

Dear Commissioners,

I would like to make a submission, having missed out on the earlier community consultation hearings process on the subject of the Royal Commission into Family Violence. This submission is far from professionally drafted in nature, but its from a layperson, who has been a victim both of a person, and even more importantly, of the SYSTEM that's meant to be the safeguard of us all. I will pre-warn though, it is a little disjointed, but I do hope you can take some points from it.

I do agree with the Honourable Marcia Neave's comment in that it is a "Very Challenging topic" to look into and present a report on. The large number of organisations, systems, types of people involved, victims, perpetrators, and other affected individuals, will make it a very big task indeed.

I would be seen to be in both a victim and a perpetrator type category on this subject, however I would strongly suggest that my apparent perpetrating, be shown for what it indeed was... most certainly non-violent Talking through the problems of the relationships involved... and nothing more than that.

I have downloaded the Issue Paper, and would like to address them as I go. However, I only became aware of the Terms of Reference mentioned in the Issue Paper when I have since been unable to get on the Internet, so I can't refer back to them, however I would hope that the Terms of Reference are NOT that narrow or excluding of issues that would be relevant for the Royal Commission to explore.

I would like to briefly outline some of my previous history, to put my submission in context of my passionate interest in the issue.

The basic events of my own history happened as follows – where I have constantly been let down by the system there to protect us all:

In [REDACTED], I was presented with an Intervention Order. This order was following (what I didn't at first know was) an extra marital on behalf of my partner, and when her husband found out, she was forced by him to get an IVO, under the Crimes Family Violence Act 1987. There was NO violence in the lead up to this, nor beyond. We kept seeing each other, technically in breach of the Order, and when that was later found, I was convicted of stalking, due to numerous IVO breaches. She later went on to re-apply after the initial Order expired, which I fought and cross examined her on myself, against her barrister, and she was determined to have lied many times in the first order, the evidence for the charges, and the current application.

The police member involved in pressing the charges on all these previous breaches, S/C [REDACTED] from [REDACTED] police, embarked on nothing but a pure vendetta in relation to myself, as determined by a number of people who witnessed his action, and LACK OF action in counter-complaints. A number of people made complaints of the alleged victims ongoing conduct, and police did NOTHING, which was reported to Ethical Standards at the time, who also did very little in that they couldn't be looking over [REDACTED]'s shoulder the whole time... and in the scheme of things at the time, with massive police misconduct etc, they were very disinterested in suburban dramas.

Intervention Orders are TOO EASY to obtain especially as a woman - without any solid evidence... I made a few applications around this time too, due to threats from the husband etc, which were refused... with the attitude from court staff at the time suggesting it was clearly because I was male.

I do understand and agree that there are many many legitimate instances where Orders are required, and this should be the case, however, there is MUCH abuse of this system, and this should be addressed. I Have no ideas on how this can be determined, other than deeper investigation by a magistrate maybe on the need for Interim Orders etc, but the system is filled with people who have rorted the system for their own ends.

In approx [REDACTED], I attended some consultations I think that were run by the Law Reform Commission, in relation to reform of the Crimes Family Violence Act and associated procedures related to IVO's. This was a waste of time, as I was very quickly determined to be an "Offender" by the largely female attendance, and including staff, and my thoughts very quickly ignored.

One of the outcomes of the changes made, were to not allow self-representation in IVO hearings. This I feel while warranted in some cases where there is harassment between parties - is prejudicial to those able to self-represent, and not of a harassing nature. This is something that could have been administered by the Magistrate on a case by case basis surely.

Subsequently, a couple of relationships since have found out I have had previous Orders against me, and after break ups between us where I have simply asked for reasons or explanations for certain actions - surprise, I have an IVO land on my doorstep.

Due to not affording representation, and overstretched legal aid people etc, it has been easier and quicker, to just wear an IVO and walk out of the court, leaving a bad relationship behind, which was the case anyway, having already walked away... this however does taint my name, and if I were able to argue my own presentment, or afford appropriate and skilled representation, then an Order may well have NOT been awarded.... Which was the case in the previously mentioned Order from [REDACTED] that was re-applied for after expiry.

