

TRANSCRIPT

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY LEGAL AND SOCIAL ISSUES COMMITTEE

Inquiry into capturing data on family violence perpetrators in Victoria

Melbourne—Tuesday 6 August 2024

MEMBERS

Ella George – Chair

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WITNESSES

Kirsten Majidi, Principal Strategic Adviser, Southern Melbourne Family Violence Regional Integration Committee; and

Christine Robinson, Principal Strategic Adviser, Eastern Metropolitan Regional Family Violence Partnership.

The CHAIR: Good afternoon. My name is Ella George, and I am the Chair of the Legislative Assembly's Legal and Social Issues Committee. We will now resume the public hearing of the Committee's Inquiry into capturing data on family violence perpetrators in Victoria.

I begin this afternoon by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land on which we are meeting, the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people of the Kulin nation. I pay my respects to their elders past, present and future.

I am joined today by my colleagues Meng Heang Tak, the Member for Clarinda; Chris Crewther, the Member for Mornington; and Cindy McLeish, the Member for Eildon; and Annabelle Cleeland, the Member for Euroa and Deputy Chair, is just about to join us.

The Committee recognises that evidence to this inquiry may be distressing, and we urge people to reach out for support. You can contact Lifeline on 13 11 14, 1800RESPECT or the Blue Knot helpline on 1300 657 380.

All evidence given today is being recorded by Hansard and broadcast live. While all evidence taken by the Committee is protected by parliamentary privilege, comments repeated outside this hearing may not be protected by this privilege. Witnesses will be provided with a proof version of today's transcript to check, together with questions taken on notice. Verified transcripts, responses to questions taken on notice and other documents provided during the hearing will be published on the Committee's website.

I now welcome Kirsten Majidi, Principal Strategic Adviser, Southern Melbourne Family Violence Regional Integration Committee, and Christine Robinson, Principal Strategic Adviser, Eastern Metropolitan Regional Family Violence Partnership. I invite you to make a brief opening statement of 5 to 10 minutes, and this will be followed with questions from members. Thank you.

Kirsten MAJIDI: Thanks so much, Ella. Christine and I today have prepared a joint statement on behalf of both of our committees. First of all, we wanted to actually thank the Legislative Assembly Legal and Social Issues Committee for the opportunity to present our joint statement on behalf of our family violence regional integration committees.

As Ella introduced, my name is Kirsten. I am the Principal Strategic Adviser for Southern Melbourne, and that encompasses the local government areas of the City of Greater Dandenong, the City of Casey and Cardinia shire, and I am joined here today by my colleague Christine from the Eastern Metropolitan Region and that encompasses the local government areas of Boroondara, Monash, Manningham, Whitehorse, Maroondah, Knox and the Yarra Ranges.

We too would like to commence by acknowledging the people of the Kulin nation as the traditional owners of the land of our regions. We recognise their continued connection to land, waters and community and that sovereignty was never ceded. We pay our respects to elders past and present and any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues that may be with us today.

If there is one message that we would like the Committee to take away today, it is the importance of using the MARAM framework as a governance model to support cross-sector shared understanding of family violence, collaborative risk assessment and management. This will provide the best opportunity for data integrity.

Across Victoria family violence regional integration committees exist to provide leadership, advocacy and specialist expertise to strengthen, integrate and improve the whole-of-system response to family violence. As local system governance structures, these partnerships are integral to the success of the Victorian Government's plan to implement the recommendations from the Royal Commission into Family Violence and outlined in *Ending Family Violence*, Victoria's 10-year plan for change. Our members represent government and non-government organisations whose work intersects with family violence prevention, early intervention, response, recovery and healing. Thus, our members are representative of a really broad range of sectors. This includes family violence; alcohol and other drugs; mental health and wellbeing; child, youth and family; homelessness and housing; multicultural; LGBTQIA+; disability; women's health; and Aboriginal community-controlled organisations as well as legal, courts, justice, police, education, health and child protection.

