

**IN THE MATTER OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION
INTO FAMILY VIOLENCE**

ATTACHMENT JB-1 TO STATEMENT OF JULIANNE HELEN BRENNAN

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This is the attachment marked '**JB-1**' produced and shown to **JULIANNE HELEN BRENNAN** at the time of signing her Statement on 9 July 2015.

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Attachment JB-1



Australian Government
Australian Institute of Criminology



Reducing Violence Against
Women and Their Children,
Victorian Grants Program:
Review of Progress and Interim
Evaluation Reports

Matthew Willis

**Reducing Violence Against Women and Their Children
Victorian Grants Program**

Review of Progress and Interim Evaluation Reports

Matthew Willis

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Introduction

In 2011-12, the Victorian government allocated funding to deliver a Community Crime Prevention Program. One element of this Program is the Reducing Violence against Women and their Children grants program, which provides funding of \$4.8 million, in eight single grants of up to \$600,000, for three year projects in each of the eight Victorian regions. In addition, funding of \$2.4 million was allocated specifically for projects in Koori communities. The grants aim to enhance collaborative working relationships at a local level and to help build an evidence base on primary prevention and early intervention in the prevention of violence against women and their children.

The eight regional grant recipients were announced in October 2012 and the four Koori Community Safety Grants recipients in February 2013. The successful projects were:

- The City of Casey in partnership with the City of Greater Dandenong and Cardinia Shire Council – CHALLENGE Family Violence
- Gippsland Women's Health Service - Gippsland Regional Preventing violence Against Women Strategy
- Women's Health Loddon Mallee – Loddon Mallee Takes a Stand
- Warrnambool City Council – Baby Makes 3
- Whitehorse Community Health Service – Baby Makes 3
- Women's Health Goulburn North East – Hume Regional Preventing Violence Against Women Strategy
- Women's Health Grampians – Act@Work
- Women's Health West – United: Working Together to Prevent Violence in the West.
- Koori Community Safety Grants
 - Lakes Entrance Aboriginal Health Association – Strong Men, Strong Communities
 - Mallee District Aboriginal Services – Family and Community Violence Prevention Project
 - Rumbalara Aboriginal Cooperative – Aboriginal Family Harmony Project
 - Victorian Aboriginal Health Service – Strong Relationships, Strong Community

This report presents a review conducted by the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) of interim evaluation reports prepared in May 2014 for each of the grant projects with some supplementary information provided in August 2014. This report aims to provide a comprehensive summary of the evaluation findings, highlighting the main achievements of each project, issues and challenges for the projects identified through the evaluation and suggest recommendations for future evaluation approaches.

The report will consider:

- The key achievements and any identified strengths each of the 12 projects at the time of the Interim Evaluation reports;
- Learnings and contributions to the evidence base gained from the projects thus far; and
- Observations of gaps or limitations identified in the interim evaluation reports that can be used to inform further stages of the evaluations.

Each of the projects is mid-way through its three year funding period and interim evaluation reports have been completed. These reports largely focused on process elements such as whether project development and implementation milestones have been achieved within planned timeframes of the evaluation. Evaluators have had limited capacity to consider outcomes and impacts as the projects are only mid-way through implementation. Further assessments of outcomes and impacts will be undertaken in final evaluation reports for each project. It should be noted that the evidence on achievements and outcomes available for this current assessment is limited to the content of the interim evaluation reports.

While this assessment will note the key achievements of each project, as demonstrated through interim evaluation reports, it is perhaps inevitable that this assessment report will tend to give greater weight to project development and implementation issues and possible areas of concern than it will to highlighting the achievements of the programs. This should not be considered an indication of each project's ultimate capacity to achieve its intended outcomes.

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Executive Summary

This report is based on an examination of interim evaluation reports for projects funded under the Reducing Violence against Women and their Children grants and associated Koori Community Safety Grants. These interim reports show that each of the projects has delivered substantial achievements in progressing efforts in the primary prevention of violence.

The establishment of partnerships and collaborative working arrangements with other organisations is a central focus of the grants. Each of the projects has demonstrated that it has worked with other local organisations. The interim evaluations provide several examples of where these arrangements have fostered shared learning and engendered enthusiastic support for prevention aims. This has led to organisations taking practical actions such as incorporating violence prevention and support mechanisms into Enterprise Bargaining Agreements.

The development of positive working relationships with local communities emerged as a key outcome achievement for some projects. In particular, projects under the Koori Community Safety Grants have included close liaison and culturally appropriate engagement with Koori communities and their leaders. This has led to keen community support and higher than expected levels of attendance at community events. While this engagement has taken time, the interim evaluation suggests the investment of this time has been both necessary and important.

The interim evaluation reports show some positive outcomes from training and program delivery activities undertaken through the projects. There is strong evidence of training having been successful in raising awareness and understanding among participants and encouraging them towards proactive behaviours. The delivery of training sessions and workshops in workplace environments appears to have been effective and the establishment of workplace-based groups as 'champions' of change has been highlighted through the evaluation reports as effective. For some projects, the evaluation reports have highlighted some of the difficulties in overcoming entrenched attitudes, particularly among male participants. Awareness training appears to be having positive effects in changing attitudes towards gender equity and behaviours supportive of violence.

The interim evaluation reports also highlighted the development and use of resources and materials to support project delivery as a significant achievement across a range of projects. This was seen as particularly valuable in terms of ensuring the sustainability and accessibility of programs as well as a mechanism for like projects to share learnings and approaches to program delivery.

At the same time, the interim evaluation reports highlighted some issues to be addressed during the time remaining for the projects. Some projects have experienced difficulties establishing the right messages and language for delivering their objectives. At times, the primary prevention aims of the projects have not

connected well with the objectives and understandings of partner organisations. There is evidence of project facilitators working to overcome these difficulties and work through other challenges of establishing collaborative partnerships in complex environments.