Once again, it's a case of not being able to pay for justice to be served.

I have had about 5 Orders against me in my time, as they find out about these things and know I'm a "bunny" for getting another one awarded a lot more easily. The most recent one was granted on [REDACTED], which yet again, due to affordability, as well as just wanting the whole saga behind me, I just consented to without admissions. Little did I know that she has made police statements re charges about same too.

This time, it came about, from a relationship of 2-3 months with a woman, who was constantly hanging me on a yoyo string, with regard to her depth invested in the relationship, which was very much destabilising to me, both mentally & emotionally

abusive of sorts, as well as a couple of physical assaults that were subsequently reported to police when it all blew up, and they literally said they weren't interested in tit for tat allegations.

The woman concerned, while we had discussed what was clearly starting to be a building relationship, and both agreed that it was most definitely something we were pursuing as such – she was constantly getting messages of a romantic nature from Dating sites, on Facebook and from SMS's direct. As well as from contacts made from irregular social nights out relating to Singles groups and the like.

This situation has once again caused great lack of confidence, self-questioning and doubt, and from that destabilising my confidence in the supposed relationship, and lead to asking her for her thoughts on the issues, why the need for the messages from so many suitors – and I do mean about 10 at any one time – what legitimacy we had, what reason they had for messaging her and continuing to do so, had she told them she was involved, and other questions raised.

At NO TIME, was there any violence or a mental, physical or emotional nature directed at her, from me, in regard to these matters. While I was asking of these things, which did become a regular thing due to the nature of the messages and my hurt manifesting in asking the questions, she did get annoyed at being asked, and did start yelling at me at times about them.

It even became my fault that she got a detail wrong about something between us – using the reason “I get 20 new messages from new guys a week, how do you expect me to remember that.....”

She also said a few times... “Well they're not here, you are, what does that tell you” while still refusing to have them stop sending the messages. Apparently this was meant to placate me and make me more comfortable that it was still going on.

Many times, as I mentioned, I asked her directly, questions like:

Are we still building this relationship.. yes honey, we're fine.

Do these other guys mean anything, am I sharing you? No honey, stop asking me these questions.

All the while, I'm seeing messages appearing on her phone, like Valentines day messages... good morning messages of a romantic nature every morning... when I go see her in the morning, into her room, she puts her phone down, or is entrenched in Facebook.

During early [REDACTED] – I was even at one point coerced into sex.... We started getting intimate, and I asked “Does this mean something to you like what it means to me bub” where I sort of seriously stopped and asked – and I was told “F██k me or go home.” Now, I had ridden a bike that day, and to ride a bike an hour at 1am, due to there being no trains, I didn't really have a lot of choice... although it wasn't an arm twist, and I was hoping it meant what it should, I did feel obligated to complete the act. Now, by my reading of the letter of the law, this is Rape... to be coerced into having to penetrate her... while it wasn't really something I fought much against, although I did want confirmation of real romantic feeling, I didn't feel a lot of choice in not having sex with her either.

All throughout though, there was also the emotional abuse – spending the night intimately with my girl, and she gets up and goes to her own bed (where her daughters had bedded down) and is immediately in romantic conversations and SMS with other guys – of which I have screen pictures of some of it.

I kept fighting for some stability in this relationship, which subsequently ended at the end of [REDACTED], where on her doorstep, she said – I don't need you anymore. That was fine by me by this point, I was sick of trying, I walked away.

There has been NO family violence in these matters at all. The only thing I have ever tried, is to discuss the issues, and never has there been any aggression whatsoever directed towards her, including when she slapped my numerous times, and including very forcefully with a shoe!!!

The Police Farce refused to investigate the assault report, as it was a guy getting belted by a girl... they literally said, mate, its tit for tat stuff, she slapped ya, get over it. Yet, if it were me slapping her, I'd have the full weight of the law on me... which I do anyway, for simply TALKING to her and trying to get to the truth of her numerous infidelities that I'm more than happy to be away from now!!!

