

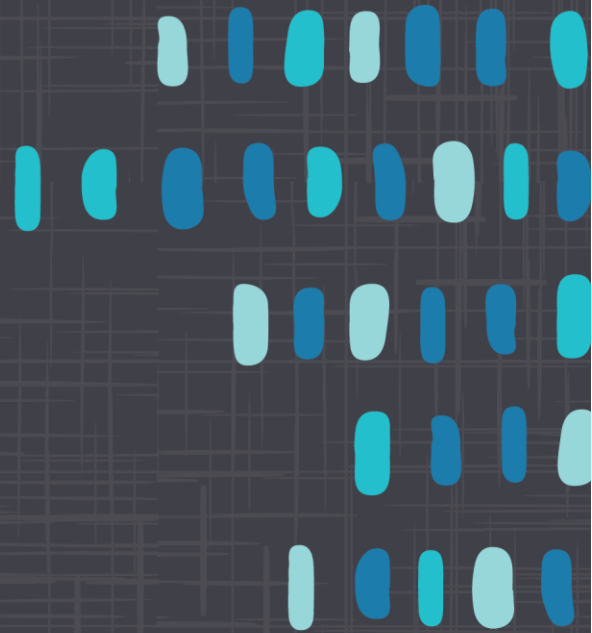
# Family and Domestic Violence Response Team

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## Operating Procedures



Government of **Western Australia**  
Department of **Communities**



# **FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RESPONSE TEAM**

## **OPERATING PROCEDURES**

A partnership between the Department of Communities (Child Protection and Family Support)<sup>1</sup>, Western Australia Police and specialist family and domestic violence services

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<sup>1</sup> Formerly The Department for Child Protection and Family Support

This document was produced by the Department of Communities (Child Protection and Family Support), Family and Domestic Violence Unit (Child Protection Division) in consultation with WA Police and the non-government organisations funded to deliver the Family and Domestic Violence Coordinated Response Service. These organisations include:

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## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| <b>Communities (CPFS)</b> | Department of Communities (Child Protection and Family Support)   |
| <b>CRARMF</b>             | Family and Domestic Violence Common Risk Assessment and Risk Management Framework                           |
| <b>FDVRT</b>              | Family and Domestic Violence Response Team  |
| <b>FDVRT Core Group</b>   | Department of Communities (Child Protection and Family Support), WA Police and Coordinated Response Service |
| <b>FPU</b>                | Family Protection Unit  |
| <b>FVIR</b>               | Family Violence Incident Report   |
| <b>SCPW-FDV</b>           | Senior Child Protection Worker – Family and Domestic Violence   |
| <b>CRS</b>                | Coordinated Response Service  |
| <b>WAPOL</b>              | Western Australia Police  |
| <b>VSU</b>                | Victim Support Unit   |
| <b>MDVHL</b>              | Men’s Domestic Violence Helpline  |
| <b>SaH</b>                | Safe At Home Service  |
| <b>CSaHPR</b>             | Communicare Safe At Home Perpetrator Response   |
| <b>DV Outreach</b>        | Domestic Violence Outreach Service  |
| <b>MACM</b>               | Multi-agency case management  |

## **FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RESPONSE TEAM**

The Family and Domestic Violence Response Team (FDVRT) is a partnership between the Department of Communities (Child Protection and Family Support), WA Police and non-government family and domestic violence services. The FDVRT model became operational in February 2013.

The FDVRT model aims to improve the safety of child and adult victims of family and domestic violence through a collaborative approach that focuses on timely and early intervention following a police call out to a family violence incident.

The collaborative approach of FDVRT includes:

- joint risk assessments using a common framework informed by police, child protection and specialist family and domestic violence workers;
- identification of opportunities to intervene early with families experiencing family and domestic violence;
- timely responses following a police call out;
- responses targeted to client need, identified risk and unique case circumstances;
- supported and streamlined client pathways through the service system;
- coordinated responses between partner agencies; and
- multi-agency safety planning on a needs basis involving agencies and organisations that have a role in responding to family and domestic violence.

Principles underpinning the FDVRT are:

- children exposed to family and domestic violence are at risk of physical, emotional and psychological harm;
- safety of child and adult victims is paramount and is the primary focus of the FDVRT;
- safety for child and adult victims is best achieved by managing risk associated with the perpetrator; and
- perpetrator accountability and risk management is most effective in an integrated systems response.

This document outlines the operating procedures for the FDVRT with a focus on the procedures that relate to the partnership arrangement.

These procedures should be read in conjunction with:

- *Children and Community Services Act information sharing provisions*
- *Strategic Bilateral Memorandum of Understanding between WA Police and Department for Child Protection and Family Support,*
  - *Schedule agreement - Family and Domestic Violence Response Team;*
- *Tripartite Schedule between the Department for Child Protection and Family Support, Department of Corrective Services and Western Australia Police – Collaboration and Exchange of Information Regarding Serious Domestic Violence Offenders;*
- *Family and Domestic Violence Common Risk Assessment and Risk Management Framework;* and
- *Relevant agency specific policy and guidelines.*

## DEFINITION OF FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The *Family and Domestic Violence Common Risk Assessment and Risk Management Framework* and Department of Communities (Child Protection and Family Support) [Communities (CPFS)] *Family and Domestic Violence Policy* define family and domestic violence as follows.

*“Family and domestic violence is the intentional and systematic use of violence and abuse to create fear and to control the victim’s behaviour. Multiple forms of abuse characterise the experience resulting in physical, sexual and/or psychological damage, forced social isolation, economic deprivation, or behaviour which causes the victim to live in fear.*

*The term domestic violence usually refers to abuse against an intimate partner, while family violence is a broader expression encompassing family and domestic violence and the abuse of children, and other family members.*

*Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people generally prefer to use the term ‘family violence’. This concept describes a matrix of harmful, violent and aggressive behaviours and is considered to be more reflective of an Aboriginal world view of community and family healing. However, the use of this term should not obscure the fact that Aboriginal women and children bear the brunt of family violence.*

*Family and domestic violence is a gendered crime. Approximately 95 per cent of the victims of family and domestic violence are female, and 90 per cent of the perpetrators are male (Bagshaw & Chung, 2000). Gender is a critical factor for understanding the aetiology and experience of violence as well as the social and cultural factors that influence its proliferation”.*

*A note on the definition:* Family and domestic violence as described above refers to a pattern of behaviour (e.g., history of violence) and specific dynamics including intentional and systematic use of violent and abusive tactics to create fear and to obtain power and control.

