

Australia's campaign to
stop violence against women

White Ribbon

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29 May 2015

To Members of the Royal Commission

Response to Issues Paper for The Royal Commission into Family Violence

Please find enclosed White Ribbon Australia's submission to the aforementioned Royal Commission. Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the questions asked in the Issues Paper.

Please accept our apologies for the late submission due to severe staff shortages and high work load associated with the running of 10 Regional Forums around Australia bringing national and international expertise to regional, remote and metropolitan communities to enhance community action in the prevention of family violence. These Forums have involved over 700 people from across the community.

Thank you for your consideration of the attached response. We look forward to the opportunity to elaborate on the information contained in this submission as required.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Libby Davies". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial 'L'.

Libby Davies
CEO
White Ribbon Australia

White Ribbon Australia's Response to The Royal Commission into Family Violence
Friday, 29 May 2015

White Ribbon Australia's (White Ribbon) response to The Royal Commission's Inquiry into Family Violence is in response to the Issues Paper. White Ribbon's submission does not answer all of the 21 Questions. This submission particularly addresses questions 4, 16 and 21 of the Issues paper. These appear in the sections dedicated to:

- Royal Commission goals (Q1)
- What has been done so far (Q2) and (Q3)
- Reducing/preventing family violence (Q4)
- Making people who have been violent accountable and helping them to change their behaviour (Q14), (Q15) and (Q16)
- General questions (Q20) and (Q21)

We welcome this important opportunity to contribute to the Commission's work. The complexity of the task ahead is large but builds on the extensive work to date in relation to the insidious issue of family violence. Collaboration and coordinated response lies at the heart of our nation's future success in eradicating violence in all its forms.

White Ribbon's focus is primary prevention - stopping violence before it occurs, by challenging the deeply ingrained attitudes, social norms and power inequalities that give rise to men's violence against women. We fully acknowledge that family violence goes beyond male violence against women. However, the most prevalent violence is that perpetrated by men to women and their children and we firmly believe that these causal factors are pivotal in determining the design and strategy of the prevention approach. We need men to stand up, to speak out and act to influence the attitudes, behaviours and actions of some men who perpetrate violence and abuse.

1. Introduction to the White Ribbon Campaign

White Ribbon is a national public education, awareness raising, prevention campaign that is driving cultural, behavioural and attitudinal change across the community but primarily amongst men and boys. We work with men and women to change the attitudes and behaviours that perpetuate men's violence against women, promoting a culture of non-violence in society. In addition to the proven and evidence based prevention programs in schools and workplaces, the White Ribbon Australia awareness-raising and educational elements of the campaign include a cohort of public relations collateral geared to the engagement and education of men in the prevention of violence against women. We do this by working across the community and including with young people, in schools, in workplaces, to raise awareness of the relationship between gender inequality and violence against women.

Active in Australia since 2003, White Ribbon's vision is that all women live in safety, free from all forms of men's violence. Importantly, we recognise the vital role men play in preventing violence against women. We foster and encourage male engagement and leadership in the prevention of violence against women, based on the understanding that most men are not violent.

This public campaign is a means for men to speak out and act to stop violence against women, and to safely and effectively challenge the attitudes and behaviours of the minority of men who use or condone violence against women.

Originating in Canada in 1991, White Ribbon Australia is the most successful White Ribbon campaign in the world.

Over the last 12 years **White Ribbon Australia** has established significant depth and breadth as a unique, male primary prevention campaign that now **has 75% brand awareness** and is successfully engaging men in changing their attitudes and behaviours. Furthermore White Ribbon has:

- Seen a **230% increase in the number of White Ribbon community events since 2010** with a doubling in the last two years;
- Implemented a **successful and award winning Workplace Accreditation program** which has directly touched over 144,000 employees the majority of which are men;
- **Implemented a successful and award winning Schools Program** with 360 schools and over 220,000 students;
- **Active social media following and a reach of over 2 million people** across media channels per week and growing;
- A growing number of **committed community and corporate partners**; and
- **Is evidencing positive social change.**

