

The CHAIR: We talked a little bit about anonymous surveys earlier. One of the themes that is coming up throughout this inquiry is how to record data or collect data on unreported family violence, and a national survey similar to the personal safety survey has been suggested. But beyond an anonymous survey, is there anything else in your experience that you think would help us account for unreported family violence?

Response from Meli

The development of robust family and domestic violence statistics requires support and commitment from a range of organisations, both government and non-government. Responding to family and domestic violence incurs costs to the community and to individuals, and improving information across sectors and jurisdictions will enhance the understanding of these financial and personal costs. An improved understanding of family and domestic violence will also provide the foundations for the creation and measurement of effective prevention measures.

In addition to the administration of the Personal Safety Survey, Meli recommends the construction of new surveys that are specific to a topic of family and domestic violence. This might include a survey that seeks to understand (to a greater degree) people's experience of violence that are not specific to physical or sexual violence. Along with the potential expansion of existing administrative data bases (where we know reports of violence are made, but possibly not captured as such), the hope would be to gain greater access to evidence of incidents of family and domestic violence.