Family and domestic violence is also defined in legislation in the *Restraining Orders Act 1997*. See further information in the *Client Group* section of the operating procedures.

## INTEGRATED RESPONSE TO FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Responses to family and domestic violence are complex, requiring involvement of multiple service systems and agencies including police, specialist family and domestic violence services, courts, child protection, health and housing. The involvement of so many different agencies can lead to fragmented or siloed responses that compromise victim safety and limit individual agency's ability to work towards perpetrator accountability.

An integrated response to family and domestic violence refers to systems, agencies and organisations working collaboratively to address family and domestic violence by improving victim safety and managing risks associated with the perpetrators use of violence.

Common characteristics of an integrated response include:

- shared vision, values and principles;
- common goals and a shared action/safety plan;
- common protocols and responses;
- cross-agency training;
- clear internal actions for each agency;
- information sharing arrangements and protocols;
- common risk assessment protocols and tools; and
- multi-agency case management.

In Western Australia, state planning for family and domestic violence has focused on implementation of an integrated response since the release of *Western Australia's Strategic Plan for Family and Domestic Violence 2009-2013* which identified the following as a key strategy; "develop a state wide integrated response to those experiencing family and domestic violence". This strategy has subsequently been reiterated in *Western Australia's Family and Domestic Violence Prevention Strategy to 2022* and the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022*.

The focus on integration in Western Australia has led to the development of a number of programs and initiatives. These currently include:

1. Family and Domestic Violence Governance Council;
2. Family and Domestic Violence Advisory Network;
3. Information sharing protocols including the *Memorandum of Understanding: Information sharing between agencies with responsibilities for preventing and responding to family and domestic violence in Western Australia*;
4. Family Violence Lists;
5. Fatality Reviews;
6. *Family and Domestic Violence Common Risk Assessment and Risk Management Framework*, Second Edition;
7. Safe at Home and Domestic Violence Outreach Services;



8. Family and Domestic Violence Response Teams; and
9. Family Safety Teams (Kimberley)

The FDVRT is an important part of an integrated response helping to streamline client pathways through the service system through coordination of WA Police, Communities (CPFS) and specialist family and domestic violence services.

## **OPERATING PROCEDURES**

The FDVRT operating procedures outline the role, responsibilities and operations of the FDVRT and its partner agencies.

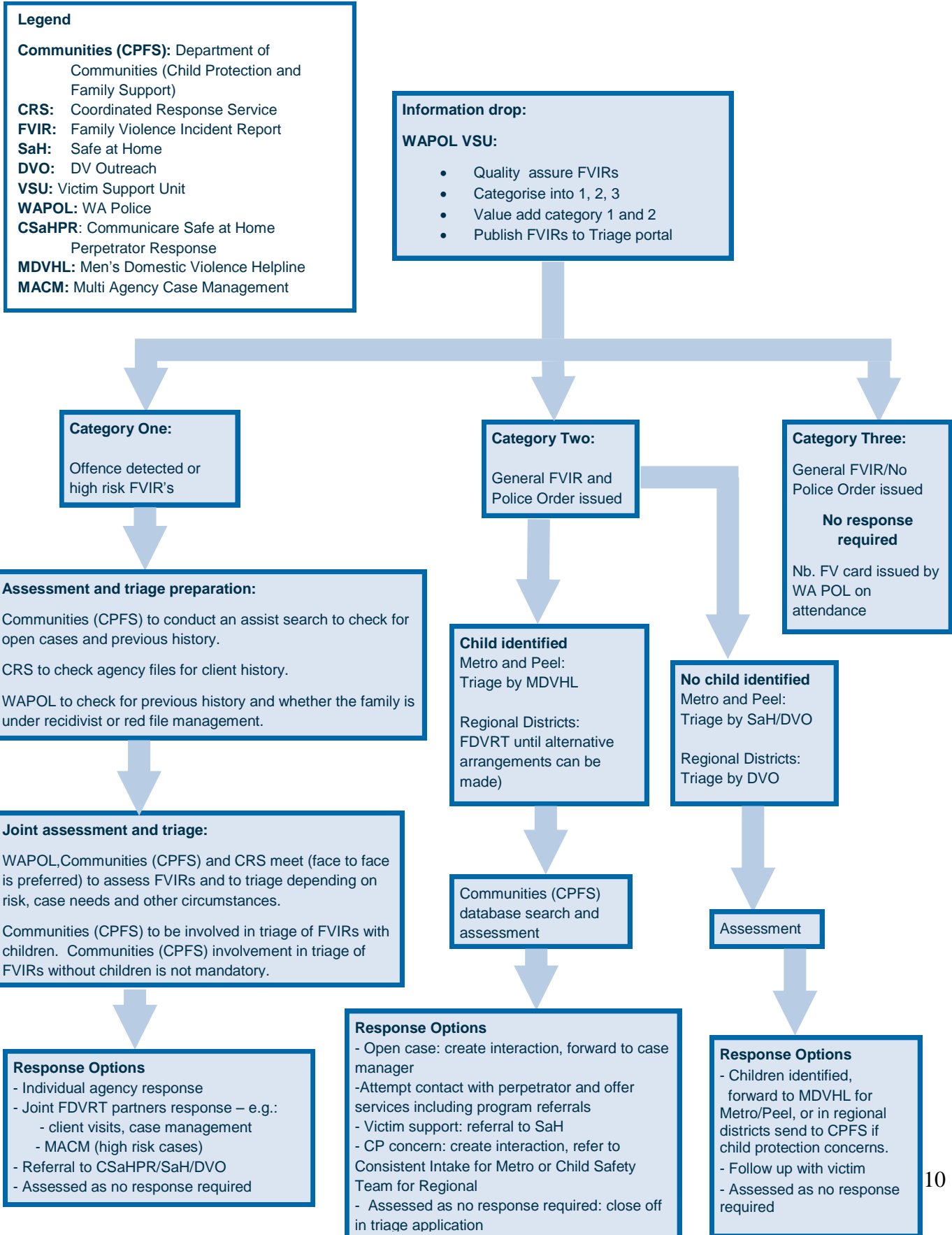
They reflect the key areas of practice that must be adhered to by all partner agencies, in all regions in order to support a baseline level of consistency across the state.

For WA Police and Communities (CPFS), the FDVRT operating procedures are aligned to respective agency policy and procedures.

For the non-government partners, the operating procedures are aligned to the service contracts.

# 1. FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RESPONSE TEAM FLOW-CHART

The flowchart depicts the flow of information between partner agencies, the decision making points and possible triage outcomes.



