

Gippsland Integrated Family Violence Service Reform Steering Committee

Terms of Reference 2018

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Definitions

Auspice organisation – The organisation responsible for supervision of the Regional Integrated Coordinator

Funded agencies and Non-funded agencies -Funded agencies are those which are funded by Department of Health and Human Services to provide specialist family violence services to women, children and men. Non funded agencies may provide a response to family violence but are not funded by DHHS to provide a specialist response.

Integration -The process of family violence service system reform (underway since 2006) that brings together police, courts and support services for women, children and men to build a comprehensive, collaborative response to family violence.

Members – Those organisations or individuals who have completed a Membership Form and have been endorsed by the Committee as full members.

Associate Members/Non-voting members – Those who represent government departments or statutory bodies and can therefore not participate in the voting process but can attend and participate in meetings and receive minutes.

Acknowledgement of the Traditional Custodians

We wish to pay respect to the traditional custodians, the Gunai Kurnai people, their Elders past and present, all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living in Gippsland and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of Australia. We also acknowledge other traditional owners who live in parts of Gippsland, including the Monero and Bidhawal people, and recognise their enduring relationship with country.

As a committee, we look forward to working in solidarity with the Gippsland Indigenous Family Violence Regional Action Group and affirm our commitment to building a future that is respectful of, values and embraces the heritage and culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and provides justice and equality for all.

State-wide Context

Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence

Australia's first Royal Commission into Family Violence, led by Justice Marcia Neave, sat for 13 months, heard from 220 victims, and received nearly 1000 submissions. The Commission provided its final report and recommendations to parliament on 29 March 2016. The Andrews Government stated it will implement all recommendations.

The Commission's eight volume, 1900-page report covers a broad range of topics including risk assessment, information sharing, service system pathways, police, courts, offences and sentencing, housing, financial security, recovery, the experience of children and young people and people from diverse communities, system governance and oversight, industry planning, primary prevention, and the role of the health system, faith communities and workplaces can play in addressing family violence. The Commission's 227 recommendations are directed at improving the foundations of the current system, seizing opportunities to transform the way family violence is responded to, and building the structures that will guide and oversee a long-term reform program that deals with all aspects of family violence.

As the pre-eminent body for the integrated family violence service system in Gippsland, the Gippsland Integrated Family Violence Service Reform Steering Committee (the Steering Committee, hereafter) works to implement these reforms regionally and to influence the reform agenda according to our local experience.

Family Safety Victoria

From the above recommendations, was the creation of Family Safety Victoria, the state's first agency dedicated solely to delivering family violence reform. Family Safety Victoria (FSV) was established in July 2017 to drive key elements of Victoria's family violence strategy and coordinate support for families to help them care for children and young people. FSV will lead policy development and deliver the Victorian Government's response to family violence. FSV have released the first of three rolling action plans (Family Violence Rolling Action Plan 2017-2020) that outlines priority areas of work across the system for the next three years. The Steering Committee plays a role in helping to implement this work and will align the regional strategy to ensure consistency with the state-wide agenda, as lead by FSV.

State-wide Family Violence Steering Committee

The Family Violence Steering Committee (the State-wide Committee) was established in May 2016 to help reform the family violence system. Members include representatives of family violence peak bodies, including Domestic Violence Victoria and No to Violence, as well as key state-wide services. The State-wide Committee will work with the Government on an agenda for family violence reform. The State-wide Committee will replace the Violence against Women and Children Forum and is co-chaired by Domestic Violence Victoria CEO Fiona McCormack and Department of Premier and Cabinet. The State-wide Committee ensures that community organisations, who are the repositories of expertise on family violence policy and practice continue to participate in advocacy and policy development. The State-wide Committee gives organisations and the Steering Committee opportunities to bring gaps and weaknesses in service provision and possible solutions to the attention to government. The Steering committee seeks to feed this information, as it relates to the Gippsland region, to the State-wide Committee for advocacy and reform purposes.

