

**Legislative Council
Hansard
Tuesday 11 August 2026**

[excerpt...]

The President, Mr Farrell, took the Chair at 11 a.m., acknowledged the Traditional People and read Prayers.

QUESTIONS

Gun Law Reform - Plans for Consultation

Ms WEBB question to MINISTER for WOMEN and the PREVENTION of FAMILY VIOLENCE, Ms PALMER

[2.40 p.m.]

Ms WEBB - Minister, congratulations on your new and additional portfolio and thank you for your correspondence dated 7 August providing an update on developments within that portfolio. As your letter stated, the implementation of Tasmania's third *Family and Sexual Violence Action Plan: Survivors at the Centre 2022 - 2027* has progressed with a system-wide evaluation currently underway to inform the next strategy.

My questions go to the need for a coherent policy approach when placing survivors at the centre. Are you aware that in response to questions I asked during the recent Budget Estimates hearings, Tasmania Police revealed that since 2021-22, family violence incidents involving firearms had more than doubled from 69 events to 140 events in 2024-2025: a shocking increase of 103 per cent, I'm sure you'll agree, in that use of firearms in family violence in over that four-year period. In July it was reported that a community advisory committee set up to advise the Tasmanian government on gun laws, and which included Engender Equality, the Alana & Madeline Foundation, and Medics for Gun Control has been disbanded by the Police Minister after just two meetings.

My further questions are the these: Firstly, do you agree that while the government pursues a system-wide evaluation to inform the next family and sexual violence action plan at the same time it is also considering gun law reform, it is imperative to consult with those with lived experience of gun violence to assist in informing new gun laws and policy amendments?

Secondly, will you ensure the next family and sexual violence action plan includes a specific strategy to tackle the threat of an actual use of firearms in family- and gender-based violence situations?

Thirdly, will you formally request the Police minister reinstate a dedicated avenue by which Engender Equality, the Alana & Madeleine Foundation, and other family violence survivors are consulted on and included in the development of gun law reforms, and if not, why not?

ANSWER

Ms PALMER - I'll just seek some advice.

I thank the honourable member for Nelson for the question. Well, there was quite a number of questions in that. What I will say is, it is a great privilege to once again hold this portfolio of Women and the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence. I believe I said in this place the first time I had this portfolio, might have even been in a response to a question to the member for Murchison, that it is a weight on my shoulders as a minister. You know, over the four years that I've been in and out of this portfolio, and certainly following on from the work of former minister Jacquie Petrusma, there's been extraordinary investment in this space and yet we still continue to see, here in Tasmania, women in particular impacted by family and sexual violence.

It's been really good, I've only had one meeting with the federal minister, Tanya Plibersek, specific to this, but it has been really encouraging to see her talking about how we can't keep doing what we've always done because we just don't seem to be moving the dial. I really look forward to working with her and with other ministers across Australia, the states and territories on this.

What I can say is that yes, there is an evaluation happening with regard to the Third Family and Sexual Violence Action Plan: Survivors At the Centre. Terribly important that we go through that evaluation process and don't just do what we've always done hoping that there will be a different outcome.

That is a really important piece of work I'm certainly very keen to see thoroughly investigated as we move towards our Fourth Family and Sexual Violence Action Plan. Obviously, with regard to the part of your question around firearms, that absolutely will need to be part. It is part of the conversations that we have because whilst firearms are only recorded in a small proportion of family violence incidents, their presence significantly increases the risk of serious harm or death, but also the threat.

It's the threat and psychological damage that can be done to a person where there are threats. It is good to see that Tasmania Police treat access to all threatened use of a firearm as a high-risk indicator and takes immediate action to protect victim/survivors, attending officers and of course the broader community. What's really important to me in this discussion on firearms is that people who have actually used or threatened a firearm do not have access to firearms.

Also, really good to be working with the attorney on a series of new legislation and amendments to legislation that further strengthens protections right across the board in the family violence area. My focus is certainly on ensuring that firearms are not in the hands of people who pose a risk to their partners, to their families or indeed the broader community. It certainly will need to be very much consulted on as we move into our Fourth Family and Sexual Violence Action Plan.

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[2.47 p.m.]

Thank you, minister for your statements there and I would absolutely state I know you have a genuine commitment to this portfolio and pleased to see you back with the portfolio. I appreciate the broader comments you made around that. However, you didn't answer my questions and wondering if you would take it on notice if I put them to you specifically so I can get more specific answers to the questions I posed on how these two areas intersect and what you in your portfolio responsibilities will be ensuring in relation to that intersection.

ANSWER

Ms PALMER - Yes, I'm very happy to do that and take that on notice and if you could forward that through, that would be great.