As principal strategic advisers our role is focused on systems leadership. We work to strengthen an integrated, collaborative and connected service system within our regions and more broadly across the state. This role is

instrumental in providing expert advice to ensure the implementation of government reforms, in particular the MARAM framework and our regional strategic priorities. Our submissions were developed from a cross-sector approach, with contributions from our person using violence working groups, broader committee members and victim-survivor advocates. Our submissions highlighted the disparate, disconnected approach with respect to the capturing, holding and analysing of data relating to the volume and behaviours of the person using violence across systems. Data quality can also vary significantly depending on the sophistication of agency platforms. Currently we are predominantly capturing point-in-time interventions, not long-term patterns of behaviour and recidivism, leaving critical gaps in our shared understanding of the person using violence's risk and identification of those opportunities for a multi-agency response.

The ANROWS recent review of filicides in a domestic and family violence context highlighted that general health services, along with child protection, were having the highest and most recent contacts with cases that resulted in filicide. One of the key recommendations of this report spoke to the importance of integrated, multi-agency efforts to address domestic and family violence. In the *Securing Women's Lives* report, for perpetrators who had interacted with a point of the system, multiple points of contact were common. Findings showed that 12% of perpetrators interacted with at least one agency, 44% with two, 24% with three and 6% with four prior to perpetrating femicide.

Christine ROBINSON: Thanks, Kirsten. Our recommendations call for actions that step away from siloed, sector-specific data platforms to one that prioritises connecting and linking data across organisations and sectors to better understand behaviour, risk and system integration. In Victoria we have the multi-agency risk assessment and management framework, MARAM. This is a world-leading framework for a whole-of-system, multi-agency approach to family violence; however, we are not yet at the point where our data system design and cross-sector approach is congruent with the principles and pillars of the MARAM framework. Just because an organisation has MARAM risk assessment tools embedded in practice does not mean the organisation is MARAM aligned. We advocate for an increased focus on MARAM implementation, as there is no other mechanism for strengthening system integration to respond to family violence.

We seek opportunities in the short to medium term that would have a significant impact on strengthening the timely gathering, sharing and understanding of perpetrator behaviours. These include: broadening access to the Orange Door central information point reports to other information-sharing and risk assessment entities that are not part of the agencies of the TODs; expanding CIP reports to include timely access to federally held data through Services Australia and the immigration department; reviewing existing data platforms and building in mechanisms that allow for the easy sharing of MARAM risk assessments and family violence information-sharing requests; evolving the person using violence MARAM risk assessment tools to support documentation of patterns of behaviour towards individual and multiple victim-survivors over time; and creating a mechanism for continuous system visibility of the person using violence. And we advocate for understanding of how MARAM information is reported by organisations across the breadth of government departments. DFFH, alongside the Department of Health, the Department of Education and the Department of Justice and Community Safety, would all hold significant information regarding perpetrator profiles, and it is not our experience that this information is connected or analysed in a meaningful way.

Importantly, our regions call for the development of a central data platform accessible by prescribed agencies and researchers. This platform would enable a dynamic view of perpetrator behaviours through the aggregation and analysis of point-in-time and longitudinal qualitative and quantitative data. Underpinned by a multi-agency, multisector approach, care and consideration must be given to our shared commitment to the rights of First Nations peoples to self-determination and data sovereignty; the importance of intersectionality in data design and analysis; system mechanisms that can swiftly respond to cases of misidentification of the person using violence; learning the disproportionate impacts on women from migrant, refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and women suffering from mental ill health; the specific experiences of adolescents using violence in the home as being victim-survivors of family violence in their own right; consistent application of the family violence information-sharing scheme and the child information-sharing scheme across sectors; and the proactive sharing of MARAM risk assessments with consent of clients.

Collectively, we are all working towards communities free from family violence. However, as noted in the *Securing Women's Lives* reports, we cannot prevent what we do not fully understand. Thus, if we are to achieve this, we must prioritise our efforts towards a cross-system approach to data collection and analysis that is

designed in alignment with the MARAM framework. A contemporary evidence base would then be created that would incorporate both statistical data and the longitudinal understandings of patterns of behaviour. In doing so, collectively we could work across systems to close the gaps and disrupt the escalation of violence as well as to inform continuous improvement of primary prevention and men's response initiatives.

Thank you, and we are very welcoming to taking questions.

