SURVIVORS AT THE CENTRE

Tasmania's Third Family and Sexual Violence Action Plan 2022-2027

Progress Report 1 July 2023 - 30 June 2024



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Minister's foreword

Family and sexual violence doesn't discriminate – decades of research, data, and personal stories shared by victim-survivors have shown us time and again that this violence exists across every fabric of our society. Both the perpetrator and those they choose to inflict violence upon may be our colleague, our neighbour, our teammate at the local sporting club or a loved one. The ripple effect can be devastating and long-lasting.

As family and sexual violence continues to remain an issue that exists within our communities, so too does the need to respond to violence with a whole-of-community approach. The Tasmanian Government continues to play a key leadership role, alongside the efforts of individuals, families and community sector organisations.

In 2023-24, family and sexual violence continued to remain a significant issue in Tasmania and nationally, further highlighting the necessity of governments to continue to focus their efforts on prevention and response to such violence. Tasmania has made notable progress across our four key priority areas, including the establishment of Arch Centres in the North and South, delivering survivor-centred and integrated responses



to sexual violence, and supporting, on average, 200 women to safely remain in their homes.

When I launched Survivors at the Centre, I was clear this is our government's sincere commitment to addressing what we heard from victim-survivors. With three years left to achieve the actions outlined in the Third Action Plan, we continue to be accountable for what we set out to achieve. To ensure transparency, we will introduce a new, more frequent reporting framework from 2024-25. This new approach allows us to measure progress more clearly, stay on-track, and adjust where necessary to maintain momentum in our work to end family and sexual violence.

Survivors at the Centre represents the government's commitment to creating a Tasmania where sustained prevention is a reality, and our communities are safe. While we have taken some positive steps forward, we still have a mountain to climb. As we continue to strive for a State where every Tasmanian lives free from violence, I call on all of us to play our part in achieving this vision.

Hon Jo Palmer MLC Minister for Women and the Prevention of Family Violence

Acknowledgements

Acknowledgement of Aboriginal people

We recognise the deep history and culture of this island and acknowledge and pay respect to all Tasmanian Aboriginal people, the past and present custodians of the land.

The Tasmanian Government acknowledges the devastating impacts of family and sexual violence in Aboriginal communities and recognise the ongoing leadership role of Aboriginal communities to prevent and address family and sexual violence.

Acknowledgement of victim-survivors

We acknowledge the resilience and courage of victim-survivors of family and sexual violence. We pay our respects to victims and victim-survivors, their families and communities that all feel the devastating impacts.

Family violence services and support

If you or someone else is in immediate danger, call Triple Zero (000).

If you or someone you know is experiencing, or at-risk of experiencing family or sexual violence, you can contact the following support services.

Counselling and support services

1800RESPECT	24 hours a day,	1800 737 732 (1800 RESPECT)
National Domestic Family	7 days a week	or
and Sexual Violence Counselling Service		Text 0458 737 732
Family Violence Counselling	9am – midnight (weekdays)	1800 608 122
and Support Service	4pm – midnight (weekends and public holidays)	

Crisis response and support for recent sexual assault

Statewide sexual assault crisis line	24 hours a day, 7 days a week	1800 697 877 (1800 MYSUPPORT)
CHSIS III IE	7 days a week	

If you have difficulty hearing or speaking to people who use a phone, the National Relay Service (NRS) can help. For further information visit **www.accesshub.gov.au**.

Introduction

This Progress Report is for the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024. It provides a snapshot of progress in delivering actions under *Survivors at the Centre: Tasmania's Third Family and Sexual Violence Action Plan 2022-2027.*

This report has been prepared using a refined structure and data provided by agencies, reflecting our ongoing commitment to transparency and accountability. By documenting achievements and tracking the progress of actions, this report supports the work of the Tasmanian community, service providers, and the Government in creating safer homes and communities. It also meets key Tasmanian reporting requirements and national commitments under the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032*.

This report marks an important transition point in the reporting approach under Survivors at the Centre. Following a review of reporting requirements and data needs, a new six-monthly reporting cycle will be implemented from 2024-25 and continue across the remaining years of the Action Plan through to 2026-27. This new approach responds to the need for more regular, targeted, consistent, and timely data to meet the requirements of multiple stakeholders - including performance reporting for the Tasmanian State Budget and tracking under the National Plan.