## 2. CLIENT GROUP

The client group for the FDVRT is individuals and families following a police call out for family violence<sup>2</sup>. The WA Police definition for ‘family violence’ is outlined in the *Restraining Orders Act 1997* (see below) and underpins the nature and type of call outs that police attend and consider to be ‘family violence incidents’.

Section 5A *Restraining Orders Act 1997* defines “**family violence**”.

- (1) A reference in this Act to family violence is a reference to –
  - (a) Violence, or a threat of violence, by a person towards a family member of the person; or
  - (b) Any other behaviour by the person that coerces or controls the family member or causes the member to be fearful.
- (2) Examples of behaviour that may constitute family violence include (but are not limited to) the following –
  - (a) An assault against the family member;
  - (b) A sexual assault or other sexually abusive behaviour against the family member;
  - (c) Stalking or cyber-stalking the family member;
  - (d) Repeated derogatory remarks against the family member;
  - (e) Damaging or destroying property of the family member;
  - (f) Causing death or injury to an animal that is the property of the family member;
  - (g) Unreasonably denying the family member the financial autonomy that the member would otherwise have had;
  - (h) Unreasonably withholding financial support needed to meet the reasonable living expenses of the family member, or a child of the member, at a time when the member is entirely or predominantly dependant on the person for financial support;
  - (i) Preventing the family member from making or keeping connections with the members family friends or culture;
  - (j) Kidnapping or depriving the liberty of the family member, or any other person with whom the member has a relationship;
  - (k) Distributing or publishing, or threatening to distribute or publish, intimate personal images of the family member;
  - (l) Causing any family member who is a child to be exposed to behaviour referred to in this section;
- (3) For the purposes of this Act, a person who procures another person to commit family violence is taken to have also committed the family violence.

Section 4 *Restraining Orders Act 1997* defines ‘**family relationship**’.

- (1) **Family and domestic relationship** means a relationship between 2 persons,
  - (a) who are, or were, married to each other;
  - (b) Who are, or were, in a de facto relationship with each other
  - (c) Who are, or were, related to each other
  - (d) One of whom is a child who
    - (i) ordinarily resides, or resides, with the other person; or
    - (ii) regularly resides or stays, or resides or stayed, with the other person;
  - (e) One of whom is, or was a child of whom the other person is a guardian; or

<sup>2</sup> The term ‘family violence’ is used by WA Police in line with legislation and refers to any behaviour as described by the *Restraining Orders Act (1997)*.

(f) Who have, or had, an intimate personal relationship, or other personal relationship, with each other.

(2) **Other personal relationship** means a personal relationship of a domestic nature in which the lives of the persons are, or were, interrelated and the actions of one person affects, or affected, the other person;

**Related**, in relation to a person, means a person who —

- a) is related to that person taking into consideration the cultural, social or religious backgrounds of the 2 persons; or
- b) is related to the person's —
  - i. spouse or former spouse; or
  - ii. de facto partner or former de facto partner.

### 3. PARTNER AGENCY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

#### ALL FDVRT PARTNERS

Must undertake the following as part of their role in the FDVRT:

- provide relevant information to inform assessment and triage;
- work collaboratively with response team partners and community based service providers;
- provide service responses to clients relevant to agency role/mandate. Service responses must prioritise victim safety and perpetrator accountability;
- initiate referrals as required for victims and perpetrators;
- coordinate multi-agency case management for high risk cases
- provide coverage for the respective agency role/function during periods of leave or vacancy; and
- maintain client records.

Responses by FDVRT partner agencies are detailed below. The roles and responsibilities of the agencies are aligned to the **Threshold Categories**.

#### Threshold Categories

##### Category 1

Incidents where an offence has been detected or there are indicators of high risk of harm.

##### Category 2

Incidents where there was sufficient concern evident for WA Police to determine that a Police Order was required but no offence was detected.

##### Category 3

No offence, no Police Order issued, no indicators of high risk.

#### CATEGORY 1

##### Agencies involved

- FDVRT Core Group
  - Department of Communities (Child Protection and Family Support)
  - WA Police
  - Family and Domestic Violence Coordinated Response Service
- Communicare Safe at Home Perpetrator Response

#### Agency specific roles and responsibilities

##### Department of Communities (Child Protection and Family Support)

*Senior Child Protection Worker – Family and Domestic Violence*

The Senior Child Protection Worker – Family and Domestic Violence (SCPW-FDV) is responsible for assessing all Category 1 FVIRs where children were present or known to reside. The purpose of the assessment is to evaluate the safety of the child/ren and make a professional judgment about whether a child protection response is required.

Communities (CPFS) must participate in *'triage preparation'* and *'joint assessment and triage'* for all Category 1 FVIRs where children were present or known to reside.

Communities (CPFS) may determine whether there is capacity to be involved in the triage of FVIRs without children. In these circumstances the Communities (CPFS) role is to:

- check Assist to see if Communities (CPFS) has a history with the family and/or if Communities (CPFS) has knowledge of children; and
- contribute knowledge/information about family and domestic violence, its risks and dynamics.

If an Assist search reveals that the individual has a child/ren, Communities (CPFS) may be allocated the case through triage if there are child protection concerns. A duty interaction should only be recorded on Assist if:

- it is an open case;
- the Communities case will be recommended for intake.

If there are no children, a duty interaction should not be recorded.

### ***Service Responses for Families***

Child protection responses may include intake for a Safety and Wellbeing Assessment to the district office (intake completed by SCPW-FDV), or recommending intake to Initial Inquiry, via the Central Intake Team, for further child protection assessment and investigation; referral to Communities (CPFS) programs; referral of the FVIR to a case manager if the family is already an open case; or follow up by the SCPW-FDV to determine whether a role for Communities (CPFS) is required.

### **WA Police**

The primary role of WA Police is of an investigative and judicial nature including evidence collection, arrest and criminal proceedings. Front line officers are also responsible for responding to immediate safety issues and the distribution of Family Violence Information and support cards. These information cards provide a method of self-referral for parties involved in family violence incidents and prompts first responders to discuss court order options with affected individuals.

### ***Family Protection Unit and Victim Support Unit***

WA Police, via Family Protection (Regional WA) and Victim Support Units (Metropolitan), provide a support role for families identified in Family Violence Incident Reports. This response is separate to the investigative process and involvement in investigations is usually limited.

WA Police facilitate the *'information drop'* for all Family Violence Incident Reports. They participate in *'triage preparation'* and *'joint assessment and triage'* for Category 1 FVIRs.

