T R A N S C R I P T

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY LEGAL AND SOCIAL ISSUES COMMITTEE

Inquiry into capturing data on family violence perpetrators in Victoria

Geelong—Wednesday 7 August 2024

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Cindy McLeish
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WITNESS

Wendy Anders, Chief Executive Officer, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Alliance.

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

I begin today by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land on which we are meeting, the Wathaurong people. I pay my respects to their elders past, present and future and extend that respect to First Nations people across Victoria.

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.

All evidence given today is being recorded by Hansard. While 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 any 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 am now pleased to welcome Wendy Anders, Chief Executive Officer, from the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Alliance. Thank you for appearing before the Committee today, Wendy. I invite you to make a brief opening statement of 5 to 10 minutes. This will be followed by questions from members. Thank you.

Wendy ANDERS: Thank you very much for giving me this opportunity. When we say National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Alliance, we actually put it into NATSIWA, so I will probably be saying NATSIWA because it is a mouthful.

I will start by first acknowledging that we are on Wathaurong land. I am an Arrernte from Alice Springs, and I have the privilege of living on Gunditjmara country in south-west Victoria. I am very privileged to live here and work here, and I would like to acknowledge the Wathaurong community that supports me.

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Alliance, NATSIWA, is the peak body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in Australia. We have a leadership team of directors made up from each state—members who are from each state come onto our board. We are funded through the PM&C Office for Women and were formed in 2009 as one of the six alliances. We do not work directly with women who are experiencing violence. We are not a service provider, we are a support and advocacy group, so we provide information, advocacy and submissions—you saw ours. We do not actually do any sort of accommodation or any support to women; however, we do meet with our members. We are a member-based organisation, and we do meet with them on a regular basis. We gather our information from surveys, members' meetings and women just contacting us wanting to talk about and find out about things, so when we do our submissions all our information is coming from our women. They decide what our priorities are, and we follow those priorities in the actions that we do and the advice and advocacy we provide.

As you know, gender violence is a national crisis in Australia, with one woman killed every nine days. It is entirely preventable, but we have a lot of issues in missing data. We have looked at time and time again how do we actually identify perpetrators who do not come under any sort of data until they have actually killed. They have got through the whole system—surely there must be some indication along their journey to the point where they do kill their partner or wife or whatever. There has to have been some indication somewhere that this man—women can be perpetrators, so whoever this perpetrator is—has the potential to kill, yet we cannot identify where that data should be picked up, why they are slipping through the system like that and how they get away with it. It is a real issue.

A lot of our women talk about the fact that they have got a new partner and there is no indication that he is violent or has a history of criminal activity or perpetrating violence until they have been in the relationship for a short time. So one of the other primary issues around data collection is how do women identify a perpetrator prior to their going into a relationship with them, particularly a very dangerous perpetrator. Are there any mechanisms for women to actually have some knowledge or to be able to check? I mean, we should have the right to know. I know this brings into play a lot of rights of the perpetrator, rights to privacy and all that sort of stuff, but if they have committed multiple assaults against women or violence against women, do they have the

rights that everyone else has? These are some questions that we have sort of been grappling with and we hope you will take on board and have a think about. As you know, Indigenous women are 7.6 times more likely to die from homicide, so it is a real issue for us.

That is all I am going to say. I have raised my two little biggies. You have read my submission, so you know. I am not going to repeat any of that stuff. I will let you ask me some questions, and hopefully I will be able to answer them.

The CHAIR: Thank you, Wendy. Thank you for your opening statement and also for the work that you put into your submission. We are really grateful for the work that you have done here. They are important voices for the Committee to be hearing.

One of the things we have heard about are some of the barriers to collecting data on First Nations people who are either using family violence or experiencing family violence. Are you able to speak to some of those barriers, and do you have any suggestions about how we could overcome those barriers?

Wendy ANDERS: It is difficult. Aboriginal women tend to be very reluctant to report violence. I mean, I am from Alice Springs. I have lived in the communities there and have experienced violence all the time. I know it is in the community: 'I see it in the community, but I don't report it because it is not mandatory for me. If I do, what are the repercussions?' I would always talk to the woman to see if she wants help or support or whatever. But it is very common. The only time I think that the police do attend is when it is really serious violence and someone has reported it and said something needs to be done. But it is happening on a daily basis to many women and many families in the communities. Education is a huge need. It needs to be ongoing and constant that violence is not okay. But a lot of it is drug-related and alcohol-related, and even in dry communities violence from alcohol and drugs is still a huge problem.