Victim Survivors' Advisory Group

The Victim Survivors' Advisory Council was established in 2016 to provide a consistent mechanism for ongoing engagement and play an integral part in the design of new services and systems. The 2015 Australian of the Year and family violence campaigner, Rosie Batty, will chair the Council. The Victim Survivors' Advisory Council includes representatives from a variety of age groups, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds who share the traumatic lived experience of family violence. The Steering Committee looks to this group to represent the voice of victim survivors and inform our work on the ground. By listening and including the views of the advisory group we will ensure all of our work is centred around improving outcomes and reducing additional trauma for victim survivors and their families.

Gippsland Region

The Gippsland region stretches along the east coast of the state and covers 41,538 square kilometres, representing over 18% of the landmass of Victoria. It has a population of 240,114, representing 5% of the Victorian population. The region consists of six local government areas; the Shires of Bass Coast, Baw Baw, Wellington, South Gippsland and East Gippsland and the City of Latrobe. The Gippsland region is noted for its diversity, which includes industrial, remote, residential, coastal and alpine communities. There is also a prison and RAAF base in the region.

Gippsland local government areas (LGAs) continue to record some of the highest numbers of family violence incidences across the state, with the Latrobe Valley consistently ranking first of 79 LGAs across the state for rate of incidences per 100,000 of population since 2011. Gippsland is recognised as a key area for reform and response work taking place, as is demonstrated by the existence of a number of strategic committees, working on elements of welfare and wellbeing for women, men and families. These include:

- Prevention of Men's Violence Against Women Steering Committee
- Gippsland Homelessness Network
- Child and Youth Area Partnership
- Primary Care Partnerships
- Indigenous Family Violence Regional Action Groups

As part of the State Government's shift towards an integrated community care model, Gippsland has been chosen as a launch site for all three reform branches of the model. These initiatives include:

- First tranche Support and Safety Hub under Victoria's family violence reforms
- Homelessness launch site under the Victorian Homelessness 2020 Strategy
- Development of the Latrobe Youth Hub under the Roadmap to Reform Strategy

The Steering Committee works closely with these partnerships and projects to ensure a cohesive and consistent approach to family violence integration across Gippsland, and ongoing collaboration with broader sectors.

Historical Context of the Committee

The Steering Committee is the cross-sectoral body acting on behalf of the Gippsland region key stakeholders and funded service providers on integrated family violence system responses for women, children and men. In 2006, a need for greater integration between specialist family violence services, family and community services and police and justice services was recognised. In response,

Department Health and Human Services funded services began working in partnership under the Guiding Integrated Family Violence Service Reform (2006-2009). The establishment of regional integrated family violence committees was a key element of the approach and the Steering Committee was established in 2007. The Steering Committee held its inaugural meeting in March 2007. It has continued to meet bi-monthly since then.

The Steering Committee operates in accordance to the Regional Family Violence Integration Governance Model, developed by the Department of Health and Human Services in consultation with the family violence sector in 2012 and released in 2013.

Many other policies inform the work of the Steering Committee, an exhaustive list is not provided. Key strategies informing the work of the committee include:

- Guiding integrated family violence reform 2006-2009
- The national plan to reduce violence against women and their children 2010-2022
- Ending family violence: Victoria's plan for change and Family violence rolling action plan 2017-2020
- Free from violence – Victoria's Prevention Strategy
- Strong Culture, Strong Peoples, and Strong Families: Towards a Safer Future for Indigenous Families and Communities Ten Year Plan
- A better place – Victorian Homelessness 2020 Strategy

Purpose of the Committee

The purpose of the Steering Committee is to drive the integration of services that respond to family violence at a local area level and oversee reform processes to achieve safety, accountability and choice. The Steering Committee will implement, monitor, promote, and continuously improve the integrated family violence response within the region through the activities and objectives outlined in an annual strategic plan. This work will be led by the Regional Integration Coordinator (RIC), whose responsibilities to the Steering Committee are outlined on page eleven of this document.