2. Question 1: Are there other goals the Royal Commission should consider?

We applaud the Royal Commission for its holistic approach and the goals identified on Page 2 of the Issues Paper. In addition we suggest the following be added:

1. *Consult internationally* in order to capture and reflect as many best practice examples from the [international] field as possible. There are, for example organisations in the UK from which lessons can be learned. One prominent example is Safe Lives (<http://www.safelives.org.uk/>). We reflect further on the work of Safe Lives in Question 21.
2. Giving capacity to developing and improving the means by which solutions to family violence are implemented and assessed and ***better positioning national advocacy in the primary prevention space.***

National Policy and Advocacy Coordination should occur through a national body that coordinates and facilitates responses from the sector. The national body should not become involved in project based work or service provision that operates in competition with already established organisations and services so as to avoid duplication, unwarranted competition in regards to prevention strategies and action, and inefficient use of very finite resources. The national policy work resulting in the national prevention framework must be respectful of the effective work already established in the prevention space including the national campaigns and programs run by White Ribbon Australia. Similarly organisations must be respectful of the coordinating policy role of this body.

This means that the focus of the national prevention organisation, Our WATCH, should be on policy development (national frameworks) and national coordination of jurisdictional, service response and coordination issues. The current design of the Our WATCH model – at the operational level, as evidenced by the Our WATCH *Statement of Priorities*, has to date resulted in duplication and unnecessary competition in the field particularly in areas such as schools and workplaces.

3. **Question 2: The Royal Commission wants to hear about the extent to which recent reforms and developments have improved responses to family violence, and where they need to be expanded or altered.**

White Ribbon is a recent development that is improving the responses to family violence through its focus on primary prevention.

White Ribbon notes there is considerable community groundswell that is successfully connecting **primary prevention** strategies consistent with a public health model approach. This approach has informed the work of White Ribbon Australia.

In particular White Ribbon Australia has:

1. Actively driven public awareness of the problem; ie Defined the problem and raised public consciousness and understanding of:
 - What is the problem?
 - Who is affected?
 - When and where is this occurring?

The public relations and creative advertising campaigns have targeted men consistent with the White Ribbon Mission of *"Making Women's Safety a Man's Issue too"*.

2. Enhanced understanding of why violence occurs and how we can reduce risk
This is core to the educative and awareness raising elements of the White Ribbon Australia Campaign and is embedded in the Ambassador eLearning and appointment process; Workplace Accreditation Training and Breaking the Silence Schools Program.
3. Developing and evaluating prevention strategies and programs and ensuring those in place evidence effective prevention.

The White Ribbon Programs are designed in response to identifying risk and enhancing protective factors. Independently evaluated, these programs are evidencing positive, behavioural change.

Expanding and further supporting this work is in the interest of the Victorian community and the Victorian Government.

Facts

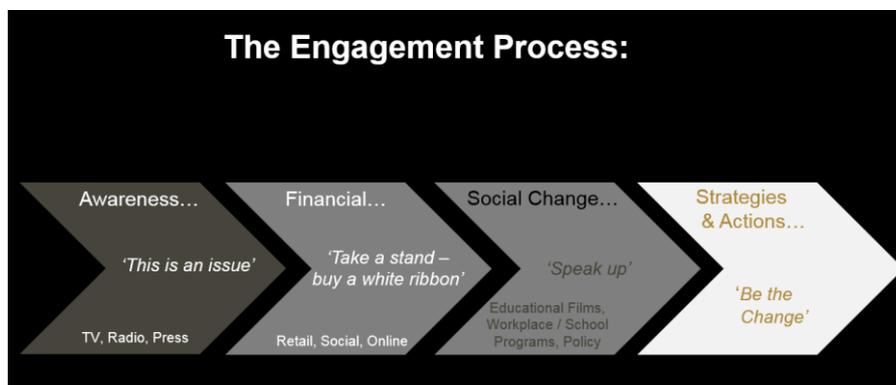
1. **White Ribbon has an established campaign in Australia** that now has 75% brand awareness. Cognisant of the need to not create new work and place greater expectations on a sector already working at high capacity with limited resources, we urge the Government to enhance what is in place rather than duplicate or erode the work of the community to date that is being evidenced through the strong metrics showing the depth and breadth of the campaign. Please refer the attached document: *Snapshot White Ribbon Australia 2015*
2. **Building on the White Ribbon public awareness raising campaigns**
In addition to the proven and evidence based prevention programs in schools and workplaces, the White Ribbon Australia awareness-raising and educational elements of the campaign include a cohort of public relations collateral geared to the engagement and education of men in the prevention of violence against women. These attributes can be viewed on YouTube and the WRA website. White Ribbon Australia is also able to show the Royal Commission these elements and