So the first barrier is getting Aboriginal women who are living with violence or anyone who is experiencing violence to actually report it. They just will not do it, and that is the barrier we have been experiencing for a very long time. How do we overcome that one barrier of getting people to report, particularly Aboriginal women? They do it to protect their partner. Aboriginal women have a sense that we have to protect our partners, our men—that we are the matriarchs of the community, of the family, and it is our responsibility to make sure our men are okay. I think a lot of the reluctance comes from actually putting them in the position where they may go to jail, where they may suicide, where they are not going to get the support that they do need. And we know that the jails are full of Aboriginal people who are not getting the support they need while they are in jail. They are not getting training. They are not getting any education programs. They are just sitting there waiting for their time to pass—and that is another submission that we need to make, I think. It starts with actually getting women to report. That is the biggest barrier.

The other barriers—I guess they appear along the whole continuum of when a woman is experiencing violence. If she goes to a hospital, the doctors are looking for injury, not violence. They are not actually taking that point of view that 'Okay, there is something more here.' They do not have the time. They do not have the experience. They do not have the education or the training to say, 'Hey, this might be a domestic violence case. I need to do something about this.' In some cases it is evident, hugely evident, from the injuries, but in most cases it is not, so that sort of reporting is also a huge barrier that we need to look at. How do we actually make sure that whenever a woman comes into the scope of services that are not domestic violence services, who are not trained, that they are actually being picked up? Does that answer your question just a little bit?

The CHAIR: It does, and I would like to expand on it a little bit further. Victoria Police have Aboriginal liaison officers, and I know that there are a number of health services—for example, here at Barwon Health—where we do have Aboriginal liaison officers. Do you think there is a role for those people to play in supporting women to report?

Wendy ANDERS: I actually do. Say a police liaison is talking to a woman at a police station—she may have come in for an injury or something—she probably does ask her if she needs anything or wants anything or what she can do, but not necessarily. Let us look at a hospital liaison. They put you in touch with services, provide family connection and things like that. They are not trained in talking to women about domestic violence, so they would never do it. I think all liaison officers should have some sort of domestic violence training and should be able to identify where there is possibly an issue. And that starts from coercive control as

well, because a lot of times women are scared and will not say anything because they know what is going to happen because they have been controlled. They have got no money. They have got nothing—no output, no rights left—because they have been controlled. I think there is a place, definitely, for liaison officers to be in the line of those workers who do talk to women about domestic violence.

The CHAIR: And then when it comes to supporting those liaison officers with training and their own education around family violence, who should provide that training?

Wendy ANDERS: Good question. Look, I do not know. I will not focus on one organisation over others, but I think there does need to be a training organisation that does cover trying to identify. We all know what the domestic violence cycle is—we know the cycle of violence—but do we identify those other things that actually indicate violence, like women's manners, the way they approach things, their conversation? Those sorts of things can also highlight that a woman may be reluctant to talk about stuff or may be in fear. You can pick up the body language. I think it starts at a very—I do not know what the word is. We are not looking at 'Okay, this is the cycle of violence.' Let us start back to actually having training around sensitivity, around body language, around understanding particularly Aboriginal women and how they approach things—that sort of understanding of the cultural context and being trauma informed to look at the trauma that this person has experienced. All those sorts of things need to be in that sort of training, but I would not know who would be the best to do that training.

The CHAIR: I guess, just to summarise, would you say it is important that the training be culturally safe and consider some of the unique experiences of First Nations women?

Wendy ANDERS: Absolutely. I am an Aboriginal woman living in a community, and we deal with violence in a different way than a person living in a really remote Aboriginal community. Anyone working in those environments has to be trained differently to how you would train someone working in an urban context than you would someone working in an Aboriginal community in a remote context. There are a lot of nuances there that need to be considered. It is a very close community; everyone knows everyone's business. If a worker is working with a woman around domestic violence, the whole community knows about it, and that puts that woman at huge risk. So it is very complex how you do collect all this data on these women and how you do actually make change effectively.