The work and achievements during this period are critical steps in advancing our collective commitment to reducing family and sexual violence and supporting victim-survivors across Tasmania. We extend our gratitude to victim-survivors, service providers, and stakeholders who continue to contribute their expertise, insights, and lived experience to this important work.

Achievements: 1 July 2023 - 30 June 2024

The following achievements occurred during the twelve-month reporting period, demonstrating the progress across the four key priority areas.

Partnership and transformation

Establishment of Multi-Disciplinary Arch Centres in the North and South [Action 1]

In 2023, Tasmania's Arch Centres in Launceston (July) and Hobart (August) commenced operations, delivering survivor-centred, holistic, and integrated responses to sexual violence. These Centres were developed in close consultation with victim-survivors and sector experts to ensure they provide the right support at the right time.

The co-location of services under one roof means victim-survivors can access counselling, police investigators, child safety workers, and other supports in a safe and therapeutic environment. This coordinated, trauma-informed model reduces the burden on individuals and strengthens Tasmania's response to sexual violence. Planning is also underway for a third Arch Centre in the North West, further expanding access to these vital services.

This work reflects Tasmania's commitment to creating a community where everyone is safe, equal and respected, and where homes and communities are free from sexual violence.

Establish a Family and Sexual Violence Liaison Services [Action 5]

The Family and Sexual Violence Liaison Service within the Tasmanian Health Service is strengthening frontline responses to family and sexual violence through trauma-informed and evidence-based practice. During this reporting period, a Clinical Lead was appointed to oversee the development and delivery of the service. A practice framework and screening tools have also been developed to guide consistent responses across the health system.

The service supports health staff with referral guidance, consultation, and training, ensuring people experiencing family and sexual violence are identified early and connected with appropriate support services by trained professionals. Further recruitment, training, and embedding of the service within the Tasmanian Health Service will continue to build a coordinated and sustainable response.

Continue electronic monitoring of high-risk family violence offenders [Action 7]

Tasmania remains at the forefront of efforts to prevent family and sexual violence, as the only jurisdiction in Australia where perpetrators can be electronically monitored as a condition of a Family Violence Order (FVO). This world-leading approach (one of only two of its kind globally) uniquely applies electronic monitoring at the front end, as a protective measure, rather than solely as a sentencing tool.

From 1 July 2023, Community Corrections assumed sole responsibility for the delivery and coordination of electronic monitoring of high-risk family violence offenders, following the transfer of this function from Tasmania Police. The program continues to play a vital role in improving safety and protection for victim-survivors, reducing the risk of reoffending, and strengthening compliance with court-imposed restrictions.

During this reporting period, participation has remained steady, with an average of 35 perpetrators monitored each month and an average of 48 victim-survivors opting into the program for added protection. It is important to note that Community Corrections is not involved in assessing or determining suitability for electronic monitoring; this responsibility remains with Tasmania Police, in consultation with victim-survivors.

Legislative reforms [Action 8]

During the reporting period there were several amendments implemented to address intimate partner or family and sexual violence legislative reform.

On 30 June 2024, the remaining provisions of the *Family Violence Reforms Act 2022* commenced. These reforms created a new serial family violence perpetrator framework and provided for mandated behaviour change program participation to be included as part of any Family Violence Order.

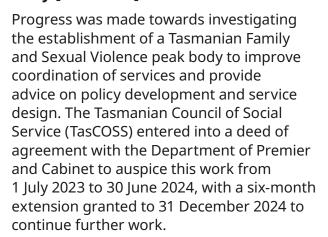
Standardising risk assessment in family and sexual violence services [Action 10]

The Tasmanian Government continued work to develop standardised risk assessment processes across government and non-government family and sexual violence services. In October 2023, the Department of Premier and Cabinet engaged Engender Equality to develop Tasmania's Risk Assessment Management Framework (RAMF) and the Tasmanian and Rural Risk Assessment (TARRA) tool. This work includes the development of practice guidelines and a training package for specialist family violence services. Development commenced in January 2024, with initial consultation focused on specialist services.

In May 2024, National Cabinet tasked the Commonwealth with leading development of new national best practice family and domestic violence risk assessment principles and a model best practice risk assessment framework. Tasmania's model will offer a timely opportunity to work towards a consistent state-based approach, contribute to national best practice, and strengthen alignment with emerging national frameworks.