provide an overview of the extensive advertising/campaign material that has been developed by a leading public relations company and encompasses a large amount of pro bono support. The Royal Commission is urged to review this material, consider its applicability as a core part of prevention action and support its enhancement as a cost effective public awareness campaign.

3. White Ribbon Australia’s (White Ribbon) Campaign is based on a whole of community approach to tackling the issue of men’s violence against women.

The campaign is based on the World Health Organisation’s model of social change that enables the individual to change attitudes and behaviours that will have a positive impact on health and well-being at the individual and societal level.

The following diagram captures the approach White Ribbon has taken over the last twelve years to build and embed a whole of community approach to violence prevention across Australia, ie at the population health level which is enabling engagement at the individual level:



The Campaign’s depth and breadth in 2015 is the result of 12 years of community engagement and empowerment and based on resources that have largely come from the community (90% of White Ribbon’s funding comes from our corporate and community partnerships).

The Royal Commission is urged to recognise the strength of the community-business-government partnership that is White Ribbon Australia and utilise this base to enhance the prevention strategy and policy of the Victorian Government.

4. Question 3: Which of the reforms to the family violence system introduced in the last ten years do you consider most effective? Why? How could they be improved?

White Ribbon Australia is cognisant of the input of this question from services on the “frontline” including DV Victoria. Cognisant of our collaboration with and support of these services and the Victorian peak body we support but not add to the responses from service providers.

In addition to the family violence systems reforms we again reiterate the importance of primary prevention work including that of White Ribbon Australia and the significant traction of the Campaign in Victoria. In addition to metrics provided elsewhere in this submission is the holding of the White Ribbon Australia Regional Series Forum in Shepparton on 1 June where we have 105 delegates attending the expert workshop led by leading American Sociologist and academic in the prevention of men’s violence against women, Professor Walter Dekeseredy and Karen McKluskey from Scotland, expert in working with violent youth. These Forums, run in 10 locations across Australia during May and June, have engaged over 700

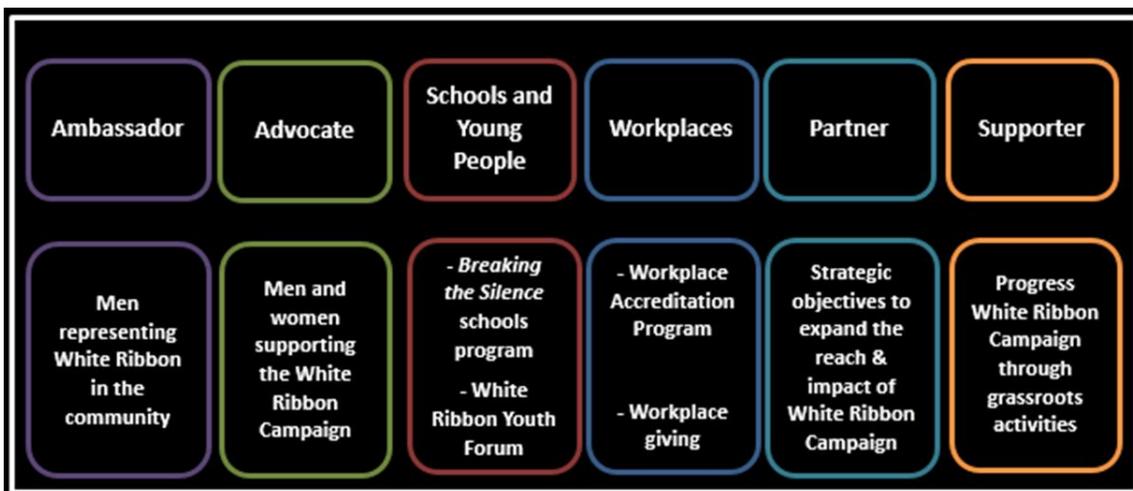
people in expert, interactive prevention workshops driving understanding and engagement to enhance grass roots prevention strategies and action.

