A woman with curly hair, wearing a white top, is looking towards another person whose back is to the camera. The scene is set in what appears to be a meeting or collaborative work environment. The image is overlaid with abstract geometric shapes in teal, green, and purple.

Framing the Future

Second rolling action plan

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Victoria and pay respects to their Elders past and present. We acknowledge that Aboriginal self-determination is a human right and recognise the hard work of many generations of Aboriginal people.

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Except where otherwise indicated, the images in this document show models and illustrative settings and do not necessarily depict actual services, facilities or recipients of services. This document may contain images of deceased Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

In this document, 'Aboriginal' refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. 'Indigenous' or 'Koori/Koorie' is retained when part of the title of a report, program or quotation.

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Their insights were instrumental in shaping the priorities and actions included in *Framing the future: second rolling action plan*.

We acknowledge Country

The Victorian Government acknowledges Victorian Aboriginal people as the First Peoples and Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land and water on which we rely. We acknowledge and respect that Aboriginal communities are steeped in traditions and customs built on a disciplined social and cultural order that has sustained 60,000 years of existence.

We acknowledge the significant disruptions to social and cultural order and the ongoing hurt caused by colonisation.

We acknowledge the ongoing leadership role of Aboriginal communities, particularly Aboriginal women, in addressing and preventing family violence and will continue to work in collaboration with First Peoples to eliminate family violence from all communities



We are committed to truth-telling and Treaty

We acknowledge the impact of colonisation to this day, including discrimination in the way that our structures and systems operate.

We seek ways to rectify past wrongs. We are deeply committed to Aboriginal self-determination and to supporting Victoria's Treaty and truth-telling processes.

We acknowledge that Treaty will have wide-ranging impacts for the way we work with Aboriginal Victorians.

We seek to create respectful and collaborative partnerships and develop policies and programs that respect Aboriginal self-determination and align with Treaty aspirations.

We acknowledge that Victoria's Treaty process will provide a framework for the transfer of decision-making power and resources to support self-determining Aboriginal communities to take control of matters that affect their lives.

We commit to working proactively to support this work in line with the aspirations of Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Victorians.

We recognise those who have been harmed by family violence

The Victorian Government recognises those who have violence used against them at the hands of someone close, including adults, older adults, children, young people and those within our workforce.

Our efforts to prevent and respond to family violence are for them. It is vital that policies and services are informed by their experiences, expertise and advocacy.

We also remember and pay respects to those who did not survive and acknowledge all of those who have lost loved ones to family violence.

We keep at the forefront of our minds all those who have been, or continue to be, harmed by family or sexual violence, and acknowledge the hurt they have experienced and their ongoing courage and resilience.

Family violence services and support

If you have experienced violence or sexual assault, contact 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732). You can get immediate help. You can also get ongoing assistance. When you call, you will talk to a counsellor from the National Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence hotline.

For confidential support and information, contact Safe Steps' 24/7 family violence response line on 1800 015 188.

If you are concerned for your safety or that of someone else, please contact the police in your state or territory, or call Triple Zero (000) for emergency help.

Minister's foreword



The people who work in our family violence and sexual assault support services are invaluable. This is meaningful work which can change lives. They support people when they are at their most vulnerable.

At the heart of our Government's efforts to prevent and respond to family and sexual violence in Victoria are our family violence and sexual assault support service workers.

Building from Strength: 10-year industry plan for family violence centres on our important family violence workforce – the people who are daily helping to rebuild lives. We are deeply committed to developing our workforce which this plan has guided since 2017. Across various sectors, recruiting new workers and retaining current employees can be a challenge, and our family and sexual violence support services are no different.

Ensuring that our existing workforce remains engaged, that we nurture career progression and demonstrate appreciation for their work, is essential.

This work is meaningful and important.

We need to continue to interest and attract new workers while also improving education and training options.

Framing the future is a major pillar of our overarching *Ending Family Violence Strategy*. Its third rolling action plan is due for release later this year.

In addition, the Women's Safety Package will change laws, change culture and deliver new support for victim survivors when they need it most.

The package will drive action at every stage: better responding to victims when violence occurs, delivering a stronger justice response that holds offenders to account, and continuing Victoria's world-leading prevention **response – meaning we can stop violence before it starts.**

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to those who have championed family violence reform, including victim survivors, advocates, peak bodies as well as practitioners.

As we take the next step forward, I want to acknowledge the tireless work of Victoria's services and those who work in them. Your commitment and dedication have been unwavering, even during the most challenging of times.

As we frame the future together, I feel privileged to work alongside you, our victim survivors, advocates and peak bodies.

Together we are building a system that is inclusive, responsive and innovative which will continue to help keep women and children safe.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Vicki Ward'. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Vicki Ward

Minister for Prevention of Family Violence

Introduction

Framing the future: the second rolling action plan 2023–2026 (the second RAP) is the second rolling action plan under Building from strength: 10-year industry plan for family violence prevention and response.

These action plans further our long-term aims for the workforce. We want to have a strong specialist family violence and sexual assault sector.

We also want to make sure professionals in other sectors can do their part.

To do this, we have introduced:

- new legislation
- contemporary practice guidance and assessment tools
- training for different roles in our workforces.

‘I think it feels really exciting to be involved in a sector that is expanding and to be involved in a narrative that doesn’t feel silenced anymore... to take a role as a worker and an advocate in that change, in that increased dialog, feels really exciting and feels like a real privilege’.

Cat, Counsellor Advocate CASA House



Building from strength

The Royal Commission into Family Violence found that workforce planning and development is a central pillar of our work.

In response, the government developed *Building from strength*. This is a 10-year industry plan to support the family violence workforce and was developed in close partnership with peak bodies, industry, unions, advocates and the tertiary education sector.

At its heart, *Building from strength* seeks to support a system where victim survivors, including children and young people, can get the support they need to feel safe. It also brings perpetrator accountability to the forefront so they can get the support they need.

The plan includes the family violence, specialist family violence, primary prevention and sexual assault workforces.

It supports workers and organisations to respond to and prevent family violence. It includes the Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM) Framework and Information Sharing Scheme. This helps everyone in the sector understand their responsibilities.

Building from strength is being delivered through rolling action plans (RAPs). These set out the actions and activities we will undertake to achieve the vision of *Building from strength*.

The actions are guided by principles of:

- Aboriginal self-determination
- gender equality
- intersectional approaches
- the value of lived experience.

Delivering *Building from strength* is a whole-of-Victorian Government responsibility. It requires us to engage with Victoria’s tertiary education system, including universities and TAFEs. We also need to work with workers and employers across universal and specialised services.

What we have achieved so far

The first RAP, called *Strengthening the foundations*, provided a base for future workforce planning and development work.

