

Domestic, Family and
Sexual Violence Commission

Corporate Plan 2024–28



Australian Government

Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commission

Contents

Contents	3
Statement of preparation	4
Commissioner's foreword	5
About the Commission	8
Government expectations for the Commission	10
Our role	12
Key activities	13
Operating environment	17
Capability	19
Cooperation and collaboration	20
Risk oversight and management	22
Performance	25

Statement of preparation



I, Micaela Cronin, as the accountable authority of the Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commission (the Commission) present the Commission's 2024-28 Corporate Plan. The Plan covers reporting period Financial Years 2024-25 to 2027-28, as required under paragraph 35(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act) and in accordance with section 16E of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014* (PGPA Rule).

Micaela Cronin
Commissioner

31 August 2024

Commissioner's foreword



I am pleased to present the Commission's second Corporate Plan, covering the reporting period 2024-25 to 2027-28.

The Corporate Plan outlines our functions, key activities and outcomes to be achieved against performance expectations that contribute to driving systems reforms to end violence against women and children and shape policies and services that support people experiencing or who have experienced domestic, family and sexual violence.

The Commission's core function is to promote and support the achievement of the objectives of the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032* (National Plan), and to hold governments accountable to it. It is our number one priority to ensure that people with lived experience of domestic, family and sexual violence are central to all that we do.

This approach takes time. It must be approached from a trauma-informed perspective and undertaken in a methodical, meaningful way, with people with lived experience taking the lead wherever possible.

Ensuring that those with deep knowledge of the harm caused by gender-based violence – and who are most directly affected by relevant policies and systems are actively listened to – is vital. This drives our work and informs our priorities and actions.

While we are still a new agency, we are continuing to mature as an organisation. We have formed stronger working relationships across government and the service sectors, with a stronger vision for our role in the domestic, family and sexual violence ecosystem.

The Commission is committed to building on our relationships with First Nations leaders and communities to ensure our work is informed by guidance. We will also work with marginalised communities – including culturally and linguistically diverse people; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ+) people; and women with disability – to raise their voices and perspectives in our representations to policy makers.

Assistant Commissioner Jenna Roberts, appointed in May 2024, will lead the Commission's work in shining a light on violence experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and in regional communities.

In the year ahead, we will continue to have an important role in holding governments accountable to achieving the National Plan's goal to end violence in one generation.

Micaela Cronin

Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commissioner

Acknowledgment of Country

The Commission acknowledges the traditional country throughout Australia on which we gather, live, work and stand. We acknowledge all traditional custodians, their Elders past and present, and we pay our respects to their continuing connection to land, waters, and community.

The Commission acknowledges and honours the work of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to end domestic, family and sexual violence and is committed to partnering with First Nations communities in this work.

Acknowledgement of people with lived and living experience

The Commission acknowledges the individual and collective expertise of people with lived or living experience of domestic, family and sexual violence.

We value the courage of those who share their perspectives for the purpose of learning and growing together and recognise their vital contribution to achieving better outcomes for all.

The Commission values the unique experiences, protective factors and strengths of children and young people and acknowledges that they are affected by domestic, family and sexual violence in their own right.

Note on terminology

The language we use when we talk about domestic, family and sexual violence matters.

Terminology used to discuss domestic, family and sexual violence; gender-based violence; and violence against women and children highlights the ongoing complexity of working in the space, as definitions vary within and across jurisdictions. We recognise that not all terminology will reflect the lived experience of all people and we will seek to use the most inclusive language possible.

The Commission will always remain open to learning and updating its language as it grows, and welcomes advice from people with lived experience.

Domestic, family and sexual violence

Domestic violence, sometimes referred to as intimate partner violence, refers to physical, sexual, psychological, economic or emotional abuse by a current or former intimate partner to gain and maintain power and control over the other.

Family violence refers to violent or intimidating behaviours used by a family member, including a current or previous spouse, domestic partner, extended family or kinship relationship, to gain and maintain power and control over another.