The environments in which the projects operate have created challenges for some projects. While engaging the leaders of other organisations has been important for partnership building, some of these leaders have found it difficult to find opportunities to progress violence prevention objectives in the face of other demands on their times. Delivering the Baby Makes 3 program in a rural and regional environment has been challenging, with many different considerations for program facilitators compared with delivering the program in a metropolitan environment.

Human resourcing by stakeholders was also an issue for some projects. In particular, the United evaluators noted that difficulties by stakeholders to sufficiently resource the projects resulted in issues around buy-in and participation. Over time, the effective embedding of PVAWC principles into the design of workplace strategies, enterprise bargaining agreements and communications plans will reduce the need for heavy human resourcing.

Nonetheless, there is clear evidence from the interim evaluations of positive outcomes across the grant programs. Further evaluation work will continue the refinement of success measures and gathering of data to identify other positive outcomes across the remaining project lives.

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Key achievements

This section will outline the main achievements realised through each of the projects at the time of interim evaluation reports.

The City of Casey in partnership with the City of Greater Dandenong and Cardinia Shire Council – CHALLENGE Family Violence

Interim evaluation reports show that, through the CHALLENGE family violence project and collaborative efforts of Men's Action Teams, the Cities of Casey in partnership with the City of Greater Dandenong and Cardinia Shire Council have increased awareness of violence against women issues and helped to develop skills and actions to bring about change among mentors and community leaders.

In their interim evaluation report of the community leader training project, the evaluators found a clear development and enhancement of community leaders' awareness of family violence issues and their actions to prevent violence against women.

The evaluators found:

- All community leaders articulated a belief that violence against women is wrong.
- The concept of the 'Manbox', a new and developing concept of masculinity where men are expected to prove their masculinity in the 'traditional' way, emerged as a significant point of learning for community leaders, who indicated they wanted to separate themselves from the masculine stereotypes it represents; the evaluators identified this as a significant achievement of the project.
- Community leaders are interested in challenging sexist beliefs and behaviours through an alternative form of masculinity. At the same time, the leaders were not prepared to do this if it impacted on their friendships with other men.
- Most community leaders reported having motivated change aimed to prevent violence against women.
- Community leaders provided positive feedback on the support and learning generated by the project through leader/mentor relationships. The evaluators found the project was effective in meeting key performance indicators in their work with mentors.
- Community leaders expressed enthusiasm for working with other men to achieve violence-free communities, with some reporting a desire to take significant action.

In relation to the training of mentors, the evaluators found that the project had generated positive changes in mentors, meeting its first key performance indicator.

They found that the mentors had developed significantly increased awareness and understanding of gender roles, sexism, violence against women and the factors that contribute to this violence. The evaluators also found that the training had met its second key performance indicator by increasing and strengthening the personal actions of mentors to create positive changes to prevent violence against women. Against this indicator, the training had led to mentors adopting behaviours that helped to directly prevent violence, to help drive structural change and advocate for the rights of women to be free of violence. Finally, the evaluators found the training had achieved the project's third key performance indicator by developing participants' skills and confidence in discerning and countering attitudes and behaviours supportive of violence against women.

Gippsland Women's Health Service – Gippsland Regional preventing men's violence against women strategy

As highlighted in the interim evaluation report, the Gippsland Regional Preventing Men's Violence Against Women (PMVAW) strategy has effectively used collaborative engagement to establish partnerships supported by a steering committee, regular meetings and consistent contact between project leaders and service providers. The evaluators noted that Gippsland Women's Health Service (GWHS) 'acts as a magnet', drawing other organisations into partnerships that are empowering for the project's participants. The evaluators asserted that the steering committee 'creates a critical mass' for discussion and commitment about addressing gender-based violence. Regular meetings have provided a forum for conversations leading to implementation of a multi-faceted strategy, which the evaluators assert to be 'already widely challenging the cultural norms which contribute to gender-based violence across the region'.

The project has led to an online 'network of champions' and local government organisations embedding PVAW-oriented principles into business plans, enterprise bargaining agreements and internal communications plans.

The interim evaluation report included the results of a survey, distributed to partners one year into the project, designed to examine perceptions of the partnership approach. The survey showed high levels of awareness of the goals and governance structure of the project, with nine of the ten respondents agreeing that the project's goals were realistic and achievable. Respondents unanimously agreed that the partnership approach was inclusive.

The Gippsland PMVAW strategy has been successful in helping strengthen the capacity of partner organisations in their efforts to prevent violence. The interim evaluation report provides examples to support this finding. The GippSport regional sport assembly is quoted as saying it has greater confidence when dealing with issues of inclusion and gender equity.

The evaluators also identified numerous examples from local government bodies involved with the 'Paving the Way' project within PMVAW showing benefits attributed by the bodies to their participation in PMVAW. These included:

- incorporating PMVAW-oriented principles into Enterprise Bargaining Agreements (EBAs) and internal communications plans;
- changes to one council's EBA allowed staff to offer leave to a staff member leaving a violent relationship; and

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- Council human resources staff feeling empowered through PMVAW training to engage with an employee suspected of being in a violent relationship.

Partners in the Gippsland PMVAW project have facilitated a series of White Ribbon events across Gippsland, which provided an opportunity for linking interested participants in an online PMVAW leadership project. The evaluators noted many ways in which participants had taken action to raise awareness of PMVAW principles within their organisations.

