

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



Wednesday, 23 March, 2016

WE WILL PUT FAMILY VIOLENCE SURVIVORS AT CENTRE OF REFORM

Survivors of family violence will be at the heart of the Andrews Labor Government's response to the Royal Commission into Family Violence.

The 2015 Australian of the Year Rosie Batty will lead a new Victim Survivors' Advisory Council who will ensure the Government makes the changes needed to protect Victorians.

The council comes as the Andrews Labor Government announces an immediate injection of almost \$10 million to relieve the pressure on vital family violence services across the state.

As part of the Government's election commitment to implement all recommendations of the Royal Commission, we are also establishing a Family Violence Steering Committee to help us reform our family violence system.

The committee will allow the Government, experts and the organisations that support survivors to sit at the same table to guide our reform of a system that has failed family violence victims for too long.

The immediate upfront cash injections include:

- \$6 million in immediate funding to meet an expected rapid rise in calls for help after the Royal Commission's report is released. This includes crisis accommodation, counselling, women's health, behaviour change programs, services working with Aboriginal victim survivors, and to support consultation with government
- \$2 million over two years to support culturally diverse communities who are experiencing family violence
- \$1 million for the Victims Assistance Program, which supports victims of crime in their recovery
- \$129,000 to fund support for women to identify and seek help for financial abuse
- \$600,000 to help local councils develop programs to prevent family violence in their communities

Family violence survivors, the people who help them and peak organisations today joined Premier Daniel Andrews and Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence Fiona Richardson at a workshop to prepare for the imminent change the Royal Commission will bring and begin developing a common agenda for reform.

The Royal Commission into Family Violence will deliver its report to the Governor of Victoria, Her Excellency the Hon Linda Dessau AM on 29 March.

Quotes attributable to the Premier Daniel Andrews

"This immediate emergency funding will help support women and their children when they need it most – and we know the coming days will be difficult for many as the Royal Commission makes its recommendations."

"I'm very proud to have former Australian of the Year Rosie Batty lead the Victims Survivors' Advisory Council. Her courage and leadership is an inspiration to all of us."

Quote attributable to the Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence Fiona Richardson

"Survivors have told us their stories. Now we need to make sure we give them the change they have long asked for."