Wherever possible, the Commission will use both domestic and family violence together to be inclusive of national differences in terminology.

Sexual violence refers to the occurrence, attempt or threat of sexual assault by a current or former intimate partner, known person or stranger, experienced by a person over the age of 16 who does not or cannot give consent. Child sexual abuse refers to sexual violence experienced by a person under the age of 16.

People with lived experience

We recognise and respect the terminology used by people who identify as victims and/or survivors of domestic, family and sexual violence. This language acknowledges the strength and resilience of people experiencing violence and is a powerful tool for advocacy. Where people are comfortable being described in such terms, we will do so.

We also recognise that there are many people who may have experienced domestic, family and sexual violence but do not identify with the terminology of victim-survivors.

The Commission recognises that there are many perspectives of the experience of domestic, family and sexual violence, and in using the term 'people with lived experience' we seek to be inclusive of the breadth of experiences.

People who use violence

The phrase 'people who use violence' refers to the individual who uses domestic, family and sexual violence to cause harm to another. People who use violence are sometimes referred to as a 'perpetrator' at legal and policy levels.

The term perpetrator aims to hold people who use violence accountable for their behaviour, and we respect the broad use of this term in the sector. The term can also be alienating and a barrier to healing and recovery for some people who use violence.

The Commission chooses to use the term 'people who use violence' where possible.

About the Commission

Why we exist

On 4 June 2020, the House Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs (the Committee) adopted an Inquiry into family, domestic and sexual violence. The Committee's final report was published on 1 April 2021 and it made 88 recommendations, which sought to inform the development of the National Plan. Recommendation 23 was that the Australian Government establish as an independent statutory office a National Commissioner for the prevention of family, domestic and sexual violence.

The Commission commenced as an Executive Agency for the purposes of the Public Service Act 1999 on 1 July 2022, and as a listed non-corporate Commonwealth entity on 1 November 2022 (C2022G00246).

The National Plan, released on 17 October 2022, articulates the role of the Commission as follows:

"The Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commission will work with Commonwealth, state and territory governments and community organisations to promote coordinated and consistent monitoring and evaluation frameworks and will provide annual reports to the Parliament measuring progress against the National Plan".

The Executive Order establishing the Commission set out the following functions:

- provide strategic policy advice to the Minister for Women's Safety
- promote and enhance coordination across Commonwealth, state and territory governments, and the not-for-profit and private sectors
- promote coordinated and consistent monitoring and evaluation frameworks by all governments for the National Plan
- develop and maintain a supportive and structured approach to victim-survivor engagement
- inform priorities for policy, research and data collection in cooperation with jurisdictions and relevant organisations and agencies
- promote the objectives of the National Plan across all parts of Australian society.

The Commission is not a statutory office. It is an executive agency that reports to the Assistant Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence, as set out in the 'Order to Identify the Minister Responsible for the Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commission' (C2022G00452). As an executive agency, the Commission is independent from the Department of Social Services (the Department). This allows the Commission to fulfil its function in monitoring the progress of the National Plan.

Commissioner Cronin commenced in the role on 1 November 2022. Assistant Commissioner Roberts commenced on 6 May 2024.

The Commission is focused on practical and meaningful ways to measure progress towards the objectives outlined in the National Plan, informed by what is important to people with lived and living experience and what the research, data, and frontline workforce are telling us. We work in partnership with relevant government and non-government actors to hold space for these national conversations.

Our purpose

The Commission's core purpose is to amplify the voices of people with lived experience of domestic, family and sexual violence, providing evidence-informed policy advice, and promoting coordination and accountability towards ending gender-based violence.



Government expectations for the Commission

The Australian Government has provided direct guidance to the Commission by detailing priorities and expectations in a Ministerial Statement of Expectations. The expectations are:

● **Strategic policy advice:** Provide advice relevant to the Australian Government’s strategic priorities in women’s safety and broader portfolio, identifying where there is a priority need or emerging issue, and to target specific areas for Government focus.

