness raising to ensure that every individual in Australia considers themselves active bystanders and greater support for community-based violence prevention.

Education on healthy relationships

Violence is preventable. We must continue to educate the community to recognise and call out coercive and controlling behaviours as unacceptable. Importantly, the National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (**NCAS**) highlights that 'violence-supportive attitudes' such as excusing perpetrators, minimising violence against women and mistrusting women's reports of violence can influence social norms and expectations.²

Education on healthy relationships, particularly in relation to respectful relationships within primary schools and healthy peer to peer and early intimate relationships in high schools is critical. We call on the Queensland Government to educate children and youth in the dangers and use of technologically facilitated abuse and, in particular, the use of social media and its ability to 'blur' young people's ability to navigate online peer relationships and the appropriate use of technology. This is particularly important considering the exponential use of intimate photo and video sharing and GPS monitoring of women and children since 2015.³

¹ Our Watch. (2015). *Change the Story: A shared prevention for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia*. <https://d2bb010tdzqaq7.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2019/05/21025429/Change-the-storyframework-prevent-violence-women-children-AA-new.pdf>

² Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety. (2018). *Are We There Yet? Australians' attitudes towards violence against women & gender equity* (Summary findings from the 2017 National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey). https://d2rn9gno7zhxqg.cloudfront.net/wpcontent/uploads/2019/12/05051806/300419_NCAS_Summary_Report.pdf

³ Woodlock, D., Bentley, K., Schulze, D., Mahoney, N., Chung, D., and Pracilio, A. (2020). *Second National Survey of Technology Abuse and Domestic Violence in Australia*. WESNET. <https://wesnet.org.au/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2020/11/Wesnet-2020-2nd-National-Survey-Report-72pp-A4-FINAL.pdf>





Recommendations

We recommend the Taskforce advises the Queensland Government to:

- Focus on prevention, early intervention and community education including education around financial literacy and financial abuse to empower victims, particularly those within vulnerable cohorts, to seek help.
- Develop a comprehensive education and awareness campaign to ensure key institutions and the community more broadly obtain an understanding of coercive control and its impacts on women.
- Develop education campaigns in relation to active bystander interventions as a community preventative measure.



Mainstream Services

Training of all frontline services

Due to the nature of coercive controlling behaviours, police will not always be the first responders for victim-survivors. For this reason, it is critical that all frontline staff that are employed or volunteering in an organisation have access to specialised training to correctly identify person/s in need of protection and respond with meaningful support options for both adult and child victim-survivors and perpetrators.

There appears to currently be a lack of understanding about coercive control within the mainstream service system. Our frontline staff report that many of the services that victim-survivors interact with do not have sufficient training, education and awareness to understand that this form of abuse is as harmful as physical violence. We call on the Queensland Government to deliver consistent and mandatory specialised training to identify and respond to coercive and controlling behaviours for police officers, judicial officers and prosecutors, and workers in the domestic abuse, health care, housing, education, finance and child protection sectors. Training and response needs must also extend to the identification of other high-risk factors of violence, in particular the strong link between pet abuse and prevalence of family violence.⁴

Financial literacy

The Queensland Government can make a huge difference by addressing the need for improved education around financial literacy and financial abuse. Data collected by the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics Australia (**HILDA**) survey suggests that around 45 per cent of Australians cannot demonstrate basic financial literacy.⁵

The Salvation Army's Doorways and Moneycare program provides free access to qualified financial counsellors who can help with crisis intervention and financial resilience services. In many cases, victim-survivors are running households with minimal funds as perpetrators direct all income for personal use, attach all bills, purchases and rental contracts to the victim-survivor's name and acquire significant debt, making it more difficult for the victim-survivor to escape violence. We have also assisted clients who have incurred government debt through incorrect reporting of income or coercive action by a perpetrator. In most cases, use of technology facilitated abuse is also present with other forms of financial and economic abuse.

⁴ Campbell, A. and Randell, M. (2020, September 1). *Showcase by Lucy's Project: Criminal investigations, animal abuse and domestic violence*. <https://www.lucysproject.com/events/>

⁵ Preston, A. (2020, March). *Financial Literacy in Australia: Insights from HILDA data*. University of Western Australia Business School.





As 'first responders' to victim-survivors experiencing financial abuse we continue to advocate for financial counsellors and the broader finance sector to be included in coordinated family violence responses. Our experience delivering financial counselling, as well as family violence support, is that banks do not always have sufficient protections in place to safeguard against financial abuse.

Risk assessment and management

To ensure victim-survivors are met with an appropriate response on first disclosure the Queensland Government must undertake further research on identifying the risk of coercive and controlling behaviours along with consistent approaches in all risk assessment and management frameworks.

The development of the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (**FVISS**) and the Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (**MARAM**) in Victoria, which importantly is supported by a suite of policies, practice tools, training, legislation, and formal reviews that aims to change both the practice and culture around how professionals and organisations respond to family violence.

An important feature of MARAM is that it applies an intersectional lens to support diversity and inclusion in family violence practice.⁶ We draw this example to the Taskforce's attention as an example of current best practice.