The role of the Family Protection and Victim Support Coordinator is to ensure quality assurance of the Family Violence Incident Reports submitted by responding officers,

provide follow-up to the domestic violence incidents and safety focused responses including safety focused responses to high risk victims including those under red file management.

Family Protection and Victim Support Officers assign FVIRs a category rating (1, 2 or 3) during their quality assurance process. Options include:

- category 1 = crime FVIRs where an offence is detected or high risk;
- category 2 = general FVIRs with a Police Order; or
- category 3 = general FVIRs, no Police Order.

**NB:** *non crime FVIRs can be allocated 'category 1' if the Victim Support Unit determines the FVIR indicates high risk to a child or adult or "category 2" if the FVIR clearly records unsuccessful attempts were made to serve a Police Order.*

WA Police Family Protection and Victim Support Units publish all FVIRs to the triage application.

### **Service Responses for Families**

WA Police may be involved with a family through identified high risk or red case file management, safety focused responses including restraining orders, duress alarms or criminal proceedings.

### **Family and Domestic Violence Coordinated Response Service**

The Coordinated Response Service (CRS) participates in '*triage preparation*' and '*joint assessment and triage*' for Category 1 FVIR's. The aim of the CRS is to provide direct service delivery to victims of family and domestic violence to improve safety and hold perpetrators to account.

### **Service Responses for Families**

The aim of the CRS is to work with adult victims of family and domestic violence to support improved safety for themselves and their child/ren. For many cases, this will involve 'cold calling' the adult victim and offering support and information. If the adult victim accepts the offer of support an assessment must be undertaken to inform a safe and appropriate response. Assessments must consider the risk, protective factors and the adult victim and children's unique needs and circumstances. Following, or in parallel to assessment, the CRS can provide safety planning, advocacy, outreach referral and/or case management.

Services should be provided to adult victims who are escaping family and domestic violence or who are living with violence.

The level and extent of the service response will depend on capacity (in terms of case volume) to respond.

**NB:** If the adult victim declines an offer of service, then the FDVRT members should consider whether further responses are possible or required in order to mitigate risk. This is particularly important in high risk cases.



## **Communicare Safe at Home Perpetrator Response**

Communicare Safe at Home Perpetrator Response's aim is to increase opportunities to proactively engage Category 1 perpetrators of family and domestic violence.

The role of Communicare Safe at Home Perpetrator Response is to:

- receive referrals from the FDVRTs
- attempt to make phone contact with the perpetrator; and
- offer information, services, referral pathways and safety planning.

## **REGIONAL OPERATION**

The FDVRT Core Group (Department of Communities, WA Police and Coordinated Response Service) will respond to Category 1 and Category 2 FVIRs with children, in the regional locations. This arrangement is until additional services can be engaged to undertake triage for Category 2, with children.

## **CATEGORY 2**

### **Agencies involved**

- FDVRT Core Group – Regional Only
- Department for Communities Men's Domestic Violence Helpline
- Safe at Home
- Family and Domestic Violence Counselling and Advocacy Service – Regional only
- Domestic Violence Outreach – Regional only

## **METROPOLITAN OPERATION**

### **Men's Domestic Violence Helpline**

The role of the MDVHL is as follows;

- triage Category 2 FVIR's where children have been identified;
- search Assist to determine if the FVIR relates to an open case or form an assessment whether child protection concerns are evident within the FVIR;
- if an open case, publish the FVIR to Assist as an open interaction allocated to the case manager, who will be notified by email of the FVIR;
- if recommended for intake, create an open duty interaction and refer the FVIR to Central Intake Team;
- attempt to contact the perpetrator where assessed as appropriate and offer services including referral to men's behaviour change program;
- refer adult victims to the Safe at Home program if contacting the perpetrator; (nb: referrals do not involve contacting the adult victim. The FVIR is forwarded to Safe at Home for their information and response); and/or
- where a referral is assessed as no response required, close off in triage application.

## **Safe at Home Service**

The role of the Safe At Home (SaH) service is to;

- assess Category 2 FVIRs where no children have been identified;
- offer support to adult victims assessed as suitable for a response; and
- receive and respond to referrals from the MDVHL and/or FDVRTs for adult victims of family and domestic violence.

## **REGIONAL OPERATION**

### **Category 2, FVIRs With Children**

#### **FDVRT Core Group**

The FDVRT Core Group (Department of Communities, WA Police and Coordinated Response Service) will respond to Category 1 and Category 2, FVIRs with children, in the regional locations. This arrangement is until additional services can be engaged to undertake triage for Category 2 (with children).

### **Category 2, FVIRs Without Children**

### **Family and Domestic Violence Counselling and Advocacy Service & Domestic Violence Outreach Service**

The role of the Domestic Violence Outreach Service is to:

- assess Category 2 FVIRs where no children have been identified;
- identify and contact adult victims assessed as suitable for a response;
- offer support and services or clarify risk and safety; and
- receive and respond to referrals from the FDVRTs for adult victims of family and domestic violence

## **CATEGORY 3**

### **NO FDVRT RESPONSE REQUIRED**

Adult victims and perpetrators are encouraged to self-refer should they require assistance through the provision of a *Family Violence Information Card* provided by WA Police on attendance of the incident.



## **4. INFORMATION DROP**

The term 'information drop' is used to describe the provision of Family Violence Incident Reports (FVIR) from WA Police to the FDVRT Portal.

All FVIRs involving children (present or known to reside) are provided to Communities (CPFS) and the Coordinated Response Service.

FVIRs involving individuals or families without children are provided to partner agencies who have a formal role in the operation of the FDVRT. WA Police have discretion to not provide information about individuals without children if they judge that there will be no benefit from joint assessment and triage e.g., if the circumstances of the incident are not related to family and domestic violence (as defined on page 6) and/or there is no discernible risk to the parties involved.

### **PROCEDURES:**

Information will be managed in the following way:

- WA Police quality assure FVIRs;
- WA Police 'value add' to Category 1 and 2 FVIRs;
- WA Police 'send' FVIR information to the 'Triage portal'; and
- Formal partners of the FDVRT access information from the 'Triage portal'.

NB: Although WA Police will, dependant on available resources and volume of FVIRs 'value add' to Category 1 and 2 FVIRs, Category 1 FVIRs will take precedence.

## 5. ASSESSMENT

All parties will adhere to the minimum standard for risk assessment outlined in the *Family and Domestic Violence Common Risk Assessment and Risk Management Framework* (CRARMF).

### Minimum Standard for Risk Assessment

Agencies that have a role in responding to family and domestic violence are required to use a common approach to risk assessment.

The common approach includes:

- victim assessment of the risk;
- consideration of key indicators; and
- professional judgement.