● **Promoting and enhancing coordination:**

Foster enhanced collaboration and coordination across government and community in relation to women’s safety. This is to assist all governments to develop person-centered, coordinated and integrated family, domestic and sexual violence service system, in line with the cross-cutting principles of the National Plan.

● **Consistent monitoring and evaluation:**

Work with Commonwealth and state and territory governments to develop consistent monitoring and evaluation frameworks to effectively measure impact. This is to ensure progress against the National Plan can be tracked accurately.

● **Victim-survivor engagement:** Amplify the voices of people with lived and living experience of domestic, family and sexual violence and support the Australian Government to draw upon this knowledge in shaping policy design and service delivery.

● **Promoting the National Plan:**

Promote the objectives of the National Plan through all activities to ensure this information is shared to all parts of the Australian society. This will require ongoing participation in public forums, media and engagements to ensure the objectives of the National Plan remain on the national agenda.

● **Engagement with Commonwealth**

agencies: The Department has primary responsibility for the National Plan, including national women’s safety policy development, program and service design and liaison with other Australian Government agencies with programs that support the National Plan. The Commission and the Department will continue to develop practical mechanisms for collaboration that assist the Commission to inform the Department of relevant issues and information affecting women’s safety or the broader portfolio without compromising the independent role of the Commission. This will ensure the Department can provide the Australian Government with well developed and informed policy advice. The Commission will execute its functions based on the principles of open communication and information sharing, and the understanding that the Commission will provide feedback to the Department through appropriate channels.

● **Engagement with state and territory governments and other stakeholders:**

Develop productive relationships with state and territory governments and stakeholders in the sector to execute the Commission’s functions and to support the implementation of the National Plan. The Commission is expected to build and maintain relationships with state and territory Commissioners, or equivalent, with responsibilities aimed at ending gender based violence.

Our role

Domestic, family and sexual violence is at epidemic levels in Australia.

We know urgent action is needed. We also know the system is large and complex; there are many governments, agencies, bodies, and organisations working to make change. Our aim is to add value and an independent perspective.

In delivering the Australian Government’s expectations, the Commission works to ensure people with lived and living experience of domestic, family and sexual violence are able to be at the centre of decisions made about them, their lives and their experience.

Underpinning our approach will be ensuring people with lived and living experience of domestic, family and sexual violence are supported and centred around policy development and implementation decisions – because we know the best people to help us make change and improve the system, are those that have needed it most in the past.

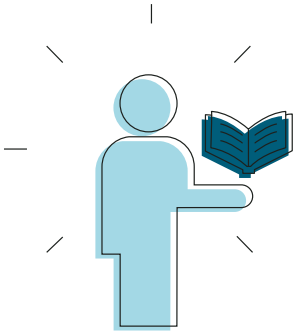


Key activities

1

Promoting the National Plan objectives to end gender-based violence and monitoring impact.

The Commission will continue to create platforms for nationally important conversations by bringing together key government and non-government stakeholders and lived experience advocates to discuss priority issues.



In 2024-25 the Commission will:

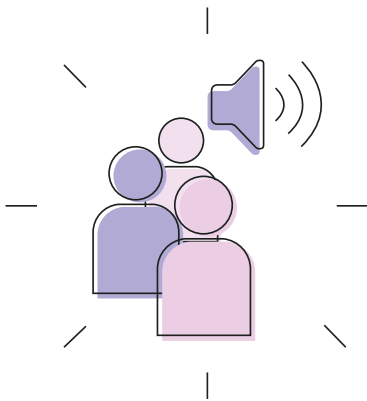
- Use public, sector and government engagements, and national conferences to promote the objectives of the National Plan and build a strong network of stakeholder relationships to support the Commission’s ongoing work.
- Work with the Lived Experience Advisory Council to co-design and convene roundtables on key priority issues, including workforce development and sexual violence.
- Work with governments to ensure a consistent and appropriate monitoring framework which complements the existing reporting mechanisms available.
- Identify gaps and opportunities to improve achievement of the National Plan objectives.



2

Amplifying the voices of people with lived and living experience for meaningful engagement in shaping policy design and service delivery.