The CHAIR: Thank you for that incredibly comprehensive opening statement. You have given us a lot to think about already, and to be quite frank I am not sure where to start, but we do have to start somewhere. There is a lot to unpack here. I think just a general observation is we have been given a lot of ideas throughout the inquiry about things that the Victorian Government can be doing better, but what I would really like to delve into is a bit more of the how we can be doing things better and what some of those practical approaches would be. So I guess my first question is: how could the Victorian Government support a strategic and systematic approach to data collection and foster a shared purpose for collecting data on people using family violence across different sectors and across different organisations?

Christine ROBINSON: I will jump into that one, if you like, Kirsten. I think it links directly back to the implementation of the MARAM framework. The MARAM framework policy's processes have been developed, but it is still not implemented at the local level across organisations in a multi-agency way, and I think that is a key point: the M-A of MARAM is multi-agency. The first pillar of MARAM is the 'Shared understanding of family violence', and that shared understanding is crucial, particularly with the non-family violence specialist sectors, so the universal service system, community health, health systems, alcohol and other drug services, mental health services and homelessness services. They are all interacting with people who use violence and without a shared understanding of family violence that is able to capture that information in a way that can then be easily shared.

The CHAIR: I have got a couple of follow-up questions to that, unless you would like to add anything here, Kirsten.

Kirsten MAJIDI: No, that is fine, Ella. Ask your questions, and then we can add.

The CHAIR: Christine, you mentioned that not all organisations have implemented MARAM. Are you able to go into some more detail about what organisations or what type of organisations have not implemented MARAM and why not?

Christine ROBINSON: Implementation really is a maturity journey. In our conversations with organisations and leaders across our regions we are always talking MARAM alignment, and it is still unfortunately really focused on the use of the MARAM risk assessment tools, which is one pillar of the MARAM framework. The other pillars are crucial to ensure that MARAM alignment is occurring across organisations. No one organisation can be aligned to the MARAM framework, because it is a multi-agency way of working. So I would have to say is we are only as aligned in our region in the east as our slowest aligning organisation. Significant funding needs to be put into alignment for organisations. Organisations are not resourced at all to progress MARAM alignment.

The CHAIR: And what would that funding look like? Is that direct funding to the organisation to become MARAM aligned or is that funding for training to support them?

Christine ROBINSON: I think it really sits at that governance level, to support them and their quality teams to work towards MARAM alignment across the whole of organisation. But, Kirsten, over to you.

Kirsten MAJIDI: I was just going to continue what Christine was saying. I think you have got—in some ways it is both. We actually need investment in organisations for whole-of-organisation alignment. When you are talking MARAM alignment, you are talking from the board level to your frontline practitioners. It touches all levels of an organisation and requires commitment from all of those levels. That is, as Christine said, a maturity journey, and it needs support within their organisations to achieve that. I think that is actually really where our starting place and our focus needs to sit. Then we also have those additional capability building exercises we can and do do with frontline workers, but if they are undertaking that professional development but there is not a whole-of-organisation approach, there is a disconnect for practitioners from what they are told

in one setting to then when they return back to their agency or their sector. So we really actually need MARAM implementation, not just training in a tool or a way of undertaking a risk assessment.

The CHAIR: What would your advice be on who should be delivering that training around MARAM implementation? Is that something that the family violence regional integration committees would play a role in?

Kirsten MAJIDI: I absolutely think the regional committees can be leveraged as a mechanism to drive this at a regional level. I will let Christine talk about a recent pilot that she was part of leading in the east, because I think there were some findings in that report that would be of benefit to share with the group. So I might hand over to you, Chris, for this, for some ways that the regional committees can actually support this work.

Christine ROBINSON: Thank you. The eastern regional committee and the Goulburn committees over the period of July 2023 through to June this year ran the MARAM alignment pilot project, and that was working to test and assess the new MARAM maturity model tools and resources that have been developed by Family Safety Victoria. We did that in a multi-agency way, and we found that co-design is absolutely crucial across organisations for MARAM alignment. We need to have congruent policies and processes across organisation, because sharing of information across organisations needs to occur at that organisational policy level, and if one practitioner is experiencing delays or pushback from another organisation, we see that there is not policy alignment, so working together in regional service systems to create organisational coherence and co-design in MARAM alignment is crucial.

The CHAIR: Thank you. I will hand over to Cindy.