Loddon Mallee – Takes a Stand

The 'Take a Stand Against Domestic Violence: It's Everyone's Business', or simply Take a Stand (TAS) is based on a model developed by Women's Health Victoria. It aims to prevent violence against women by addressing the causes and determinants of violence in workplace settings. To date, four workplaces have been engaged and over 150 participants have undertaken training. An interim evaluation, completed in May 2014 and revised in August 2014, addressed project impacts in two components:

- The impact of workplace training on employee attitudes, understanding and preparedness to act against pro-violence attitudes and practices in the workplace.
- The role and impact of conferences and forums and attitudes in workplaces and the community.

Surveys undertaken with participants post-training showed positive changes in awareness and attitudes among participants:

- The proportion of workers who indicated they were likely to speak out against pro-violence attitudes and actions increased from 53% pre-training to 68% post-training.
- The proportion who thought their co-workers valued speaking out against pro-violence attitudes, actions and behaviours increased from 33% to 41%.
- After training, participants were more likely to take into account their co-workers thoughts and norms before deciding whether to speak out against inappropriate attitudes (and increase from 25% to 40%).
- An 11 percentage point increase in participants who disagreed with a contention that domestic violence does not impact on their workplace because it is a private and personal issue.
- A large 31 percentage point increase (52% to 83%) in participants who thought they understood what causes domestic violence.
- Substantial increases across a range of measures indicating increased confidence in raising the subject of domestic violence with co-workers and superiors.
- A 33 percentage point increase (from 67% to 100%) in participants who felt they would know to seek support for themselves or a colleague experiencing domestic violence.

Warrnambool City Council – Baby Makes 3 Plus

Originally developed by Whitehorse Community Health Service and the City of Whitehorse, the Baby Makes 3 (BM3) program seeks to prevent violence by promoting respect and equality between new first time parents. The initial BM3 program was shown through a 2011 evaluation to be an effective and cost-efficient violence prevention strategy. The Warrnambool City Council implementation of BM3 includes an expanded set of aims, including increasing competencies of early years practitioners in the prevention and early detection of violence against women and their children. The expanded program, known as BM3 Plus, is also the first time the program has been implemented in a rural and regional setting.

The interim evaluation report for BM3 Plus found it was well received by many participating parents. The program's focus on developing healthy parenting relationships, rather than on family violence, was seen as a positive aspect of the program by stakeholders interviewed for the evaluation. Facilitators reported that most participant parents found BM3 Plus to be beneficial, and this was reinforced by feedback from parents.

Interest and enthusiasm for BM3 Plus and recognition of its potential was reported by the evaluators as instrumental to the success of Warrnambool City Council in being able to recruit and train a large group of facilitators for project. However, as noted in the Issues section below, this success has had some unintended consequences that have created challenges for the project.

Whitehorse Community Health Service – Baby Makes 3

Whitehorse Community Health Service, together with City of Whitehorse, developed the BM3 program, aimed at maintaining healthy relationship between a couple during their transition to first-time parenthood. The interim evaluation reported noted that BM3 was being delivered in thirteen pilot sites across the Eastern Metropolitan Area of Melbourne, with Whitehorse Community Health Service as the lead agency. BM3 uses an opt-out model and is linked to an existing New Parent Group program delivered by Maternal and Child Health Services.

Participation objectives for Baby Makes 3 were set at 2,000 parents attending the program between September 2013 and October 2015. The interim evaluation report noted good participation rates to May 2014. From the commencement of group delivery in September 2013 to the time of the report in May 2014, a total of 435 parents had attended BM3 across 34 groups. Slightly more mothers (53% of all participants) had attended than fathers (47%), attributed by the evaluators to single mothers who were encouraged to attend the program.

The interim evaluation found that retention rates in BM3 were high, with 82.3 percent of parents attending all three sessions. In the absence of Maternal Health Services data, which they were unable to access for the evaluation, the evaluators relied on anecdotal and observational data to estimate that approximately 70 percent of mothers who attended the New Parent Groups also attended BM3 with their partners. This attendance was consistent with program expectations noted for the evaluation.

Participant feedback from the Whitehorse Community Health Service's BM3 program sessions indicated participants found the program highly relevant, helpful and

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enjoyable, based on post-group feedback. Over 90 percent of both mothers and fathers agreed or strongly agreed that BM3 group was enjoyable. This was also true for those agreeing or strongly agreeing that the BM3 group was relevant to their situation, and those agreeing or strongly agreeing that BM3 was helpful.

When asked how they rated the BM3 program overall, 40 percent of mothers rated it as 'excellent', 34 percent as 'very good' and 25 percent as 'good'. Only one percent rated the program as 'poor' and none as 'fair'. The results were similar for fathers, with 35 percent rating BM3 as 'excellent', 45 percent as 'very good' and 15 percent as 'good'. No fathers rated the program as 'fair' or 'poor'.

In their implementation of BM3, Whitehorse Community Health Service has also experienced success in recruiting facilitators. This has been particularly the case with recruitment of male facilitators, despite expectations by project staff that males would be difficult to recruit. Whitehorse did experience some delays in facilitator recruitment, contributing to lower-than-expected attendance levels, but as discussed below a number of other factors also impacted on attendance.

Women's Health Goulburn North East – Hume Regional Preventing Violence against Women Strategy

The Women's Health Goulburn North East (WHGNE) Hume Regional Preventing Violence against Women and Children (PVAWC) Strategy aims to address the factors that contribute to violence against women and children and build community capacity to prevent violence. It is a regional strategy using a developmental approach that incorporates whole of community primary prevention strategies and targeted responses to individuals and groups at risk of violence. A formative evaluation of the project, reported in May 2014, drew on semi-structured interviews with four respondents and use of project documentation, as well as baseline data provided by 11 respondents using a Community Capacity Index.

