

UPDATE: B.C.'s Domestic Violence Action Plan

Coroner's Inquest Recommendations	Action Plan Status at March 16, 2010	Completion Target	Action Plan Status at Dec. 6, 2010
<p>1. Continue unification efforts of the various police departments.</p>	<p>A domestic violence unit that will serve the entire Capital Regional District – bringing together police, victim services and child protection in one location – is being established, based on the model in place in Vancouver and New Westminster. Its mandate and general staffing levels have been set, and the implementation team is selecting a site and staff.</p> <p>Government is working with police to develop a domestic violence investigation policy to guide and inform police agencies' operational policies.</p>	<p>Unit operational: June 2010</p> <p>Policy: Fall 2010</p>	<p>Unit operational July 2010.</p> <p>Policy drafted, consultation with police and policy to be finalized in December.</p>
<p>2. Before release of high risk accused on bail, properly screened and appropriate sureties must be provided.</p>	<p>The Province will finalize a standardized set of bail conditions and terms for high-risk domestic violence offenders, to strengthen the justice system's ability to enforce conditions, offender accountability and victim safety. This work is currently underway in consultation with the judiciary.</p>	<p>Conditions and terms: May 2010</p>	<p>Complete and included in the VAWIR policy.</p>
<p>3. All police departments work across jurisdictional</p>	<p>See response #1.</p>		

boundaries as one unit.			
4. All victims and abusers should be provided with universally available advocacy services. Such services to be initiated upon first contact.	Legal aid services like emergency services referrals are available throughout B.C. to financially eligible victims and those at risk of violence, including children. Advocacy services, counselling, outreach and transition house services are also available to crime victims across B.C.	Underway	Ongoing For more information on where to get help and legal options, see also the new website: www.domesticviolencebc.ca
5. Risk assessment be made at the front end of process before bail conditions set.	The Province is finalizing its evaluation of risk-assessment tools to identify a provincial standard that first responders will use to assess risk. The selected tool will be integrated into the advanced risk-assessment training now under development (see response #14) and the Province's integrated domestic violence policy (see response # 13).	Evaluation: April 2010	Evaluation was completed April 2010. Training now under way.
6. Special domestic violence units be set up regionally and coordinated with all stakeholders.	See response #1.		
7. "No fixed address" designation not be allowed on bail orders unless accused agrees to GPS monitoring on high risk cases.	See response #2. Community Corrections' is assessing GPS monitoring.	Feasibility assessment: April 2010	Complete Standardize bail conditions have been developed and are incorporated into the VAWIR policy.
8. All updated "K" file information be shared across all jurisdictional lines immediately and with all agencies.	A review is underway of how domestic violence files ("K" files) are entered and shared in police and Crown file	Review: Summer 2010	A review of how domestic violence files ("K" files) are entered and managed in the PRIME and JUSTIN information management

	management systems.		systems was completed earlier in the year. Areas for improvement in information flow were identified and a working group was established to make systems changes, including improving the manner in which family/domestic violence is reported and flagged in the systems; its work is continuing. To improve information flow while this work is underway a policy directive was issued to PRIME users in March 2010 clarifying and emphasizing the importance of properly flagging family/domestic violence in PRIME and JUSTIN.
9. Bail release conditions be developed in conjunction with bail supervisors to ensure they are enforceable.	See response #2.		
10. Ongoing multimedia community based educational advertising program surrounding domestic violence be expanded and enhanced.	Government will launch a new public website that brings together its information related to domestic violence. This will include a section for youth that links with related school activities (see response #12 below), and will use social media to maximize youth engagement.	Website: Summer 2010; Social media video posting: By Winter 2010	Complete – website launched Fall 2010. Social media planning underway.
11. The government provides global funding to accommodate associated costs of these recommendations.	Funding is in place to complete and implement these responses: • Up to \$250,000 from civil forfeiture proceeds in 2010 (see news release).	Underway.	Underway

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> nearly \$80 million across government (\$42.2 million for Victim Services and Crime Prevention, of which \$16.9 million goes directly to Violence Against Women programs; \$32 million for transition houses; and \$5 million to help abused women overcome barriers to employment) supports domestic violence response, (2009/2010). 		
12. Family relationships and domestic violence education program be instituted for all students from kindergarten to Grade 12.	The Ministry of Education (MED) has completed a review of the provincial K-12 curriculum to identify student learning outcomes aimed at addressing family relationships, including domestic violence. A new teacher resource will support the learning outcomes. MED will distribute the new material to the public, teachers, principals and superintendents.	Distribution of teacher resource: Spring 2010	Complete
13. Develop a single domestic violence unit across all provincial jurisdictional lines and include all agencies and services.	See response #1. The Province is also reviewing and updating its domestic violence policy, to ensure a cross-agency approach with clear protocols. The policy will set out roles and responsibilities of all service providers who respond to domestic violence.	Revised policy: Fall 2010	Complete
14. SARA or BSAFER be used to train all	The Province is developing an advanced course for	Delivery of new course: Fall 2010	B-SAFER selected as the standardized provincial risk assessment tool and

