

**14 May 2025**

## **NTCOSS and Specialist DFSV Services Respond to NT Government's \$36 Million Funding Announcement**

Northern Territory Council of Social Service (NTCOSS), on behalf of the Territory's specialist DFSV sector, welcomes the NT Government's announcement confirming an ongoing commitment to an increase of \$36 million in annual funding to address domestic, family, and sexual violence (DFSV) in the Territory.

Particularly welcome is the inclusion of a DFSV Training Centre, recognising the importance of building sector capacity through specialist training initiatives. Investing in training and professional development is fundamental to ensuring the ongoing development and sustainability of a skilled, specialist workforce.

Providing an expanded program for collaboration between frontline specialist and emergency services through the Co-Responder model, is another positive budget measure. Collaborative approaches between government and the specialist sector should be expanded and remain the cornerstone approach to improving safety for women and children in the territory.

While the ongoing commitment is a positive step, it is essential the funding is prioritised for those whose core business is the prevention of and response to DFSV. These include women's safe houses, DFV crisis accommodation, DFV counselling services, specialist sexual assault counselling and response services, men's behaviour change programs, and specialist DFV legal services.

NTCOSS recognises that programs like Circuit Breaker and prison-based initiatives are valuable programs for reducing violence in the community. However, these are child protection and corrections initiatives that should be funded accordingly, and not at the expense of specialist DFSV services. To ensure positive outcomes and maintain service quality, it is crucial that DFSV specific funding is delivered through specialist services in line with previous commitments and coronial recommendations, noting that increased service demands will continue to emerge.

NTCOSS and specialist DFSV services are eager to work closely with the NT Government to develop integrated approaches that are known to work at reducing violence and improving community safety. The sector is committed to leveraging its expertise and local knowledge to support government and community-led initiatives. To reinforce this, the sector will continue to advocate that in coming budgets, government fund a dedicated DFSV Peak and adequate resourcing for specialist services. Through genuine collaboration, we can ensure funding decisions align with community and sector needs and create a safer Territory.

### **Quote:**

*"To ensure that funding is effectively addressing the needs of those impacted by DFSV, it is important that funding is strategically allocated and clearly explained. Programs aimed at reducing violence and supporting communities must be adequately resourced, particularly specialist frontline services that face increasing demand."*

**- Sally Sievers, CEO Northern Territory Council of Social Service**