

National Cabinet on Gendered and Domestic Violence

On Wednesday, 1 May 2024, Prime Minister Anthony Albanese convened a meeting of National Cabinet to address the crisis of gender-based violence in Australia.

The Cabinet was called by the Prime Minister when he spoke at the Canberra rally against gender-based violence on Sunday, 28 April 2024. Hundreds of thousands of supporters marched in cities across Australia to highlight the issue of gender-based violence after the murder of numerous women.

Twenty-eight women have already been killed in 2024, an average of one woman killed every four days. Demonstrators want gender-based violence to be declared a national emergency and stricter laws put in place to stop it.

This occasional paper highlights the key announcements from National Cabinet.

National Cabinet Meeting

The National Cabinet met virtually to discuss the gender-based violence national crisis. The key priorities from the meeting, stemming from the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032*, include;

- Strengthening accountability and consequences for perpetrators – with early intervention for high-risk perpetrators and serial offenders and best violence justice responses that support people who have experienced violence;
- Strengthening and building on prevention work through targeted, evidence-based approaches; and
- Maintaining a focus on missing and murdered First Nations women and children and the impact of domestic and family violence on First Nations communities.

The Cabinet also agreed that system responses must be strengthened, involving work across governments and jurisdictions. First Ministers will take action on this work and report back to the National Cabinet later in the year.

- The Police Ministers Council and the Standing Council of Attorneys-General will be tasked with developing options for improving police responses to high-risk and serial perpetrators, including considering focused deterrence and fixated threat strategies.
- First Ministers, led by the Commonwealth Minister for Women, agreed to improve information sharing about perpetrators across systems and jurisdictions.



- First Ministers agreed that States and territories, led by Victoria and South Australia, will explore opportunities to strengthen national consistency and drive best practice approaches across jurisdictions, including those related to risk assessment and responses to sexual assault.

The full media release on the National Cabinet meeting can be found [here](#).

Helping Women Leave a Violent Partner Payment

The Commonwealth will also deliver the Leaving Violence Payment to help people experiencing intimate partner violence with the costs of leaving such a relationship.

The Government will invest **\$925.2 million** over five years to establish the program permanently. Those eligible can access up to **\$5,000** in financial support, referral services, risk assessments, and safety planning.

The Government will also;

- Expand eligibility for parenting payment single – which will assist 82,000 more single parents to remain on higher payment rates until their youngest child turns 14;
- Legislate paid family and domestic violence leave; and
- Invest in crisis accommodation and affordable housing for women and children escaping violence.

These reforms make the Escaping Violence Program trial permanent. More than 45,000 Australians have accessed the EVP payment since 2021, with 80 per cent being self-referrals.

The full media release on the Leaving Violence Payment can be found [here](#).

E-safety reforms

In addition to the delivery of financial support, the Government will also introduce a suite of online measures to ensure easy access to pornography for children and young people is addressed and tackle online misogyny, which fuels harmful attitudes towards women.

There are four main announcements regarding e-safety reforms:

1. Legislation to ban the creation and non-consensual distribution of deep fake pornography will be introduced by the Government, enforcing that the creation and sharing of sexually explicit material with consent using technology will be subject to criminal penalties.



2. The Government will provide resourcing to conduct a pilot of age-assured technology to protect children from harmful content. It will identify available age-assured products to protect children from online harm and test their efficacy in relation to privacy.
3. The pilot's outcomes will then inform the work of Australia's eSafety Commissioner under the Online Safety Act through the development of industry codes and standards.
4. The Stop It at the Start campaign will also launch a new phase in mid-June **until May 2025**. The phase will include a counter-influencing campaign in online spaces where violent and misogynistic content is found.

The campaign intends to counter the influence of online content that condones violence against women, raise awareness about a proliferation of misogynistic influencers and content, and encourage conversations within families about the impact of such material. The new phase of the campaign builds on the government investments already made to fund a three-year trial to explore what works best to counteract the impacts of social media messaging that targets young men and boys.

The Government will also undertake classification reforms with states and territories, which will examine options to reduce exposure to violent pornography. In bringing forward legislation in August, the Government will outlaw doxing, the act of sharing personally identifiable information about an individual without consent, and overhaul the Privacy Act to give all Australians who experience domestic violence greater control and transparency over their personal information.

The full media release on the Esafety Reforms can be found [here](#).

For any in-depth details on the announcement, please contact your Hawker Britton consultant, Emma Webster, at ewebster@hawkerbritton.com.