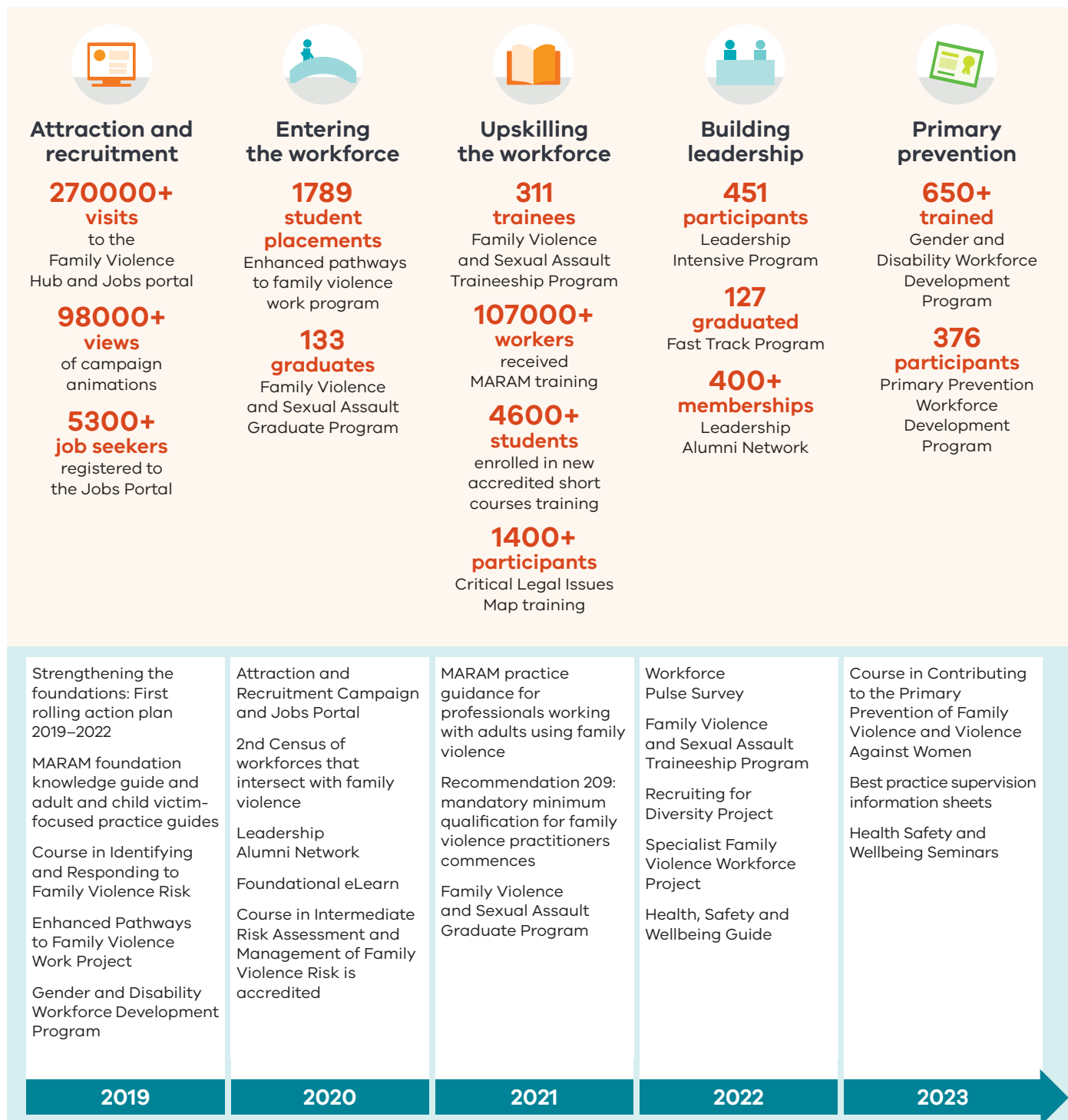
It set out initiatives focused on workforce supply, wellbeing and capability development, and system integration.

It covered 61 actions in seven focus areas, including:

- delivering programs and activities to grow the workforce, including attraction and recruitment campaigns, specialist programs for trainees and graduates, increased organisational support for people undertaking student placements
- providing tools to embed MARAM and support organisational change through new practice guidance, resources, capability building and training
- supporting employers to recruit and retain their workforces, including a jobs portal, scholarships and transition support for the introduction of mandatory minimum qualifications policy
- boosting family violence response and primary prevention capability with:
 - new practice guidance
 - vocational education and training courses
 - professional development and communities of practice
 - leadership programs
 - health, safety and wellbeing programs
 - best practice supervision
- building the evidence base through activities including funded research, new workforce data collection approaches and a new Best Practice Education Model for family violence training.



Figure 1: First rolling action plan – key achievements



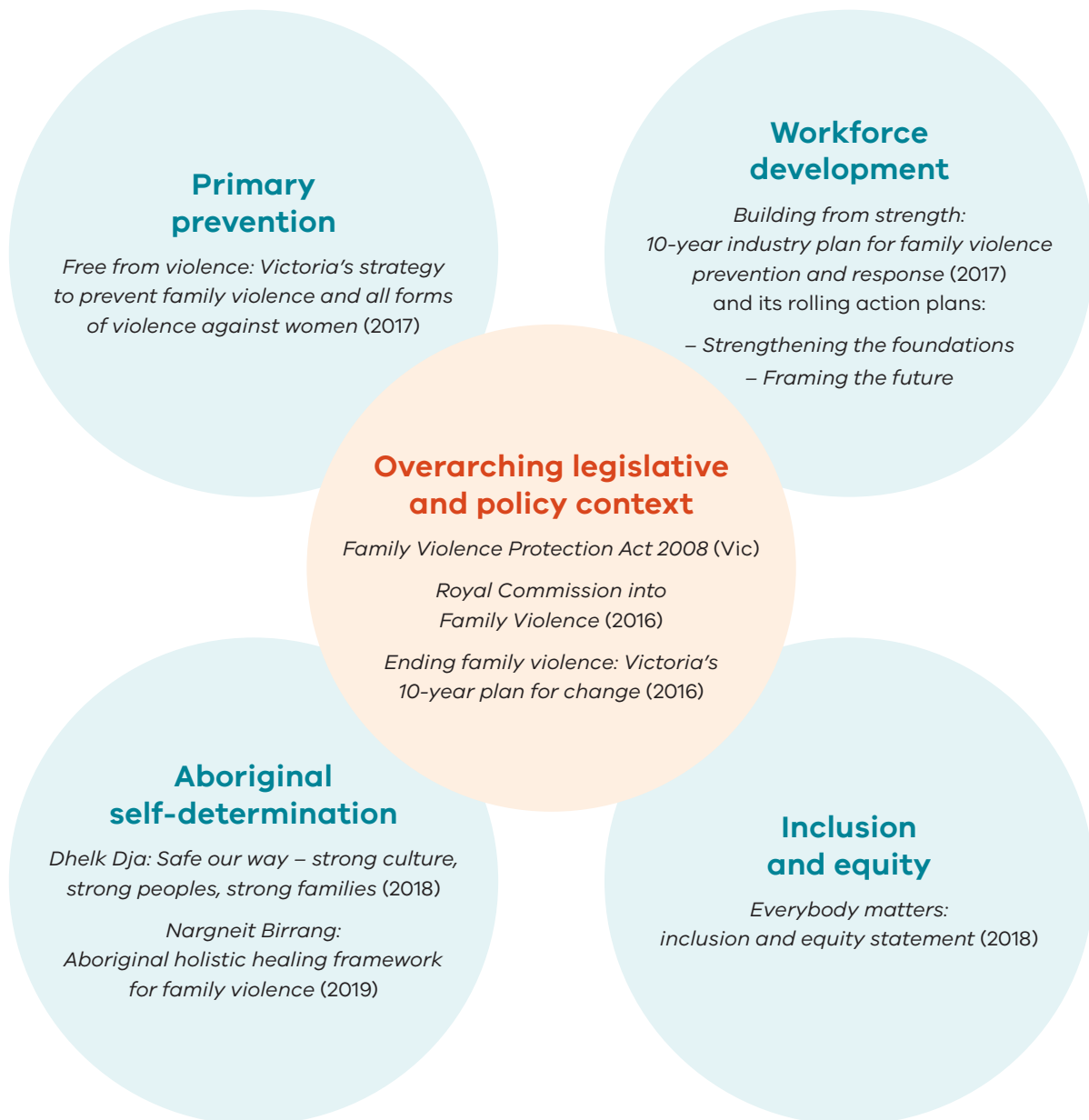
Policy context

Building from strength sits within a broader context of family violence reforms. These are guided by the Victorian Government's overarching 10-year reform plan, ***Ending family violence***.