Recommendations

We recommend the Taskforce advises the Queensland Government to:

- Implement specialist training for police officers, judicial officers and prosecutors, and workers in the family and domestic violence, health care, housing, education, finance and child protection sectors. This training should be repeated regularly.
- Consider adopting a Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework to ensure services are effectively identifying, assessing and managing family violence risk.

⁶ Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor. (2019). *Report of the Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor - As at 1 November 2019*. <https://www.fvrim.vic.gov.au/report-family-violence-reform-implementation-monitor-1-november-2019/>



*Sienna's Story

Sienna* is a woman in her thirties who moved to Queensland with her children to escape her abusive ex-husband. Sienna's ex-husband was physically and emotionally abusive. He isolated her, took full control of her finances and encouraged her to cease employment so that she would further depend on him.

While she was still in the relationship, Sienna's husband forced her to become the sole director and personal guarantor of his business. She recalls being given papers to sign, however all other communication occurred between her husband and the brokers. The company was not profitable and ceased operating, meaning that Sienna was left with significant debts that she did not have the capacity to pay. Her husband also kept the assets that were secured under finance.

Sienna came to Moneycare for assistance as she was being chased by two different commercial credit contractors. Sienna had to go through the painful process of getting back in contact with her ex-husband and his family members to get information on the assets that the credit contractors were chasing her for. They provided her with no information.

Neither commercial credit contractor had any family and domestic violence policies and they lacked a trauma informed approach in their pursuit of assets from Sienna. Moneycare assisted Sienna in finding legal assistance for the matter. It was incredibly difficult to find a legal service to assist in the matter, particularly given that she now lived in a different state from where the credit contractors were located.

After assistance from the legal service, one of the companies was able to retrieve their assets, however they then continued to pursue her for short form debt. This was waived after a lawyer drafted a letter detailing the domestic violence and abuse. The second credit contractor has not waived any debt even after correspondents with lawyers and continues to chase Sienna. Moneycare continues to work with Sienna to find a resolution.

**Name changed*



Domestic and Family Violence Service Systems Response

Improving the capacity of the service system

Any legislative change to criminalise coercive control, especially in conjunction with a media campaign to boost community education on the topic, will inevitably increase demand for family and domestic violence specialist services. Any efforts to criminalise coercive control must therefore be accompanied by sufficient funding and resources for specialist family and domestic violence services and victim support services to ensure that all victim-survivors can access the support they require.

Our experience is that Queensland does not currently have the systems in place to manage an increase in victim-survivors seeking assistance. There is not enough safe accommodation for women and their children and where there is accommodation, the security at the residence is often inadequate. It has been well-established that the most dangerous time for a victim-survivor is when she leaves a violent relationship.⁷ It is therefore of the utmost importance that the accommodation a victim-survivor resides in when she leaves is safe and secure. Presently, there is no systematic response to ensure that accommodation is safe; instead individuals are responsible for implementing the security that is required.

High-risk cases of family and domestic violence require substantial infrastructure and support in the form of extensive security, duress alarms, case work and ongoing outreach. Consideration also needs to be given to ensuring victim-survivors' safety when they leave the safe accommodation for reasons such as work, running errands and dropping children off. We cannot be in a position where high-risk cases of family and domestic violence are denied a service because the service does not have the facilities to keep them safe. Increased infrastructure to support victim-survivors is needed to achieve acceptable outcomes as demand will inevitably increase with increased awareness.

National Safer in the Home Program

The Salvation Army has been funded by the Commonwealth Government since October 2016 to deliver on the National Safer in the Home (**SITH**) program. The National SITH program, under the Fourth National Action Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children, is funded to provide personal and property safety assessments and 'basic' security upgrades aimed at ensuring that women and children victim-survivors are able to live safely in the home of their choosing after family violence.

⁷ Saunders, D. (2018, March 27). Abusive relationships: Why it's so hard for women to 'just leave'. *The Conversation*. <https://theconversation.com/abusive-relationships-why-its-so-hard-for-women-to-just-leave-93449>



Queensland has, since the inception of the program, been the highest consumer of the National SITH program. Of the 2483 referrals received nationally, 1012 were received from Queensland, representing 40.8 per cent of the total national referrals. A significant proportion of these referrals were received from the Gold Coast. Between 13 March 2020 and 1 February 2021, 91 of the 222 referrals for SITH in Queensland were received from the Gold Coast.

In addition to SITH, the Commonwealth also funds the Queensland Government to deliver the Keeping Women Safe in the Home (**KWSITH**) in Cairns, Caboolture, Ipswich and Rockhampton. KWSITH is designed to assist women who are risk-assessed as highly vulnerable or experiencing ongoing family and domestic violence, to stay safer in their home. However, professional referrers report difficulty in accessing KWSITH for victim-survivors assessed as being at medium to high risk. As a result, a significant number of these 'ineligible' women are then referred to the national SITH program. KWSITH is also not available in the high demand catchment of the Gold Coast.