The evaluators noted that the project achieved a high level of progress in moving from their first steering committee in March 2013 to launch of a regional strategy – endorsed by 18 agencies – by November 2013.

Commitment emerged as an important theme in the evaluation findings, and the formative evaluation found strong commitment by all stakeholders to the goals of violence prevention and the need for multi-organisation collaboration. Evaluation informants identified examples of benefits that had arisen from their participation in the project, noting for example, that existing programs had benefited from knowledge transfer and shared learning. At the same time, the evaluation found evidence of tension related to ownership of the project, which was seen most often by informants as the WHGNE's project. Some informants indicated they felt a lack of ownership of details of the strategy and were not able to be active partners.

The formative evaluation found that formation of a local government working group was a particularly positive outcome from the project. It also found that the project has contributed to fostering and maintaining a receptive context for change for stakeholders that was well adapted to local circumstances.

A noted strength of the WHGNE project was the establishment of a governance structure with strong potential for sustainability. This was achieved through the establishment of a Steering Committee supported by a strong commitment from all stakeholders, sound budget arrangements and the development of activities and programs that could be carried forward beyond the current funding period.

Women's Health Grampians – Act@Work

The Women's Health Grampians Rural Workers Take a Stand project, known as Act@Work, aims to achieve primary prevention of violence against women in workplace settings. The project aims to build organisational capacity to promote gender equity and non-violent norms. It also works at a community level to raise awareness and understanding. Women's Health Grampians has developed a range of resources and materials for the Act@Work project, including information packs, workshop plans and brochures. These kinds of resources can be valuable in helping to ensure sustainability of a program as well as spread its reach broadly and to new audiences.

The interim evaluation report for the Act@Work project focused on process and impact indicators to assess the project's effectiveness in the areas of:

- governance;
- partnerships;
- capacity building;
- training;
- communication; and
- evaluation.

The interim evaluation found all governance process indicators were finalised or ongoing. Capacity building aspects of the project had been progressed, with action plans being implemented at the first two workplaces covered by the project, together with the establishment of Workplace Implementation Committees.

At the time the interim evaluation report was prepared, more than 200 staff members had attended workshops across two workplaces. Participant feedback surveys showed the training had increased participants' knowledge and awareness of PVAW issues.

The project has also increased primary prevention knowledge among key project partners who are the leading providers of family response services in the region, but who had only limited knowledge of primary prevention as it is outside their core business.

The evaluation report noted the value of Action Groups established in workplaces. These Groups advocated across work teams for involvement and engagement with PVAWC principles. The Groups have completed Organisational Needs Assessments, which the Act@Work team has used to develop action plans. This allows the Act@Work team to collaborate closely with the workplace. One example of the benefits of collaboration is an International Family Violence Conference that is being sponsored by one of the workplaces participating in Act@Work (the Ballarat Courier).

A strength of the Act@Work project model, identified through progress and evaluation reports, lies in the use of workplace Action Groups. Establishing partnerships through an Action Group means that Act@Work becomes a shared responsibility in the workplace, with the Group becoming champions and advocates in the workplace.

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Women's Health West – United: Working Together to Prevent Violence in the West

The 'United: Working together to prevent violence against women in the west' project, led by Women's Health West, aims to address the social determinants of violence against women through workplace initiatives. The project involves local city councils, community health services, primary care partnerships and other community services in Western metropolitan Melbourne. It is an implementation of the Preventing Violence Together Framework and Action Plan.

The interim evaluation report notes that a Preventing Violence Together gender equity staff attitudes survey was conducted across nine partner agencies, yielding 960 responses. Survey results indicated that the partnership established through the project had led to the inclusion of PVAW and gender equity in health promotion material, as well as health and wellbeing plans. Partner organisations have included PVAW and gender equity as priorities in strategic and operational plans, and surveys indicated an increase in the likelihood of partner organisations acknowledge PVAW as a key issue for local communities, compared with results from previous surveys.

The May 2014 interim evaluation report found, through project worker reflection workshops, that the project was contributing to the development of knowledge about primary prevention of men's violence against women. It found that this was occurring through capacity building sessions, presentations at partner agencies, sharing of knowledge by project workers at agency meetings, and ongoing individual support.

In addition to the interim evaluation report, the project's Year 2 mid-year progress report provided evidence of substantial work undertaken through the project. This report highlighted the development of resources to assist partner agencies in addressing gender equity through examining staff attitudes. The establishment of a Preventing Violence Together (PVT) Implementation Committee emerged as another key achievement, as well as the establishment of several working groups.

A PVT United Resource Hub, an online database of PVAW and gender equity resources, appears to have been well used since its inception. Over a seven month period from October 2013 to the beginning of May 2014, the Hub was accessed 642 times by 422 different users.

Koori Community Safety Grants

The four projects funded through the Koori community safety grants share a common overarching objective of preventing violence in Indigenous communities, particularly violence against women and children. Each of the four individual projects then has additional aims linked to helping achieve the overarching objectives.

Progress

The interim evaluation report mapped progress in each of the activities and outputs planned for the three years of the Koori Community Safety Grants. The evaluators reviewed Year 1 annual reports together with information from project staff on additional activities delivered since the end of Year 1. The following activities were assessed by the evaluators as being on track or ahead of progress:

Individual level activities

- Sister's Day Out workshops
- Dardi Munwurro youth camps

- Dilly Bag programs
- Camps for youth, men and women
- 'Mini' camps/workshops
- Support and follow up activities
- Men's groups – support for established groups

Community level activities

- Media campaign – ads to screen in phases
- Community attitudes survey
- Harmony Days
- Community Education sessions

Organisational level activities

- Staff Cultural Safety program
- Mediation training

Some program activities were assessed by the evaluators as being delayed, or delivering fewer outputs than expected:

Individual level activities

- Dardi Munwurro men's retreats
- Men's groups – new groups formed and supported
- Healing programs

Organisational level activities

- Staff education sessions.