This plan includes reforms focusing on:

- diversity and inclusion
- Aboriginal self-determination
- prevention of family violence and violence against women.

Figure 2: Family violence policy context





Family violence and sexual assault workforces

The second RAP encompasses groups who work in different service types.

In broad terms, there are 2 types of specialist family violence and sexual assault services:

- those that focus on victim survivors
- those that focus on perpetrators.

Family violence and sexual assault services have diverse workforces with a mix of qualifications. These range from diploma to undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications.

Disciplines include social work, community services, psychology, art therapy, counselling and public health.

Since the Royal Commission into Family Violence, we have funded a five fold increase in the specialist family violence response workforce – from around 500 workers in 2014 to 2,500 workers in 2023.

Figure 3: Growth in specialist family violence workforce



Job roles within the sector

Family violence jobs are challenging but meaningful and rewarding work.

There are diverse roles across:

- intake and risk assessment
- therapeutic responses and counselling
- case management
- telephone counselling
- crisis intervention and support
- men's behaviour change programs facilitation
- advocacy.

Sexual assault services are separate from family violence services. However, they often work together and can be co-located.

Counsellor advocates work across sexual assault services and harmful sexual behaviour treatment services. These roles may be within Centres Against Sexual Assault (CASAs), community services organisations as well as hospitals.

There are also child-focused services and roles, and telephone counselling services.

Aboriginal community-controlled organisations (ACCOs) provide community services under the one entity. They can include both family violence and sexual assault services. Service delivery is driven by the community and designed and led by Aboriginal people. ACCOs focus on cultural connection, holistic healing and support.

'It's quite easy for me to work with our mob because I bring that cultural knowledge as an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander woman. And that comfortability and that safe space.'

Latoya, Family Services Coordinator



The **primary prevention workforce** works in dedicated primary prevention or gender equality agencies or organisations. The workforce also works in settings such as local government, faith, education, youth, women's health and community settings.

Primary prevention engages people over the long term, in the many different environments they live, work, learn and play.

The types of roles within primary prevention may include Gender Equality Coordinator, Prevention of Family Violence Team Leader, and Education and Engagement Officer. This includes an increased number of specialist primary prevention roles, included through investment in innovative prevention initiatives delivered by diverse communities.

'I studied a Bachelor of Arts and I majored in psychology and criminology. Once I completed my degree, I went into crisis accommodation. I was working with victim survivors who were homeless as a result of family violence'

Emily, Specialist Family Violence Practitioner



Why people work in these sectors

We know from our research¹ that people who want to work in the sector do so because they want:

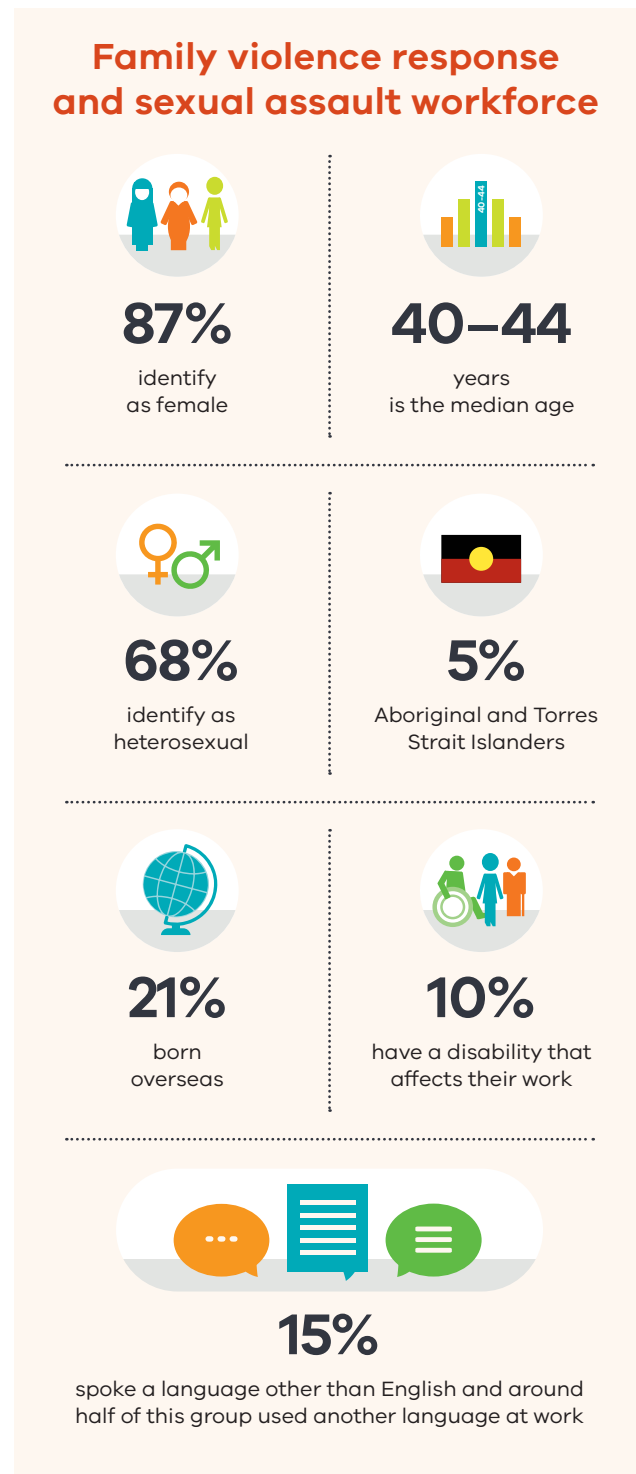
- to do a job that aligns with their values about social justice, equality, feminism and human rights
- to contribute to social change
- to do a job with purpose that makes a difference
- to do challenging and difficult work that is also meaningful, important and rewarding
- to work directly with women and children in need
- to work in a sector with diverse roles that suit many skills and interests.

'I wanted to do something for the community. I wanted to volunteer somewhere. There was a speaking up program which was a volunteer, sort of advocacy program. I really felt that my experience being a victim survivor, I thought that I am the best person for this kind of role.'

Libby, Family Violence Practitioner



Figure 4: Snapshot of our workforce



¹ Family Violence Jobs Portal – the jobs portal was launched in 2020 to support the attraction and recruitment of workers into the family violence and sexual assault sectors. It is a dedicated job portal where employers can post their jobs and prospective employees can search for jobs. Included are also resources for both employers and employees about specialised roles.