The key risk indicators that must be incorporated into family and domestic violence risk assessments are attached as Appendix 1.

Professionals conducting risk assessments must have a solid understanding of family and domestic violence, its common patterns and dynamics, factors that affect risk and issues or factors that may make some population groups more vulnerable to family and domestic violence and severe harm than others.

Once a risk assessment is complete the outcome should be used to inform the response (risk management).

Where immediate safety concerns are identified the agency must take all reasonable steps to secure the immediate safety of the victim and any accompanying children.

NB: the minimum standards for risk assessment are consistent with WA Police and Communities (CPFS) policy and procedures. The Coordinated Response Service must operate in line with the CRARMF as set out in their contract arrangements.

See link below to access the CRARMF:

<http://www.dcp.wa.gov.au/CrisisAndEmergency/FDV/Pages/CRARMF.aspx>

## 6. JOINT ASSESSMENT AND TRIAGE

### Category 1

Joint assessment refers to information sharing and discussion between the FDVRT Core Group [WA Police, Communities (CPFS), and CRS] to identify and evaluate the risks present/evident in the Category 1 FVIR and the family's previous contacts with WA Police, Communities (CPFS) and the non-government partner agency.

The purpose of joint assessment is to bring as much information and expertise to the discussion as possible. 'Information' in this context refers to data or information stored on WA Police, Communities (CPFS) or the non-government services' client database. 'Expertise' refers to the professional contexts and experiences of the practitioners involved in the assessment process.

Triage refers to a decision made between parties about the most appropriate response option for the individual and/or family.

### PREPARATION FOR TRIAGE

FDVRT Core Group will check for prior contact with the family as follows:

- WA Police: check Incident Management System for prior history/contact and recidivist or red file case management.
- Communities (CPFS): check Assist for prior history or contact with the family and determine if it is an open case.
- Coordinated Response Service: check agency files/databases for prior history or contact with the family.

**NB: information collection and contribution to joint assessment can occur without client consent.**

FDVRT Core Group agencies will prepare notes, comments or any other material or information that may be necessary for assessment and triage.

### JOINT ASSESSMENT AND TRIAGE MEETINGS

FDVRT Core Group agencies [WA Police, Communities (CPFS) and CRS] must be involved in joint assessment and triage of Category 1 FVIRs. This can be undertaken in whatever manner is suitable for the region and partner agencies but must include the following components:

- all partners engaged in a discussion (face to face preferred) about risk and response options; and
- all partners provided with the opportunity to contribute relevant information and professional judgment to the assessment and triage process.

#### *Information exchange*

Core Group agencies will contribute the following information to the joint assessment process. This will occur with or without client consent:

- Communities (CPFS) will provide information about the family's history as contained in Assist;

- WA Police will provide information about the family's history as contained in the Incident Management System; and
- The CRS will provide information about the family's contact with their respective agencies programs and services.

**The exchange of information must relate to the identification of risk of harm to an adult victim or child; strategies to manage or mitigate risk; and/or hold perpetrators to account for their violence and abuse.**

On a case by case basis, information that can be provided or exchanged will include, but is not limited to:

- basic demographic information;
- known details of any family circumstances including, but not limited to, any criminal and civil history of violence;
- relevant information provided by the victim or another party who is concerned about the victim;
- any issues that might be contributing to risk or harm e.g., cultural factors, mental health, substance misuse or other medical issues;
- criminal histories that (1) have been taken into account in determining the risk for the child and adult victim, and/or (2) indicate a potential risk of harm to a worker who will become involved as a result of information provision or exchange;
- the information or circumstances that have led the referring agency to assess the individual/s to be at high risk of harm;
- details of violence or any other restraining orders that are in place; and
- any other information that might contribute to reducing the risk of harm to adult and child victims.

## 7. PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING

All parties will adhere to the minimum standard for risk management outlined in the CRARMF.

### Minimum Standard for Risk Management

Responses to family and domestic violence (risk management) must be informed by a risk assessment.

To manage identified risk, agencies are required to:

- work with the victim to design, implement and monitor a personal safety plan;
- work collaboratively with other agencies involved in the case to provide an interagency response that includes design, implementation and monitoring of an interagency safety plan; and
- monitor and review the risk on a regular basis.

If referral or other offers of support are declined, services must:

- provide standard written information (if it is safe to do so) about sources of help and how to access them and make it clear that the victim can return to the service at any time; and
- in high risk cases, consider whether multi-agency case management is necessary and appropriate.

NB: the minimum standards for risk management are consistent with WA Police and Communities (CPFS) policy and procedures. The Coordinated Response Service must operate in line with the CRARMF as set out in their contract arrangements. See link below to access the CRARMF:

<http://www.dcp.wa.gov.au/CrisisAndEmergency/FDV/Pages/CRARMF.aspx>

### RESPONSES TO FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Although the triage process is informed by assessment of the risk and circumstances of the individual or family, risk assessment must be ongoing. This is particularly important in the first or initial follow up with the adult victim following the police call out as the assessment that has informed the response thus far will have been based on limited, and systems based, information. This means, the agency responding to the individual or family should conduct further risk assessment in order to inform the details and nature of the response provided.

If the agency is having an ongoing role with the individual or family, risk must be continuously monitored and re-assessed.



## 8. FEEDBACK

### PROCEDURES:

All FDVRT partner agencies should provide feedback about the outcome of their contact with the family and the service response provided. Feedback should be provided to all FDVRT partners.

The way that feedback is managed can be locally arranged; some suggestions or options include:

- brief updates in an email – this allows agency partners to copy and paste as necessary into respective databases;
- verbal updates in subsequent assessment and triage meetings or an end of week case closure meeting; and
- updates recorded in a central 'tracking sheet'.

Feedback is particularly important in cases where contact with the individual or family has been unsuccessful and the risk or nature of the situation continues to warrant concern or follow-up.

Similarly, feedback is critical in circumstances where follow-up with the family reveals:

- child protection concerns;
- elevated and/or high risk;
- criminal activity; and/or
- safety concerns for workers attending the property.

In any of the above circumstances, responses should be considered and managed as appropriate.

## 9. RECORDING OUTCOMES

Recording decisions, particularly those resulting from joint assessment and triage is a critical aspect of the response team model. How the information is recorded will vary depending on the FDVRT partner agency.

### PROCEDURES:

WA Police:

- will record assessment and triage outcomes in the FVIR running sheet

Communities (CPFS):

- will record assessment and triage outcomes in the 'initial assessment' section of the duty interaction;
- Communities (CPFS) will only record outcomes for FVIRs that involve children and:
  - it is an open case;
  - the Department is involved in providing a response; or
  - the case will be recommended for intake.