To ensure that cases of family and domestic violence are not being denied a service, the KWSITH program should be opened up and expanded to adult and child victim-survivors living on the Gold Coast.

[Ensuring women in regional and rural areas have access to services](#)

Smaller towns and less populated communities make disclosure more difficult and risky for women and children. A lack of support and services also elevates the risk for women and children. There are currently few family and domestic violence services available in rural and regional Queensland. This means that victim-survivors often have to travel great distances to access a women's shelter, financial service, or health or legal centre.

For women in coercive and controlling relationships this lack of available services has detrimental consequences. Our services have reported cases where victim-survivors have had to travel great distances to access a service and escape a coercive and controlling relationship. However, it is not uncommon for these victim-survivors to have to return because of the financial pressures and lack of social supports associated with moving to a new area. It is often the case that the perpetrator's control only increases after a victim-survivor returns and her safety put to greater risk.



Empowering victims to seek help

We need to ensure that when victim-survivors seek help from frontline staff, they are believed and receive help promptly and in the right way. The police are an important element of this frontline service system, with family and domestic violence taking up a large part of day to day police work. In Queensland, police respond, on average, to more than 400 cases of family and domestic violence per day.⁸ An initial positive police response is recognised as having a significant impact not only on the safety of victims, but also on whether they decide to report further victimisation.⁹ When police respond to a family and domestic violence call out it is crucial that they are able to identify and appropriately respond to both non-physical and physical forms of violence. Our experience shows that police training and responses remains critical and that outside the specialist family violence sector, there is limited understanding of what coercive control is and how best to respond.



“Police need training on identifying coercive control. Even today there are a lot of issues with police responding correctly to domestic violence. Individuals are being coerced into dropping charges, being cut off financially and left homeless and isolated.”



- A frontline worker in our family and domestic violence service

Some groups of women experience greater risks of family and domestic violence due to social barriers and intersecting forms of oppression, discrimination and marginalisation. These groups include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, women from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, young women, pregnant women, women separating from their partners, women with disability, women on temporary visas, and women experiencing financial hardship.¹⁰ While more research is required into the risks experienced by those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, gender diverse, intersex, queer, asexual and questioning (LGBTIQA+), our experience suggests that this cohort similarly experiences greater risks due to marginalisation and discrimination.

⁸ Eaton, M. (2021, May 17) Queensland domestic violence cases still rising sharply, expert warns coercive control law will be no quick fix. ABC. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-05-17/qld-domestic-violence-cases-rise-sharply-coercive-control-law/100133958>

⁹ Australian Law Reform Commission. (2010). Family Violence – A National Legal Response (ALRC Report 114). https://www.alrc.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/ALRC114_WholeReport.pdf

¹⁰ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2018). Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia. <https://www.aihw.gov.au/getmedia/d1a8d479-a39a-48c1-bbe2-4b27c7a321e0/aihw-fdv-02.pdf.aspx?inline=true>





Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women may not seek help or report violence because they fear isolation from community and family connections, racism and lack of understanding from support services in their region. As Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women often live in tight knit communities, the whole community can be affected by family violence and a shared sense of shame can reinforce the unspoken rule to keep silent, especially within the historical context of white settlement and colonisation and the continuing impacts of loss of traditional roles and status within communities.¹¹ Others may have to leave the community and their spiritual connections to the land, creating trauma for both women and their children. Due to this sense of loss of community, land and family, many women leave family violence services and return to unsafe and violent relationships.¹² Some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women have also mentioned to our staff that there is a lack of culturally appropriate family violence services that enable victim-survivors to safely disclose and build trust.

Our experience through the Moneycare program shows that women living in rural and regional areas experience high rates of financial abuse. Isolation limits access to help and support when needed and without access to a vehicle or transport they are unable to leave relationships, even when staying becomes dangerous. Financial abuse is also often used against CALD women who due to language barriers are often isolated, have a limited understanding of their rights or the law and are scared to leave as they have no access to money for themselves and their children.



“Financial abuse is high within this (culturally and linguistically diverse women) cohort. They often have this as a threat – you have no money so where will you go?”



- A Salvation Army frontline worker

Many CALD women and children remain isolated within Australian communities due to a lack of community connection outside of their culture and language barriers. CALD victim-survivors are sometimes not even aware that they are in abusive relationships. Women on temporary visas can face added threats of deportation by the perpetrator and many are told they will not be able to take their children with them. Our services have also encountered cases where the victim-survivor is not aware that they have a working visa as the perpetrator keeps this information from them as a mechanism of obtaining further control. It is only when they engage with a service that they are made aware of their visa status.

¹¹ National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service. (2017). *Strong Families, Safe Kids: Family violence response and prevention for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families* (Policy paper). http://www.natsils.org.au/portals/natsils/Strong_Families_Safe_Kids-Sep_2017.pdf?ver=2017-10-18-111427-643.

¹² Ibid





The Salvation Army has worked intensively with CALD women to facilitate access to services and support. Many do not know their legal rights in Australia and face significant barriers in engaging with support services, especially if they are not provided access to interpreting services. Our experience has identified that in some cases children are asked to translate advice to their respective parent, increasing trauma for both the child and the parent-child relationship. This issue is elevated in regional and remote areas with fewer services.