5. **Question 4: If you or your organisation have been involved in programs, campaigns or initiatives about family violence for the general community, tell us what these involved and how they have been evaluated**

White Ribbon has extensive experience in designing and delivering primary prevention programs. Please refer to Question 3 for the explanation as to the foundation of the White Ribbon Campaign and primary prevention programs.

In addition to that information, it should be emphasised that White Ribbon is a community supported and driven campaign. To appreciate how the Campaign works there are six ways in which the broader community engages in the education, awareness raising and primary prevention programs that, as independently evaluated, are delivering position social change.

Education + Awareness Raising —————> Action and Positive Social Change



There are **six** ways that the broad community engages with White Ribbon’s primary prevention work. Each of these is described below.

- I. **Ambassadors:** White Ribbon Ambassadors are men and boys who are the public face of the White Ribbon Campaign and support our work at national and local levels. Over 2,300 men, from across Australia volunteer as White Ribbon Ambassadors. They represent the White Ribbon campaign at community events, through media and in everyday life. Ambassadors are actively engaged in driving attitudinal and behavioural change at the grassroots level.

We have seen a 58% increase in the number of Ambassadors wanting to work with White Ribbon from 2010 – 2014. The role of our Ambassadors is tightly regulated, with strict application procedures, face-to-face interviews and an e-learning induction for all new Ambassadors. They must undertake the eLearning before they can progress their nomination. Existing Ambassadors renew their commitment and induction training every 3 years and annually they must self-assess how they have contributed to the prevention of men’s violence against women.

- ✓ The program is regularly reviewed through stakeholder consultation but has not been independently evaluated. However numbers of engagement and men engaged in community action, including the holding of community events, has increased over the last few years. **These men are giving action to a key tool in prevention, A guiding principle in preventing men's violence against women is engaging men. And there is no better way to do this than through the voices of other men.**

II. Advocates: White Ribbon Advocates are men and women that volunteer at a local level. Like our Ambassadors, they also represent White Ribbon in the community. Like Ambassadors, White Ribbon Advocates are a key component in White Ribbon's effective mobilisation of grass-roots activity, particularly around White Ribbon Night (the last Friday in July) and in particular, White Ribbon Day (25 November). Through the Advocates program, we engage closely with female volunteers, champions to the cause and working alongside men, to prevent family violence and in particular men's violence against women.

- ✓ The impact of our Advocates program has not been independently evaluated.

III. Breaking the Silence Schools Program: The Breaking the Silence Schools Program adheres to best practice principles and evidence by advocating a whole of school approach to supporting behavioural change in individual students and the school community. **An award-winning, professional development program, it works with school leadership to embed models of respectful relationships in school culture and classroom activities. The program is based on the National Standards for Sexual Assault Prevention Education.** We have run this program in NSW, ACT and Victoria since 2009. In 2015, the program is also operating in NSW, ACT, Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania.