Cindy McLEISH: Thank you very much. Given you are part of the cross-sector committee, you are really poised to provide us some fantastic information, and our focus here is about capturing data on the profile and volume of persons who use violence, or the perpetrators. Who collects the data on perpetrators now?

Kirsten MAJIDI: That data is collected across agencies and across sectors. Every agency that is part of our regional committees, or the majority of agencies, is working with people who use violence, so they are collecting elements of understanding the perpetrator's behaviour, their connection to their sector, and also if we field them all together, we are looking at their movement through the system. So everyone is collecting a form of data. The challenge is that it sits siloed, so some sits under the Department of Health, some sits under the Department of Education, some sits with justice, some sits with DFFH. This big picture is just not linked or connected. Everyone is tracking data, but everyone is using different systems, different platforms and has different reporting requirements.

Cindy McLEISH: Just to clarify, you are saying that they are capturing the data on perpetrators from the perpetrators not from those who have suffered at the perpetrator's hands.

Kirsten MAJIDI: Yes, because it depends on who is accessing the service. You might have a perpetrator who is attending receiving alcohol and other drug support through an AOD agency; they may also be connected in mental health and they may also be connected with the men's service. The person using violence has multiple connection points. So too does the person experiencing violence, the victim-survivor. They may be connecting with a victim-survivor service and there may be child and family involved that is working with the whole of family, so all of these sectors are so intertwined and connected. Information sharing is a mechanism for that collaborative approach to risk assessment and management, but that is where we are seeing struggles and challenges coming through.

Cindy McLEISH: What data specifically, when we are looking at profiles, is collected, specifically the type of data? Because you are saying everybody is collecting it—what are they collecting?

Kirsten MAJIDI: It would depend on the agency's focus. It may be your statistical demographic data. They may be connecting data around somebody's age, country of birth and languages spoken. It may also be their residency status. There is all of that statistical data that would form your intake, so those general questions that then get asked. Then it sort of segments off into where the areas of focus are. If you are working with a person using violence and I am in a men's service, then my data that I am collecting is also around their case management, so their goals, their readiness for a men's behaviour change program. I am collecting –

Cindy McLEISH: How do you determine their readiness? How do you capture and determine that?

Kirsten MAJIDI: That is determined through the engagement of your workers in your men's agency in conversation that they have with the person using violence as part of what they would call their intake or readiness. They would then have—and we could absolutely get the suite of questions they ask; I do not sit in a men's service. They ask specific questions, and they also have to make an assessment around the level of risk. Some men get assessed and they have those conversations, and then some are considered group ready and others are not. We actually then have decisions being made by our men's services around readiness for programs.

Cindy McLEISH: And if someone is at risk, what happens with that data?

Kirsten MAJIDI: If someone is at risk?

Cindy McLEISH: If someone is identified as being a risk, because you said all the data sits in silos, then that just stays in the silo?

Kirsten MAJIDI: Well, it depends on the agency's –

Cindy McLEISH: On the silo.

Kirsten MAJIDI: Yes, it does. It depends on the silo and the agency. Where we talk around MARAM alignment and implementation, this is where it comes in. If we look at MARAM as our overarching governance framework, these are the points for information sharing and that connection so that when risk is identified, when changes in risk are identified and there is escalation, there is a collaborative approach so risk is not held in any one setting or sector. The idea of the multi-agency is that this is shared and we are connected.

Cindy McLEISH: Thank you very much. Thanks, Chair.

The CHAIR: Thank you, Cindy.

Cindy McLEISH: I could keep going on, but I will not.

The CHAIR: Meng Heang, over to you.

Meng Heang TAK: Thank you, Chair. Thank you for your presentations. My question is: how common is it for services to develop their own family violence data like a dashboard or spreadsheets to analyse and extract original data?

Christine ROBINSON: In our consultations with our members, our partner agencies, we found that there are in fact agencies that develop spreadsheets for ease of cleaning data or else information sits within narratives, within case management systems, so yes, it absolutely does occur. Those spreadsheets would not be shared, because that is additional data that has been obtained from those organisations. There would not be reporting requirements around that.

Meng Heang TAK: Then how can the Victorian Government support service providers to integrate these analyses into existing reporting tools without losing valuable data or compromising privacy and accuracy—if any?