Underpinning the work of the Commission is ensuring that people with lived and living experience of domestic, family and sexual violence are supported and centered around policy development and implementation decisions. The Commission will continue to work in partnership with the Lived Experience Advisory Council to amplify the voices of people with lived and living experience of domestic, family and sexual violence at the national level and to embed the voices of people with lived experience into all aspects of the delivery of the National Plan.

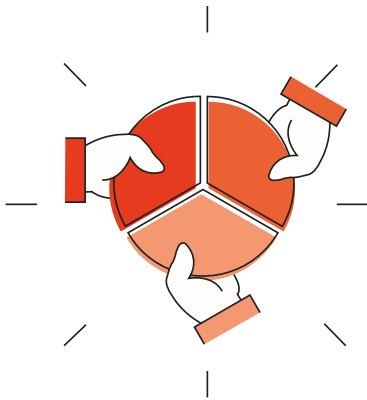


In 2024–25 the Commission will:

- Support the Lived Experience Advisory Council to design best practice principles for incorporating lived experience expertise in the design and implementation of policies and programs to address and respond to domestic, family and sexual violence.
- Work across government to promote and facilitate engagement with people with lived experience in policy and program design and implementation.
- Co-design Commission events in genuine partnership with lived experience advocates and experts.
- Work across government to both seek out, and respond to, opportunities for lived experience co-creation and/or consultation on policy design and service development.
- Promote best practice in engaging with people with lived and living experience within the Commission, holding ourselves accountable for implementing promising practice.

3

Fostering collaboration and coordination across government and communities to enhance connection and reduce fragmentation to improve outcomes.



In 2024–25 the Commission will:

- Continue to work closely with the Australian Government and states and territories to understand issues, systems and structures and highlight areas for greater coordination and collaboration.
- Work across governments to provide avenues for sharing knowledge and promoting lived experience during policy development processes and program implementation.
- Work with governments and sector organisation to promote coordinated, consistent evaluation of the National Plan and its initiatives.
- Bring together government, sector, business, researcher and lived experience stakeholders to discuss issues that cut across portfolios and focus on whole of government solutions.

4

Providing strategic advice to inform strengthened policy, practice and improved outcomes.



In 2024–25 the Commission will:

- Provide a yearly report to Parliament outlining progress towards the objectives of the National Plan and priorities for the year ahead.
- Provide strategic advice to governments on priority policy areas under the National Plan identified in the 2024 yearly report, including sexual violence and children and young people.
- Create new mechanisms for stakeholders to contribute to the work of the Commission on priority policy areas.
- Develop additional mechanisms for providing policy advice to government, sector and community stakeholders.

Principles for action

The Commission has five principles that underpin our philosophy and approach to everything that we do. They reflect the establishment phase the Commission is in and openness to learning and sharing.



Inquiring: we will approach challenges with curiosity and openness, and use insights, evidence and expertise to inform strategic advice.

Collaborative: we will facilitate coordination and connection across communities, sectors and governments.

Responsive: we will maintain flexibility to respond to emerging issues and needs.

Dignity: we recognise our actions contribute to people with lived experience being heard, understood, safe and supported.

Influence: we will influence positive change and inform priorities for policy, research and data collection.



Operating environment

The Commission is part of a significant national reform program in which all jurisdictions acknowledge the importance of addressing the challenges of domestic, family and sexual violence in a concerted and visible manner.

The Commission undertakes this work in a complex strategic and operating environment that requires coordination among and within jurisdictions and across sectors.

National Plan

The National Plan was released on 17 October 2022 and commits to 10 years of sustained action across sectors and governments towards ending gender-based violence in one generation. It provides a national policy framework to guide the work of governments, communities, businesses, policy makers, and frontline organisations.

The National Plan is being realised through Action Plans, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Action Plans, with specific actions and investment by government across the 4 domains of prevention, early intervention, response, and recovery and healing.