*Kylie's Story

Kylie* is a 56-year-old women who was referred to the National Safer in the Home program by her accountant as she was not experiencing enough risk to qualify for a local family violence service. Kylie separated from her ex-husband in 2014 after being married for 30 years. While they were married, Kylie had become very successful in her career and despite Kylie being the main income earner in the relationship, her ex-husband was in charge of all their finances.

During this time Kylie's ex-husband began to undermine her decision-making, self-worth and femininity. Kylie did not find out until decades later that portions of her wages were being placed in offshore accounts. Her ex-husband also paid a hacker to seize her email accounts and also opened bank accounts and credit cards in her name, running up significant debts. This behaviour continued until they separated.

Following separation, her ex-husband began sending graphics and detailed death threats to her via strangers who she believed he was paying as well.

**Name changed*

*Lily's Story

Lily* is a 28-year-old women, who recently left a 7-year relationship in which she experienced psychological, verbal, sexual and financial abuse, including manipulation, controlling and stalking behaviours. During the relationship her ex-partner controlled all finances and forced her to perform sexual acts in return for money for nappies or milk for their children.

During the relationship Lily's ex-partner obtained various loans in her name without her knowledge or consent. She discovered this late in 2019 as a result of accessing an email account unused for years. Lily continues to find new debts in her name. The debts currently total over \$50,000, in addition to previous debts totalling tens of thousands of dollars in her name. These debts have severely affected Lily's credit rating and she is unable to purchase a car, which she needs for transport for her children and her medical appointments.

Lily's old social media and email accounts, which she has previously deactivated, continue to be reactivated by someone else, Lily's ex has managed to access information from Lily's new online accounts and has previously ascertained private information about her daughters' locations.

The Salvation Army has assisted Lily to contact all creditors and to provide the police with information. It is a slow process and Lily is still experiencing trauma.

**Name changed*





Perpetrator intervention programs

The Salvation Army's experience identifies that there are limited options for perpetrator intervention currently in place in Queensland. We strongly advocate for increased government investment in a range of new men's perpetrator programs and trials to develop prevention, early intervention and post-violence interventions. A continuum of perpetrator intervention options must also include outreach programs, including support and case management, and therapeutic counselling whilst in prison and when exiting prison.

The Salvation Army does not currently operate any perpetrator intervention programs in Queensland. Our experience running similar interventions in Victoria highlights the need for adequate funding of case management of perpetrators as this often leads to reduced recidivism. We strongly recommend that perpetrator intervention programs providing case management also provide access to emergency accommodation, as this allows victim-survivors the option of safely remaining in the home. Specialist resources are also needed to facilitate group theory and practice sessions with perpetrators. These acknowledge and cater to men's differing behavioural needs, including through preventative and post-violence programs, particularly learned behaviours in cases where perpetrators have been child victims of family violence.

No singular program will meet the needs of all perpetrators. There must be a range of perpetrator programs and responses, whether they be residential treatment, one-on-one case management or group work.

It is also crucial that safety contact workers are available for women. The role of a safety contact worker is to liaise with and support the families of perpetrators participating in the program. All women who have an intimate partner in the program need to have the opportunity to access a safety contact worker. Our experience in running programs in Victoria is that usually the early stages of the therapeutic recovery process challenge the perpetrator's experiences and retrigger certain traumas, which can lead to a period of raised anger and frustration on the part of the perpetrator. In these stages of the program, working in conjunction with the victim-survivor is integral to ensure her safety and that of her children throughout the perpetrator's treatment. Support for victim-survivors is also an important means for women to receive accurate information about the program and her partner's participation in it. This prevents women from having to rely solely on the information provided by the perpetrator himself. It is also possible for victim-survivors to provide additional information to program providers to maximise the effectiveness of the counselling.

The Queensland Government should also consider funding perpetrator parenting programs that focus on, and use the dialogue of, children rather than the adult within family violence, and highlight how this violence causes developmental damage to a child. The Salvation Army's Men as Fathers Program acts as a powerful way to engage, and change the behaviours of, perpetrators and develop skills on how to become good fathers. In the program we deliver in Melton and Wyndham in Victoria, a parenting program practitioner establishes a range of strategic partnerships within and across the two communities. Fathers have participated in dads' playgroups, an online father support network, evidence-based parenting education sessions aimed at fathers, school holiday programs, and activities that connect them and their children to their community.





Research and evaluation of perpetrator programs

There is limited research into perpetrator interventions in Australia. If the Queensland Government increases funding of perpetrator interventions and programs, it is also important to fund the evaluation of these programs. Studies require large populations and program comparisons over time to better understand how best to develop sound intervention programs. These evaluations need to not only assess whether the desired outcomes were achieved, but also which components of the program assisted in achieving those outcomes.