The CHAIR: Thank you, Wendy. Thank you. Cindy.

Cindy McLEISH: Thank you, Wendy. It is indeed exceptionally complex when you have got the women in your communities feeling like they need to protect the men. Is that changing with the younger generation? There is a lot of work being done around equality. Are the younger women thinking, 'No, it's about time I stood up for myself.' Or is it what you are saying: everybody knows everybody's business in some of these communities and they do not want to disrespect their elders' views or something?

Wendy ANDERS: Look, I think there is a bit of each of those things. Younger women do stand up a little bit more than older women would. They do know that they have rights and that they do not have to tolerate violence. Unfortunately, they get into the relationships, and once they are in those relationships they cannot get out of them. That is where they are tied to that coercive control—nowhere to go, no way of leaving. Particularly for women in remote communities, there is nowhere for them to go, no way to get out of that community—and the perpetrator will be back. You cannot stop him from coming back. That is like displacing him again, and you cannot displace a person if that is his community. How do you stop him from coming back and reoffending?

Cindy McLEISH: Is there any movement of the women out? I am thinking Victoria is not particularly remote. But your areas at Lake Tyers or Framlingham or up on the river—are any people from there moving to the city to escape?

Wendy ANDERS: A lot of Aboriginal women do move and do leave the partner and move to another town or somewhere else. But within an Aboriginal community it is very small. Everyone knows everyone. It is very hard for a woman to hide. Often they will move interstate, but that is removing them from their family and their supports and their ties to that country. That is the huge issue. I do not like being away from my country. I have to be because of my work and family and things like that, but I go home to Alice Springs five or six times a year for a couple of weeks just to reconnect and to stay connected on that country. It is a need. It is something I absolutely have to do, and I imagine most Aboriginal people feel like that. I know there are a lot displaced from

their country who have never been able to reconnect back into their country, and we try to bring them into our communities so that they have some sort of a connection. I am not going to talk about colonisation or all that; that is in the past. But it is really hard to ask a woman to leave and remove herself from that country, that connection that we feel. That is always going to be one of the biggest barriers for her in escaping violence. It is the same with the young women: they are not going to move away. They might go to the city for a while, but they always come home to country and finally settle where they belong.

Cindy McLEISH: Do the men tend to hang around rather than leave?

Wendy ANDERS: They do. Men do not leave very often. Men do not often leave their community and go to live somewhere else. I mean, some do, but mostly they stay within their community.

Cindy McLEISH: One of the things out of the submission was talking about the greater collaboration and communication required to minimise the harms of repetitive and unnecessary data collection. I am imagining that the data collection is collected from the woman rather than the perpetrator of the violence.

Wendy ANDERS: A woman has been assaulted. She goes to the hospital—her data is collected. She goes to a domestic violence service—her data is collected. She goes to Centrelink—her data is collected. Where is his data being collected in all this? Nowhere. We need to flip that somehow.

Cindy McLEISH: That is what we are very keen to do.

Wendy ANDERS: It is from a domestic violence incident. The police are the ones who have the data, but there is no record of him. That is what I was saying in my introduction: there is nowhere along that continuum where he is being picked up as a perpetrator and his data recorded—till he kills, in some cases. How do we? I do not really know what the answer is.

Cindy McLEISH: We have looked at the L17s, and most of the information that is provided is provided from the person who has suffered. They might have a few tick boxes around the background of the perpetrator, but again that is provided from the person presenting.

Wendy ANDERS: Yes, we are not actually taking any data of that person who is the perpetrator. That is a huge gap. That is a massive gap.

Cindy McLEISH: Yes, and this is key to our inquiry. It is certainly a challenge. Have there been any behavioural change programs specifically for Aboriginal men? We have heard in different areas that there are men's behaviour change programs—some are mandated by the courts, some are voluntary—but I do not know whether there are any that have been specifically targeted to your community or where you know of members of the different communities that have been involved in some of these behaviour change programs.

Wendy ANDERS: Look, I do know there are quite a few around. They do bush camps and things like that for men, and some of them have had quite successful programs. I think there are a lot of issues around the data that they do collect as well. We do not hear about it much unless we are attending a conference where they are talking about what they are doing. It is not out there in the media. A lot of services do their work and have all this data, but there is nowhere that data goes so that anyone like me or women or anyone else can actually access it. I have to contact that service and ask them for their data if I want it. That is a big issue with these men's services—that data is not coming out unless you are actually wanting it or they are talking about it at a conference or something.