This will include:

- working in conjunction with the RIC to lead reform work and integration of services within the family violence space in Gippsland;
- advocating for local issues and concerns to relevant government, peak and umbrella bodies;
- supporting local initiatives that drive reform and improve outcomes for those experiencing family violence through program/project funding;
- establishing and supporting sub regional Family Violence networks across Gippsland; and
- guiding, implementing and reporting on workforce development at the regional level (in line with the 10 Year Industry Plan – currently under development)
- providing regular and collective feedback regarding the effectiveness, challenges, learnings, emerging trends and successes identified in implementation of service integration in Gippsland.

Department of Health and Human Services Boundaries

In December 2012 the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) was reshaped to better support Victorians in need and to lay the foundations for further human services reform. The department now operates across the state from within seventeen local areas, two of which fall

within Gippsland – Inner Gippsland and Outer Gippsland. The Steering Committee covers both DHHS areas and recognises the different reform agendas and schedules of each, working closely with sub regional groups to ensure the Steering Committee remains effective across the region. In Gippsland, the DHHS areas are split into Inner Gippsland and Outer Gippsland as follows.

Inner Gippsland spans four Local Government Areas including:

- Latrobe City
- Baw Baw Shire
- South Gippsland Shire
- Bass Coast Shire

Outer Gippsland spans two Local Government Areas including:

- Wellington Shire
- East Gippsland Shire

Sub Regional Networks

In recognition of the vast area that comprises Gippsland and the differences that occur from one area to the next, three subregional networks have been developed. They are;

- Baw Baw/Latrobe
- Bass Coast /South Gippsland
- Wellington/East and Far East Gippsland

Each network is convened by a Sub-regional chair, who attends and reports back to the Steering Committee. These meetings are held bi-monthly. The purpose of these networks is to:

- represent, communicate and advocate for needs, emerging trends and other relevant information relating to the implementation and continuous improvement of the integration family violence system;
- identify gaps, barriers, successes and opportunities for local integration activities;
- build stronger relationships, communication and referral pathways between local agencies, to enable greater integration and collaboration on the ground;
- share information between the Steering Committee and sub regional networks; and
- facilitate and collate localised feedback on and contributions to projects, reform activities, submissions and consultations for communication to the Steering Committee and other appropriate bodies

Governance and reporting structures for the sub regional networks will be further detailed in Terms of Reference for these networks, to be developed in 2018.

Membership

The Steering Committee will ensure strategic planning is grounded in practice reality through an appropriate balance in committee membership (i.e. the representation of all funded family violence service providers and other key service and sector representation).

Members must have sufficient seniority and capacity to represent their agency position, to make commitments to partnership arrangements and to drive Steering Committee priorities within their organisation. Community members who are not affiliated with an organisation will be considered

based on previous experience in and knowledge of the family violence sector, including the seniority of that experience (i.e. having worked at management level or above).

There are two levels of membership of the Steering Committee, full member and associate member. Members are requested to provide a nominee if they are unable to attend meetings. The nominee should be able to complete the 'Role and Responsibilities of Committee Members' as outlined below. This is to ensure that the Committee has a consistent and well informed membership at each of the meetings.

Level 1 - Full Member

- Receipt of all Steering Committee communications.
- Ongoing and consistent participation in Steering Committee meetings (with full voting rights), consultative and planning processes and other activities, including joint projects.

The Steering Committee will comprise Full Membership from the following organisations at the executive, management level:

- Women's and Children's family violence services
- Men's behaviour change services
- Indigenous family violence services
- Indigenous Family Violence Regional Action Group
- Integrated Family Service Alliance
- Courts
- CALD services
- Mental health services
- Sexual assault services
- Women's health service, including coordination of regional prevention strategy
- Community legal services
- Disability services
- Housing and homelessness services
- Victoria Police
- Education
- Mediation and Counselling services
- Any other relevant services and individuals who can make a positive contribution to the Steering Committee

Level 2 - Associate Member

- Receipt of all Steering Committee communications.
- Optional attendance at Steering Committee meetings (without voting rights).
- Participation in consultative and planning processes in relation to Steering Committee Strategic Plan and other activities