During these discussions, I would even apologise in a blanket fashion for “Anything you might say I've done wrong” that I have no blame for - just to keep the peace and start the rebuild process or get past the barrier of whatever the issue was.

So at this point, then the next thing I see, is a complaint under Family Violence, for an IVO. I had also already made an application date with the court before this occurred, due to a couple of threats, and the mental and emotional anguish, as well as a lot of Facebook besmirching by the woman concerned.

As mentioned, the only thing I had ever thrown at her, were questions, and when she said walk away, I did. It is this sort of abuse of the system relating to Intervention Orders, and Family Violence, on the whole, that needs to be addressed.

I have since been in contact with some of this woman's previous relationships, and she threatened them with the same thing... that if they asked her to explain herself, she would become vindictive and make them regret it, as she has clearly done with myself.

A lot of the following part of my submission will be related to the IVO system, as that is where most of my exposure has been to it, and also a little related to S.21 of the Crimes Act – Stalking.

In regard to Point 4 of the Issue Paper, where it mentions that submissions should “highlight solutions to these gaps and problems” and that “You may want to suggest short term and longer term solutions.”

While I’m not involved in the depth of the support side of the issue, only seeing it from a layperson perspective, I can only make observations of what I’ve been through, sadly and destructively numerous times, and I will do that in this submission, however I don’t think this would be my exhaustive number of suggestions either. The solutions to the problem, won’t be a short term fix, I think we all realise this, however, short term, one thing is there needs to be responsible enforcement of reporting family violence matters and also very strong enforcement where these reports prove to be falsely made.

Point 10 of Issue Paper -

With relation to the fostering of a violence-free society. I personally abhor violence of any sort, which is why being accused in an IVO application of perpetrating it has ruined my outlook on life and affected so many other parts of my life. Yes I have had counselling about this, but it’s a smear hard to erase – especially when it comes up time and again. It’s so easy for someone to make an accusation and get an Order – when they’re handed out like lolly papers (a police member’s own words) – yet the ramifications of them can be life lasting!! Two careers I was very passionate about have been destroyed, and work prospects massively reduced, as well as massive social ramifications with people who draw conclusions on people based on the Stigma of Family Violence. The psychological damage done I can’t even fathom to describe. Just when things were running rightly from the first lot, along comes another, so back to square one. This is because the Orders are so EASY to obtain, and the damage they do, can’t be foreseen, depending on information that is passed on to others, whether it’s factual or not.

### Question One

#### ***Are there other goals the Royal Commission should consider?***

I feel that greater emphasis and recognition should be given to the FACT that men are victims of Family Violence too. And, men are also victims of women falsely getting IVO’s and claiming Family Violence so readily and easily (and spitefully & vindictively) without evidence, because they know the Police will come down hard on the alleged perpetrator.

IVO’s DO do damage, sometimes substantially, to careers and lives. Magistrates seem to dictate that once an Order expires, it’s all forgotten about, but this is very much not the case. The granting of an IVO carries with it, the Stigma, that you’re somewhat agreeing to having been a perpetrator, as well as significant consequences in some cases – as with my own where I have lost TWO long term careers because of Orders being taken against me.

Magistrates emphasise that Orders are simply a Civil process and that they don’t do any harm, but as with other issues, the judiciary are seen to be out of touch with reality, and even an IVO carries with it some degree of consequence in some areas.

A Magistrate supposedly must be convinced that the conduct will continue to occur, for him or her to make an IVO, yet this is a principle that is never even entertained in a hearing. It's a principle I have felt, that I have no desire for any conduct with the people who have taken the steps against me, I want nothing to do with these people, and point this out very clearly, but its not something the courts are willing to explore. Instead, I get my name tarnished by an Order being made "just in case."