Qualifications and career pathways

Main fields of study

included:

38% social work
14% community services

12% psychology
8% counselling



81%

graduate/postgraduate qualification



31%

worked 2 years or less in the sector



21%

worked 10+ years in the sector



50%

worked in a related sector prior to their current role

Specialist primary prevention workforce²



87%

identify as female



35-54

years is the median age



35%

use their cultural or faith-based knowledge and experience to undertake their work



46%

had been in their role for more than 5 years



Most primary prevention workers hold a bachelor or postgraduate degree

Source: Workforce Pulse Survey 2022²

Source: 2019-20 Census of workforces that intersect with family violence

² 1,049 workers from 100 funded agencies in Victoria responded to the Workforce Pulse Survey 2022, representing an estimated 35 per cent of the family violence and sexual assault workforce. This does not include the primary prevention workforce.

What our workforce needs

We know we need to support workers throughout their career. Focusing on a single element like recruiting new workers is not enough.

During consultations for this second RAP, we heard from the sector that we need to:

- retain skilled and experienced workers by supporting wellbeing and improving pay and conditions
- attract new workers who reflect the communities they serve
- address the workforce supply challenges for rural/regional services
- improve entry pathways and work readiness, as well as specialist practice skill development
- improve mobility between community services sectors
- collect and analyse workforce data to inform investment and workforce planning
- make clearer pathways through the vocational and tertiary education to job roles
- develop our highly skilled and diverse workforce over time.

Broader workforce reform context

As well as an increased focus on the family violence workforce, we are also looking at the entire community services workforce. To support this work, the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing established a new Centre for Workforce Excellence in 2022.

We know that community services workers have similar core competencies, follow similar education pathways into the workforce, and share similar motivations for why they do the work they do.

Rather than focusing on attracting new workers to specific service types, it is more effective to use shared strategies for the sector as a whole. In recognition of this, some actions in the second RAP will focus on working across the community services sector.

Other actions focus only on family violence and sexual assault services. These actions aim to provide more specialisation in career pathways.

They also aim to remove barriers for professionals who want to move between different service types to develop in their careers. Reforms within education, training and skills will also help this.

During the first RAP, we encouraged collaboration across community services, education and training. For example, we developed a course called Identifying and Responding to Family Violence Risk and put it on the Free TAFE list to encourage uptake by anyone who may come across family violence their work. This course can be undertaken by anyone, from hairdressers and tradies to support workers, health workers, youth workers, human resources practitioners and accountants. This course is aligned with the MARAM Framework and delivers fundamental capabilities for anyone to identify and respond to family violence risk.

New education and skills opportunities provide further reform opportunities. This includes the Vocational Major. This program allows secondary school students to study a two-year vocational and applied learning program. This could include VET options such as a Certificate II or III in Community Services. Students could undertake these qualifications while doing their Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE).

We will also work with the Commonwealth Government on federal factors that affect workforce supply and capability.

Aboriginal family violence workforce

The second RAP embeds Aboriginal self-determination as one of its guiding principles. It aligns with the vision and directions set by *Dhelk Dja: Safe our way – strong culture, strong people, strong families*.

The development of *Dhelk Dja* was led by Aboriginal people and reflected the principle of self-determination. Initiatives under *Dhelk Dja* will continue to be the main vehicle to support Victoria's ACCOs and Aboriginal workforce.

The second RAP supports three Aboriginal-led activities identified in the *Dhelk Dja* second action plan:

- identifying opportunities to scale Aboriginal-led pathways to meeting the Mandatory Minimum Qualifications policy
- administering the Mandatory Minimum Qualifications Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Practitioner Scholarships Program
- developing an approach to Aboriginal cultural leadership.

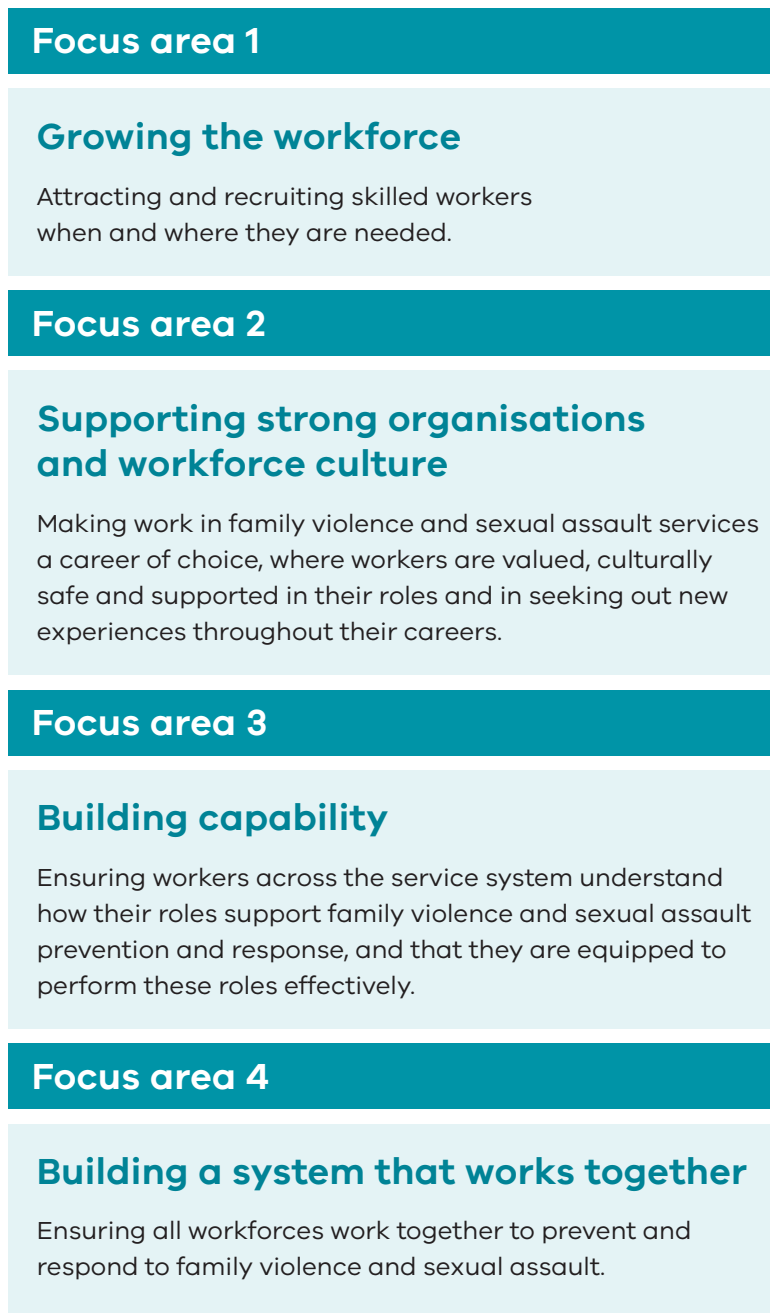
New initiatives in the second RAP will also respond to the needs of Aboriginal organisations and clients. The actions in the second RAP aim to ensure all services are culturally appropriate.

We will identify implications for Aboriginal practitioners and clients for all actions.

How we are approaching the second RAP

The initiatives in the second RAP are grouped in four focus areas.

Figure 5: Four focus areas



The focus areas include **activities** that build on workforce reform work already under way. They also include **new actions** that respond to emerging workforce challenges and priorities.

Together, these initiatives seek to secure and maintain a pipeline of skilled workers into the sector. This includes addressing vacancy rates and building better career pathways to retain them.

The actions also respond to the consultation themes and industry feedback, and the evidence of what the first RAP has shown as working.