These programs I think are mandatory programs—someone has to go and do it. They are starting off on the wrong foot because they do not want to do it anyway. And I do not know how successful that is, but I do not know what the other alternative would be—you know, if you have got to do some sort of anger management program. But I do know that self-referral is limited. A lot of men do not identify that they are violent. It is the way they have grown up. They think it is still their right to treat women like that. So self-referral is an issue, getting men to self-refer. Then, getting the men to talk about their violence is always going to be an issue as well.

I do know that there is a service—and I cannot think of the name of it right now—in Western Australia that has done some really good work around working with perpetrators. They are one of the key services that actually

could get the data we want through talking with the men. But if you are out at a camp and you are talking to men, you are not writing and taking the data. You are talking to them about their behaviour and all those sorts of things. So I think there has to be some sort of self survey that the men do prior and then probably a set of questions after 'What did you get out of this program?' And then maybe further on down the track, you know: 'Are you still in the same space that you were in when you left this program? Have you gone back to being a perpetrator again?'

It is tricky, because, look, every service I have ever come across—we are underfunded. But I think, given the statistics that we are looking at now, there needs to be a lot more money put into perpetrator programs that actually can identify—lived experience is a huge thing for people working with perpetrators. If someone has been a perpetrator and they are working in that field now, perpetrators do identify with them and would have more opportunity to talk. That is an opportunity for people who have been perpetrators to be employed, to be trained, to be educated, to actually work in that field to make change. Perpetrators are not going to tell you they are a perpetrator. They are not going to say, 'Yes, I admit it.' They are not going to do that, so you have got to find a way to get in and be able to talk about the stuff that is going on for them that makes them want to be violent.

Cindy McLEISH: It takes a while to draw it out.

Wendy ANDERS: It does.

Cindy McLEISH: At bush camp you might—on day two or three you might do that.

Wendy ANDERS: And those sorts of bush camp-type programs or even weekends away, or if a man is in this long-term program—I do not think short-term programs are the answer. Trust me; one weekend away is not going to make men not perpetrate anymore. These have got to be long-term programs. I think it gives men the time to get away from the environment they live in and see that there are other men in the same situation who want to change, and that may give them that need to make changes in their lives.

Cindy McLEISH: Thank you very much—comprehensive.

Wendy ANDERS: I hope I am helping. I do not know.

Cindy McLEISH: Thank you, Chair.

The CHAIR: Thanks. Heang.

Meng Heang TAK: Thank you for your input. I want to go back to the self-reported survey that you just mentioned. In terms of that survey, if it is to be conducted, what sort of questions do you think should be included in order to encourage participation?

Wendy ANDERS: We survey our women constantly around issues, and we ask questions: 'Are you a victim of domestic violence? When was the last time you were assaulted?'—things like that. They are very confronting questions, so we set it up in terms of, 'You don't have to answer this, but if you do, you are actually contributing to making change.' I think that sometimes we do not ask these questions because of sensitivities, because we do not want to offend or it is invading someone's right to privacy or that sort of stuff. But if you are taking a survey of a perpetrator, then I think we need to be really up-front around the questions we need to ask. 'Have they lived in violence as a child?'—questions like that that give us an idea that, yes, they have grown up in violence and have gone on to perpetrate, and that is something that we always need to look at.

The youths that are coming through the system now, and I have had a brief chat before about it, for young people and young males particularly in Aboriginal communities there is a lot of violence. They are coming through the system, and they are going to become male perpetrators. If we are to stop that link between being a youth and a victim of domestic violence and going on to be a perpetrator of violence, then we need to ask the questions around that. 'Were you a victim as a child?', 'How often do you assault your wife?' These sorts of questions are confronting for someone, but if he is genuinely on the path to changing his behaviour, he would want to answer them, I think. Does that answer your question?

Meng Heang TAK: Yes, sure. If I can have a supplementary question. Say that self-reported survey was conducted and concluded, how could the Victorian Government report back to the First Nations community about the survey and what you think?