involved service providers to a common standard in all criminal justice regions in the province.	professionals involved in domestic violence response and will soon select a risk-assessment tool for their use. The tool will be part of the training and integrated domestic violence policy (see response #13).		training developed and underway in November.
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Representative for Children and Youth Recommendations	Action Plan Status at March 16, 2010	Completion Target	Action Plan Status at Dec. 6, 2010
1(a): That MCFD propose required changes to legislation, and develop policies, standards and training to provide social workers with clear direction in assessing the safety of children who are exposed to domestic violence.	<p>The Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) is updating its 2006 <i>Best Practice Approaches: Child Protection and Violence Against Women</i> guidelines.</p> <p>These updated guidelines will be a component of advanced risk assessment training for MCFD staff and other professionals involved in domestic violence response for fall 2010 delivery (see above response #14 to coroner's recommendation). This will augment MCFD's mandatory 19-week training program for new staff that includes 3.5 days of risk assessment training and specific domestic violence training during 4.5 days that is focused on "Understanding abuse and neglect in family</p>	Fall 2010	<p>Complete – published in November.</p> <p>MCFD child welfare workers have participated in the advanced risk assessment training rolled out in November.</p> <p>MCFD has developed a related training plan to support staff awareness and consistent use of the Best Practices Approaches.</p>

	<p>violence” and “Culture and diversity.”</p> <p>MCFD has reviewed the legislative definition of “when a child needs protection,” including contact with service agencies. Based on this review, the current definition was determined to be broad enough to include circumstances where children may be at risk due to exposure to domestic violence.</p> <p>Listing exposure to domestic violence as a specific reason why a child needs protection – and therefore, removal and placement in a foster home – may place women and children at greater risk, and act as a barrier to women in need requesting and receiving services.</p>		
1(b): That MCFD develop and implement a strategy to screen child protection reports for domestic violence issues.	MCFD assesses every report made regarding children who may be at risk of abuse or neglect related to their parents’ conduct, including situations of domestic violence.	Underway	Complete - The updated Best Practices Approaches noted above, has new information on assessing safety /risk factors.
1(c): That MCFD record and track child protection reports with domestic violence issues in order to evaluate effectiveness of safety planning and protection of children	Government is investing \$180 million to develop an integrated case management system which will allow MCFD to better track the nature of cases, including those with domestic violence scenarios.	This new system is being planned in five phases; the first will start in late Fall 2010	In progress - Phase One of ICM completed in November.

over time.			
<p>2: That the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General take the lead in a special initiative that focuses on the issue of safety of children and youth in domestic violence situations, by ensuring a coordinated, effective and responsive system in Greater Victoria and throughout British Columbia.</p>	<p>MCFD has contributed a dedicated social worker to the establishment of a new domestic violence unit for the Capital Regional District.</p> <p>See above responses to coroner's recommendations #1, #3, #13 and #14.</p> <p>Additionally, domestic violence training courses will be updated to include a component on the mandate and use of the Protection Order Registry.</p>	<p>Unit operational: June 2010</p> <p>Delivery of new course: Fall 2010</p>	<p>Unit operational in July.</p> <p>Complete - risk assessment training developed and underway in November, includes crown, police, child welfare and victim services workers. Updated policy also includes information on the Protection Order Registry.</p>
<p>3: That the Ministry of Attorney General undertake a review and enact necessary changes to improve the administration of justice in criminal matters involving domestic violence, including establishment of domestic violence courts, to better protect the safety of children and their mothers.</p>	<p>The Province is enhancing training to develop greater expertise and knowledge on domestic violence within our existing court system. This will allow B.C. to address domestic violence at a local level, in every court in the province, rather than through a specialized, stand-alone court.</p> <p>Regarding protective orders, see above responses to coroner's recommendations #2 and #5.</p>	<p>November 2010</p>	<p>Complete - risk assessment training developed and underway in November, includes Crown, police, child welfare and victim services workers.</p> <p>Updated VAWIR policy has a new protocol for highest risk cases, and standardized provincial risk assessment tool (B-SAFER) for police. And, risk assessment training is underway, including Crown, police, child welfare, victim service</p>

			workers together. See # 2 coroner's recommendation VAWIR also has standardized bail conditions.
4: That the Ministry of Attorney General undertake a review and enact necessary changes to improve administration of justice in family law matters in domestic violence cases, to better protect the safety of children and their mothers, and to ensure that the perspective of the child is considered.	MAG is conducting a comprehensive review of the <i>Family Relations Act</i> . As a priority, the Ministry is developing proposals to amend and update family law for possible introduction in a future legislative session.	Timeframe unspecified (pertains to legislation)	Underway - A white paper was released for public consultation which closed October 8, 2010 and proposals to amend and update family law are being developed.
5: That MCFD strengthen services to immigrant women in circumstances of domestic violence.	<p>MCFD is involved in development of specialized training for front-line staff who work with immigrant women. Existing standards guide social workers to ensure they deliver culturally-sensitive services to families and children.</p> <p>Government also provides 12 multicultural outreach programs that support women and their dependent children from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds who have experienced violence or are at risk. Programs help women identify and access services they need and provide community education to raise awareness of those</p>	<p>Planning is currently underway</p> <p>In place</p> <p>In place</p>	Complete – the first training session was completed in November and future training is being planned.

	<p>services. As needed, programs also provide local transportation, accompaniment and advocacy.</p> <p>The VictimLINK toll-free, provincewide phone service provides 24/7 information, interpretation, translation and referral services in 110 languages to crime victims, including victims of domestic violence. MCFD has interpreters available to assist if unexpected communication difficulties arise.</p>		
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