CRS:

- will record outcomes for FVIRs that they have accepted/been allocated through triage; and
- will record assessment and triage outcomes in their respective agency files or databases.

MDVHL:

- will record assessment and triage outcomes; and
- will record on Assist when a perpetrator is contacted.

Safe at Home, FDV Counselling and Advocacy Service and DV Outreach Service:

- will record a decision to attempt contact in the triage portal; and
- will record the outcomes of contact with clients on their agency databases.

*All agencies will provide a brief rationale in the decisions tab of the triage portal to support their decision to contact or not contact.*

Agencies may use a 'triage tracking sheet' if this is determined to be helpful and relevant. A triage tracking sheet is not a mandatory aspect of the FDVRT model.

## 10. MULTI-AGENCY RESPONSE

### Multi-agency case management (MACM)

MACM is a critical feature of an effective integrated response. It provides a platform for agencies to share information, develop comprehensive risk assessments, plan strategies to mitigate risks and work towards child and adult victim safety and perpetrator accountability. MACM is also important for creating transparency and accountability between agencies about their roles and responsibilities in responding to family and domestic violence.

### Client pathways: referrals and multi-agency case management

As identified earlier, the FDVRT is only one part of an integrated response to family and domestic violence. To support seamless client pathways through the service system and coordinated actions/activities between agencies, the FDVRT must work closely with other agencies in the region. This may include referral of a client and/or to invite an agency to contribute information to or participate in MACM.

### FDVRT and multi-agency case management

The FDVRT is responsible for convening MACM for families that are considered to be at high risk of future serious harm. This can occur with or without client consent and may occur on a needs basis or via regular structured meetings. To do this, the FDVRT will contact agencies to contribute information to and/or participate in MACM.

### Information sharing

MACM and information sharing is supported by the Children and Community Services Act (2004) and various Memorandum of Understandings, including:

- *Information Sharing between Agencies with Responsibilities for Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence in Western Australia;*
- *Tripartite Schedule between the Department for Child Protection and Family Support, Department of Corrective Services and Western Australia Police – Collaboration and Exchange of Information Regarding Serious Domestic Violence Offenders;*
- *Memorandum of Understanding between Department of The Attorney General, Department of Corrective Services, Department for Child Protection and Family Support, and Western Australia Police; and*
- *Family and Domestic Violence Common Risk Assessment and Risk Management Framework.*

### Roles and responsibilities

**A lead agency** should be nominated for each case discussed. The lead agency can be any agency present or represented at the MACM meeting. The role of the lead agency is to:

- liaise with the adult victim about the outcomes of the meeting;
- record the safety plan during the meeting and email a copy to all agency representatives that have an action documented;
- coordinate feedback from agencies about the progress of the action/s;
- call for follow-up MACM meetings to monitor and review the progress of safety plans and establish further actions in response to the review; and

- continue to facilitate MACM meetings until risk is mitigated as identified in the safety plan.

**NB: Nomination of a lead agency does not alter the activities of other agencies involved with the family.**

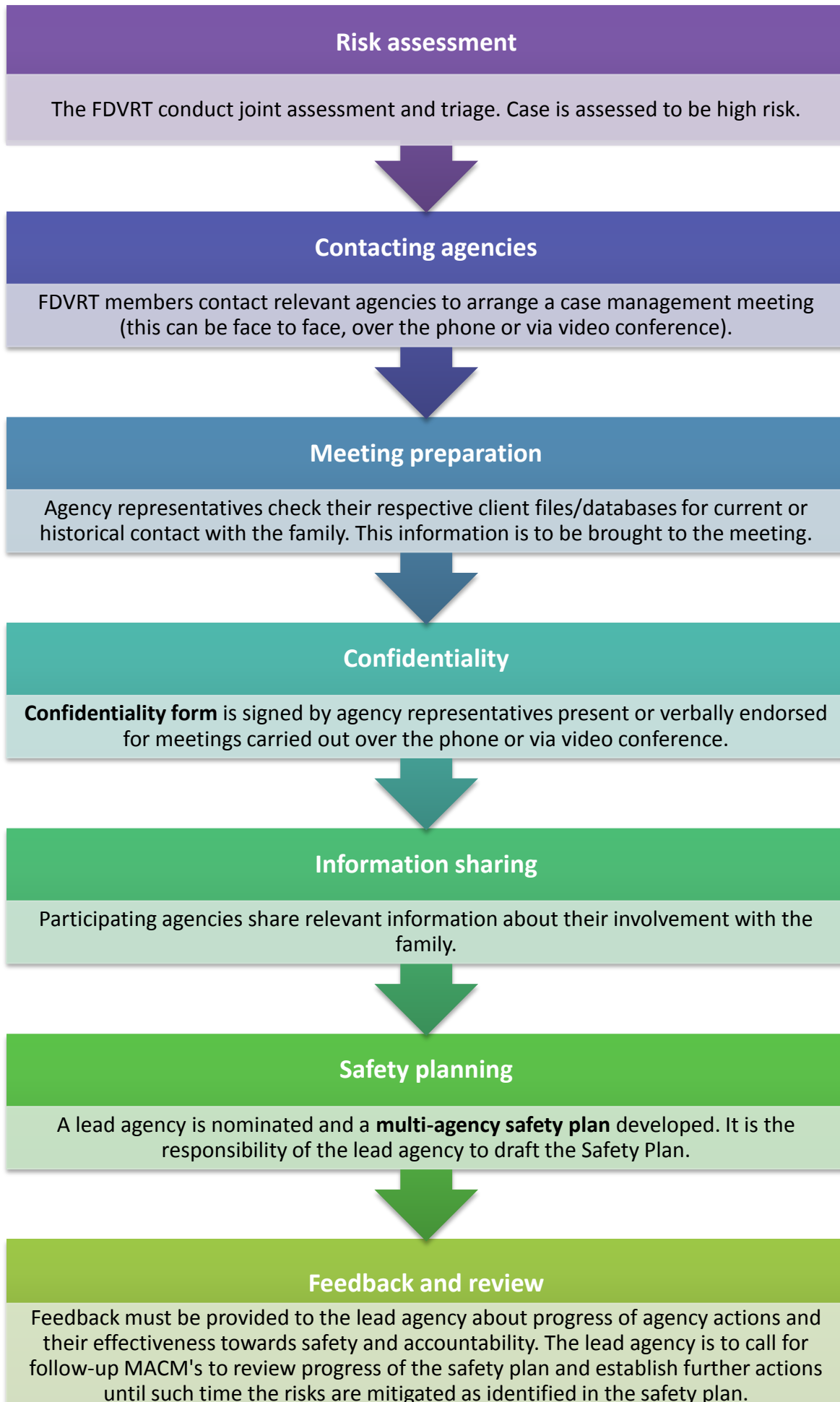
**Agencies contacted to participate** in MACM of high risk family and domestic violence cases will:

- provide a representative to participate in the meeting;
- share relevant information about the adult and child victim/s and the perpetrator;
- contribute to safety planning;
- undertake any actions designated to the agency through the safety planning process;
- provide feedback to the lead agency about progress of the action and its effect on improving safety or mitigating risk; and
- provide feedback to their agency about the outcome of MACM.