Wendy ANDERS: I do not know how to answer that question. We send the data up to the government, and that is our role. But I think it is through –

Meng Heang TAK: Perhaps by building trust.

Wendy ANDERS: Yes, building trust, and having campaigns that notify people of what is going on. Government media releases and things like that are where we find a lot of our information. I think that sort of data needs to be used to invest in programs, invest in further funding. It is probably not beneficial to me, but it would be beneficial to particularly the government in terms of what areas need to be looked at. How does government feed us information now? I do not know. There are all sorts of mechanisms for that.

Meng Heang TAK: Thank you. Thank you, Chair.

The CHAIR: Thank you. Chris.

Chris CREWTHER: Thank you very much for your submission and your evidence and time today. Your website includes a recorded webinar on family violence and knowing your rights that shares information about how to keep people from experiencing family violence, and relevant court and legal processes. In your experience, are recorded webinars and videos like this the best way, or an optimal way, to communicate and share messages about processes such as data collection amongst your communities and others?

Wendy ANDERS: Absolutely. We do a lot of webinars with our women and fact sheets and things like that that we filter down through our membership base. One of the issues is actually getting the members to attend or getting women to come on and talk on a webinar and to get members interested in the outcome of those sorts of things. People will come to a webinar if they have got a vested interest in the topic. That is across the board. I mean, I do it myself; I look at what webinars are happening and if I have got an interest in it, then I will watch it and participate in it. But I think it is a good mechanism for getting data and information out there and what is happening. Because that opens it up to anyone to be able to come on and have a look at it. That webinar has had over 200 hits on it on the website, so it is being looked at, and it was quite some time ago that we did that. But where do you place those webinars? Where you place them for people to access after the fact is also an issue—on our website, on everyone's website, you know.

Chris CREWTHER: Yes.

Wendy ANDERS: Who goes to government websites to look at the webinars? Sorry, but that is a genuine question—who does?

Chris CREWTHER: Correct.

Wendy ANDERS: It is a good mechanism for getting information out.

Chris CREWTHER: Thank you. Do you have any commentary on language and terminology in the family violence sector, particularly the push to use terms like 'users of family violence' rather than 'perpetrators', or 'victims' and 'targets'? Do you think the right language is being used? Do you think it is going in the right direction or the wrong direction? Particularly as it relates to data collection as well and the recording of data.

Wendy ANDERS: Yes. I think that is confusing if you are ticking a box and you are talking about a perpetrator or you are ticking a box as someone who uses violence. Someone who uses violence—people may not make that connection, but they are also a perpetrator. Do you know what I mean? I think that it does need to be very clear on actual terminology that we are using, and I think moving into 'people who use violence'—violence can be used for a whole lot of reasons. It is not just family and domestic violence. So that could muddy the waters a bit, because somebody who is committing violence when they are breaking into someone's home is not committing domestic violence. It has to be a perpetrator—someone who is using violence; I do not know what the terminology is. But then it is a very long question. Are you a perpetrator of violence or is the person a perpetrator of family violence? A 'perpetrator of family violence' is much more succinct than 'someone who uses violence against their partner'. But I think we do need to have one terminology that we all use. That would

make it all so much clearer when we are actually collecting data—what data we are looking for and what we are using the data for.

Chris CREWTHER: Thank you.

The CHAIR: Thanks, Wendy. I have got a few more questions to run through before we close. Feel free to take any of these on notice too. Some other stakeholders to the inquiry have suggested that Indigenous data sovereignty and governance must be part of the solution to improving data collection from First Nations communities about family violence. Does NATSIWA have a view on this?

Wendy ANDERS: We fully support the fact that we have to have data sovereignty. Sometimes we have to forgo having that sovereignty to get the data or do the work that we do. But at the end of the day I do believe we have a right to data sovereignty, yes.

The CHAIR: Okay. In your submission you—I am just going to find the page now.

Wendy ANDERS: Refresh my memory.

The CHAIR: On page –

Wendy ANDERS: No page numbers—naughty girl. How did I miss that?

The CHAIR: Page 7 of your submission. I will just quickly read this out:

> A key inconsistency in data collection is discrepancies over the term 'Indigenous'. Many First Nations people feel this term fails to account for the diversity of community and individual experiences. Although terms like this help streamline data collection, there needs to be space made for self-identification labels that can be used alongside broader categories.