Another massive concern I have, and have had with each occasion is that if someone is vindictive enough, or playing mind games enough etc, to take out an IVO, then its not above them, to make allegations of breaches when there have been no such thing – which again, the police very vigorously pursue. Or in one of my cases, myself & the Ex got back together, and the IVO was forgotten about, until it fell apart again, and I was convicted for many many breaches – i.e. each of the dates we were together when resuming the relationship.

In times past, because of the harassment by police and the like, I became somewhat fearful of even leaving the house, in case I was seen somewhere that I could be seen as being close to someone or somewhere I shouldn't have been. An IVO shouldn't make someone feel like this.

I feel it important to educate or drive it home to Police and the Courts, that IVO's are dangerous things in the hands of some, and they should be more willing to detect and disallow, as well as prosecute where relevant, false reporting and false statements made in relation to IVO applications, which are sworn to be free from Perjury. This is NEVER followed up when its proven not to be the case. Are the courts serious with the sanctity of demanding honest evidence??

More exploration should be made in relation to the legitimacy of the grounds for the application being made. This falls back to the time a court gives to each complaint, once again related to the excessive number being applied for, and the lack of hearing days applied to the Family Violence hearings.

What needs to be pressed however is, where an application is found to be less than truthful, embellished, or matters presented out of context, those making the application MUST be held accountable, and dealt with the discourage others from a similar course of action – just the way the deterrent principle works in criminal sentencing.

Sgt [REDACTED] of [REDACTED] Police recently told me – If we had to evaluate and prosecute every IVO complaint, for whether it was true throughout or not, that's all we'd ever be doing, there are so many being applied for now. And your statistics in the Issue Paper support this fact.

Another goal to consider would be for the Courts to not be scared to facilitate or order of participants, where appropriate, instead of making IVOs, divert them to counselling or mediation. We have the DSCV and numerous other services, that can intervene, so why haven't they been utilised?? IVOs bring resentment, and in the wrong hands, this will bring revenge and aggression I'm sure.

CONTEXT – is an important principle in the application, and enforcement, of matters relating to Family Violence and Intervention Orders, needs to be taken into

consideration first & foremost. There is a great deal of difference, between committing physical violence, mental abuse etc, and actually trying to have a rational discussion with someone about issues of the relationship – completely without any aggression whatsoever, which was entirely the course of action in my case - not even under duress at times. How can this be determined to be worthy of Police time? Yes, because I'm male, they need to act. Yet I report to them of being assaulted (with a weapon) by their complainant, and they refuse to act.

On the IVO form, there is a tick box option for the applicant to ask for the Male, to be ordered to undertake Male Behavioural Counselling – or words to that effect – yet conversely, there is no such stipulation for females at all.

Upon answering an IVO complaint, you have 3 options – Contest (at great expense since Law Reform took away the right to defend ones self), Consent, and Consent without Admissions. I would suggest that Consent without Admissions – is almost seen to be Consent, while not having to admit that I actually did whatever was alleged, like a “cop out” of what was done. There needs to be a “Consent by I don't care” or something, where someone has no interest whatsoever in any contact with the other person, nor what they have alleged.

S21a – Stalking – goes hand in hand really with the Family Violence principles. They are largely all about the same acts, same problems occurring, and when breaches occur you are largely charged with both offences. However, it must be suggested, and I know this first hand, that the laws related to that, are FAR too broadly reaching. Almost anyone in the community could be convicted of it, with the wording of the actual section of law, being so broad that it could be twisted to fit anyone.

**THIS** is something that needs to be changed – that while the elements are there, the magistrate must also see it in the **CONTEXT** of the actions taken.

Point 12 of the Issue Paper – mentions as does the stalking subsection, as do IVO forms, of threatening or coercive behaviour. Once again, I had this behaviour used against me, in an emotionally abusive manner, and when later brought to the courts attention, it was dismissed by the registrar as not relevant. These people are the front line for victims, and need to be able to recognise what does & doesn't fit the criteria, and not ostracise a male for something that isn't traditionally something they complain of.

