

Question

Answer

Asset ID

709311

Page 1

Title

Miss

Please specify your title

Given name

Family name

I do not wish to provide my name

Contact number

I do not wish to provide a telephone number

Email address

I do not wish to provide an email address

Street address

Suburb

State

QLD

Postcode

I do not wish to provide a postal address

What type of submission are you making?

I am responding to Discussion Paper 3 and making a general submission

Who are you making the submission for?

I am making this submission for myself

What is the name of the organisation?

What is the core work of the organisation?

What is your position in the organisation?

Question	Answer
Do you have authority from the organisation to make a submission on its behalf?	
Please specify who you are making this submission for	
Please select at least one from below	I have lived experience of domestic, family or sexual violence and/or of the criminal justice system, I have supported a friend or family member experiencing of domestic, family or sexual violence and/or engaging with the criminal justice system, I am an interested members of the public
Please specify (if Others was selected)	
Are you able to advise a timeframe for when most of the lived experience/observations in your submission occurred?	In the past five years
Page 2	
How would you like us to use your information?	Identified – published on website
Page 3	
What is your age range?	I am between 18 – 25 years old
What is your gender?	Female
Please specify other gender	
What is your current postcode?	
What is your main language other than English spoken at home?	
In which country were you born?	
Do you identify as a member of any of the following groups? (Please tick all that apply)	
Page 4	

Question

Your knowledge and experiences

Answer

I was 19 when I met my much older boyfriend. He was my first adult relationship, so not only was there the imbalance of power due to age, but also experience. I endured all forms of abuse: financial, physical, sexual, and psychological. Today I still struggle with severe PTSD, and have not yet even had my trial. Although I suffered more extreme forms of abuse, coercive control was a central tool my attacker used. I would be stalked, monitored, pressured to do things I didn't want to do - all while having very little understanding of how it was wrong and abusive. For me, the psychological torment I endured has been the most debilitating for me, and even today I find myself having to correct my automatic thoughts/retrain my brain. Unfortunately, coercive control is not currently a criminal act in QLD. However even if it was I have absolutely no faith in the current system to enforce proper sanctions. I had, and still have, a full no-contact DVO, which was consistently breached on multiple occasions. Whenever I reported, even when there was video footage, the charges for the breaches were never pursued. I found myself constantly calling police, pushing for charges, crying in fear. Very quickly my attacker learnt that the DVO was nothing more than a piece of paper. My cries for help and reports of breaches being ignored led to my attacker almost ending my life - then and only then were formal charges brought forth. Charges which are still yet to be heard at trial. To even make it to trial has been an intense and gruelling process. From beginning to end I've been met with men. Having men attend the scene. Reporting my rape to men alone in a room. At all steps I felt incredibly uncomfortable, with the male police officers clearly lacking correct training for DV. Additionally, women such as me are incredibly traumatised, another area in which police lack any knowledge or training. Trauma-informed practices need to be brought into policing. Additionally, having designated women on a DV taskforce will help women feel safe and heard when reporting DV. When your attacker is a man it's incredibly difficult to disclose the sensitive and vulnerable information to another man - and is often a huge trigger. I was once laughed at by a male police officer for not pursuing an assault charge when my abuser spat in my face, "you're going to regret this" he (the police officer) said. The court process itself has taken years, with time and time again the trial being delayed. Each time becoming increasingly more debilitating as I have to "go back" to the most terrifying and traumatising times of my life, while trying to "live" (work, function). All while knowing it is incredibly likely that my attacker will walk free - the conviction rate is so low it's horrifying. The way the current system works favours the offender and puts the onus on the victim. I am the one who gets my credibility questioned, I am the one whose character is up for criticism, I am the one who essentially is called a liar by the defence. I have to worry about what colour I wear, how my clothes will hug my body, will my tattoos show, do I look like a "good girl", do I cry enough, do I seem cold, am I the perfect victim? And if not, then no one will believe me. The prosecutor does not represent me or my interests. I can not be guided. I can not be given advice. It actually goes against the prosecutors oaths/ethics to support victims this way - which is a fatal flaw. So instead I get up on a stand, for the most important part of my life, going in completely blind. Instead of putting so much onus on the victim, it needs to be instead on the offender. Instead of proving I said no, and that the offender knew I said no - prove that I said yes, and provide evidence accordingly. Also I believe that although it is a civil matter, cumulative DVOs across different partners should matter and should be considered. My abuser had 2 DVOs to his name. Then he almost killed me. The police can see a pattern, see he's dangerous - yet they wait till a woman dies (or almost does) before they do anything/take it seriously. I was even told once by a police officer that I have to "wait for him to attack me again" before they could pursue something. Just disgusting. Why am I believed more dead than I am alive? Why should I have to die before he gets truly punished? There is a reason why so many others do not pursue justice through the system. If I did not fear my abuser would kill me the second he was free, maybe even I would've given up the charges earlier. Had I had less support I too would've given up. The fact that women think like this at all speaks volumes about how the justice system has truly failed victims of abuse.

Upload file