Capacity building

Investigate the establishment of a Tasmanian Family and Sexual Violence peak body [Action 14]



As at the end of the reporting period,
TasCOSS continued to coordinate sector
input and representation on the Steering
Committee, with the time extension
enabling final recommendations to be
completed and the potential transition of the
Steering Committee from the auspices of
TasCOSS to an incorporated peak body.
The next phase will work to position the
peak body to explore viability, represent the
sector and strengthen Tasmania's family and
sexual violence response system.



Keeping Women Safe in their Homes [Action 17]

The Keeping Women Safe in their Homes program continued to provide security upgrades for women and children experiencing family violence, enabling them to safely remain in their homes. An average of 200 women were supported in this period and received completed security upgrades to a house or home of their choice. This program operates through Safe at Home and offered individualised risk assessments, safety planning, and home modifications to enhance stability, autonomy, and connection to community.

Prevention and early intervention

Embed Respectful Relationships and Consent Education in Tasmanian schools [Action 24]

Embedding Respectful Relationships and Consent Education (RRCE) in Tasmanian schools takes ongoing, sustained effort. Progress on this action in 2023-24 included successfully updating, publishing and communicating the four comprehensive RRCE Teaching and Learning packages. These resources are available from www.respectfulrelationships.education. tas.gov.au.

The Department for Education, Children and Young People continue to review and update a range of supporting resources to meet the needs of schools. This includes aligning resources with professional learning delivered by the Office of Safeguarding Children and Young People.

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Key stakeholders, including children and young people, continue to be engaged in this work to embed RRCE in Tasmanian schools. This integral engagement continues to inform the update and delivery of the teaching materials.

To further embed RRCE, a variety of professional learning options were delivered to staff in Tasmanian Government schools. Since the project officer commenced in April 2023, 84 per cent or 164 government schools/sites have had staff participation in RRCE professional learning, reflecting strong engagement and progress in building the capacity of schools to deliver this crucial education.

Support young people using violence at home or in relationships through the Step Up Program [Action 25]

The Step Up Program, delivered by Home Base (formerly Colony 47), continues to support young people aged 11-17 who are using violence in the home or in relationships. Through tailored one-on-one support, the program teaches respectful communication, non-violent conflict resolution, and positive relationship strategies to help build safer family dynamics.

The program has built a strong reputation across the service sector for its consistent, positive outcomes for young people and their families. In 2023-24, increased funding through the *National Partnership Agreement on Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence Responses* supported the program's continued reach and impact. Between July 2022 and April 2024, 447 individuals were referred to Step Up. Of families surveyed, 100 per cent reported some reduction in violence and abusive behaviours in

the home, 63 per cent reported that all physical violence had completely ceased, and 87 per cent reported an overall improvement in feeling safe at home.

In 2024, Step Up was recognised nationally, receiving an Australian Crime and Violence Prevention Award for its significant contribution to early intervention with young people using violence.

SPOTLIGHT: A family's journey to safety



"Tom working with both of us gave Lucas the tools he needed." Emily's 12-year-old son Lucas, who had become verbally abusive and physically violent, found it hard to express his emotions, often taking out his frustrations on his family and the house.

With the support of Tom from the Step Up Program, strategies were tailored to Lucas's needs, including visual aids and a conflict de-escalation technique called "drop the rope." As Emily noted: "Lucas was willing to participate, and Tom worked with both of us in a way that was thorough and effective. Things have improved, and now Lucas can tell me when things are going wrong¹."

¹ Case study used with permission; names have been changed for privacy.

Our Watch partnership with the Tasmanian Government [Action 26 and 27]

Our Watch continued its activity to build relationships with key stakeholders across government, local government and non-government setting. This included promoting and building awareness of Our Watch's resources, best practice approaches, tools and resources.

In 2023-24, the Our Watch Senior Advisor gave 14 presentations, webinars and workshops, and attended 19 events. Work continued to implement the Workplace Equality and Respect Standards across the Tasmanian State Service; to support the Department for Education, Children and Young People in embedding Respectful Relationships and Consent Education; and engaging with sporting organisations and clubs such as attending *Inclusivity and Diversity in Sport Forum* hosted by Clubs Tasmania in July 2023.

Voice and diversity

Establish Tasmania's first Victim-Survivor Advisory Council [Action 31]

In 2023-24, the inaugural members of Tasmania's first Victim-Survivor Advisory Council were selected by the Minister. The selection process was guided by a specialist in trauma-informed practices, ensuring a sensitive and supportive approach. An expression of interest and interview process was conducted, with careful consideration of both individual qualifications and the dynamics of the group, ten members were selected. The safety of the group, both individually and collectively, was prioritised throughout the process to foster a respectful and secure environment for all members.