If the agency is unable to provide a representative for the meeting, they will provide relevant information in writing including:

- whether they have current involvement with the adult or child victim or perpetrator;
- information relevant to risk and safety; and
- history of past safety planning and interventions and the success or otherwise of these efforts.

The lead agency may contact the agency representative to seek additional information and/or to negotiate possible actions for the agency to undertake.



## **11. EXTERNAL REFERRAL TO THE FDVRT**

The FDVRT is a service response for families and individuals identified in WA Police FVIRs. The FDVRT does not accept external referrals for clients.

However, WA Police and Communities (CPFS) continue to have roles and responsibilities for individuals and families where there are concerns for their safety or welfare. For these two agencies, referrals should continue to be made through existing referral pathways e.g., Communities (CPFS) Central Intake Team (metropolitan) or local district office (regional), WA Police stations or WA Police Family Protection or Victim Support Units.

## **12. CASE TRANSFER BETWEEN COORDINATED RESPONSE SERVICES**

An issue that will inevitably arise is the movement of clients across FDVRT geographic boundaries.

WA Police and Communities (CPFS) have policies and procedures for the transfer of cases between/across district boundaries. Therefore, the procedures below are provided as a template or an example, only for the Coordinated Response Service.

### **PROCEDURES:**

Due to the short-medium term nature of Coordinated Response Service involvement or intervention with clients, there are only limited circumstances when case transfer would be required. These include situations where the:

- client is not engaged with any other service (other than the Coordinated Response Service); or
- client will no longer be able to access the services that they are currently involved with e.g., if they are moving a large geographic distance or transport is an issue.

In either of these circumstances, the Coordinated Response Service should:

- provide a warm referral. In this context 'warm referral' includes contacting the Coordinated Response Service worker via phone or email, arranging or supporting contact between the client and the new Coordinated Response Service, providing follow-up to check that the referral was a success; and
- provide written information to support the referral including the risks present, safety planning undertaken, case planning undertaken and progress of the case plan to date.

### **13. CASE CONSULTATION OR INFORMATION REQUESTS BETWEEN COORDINATED RESPONSE SERVICES**

As described on the previous page, the transient nature of domestic violence clients will mean that there will be occasions where a FVIR has been received in one district and police or Communities (CPFS) records demonstrate that the family has been subject to previous FVIRs where the response was provided by the respective Coordinated Response Service for that area.

In these circumstances, contact with the Coordinated Response Service previously involved with the family may be necessary in order to inform assessment and triage.

#### **PROCEDURES:**

Information requests should be made via telephone in the first instance and formalised in writing (e.g., via email or a letter attached to an email). The request should include the reason the information is being sought and the kind of information the requesting agency is after.

Responses to requests for information should include information relevant to the clients risk and safety (see section on *Information Exchange* p. 13) including (but not limited to) risks present, whether contact with client was able to made, outcomes of client contact including case planning, safety planning or referrals.



## 14. FAMILY SAFETY TEAMS (KIMBERLEY REGION)

### BACKGROUND

The rate of reported family violence in the Kimberley is significantly higher than any other regional or metropolitan location in Western Australia. The Kimberley is significantly over-represented, per head of population on measures related to prevalence and severity of family violence and under-represented on measures of response such as criminal charges and family violence restraining order applications. In response to this information, the *Kimberley Family Violence Regional Plan (KFVP)* was developed. Within the KFVP, actions were developed to enhance the FDVRTs in the east and west Kimberley region.

### FAMILY SAFETY TEAM (FST) MODEL

FDVRT in the east and west Kimberley have been enhanced with additional partner agencies. Collectively the enhanced teams are referred to as the east and west Kimberley Family Safety Teams (FST).

| Family Safety Teams   |   |
|---|---|
| FDVRT (core group)  | Partner agencies                              |
| Western Australian Police (WAPOL) Family Protection Coordinator               | Kimberley Family Violence Service (Anglicare) |
| Department of Communities (DOC) – Senior Family and Domestic Violence Officer | Department of Justice                         |
| Coordinated Response Service (CRS)<br>Anglicare                               |   |

### ROLE OF FDVRT (core group)

Response Teams in the east and west Kimberley are responsible for the triage of FVIRs, and operate within the normal FDVRT operating guidelines.

### ROLE OF PARTNER AGENCIES

**Kimberley Family Violence Service (KFVS)** role is to provide direct service delivery to individuals and family's experiencing family and domestic violence, to work towards improved victim safety and perpetrator accountability. The KFVS includes women's family violence workers and men's family violence workers. The primary source of referrals to the KFVS is from the FDVRTs however they can also receive referrals from external sources.

**Department of Justice** officers will review FVIRs and identify individuals who have a current Order and are being supervised by DCS. They will liaise with the FDVRTs to exchange risk relevant information, and where appropriate, participate in joint responses to the individual/family. The DCS representative is based in Broome however will provide relevant information about perpetrators to both the east and west Kimberley FDVRTs.

### FAMILY SAFETY TEAM MEETINGS

All partners to the FSTs will meet regularly to discuss cases and to ensure the flow of internal and external referrals are effectively managed.