Christine ROBINSON: A whole-of-data client management system would be incredible. Victoria Police have the LEAP database, and if you search for any name on the police database, it comes up with a full history. It would be ideal if the suite of community and health services and specialist family violence services all had access to data integrity like that.

Meng Heang TAK: Any further input, or is that all?

Christine ROBINSON: Data input is incredibly important. For example, we do find through some of the projects that we have run within our regions that MARAM risk assessment tools are still used in a tick-box fashion. The data inputted is only as good as the questions that are being asked, so if practitioners are not using investigative interviewing techniques but rather the prescriptive questions within the MARAM risk assessment

tools, those are the answers that they get—yes, no—and they are not fully exploring those questions or adapting them to the needs of the client that they are speaking to.

Meng Heang TAK: Thank you.

Annabelle CLEELAND: Can I ask a supplementary question to yours?

Meng Heang TAK: Yes.

Annabelle CLEELAND: Chris, with your data comment just then, do you see any risks of services accessing such in-depth data of individuals? We have heard a lot about misidentification challenges.

Christine ROBINSON: I think trust is a huge issue across different sectors, which may be one reason why information is not shared as readily as it should be under the FVISS and CISS—and also even just sharing the MARAM risk assessment tools. Similar to the LEAP system within Victoria Police—every Victoria Police member has access to that LEAP system and they have mechanisms to monitor that—there would be mechanisms, I am sure, if a broader data system was created.

Annabelle CLEELAND: Excellent. Kirsten, chip in if you want to contribute anything further.

Kirsten MAJIDI: I was just going to say when we talk misidentification I think it is important that there is a mechanism within the system to address that. I think the challenge or concerns come when someone is misidentified yet they still sit in the system as the person using violence. I think it is around the design and consideration of the needs of the platform or the system that we want to develop. I think if you can take that care and consideration, you then have that ability to design for that. We mentioned in the beginning in particular around adolescents using violence and how we sort of work with those in the system, as they are also victim-survivors in their own right in overwhelming majority.

I think the concern and fear can also come around where systems label and systems stereotype or they can have that impact, and that is not what we want. But what we do want is a system where we are actually seeing visibility of the person using violence through the entire, connected multi-agency systems. That is what we want to see. There are multiple points that exist at the moment where we lose sight of the person using violence.

Annabelle CLEELAND: Excellent point, and your submission around the data you want to see was very informative. We know that there are at least six databases that are used in Victoria for state and federal government reporting of the outputs of funding at times and how clunky that can be in extracting information from it, but we have not necessarily heard so much about those individual dashboards that services have also established themselves. How common is it for services to develop their own family violence data dashboards within their service to analyse and extract their own regional information?

Kirsten MAJIDI: You go, Chris, and then I will follow you. That is fine.

Christine ROBINSON: I do know that there are several health services across Victoria that have done that. So they are able to maintain that data across their different sites.

Annabelle CLEELAND: Sorry, just on that: is that then used for informing referrals?

Christine ROBINSON: I would probably have to take that one on notice. Unless you are able to inform us, Kirsten?

Kirsten MAJIDI: I think the challenge comes in having the resourcing to be able to develop dashboards so that when we talk cross sector and all of the sectors that we engage with, that does vary. For one of our key agencies that does build their own dashboard, it really helps to understand the client profile and the shifts in profiles of clients over time. Particularly, demographic data is really critical for the region that I work across because it is exceptionally multicultural—so really understanding the needs of communities. But I think—and again I am happy to take that on advisement and take that back—that the sophistication of those platforms will vary depending on the size and resourcing of agencies, and that is a challenge.

Annabelle CLEELAND: We are conscious I guess of any form of database in Victoria not to add another layer of burden with that accumulation of information. You have noted the data that you would like to see in it,

but we are still kind of grappling with what it will look like and how it will be used and are we combining systems that exist or rebuilding from the beginning. Is there an opportunity to use those individual data dashboards or databases that exist to feed information in, or are you seeing a reimagining of how data is collected and shared within Victoria?

Kirsten MAJIDI: I think we need some data experts.

Annabelle CLEELAND: Sorry. Yes.