The Steering Committee will comprise Associate Membership from the following organizations at the executive, management level, and additional strategic leadership roles:

- DHHS - Local Connections Unit
- DHHS - Child Protection
- DHHS – Indigenous Family Violence Strategy Manager
- Department of Justice and Regulation

- Gippsland Homelessness Network Coordinator, Quantum Support Services
- Coordinator of Prevention of Men's Violence Against Women strategy
- SHS (SAAP) Children's Resource Worker, auspiced by Uniting

The Steering Committee may vary its membership from time to time as it sees fit. To apply for membership a Membership Application Form must be completed (Appendix 1). The Steering Committee will make an informed decision from the information received by the applicant about which level of membership is the most appropriate. Membership will continue each year unless discontinued by the member organisation or revoked by the Steering Committee if that membership no longer meets these terms of reference.

Role and responsibilities of Steering Committee Members

Steering Committee members have a responsibility to:

- Complete an induction with the RIC and establish a working knowledge of the Steering Committee, its purpose and strategic activities
- Attend and actively contribute to regular meetings, maintaining consistency in representation
- Notify RIC and complete a handover where new organizational representatives are attending Steering Committee meetings
- Contribute knowledge and expertise about their service type/sector and any specific issues experienced by that sector, including consumer trends and experiences, opportunities for improved practice, workforce needs and local impacts of reforms on service provision
- Report back to, and consult with, their respective service types/sectors on developments occurring within the Steering Committee
- Participate in the development, implementation and review of the Steering Committee's annual plan
- Provide relevant organisational and sector data to support planning and continuous improvement processes
- Implement and report on relevant actions in the regional plan
- Identify opportunities to link the work of relevant sector networks and groups with that of the Steering Committee
- Establish processes within their own organizations to support the implementation of the integrated family violence response in Gippsland. The processes established should be able to overcome organizational structural barriers and address from a strategic perspective any policy or practice issues that prohibit effective implementation of the family violence integrated model

Frequency of Meetings

The meetings of the Steering Committee will be held bi-monthly or more often as issues require or as deemed appropriate by the Steering Committee. Each organization/agency will meet its own costs in respect of participation at the Steering Committee meetings and in other activities associated with the Steering Committee.

Reporting (Monitoring and Evaluation)

The Steering Committee will develop clear links between regional and statewide coordination structures by providing appropriate feedback and participation through the mechanisms outlined in the DHHS Guiding Integrated Family Violence Service Reform 2006-2009 Document and the Regional Family Violence Integration Governance Model 2013(15).

Tools and methods for reporting are outlined in the Steering Committee Evaluation plan and will be completed according to state government direction. This plan operates in conjunction with the strategic plan and documents how and when strategic outcomes will be achieved by the Steering Committee.

Delegations and Quorum

The Steering Committee may delegate any of its functions and powers to its local sub-regional Reference Groups as well as to any (full) member or (associate) member(s) of the Steering Committee, or any other person or persons as it may determine who are qualified to provide advice to the Steering Committee. This may be necessary at times where the RIC or Chair is unable to attend state-wide meetings or other events where the Steering Committee must be represented.

The Steering Committee quorum for conducting Committee business will consist of 50% plus one of the full members. Approval action is defined by a simple majority of voting members present. Each member organisation will nominate a representative to attend the meetings. Voting rights will equal one vote per organisation.

‘In all matters requiring voting, the Chair will participate as a voting member but will not have a casting vote. It is understood that the interests of the auspice agency will align with those of the Steering Committee, and the vote of the Chair will therefore represent her role both as CEO of GWH and as the Chair of the Steering Committee. In instances where a conflict of interest may be identified (i.e when voting on a funding application submitted by the auspice agency), the Chair will abstain from voting.’

The Regional Integration Coordinator may provide information and advice on matters for the Steering Committee but will not vote.

Meeting proceedings will be minuted, including full attendance records.

