

MEDIA RELEASE

Women's Sector calls for Independent Review into police responses to DFV

28 April 2021.

DVConnect, Queensland Domestic Violence Services Network (QDVS) and Ending Violence Against Women Queensland (EVAWQ) are calling for an Independent Review into QPS responses to DFV.

Calls for an Independent Review follow the preventable homicides of Kelly Wilkinson and Doreen Langham, killed two months apart after exhaustively seeking protection from QPS. Their murders call into question the way police in South East Queensland are responding to domestic violence.

Kelly's sister, Danielle told the media that she drove Kelly to the police station almost every day. And Doreen contacted police on a daily basis about her ex partner's contravention of the DVO in the lead up to her murder.

CEO of DVConnect, Beck O'Conner said, "Kelly, Doreen and other victims have used the tools available to keep themselves safe. But the tools are failing and they are costing lives."

The women's sector works closely with police and sees some great outcomes for women's safety. However, police interactions with victims remain inconsistent.

"We need urgent answers that DVConnect and the women's sector are not confident will come out of another internal review. Frankly, we are concerned about police investigating police. Kelly Wilkinson was murdered by her ex-partner at the same time police were conducting the internal review into Doreen Langham's murder," said Beck O'Connor.

The women's sector appreciates Assistant Commissioner Brian Codd's leadership in acknowledging system failure but an immediate Independent Review is needed alongside a substantial investment in police training.

Domestic and Family violence accounts for up to 60% of policing time.

"It is essential that all Police undertake training in appropriately recognising, responding and assessing risk in relation to men's perpetration of violence against women and children," said President of EVAWQ, Emma Iwinska.

"This training needs to be substantial and delivered by specialist trainers for both new and existing Police and members of the justice system."

The women's sector appreciates the community's support of the GoFundMe set up for Kelly's funeral, her children's schooling and other costs. And the sector stands in solidarity with Kelly's family who have called for proactive solutions to domestic and family violence.

"QDVS members are supportive of the call for an independent review and call on our colleagues and partners within QPS to deepen and strengthen an integrated response to better protect women", Secretary of QDVS, Stacey Ross said.

About DVConnect

- DVConnect is a not-for-profit charity.
- We've been providing pathways to safety since 1980.
- We have highly specialist trauma and crisis counsellor, all degree qualified with extensive professional experience in DFV and sexual assault response.

If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic and family violence, call DVConnect anytime 24/7 on 1800 811 811, or visit www.DVConnect.org for more information. DVConnect helps Queenslanders escape violence by providing emergency transport and emergency accommodation, as well as crisis counselling.

DVConnect helps Queensland women in a number of ways, including, but not limited to:

- Providing emergency transport away from violence for women, their children and their pets
- Providing emergency accommodation for women and their children
- Providing safe accommodation for pets through our Pets In Crisis program
- Providing crisis counselling, safety planning and referrals to other services that can help the callers.

For more details contact:

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