Kirsten MAJIDI: Because I think that is essentially the question we are looking at: can we use the existing data platforms that are in place but is there an overlay that we can put on those systems that will allow them to link and connect and aggregate that information up? Or does it mean that we do need to start from scratch, and it is a redesign? I think that is an investment in consultation. I am definitely not a data expert in design; I do leave that to the experts. But that really is a question for—we really encourage consideration of that. If there is a mechanism or way of connecting the existing systems that is of benefit, great. But it may mean starting from scratch. When you look at the list of all the different systems out there, you can see how many of them there are and how they all operate differently and feed into different areas of government.

Annabelle CLEELAND: I was just about to hand over to Chris, my colleague, except I wanted to just ask: a pretty powerful comment that we just heard is that all the databases that exist currently are focused on outputs, not outcomes. Big nods. Would you agree? Yes, okay. I will hand it back.

Christine ROBINSON: Can I comment on that, actually? They are funding requirement, outputs, and I do not know how the government could redesign their reporting requirements to turn into outcomes, which absolutely would be more beneficial and perhaps would see less continual referral back into the service system as well. In terms of, if I may, sharing of data across different data systems, we are still at the point where data is shared in PDF form to another organisation and that organisation has to have the administrative load to translate that into their own data systems. That takes away from client hours and outcomes and outputs.

Annabelle CLEELAND: Thank you.

The CHAIR: Great. On to you, Chris.

Chris CREWETHER: Thank you, Chair. Firstly, thank you again for your evidence today and also for your submissions as well. I note we do not have Tarryn Chapman with us today from Western Integrated Family Violence Committee, but you may have some comments on this that you may know about or want to share. In their submission they note:

... what is currently available is not robust or useful ...

with respect to data on the Caring Dads program. Do you have any comments or understanding of that or the need for more robust data in that regard that you would like to expand upon or that you could expand upon without Tarryn being here?

Kirsten MAJIDI: No, not specifically on that, but we are happy to take it on notice and provide that back to Tarryn to get feedback from her committee.

Chris CREWETHER: Yes, no worries. On your submission, Southern Melbourne Family Violence Regional Integration Committee, on page 14, with respect to item 4, which is:

Data on adolescents using violence in the home and how this is captured in the context of also being victim survivors of family violence themselves ...

you mention a few different suggestions of how some of these problems can be overcome. You mention in point 1 about legislative changes that allow services to access federally held data from Services Australia and the immigration department. Can you expand upon that and your thoughts and suggestions in that regard?

Kirsten MAJIDI: Yes. This came through the committee really strongly when we were working on our submission. This is relating to kind of all of the points above, so really not just adolescents using violence. One of the themes that was really strong in the discussion was particularly when we are working with an imminent risk, a high-risk person using violence, and we do not have visibility in the system. It takes an exceptionally

long time if we are trying to find their Centrelink—‘Are they accessing Centrelink support payments? Where are they accessing them from?’ That is a point of visibility where we can find the location. That process in itself takes a really long time to do, but often that is the only one of the mechanisms we have to actually see where they are and make some decisions around risk and safety.

It is similar around the immigration department and visa status—that information. Often we will hold that for the victim-survivor, but we do not necessarily always have the visibility of that on the person using violence, hence we have got an incomplete picture. Also that plays into your risk assessments on the safety of children and risk of abscondment from the country. So it is really about thinking: what are those critical points where information is valuable and can actually help work in a multi-agency—again—collaborative way to assess and respond to risk? So that is where that recommendation came from, Chris.

Chris CREWETHER: Thank you. Do I have time for one more question?

The CHAIR: Go for it.

Chris CREWETHER: With respect to the submission from Eastern Metropolitan Region Family Violence Partnership—so this is one for Christine—on page 4 of 4 you note that:

It is hard to make MARAM assessment tools ‘living’ documents or dynamic assessments because they cannot be added to easily. Practitioners often need to copy and paste between assessments or complete a new assessment tool as they are unable to update the initial assessment because services’ CMS are not integrated ...

and so forth. I am just wondering, Christine, if you can expand upon that and what you feel needs to be done in that regard to fix the current issues.

Christine ROBINSON: Yes, collaborative risk assessment is absolutely crucial—and building on MARAM risk assessments. So we know—and I know that previous panel members to your committee have also mentioned—that a brief or intermediate risk assessment commences with one organisation and needs to be built upon by the next organisation rather than a whole new MARAM risk assessment being conducted. That is a crucial part of preventing victim-survivors and people using violence having to retell their story—more the victim-survivors in particular.