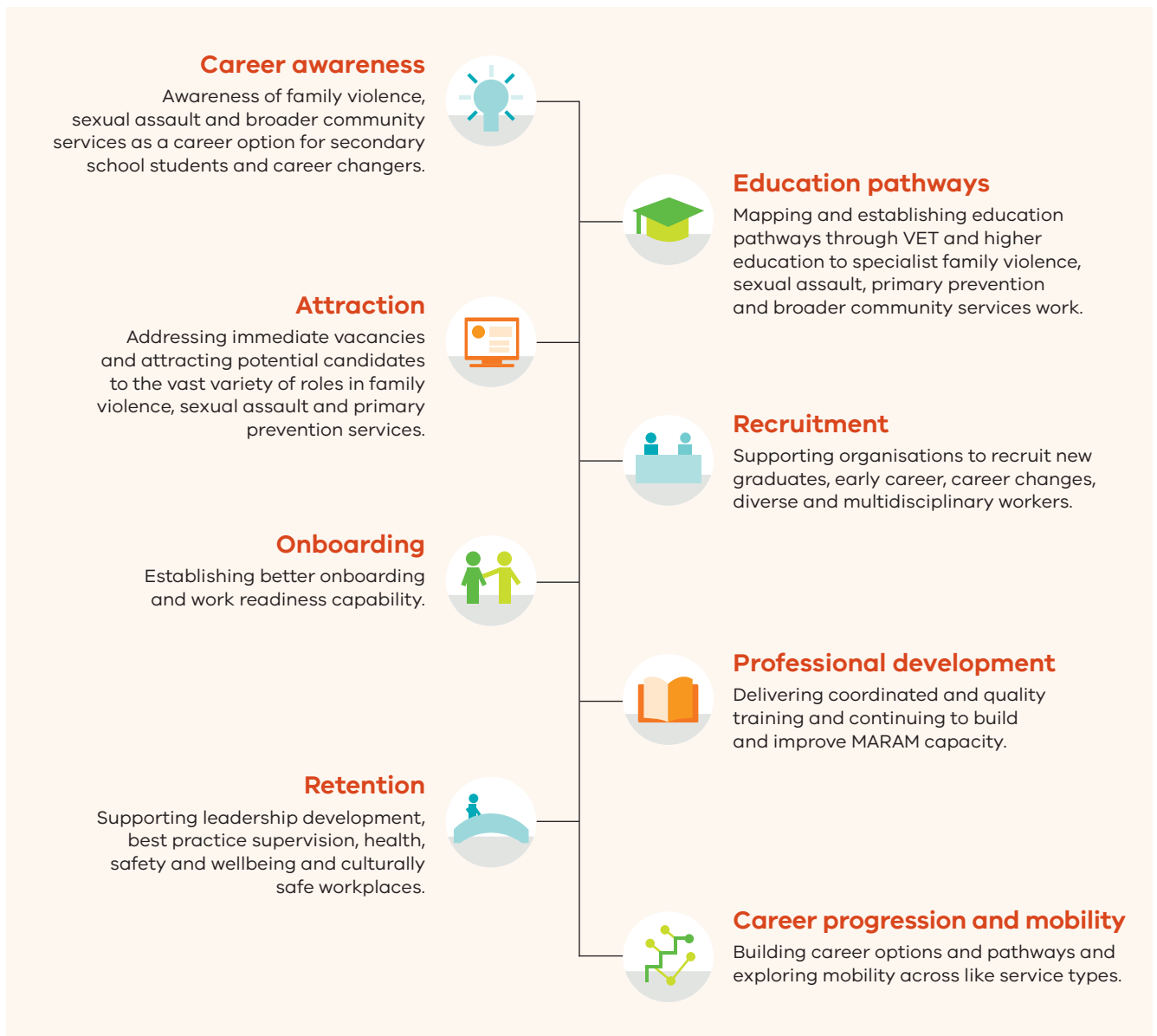
The scope of focus areas 3 and 4 includes broader community services, health, justice and education workforces, as well as family violence and sexual assault.

A number of reform activities under these focus areas include these broader workforces. This is particularly the case for implementing the Family Violence Prevention and Response Capability Frameworks (Capability Frameworks) and MARAM.

In general, actions apply to all parts of the specialist family violence and sexual assault workforce. However, they may need to be tailored for different workforces in primary prevention, victim survivor response services and perpetrator services.

The initiatives reflect our vision for a worker career journey, as depicted in Figure 5.

Figure 6: Future worker journey





Focus area 1

Growing the workforce

We need to increase the number of new workers entering the family violence and sexual assault sector. This is so we can close the gap between supply and demand for workers.

The first RAP recognised this issue. It set out several actions targeted at attraction and recruitment. The second RAP will continue and build on this work.

Growing better options for early career workers

New actions will complement existing efforts to attract people to the sector.

The first action will provide recruitment incentives to services to address immediate vacancies. It will also develop tailored approaches to attraction. We will review the data from the Family Violence Jobs Portal to determine trends in vacancies by region and role.

The second action seeks to raise awareness of community services as a future career option for young people, recognising that many young people at secondary school have not decided what field to pursue for their career or do not see the potential careers available to them.

Pathways to working with perpetrators

We lack skilled practitioners who can work with perpetrators to change their use of violence.

This work is complex and specialised. It requires experienced and supported practitioners and is generally not suitable for new graduates.

However, we can attract new workers retain the ones already working in this area by providing greater mobility and skill-sharing between family violence and other sectors that perpetrators come into contact with. This includes mental health, alcohol and other drugs and justice services.

We can also map the education pathways into careers in perpetrator services. This will help us find ways to leverage these connections to other sectors and boost this workforce.

Strengthening family violence prevention

We aim to change the attitudes, behaviours and structures that cause family violence. To do this, we need to engage all Victorians in the places where they live, work, learn and play.

This means working across a range of settings where primary prevention is not necessarily the core focus. These settings include sports clubs, educational institutions, health services and faith institution.

It also means developing the prevention capability of people working in these settings to be able to support culture change.

We will grow the size and diversity of the primary prevention workforce in key settings and contexts.

We will develop a targeted learning approach for workers in those key settings. This will look at their job-readiness and their learning and development needs.

Case study

Family Violence and Sexual Assault Graduate Program

During the first RAP, we learned that two-thirds of new graduates applying for work were not successful because they did not have experience.

In response, we developed the Family Violence and Sexual Assault Graduate Program. This program aims to attract and recruit high-quality graduates.

135 graduates participated in the program from 2021 to 2024. Graduates participated in statewide learning and development opportunities. They also received supervision support, regular communities of practice and workshops.

The evaluation of the Family Violence and Sexual Assault Graduate program will help us design a graduate intake program for the broader community service system. This program could feature graduate rotations between different community services. It would provide the social services equivalent to successful programs in the health and education systems.

We found that:



86%
agencies
satisfied with
the program.

They felt
it prepared
graduates for
ongoing work.



75%
graduates
intend to
remain working
in the sector.



Focus area 1 continued

Table 1: Focus area 1 – new actions and continuing activities

New actions		Commencement
1.1	Support employers to recruit workers to address critical vacancies across family violence and sexual assault services	2023–24
1.2	Explore opportunities to raise secondary school students’ awareness of the education, training and employment pathways that can lead to a career in community services.	2023–24
1.3	Pilot a cross community services sector graduate program modelled on the Family Violence and Sexual Assault Graduate Program.	2023–24
1.4	Map the education, training and employment pathways for people to work in perpetrator services and identify and test options to attract new, appropriately qualified workers.	2024–25
1.5	Scope and develop targeted training approaches to grow the workforce contributing to primary prevention for diverse sectors and settings.	2024–25
Continuing activity	Family Violence Attraction and Recruitment activities including strategy work to link to Jobs That Matter campaign, review the Family Violence Jobs Portal and determine next steps.	2023–24





Focus area 2

Supporting strong organisations and workforce culture

Supporting retention across the worker journey

Practitioners are more likely to remain in the sector if they feel fulfilled and supported in their roles.

