# Premier’s Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland

Domestic violence is everyone’s concern. As a community, we have a responsibility to stop the behaviour and attitudes that feed into the cycle of domestic violence and to look after one another.

Domestic violence can affect anyone, regardless of age, gender or wealth. The social and economic cost to individuals, their families and the community is enormous. There has been a tragic increase in domestic and family violence incidents over the last few years. Levels of domestic violence in Queensland have increased by more than 10% since 2010-2011. In 2013 alone, there were:

* 64,246 occurrences of domestic violence (up from 57,963 in 2012);
* 14,659 domestic violence applications made by police (up from 12,845 in 2012);
* 8,241 domestic violence applications made privately (up from 7,444 in 2012);
* 12,828 breaches of domestic violence court orders (up from 10,997 in 2012); and
* 17 domestic and family violence related homicides (of the total 49 homicides).

The estimated annual cost of domestic and family violence to the Queensland economy is between $2.7 billion and $3.2 billion.

Queensland’s domestic and family violence support system is complex, and includes a number of Queensland Government departments administering police, legal, housing and other support services. The tireless efforts of many organisations around the state that support Queenslanders experiencing domestic and family violence also needs to be acknowledged.

The Queensland Government is committed to taking a strong leadership position and working in partnership with the community to eliminate domestic and family violence.

## Special Taskforce

* The Premier, the Honourable Campbell Newman, MP, has appointed a Special Taskforce (the Taskforce) to investigate domestic and family violence in Queensland.
* The Taskforce is chaired by the Honourable Quentin Bryce AD CVO and comprises four Members of Parliament (two LNP members, one opposition member and one independent), two expert community representatives and an Indigenous representative.
* The Taskforce will be charged with defining the domestic and family violence landscape in Queensland and will recommend ways the Queensland Government and community might reduce the incidence of this insidious form of violence.
* The Taskforce will reach into all Queensland regions as part of an extensive program of consultation with key stakeholders and the community.

## Structure and Process

* The Taskforce will make recommendations to the Queensland Government, to inform the development of a domestic and family violence strategy to achieve a long term vision, where all Queenslanders can live free from violence from a partner or family member, and where children do not have to see or experience family violence.
* In conducting its review, the Taskforce will undertake extensive, state-wide community engagement and consultation, recognising the need for shared responsibility across government, business, media, non-government organisations, communities, families and individuals in seeking to achieve the long term vision.
* In conducting its review, the Taskforce will seek input from relevant experts, including those with knowledge of, and experience in, family law matters, and issues involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, same sex relationships, people in rural and remote areas and people with disability.
* The Chair of the Taskforce will make recommendations, by way of a report, to the Premier by 28 February 2015. The report will be tabled in Parliament as soon as practicable after the Premier receives the report.
* The Taskforce will be supported by a secretariat provided by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

## Terms of Reference

In making its recommendations, the Taskforce is to have regard to, but is not to be limited by, the following matters:

* Educating and engaging Queenslanders to create a community that supports respectful relationships, practices positive attitudes and behaviours and promotes a culture of non-violence
* Early intervention to identify those who are at the greatest risk of violence, to ensure action is taken to protect those at risk of being subject to domestic and family violence, and to change the behaviour of those who use violence
* Holistic, coordinated and timely responses to domestic violence, including building community confidence in the reporting and investigation of domestic and family violence and ensuring that those who are subject to domestic and family violence receive immediate and effective protection and support
* Ensuring that Queensland’s law and order responses, including police, prosecutors and courts, provide an effective response to domestic and family violence, to deter perpetrators from committing violence, and hold them accountable for their behaviour
* Considering ways in which strategies for ensuring protection from domestic and family violence in Queensland best complement relevant systems and processes (including within the family law jurisdiction) to provide just outcomes and maximise the safety of families
* Defining the scope of violence, assault and abuse to be addressed in a domestic and family violence strategy and whether it would be appropriate for such a strategy to focus on particular or defined sections of the community in order to have the most impact.