Recommendations

We recommend the Taskforce advises the Queensland Government to:

- Increase funding to frontline family violence services.
- Work to increase the accessibility of housing and services so that they are accessible to all, including those in regional and remote areas, and ensure that these facilities have extensive security to ensure the safety of women in high-risk cases of family and domestic violence.
- Extend the Keeping Women Safe in their Home program for women and children experiencing medium- to high-risk of family violence to victim-survivors on the Gold Coast.
- Significantly increase funding for perpetrator intervention and research.
- Invest in a range of new perpetrator intervention programs, including prevention, early intervention, parenting and outreach programs, and programs for perpetrators in and exiting prison.



Considerations in Legislating Against Coercive Control

It is important to note that criminal justice approaches to coercive control must rely heavily on victim-survivors' willingness and ability to involve police. Research from the Australian Institute of Criminology shows that many women do not seek help from police because of mistrust or an ineffective response when they initially sought help.¹³ Our frontline experience repeatedly shows us that there are many reasons why victim-survivors are hesitant to report abuse. In many cases, victim-survivors just want safety for themselves and their children rather than punishment for the perpetrator. Victim-survivors fear they will not be believed and are terrified that the abuse will escalate if police intervene, or that they will be blamed for the abuse committed against them.

If a separate criminal offence is created for coercive control it is paramount that first responders are able to correctly identify the coercive and controlling behaviours and gather the right information from the victim-survivor at the right time. For cases proceeding to court, a key issue is how to prove coercion, which rarely leaves physical evidence and may not have a third party as a witness who can corroborate the occurrence of the behaviour. A new offence will need to get this balance right¹⁴ to ensure that accounts of abuse are to the requisite legal standard, avoid long drawn out processes and ensure the safety and wellbeing of adult and child victim-survivors.

In determining the utility of criminalising coercive control in the family violence context, we draw to the Taskforce's attention the current criminal controls in place and associated challenges of prosecuting certain slavery and trafficking offences under the Commonwealth Criminal Code Divisions 270 and 271.¹⁵

The Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions has noted¹⁶ that a major impediment to prosecuting these offences is the reluctance of people to give evidence, particularly as they (or their families) may have been the subject of violence or threats of violence, or because the allegation is that family members are involved in the offending.

¹³ Richards, K. and Lyneham, S. (2014). Help-seeking strategies of victim/survivors of human trafficking involving partner migration. *Trends & issues in crime and criminal justice*, 468, Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology.

<https://www.aic.gov.au/publications/tandi/tandi468>

¹⁴ Queensland Government. (2020, October 4). Palaszczuk Government to get coercive control right.

<https://statements.qld.gov.au/statements/90986>

¹⁵ 'Coercion' is defined in section 270.1A of the Criminal Code and is defined as including coercion by any of the following: force; duress; detention; psychological oppression; abuse of power; or taking advantage of a person's vulnerability

¹⁶ Australian Government. (2020). *Trafficking in persons: The Australian Government Response (1 July 2016 – 30 June 2017)*.

<https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/criminal-justice/files/interdepartmental-committee-human-trafficking-and-slavery-07-2016-06-2017.pdf>



As the prosecution of matters involving human trafficking and slavery relies heavily on the evidence of individual victim-survivors, corroboration of that evidence is frequently necessary to meet the high standard of proof in criminal proceedings, as would be the case for offences relating to coercive control. It is often challenging to corroborate this evidence. In some cases, victim-survivors may be unable or unwilling to contribute to a criminal justice process due to trauma or threats by the alleged offender. It can also be difficult to corroborate victim-survivors' evidence to the high standard required in criminal prosecutions.¹⁷

We suggest the Queensland Government also consider recent analysis and learnings from the Tasmanian laws that criminalise financial and emotional abuse. The findings identified the need for greater clarity around the concept of 'reasonableness', issues associated with the requirement for incidents to be reported within 12 months of occurring, and significant difficulties around the operationalising of emotional abuse in the legal context. There are also offences that are listed as both included and excluded offences, 'arguably making both redundant'.¹⁸

Creation of any new offence will require a highly coordinated legal and non-legal workforce that has the appropriate expertise in identifying, investigating, assessing, prosecuting and judging such complex domestic and family violence matters. Monitoring and evaluating professional practice and system improvements must also be measured relative to outcomes, including the extent to which the reforms improve victim-survivor safety, wellbeing and recovery and improves accountability of perpetrators.

Need to work collaboratively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations

Queensland has the nation's second largest Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population¹⁹ and it is crucial that the Taskforce considers the cultural and geographical needs of these communities when deciding on any legislative changes. It is well documented that in Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are the most at-risk group of experiencing family and domestic violence and that the prevalence and severity of this violence increases with remoteness.²⁰

Consideration needs to be given to forms of coercive and controlling behaviours that are pertinent to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. The Salvation Army's services have seen instances of perpetrators repeatedly threatening to report the mother to Child Protection Services. This is a form

¹⁷ Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade. (2018). *Inquiry into establishing a Modern Slavery Act in Australia. Final Report.*

https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/Foreign_Affairs_Defence_and_Trade/ModernSlavery/Final_report/section?id=committees%2Freportjnt%2F024102%2F25296#footnote70target.