Having to copy and paste onto a new document prevents that collaborative and dynamic risk assessment across organisations. The previous organisation cannot see what the new risk assessment looks like. The sharing of information is crucial, and there are quite often delays in receiving this information as well. We are having reports in the east that we can have delays of sharing of information anywhere from two days to six weeks, and we know that sometimes a matter of hours is crucial when it comes to the safety of victim-survivors. So dynamic risk assessments are crucial.

Chris CREWETHER: Thank you. That is all, Chair.

The CHAIR: Great. Annabelle?

Annabelle CLEELAND: A supplement actually to Chris’s question: so how can more data on long-term patterns of violence and the nuances of family violence perpetration be built into MARAM, and what improvements to MARAM could enable better data collection and analysis?

Kirsten MAJIDI: I think that was to you, Chris.

Annabelle CLEELAND: No, I am happy for both.

Kirsten MAJIDI: Sorry, Annabelle, I was thinking that was going to Chris. Sorry, could you just repeat the question?

Annabelle CLEELAND: That is okay. How can more data on long-term patterns of violence and any other useful information about the nuances of family violence perpetration be built into MARAM and are there any improvements that you can suggest to MARAM that could enable better data collection and analysis?

Kirsten MAJIDI: Sure. I think one thing is around: is that MARAM alignment a piece of work that needs to happen across sectors? So we all need to be understanding and operating from a shared understanding of

family violence and in particular a shared understanding of risk relevance. This is where we talk data. Data—if it is dynamic and if it takes building that long-term view of patterns of behaviour, then we are able to really continue to have a contemporary base of understanding that we are working from. I think a lot of data is actually sitting there already. It is not linked, it is not brought together, and I think that is one of the things that we talk about, is that someone may be—there are pieces of information sitting with AOD, there are pieces of information sitting with the Orange Door, there are pieces of information sitting with a men's service, and we are just not linking and connecting those dots because we do not have a mechanism that enables us to do that easily. It is really burdensome, it is highly administrative, and sectors are just working those silos. I actually think some of the information is there, but what we do not have is the mechanism to connect it and to inform our work and inform our programs moving forward.

Cindy McLEISH: Can I ask one little quick one?

The CHAIR: Cindy.

Cindy McLEISH: Thank you. We have talked about the barriers and the silos with the data: what are the barriers to getting data that is held within the Orange Door?

Kirsten MAJIDI: It is not accessible outside of the Orange Door.

Cindy McLEISH: But they cannot upload it anywhere else? It is just held within the Orange Door?

Kirsten MAJIDI: It is held within the Orange Door and importantly to the agencies that are partner agencies in the Orange Door. Critically, in our region that excludes a number of services that are working with the person using violence. So they do not have access to this information in a timely manner. They are reliant on information-sharing requests. So I think that is one of the critical things that was in our opening statement and in our submissions, that this information needs to be accessible to other information-sharing entities and risk assessment entities that are doing the work.

Cindy McLEISH: Thank you.

The CHAIR: Just one more question from me and then we might wrap up this hearing. Do you know if any other jurisdictions either interstate or overseas have used machine learning or advanced data analytics to better understand trends and patterns using existing data, and if the Victorian Government were to enhance data analytics through machine learning what might be some of those practical considerations?

Christine ROBINSON: I am not aware of any. I do know that New Zealand are quite innovative, so perhaps looking to New Zealand ways of working might be of benefit. I would say, though, that the MARAM framework is world leading, and we have it here in Victoria, so implementing that to our absolute maximum potential is crucial—but under our own data sovereignty.

The CHAIR: Thanks, Christine.

Kirsten MAJIDI: And no, I am not aware of anything, particularly from a data mechanics point of view.

The CHAIR: Okay. Thank you both for appearing today and for your contribution to the inquiry. We are greatly appreciative of the time you have taken to appear before us and to prepare and also for your submissions.

I also want to thank all the witnesses who have given evidence to the Committee today, as well as Hansard, the Committee Secretariat and security. I declare this hearing adjourned.

Committee adjourned.