



MEETING COMMUNIQUÉ

**Thursday, 28 April 2016 and Friday, 29 April 2016
Mount Isa**

On Thursday, 28 April 2016 and Friday, 29 April 2016, the Domestic and Family Violence Implementation Council (Council) travelled to Mount Isa. During the visit, Council members met with local representatives of government and service organisations to discuss responses to domestic and family violence and associated issues within the Mount Isa community. The Council also conducted its formal meeting in Mount Isa, which included a round table discussion with local representatives.

The Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, the Honourable Shannon Fentiman MP, also attended the Council meeting. Prior to the meeting, Minister Fentiman announced that Mount Isa would be the regional trial site for a new integrated service response model in response to recommendation 74 of the *Not Now, Not Ever* report.

Meetings with Mount Isa domestic and family violence services 28–29 April 2016

During the course of the Council's visit, members participated in a program of 19 separate meetings and activities covering a range of aspects of Mount Isa's response to domestic and family violence issues. Council members visited and/or met with representatives of the following local organisations and service providers:

- North Queensland Domestic and Family Violence Service
- Mount Isa Domestic and Family Violence Combined Action Group
- Good Shepherd Parish / North West Queensland Indigenous Catholic Social Services
- Nawamba House
- Ngurri Ngurri Young Female Shelter
- Serenity House
- Jimaylya Topsy Harry Centre
- Domestic Violence Integrated Case Management Action Group
- Mount Isa Community Justice Group
- Cloncurry Justice Association
- Kalkadoon Aboriginal Corporation
- Ngukuthati Children and Family Centre

- Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Legal Service
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service
- Injilinj Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation for Children and Youth
- Centacare North Queensland
- Young People Ahead
- Queensland Police Service
- Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services
- Department of Housing and Public Works
- Mount Isa Courts
- Spinifex State College
- Queensland Health
- Queensland Ambulance Service

At these meetings, Council members discussed a range of issues with local representatives, including the rates of domestic and family violence incidents experienced in Mount Isa and the broader Mount Isa Police District, services available for victims, perpetrators and children affected by domestic and family violence, the operation of court and other legal processes, and support provided to young people in the community.

These issues were discussed in the context of specific challenges facing the Mount Isa community, such as the lack of after-hours services and public transport, difficulties with recruiting and retaining skilled professionals across a variety of fields, the prevalence of alcohol and other drug misuse, and the practical and cultural challenges of providing outreach services to people in remote communities within the region.

Domestic and Family Violence Implementation Council meeting 29 April 2016

Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month – May 2016

Minister Fentiman advised Council members of the campaign developed for Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month: *Not Now, Not Ever — Take up the challenge to put an end to domestic and family violence.*

The Queensland Government's community awareness campaign showcases five local community initiatives aimed at addressing domestic and family violence: Gympie State High School's health and respectful relationships education; AGL's domestic violence support policy, UnitingCare Community and AFL Capricornia's 'Not in our club' awareness campaign; Working Against Violence Support Service, Soroptimist International, Redlands Centre for Women and Zonta Club in the Redlands area's distribution of domestic and family violence prevention messages; and Gladstone Women's Health Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Centre's 'Not in our town' campaign.

The campaign also features a range of resources and templates available to community members to be adapted to promote local initiatives and assist community members in taking up the Not Now, Not Ever challenge.

Round table discussion with local representatives

At the Council meeting, representatives of a number of local organisations, as well as the Mayor of Mount Isa and a representative of the Member for Mount Isa, attended to participate in a round table discussion about local domestic and family violence issues.

The Council heard from these representatives in relation to the specific challenges and opportunities faced by the Mount Isa community. It was noted that the Mount Isa community was a particularly relevant example in the context of findings of the *Not Now, Not Ever* report about provision of domestic and family violence services in a regional setting, and as an outreach service to rural and remote communities.

Each of the local representatives spoke to the Council about the key issues they had experienced in relation to domestic and family violence service delivery in the Mount Isa community. The need for culturally appropriate services for Indigenous people, the lack of after-hours services, and a shortage in mental health services were commonly identified as key issues within the local community.

It was acknowledged that integrated and coordinated service responses were necessary. In this respect, Council noted the work of the Integrated Case Management Action Group led by the Queensland Police Service, which is delivering an intensive coordinated case management service to high risk couples in the Mount Isa area. One of the problems noted in relation to service integration was the need for information sharing, which can be hindered by legislative and information system barriers between agencies.

Council noted that the pilot of the integrated service model in Mount Isa announced by Minister Fentiman will seek to ensure agencies' services are coordinated and gaps are addressed. In addition, the current review of the *Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012* will be considering potential barriers to sharing of information between agencies.

The need to maintain the current momentum and commitment to achieving real change in relation to domestic and family violence was raised. It was also noted that there was overlap between the implementation of these reforms and the current child protection reforms being implemented as a result of the Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry and that coordination of these processes was important.

Overall, Council noted there have been many positive initiatives implemented by the Mount Isa community to address domestic and family violence and that the current challenge was to build on these efforts to deliver improved services to the community.