¹⁸ Walklate, S & Fitz-Gibbon, K. (2019). The criminalisation of coercive control: The power of law? *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy*, 8(4), pp.94-108. <https://doi.org/10.5204/ijcjsd.v8i4.1205>

¹⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2016). *Census of Population and Housing: Reflecting Australia – stories from the Census.*

<https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/2071.0-2016-Main%20Features-Aboriginal%20and%20Torres%20Strait%20Islander%20Population%20-%20Queensland-10003>

²⁰ Productivity Commission, *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage Key Indicators 2014 Report*, Australian Government, 2014 <https://www.pc.gov.au/research/ongoing/overcoming-indigenous-disadvantage/2014/key-indicators-2014-report.pdf>





of abusive behaviour that preys upon the fear of many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women of losing their children as a mechanism for maintaining control.

Criminalising inflicting psychological harm also raises the possibility of increased police presence and investigation in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities which are already over-policed and over-criminalised.²¹ While the Queensland criminal justice system is striving to improve the system's engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the current system continues to deliver poor outcomes for women in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities²².

The Salvation Army reiterates the importance of consulting with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander victim-survivors and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led organisations to ensure that any structural changes to the criminal justice system recognise the particular cultural and geographical needs, and the differing nature and prevalence of violence in the those communities. It is essential that grass roots Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have the ability to lead and develop projects and that other projects that are led by non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are only supported when they can demonstrate deep consultation and co-design processes that do not further marginalise or 'other' these voices.

Potential impact on young people

Adolescent family violence has long been excluded from mainstream family and domestic violence research and policy responses.²³ Adolescents who abuse their parents often adopt similar tactics to adult perpetrators in the form of coercion, threats and intimidation, destroying property and possessions, and physical assaults.²⁴ Violence against others is never acceptable, but to achieve a good outcome when responding to adolescents, consideration must be given to the complex array of issues that may be underlining a young person's violent behaviours. This includes their age and whether they are experiencing poor mental health, school disengagement, problematic substance use or family and domestic violence.

²¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2020). Aboriginal over-representation in the NSW Criminal Justice System. https://www.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/Pages/bocsar_pages/Aboriginal-overrepresentation.aspx

²² Wirringa Baiya Aboriginal Women's Legal Centre. (2020) Coercive Control: Discussion Paper. <https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/ladocs/submissions/70669/Submission%20-%20142.pdf>

²³ Boxall, H. & Morgan, A. (2020). Repeat domestic and family violence among young people. *Trends & issues in crime and criminal justice*, 591. Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology. https://www.aic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-05/ti591_repeat_domestic_and_family_violence_among_young_people.pdf

²⁴ Howard, J. (2015). *Adolescent violence in the home: How is it different to adult family violence?* Australian Institute of Family Studies. <https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/2015/12/08/adolescent-violence-home-how-it-different-adult-family-violence>





Given the age of criminal responsibility in Queensland is 10 years old, consideration needs to be given to the potential impacts of coercive control laws and justice responses on young perpetrators. Our services have anecdotally heard a growing cohort of family and domestic violence perpetrators are people aged as young as 10 years old, particularly in regional and rural Queensland. For this cohort a standardised one-size-fits-all justice approach is often not appropriate, responses should instead identify the pathway that led to the abusive behaviour so a response can be tailored that is appropriate to the needs and circumstances of the individual and their family.²⁵

Recommendations

We recommend the Taskforce advises the Queensland Government to:

- Consider international and domestic evidence and findings on criminalising coercive control, as well as current challenges of prosecuting certain slavery and trafficking offences, in building the best possible system.
- Ensure sufficient clarity in any legislative framework to enable police and other first responders to identify and respond effectively to both physical and non-physical forms of family and domestic violence.
- Following any legislative change, monitor and evaluate any changes in relation to victim-survivor safety, well-being and recovery and perpetrator accountability.

²⁵Douglas, H. & Walsh, T. (2018). Adolescent family Violence: What is the Role for Legal Responses? *Sydney Law Review*, 40(4), p.499
<http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/journals/SydLawRw/2018/20.html>



Conclusion

The Salvation Army Again thanks the Queensland Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce for the opportunity to provide evidence to this important inquiry.

Coercive control is highly complex and due to its prevalence and impact on victim-survivors we support thorough research and consultation, especially with people with lived experience, is required to determine if further legislation. This is particularly important as legislative measures ultimately rely on a victim's willingness and ability to assist police, first responders and the courts in investigations and prosecutions.

Any policy and legislative change must hold the safety and wellbeing of victim-survivors as paramount. It must be monitored and evaluated to ensure that the safety and wellbeing of victim-survivors is not being compromised, including by ensuring their ability to continue to be employed, pursue education and be connected with their community.

Evidence from Tasmania and overseas confirms that widespread community education and extensive lead-in times are critical to ensure that victim-survivors are empowered to seek help and anyone who works in areas related to domestic and family violence is ready to identify and respond appropriately to coercive control.