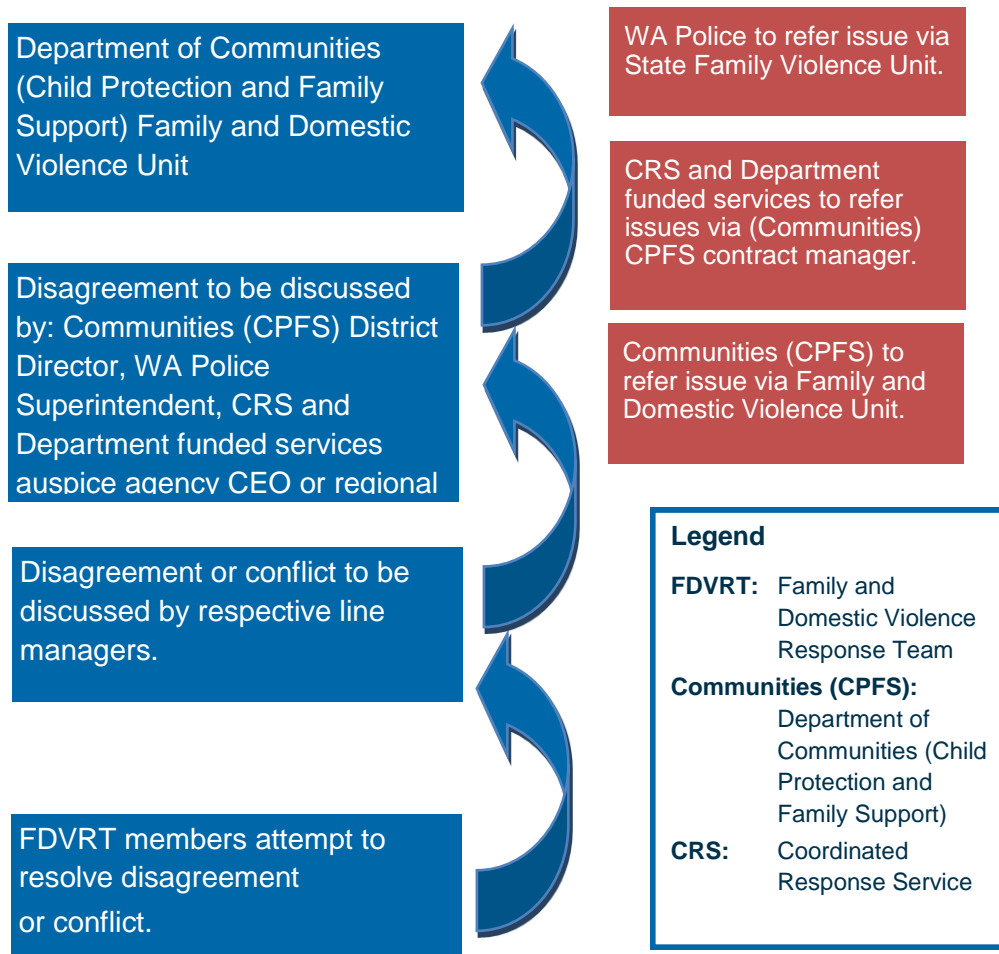
## 15. PROCESS TO RESOLVE DISPUTES

The FDVRT requires a close working relationship between partner agencies. Given that the role, mandate and practice frameworks for Communities (CPFS), WA Police, CRS and partner agencies are different, it would be reasonable to expect that challenges or difficulties will arise from time to time.

Where possible the FDVRT should try to resolve these difficulties at the lowest practicable level (see diagram below).

In instances where issues cannot be managed within a region, they can be referred to Communities (CPFS) Family and Domestic Violence Unit, Child Protection Division.

WA Police can refer to the State Family Violence Unit; Communities (CPFS) can refer via the Family and Domestic Violence Unit, Child Protection Division, and the Communities (CPFS) funded services can refer via their contract manager.



## APPENDIX 1. KEY RISK INDICATOR TOOL

| RISK ASSESSMENT PROCESS<br>Risk or vulnerability factor   | Presence of factor       |                          |                          |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
|   | Yes                      | No                       | Unknown                  |
| <b>Victim</b>   |                          |                          |                          |
| Pregnancy/new birth   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Depression/mental health issue <sup>#</sup>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Drug and/or alcohol misuse/abuse  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Has ever verbalised or had suicidal ideas or tried to commit suicide  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Isolation   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>Children</b>   |                          |                          |                          |
| Has the child ever been in the adult victim's arms when she/he has been attacked  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Has the child ever tried to intervene in the violence   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is the child encouraged to participate in the violence towards the adult victim   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is the child scapegoated or used as a control mechanism (eg. hurt or abused when the adult victim does something the perpetrator does not like) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Has the child demonstrated violent/cruel behaviour towards pets or other animals  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Has the child's development recently regressed (eg. Bed wetting)  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is the child delayed in reaching significant developmental milestones   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is the child showing signs of trauma  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>Perpetrator</b>  |                          |                          |                          |
| Use of weapon in most recent event  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Access to weapons   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Has ever harmed or threatened to harm victim  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Has ever raped or sexually assaulted victim   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Has ever tried to strangle the victim   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Has ever tried to kill victim or threatened to kill victim  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Has ever harmed or threatened to harm or kill children  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Has ever harmed or threatened to harm or kill other family members  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Has ever harmed or threatened to harm or kill pets or other animals   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Has ever threatened or tried to commit suicide  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Stalking the victim   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Controlling behaviour   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Unemployed  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Depression/mental health issue <sup>#</sup>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Drug and/or alcohol misuse/abuse  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| RISK ASSESSMENT PROCESS<br>Risk or vulnerability factor        | Presence of factor       |                          |                          |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
|  | Yes                      | No                       | Unknown                  |
| Obsession/jealous behaviour towards adult victim               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| History of violent behaviour (not family violence)             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>Relationship</b>  |                          |                          |                          |
| Recent separation  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Escalation - increase in severity and/or frequency of violence | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Financial difficulties   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>Additional Information</b>                                  |                          |                          |                          |
|  |                          |                          |                          |

# Mental health issues such as depression and paranoid psychosis, which focus on the victim as hostile, are high when they are present in conjunction with other risk factors, particularly a previous history of violence. The presence of a mental health issue must be carefully considered in relation to the co-occurrence of other risk factors.

## APPENDIX 2. INTER-AGENCY SAFETY PLAN

| Date                    | Responsible Agency | By When |
|-------------------------|--------------------|---------|
| / /                     |                    |         |
| <b>Strategy</b>         |                    |         |
|                         |                    |         |
| <b>Strategy Outcome</b> |                    |         |
|                         |                    |         |

| Date                    | Responsible Agency | By When |
|-------------------------|--------------------|---------|
| / /                     |                    |         |
| <b>Strategy</b>         |                    |         |
|                         |                    |         |
| <b>Strategy Outcome</b> |                    |         |
|                         |                    |         |

| Date                    | Responsible Agency | By When |
|-------------------------|--------------------|---------|
| / /                     |                    |         |
| <b>Strategy</b>         |                    |         |
|                         |                    |         |
| <b>Strategy Outcome</b> |                    |         |
|                         |                    |         |