No I hadn't been violent, I approached these people with questions – rational questions that I felt I had the right to ask. Yes I sought counselling, privately, of my own volition, who basically told me, that while the conduct was obviously what I got charged for, they completely understood my standpoint too. What changes came in me – Well I wasn't free to go where I wanted to, be who I wanted to, totally changed my respect for people, I felt I had to have evidence backing up everywhere I went and everything I did, in case someone made a random complaint – and all this from someone vindictively making allegations, with a pinch of fact, and 95% fiction.... So where the elements of the offence are there, and therefore it **HAS TO BE** pleaded to, the context of the offence is most certainly **NOT** there. **THIS** is something that needs to be changed – that while the elements are there, the magistrate must also see it in the **CONTEXT** of the actions taken.

Points 16 & 17 of the Issue Paper – My reading of it has it relating to the definition of Family Violence, and taking into account the range of behaviours that would fall under the heading of being seen as Family Violence. I would submit that there MUST be a line drawn between rational talking, and actual harassment (and worse) type behaviours that actually do represent Family Violence, and it be seen in the context of how it manifested, and the intent thereof, which more often than not, is very obvious. If we're not even allowed to rationally speak to the other party about relationship problems without them turning around and getting Orders and Police Charges, then the courts are going to be nothing short of over-run with matters that shouldn't see the light of day.

Point 19 of the Issue Paper – 14% of men experienced emotional abuse – manipulative & coercive behaviours. As do 46% of males suffer anxiety as a result of said abuse.

Highlighted are some of the things I've faced – about half of the total examples given. 'Emotional abuse' means one or more of the following, when repeated with the intent to prevent or control behaviour and cause emotional harm or fear: stopped or tried to stop them from contacting family, friends or community; stopped or tried to stop them from using the telephone, Internet or family car; monitored their whereabouts (e.g. constant phone calls); controlled or tried to control where they went or who they saw; stopped or tried to stop them knowing about or having access to household money; stopped or tried to stop them from working or earning money; stopped or tried to stop them from studying; deprived them of basic needs such as food, shelter, sleep or assistive aids; damaged, destroyed or stole any of their property; constantly insulted them to make them feel ashamed, belittled or humiliated; lied to their child/ren with the intent of turning them against the other family member; lied to other family members or friends with the intent of turning them against them; threatened to take their child/ren away from them; threatened to harm their child/ren; threatened to harm other family members or friends; threatened to harm any of their pets; harmed any of their pets; threatened or tried to commit suicide.

6 'Anxiety' was defined to include distress or uneasiness of mind resulting from apprehension of danger or misfortune. The anxiety or worry may be accompanied by restlessness or feeling 'on edge', difficulty concentrating or mind going blank, irritability, muscle tension or sleep disturbance; 'fear' includes fear of reprisals or the recurrence of a similar incident by either the person being violent or another person.

My [REDACTED] Justice Centre experience of Early [REDACTED].

I went to apply for an intervention order, and upon presenting the application form with all sorts of detailed harassment and emotional & mental abuse, the girl was very dismissive of the abuse, leaving only 2 physical assaults to carry the application through.

I reported most of the numerous instances of emotional & mental abuse, and a couple of physical assaults to the court, in my IVO application - which was very quickly discounted as not at all being relevant by the lady who interviewed me at the court, who said that the mental & emotional abuse she wasn't interested in, as it didn't fit with what she determined it to be – as it wasn't like we were living together or anything I think was one of the terms she used. So those statistics, where percentages of males suffering from this are presented, are they court figures after a female registrar has dissuaded & embarrassed a male from proceeding, as she did with myself ??



Another great argument the registrar lady made was – “You can't complain about and stop someone talking about you to someone else... like I can't complain if you were to talk to someone about me, be it on Facebook, on a phone, or wherever else.” Then why is it a stipulation on Orders that it not happen.