This means providing roles that are satisfying and well-supported. These roles should have manageable workloads, strong leadership, and good job security and career prospects.

We must also continue to focus on workers' health, safety and wellbeing and the role that organisations can play.

At the entry level, we will improve the experience for new recruits. We will do this by developing resources to support onboarding and work readiness across all community services roles. We will work with relevant peak bodies and other stakeholders to develop and encourage take-up of these resources.

Once they are in the sector, practitioners need broad career options across different service types. This includes different roles and levels of seniority.

This is particularly important for practitioners who want to continue to improve their frontline practice, but who do not want to move into management.

We will examine what stops workers from moving to different parts of the community services sector. This includes movement into and out of specialised services. These include ACCOs, services supporting people with disability and services for the LGBTQIA+ community.

We will seek to formally recognise and value experiences in different service types which could improve the workers' career experience within community services and boost retention within the sector.

Supporting cultural and lived experience

Many people working in or looking to enter the family violence and sexual assault sectors have their own lived experience of family and sexual violence.

The lived experience pathway under the Mandatory Minimum Qualifications Policy provides further impetus to do more in this area. We will build on existing work to develop new guidance on recruiting and supporting staff with lived experience. The final new action in this focus area will involve scoping initiatives to embed culturally safe and inclusive practice in the workplace.

Leaders who understand the value of embedding an organisational approach to intersectionality can enable their workforces to be more inclusive in their practice. This can result in services becoming more accessible to all members of the community.

Focus area 2 continued

Table 2: Focus area 2 – new actions and continuing activities

New actions		Commencement
2.1	Identify ways to increase workforce mobility between the family violence and sexual assault sectors, other non-government community services, and government-delivered services.	2024–25
2.2	Explore options to support onboarding and work readiness for workers across service types, in consultation with sector stakeholders.	2024–25
2.3	Develop guidance on recruiting and supporting staff with lived experience in the family violence and sexual assault sectors.	2024–25
2.4	Scope initiatives that support organisations to embed culturally safe, inclusive and equitable workplace policies and practices.	2023–24
Continuing activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future workforce development • Leadership development – Fast Track Program, Leadership Intensive Program, and the Leadership Alumni Network • Best practice supervision implementation • Health, safety and wellbeing program 	2023–24

Case study

Specialist Family Violence Workforce Project

Under the first RAP, the Specialist Family Violence Workforce Project gained a deeper understanding of the jobs that currently exist in the family violence response sector.

The project was done in partnership with the Workforce Innovation and Development Institute (WIDI). It found that:

- the workforce does not always align with organisational charts and position descriptions
- the structure and description of similar positions are not consistent across organisations
- position descriptions need to improve to achieve consistency and good recruitment practice.

The project mapped the job families and core job functions required to deliver specialist family violence services. The second RAP will extend this work. It will help design the future state of the family violence workforce. This will involve:

- understanding the current remuneration, staffing break-down and numbers across the current workforce
- improving consistency in job classifications, roles and functions within organisations and across the system.





Focus area 3

Building capability

Building the training system

All workforces share responsibility to identify and respond to family violence.

The MARAM Framework establishes levels of responsibility for different workforces.

To put this in place, we have expanded training available for family violence specialists and workers in other sectors. The first RAP did this by making training more widely available through the vocational education and training (VET) system.

The second RAP continues to use education and training opportunities as a way to upskill workers through TAFE.

To support this expansion, we developed the Best Practice Education Model (BPEM) to guide registered training organisations on the knowledge, skills and experience required for their family violence trainers to deliver quality training.

Further work on the BPEM during the second RAP will include a professional learning suite for VET family violence trainers. It will also include work to apply the BPEM competencies to non-accredited training delivery.

More accredited training courses will be scoped in 2024. This could include other areas of family and sexual violence. We will also deliver the Course in Intermediate Risk Assessment and Management of Family Violence Risk and Course in Contributing to the Primary Prevention of Family Violence and Violence Against Women during the first year of the second RAP.

Further training rollout will include evaluation work to better understand the outcomes of formal training. We want to move beyond relying on learner self-assessments completed at the end of sessions. Instead, we will look at how learners apply family violence capabilities in their day-to-day work.

Increasing the coordination of primary prevention training and professional development

We will work with the sector to map professional development activities in the primary prevention workforce.

We will also identify opportunities to strengthen coordination and create training pathways for people wanting to work in primary prevention.

This complements our work to deliver accredited training through the VET system. It also complements efforts to embed prevention within public health and other relevant university courses. It will build workers' capability before they enter the workforce.

Capability frameworks

The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing has partnered with Safe and Equal to review the *Preventing family violence and violence against women capability framework* and the *Responding to family violence capability framework*. These were originally developed in 2017.

The capability frameworks are being refreshed to align with the MARAM Framework and other reforms. During the second RAP, we will put in place the revised capability frameworks. This will include an online platform so people can have easier access to the frameworks.

We will actively explore ways to embed family violence capabilities in pre-service qualifications. This may include focusing on a small number of priority workforces.

We will also develop a separate capability framework for sexual assault services. We will consult closely with Sexual Assault Services Victoria to do this.

Mandatory Minimum Qualification policy

The Mandatory Minimum Qualification (MMQ) policy was introduced in mid-2021. It aims to elevate the professional profile of family violence work.

This policy requires new family violence response practitioners to either:

- hold qualifications that meet the policy, or
- be working towards these via one of the available employment pathways.

The government directly funded services to support implementation of the policy. This includes updating processes for hiring and professional development.

Other initiatives provide flexible support for services to meet the policy. This includes the Family Violence and Sexual Assault Traineeships Program, designed to provide flexible support to upskill and meet the policy requirements.

New bespoke qualifications that meet the MMQ policy include:

- the Graduate Certificate in Family Violence at Chisholm Institute
- the Graduate Certificate in Domestic and Family Violence at RMIT
- the Graduate Certificate in Family Violence Prevention at Monash University
- the Graduate Certificate in Domestic and Gender-Based Violence Research and Practical Equivalent at the University of Melbourne

Practitioners can use these new educational pathways to balance work, study and caring.

Family violence services have worked closely with Safe and Equal and the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, to understand and apply the policy. We also listened to what services also told us about the challenges and opportunities of the new policy.

As a result, we have brought forward the mid-transition period review that the first RAP committed to. This will commence from early 2024.

The review will examine whether the policy is meeting its aims to elevate the professional profile of family violence work. It will also look at aspects like the cultural and lived experience pathways for meeting the policy. It will consider the options available to people coming into the sector with other qualifications.

A related action under the *Dhelk Dja* second action plan is to develop an Aboriginal-led pathway to meet the MMQ policy. This will be informed by the findings of the review.

Case study

Culturally safe and collaborative partnerships

An Aboriginal pathway to meet Mandatory Minimum Qualifications

Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative has developed an innovative approach to build skills and qualifications in its workforce. It partnered with RMIT to co-design and pilot a Wathaurong-specific Graduate Certificate in Family Violence. This partnership offers a culturally appropriate, Aboriginal-led pathway to meet mandatory minimum qualifications.

