

# DFV NEWSLETTER

FROM THE CHIEF MAGISTRATE'S OFFICE



APRIL 2026



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## News

- Each year in May, Queensland recognises [Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month](#) to send a clear message that gendered violence will not be tolerated. The theme for 2026 is "Together Queenslanders can prevent domestic and family violence." A list of community events is available on the [Queensland Government](#) website.
- [Women's Legal Service Queensland \(WLSQ\)](#) has launched its criminal practice to support women who are victims of crime and those who come into contact with the criminal justice system as a result of domestic and family violence. The new service provides free legal advice to help women understand the investigation process, their role in court proceedings and their rights and options as a victim-survivor of crime. It also offers advice for women charged with minor or summary offences where the conduct is connected to their experience of domestic and family violence. WLSQ have relocated to a new, larger office space at Level 3, 349 Coronation Drive, Milton.
- The [Queensland Government](#) has announced details of the \$16.1 million major upgrades to the Toowoomba Courthouse which will make it safer and more accessible for domestic and family violence survivors. The upgrades include two new courtrooms, with one dedicated to DFV matters, and a new DFV safe room, providing vulnerable witnesses with a private space to prepare for and access court proceedings.
- [No to Violence](#) is building a National Directory of Services for people who use violence or are at risk of using violence in a domestic and family violence context. There will be two National Directory interfaces: one for the public and one for professionals working with people using violence.

- Legal Aid Queensland has released a new guide "[Got a DVO? Everything you need to know](#)". It provides clear, practical advice and FAQs to help respondents understand and comply with their DVO in real-life situations. The guide addresses what constitutes domestic violence behaviours, what happens if a DVO is breached, practical tips for complying with a DVO and key support services for respondents.
- Australia's first standalone National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Plan to End Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence has been officially launched. [Our Ways – Strong Ways – Our Voices](#) is a landmark, community-led plan shaped by decades of advocacy from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, survivors, and communities.
- Major banks and lenders have launched a new [Financial Safety Alliance](#) to stop loans, accounts and credit from being weaponised against victim-survivors. The aim is to build "financial safety by design" into banking products so perpetrators can't use money to control or harm. This includes clearer consequences for misuse of financial products and more consistent support for people experiencing financial abuse. This is the first coordinated industry-wide response of its kind.

The Electronic Monitoring Device pilot for DFV respondents commenced in the Townsville and Caboolture Magistrates Court in September 2025. The eligibility criteria was further expanded to include respondents who are not in custody in January 2026.

The [DFV Bench Form \(Version Seven\)](#) has been amended to account for these changes. \*

**\* Links to pages on the Magistrates Intranet are not publicly available**

- The [Queensland Government](#) has committed is an \$8.6 million upgrade to Rockhampton Courthouse to better support operations and victims of DFV when attending court. Work will include construction of a new courtroom dedicated to DFV matters and two new dedicated safe rooms, providing vulnerable witnesses with secure, private areas to prepare for and access court. Safety will be further bolstered with a security upgrade to the entry of the courthouse. This work is expected to be completed by the end of this year.

# Podcasts

## [Broken Trust](#)

The Guardian Australia  
November 2025

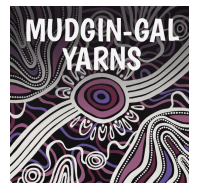


A special podcast series by The Guardian Australia looking at domestic and family violence deaths, failures in police and coronial responses, and systemic issues in Queensland.

Investigative reporter Ben Smee examines new evidence in the case of Hannah Clarke and her children and interviews a former Queensland senior detective.

## [Mudgin-Gal Yarns](#)

University of Technology Sydney  
October & November 2025



Mudgin-Gal Yarns is a five-part series where inner-city Aboriginal women speak openly about the systems meant to protect them: police, government, and services.

The podcast features candid conversations that explore what works, what fails, and what needs to change.

# Upcoming Events

20 - 23  
April

## **[The Art of Dialogue: Group Facilitation Skills for Working in a DFV Program](#)**

Cliftons Brisbane, 24/288 Edward Street, Brisbane City  
20 – 23 April 2026, 9:00am – 4:00pm

This four-part training event by WorkUP Queensland seeks to provide hands on facilitation skills training for perpetrator programme staff and victim advocates with an opportunity to participate in interactive training and enhance their group facilitation and one-on-one facilitation skills with perpetrators and/or victim survivors. Men's Behaviours Change (MBC) training participants will learn skills necessary to address accountability, collusion and co-facilitation while centring a survivor's lived experience in an MBC program.