The Commission has been tasked with providing a yearly report to Parliament on progress against the National Plan, to help hold Government accountable. The Commission is committed to ensuring the efforts across sectors and all levels of government are progressing towards ending violence against women and children in Australia in one generation.

In addition, developing a First Nations National Plan was a key election commitment for the Australian Government to address family violence and abuse against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children. This is due to be delivered in June 2025.



Rapid Review of Prevention Approaches

On 1 May 2024, following a meeting of the National Cabinet on gender-based violence, the Australian Government announced it would undertake a rapid review of evidence-based approaches to prevent gender-based violence. This work is led by a panel of experts, who will provide practical advice to government on further action to prevent gender-based violence, which builds on the considerable work underway under the National Plan.

The expert panel was announced by Minister Rishworth and established on 28 May 2024 to provide practical advice to Government on further action to prevent gender-based violence.

Drawing on existing evidence and best-practice approaches, the panel's work will address opportunities to strengthen prevention efforts and approaches across all forms of violence against women and children, including a particular focus on homicides.

The Commission will support the Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commissioner, as a co-convenor of the expert panel established to provide government with advice on approaches to the prevention of violence against women.

Capability

People

The Commission is a small, agile team that includes highly skilled staff with a range of experience in government and across the domestic, family and sexual violence sector.

Our staff have expertise in public sector governance, policy, the community sector, data analytics, stakeholder engagement, and communications. We have a deep understanding of domestic, family and sexual violence, cultural awareness, and a commitment to the principles for action of the Commission, and the APS values.

There are five teams in the Commission:

- Executive
- Governance and Corporate Coordination
- Lived Experience Engagement
- Policy and Partnerships
- Strategic Communications and Media.

During 2024-25, the Commission will establish a s24(3) determination under the *Public Service Act 1999*. This determination will work to apply the terms and conditions set out in the Department’s Enterprise Agreement 2024-2027 to staff of the Commission, including all pay increases.

Wellbeing

The Commission is committed to trauma informed, shame sensitive practice. Ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our staff and our duty of care to people with lived experience via our engagement role is at the core of how the Commission operates.

Cooperation and collaboration

The Commission recognises that deep knowledge, experience, and expertise on domestic, family and sexual violence lies within government, peak bodies, frontline services, academia, research institutions, and the community. Through our partnerships, commissioned activities, and collaboration we draw upon this knowledge to achieve our objectives.

The Commissioner sits on a range of government bodies which inform policy, including the National Plan Advisory Group and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Safety Plan Steering Committee. The Commissioner and Commission staff also attend and present at formal governance mechanisms for the National Plan, the Women and Women’s Safety Ministerial Council, and the Women’s Safety Senior Officials meetings.

Roundtables

During 2024–25, the Commission will continue to hold regular roundtables on priority topics, in partnership with organisations with relevant expertise. These partnerships support strong participation by a broad range of stakeholders and engagement of diverse perspectives.

Our roundtable program centres the voices of people with lived experience. We also embed representation from organisations supporting or advocating for diverse populations and individuals, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people with disability, people from migrant or refugee backgrounds, and people from the LGBTQ+ communities.

Our roundtables have created new spaces for critical national conversations to occur and connections between agencies, government, researchers and those with lived and living experience.

Lived Experience Advisory Council

The Lived Experience Advisory Council will continue to work closely with the Commission and government to provide advice to create and improve policy, systems and services, and report on implementation and progress towards the objectives of the National Plan.

The Lived Experience Advisory Council will also develop and promote best practice models of lived experience engagement. Drawing upon their work with the Commission, research and existing models



across jurisdictions, the Council will design best practice principles for incorporating lived experience expertise in the design and implementation of policies and programs to address and respond to domestic, family and sexual violence.

Under the terms of reference, the Lived Experience Advisory Council will meet at least six times during 2024-25.

Corporate Services and Systems

The Commission is a party to a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Department, enabling the Department to deliver corporate services and systems to the Commission. These services include office accommodation, human resources, financial, IT, security, and information management. The MoU is reviewed annually and necessitates close working relationships between the Department and the Commission.