Several activities (men's retreat follow up sessions, community campaigns, regional camps and forums and mediation sessions) had either not commenced or were behind targets, but were contingent on completion of other activities.

The evaluators noted that camps and 'mini camps' conducted through the Aboriginal Family Harmony Project commenced ahead of schedule, in response to keen community interest in the project. Community interest also led to greater than expected community attendance at the inaugural Aboriginal Family Harmony Day in Shepparton. The evaluators cited successful community engagement and promotion as leading to 250 women attending the Mildura Sister's Day Out, when only 100 were expected to attend.

In all, over 2,600 people had attended activities conducted through the Koori Community Safety grants at the time of evaluation. Healing programs were particularly successful, in terms of total numbers, with more than 300 attendances by men and nearly 800 by women. There were over 500 people attending men's groups. However, the data examined by the evaluators did not allow them to identify the number of distinct individual participants from within the overall participant numbers.

Evaluation of the Koori Community Safety Grants projects examined the extent to which the projects had achieved best practice in design and delivery of Aboriginal family violence prevention. Some key findings of the evaluators in this regard were:

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- Sister's day Out, Dardi Munwurro and Dilly Bag had sound evidence of cultural grounding in their design. The evaluators noted this is likely due to them having existed prior to the Koori Community Safety Grants Program so having a longer development and refinement period than others.
- The Family and Community Violence Prevention project explicitly aimed to engage the community (in designing and conducting media campaigns). Each project demonstrated a selection of activities reflecting efforts to respond to local community concerns and issues.
- All projects have a range of activities to cater for different audiences – individual, community, organisational – reflecting a recommendation of the Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Framework.
- Each of the projects involved Elders, with high levels of participants in the Dardi Munwurro youth camp and the Dilly Bag program providing positive feedback about the involvement of Elders
- The best practice element of including self-empowerment and self-esteem as program outcomes was reflected in program logic models for each project; Sister's Day Out, Dardi Munwurro and the Dilly bag program showed clear evidence of this in activity documentation and program material.
- All four projects have clear mechanisms to build capacity through partnerships and interagency collaboration; it was too early to examine whether this has been achieved.
- Three of the four projects (Aboriginal Family Harmony; Strong Relationships; Strong Community; Family and Community Violence Prevention) included staff training and skills acquisition, which is an element of best practice in delivery.
- All recurring activities under each program have been designed to allow flexibility and adaptability through opportunities to improve the activity for the future.

Through the interim evaluation report, the evaluators examined whether short-term outcomes were being achieved from the four projects. Some key findings from that examination are:

- Participant feedback from the Dilly Bag program and Dardi Munwurro indicated they had increased understanding of Aboriginal culture, traditions and identity among participants. Feedback also showed each program increased understanding about traditional gender roles.
- Participant feedback from Sister's Day Out showed more than one-third of participants said the most valuable thing about the event was learning more about family violence services.
- Dilly Bag participants reported that participation would help them make strong choices in their lives.
- Dardi Munwurro participants reported improvements in communication and problem solving skills.
- Sister's Day Out participants reported increased awareness of the causes and impacts of family and community violence, and improved knowledge of legal assistance services.

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Issues

This section of the review will focus on the main issues identified through the interim evaluation reports as creating challenges for the implementation and management of each project.

The City of Casey and the City of Greater Dandenong – CHALLENGE Family Violence

The CHALLENGE family violence project experienced some delays following the loss of its project leader and the time needed to recruit a replacement. This project also experienced a loss of several 'dynamic' mentors and community leaders, mostly due to promotion, which disrupted the momentum it gained in its early stages. A third challenge faced by the Cities of Casey and Dandenong in implementing this project was a lack of male facilitators to conduct roundtable meetings. While the project leaders considered it important to have male facilitators to work with male community leaders, they found a shortage of men who were experienced and had an understanding of family violence prevention.

Working with faith leaders in the community raised some challenges for the Cities of Casey and Greater Dandenong. Project staff found that some of these leaders struggled to accept the existence of violence within their communities, understand the causes of violence and how causal links led to violent behaviour, and the relevance of a PVAW program to their communities and their roles as faith leaders. The faith leaders appeared willing and able to accept that violence occurs in the wider community, but not within their communities. Connected to this, the evaluators noted a lack of resources suitable for use in conveying PVAW messages to faith leaders. Related to this, through engagement with PVAW issues many faith and other community leaders were experiencing disclosures from women who had experienced family violence. This had led to increasing discomfort among the male leaders and raised the need for project organisers to consider providing debriefing services for the leaders they worked with.

The CHALLENGE project has highlighted a number of issues for the Cities of Casey and Greater Dandenong in challenging and seeking to reshape male attitudes that contribute to violence against women. One particular issue that has emerged is that the men engaged with the project are keen to contribute to reducing men's violence against women and developing alternative forms of masculinity that challenge gendered beliefs and behaviours – but not at the cost of their friendships. The men expressed willingness to confront behaviours in the workplace and reject inappropriate attitudes and behaviours in that setting, but this does not extend to social settings. As noted below, further work will be needed to investigate the determinants of these different attitudes and identify ways of working towards changing them.

Changing men's behaviour is made more problematic by the finding from the CHALLENGE evaluation that some men reporting feeling uncomfortable in discussing violence-related issues with women present and were not ready to embrace women as allies. This kind of separation of roles and identities can undermine PVAW efforts and contribute to perpetuation of inequities and the creation of pro-violence behaviours. PVAW work through CHALLENGE includes challenging and seeking to reform patriarchal subcultures that tend to perpetuate inequities and discriminatory attitudes against women. Community leaders reported finding it harder to challenge some patriarchal subcultures than other subcultures. 'Male only' spaces within community structures were identified as a particular challenge and an element of society that will be difficult to reform.