Leadership roles

Chairperson

The Chairperson of the Steering Committee will be the Chief Executive Officer of Gippsland Women’s Health, as the agency responsible for the management of the Family Violence Regional Integration Coordinator’s position. The Chairperson will also represent the auspice agency of the RIC and undertake those duties assigned to that agency in supporting and supervising the RIC in her role. In recognition of the importance of the leadership role of Chair, an allocation of funds (\$5,000) will be paid to support the Chairperson position. The Chairperson as representative of the Steering Committee, is accountable to DHHS for the activities of the Committee.

The duties of the Chairperson include:

- leading, communicating and advocating for the ongoing strategic work of the Steering Committee in a broader context of state-wide reform and integration;
- ensuring the Steering Committee maintains collaborative direction and purpose in its work;
- guiding the Steering Committee in development of innovative responses and fostering integrated approaches to reform in line with state-wide objectives and priorities;
- planning and chairing the Steering Committee meetings
- preparing an agenda with support from the RIC, which focuses on progressing the achievement of strategic priorities as identified in the strategic plan;
- ensuring regular reports are submitted as required to the relevant supervising body;

- attending the biannual State-wide Family Violence RIC and Chairs meeting facilitated by Domestic Violence Victoria; and
- representing the Steering Committee at any additional meetings deemed appropriate and in line with reform process guidelines.

Deputy Chairperson

As the Chairperson is also the manager of the RIC position it has been agreed to by the Steering Committee that the appointment of a Deputy Chairperson should occur as deemed by the Regional Family Violence Integration Governance Model 2013. The position will be held for one year and will be drawn from full members, participation in the selection process will be voluntary. Any agencies may be excluded from selection, with exception of seven funded family violence agencies: Gippsland Lakes Community Health, Salvocare Eastern, Quantum Support Services, Victoria Aboriginal Child Care Agency, Orbost Regional Health, Gippsland East Gippsland Aboriginal Cooperative and Yoowinna Wurnalung Healing Service. An allocation of funds (\$2,000) will be paid to support the Deputy Chairperson position.

The duties of the Deputy Chairperson include:

- supporting the Chair role and fulfilling the role of the Chair in their absence;
- temporarily assuming the role of Chair if a conflict of interest occurs due to the Chair also representing the RIC employer agency

Regional Integration Coordinator (RIC)

The Steering Committee and the Chair will work with the Regional Integration Coordinator to provide leadership in the development, implementation and monitoring of the integrated approach across the sector.

The role of the RIC is one of strategic leadership in steering integration initiatives and activities that support the achievement of the Steering Committee priorities as set out in the Strategic Plan. As such, all RIC work is directed by the Strategic Plan. As a minimum, the role of the RIC includes:

- facilitating the development of relationships that support key agreements and protocols between regional family violence services (women, children and men's services) and other key sectors and services, such as Child FIRST/Family Services, child protection, mental health services, homelessness services, housing services, Courts, Police and the Indigenous Family Violence Regional Action Group;
- acting as a conduit for communication and information flow within the regional partnerships, as well as with other key service sectors including Indigenous;
- acting as a regional coordination point for relevant State wide initiatives, collecting local information and viewpoints for contribution to these initiatives and ensuring regional agencies stay up to date and engaged with broader reform activities;
- forging and maintaining effective formal links with other regional service system coordinators, forums and networks;
- supporting and leading strategic planning and reflection within the Steering Committee;
- monitoring progress against the Strategic Plan and providing feedback to the Steering Committee regarding this;
- working closely with sub-regional network chairs to provide guidance and strategic direction for the networks, ensuring alignment with the objectives and priorities of the Steering Committee; and

- identifying and documenting successful integration service models for further development of the Steering Committee.

Further details regarding the RIC role are outlined in the RIC piece on RSC and RIC role, 2017.

Commencement, Modification and Termination

The original Terms of Reference commenced on 14th March 2007 and were modified on 22nd May 2008, 8th July 2011, June 2010 January 2014 and March 2016.

Future revision schedule will be every year, or at any other time as deemed necessary by the Steering Committee.