- ✓ The impact of our Breaking the Silence Schools Program was independently evaluated in 2011 and again in 2014 by the University of New South Wales (UNSW). The participants interviewed for this evaluation were *'unanimously positive about their support for the program'*. Some of the key observations made were as follows:

1. Schools agreed that students were more likely to stop others who were being unfair or disruptive;
2. Schools were more likely to have procedures in place to promote a culture of non-violence;
3. Schools described improved behaviour amongst their students following program implementation;
4. Schools reported positive changes in the interactions between boys and girls; and
5. Schools reported positive engagement in their students;
6. Schools found that Breaking the Silence easily integrated with, and complemented, their existing programs as a 'scaffold' - the emphasis on respectful relationships provided an easy link to the schools' other programs, policies, curricula and student welfare issues.

The Program also meets the objectives of the Australian Government's National Plan to Prevent Violence against Women and their Children 2010 – 2022.

IV. White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation Program: Our Workplace Accreditation Program is the first workplace accreditation program in the world dedicated to gendered violence prevention. It was initiated in May 2011 as a pilot program, funded for four years by the Australian Government Department of Social Services (DSS) [formerly the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA)] and underwritten by White Ribbon's own funding. The Program also meets the objectives of the Australian Government's National Plan to Prevent Violence against Women and their Children 2010 – 2022. **The Workplace Accreditation Program is also an award-winning program, supporting workplaces to prevent and respond to violence against women.**

At present, a total of 23 organisations from across Australia are White Ribbon Accredited Workplaces. These are the organisations that completed the pilot project. A further 67 organisations are currently undergoing accreditation as part of our 2015 intake. A further 461 organisations have expressed interest in the program. **This program is currently reaching in excess of 500,000 employees in Australia, the majority of which are men. It takes 2 years to complete the accreditation program meeting 15 criteria under three Standards - Leadership and Commitment** and focuses on the positive role men play in making women's safety a man's issue too; **Prevention** of violence against women; and **Response** to violence against women in the workplace. The organisation is accredited for a period of three years during which time they must continue to progress cultural change which is again measured through a third survey at the 18 month point.

- ✓ The impact of our Workplace Accreditation Program was independently evaluated by The Benevolent Society in 2014. This was for the Pilot Phase of the Project. Ongoing evaluation is contributing to White Ribbon's Social Impact Framework being put in place this year.
- ✓ The participants interviewed for this evaluation were '*unanimously positive about their support for the program*'. Some of the key observations made were as follows:
 1. Positive change to workplace behaviour: A significant increase in percentage of staff said they would take action if they witnessed sexist language and sexually explicit jokes.
 2. Positive change to workplace behaviour: 20% of participant workplaces noted a positive change in how others in their organisation thought about or behaved towards women. Changes that were noted included more open discussions about the extent of men's violence against women, a reduction in unacceptable behaviour or language and specific mention of new policies to support victims of violence.
 3. Positive change to workplace behaviour: Over 10% noted changes in themselves in the way they thought about or behaved towards women in the last few months, both in the workplace and at home.
 4. Enhanced workplace policy and procedure: Positive progress towards organisations having appropriate policies and procedures in place. During the Program, organisations employed a wide range of mechanisms to communicate their commitment.
 5. Organisational benefits: Almost half (45%) of respondents to the Management Feedback Survey (MFS) felt that the Program had led to increased public confidence in the organisation, and 90% felt it would in the future.
 6. Organisational benefits: 10% of MFS respondents indicated that the Program had led to cost savings although 29% believed that cost savings would be achieved in the future.

- V. **Partner:** Partners are an integral part of our strategy to expand the reach and impact of the anti-violence campaign. All of our partners are listed on our website. Examples include: The NFL, the AFL, The Canterbury - Bankstown Bulldogs, Telstra, Virgin Australia, the Australian Navy, The Australian Army, the Royal Australian Air Force, Suzanne Grae and Hills.

Every organisation we partner with acknowledges that men's violence against women is a serious and prevalent issue in the Australian community. They share our vision that all women live in safety, free from violence and abuse. They see an active role for their organisation in preventing violence against women including working with their own networks, staff, and customers; and by directly supporting the primary prevention work of White Ribbon Australia.