Men also have the problem of Pride and related feelings – not to need to seek help in arguments with women. Let alone those that don't want to go down a legal route, and sort it out between 2 supposedly rational adults. And upon making the complaint, either to Police or the Courts, to have it criticised so easily and fully, does NOT encourage reporting of these matters when its males making the complaints.

On the hearing day, I was finally called in to the court by the PA system, to agree to the Order by Consent without admissions – as did the other party to the Order against her. The hearing had obviously been going for some minutes, as the Magistrate was basically wrapping up the matter, and asked if I indeed did Consent. Upon him concluding, he read me the clauses of the Order, and then told us to leave and get the paperwork outside. At NO TIME, did he direct any directions at her, and I was seemingly the only defendant in the room at the time. This is another indication of the attitude of the judiciary, that Males are seen as the perpetrators, ALL of the time.

Point 20 of the Issue Paper – Referring to application numbers, and the 83% increase in applications since 2009-2010.

I would submit that this is in part, because as with anything in society, the ‘*word gets around*’ that these things are easy to obtain, for whatever reason, be it a custody matter, a disgruntled ex partner, or whatever, and the wheels get set in motion. But as stats go to show, a lot of the applicants are the women, and every day its being made more attractive for them to go down this road.

Case in point being an article in The Age Newspaper on 25 May 2015 – An App is now available for WOMEN to make Intervention Order applications online, from their own couch if they want to – AGAIN, it does NOT mention Men being victims ONE single time in that entire article !!! This is clearly the agenda shown by the media, as has been the case for a long time. The article also quotes some 50,208 Orders being applied for in last year – is this not indicative of the joke that they have become.

Statistics presented in your Issue Paper though state 35135 were finalised... so for 15073 applications made – were they by males, and dissuaded by court staff into being withdrawn??

*(I do apologise for the slightly skewed scan of the article, however rotate it as you wish. I'm sure you will be aware of the article by now though)*



A court building is a very official feeling place, and while it can be scary, it also imparts in you, that you are undertaking an official action, and you better be doing it honestly and correctly, whereas, with this new App, this wont be felt, doing it from your couch. The people making the False applications don't need ANY more encouragement or ease to make a males life hell... but they are instead being spoon fed the ability to do so.

A fairly simplistic example I know, but the theory is there to be looked at.

The current climate in regard to Family Violence, Stalking, and anything attributable to either type of behaviour, is very much seen as abhorrent in the current climate, due to a number of high profile events of recent times, and any actions taken against this sort of thing, even as preliminarily in process as an IVO application, the defendant is seen to be the worst of the worst – even before any sort of judgement is officially made.

The current climate is so obviously slanted towards the female, as I have mentioned a number of times now (sorry), and police are so very rapid and come down on it so very strongly, yet when it's a male making the report, they want nothing to do with it. I have reported my Ex assaulting me, and they call it tit for tat, yet she reports I came to talk to her, and I'm being investigated!!

I report unrelated an assault, at a nightclub, where they are handed the offender, taking his name & details, and I write a statement, they let the person leave the country 2 months later, without being charged.

Point 21 of the Issue Paper – I was disheartened to see the results of those studies – especially the top one, as there is NO excusing domestic violence, and being angry is not an excuse at all.

I can draw the correlation with the 6% where infidelity bring violence against women, however, in my case, talking and discussing my concerns and suspicions would not surely be deemed Family Violence either. Its only when the questions hit home, that she pulled away and sought help to shut me up.

Point 24 of the Issue Paper – In regard to the Law Reform Commissions recommendations to improve legal remedies – Yes for some it was a good outcome,

but for those unable to pay for justice, pay for a legal rep, it was a Joke, as we aren't allowed to question the applicant, at all... to show a court the lies and the like. It completely removed my right to defend myself in a couple of cases.

#### Question Two

***The Royal Commission wants to hear about the extent to which recent reforms and developments have improved responses to family violence, and where they need to be expanded or altered.***

The Police Farce are very speedy to come down hard on males when allegations are made, because they don't want to be blamed for inaction, if another Luke Batty incident were to come about. This has been spoken by many a police member.