Gippsland Women's Health Services – Gippsland Regional preventing men's violence against women strategy

Implementation of the Gippsland Regional PMVAW strategy was hampered by difficulty engaging one part of the region, where there had been little work undertaken previously towards development of a mandatory municipal health and well-being plan and the absence of a community group to help drive the work. The collaborative work expected from partnerships can create time and resource pressures for partner organisations. Several local government representatives on the Gippsland PMVAW Steering Committee noted that having PMVAW principles embedded into policy, and finding the time to progress PMVAW actions and attend training presented them with challenges. The representatives cited resource constraints and legislative barriers, as well as having to attend other training, as contributing to these challenges. These observations from the Gippsland experience therefore highlight the importance of project leaders being mindful of the environment within which they are trying to establish and progress their projects and the wide range of external influences on both the project organisations and other stakeholders.

The Gippsland Regional PMVAW strategy has encountered difficulties in implementing its primary prevention initiatives due to disconnections between project objectives and understandings within partner organisations about ways to address men's violence.

Koori Community Safety Grants

Men's retreats under the Strong Men, Strong Communities project and youth healing programs in the Strong Relationships, Strong Communities project were rescheduled to later days to allow for more consultation with Koori communities. The Dardi Munwurro camps under the Strong Men, Strong Communities project, and the Dilly Bag program sessions under the Family and Community Violence Prevention project experienced delays and falls in participant numbers due to cultural obligations from Sorry Business.

Loddon Mallee – Takes a Stand

As noted earlier, the evaluators of TAS found from pre-training consultations that participants were clearly not undertaking the training by choice. They had very low awareness of the reason for the training and no expectations of what they might gain from it.

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The TAS interim evaluation noted that, at the time of evaluation, the project had not delivered training to the planned number of organisations. The evaluators saw this as putting completion of milestones as somewhat at risk, but noted the efforts of program staff to conduct negotiations and put in place processes to rectify this situation.

Warrnambool City Council – Baby Makes 3 Plus

Warrnambool City Council's implementation of the BM3 program has been hampered somewhat by difficulty in engaging fathers to participate in program sessions. The BM3 model, which focuses on building strong parental relationships, relies on the engagement of both parents to deliver its messages effectively and participation by fathers emerged as a critical issue for the BM3 implementation.

The BM3 program has also been affected by low rates of birth notifications in some municipalities, limiting the pool of potential participants. Attendance patterns have seen attrition across the three sessions of the BM3 program, which has further impacted on the ability of program facilitators to fully deliver the messages of the program. Representation from some groups in the program has also been uneven, with a lack of representation from teenage and Koori parents.

The target area covered by Warrnambool City Council for the BM3 program includes a number of small rural and regional areas. The logistics of organising BM3 sessions in these areas has proven difficult, with limited community facilities meaning that venues have sometimes been too small or otherwise inappropriate. It is not always possible to get enough attendees to start a program in the smaller centres and it is not reasonable or feasible to expect new parents and their babies to travel to larger centres to attend the program.

Warrnambool City Council has investigated ways of overcoming some of these issues, including looking at scheduling arrangements so that BM3 program sessions are not only conducted on midweek nights in maternal and child health centres. This could follow the approach taken by Whitehorse Community Service, who offers a Saturday BM3 group. Other options investigated by Warrnambool City Council include reviewing eligibility criteria and program content, and ensuring the messages of BM3 are delivered to new parent groups run through maternal and child health centres. At the time of progress reporting, the Council was also planning to engage a researcher to conduct a study into parental pathways from ante-natal classes through birth and new parents groups to BM3, as a way of identifying strategies for improving participation and reducing attrition.

As noted above, in implementing the BM3 program, Warrnambool City Council was very successful in recruiting a pool of enthusiastic facilitators to conduct program sessions. However, this success has had unintended outcomes as issues with attendance meant there has not always been sufficient work for facilitators, particularly in smaller rural and regional centres. This raised concerns for the evaluators about whether the quality of facilitation may be reduced due to lack of experience and loss of the facilitators' knowledge and confidence during the periods between sessions. The evaluators also noted confusion among facilitators about the aims of the project and whether it was focused on primary prevention or family violence responses. The evaluators recommended that Council examine options for using the facilitators to conduct other programs in the region as a way of securing their engagement and involvement and maintaining their facilitation skills.

The evaluators noted that facilitators of the BM3 program have, at times, struggled to find the right way of presenting the programs messages. The program ultimately aims to further PVAW efforts by helping new parents to maintain healthy and respectful relationships under the pressures that can come with raising a child. They have avoided presenting the program as linked to violence prevention out of concern that this would be off-putting to potential participants. The evaluators assessing the program recommended that facilitators ensure BM3 is presented as a parent education program, focusing on the couple relationship.

At the same time, the relationship between the primary message and aims of the BM3 program and its underlying objectives has led to some confusion. The interim evaluation of Warrnambool City Council's BM3 Plus program found a lack of clarity among professional staff involved with the program about what messages the program was delivering and what it was aiming to achieve. The evaluators found clear tensions arising from a lack of consensus about whether BM3 Plus is primarily a violence prevention program or a parenting program. Those who see it as primarily a violence prevention program expressed concerns about facilitators lacking a background in family violence work. Some facilitators who participated in interviews for the evaluation felt that facilitator training was inadequate for those not experienced with family violence.