30  
April

## **[Australian Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Recovery and Healing Conference 2026](#)**

Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre  
30 April & 1 May 2026

The aim of the 'Recovery and Healing: Striving Together' Conference by the Australian Domestic, Family, and Sexual Violence Recovery Alliance is to engage with colleagues and stakeholders about the importance of trauma recovery and healing in a relaxed informal environment. The conference will educate, inform, support, and activate professionals, decision makers, and researchers about the need to focus on recovery and healing and best practice if, as a nation, we want to end gender-based violence. The conference has attracted high quality national and international speakers who are leaders in the recovery and healing sector.

5  
May

## **[Understanding Pathways to Safety: Brisbane Domestic & Family Violence Forum 2026](#)**

Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre  
5 May 2026, 9:00am – 4:30pm

This event by Women's Health and Equality Queensland is a one-day forum that aims to increase people's knowledge of, and relationships with, the domestic and family violence services and programs available across the Brisbane region. It's great for workers new to the sector wanting to map the landscape, those working in allied community services who may need to support victim-survivors of violence, or experienced workers looking for a networking and learning opportunity.

23 & 24  
June

## **[Breaking the Hold: Strangulation Prevention & Response](#)**

Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre  
23 & 24 June 2026

This event is Red Rose Foundation's 10th Anniversary Conference, bringing together international and Australian experts committed to raising awareness of and enhancing responses to strangulation: an often hidden and potentially lethal form of domestic violence. This landmark conference connects international insights with local practice, equipping practitioners, policymakers and advocates with the knowledge and tools needed to save lives and create safer futures.

# Articles & Reports

## [Education, Accountability and Support: Improving Queensland's Response to Non-Fatal Strangulation](#)

Queensland Law Reform Commission  
September 2025

The Queensland Law Reform Commission examined the offence of choking, suffocation, or strangulation in a domestic setting in [section 315A of the Criminal Code \(Qld\)](#). The Commission considered that reforms were necessary to improve the response to this offence and made 18 recommendations to achieve this reform.

## [Primary Fire Homicide in Australia: Trends, Victim-Offender Relationships, and Gendered Violence \(1989-2023\)](#)

Journal of Criminology  
February 2026

This article examines primary fire homicide (PFH) in Australia from 1989 to 2023, focusing on cases where fire was used as the main method of killing, particularly in domestic and intimate partner violence contexts. It finds that although fire-related homicide is rare, it has increased slightly over time and is strongly associated with domestic relationships, coercive control, and gendered violence.

## [Can and should police tell victim-survivors 'I believe you' during sexual offence investigations?](#)

Current Issues in Criminal Justice  
December 2025

This article examines whether and how police should explicitly communicate belief to survivors when they disclose sexual violence. It discusses the value survivors place on being believed, the confusion and debate among practitioners about the appropriateness and implications of saying "I believe you," and how such communication fits within trauma-informed investigative practices and police procedures.

## [The Tangled Web: Examining Domestic and Family Violence Sentencing Reform](#)

Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council  
February 2026

The Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council conducted research, consultation, and analysis on how two specific legislative changes relating to domestic violence offences have impacted sentencing outcomes, perpetrator accountability, victim-survivors satisfaction, and the broader justice system. The two reforms examined were the increase to the maximum penalty for contravening a domestic violence order and the introduction of domestic violence as an aggravating factor for the purpose of sentencing.

## [Intimate partner violence and suicidality among Australian males: A longitudinal analysis](#)

Psychiatry Research  
February 2026

The link between intimate partner violence (IPV) and suicidality in males remains underexplored and needs further investigation. This article draws longitudinal data from three waves of the Australian Longitudinal Study on Male Health. Analysis identified that IPV exposure and use were strongly linked to suicidal ideation and attempts cross-sectionally and over time. The study highlights the need to integrate violence and suicide prevention efforts for males.

## [Learning lessons from the criminalisation of coercive and controlling behaviour ten years on: The implementation journey in England and Wales](#)

International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy  
December 2025

This paper summarises key findings from three research studies conducted over a 10-year period with three different police forces in England and Wales since the criminalisation of coercive controlling behaviour in 2015.

## **[SSW v Commissioner of Police & Anor \[2026\] QDC 2](#)**

Byrne KC DCJ  
30 January 2026

The appellant, a serving police officer, appealed against a decision of a Magistrate to make a domestic violence protection order against him and dismissing his cross-application against his spouse, who was also a police officer.

The parties had made competing allegations of domestic violence following their separation in 2023, including claims of physical abuse, property damage, coercive behaviour, and interference with finances and parenting. The appellant argued that the Magistrate had erred in accepting his former spouse's evidence, rejecting his own, and in finding that he had committed domestic violence while she had not, and he also sought to rely on new evidence.