White Ribbon Australia is 90% funded by resources other than government. This partnership model identifies the very strong and effective Community – Business – Government Partnership model that supports this extensive anti violence work.

We urge the Government to build on and not lose sight of the important partnership that exists between White Ribbon and the community, which is providing essential resourcing and engagement to support violence prevention in Australia.

Whole of community prevention strategies value add to the campaign and underpin the current partnership model that is successfully driving the prevention of men's violence against women in Australia as evidenced in the White Ribbon Campaign.

The White Ribbon campaign in all its elements should be enhanced as part of the prevention focus of the Victorian Government.

- VI. **Supporter: The White Ribbon Campaign is driven by the community, for the community.** In 2013 we saw over 850 awareness raising events held across Australia, a 200% increase on the previous year. At least 34% of these were organised by men. In 2014 this figure rose to over 1000 and 39% organised by men. This work is mostly done through the local, regional and state/territory volunteer White Ribbon committees across the country, supported by the National Office. White Ribbon Committees are made up of people from a broad range of sectors and organisations - service providers, government, police, schools and local business leaders, amongst others. There are at least 35 of these across Australia working together with, alongside or as part of the locally focused DV Committees.

✓ The impact of our Supporter program has not been independently evaluated.

Of particular relevance to this question are our Breaking the Silence Schools Program and our Workplace Accreditation Program, both of which have been and are currently being independently evaluated. These feed into the White Ribbon Social Impact Measurement Framework.

6. **Question 14: To what extent do current processes encourage and support people to be accountable and change their behaviour? To what extent do they fail to do so? How do we ensure that behaviour change is lasting and sustainable?**

Please refer to the information provided in the previous section and the Attached *Snapshot White Ribbon Australia 2015*

7. Question 15: If you or your organisation have offered a behaviour change program, tell us about the program, including any evaluation of its effectiveness which has been conducted.

Please refer to Question 5 Response.

8. Question 16: If you or your organisation have been involved in observing or assessing approaches to behaviour change, tell us about any Australian or international research which may assist the Royal Commission. In particular, what does research indicate about the relative effectiveness of early intervention in producing positive outcomes?

White Ribbon Australia appreciates and supports the work of ANROWS and their extensive response provided to this question.

9. Question 20: Are there any other suggestions you would like to make to improve policies, programs and services which currently seek to carry out the goals set out above?

Gaps in prevention are primarily as a result of:

1. Limited investment in primary prevention.
 2. Lack of adequate support for prevention strategies in places that matter - schools and workplaces. White Ribbon urges recognition of the effective programs in place that should be endorsed and supported.
 3. National Policy Development and Advocacy. The Our WATCH model, as evidenced by the Our WATCH *Statement of Priorities* and some operations to date, has resulted in duplication in the field particularly in areas such as schools and workplaces. The focus of the national organisation should be on policy development (national frameworks) and national coordination of jurisdictional, service response and coordination issues. Project work that competes with organisations currently undertaking this work risks duplication and ineffective use of very finite resources. The national policy coordination role should be respected by the sector and operate as currently exists with the national policy and advocacy model of *Families Australia*.
 4. Enhanced training and support for all services connecting with victims of DV, including for example, maternal child health home visiting, general practitioners and related health service providers.
 5. Targeting effective parenting and family strengthening interventions for high risk children.
- 10. Question 21: The Royal Commission will be considering both short term and longer term responses to family violence. Tell us about the changes which you think could produce the greatest impact in the short and longer term.**