I am just wondering if you can expand on self-identification labels and what that might look like?

Wendy ANDERS: Well, you know, when you use the term 'Indigenous' you are actually talking about indigenous people all over the world. An Aboriginal may think 'I don't associate with being Indigenous; I associate with being Aboriginal or a First Nation.' And now we are moving into calling ourselves First Nations people rather than Indigenous or Aboriginal. We have sort of moved away from 'Indigenous' because it does include—and this country is now full of—other indigenous people. They have a right to call themselves Indigenous as well because they are indigenous to their country, so it sort of muddies the waters a little bit, whereas if you say 'First Nations people', it actually identifies us as the first people of this country.

Chris CREWTHER: Can I just come in on that? Do you think that might confuse other people who are First Nations of their countries as well, much like Indigenous?

Wendy ANDERS: Well, it does, so we always put 'Australian First Nations'. But Aboriginal, the original inhabitants of the country, is very much what we are as well. I tend to like 'Aboriginal' rather than anything else because it does identify me as an original person of this country. I was here first, you know, and that cannot be taken any other way.

The CHAIR: Do you think if there were more opportunities for people to self-identify, that would help build trust in reporting?

Wendy ANDERS: Absolutely. Yes, I think so. I think when you are actually asking people to report and they are filling out a survey or you are asking them what nationality they are or something, Aboriginal women will often not identify. Aboriginal people will not identify because of the stigma attached, so there has to be a question that is 'Are you Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander?' and I do not think we have ever had a problem with that question being asked. I think if we go messing too much with the data we are already collecting, it is going to change how that data is recorded. So I think we need to stick to some of the stuff that we are already doing and the way we are doing it.

The CHAIR: Yes. Okay. And just one final question—another area that has been raised throughout this inquiry is data around children and young people who are either using violence or experiencing family violence. I am just wondering if you want to speak at all to that and about some of the challenges in that space.

Wendy ANDERS: Yes. It is a very sensitive area for Aboriginal people when it is our children. We are fiercely protective of them, as most people are. But there is a growing number of children and youth who are perpetrators of violence in our communities these days, particularly in remote communities. So you look at Alice Springs as an example—the children are running amok, and there does not seem to be any answer to solving the issues around these children and what needs to be done to make the changes in these children's lives that prevent them moving into those areas of growing up to be an adult perpetrator of violence. The issue is that no parent would report on their child. Aboriginal parents do not very often report on their child. They stay and they put up with the abuse. It is a fear; there is a huge fear of the child being removed from community, being taken away from all their supports. But at the end of the day, the child probably could benefit from some short-term care where they are actually shown that there are other ways to behave. A lot of the reasons these children perpetrate is because of their home life, the issues within their home. They are hungry. They are bored. They have got nothing to do. They are not engaging in school because it does not suit their way of learning. And all these things have got to be looked at in order to make change for these children. That is huge lot of things.

I know going to school, I did not finish—I did not go to high school. I left because I could not sit in that classroom all day listening. It was boring, you know. Growing up I did a bridging course and went to uni. I ended with a masters in public health and I ended up being a lecturer and a head of school, so there are opportunities there to block. The other thing, not looking at myself because I am a fine example of how people can change given those opportunities, it was because we were moved away from our community and up into Darwin for a little bit and that made a huge change, but we still had that connection to family because Mum came with us. We had Mum, and as long as you have got a family member that is close, it can work, be in that environment with the child, then there is room to make change. How do you do that?

I know there was a program running in Alice Springs—and it is still running I believe—that had a camp out of town for children where they had horses, they had stockmen showing the kids how to ride horses, how to do woodwork, all those sorts of things, and it was closed down because of funding, because the insurance was too much and there was a concern that children were going to run away. They were in the middle of nowhere—where were they going to go? They were not that silly. They were not going to bolt off into the bush. So why it was closed down is a huge question mark. It should not have been. Those are the programs we need for these kids to engage them and get them out of the environment where they are perpetrating—where they are committing the violence—but they are still on their country.

The CHAIR: Wendy, thank you so much for appearing today and for your contribution to this inquiry. The Committee is greatly appreciative of the time and effort you have taken not just today but also in preparing your submission.

Witness withdrew.