Byrne KC DCJ held that although some aspects of the Magistrate's credibility assessment were flawed, the appellant had not demonstrated sufficient error or a miscarriage of justice, and the proposed new evidence lacked sufficient cogency.

After conducting a rehearing on the record and reviewing the factual findings, the Court dismissed the appeal, upheld the protection order, and refused most of the application to adduce further evidence.

## **[Crime and Corruption Commissioner v A/Det Supt Christopher Hansel \[2026\] QCAT 50](#)**

Member Auld  
2 February 2026

The Tribunal set aside Acting Detective Superintendent Hansel's decision not to commence a disciplinary declaration process against a former police officer who had been dismissed on medical grounds after facing multiple allegations of serious domestic violence and interference with justice.

The Crime and Corruption Commission established four errors: the decision-maker misunderstood the purpose of Part 7A of the Police Service Administration Act, made an unsupported factual finding that the former officer was unlikely to seek government employment, failed to give proper weight to the seriousness of the alleged conduct, including "multiple acts of physical violence upon the Former Officer's heavily pregnant ex-partner" and "interference in the course of justice", and incorrectly concluded there was no tangible benefit in commencing a disciplinary investigation.

The Tribunal held that the evidence before the original decision-maker clearly supported commencing the disciplinary declaration process, emphasising the seriousness of the conduct and the importance of maintaining public confidence in the QPS. The matter was returned to the Commissioner of Police with directions to issue a notice under section 7A.3(1)(a) of the Police Service Administration Act 1990 (Qld) and to hold a disciplinary hearing.

## **Legal Services Commissioner v MAB [2026] QCAT 108**

Wilson J, Member Schmidt & Member Lamont  
2 February 2026

The applicant brought two disciplinary charges against the respondent who was a legal practitioner. The second charge concerned the respondent's breach of a protection order on 20–21 March 2022, when he sent his ex-wife a series of forceful, hostile text messages and then telephoned her the next day in a manner that was verbally abusive, despite being bound by a current protection order requiring him to be of good behaviour and not commit domestic violence. He subsequently pleaded guilty to contravening the order under s177(2)(a) of the DFVPA and was fined \$750 with no conviction recorded. The Tribunal held that this conduct, occurring after an earlier breach in 2021, was wilfully disobedient to the law, occurred in the context of an acrimonious separation, and was behaviour likely to materially bring the profession into disrepute, such that it properly amounted to professional misconduct. The respondent was ordered to pay a pecuniary penalty of \$2,500 plus the applicant's costs of the application.

## **R v WCL [2026] QCA 11**

Mullins P, Bond JA & Crowley J  
3 February 2026

The Court of Appeal dismissed an appeal against convictions for assault occasioning bodily harm and strangulation in a domestic setting, arising from incidents involving the appellant and his former wife in 2018.

The appellant argued that the verdicts were unreasonable, inconsistent with his acquittals on other charges (including rape), and that miscarriages of justice occurred due to the admission of an allegedly unlawful recording and the provision of selective transcripts to the jury.

The Court held that the recording was properly admitted by agreement of counsel and, even if unlawfully obtained, did not render the trial unfair, and that the trial judge acted within discretion in providing balanced transcripts. It further found that the complainant's evidence, supported by photographs, witness testimony, and recorded admissions, was sufficient to sustain the convictions, and that the mixed verdicts were logically reconcilable given differences in the quality and nature of the evidence. Accordingly, no miscarriage of justice was established, and the appeal was dismissed.

## **R v KBN [2026] QCA 20**

Bond JA, Brown JA & Henry J  
17 February 2026

The Queensland Court of Appeal dismissed the appellant's appeal against his conviction for raping his eight-year-old stepdaughter, finding the jury's verdict was open on the evidence, particularly the complainant's detailed and credible police interview and consistent allegations over time.

The Court held that inconsistencies raised by the defence, including a Child Safety record suggesting some confusion about separate allegations involving the complainant's brother, did not undermine the reliability of her allegation against the appellant.

The Court also found no miscarriage of justice arose from the trial judge's failure to give a specific direction about that record, as its relevance was limited to credibility and there was no realistic possibility the absence of a direction affected the jury's verdict.

### **R v BFD [2026] QCA 39**

Boddice JA, Doyle JA & Muir J  
2 March 2026

The case concerned an application for leave to appeal against a sentence after the applicant pleaded guilty to five counts of rape and one count of strangulation, all arising from violent domestic offending against a 19-year-old complainant over three incidents in February 2023. The sentencing judge imposed a head sentence of 10 years' imprisonment for the most serious rape count, with concurrent sentences of nine years for three other rape counts, five years for another rape count, and four years for strangulation, together with a mandatory serious violent offence declaration.