#### Question Three

***Which of the reforms to the family violence system introduced in the last ten years do you consider most effective? Why? How could they be improved?***

Not sure about any being the most effective, but being unable to defend myself is the WORST, by far, because a lawyer costs a lot of money, and he/she doesn't have all the answers immediately to hand, let alone knowledge to follow on from a curly answer given.

A Magistrate CAN enforce conduct in his/her court room, where parties might need to be questioned, so that conduct doesn't become abusive.

Point 27 of the Issue Paper – Media are crucial to fostering positive attitudes, and addressing misconceptions – I simply refer you back to the previously inserted article up at Point 20, to see just how the media sees the issue and reports it, and indeed causes those misconceptions to be perpetuated, and in fact encouraging them to grow.

#### Question Four

***If you or your organisation have been involved in programs, campaigns or initiatives about family violence for the general community, tell us what these involved and how they have been evaluated.***

I know its not really the context of the question as such, however yes I did attend counselling in the past about the similar events, and the more recent too, and counselling vindicated that my actions were indeed fair & reasonable, in doing nothing more than attempting to discuss problems.

#### Question Six

***What circumstances, conditions, situations or events, within relationships, families, institutions and whole communities, are associated with the occurrence or persistence of family violence?***

Infidelity & trust issues, emotional & psychological abuse, playing what are commonly referred to as head games, coercion, and much more.

#### Question Seven

***What circumstances and conditions are associated with the reduced occurrence of family violence?***

Education, Counselling, Make prosecution occur for false presentments and allegations.

Point 30 of the Issue Paper – I have been on both sides of the equation – the perpetrator, and the victim. I've been assaulted numerous times since I was about 10, up til this year, where I'm now [REDACTED]. What have the police done every single time – NOTHING. In relation to Family Violence, I've suffered mainly psychological and emotional abuse, although some physical matters too, and when I've pursued these with both the Police & Courts directly, the response I've had has been to suck it up, its tit for tat rubbish, and a few other choice terms. Yet when a female applies against me, the Police Farce are on my doorstep the next minute.

Point 32 of the Issue Paper – Areas I would like to consider. Not sure why I would like to consider them, but to break it up a bit:

Police responses – they have failed to act on the minor context of her complaints, where its been so innocent and polite... and they have gone about acting overbearingly, mainly because the other party knows a police member.

Court responses – have been outwardly obvious disdain from staff at [REDACTED] Previously unhelpful too, including filing a County Court appeal under the wrong Act so it would be thrown out immediately. Unknown persons cancelling an appointment in [REDACTED] for an Order, apparently on my behalf.

#### Question Eight

***Tell us about any gaps or deficiencies in current responses to family violence, including legal responses. Tell us about what improvements you would make to overcome these gaps and deficiencies, or otherwise improve current responses.***

Duty lawyers are overworked, often having in excess of 20 people to see on the typical Family Violence hearing day – of which there are too few at the courts, and too few courts available to make for an honest hearing, given the stats presented – and the duty lawyers always push for Orders by Consent (irrespective of it being without admissions), so as their daily workload reduces.

Court time being hard to get, makes for long adjournment periods, where you are encouraged instead to just cop an Order, instead of 6 months of adjournments and then a 12 month thereafter too.

Police are not brave enough to deny or fail to act for females, like they do tell to males.

Look into the specific context of acts tat are complained of, to ascertain the level (or not) of Family Violence – if its actually speaking naturally, surely its not adequately fitting the grounds for being Family Violence.

#### Question Nine

***Does insufficient integration and co-ordination between the various bodies who come into contact with people affected by family violence hinder the assessment of risk, or the effectiveness of (early intervention, crisis and ongoing) support provided, to people affected by family violence? If so, please provide examples.***

Police & Courts should involve (and judicially order) mediation more, where its appropriate, and where its seen to be a relatively pedantic matter. Obviously there are some cases where its not at all possible, but most cases could be more easily resolved in mediation.

