



VICTORIA POLICE

LIVING FREE FROM VIOLENCE – UPHOLDING THE RIGHT

VICTORIA POLICE STRATEGY TO REDUCE
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN 2009–2014

‘Our vision is to support women and children to live free from violence. This is based on the fundamental principle that every person has the right to live a life free from violence. Victoria Police is committed to upholding that right. We want victims of family violence, sexual assault and child abuse to be confident they can call Victoria Police and receive a timely, thorough and respectful response to ensure their safety and well-being’.

OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS VICTORIA POLICE WILL:

OBJECTIVE 1

RESPOND TO AND INVESTIGATE FAMILY VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT AND CHILD ABUSE MORE EFFECTIVELY.

OBJECTIVE 2

TAKE A LEADERSHIP ROLE IN DRIVING INTEGRATED SERVICE DELIVERY.

OBJECTIVE 3

REDUCE RISK TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OF ONGOING EXPOSURE TO VIOLENCE THROUGH PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION.

1. Continue to monitor, review, and embed implementation of the Codes of Practice for the Investigation of Family Violence and Sexual Assault and related protocols.

2. Implement, monitor and evaluate responsibilities pertaining to the Family Violence Protection Act 2008, including evaluation of Family Violence Safety Notices.

3. Participate in the Systemic Review of Family Violence Deaths led by the State Coroner and develop an investigative model for family violence crimes.

4. Continue to strengthen positive working relationships with community leaders and organisations in diverse and vulnerable communities.

5. Reward and recognise excellence and best practice in policing of family violence, sexual assault and child abuse.

6. Improve investigative response to sexual assault and child abuse through the state-wide expansion of the Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Investigation Teams (SOCIT), including better outcomes for cognitively impaired victims.

7. Implement recommendations of the VATE Review as well as implementing a process for ongoing specialist sexual assault and interviewing training.

8. Develop quality assurance frameworks for family violence, sexual assault and child abuse including ongoing monitoring and evaluation of SOCIT program and transition.

1. Implement Victoria Police commitments in the *Strong Culture, Strong People, Strong families, Towards a safer future for Indigenous families and communities: 10 Year Plan*.

2. Develop strategies to enhance collaboration between police, sexual assault and family violence services and child protection.

3. Participate in the development of an integrated strategy to better respond to high risk victims and perpetrators of family violence. This includes multi-agency responses to risk management.

4. Continue regional coordination between Victoria Police, courts and victim/perpetrator services in relation to family violence.

5. Enhance risk management and information sharing capabilities to increase safety while respecting privacy

6. Undertake research and analysis of repeat family violence to inform state-wide Strategy to reduce repeat offending and victimisation.

7. Continue to participate in whole of government coordination mechanisms and provide a social leadership role in reducing violence against women and children.

8. Ensure support for Family Violence Advisers and Family Violence Liaison Officers to match new regional boundaries.

9. Participate in internal and whole of government evaluations and data collection projects such as the Family Violence Data Base and Sexual Assault Reform Initiative evaluation.

1. Improve children and young people's access to Victoria Police services by enhancing communication, information provision and consultation (linking to Victoria Police Child and Youth Strategy)

2. Develop skills, capacity and understanding of Victoria Police members regarding earlier intervention strategies to reduce risk of re-victimisation or perpetration of violence.

3. Collaborate in internal and whole of government early intervention initiatives for children and young people.

4. Collaborate and participate in state-wide and policing prevention initiatives such as White Ribbon Day to promote respectful relationships.

5. Develop quality assurance indicators to measure Victoria Police response to violence against children.

6. Improve joint investigative responses (VicPol/DHS) to children at risk of abuse.

7. Develop a specialist community of practice and investigative guidelines for child abuse.

OBJECTIVE 4

INCREASE MEMBERS' UNDERSTANDING ABOUT ISSUES OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN (VAWC) IN ORDER TO PROVIDE APPROPRIATE POLICING RESPONSES.

This Strategy provides a clear direction and commitment from Victoria Police and outlines key objectives and tasks we will undertake to work towards our vision.

1. Develop and implement a training and professional development strategy to ensure that training on violence against women and children is included in all relevant training courses.

2. Ensure data systems are meeting the needs of the organisational response to violence against women and children. This includes Interpose, LINK, and LEAP to ensure ongoing performance monitoring and improvement.

3. Support existing research initiatives to enhance Victoria Police response to violence against women and children.

4. Develop and implement violence against women and children performance measures for Compstat reporting to identify actions taken in each Police Service Area (PSA).

5. Develop internal and external communications strategy for violence against women and children.

6. Maintain support for the Crime Department to provide relevant strategy, policy and practice advice and project development and implementation.

7. Develop a benchmark for members' skills, knowledge and attitudes in responding to VAWC.

8. Develop a mechanism to gauge victim satisfaction regarding police responses to VAWC.

HOW PREVALENT IS VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN?

→ Research informs us that the underlying cause of violence against women is the unequal relationships between men and women. This includes both the unequal distribution of power and resources between men and women and broader societal structures that place women and children in a vulnerable position.

Statistically –

- More than one in two Australian women experience physical or sexual assault by a man in their lifetime, and, more than one in three women who have had an intimate partner, have experienced violence from a partner. 1 in 4 young people have witnessed family violence.
- Over the past six years, reporting of family violence incidents to Victoria Police has increased by 22% from approximately 28,000 incidents in 03/04 to nearly 34,000 in 08/09 and charges laid have increased by 178%, from 3,000 in 03/04 to 8,000 in 08/09.
- Of the 4,378 reported sexual assaults in 2008/2009, 62% were for children and most of these reported sexual assaults were perpetrated against females.

MEASURES OVER 5 YEARS 2009/10 – 2013/14

1. INCREASE FAMILY VIOLENCE REPORTS TO VICTORIA POLICE BY 10%
2. INCREASE SEXUAL ASSAULT REPORTS TO VICTORIA POLICE BY 15%
3. INCREASE CHARGES LAID FOR FAMILY VIOLENCE BY VICTORIA POLICE BY 5%
4. INCREASE APPLICATIONS BY POLICE FOR INTERVENTION ORDERS BY 10%
5. INCREASE REFERRALS FROM POLICE TO FAMILY VIOLENCE SERVICES BY 15%
6. INCREASE REPORTS FOR CHILD PHYSICAL ASSAULT BY 10% (FAMILY RELATED)
7. DEMONSTRATED INCREASE IN MEMBERS UNDERSTANDING OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN

All of the performance measures are expressed in terms of total outcomes to be achieved over five years to 2013/14

All of the performance measures have been calculated using trend data over the past six years as well as population data trends to develop conservative and achievable estimates for this Strategy

All of the performance measures have been calculated using 2008/2009 figures as the benchmark

ORGANISATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND GOVERNANCE

ACCOUNTABILITY

- Annual Action Plan
- Annual Stakeholder Report
- Mid term Assessment and Review
- Regular Compstat report on Performance Measures

GOVERNANCE

- Crime Department
- Corporate Sponsors
- VAWC Steering Committee



VICTORIA POLICE

www.police.vic.gov.au

For further information or the full strategy, see www.police.vic.gov.au or email violenceagainstwomen@police.vic.gov.au