The eradication of family, domestic and sexual violence is critically important to The Salvation Army in Australia and across the world. We believe it can be achieved through complementary efforts to address the societal drivers of violence, extensive frontline worker education and approaches to family violence that are tailored to the individual needs and voices of victim-survivors.

We are grateful for the efforts of the Taskforce in examining and drawing attention to this critical issue. If there is any way we can be of help to the Taskforce, The Salvation Army would be very happy to assist.



Appendix A: Family Violence Behaviours

This list presents a comprehensive overview of family violence behaviours as included in The Salvation Army Model of Care. This Model of Care was informed by experts within the sector and is incorporated into our service delivery guidelines, practice and training materials.

Category	Description	Examples
Physical	Assaulting or causing personal injury or fatality, disrespecting bodily integrity, damaging property, or threatening to do so.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deliberately causing or threatening to cause physical injuries through hitting, punching, kicking, burning, pushing, throwing, strangulation etc.• Using intimidating physical actions or gestures to instil fear of bodily harm.• Threatening to kill or using physical violence to cause near fatalities.• Restraining, tying, locking up or moving someone's body.• Covertly or forcefully giving medicine, drugs, alcohol, poisons, or other substances.• Controlling or denying access to food, medication, doctors, and healthcare treatments.• Using or displaying weapons (e.g. guns, knives, bats), or objects as weapons, (e.g. cars, blunt instruments, scissors).• Trying to control, force, or deny changes to a person's physical body or appearance.• Damaging or destroying property and personal belongings.• Damaging or moving a wheelchair, mobility aids or communication devices.
Sexual	Sexual assault, rape, coercion, sexual harassment, non-consensual sexual behaviour or threatening to do so.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pressuring, forcing, or expecting sexual intercourse, sexual acts, or touching.• Not obtaining consent or expecting that prior consent to sexual intercourse/acts means ongoing consent.• Pressuring or forcing to view, talk about, or participate in pornographic video/images.



Category	Description	Examples
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making sexual comments or engaging in humiliation or put-downs of a sexual nature. • Using alcohol or drugs to take control and confuse someone in order to engage in sexual assault/abuse. • Engaging, or threatening to engage in, sexual acts with other people. • Sharing, or threatening to share, private sexual information with other people.
Reproductive	Behaviour that controls, constrains, or interferes with reproductive autonomy, choices, and decision-making.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual abuse (see category) that is used to control or interfere with reproductive choices. • Forcing or pressuring someone to become pregnant, terminate a pregnancy, manipulate menstrual cycles, or engage in sterilisation. • Forcing or pressuring unprotected sexual intercourse. • Removing a condom/contraceptive device before or during sex without consent. • Denying access to or sabotaging contraceptives, such as condoms and birth control medication/devices and emergency contraception (e.g. 'morning after' pill). • Knowingly passing on a sexually transmitted infection or refusing to get tested for a suspected infection and continuing to force or expect sexual acts. • Stopping access to reproductive healthcare information, services, and tests. • Forcing, pressuring, or threatening genital cutting, mutilation, or surgeries
Stalking/Surveillance	Repeated behaviours of harassment, intimidation, monitoring and unwanted contact, including in current or former	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping track of someone's movements, contact with others, and plans. • Following someone to/from their home, workplace, and social activities or turning up unexpectedly at places



Category	Description	Examples
	intimate/familial relationships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sending or leaving unwanted gifts, notes, items. • Breaking into a home or workplace or entering via manipulating/threatening others or using unreturned keys. • Using the internet to contact, monitor, or intimidate via email, social media, websites, online databases, and records. • Checking mobile phones, tablets, computers and/or putting surveillance apps and software on devices. • Hiring or procuring others to engage in stalking and surveillance.
Financial/Economic	Using money to hurt someone, denying reasonable financial autonomy or financial support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Controlling access to money, financial institutions, bank accounts, assets, and financial information. • Controlling or denying access to money or other resources required for the care of children. • Controlling access to, denying, or forcing employment or paid work. • Denying access to education and personal development opportunities. • Taking income earnings and denying access to pay. • Denying financial autonomy completely or providing only an 'allowance'. • Requiring requests to access and explain use of funds, provide receipts, justify reasonable purchases. • Using household income for purchases, gambling, or other expenses that cause financial insecurity. • Making a person financially responsible for assets, debts, liabilities. • Dowry-related threats and abuse.
Spiritual/Cultural	Preventing, controlling, or ridiculing spiritual, religious, or cultural practices and beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using scripture, religious/spiritual texts, or cultural beliefs to justify abusive behaviours.