Whitehorse Community Health Service – Baby Makes 3

While overall levels of participation and retention in its BM3 program were good, Whitehorse Community Health Service also encountered some issues with attendance levels in 2013 which were below their targets. While 15 groups were planned for 2013, involving 225 participants, only 8 groups with a total of 84 participants were delivered. This appears to be mainly due to Whitehorse basing participation targets on figures for attendance at new parents groups (from which BM3 participants are recruited on an opt-out basis) that were flawed. Whitehorse also found particular difficulties with attendance in December, as parents cited Christmas demands for not attending, and for groups that ran over the Easter and Anzac Day periods. Delays in recruiting facilitators also impacted on the number of sessions that could be run in the year and therefore on participant numbers

Women's Health Goulburn North East – Hume Regional Preventing Violence against Women Strategy

One issue noted in the evaluation of the Women's Health Goulburn North East project was that the project was often seen as the lead agency's project, rather than a joint venture. This was despite recognition that multiagency collaboration was a vital component of the project design. While successful work had been carried out to develop a regional strategy and commitment to its overall aims and objectives, the evaluators found a perceived lack of ownership among stakeholders. According to the evaluators, this appeared to have been affected by differences in language and jargon across the different organisations and the community that sometimes impeded communication. Together these issues may have contributed to the mixed evidence concerning the extent of the project's achievements in creating a receptive context for change. To help resolve these issues, the evaluators recommended all organisations involved review methods for enhancing participation, while the lead agency needed to review communication within the project and provide better support to the project coordinator.

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The breadth and complexity of the work needed to achieve the prevention of violence was noted through evaluation of the Women's Health Goulburn North East project as a major challenge for the project and PVAW work more generally. The main areas of complexity that were noted included:

- Recognition that cultural and attitudinal change is achieved across generations
- The complex relationships and sometimes keeping interests between the PVAW project and other primary prevention work being undertaken in the region
- The difficulty of identifying and achieving the requirements for successful implementation of PVAW projects
- The diversity of organisations involved in this and other PVAW projects
- The complexity of processes needed to establish the project and ensure its proper management, and
- An inherently sensitive and challenging project environment.

Women's Health Grampians – Act@Work

The uncertainty of funding in the community welfare sector was reported as an ongoing issue for Women's Health Grampians in its implementation of the Act@Work project, particularly in gaining buy-in from stakeholders. While this is an ongoing issue in a sector dependent on non-recurrent funding, it nonetheless raised particular challenges for this project and sustainability of the project was being seen as an increasingly prominent issue for program leaders and partners. In particular, project leaders identified difficulties in finding the right balance between planning for lapsing funding and the continuation of the work beyond this point, and not investing unnecessary time and effort in a project that may not continue.

The appropriate marketing of the Act@Work project was identified as an issue for Women's Health Grampians. Concerns revolved around whether the project should be considered a gender equity project, a respectful relationships project, or as a PVAW project. This had been a challenging issue and the subject of frequent discussion within the project.

Women's Health West – United: Working Together to Prevent Violence in the West.

The Preventing Violence Together Implementation Committee established through 'United' encountered particular problems engaging with upper management of key organisations to secure buy-in to the project. This does not appear to be the result of any resistance by the managers to principles or aims of the project, but rather a result of the range of demands placed on the managers and their limited time to engage.

A finding from interim evaluation of the 'United' project has been a key challenge in managing expectations between the lead agency and partner agencies in driving and implementing organisational change. This has meant recognising that organisational change is a gradual and long term process with different issues for each agency.

Learnings and contributions to evidence

The aim of this section will be to present key learnings arising from the work of the projects to date, that provide a contribution to the knowledge and evidence regarding best practice in the prevention of men's violence against women.

The City of Casey and the City of Greater Dandenong – CHALLENGE Family Violence

Evaluation of the CHALLENGE project and its model of engagement identified several gaps in the evidence, which the work of the CHALLENGE project will help to inform. These have included:

- The differential contributions of context to men's engagement with PVAW. In particular, men's expressed willingness to challenge the behaviour of other men in work locations and settings alongside their reluctance to challenge the same kinds of behaviour in social settings.
- The importance of recognising that men's violence occurs across communities and developing culturally and contextually appropriate messages and media to increase awareness of this phenomenon among community and cultural leaders.
- Exploring the ways in which raising awareness of men's violence and exploring the issues contributing to this violence can expose and encourage disclosure of inequity and discrimination against women, and how this can confront and challenge men, potentially discouraging them from being willing to play roles in leading PVAW efforts.
- How faith leaders can be encouraged to accept the existence of men's violence against women within their communities and how those working in the violence prevention sector can most effectively leverage the valuable role that faith leaders can potentially play in progressing behaviour and attitude changes that will help to reduce violence.

Gippsland Women's Health Services – Gippsland Regional preventing men's violence against women strategy

The work of the Gippsland PMVAW strategy has shown that the process of developing partnerships can, in itself, be an opportunity to build the capacity and awareness of partners in preventing violence against women. This knowledge could prove valuable in identifying ways of generating early commitment and results from

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collaborations and strategies for maximising the effectiveness of partnerships at the point of their formation and beyond.

Several local government representatives on the Gippsland Regional PMVAW Steering Committee identified they were having difficulty being able to progress PMVAW work. The representatives cited resource constraints and legislative barriers, as well as demands on them to attend other training, as contributing to these challenges. These observations from the Gippsland experience therefore highlight the importance of project leaders being mindful of the environment within which they are trying to establish and progress their projects and the wide range of external influences on both the project organisations and other stakeholders.

Loddon Mallee – Takes a Stand

The experiences of facilitators delivering TAS training highlighted the need to ensure that support is available for participants who disclose experiences of family violence during the training. The evaluators noted a training session early in the project that resulted in disclosures from several participants and required some amendment to training content.