Principles of Reform

1. Enhance prevention of family violence (F), together with improved systemic support for the victims of violence.

2. FV is the result of gender based violence emanating from gender inequality and constructs of masculinity that define men and boys in positions of power, privilege and control resulting in the unequal distribution of power between men and women, stereotyped roles of men and women, boys and girls. These causal factors are pivotal in determining the design and strategy of the prevention approach and underpin White Ribbon Australia.
3. Constructs of masculinity that perpetuate male power and control must be identified and messaged by men to other men as a core part of the prevention strategy.
4. Effective prevention is the engagement of men and boys to drive attitudinal and behavioural change. A guiding principle in preventing men's violence against women is engaging men. And there is no better way to do this than through the voices of other men.
5. The engagement of men and boys must be through proven strategies and programs, and include the use of the bystander approach.
6. National policy and advocacy coordination should occur through a national body that coordinates and facilitates responses from the sector. The national body should not become involved in project based work or service provision that operates in competition with already established organisations and services so as to avoid duplication, unwarranted competition in regards to prevention strategies and action, and inefficient use of very finite resources. The national policy work resulting in the national prevention framework must be respectful of the effective work already established in the prevention space including the national campaigns and programs run by White Ribbon Australia. Similarly organisations must be respectful of the coordinating policy role of this body.

Short Term

1. Primary prevention action building on the 75% brand awareness that exists with White Ribbon and the effective primary prevention programs in place.
2. Immediate safety of clients through **Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy/Advocate (IDVA)**
 - An IDVA is a specialist domestic violence professional who supports victims at the highest risk of murder or serious injury. Their job is to make the victim and their family as safe as possible. They stand alongside victims and make sure they get whatever help they need.
 - Experts in high risk domestic violence, IDVAs provide vital emotional and practical support to victims. They deal with everything from getting an injunction to sorting out money to having the locks changed. Their job is to make sure the victim is safe – and they do whatever it takes.
 - IDVAs may work for charities, councils or other organisations. Many are located out in the community – such as in hospital Emergency Departments.
 - An IDVA works with a caseload of 25 high risk cases as scored on a DASH Risk Indicator Checklist - <http://www.dashriskchecklist.co.uk/uploads/pdfs/DASH%202009.pdf>. Risk is determined using critical indicator list and in connection with the MARAC – multi agency risk assessment conference.
 - More information on IDVAs can be found here: <http://www.safelives.org.uk/policy-evidence/helping-high-risk-victims-fast>
3. MARAC – Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference system to safeguard fast and put measures in place to keep victims safe.
4. Enhanced public awareness through hard copy material and social media – eg: Posters in public spaces so victims not accessing services already will see help/advice – doctors surgeries, libraries... schools...

5. Enhanced awareness campaigns / promotion of the bystander approach and building on the successful White Ribbon Campaign.

Core of the Prevention Focus – Critical in the short and long term.

1. Valuing and strengthening an effective Community – Business – Government Partnership

We urge the Victorian Royal Commission to recognise, build on and not lose sight of the important partnership that exists between White Ribbon and the community, which is providing essential resourcing and engagement to support violence prevention in Australia.

Whole of community prevention strategies value add to the campaign and underpin the current partnership model that is successfully driving the prevention of men's violence against women in Australia as evidenced in the White Ribbon Campaign.

The White Ribbon campaign in all its elements should be enhanced as part of the prevention focus of the Victorian Government.

2. Awareness Raising

Utilise and build on successful public relations strategies and collateral that have been established by White Ribbon Australia. These are based on research as to what will engage men and drive the behavioural change needed to bring about long term social change. Support/expand resources to enable broader public engagement.

We urge the Victorian Royal Commission and Victorian Government to appreciate the important foundational work and traction of White Ribbon that has been established to date in Australia.

3. Workplace Engagement: Mandate that all Victorian Government Departments become White Ribbon Accredited thereby exemplifying the commitment of the government to prevention and "walking the talk".

4. Youth Focus: Support schools to become White Ribbon schools through the Breaking the Silence Schools Program.

Both the above programs are award winning and proven effective in driving behavioural change.

5. In addition to the proven and evidence based prevention programs in schools and workplaces, the White Ribbon Australia awareness-raising and educational elements of the campaign include a cohort of public relations collateral geared to the engagement and education of men in the prevention of men's violence against women. This material represents an important value add to the prevention of family violence and should be supported through Victorian specific family violence prevention action.