The applicant argued the sentence was manifestly excessive and that a global sentence of about nine years with parole eligibility at the halfway point should have been imposed. The Court of Appeal rejected those arguments, holding that the sentencing judge correctly applied the relevant sentencing principles and that the violent, degrading nature of the offending, the vulnerability of the complainant, and the applicant's circumstances justified the sentence imposed. Accordingly, the Court refused leave to appeal against sentence.

### **R v KBO [2026] QCA 33**

Bond JA, Freeburn J & Sullivan J  
3 March 2026

The Court of Appeal dismissed the appellant's challenge to his conviction for one count of rape (domestic violence offence), holding that none of the five grounds of appeal had merit. The Court found no reasonable apprehension of juror bias where a replacement juror had been present for the trial judge's initial impartiality directions, and it held that evidence of uncharged domestic violence from 2017 was properly admitted as relationship evidence, with clear directions given that it could not be used as propensity reasoning. The inadvertent admission of previously excluded evidence about damage to the complainant's car in 2017 was found to be insignificant in the context of the whole trial, particularly as defence counsel neither sought a discharge nor objected and instead used the evidence strategically in cross-examination and submissions.

The Court concluded that the appellant was bound by his counsel's forensic choices and that no miscarriage of justice had occurred, noting the jury's careful approach as reflected in the acquittal on one of the two rape counts.

### **R v PBU [2026] QCA 32**

Bond JA, Bradley JA & Doyle JA  
3 March 2026

The Court of Appeal dismissed the appellant's conviction appeal for maintaining an unlawful sexual relationship with a child (domestic violence offence), rejecting all three grounds advanced. The Court held that the guilty verdict was not unreasonable, noting that the complainant's evidence, though challenged as vague or inconsistent, was detailed, coherent, and capable of being accepted by the jury, who had the advantage of seeing and hearing her. The argument that the complaint lacked sufficient particularity was rejected, as the prosecution had clearly identified the acts relied upon and the appellant was able to conduct a meaningful defence.

The Court also refused to admit new evidence said to come from the complainant's mother and found no miscarriage of justice in defence counsel's failure to obtain or deploy that material, emphasising that counsel's conduct was within the range of reasonable forensic decisions. Leave to adduce new evidence was refused and the appeal was dismissed.

## **[RAB v A Magistrate Court of Queensland \[2026\] QSC 49](#)**

Bowskill CJ

17 March 2026

The decision concerns a self-represented applicant who sought judicial review of two Magistrates Court decisions made under the DFVPA. Police had issued him with a police protection notice (PPN), which by force of s 112 is taken to be an application for a protection order. After the applicant appeared and consented without admissions to a temporary protection order, the matter was later discontinued by police.

When the Magistrate refused his requests for costs, the applicant challenged both the original temporary protection order and the later costs ruling, arguing the Magistrates Court lacked jurisdiction because no “real” originating application under s32 had been filed and that the costs refusal involved jurisdictional error.

Bowskill CJ rejected these arguments, holding that s112 expressly deems a PPN to be an application for a protection order, that filing of the PPN under s111 validly invoked the Court’s jurisdiction, and that the applicant’s contrary construction was misconceived. Her Honour also held that under s157, the discretion to award costs does not arise where an application is withdrawn, consistent with *KAV v Bentley* [2016] QSC 46 and *Grace v Peter* [2024] QSC 69. The application for review was dismissed, with costs reserved.

## **[Queensland Police Service v OMD \[2026\] QMC 2](#)**

Magistrate Hughes

20 March 2026

In this matter, Magistrate Hughes dismissed the defendant’s application to exclude evidence of five alleged contraventions of Temporary Protection Orders arising from numerous emails he sent during Family Court proceedings. His Honour held that communications copied to the aggrieved, such as statements referring to her as “a liar and a bully” and threats to “burn this court down”, were not required by Family Court processes, breached both the Family Court orders and the protection orders, and were capable of constituting systems abuse, a recognised form of domestic violence.

Magistrate Hughes found that neither the “without prejudice” character of some correspondence nor the context of parenting negotiations outweighed the strong probative value of the material, and that public policy favoured exposing systems abuse rather than shielding it. Accordingly, all categories of correspondence were admissible and the application to exclude the evidence was dismissed.

## **Quick Links**

- [Earlier editions of DFV Newsletter](#)
- [Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012 Benchbook](#)
- [National Domestic and Family Violence Benchbook](#) – August 2025
- [Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012](#)
- [Domestic and Family Violence Protection Rules 2014](#)
- [DFV Resources for Magistrates](#) \*
- [DFV Bench Forms for Magistrates](#) \*

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