RMIT supported students to meet the Graduate Certificate learning outcomes. This included aligning assignments with workplace deliverables such as practice papers and journal reflections. RMIT tutors provided additional face to face support to students.

Undertaking the graduate certificate has opened up career opportunities for some first-in-family graduates, with 13 out of 14 students graduating.

The co-design process was informed by:

- centring Aboriginal ways of knowing, being and doing
- a focus on Aboriginal community development and prevention approaches
- critical reflection on existing family violence sector from an Aboriginal worldview
- building on participating staff's life and community experiences
- ACCO-owned data sovereignty, cultural and intellectual property.



Focus area 3 continued

Table 3: Focus area 3 – new actions and continuing activities

New actions		Commencement
3.1	Analyse current mechanisms for monitoring training quality and effectiveness, and identify where new measures may be required to understand how professionals are embedding family violence capabilities in their work.	2023–24
3.2	Accelerate the start of the mid-transition review of the Mandatory Minimum Qualification policy for specialist family violence practitioners.	2023–24
3.3	Work with peak bodies, government, education providers and industry representatives to implement the revised capability frameworks, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exploring options to embed family violence capabilities in pre-service qualifications for priority workforces • developing an online interactive platform for the capability frameworks. 	2023–24
3.4	Develop a new capability framework for sexual assault services.	2024–25
3.5	Strengthen the coordination of workforce training and development activities across the primary prevention workforce.	2024–25
Continuing activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued rollout of accredited training • Best Practice Education Model implementation 	2023–24



Focus area 4

Building a system that works together

The MARAM Framework

All community services workforces spanning family violence services, other community services, health, justice and education need to work together to respond to and prevent family violence. The MARAM Framework is the cornerstone of this systemic response.

10 MARAM practice responsibilities set at organisational level

- 1 Respectful, sensitive and safe engagement
- 2 Identification of family violence
- 3 Intermediate risk assessment
- 4 Intermediate risk management
- 5 Seek consultation for comprehensive risk assessment, risk management and referrals
- 6 Contribute to information sharing with other services (FVISS and CISS)
- 7 Comprehensive assessment
- 8 Comprehensive risk management and safety planning
- 9 Contribute to coordinated risk management
- 10 Collaborate for ongoing risk assessment and management

3 levels of practice for professionals

Comprehensive	All responsibilities
Intermediate	All except 7 and 8
Identification	All except 3, 4, 7 and 8

MARAM has significant workforce implications for the whole service system.

Workers need knowledge and skills to identify and respond to family violence, as relevant to their role. This includes having a shared understanding of the nature of family violence. It also includes common or compatible tools to assess and manage risk.

Organisational leaders need a sound understanding of how MARAM responsibilities apply to their services. They need to track the progress of their organisations in embedding MARAM within their day-to-day operations. They also need to be engaged in processes of continuous improvement.

The Victorian Government has invested more than \$130 million in MARAM to date. The current investment of \$96 million over four years started in 2021–22 and runs until June 2025. This supports a sector-by-sector approach to workforce development needs.

Major activity during the second RAP will include:

- developing further practice guidance for working with children and young people
- developing purpose-built online practice guides to make it easier for workers to use the guides
- further developing and refining MARAM training. This includes beginning delivery of training in working with perpetrators
- implementing the MARAM Maturity Model to create tools, guidance and other resources. These will help prescribed services understand their progress towards alignment with MARAM
- providing primary prevention workers with clear, best practice guidance in responding to disclosures of family violence in line with MARAM.

Defining and mapping the primary prevention workforce

The primary prevention workforce has grown and diversified over recent years. This diversity has occurred in the types of roles available, as well as the settings where we do prevention work.

Defining and mapping the current workforce will:

- provide a basis for further strategic workforce development based on a clear and detailed picture of the workforce
- provide the basis for understanding the future needs of workers in primary prevention
- illustrate the diverse nature of primary prevention workers across different services and settings
- support ongoing data collection.

Data improvement

We need an accurate understanding of what is happening within the system if we want to improve it. Currently, we do not have enough workforce data for family violence and sexual assault services to do this.

There is little systematic or consistent data collection. It is also hard to compare data between different services and across time. This makes it difficult to conduct analysis and generate actionable insights.

We want to improve data collection as part of the second RAP. This includes regular quantitative data collection on total numbers, vacancies and turnover.

We will also use periodic qualitative research. This will be like the Census of Workforces Intersecting with Family Violence (run in 2017 and 2019–20) and Workforce Pulse Survey (run in 2022).

We will work with peak bodies and services on shared access to the data collected and the results of analysis.

Table 4: Focus area 4 – new actions and continuing activities

New actions		Commencement
4.1	Define and map the primary prevention workforce to support targeted future primary prevention workforce initiatives.	2023–24
4.2	Develop a new regular collection of key workforce data, supported by periodic qualitative workforce surveys.	2023–24
Continuing activity	MARAM continuous improvement	2023–24

Where we want to be at the end of the second RAP

Figure 7:
Indicative implementation timing for key activities under existing reforms and proposed new actions

