

Inquest into the deaths of Doreen Gail Langham and Gary Matthew Hely

Doreen Gail Langham and Gary Matthew Hely died on 22 February 2021 in a housefire fire intentionally lit by Mr Hely in order to kill Ms Langham.

The Deputy State Coroner Jane Bentley delivered her findings of inquest on 27 June 2022.

The Queensland Government responds to recommendations directed to government agencies at inquests by informing the community if a recommendation will be implemented or the reason why a recommendation is not supported.

The departments named in this response will provide implementation updates until the recommendation is delivered. Further information relating to the implementation of recommendations can be obtained from the responsible minister named in the response.

Recommendation 1

The Queensland Government provide funding for the Queensland Police Service to trial a specialist victim-centred police station specifically designed to deliver an integrated response for victims of domestic violence staffed by suitably qualified multidisciplinary teams which include police officers with specialist domestic violence training, domestic violence workers, social workers and legal advisors in the Logan District.

Response and action: recommendation is agreed in principle and implementation completed.

Responsible agency: Queensland Police Service and Department of Justice and Attorney-General.

On 4 December 2023 the Queensland Government responded:

The Queensland Government has considered this recommendation together with the recommendations from the Women's Safety Justice Taskforce (WSJT) *Hear her voice: Report one – Addressing coercive control and domestic and family violence in Queensland* and *Hear her voice: Report two – Women and girls' experiences across the criminal justice system* and the Commission of Inquiry (COI) into Queensland Police Service responses to domestic and family violence that relate to integrated and multidisciplinary responses to domestic and family violence. The Government is committed to better meeting the needs of victims and people affected by domestic and family violence.

The Queensland Government, is currently trialling or piloting a range of integrated service response initiatives that address the intent of this recommendation for integrated responses to victims of domestic and family violence by multidisciplinary teams, including embedding 300 domestic and family violence support workers in police stations across the State, embedding police officers within non-government domestic and family violence services, develop and trialling a co-response model and establishing arrangements with service providers to access offsite locations to engage with victim-survivors for whom attending a police facility may be problematic. In addition, a further three High Risk Teams (HRTs) are being established at Townsville, South Brisbane/Redlands and Rockhampton to supplement HRTs in the existing locations, Logan/Beenleigh, Brisbane, Caboolture, Cairns, Cherbourg, Ipswich, Mackay and Mount Isa/Gulf.

Since the findings were handed down in 2022, the Queensland Government has reinvigorated its domestic violence response and support services and continues to support a specialist multi-disciplinary approach to provide the best victim centric trauma informed responses to domestic and family violence. The Queensland Government will continue to build upon and improve services through a continuum of integrated service delivery options.

The Queensland Government will continue to report on the progress through the Annual Reports on the status of the WSJT and COI recommendations. The annual reports are tabled in Parliament by the relevant Ministers and monitored by the Independent Implementation Supervisor.

Recommendation 2

The Queensland Government provide funding for an appropriately qualified and experienced domestic violence specialist social worker to be embedded at the front counter of every police station in Logan District for a trial period of 12 months.

Response and action: recommendation is agreed to in principle and implementation completed.

Responsible agency: Queensland Police Service and Department of Justice and Attorney-General.

On 4 December 2023 the Queensland Government responded:

The Queensland Government is working to develop a sustainable model to embed domestic and family violence workers in police stations across the State in response to:

- the WSJT, *Hear her voice: Report one – Addressing coercive control and domestic and family violence in Queensland*
- the Commission of Inquiry into Queensland Police Service responses to domestic and family violence report, *A call for change*
- the Queensland Audit Office's report, *Keeping people safe from domestic and family violence*.

Development of the model will include consultation with the domestic and family violence sector on implementation considerations and workforce planning.

The Queensland Government has committed significant funding to embed domestic and family violence support workers in police stations across the State in response to the report of the Commission of Inquiry into Queensland Police Service responses to domestic and family violence. This commitment will ensure specialist domestic and family violence support workers are available in police stations statewide, including the Logan District.

While the statewide rollout progresses, \$2.6 million has been allocated to several domestic and family violence support services to continue existing arrangements embedding domestic and family workers in police stations. The Centre for Women and Co has been funded to embed domestic and family support workers in the Logan Central police station.

The Queensland Government will continue to report on the progress through the Annual Reports on the status of the WSJT and COI recommendations. The annual reports are tabled in Parliament by the relevant Ministers and monitored by the Independent Implementation Supervisor.

Recommendation 3

Police operational procedure 9.3.1 be amended to state that officers 'must' view a person's interstate record for every domestic violence matter.

Response and action: recommendation is implemented.

Responsible agency: Queensland Police Service

On 7 May 2023 the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and emergency Services responded:

The Queensland Police Service has amended Section 9.3.1 of the Operational Procedures Manual (OPM) to provide that officers 'are to' view a person's record to identify any nationally recognised domestic violence orders and domestic violence related criminal history. In the OPM, the terms 'is to' and 'are to' are synonymous with 'must' and requires compliance. The amendments were published in October 2022.