#### Question Ten

***What practical changes might improve integration and co-ordination? What barriers to integration and co-ordination exist?***

Barriers – Police & Courts are too scared to NOT act, and to push for non-court avenues or resolutions to matters.

Point 33 of the Issue Paper – Yes family violence can affect peoples lives substantially, as can harassment via falsely alleged IVOs. Accessing & Keeping employment – where I draw your attention back to Question 1 response, where I lost 2 career positions from getting an IVO handed to me.

Question Eleven

***What are some of the most promising and successful ways of supporting the ongoing safety and wellbeing of people affected by violence? Are there gaps or deficiencies in our approach to supporting ongoing safety and wellbeing? How could measures to reduce the impact of family violence be improved?***

If false reports were reduced, by whatever means, then more resources would be available for the legitimately needed cases where its needed.

Question Twelve

***If you, your partner or a relative have participated in a behaviour change program, tell us about the program and whether you found it effective. What aspects of the program worked best? Do you have criticisms of the program and ideas about how it should be improved?***

No I haven't participated in any program per se, I self managed my changes, in which I regressed due to no confidence in the law and those around me, and feeling a need to constantly have an alibi for everyday living and activities, unrelated to any apparent complaints, but just in case anyone decided to make an allegation. I needed to have my tail covered at all times was the overwhelming feeling.

Question Thirteen

***If you, your partner or a relative have been violent and changed their behaviour, tell us about what motivated that change. Was a particular relationship, program, process or experience (or combination of these) a key part of the change? What did you learn about what caused the violent behaviour?***

Violent behaviour in so far as rationally asking questions and discussing problems and concerns re infidelity etc?? No I haven't changed that at all, because I feel its MY RIGHT to discuss my concerns. But the police and courts prosecute this.

Question Fourteen

***To what extent do current processes encourage and support people to be accountable and change their behaviour? To what extent do they fail to do so? How do we ensure that behaviour change is lasting and sustainable?***

Behavioural change is voluntary – it can be encouraged, and educated, but it can't be ensured. Only the person committing the Family Violence or whatever other problem can be responsible for changing their behaviours.

If however, the behaviour is fair & just, and reasonable, then why change it ??

With actual commission of Family Violence though, in whatever form, then the authorities need to investigate the context and act accordingly, from a kick in pants, to a more prosecution type course of action if it warrants it – male or female.

Courts also need to be more accountable for the actions they take, be it handing out IVOs by the dozens, or hearing obvious Perjury and not clamping down on it, and indeed penalising it.

#### Question Seventeen

***Are there specific cultural, social, economic, geographical or other factors in particular groups and communities in Victoria which tend to make family violence more likely to occur, or to exacerbate its effects? If so, what are they?***

Alcohol, drugs, socio-economic pressures, and much more.

#### Question Twenty-one

***The Royal Commission will be considering both short term and longer term responses to family violence. Tell us about the changes which you think could produce the greatest impact in the short and longer term.***

Less fraudulent IVO applications - don't make it so easy for them to be made.

Family Violence is often very much embellished and overplayed, be it for sympathy, custody issues, malice, or whatever else. This needs to be clamped down upon.

One of the questions asked in the community consultations afternoon, was – when Family Violence occurs, how do the systems respond. Well the simple answer to that, in summary is, very much slanted towards the females version of events.

As I said at the beginning, there ARE legitimate people who need the orders and the system, most certainly, but there are also those that constantly maliciously apply, which is what eh most recent one said she had done with one previously a couple of years before.

I do (apologise once again, and) thank you for sifting through my rather long winded and a little jumbled submission, and I hope that its provided you with some insight into what its like for the average layperson out there being played and destroyed by the system where some use these actions as a shield, however, sadly, some use them as a sword, with the sole intent of causing damage to someone.

I would further like to make known an expression of interest, to continue to be involved in the process, as I am very passionate about the mistreatment I have received, which has had nothing short of disastrous effects on my life, and I wish to be involved even in a small part, in hopefully making this system better for all.