Category	Description	Examples
	and/or manipulating practices and beliefs to cause harm.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forcing participation in a religion or cultural practices, or denying and controlling access to a religion, spirituality, or culture. • Shaming or insulting religions, spiritual or cultural beliefs. • Involving religious or cultural leaders in minimising, denying, or encouraging acceptance of control and abuse. • Pressuring and/or forcing non-consensual relationships or marriage on religious or cultural grounds.
Social	Social isolation from family, friends, and community networks and/or damaging social relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stopping someone from contacting or seeing friends, family, or other people, and forming new social relationships. • Controlling movements and/or not allowing movement outside their home, room, yard, neighbourhood, or geographic boundary. • Denying or restricting participation in social and community activities and events, including pick-ups and drop-offs and social interactions with others. • Telling lies or manipulating information to humiliate someone in front of others or turn other people against them. • Deliberately causing someone to be late or miss events and appointments. • Restricting access to a vehicle, transportation, wheelchair, or mobility aids. • Involving multiple family members in the perpetration of abuse and controlling behaviours.
Psychological/Emotional	Behaviour that causes emotional or mental distress and harm.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal abuse, put-downs, name-calling, and humiliation. • Blackmail, emotional manipulation, ignoring and 'silent treatment'. • Yelling, shouting, using obscene language.



Category	Description	Examples
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jealousy, possessiveness and accusations of flirting or cheating. • Threats of harm, including toward children, family members, friends, pets. • ‘Gaslighting’ by using ‘mind games’ or creating an atmosphere to cause someone to believe they have a cognitive deficit or are mentally unwell. • Exacerbating existing mental health issues and using mental health issues to control or discredit. • Criticising appearance, thoughts, plans, and intelligence. • Giving orders and treating a person like they are a servant. • Using coercion to force someone to use drugs and alcohol.
Neglect ²⁶	Controlling, denying, or ignoring health and wellbeing needs that support someone to feel comfortable and safe.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denying access to food, water, personal hygiene materials or providing inadequate amounts or poor quality/unsafe products. • Not providing a safe and reasonably clean environment to live in with access to personal privacy. • Denying or controlling access to bathrooms, laundry, running water and other ways of keeping a clean body, clothes, shoes etc. • Engaging in social abuse (see category) to neglect access to support systems, transportation, and general quality of life. • Engaging in psychological abuse (see category) and treatment where a person is denied love, care, and kindness.
Animal/Pet Abuse	Causing or threatening to cause the death or injury to an animal, irrespective who the animal belongs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Causing physical injury or killing pets/animals or threatening to do so. • Talking about or demonstrating acts of violence and abuse toward a pet/animal.

²⁶ This category has particular impacts on children, people with disability or temporary impairments, older persons, and people living in institutions.





Category	Description	Examples
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Denying resources to sustain a pet/animal's health and wellbeing such as food, comfort, medication, etc.
Technology-facilitated	Using technology such as phones, email, social media, or spyware to threaten, harass and harm.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using the internet and technology to engage in stalking/surveillance, hacking and impersonating. Using the internet and technology to spread lies and manipulate information causing harm. Denying access to technology, computers, phones, or other devices and/or controlling access including use of passwords. Engaging in repeated emails, phone calls, voicemails, text messages, or social media posts or messages. Posting private photos/videos online without permission, including images with sexual content, or that are used to discredit and distress.
Migration-related	Using and manipulating immigration systems to bully, control and threaten.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Threats of rescinding visa sponsorship, deportation and separation from family, children, and community. Denying or controlling access to migration documents, visas, and passports. Denying or controlling access to English language education or other settlement resources. Manipulating or withholding information about migration status and eligibility. Taking advantage of systemic problems caused by visa status to exert control, such as lack of government income support, healthcare, childcare and other resources. Engaging in human trafficking and modern slavery where a person becomes involved in a family/family-like relationship by means of threat, coercion, force, and deception.



Category	Description	Examples
Systemic/Legal	Using legal or other systems to bully, control, and threaten.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping someone involved in legal processes, such as family law systems, vexatiously and repeatedly over time to scare them or wear them down. • Using tactics to make the victim appear as though they are the perpetrator in order to turn systems, such as police, courts, and child protection against them. • Stopping access to legal advice, social services, or therapy, including for children. • Controlling access to or destroying documents or evidence, claiming documents are missing or not filing them with legal services or courts as requested. • Breaching police or court orders, manipulating information about orders, or taking orders out against the victim. • Representing themselves in court to examine and put the victim 'on trial'. • Not showing up to court, avoiding or hiding from legal or justice systems.
Child Abuse	Violence and abuse that directly or indirectly harms children, their parental relationships, and their right to care and protection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abusing or harming children or threatening to do so to children directly, or to their other parent, carer, or family members, using any of the above categories and tactics of family violence. • Exposing children to seeing, hearing, overhearing family violence or the effects of family violence, such as distressed parents, family members, or siblings, property damage, financial insecurity, housing insecurity, neglect, social isolation, contact with police, etc. • Forcing, pressuring or coaching children to use abusive and harmful behaviours against their parent/carer, siblings, or other family members. • Forcing children to clean up and comfort their protective parent/carer, siblings, or



Category	Description	Examples
		<p>other family members after using violence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Preventing or disrupting a protective parent/carer from reducing children's exposure to family violence.• Preventing or disrupting a protective parent/carer from creating a stable, nurturing, and loving environment for children.• Insulting a parent/carer's abilities and capacity to look after children.