Through focus groups, the evaluators made several important observations about attitudes and processes before TAS training was undertaken. These included:

- Very low awareness of reasons for the workplace training, indicating they had been instructed to attend rather than choosing to attend.
- High levels of confidence in the way workplaces dealt with pro-violent attitudes. However, males were much more confident in this respect than females.
- Males exhibited much higher levels of belief than females that their workplaces promoted the wellbeing of female workers.
- Female workers were very reluctant to report violence against themselves within the workplace, or to raise concerns with sexist or disrespectful behaviour such as comments or jokes.
- Clear differences between large and small organisations in how and why they responded to issues of violence against women.

Warrnambool City Council – Baby Makes 3 Plus

The evaluators of the Warrnambool City Council BM3 program noted that they saw the issues they found in establishing the program as a normal element of program development and implementation. Rather than failings that could have been foreseen and planned for, they suggested that issues such as participation, engagement and message development should be considered part of the program development and implementation process and factored into project resourcing and planning. At the same time, they noted the need for further development of BM3 to take into account parents' perspectives and ensure they were reflected in program design and implementation.

Whitehorse Community Health Service – Baby Makes 3

Evaluation of the Whitehorse Community Health Service's BM3 program noted that the program and its evaluation were contributing to the evidence base by answering several important questions. These included whether the BM3 model was

transferable to other regions, how BM3 impacts on gender equity issues, and whether BM3 is cost-effective relevant to other current forms of practice. The program facilitators also noted that the evaluation results and the learning gained from them would be relevant for other PVAW projects and activities.

In an attempt to ensure flexible participation options for parents, Whitehorse Community Health Service also implemented a Saturday BM3 group.

Women's Health Goulburn North East – Hume Regional Preventing Violence against Women Strategy

The progress reports and interim evaluation of the Women's Health Goulburn North East PVAW project noted the project had taken some positive steps in formulating communication plans, and had developed a range of promising communication strategies that could inform implementation of other projects. These included the development of a peer learning network, a quarterly newsletter and the production of project documentation that was accessible to all partner organisations.

Women's Health Grampians – Act@Work

The evaluators for the Grampians Women's Health Act@Work project identified development of an evaluation model that has contributed to the strength of the project as an unexpected outcome of the evaluation process.

The use of workplace Action Groups has also allowed for the transferability of the project across various organisations and settings.

Women's Health West – United: Working Together to Prevent Violence in the West.

The facilitators of the 'United' project have identified the need for ongoing knowledge development within their partnership regarding primary prevention of men's violence against women as existing knowledge and awareness is limited. The process evaluation for this project highlighted the importance of facilitating the collaborative element and the dynamic of the Preventing Violence Together Implementation Committee. They noted that maintaining a collaborative and collegial implementation committee should be recognised as a key working objective and action of all partners.

Koori Community Safety Grants

The interim evaluation report for the four Koori programs identified lessons learned by project staff in designing and delivering the projects. Some of these lessons were:

- The importance of embedding program activities in cultural frameworks and applying cultural considerations to program design and implementation.
- Whole-of-community activities provide a culturally safe environment to promote and engage with people in relation to more targeted activities.
- Project initiation takes time to allow engagement with local communities on program design and set up decision making and advisory structures. The evaluators noted this investment of time appeared to be paying off through attendance and participation.
- The projects allow opportunities to increase awareness of other forms of violence, particularly lateral violence.

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Further evaluation

This section will focus on issues that may need to be considered by project facilitators and evaluators in further stages of project evaluation.

As would be expected at this stage of the projects' life cycles, the interim evaluations have been process-focused. In the longer-term, evaluations at the end of the projects' life cycles are expected yield information on project outcomes and impacts. However, based on the measures reflected in the interim evaluations, the assessment of outcomes and impacts may be difficult to quantify. This is because, in some cases, progress reports and interim evaluations have identified achievements and outcomes that are vague and not supported by evidence. For instance, an achievement cited for the Gippsland PMVAW strategy was that conversations arising through the partnerships had led to implementation of a strategy that was already widely challenging cultural norms. Challenging norms can be complex and multifaceted, and the messages or alternative attitudes used in challenging the norms have to be appropriate. Further evaluation of this project could consider providing further information on the norms that are being challenged, the messages that are being used and the contexts that are being addressed.

The results of the Gippsland surveys undertaken following White Ribbon Day events organised through the PMVAW sometimes showed a reliance on what appeared to be weak evidence to support claims of substantial progress and achievement. For instance, in response to a question about what they had done in response to PMVAW issues following the events, respondents cited actions such as discussing the issues at work and planning to organise a program.

In other cases, evaluators noted programs with the lack of sufficient data to inform outcome and impact assessments. The evaluators for the Whitehorse Community Health Service' BM3 program noted that at the time of preparing the interim evaluation report, only a very small number of parents (not quantified in the evaluation report) had reached the three month milestone identified in the evaluation plan to allow valid analysis of follow-up data. The evaluators also noted a lack of data on those attending BM3 versus those not attending, including for important variables such as demographics, the number of parents experiencing first-time births and comparable attendance at new parents groups.

For further stages of the evaluations, it may be difficult in some cases for the evaluators to validly measure the outcomes and impacts of these projects in ways that allows a proper assessment of their effectiveness. Activities such as raising awareness and disseminating information can be difficult to measure unless arrangements can be put in place for follow-up to assess whether awareness and knowledge have been maintained. In the short-term the success of these activities can be measured through surveys or consultations, such as increased awareness or

willingness to effect change. Identifying indicators of longer-term impacts from these activities is more problematic and may not reasonably be possible.