Through partnerships, collaboration, and engagement, the Commission will work to amplify the voices of lived experience and frontline expertise.



Risk oversight and management

Our risk management

Risk management is an integral part of the Commission’s operations and decision-making processes. The Commission promotes a positive risk culture where staff actively engage with and proactively manage key risks in order to deliver on our purpose.

The Commission’s risk appetite recognises that risk is inherent in an ever-changing environment and, in certain instances, a higher level of risk acceptance may be beneficial in the achievement of strategic objectives. Although our appetite for risk may vary depending on the type of risk being managed, the Commission has a low-risk appetite for work, health and safety, and psychosocial risks.

During 2024–25, the Commission will continue to mature its risk management framework and strengthen its governance processes and risk management capability.

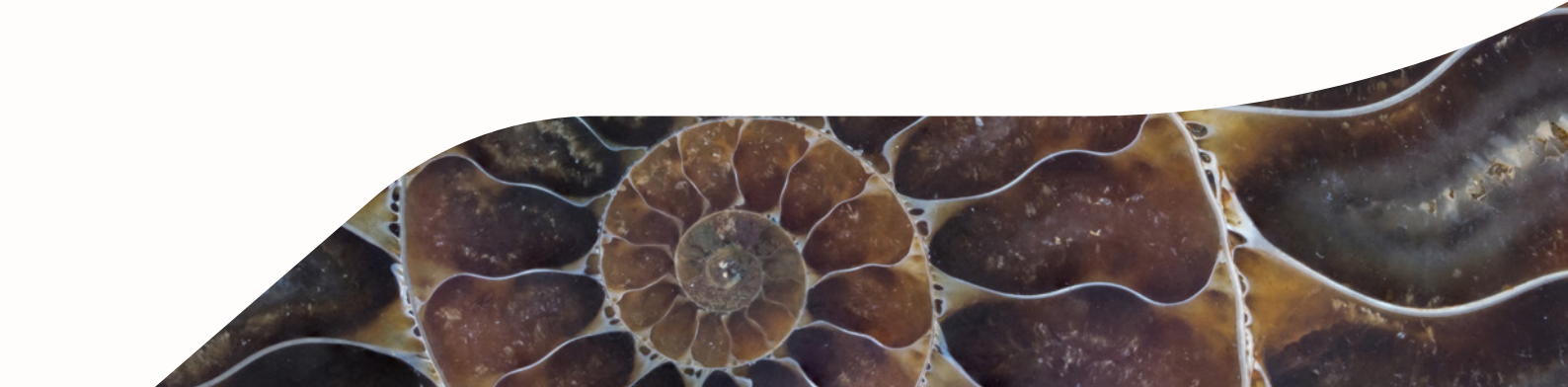
Our risk governance

The Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner, and the Governance and Corporate Coordination team oversee our risk management, control, and compliance arrangements.

Independent assurance on the appropriateness of the Commission’s financial and performance reporting, system of risk oversight and management, and system of internal control is provided by the Audit and Risk Committee. This ensures conformance of the Commission’s risk management framework with the Commonwealth Risk Management Policy and section 16 of the PGPA Act.

Our strategic risks

The Commission has identified five strategic risks that have the potential to impact on the Commission’s objectives. These risks and associated mitigations are outlined below:



RISK	DESCRIPTION	RISK MITIGATIONS
Government priorities	The Commission is unable to fulfil the functions as outlined in the Executive Order.	<p>Continue engagement with people with lived experience of domestic, family and sexual violence and their support networks, all levels of government and the non government sector to identify prioritisation of policy and service systems reforms.</p> <hr/> <p>Continue to build a strong team with relevant skills, knowledge and experience to deliver on Government priorities.</p> <hr/> <p>Continue to progress effective working relationships across government, non-government, peak bodies, service organisations, community groups, the academia and research institutions.</p>
Collaboration and Partnerships	The Commission is unable to foster collaboration and coordination across government and community to enhance connection and reduce fragmentation to improve outcomes.	<p>Appoint dedicated staff with strong stakeholder engagement skills to focus on collaboration and coordination activities.</p> <hr/> <p>Continue to deliver round tables to foster collaboration and coordination including attending conferences and events to strengthen networks.</p>
Integrity	The Commission is unable to maintain the highest standards of integrity, public service values and professionalism in the work we do.	<p>Adopt and implement the Department's integrity processes that meet the requirements of the National Anti-Corruption Commission.</p> <hr/> <p>Continue educating staff on their responsibilities for maintaining integrity through the delivery of mandatory training on APS values, code of conduct, fraud awareness and corruption, employment principles and expectations.</p>
Workforce Capability and Safety	The Commission is unable to recruit and retain the workforce capability needed, including managing the safety, wellbeing and development of staff and victim survivors.	<p>Leverage the Commission's reputation in recruitment processes and continue to recruit across jurisdictions to have the largest possible pool of talent.</p> <hr/> <p>Leverage the Department's Work Health and Safety, wellbeing, HR and diversity policies and arrangements.</p> <hr/> <p>Promote staff learning and development through individual performance management processes.</p>

RISK	DESCRIPTION	RISK MITIGATIONS
Data integrity	The Commission is unable to maintain, protect and use its data effectively to support outcomes.	<p data-bbox="782 241 1402 358">Manage data in accordance with the Department’s data management processes and procedures.</p> <hr/> <p data-bbox="782 380 1402 501">Promote staff awareness and learning on importance of securing and managing data and information.</p>



Performance

The Commission acknowledges that as our approach is informed by people with lived and living experience of domestic, family and sexual violence, as well as with community and government, measuring the effectiveness of the Commission's activities will be challenging during the initial years of its establishment and will evolve over time.

The Commission will be reviewing its performance measures during 2024-25 in line with the Strategic Plan and the PGPA Rule. The revised performance measures will be incorporated in the Commission's 2025-29 Corporate Plan.

The Commission's current performance measures are outlined below.

ACTIVITY	PERFORMANCE MEASURE	2024-25 TARGET	2025-26 TARGET AND BEYOND
Amplifying the voices of people with lived experience	A supportive and structured approach to engagement with people with lived experience of domestic, family and sexual violence is implemented.	The Lived Experience Advisory Council is operating effectively and sustainably, holding quarterly meetings.	The Lived Experience Advisory Council is operating effectively and sustainably, holding quarterly meetings.
		The Lived Experience Advisory Council's strategic focus and ways of working with government are co-designed and established.	The Lived Experience Advisory Council's strategic focus and ways of working with government are matured.



ACTIVITY	PERFORMANCE MEASURE	2024-25 TARGET	2025-26 TARGET AND BEYOND
Promote and enhance coordination across Commonwealth, state and territory governments, and the not-for-profit and private sectors	Engagement and communication activities that support collaboration and the sharing of policy, knowledge and practice across jurisdictions and silos are delivered.	Key mechanisms are in place to bring together Government, not for profit and private sector actors to enhance collaboration and coordination.	Key mechanisms are matured to bring together Government, not for profit and private sector actors to enhance collaboration and coordination.
Inform priorities for policy, research and data collection in cooperation with jurisdictions and relevant organisations and agencies	Coordination across Commonwealth, state and territory governments, and the not-for-profit and private sectors is promoted.	Collaborative partnerships are established with key organisations and agencies and shared priorities are agreed upon.	Collaborative partnerships are matured with key organisations and agencies and shared priorities are agreed upon.
Promote the objectives of the National Plan, and undertake reporting towards the actions and targets of the National Plan	The annual progress report promoting and informing government on the progress towards achieving the National Plan targets.	Promotion of the objectives of the National Plan through Commissioner participation in public forums and engagements. Delivery of a report to Parliament on the progress towards the objectives of the National Plan.	Promotion of the objectives of the National Plan through Commissioner participation in public forums and engagements. Delivery of a report to Parliament on the progress towards the objectives of the National Plan.



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