The Terms of Reference may be modified by a majority decision of the Steering Committee.

Funding Applications – Appendix 1

LGA specific Funding applications

Where projects will be delivered within a specific LGA, applicants can seek funding by:

- completing a funding application form with all project details included;
- presenting the proposed project with requested funding amount to relevant sub-regional network for approval.
- If an applicant cannot present to the sub-regional network, the applicant is to discuss the proposed project with their local sub-regional chair in preparation for further discussion at the Steering Committee.

If approved by the sub-regional network, the chair of that network will pass on the application to the Steering Committee for consideration.

Region wide Funding applications

Where projects will be delivered across the Gippsland region and are not specifically targeting one LGA, applicants can seek funding by:

- completing a funding application form with all project details included; and
- submitting this application to the RIC who will present the proposed project with requested funding amount to the Steering Committee for approval.

Timelines for applications

Funding Application forms that are to be considered by the Steering Committee should be received by the RIC or family violence support worker based at Gippsland Women's Health, no later than two weeks before the date of the next Steering Committee meeting.

Applications under \$5,000

It was decided by the Steering Committee in September 2015 that a sub-committee of five members be appointed to process and determine the outcome for funding applications below \$5,000. These members would meet or teleconference, within a two week time period before the next meeting date to determine the outcome of the funding application and present their decision to the Steering Committee.

Risk Assessment Plan

A Risk Assessment Plan may be required to be completed by the person / organization applying for the funding, particularly if they are not a member organisation of the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee would prefer to fund applications submitted by member organisations or applications for services/training/events in conjunction with peak bodies such as DV VIC or NTV or credited training organisations such as DVRCV, Australian Childhood Foundation or Berry St. Non-member applications will be considered and assessed based on relevance, consistency with state and regional priorities, appropriate skill base of applicants and safety and risk management frameworks.

List of Full Members – Appendix 2

Full members as of October 2017:

Quantum Support Services (QSS) – (FV Women’s & Children’s Service and FV Women’s and Children’s Refuge and Gippsland After Hours service)

Latrobe Community Health Service (LCHS) – (FV Women & Children’s Counselling, Men’s Behaviour Change Program & Choices Program)

West Gippsland Health Group (WGHG)– (FV Women and Children’s Counselling)

SalvoCare Eastern – (FV Women’s & Children’s Service, Men’s Behaviour Change Program)

Bass Coast Health (BCH) - (FV Counselling)

Gippsland Lakes Community Health (GLCH) - (FV Women’s & Children’s Service, Men’s Behaviour Change, FV Counselling and Child First)

Gippsland & East Gippsland Aboriginal Co-operative Ltd (GEGAC) - (FV Women’s and Children’s Service and FV Women and Children’s Shelter)

Uniting - (FV Women and Children’s Counselling, Child First)

Community Housing Ltd (CHL)

Gippsland Women’s Health (GWH) - (Chair of Regional Steering Committee and Prevention Coordinator)

Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service (AFVP&LS)

Victoria Police (VicPol)

Anglicare Victoria- (Gippsland Community Legal Services and Child First)

Latrobe Magistrates Law Court

Relationships Australia Victoria/Gippsland Early Intervention Services (FV Services)

Salvo Care Eastern

Orbost Regional Health (ORH) – (FV Service)

Within Australia

Yoowinna Wurnalung Healing Service - (FV Counselling , Advocacy, Referrals and Support, Aboriginal Men’s Behaviour Change)

Gippsland Centre for Sexual Assault (GCASA)

Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA) – (FV Women’s and Children’s Service & Orana Gunyah)

Windermere - (Victim Assistance and Counselling Program - VACP)

Victoria Legal Aid

Family Mediation and Counselling Centre

Chris Laming (community member)

Associated Members

Federation University

Department Education and Training (DET)

Department Health and Human Services (DHHS)

Gippsland Homelessness Networker (QSS)

Statewide Children's Resource Coordinator (Uniting)

Prevention Strategy Coordinator (GWH)

Department Justice and Regulation