

[REDACTED]

From: Joanne Stojkovic [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 7 July 2023 1:35 PM
To: QSAC Submissions
Subject: FW: Review of sentencing for sexual violence offences and aggravating factor for domestic and family violence offences

[REDACTED]

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the review of sentencing for sexual violence offences and aggravating factor for domestic and family violence offences. Relationships Australia Queensland (RAQ) welcomes this review of sentencing practices for sexual assault and rape offences and the impact of increase in maximum penalties for contravention of a domestic violence order.

As one of the largest providers of individual, family and relationship support services in Queensland, including domestic and family violence services, RAQ has over 70 years' experience providing individual, couple and family group counselling, dispute resolution, services to older people, children's services, services for victims and perpetrators of family violence, and relationship and professional education. We aim to support all people to live with positive and respectful relationships, and believe that people have the capacity to change how they relate to others and develop better health and wellbeing.

[REDACTED]

In relation to the proposed Terms of Reference and preliminary feedback regarding key issues for exploration, we would like to draw attention to the following:

- Risk of exacerbating over-criminalisation and over-incarceration of marginalised groups, including First Nations people, while not attending to structural issues that may contribute to such offences in the first place.
- Given the evidence of misidentification of women as primary aggressors, especially marginalised women, and the potential risk of worsening their situation or outcomes.
- That measures such as these may draw attention away from the need to address the complex intersection of intergenerational trauma and dispossession – and the need for a whole of community response that prioritises cultural healing to effectively break the cycle of family violence.
- The evidence that supports the role of early intervention such as Intervention Orders, and behavioural change programs that include focus on the gendered nature of domestic, family and sexual violence.

Also noteworthy is our observation that men can be reluctant to name sexual violence when working with female practitioners – worth consideration when working with male perpetrators.

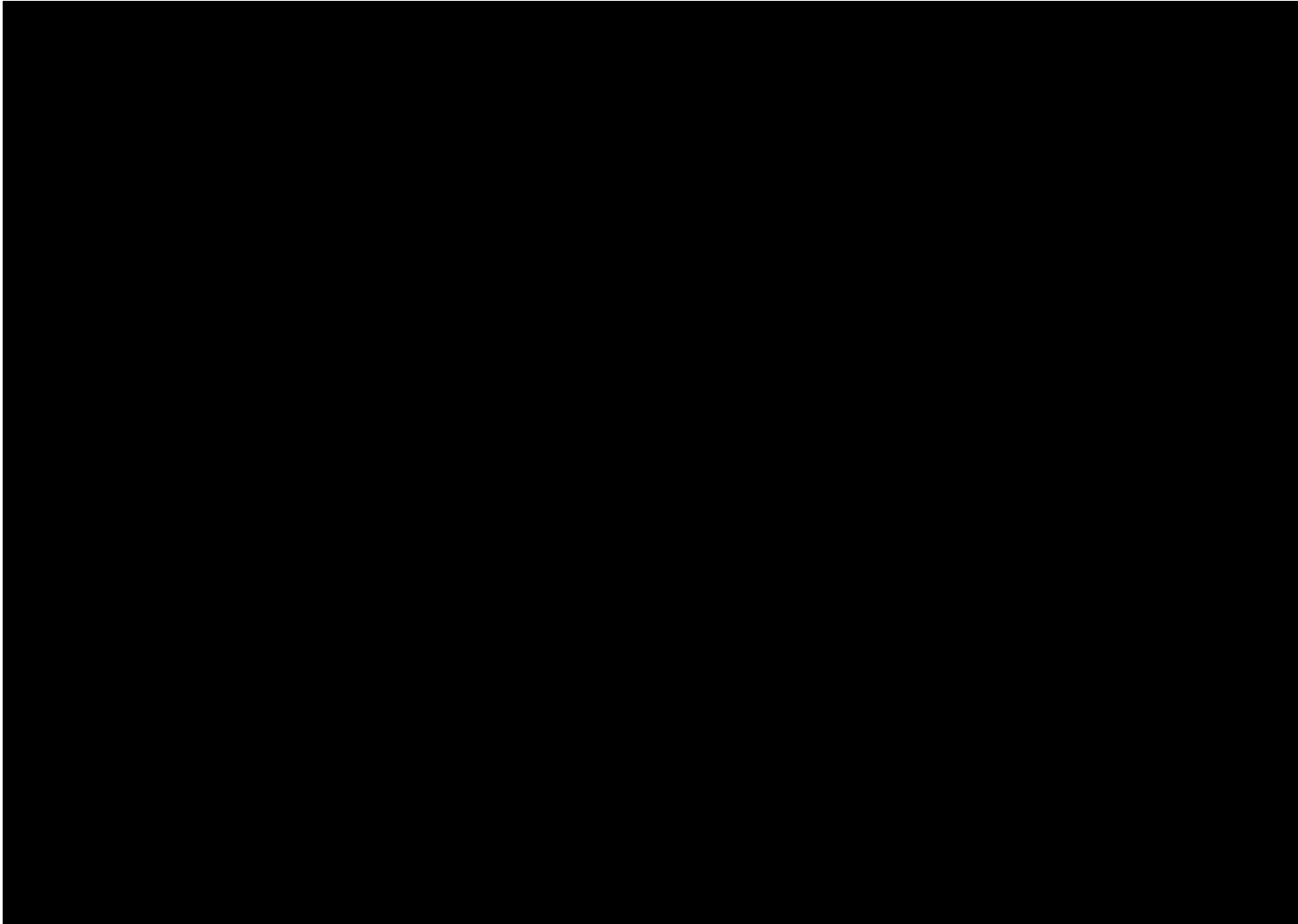
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Relationships Australia Queensland recognises and acknowledges the Aboriginal People of mainland Australia and related island communities and the Torres Strait Islanders as the First Peoples of this Country. We acknowledge the respective Traditional Owners on whose countries we live and work and Elders Past and Present. We pay tribute to their enduring stewardship of this country, and honour their ongoing contribution to the spiritual, environmental, social, cultural, political and economic fabric of our society. This Acknowledgement is integral to the process of healing, recovery and development of relationships and our shared future with The First Peoples of Australia.

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