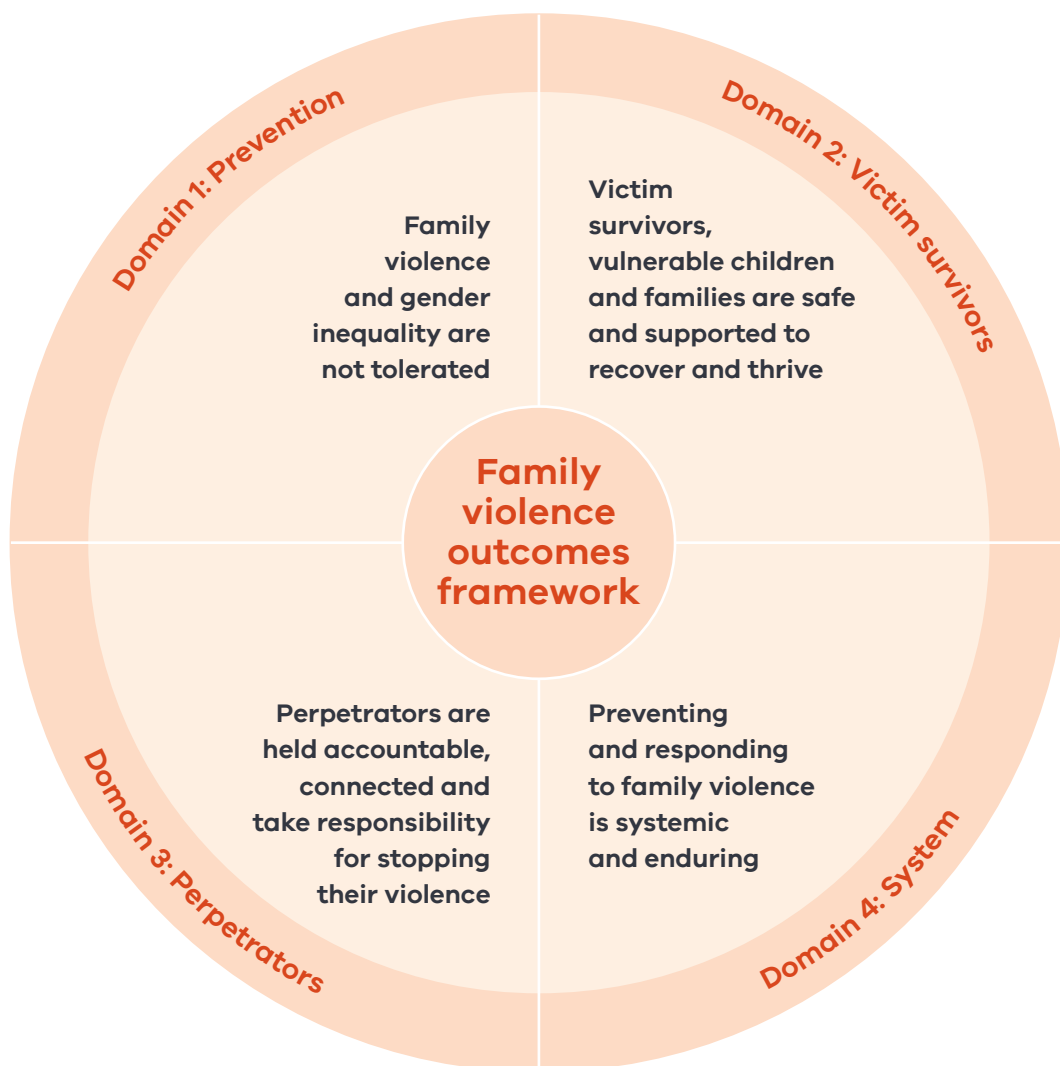
Financial year	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26
Focus area 1: Growing the workforce			
New	1.1 Addressing critical vacancies		
	1.2 Engagement of secondary school students		
	1.3 Cross-sector graduate program – scoping	Cross-sector graduate program – delivery of pilot	
		1.4 Pathways into perpetrator services	
		1.5 Primary prevention training approaches	
Continuing	Attraction and recruitment next steps		
Focus area 2: Supporting strong organisations and workforce culture			
New	2.1 Increasing workforce mobility		
	2.2 New worker onboarding and work readiness		
	2.3 Lived experience guidance		
	2.4 Initiatives to support culturally safe workplaces		
Continuing	Future workforce development including job classifications		
	Leadership development initiatives including Aboriginal leadership approach		
	Best practice supervision implementation		
	Health, Safety and Wellbeing evaluation and finalisation		
Focus area 3: Building capability			
New	3.1 Monitoring training effectiveness		
	3.2 Mandatory Minimum Qualification review	Implementation	
	3.3 Implement revised capability frameworks including embedding in pre-service qualifications		
		3.4 Sexual assault capability framework	
		3.5 Strengthen the coordination of workforce training and development activities across the prevention sector	
Continuing	Accredited training development		
	Best Practice Education Model		
Focus area 4: Building a system that works together			
New	4.1 Defining and mapping the primary prevention workforce		
	4.2 New regular data collection (development)	New regular data collection (implementation)	
Continuing	MARAM continuous improvement activities		

Accountability and outcomes

The *Family Violence Outcomes Framework* translates Victoria's vision to end family violence as outlined in *Ending Family Violence: Victoria's 10 year plan for change*. Initiatives under the second RAP contribute to all four domains of the *Family Violence Outcomes Framework*.

Most directly, they contribute to the workforce outcome under Domain 4: The family violence and broader workforces across the system are skilled, capable and reflect the communities they serve.

Figure 8: Family Violence Outcomes Framework



At a more detailed level, Table 5 shows the outcomes we expect to see from successful implementation of all initiatives under each focus area at the end of the RAP 2 period.

Table 5: Outcomes by 2026

Focus area	Expected outcomes at end 2026
Growing the workforce	There is greater integration between attraction and recruitment activities across different parts of community services, with early combined initiatives being developed.
	There is a higher level of awareness of family and sexual violence and broader community services as a career option for school leavers and new graduates. New strategies have been identified to attract more people into the perpetrator workforce.
	Workforces across different sectors and settings have greater capability to contribute to the primary prevention of family violence.
Supporting strong organisations and workforce culture	Organisational leaders in family violence and sexual assault services are more confident in leading and managing the impacts of the sector's expansion.
	Organisational leaders and managers in family violence and sexual assault services are making use of resources to support best practice supervision, lived experience and promoting and modelling health, safety and wellbeing in the workplace.
	A consistent set of job classifications and role descriptions have been identified across the family violence response and sexual assault sectors. They are starting to be used by services.
Building capability	The MMQ policy review is complete, and findings have been implemented.
	An Aboriginal-led pathway to meeting the MMQ policy has been developed.
	The full suite of family violence accredited training is complete and is being delivered.
	Training quality and effectiveness is being tracked more systematically, and is connected with the MARAM Maturity Model.
	The Sexual Assault Services Capability Framework is complete and is being applied across sexual assault services.
Building a system that works together	MARAM perpetrator-focused training is being delivered, children and young people practice guidance has been released. Maturity Model is being implemented by services and outcomes of the MARAM five-year review have been implemented.
	We have a clear picture of the current primary prevention workforce across diverse sectors and settings.
	Workforce data is being collected on a more regular and consistent basis and data analysis is influencing workforce strategy for the family violence and sexual assault sectors.

Evaluation planning will begin shortly after the release of the second RAP, to enable baseline data collection. These short-term outcomes will be used as an input to the development of a more comprehensive monitoring framework to guide the evaluation.

Appendix 1:

Text-equivalent descriptions of figures

Focus area 1: Growing the workforce

New actions:

- 1.1 Addressing critical vacancies – 2023–24, 2024–25, 2025–26
- 1.2 Engagement of secondary school students – 2023–24, 2024–25
- 1.3 Cross-sector graduate program – scoping 2023, delivery 2024–2026
- 1.4 Pathways into perpetrator services – 2024–25, 2025–26
- 1.5 Primary prevention training approaches – 2024–25, 2025–26

Continuing actions:

- Attraction and recruitment next steps – 2023–24, 2024–25, 2025–26

Focus area 2: Supporting strong organisations and workforce culture

New actions:

- 2.1 Increasing workforce mobility – 2024–25, 2025–26
- 2.2 New worker onboarding and work readiness – 2024–25, 2025–26
- 2.3 Lived experience guidance – 2024–25, 2025–26
- 2.4 Initiatives to support culturally safe workplaces – 2023–24, 2024–25, 2025–26

Continuing actions:

- Future workforce development including job classification – 2023–24, 2024–25, 2025–26
- Leadership development including Aboriginal leadership approach 2023–24, 2024–25, 2025–26
- Best practice supervision implementation – 2023–24
- Health, safety and wellbeing evaluation and finalisation – 2023–24

Focus area 3: Building capability

New actions:

- 3.1 Monitoring training effectiveness 2023–24, 2024–25, 2025–26
- 3.2 Mandatory Minimum Qualification policy – review 2023–24, implementation 2024–25
- 3.3 Implement revised capability frameworks including embedding in pre-service qualifications – 2023–24, 2024–25, 2025–26
- 3.4 Sexual assault capability framework – 2024–25, 2025–26
- 3.5 Strengthen the coordination of workforce training and development activities across the prevention sector – 2024–25, 2025–26

Continuing actions:

- Accredited training development – 2023–24, 2024–25, 2025–26
- Best Practice Education Model – 2023–24, 2024–25, 2025–26

Focus area 4: Building a system that works together

New actions:

- 4.1 Defining and mapping the primary prevention workforce – 2023–24
- 4.2 New regular data collection – development 2023–24, implementation 2024–25, 2025–26

Continuing actions:

- MARAM continuous improvement activities – 2023–24, 2024–25, 2025–26