Additionally, in preparation for their inaugural meeting, all members of the Advisory Council will be required to complete advocacy training. This training is scheduled to take place in the next reporting period to ensure members are well-equipped for their roles and responsibilities.

Supporting Diverse Communities [Action 32]

In 2023-24, the Tasmanian Government launched the Supporting Diverse Communities Grant Program to strengthen support for victim-survivors from diverse backgrounds and reduce barriers to safety and services. This grant round closed in August 2023, with \$675,000 in funding available for grants of up to \$150,000 per project.

In September 2023, the Tasmanian Government awarded the funding to seven projects supporting community-based initiatives for children and young people, older Tasmanians, Tasmanian Aboriginal communities, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, the LGBTIQA+ community, Tasmanians with disability, and people living in rural and regional areas. The program also meets Commonwealth requirements under the National Partnership Agreement on Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence Responses 2023–2027 by supporting diverse priority cohorts.

Continue to support children and families through the Safe Homes, Safe Families Support Team [Action 36]

In 2023-24, the Safe Homes, Safe Families Support Team supported 5,956 individual children and young people affected by family violence through Tasmanian Government schools and Child and Family Learning Centres. Support was provided through direct client work and secondary consultation with school and agency staff.

Compared with 2022-23, in 2023-24 there was a 14 per cent increase in notifications received from the Safe Families Coordination Unit. This resulted in a corresponding rise in demand for both direct support and consultation work.

Strengthen culturally safe support for Aboriginal families [Action 37]

Aboriginal Family Support Worker positions are provided in three Child and Family Learning Centres to model culturally safe, trauma-informed support for Aboriginal families with young children. These roles provide family safety education, support access to services, undertake outreach, and use culturally responsive engagement strategies to help strengthen trust and improve service accessibility within communities.

Status of the actions

The status of the 38 actions in *Survivors at the Centre: Tasmania's Third Family and Sexual Violence Action Plan 2022-2027* are reported at 30 June 2024.

Actions carried over from the *Safe Homes, Families, Communities Tasmania's Action Plan for Family and Sexual Violence 2019-2022* have a 'Continuing' action type. These actions are considered complete for the purposes of this reporting.

Priority areas	Action number	Action item	Action type New / Enhanced/ Continuing	Action status Completed/ Progressing	Responsible Minister
	1	Pilot the establishment of two Multi-Disciplinary Centres in the North and South of the State to provide survivor centred, holistic and integrated responses to family and sexual violence.	New	Completed	Police, Fire and Emergency Management
	2	Expand the scope of the Safe Families Coordination Unit to undertake whole of Government data coordination and integration for family and sexual violence.	Enhanced	Progressing	Police, Fire and Emergency Management
	3	Investigate the Safe and Together Model, including providing professional learning on the model for legal professionals, community sector workers, and Government officers.	New	Progressing	Prevention of Family Violence
nation	4	Provide next generation technology and instruments for forensic scientists to ensure higher quality evidence for court proceedings, and increase capacity for storage of evidence, including sexual evidence kits.	New	Progressing	Police, Fire and Emergency Management
Partnership and transformation	5	Establish a family and sexual violence liaison service within the Tasmanian Health Service, which will provide Family Violence Liaison Officers statewide to support clients who identify as experiencing family and sexual violence to access services.	New	Progressing	Health
	6	Provide an additional appointment for parents and children who identify as experiencing family violence through the Child Health and Parenting Service.	New	Progressing	Health
	7	Continue electronic monitoring of high-risk family violence offenders.	Continuing	Completed	Corrections and Rehabilitation
	8	Continue to implement legislative reform to strengthen legal responses to family and sexual violence.	Continuing	Completed	Justice
	9	Continue to roll out mobile phone data extraction devices to collect evidence of technology facilitated abuse.	Continuing	Completed	Police, Fire and Emergency Management
	10	Continue to develop standardised risk assessment processes across government and non-government family and sexual violence services.	Continuing	Progressing	Prevention of Family Violence
	11	Continue the Family Violence Liaison Officer in the Strong Families, Safe Kids Advice and Referral Line.	Continuing	Completed	Education

Priority areas		Action item	Action type New / Enhanced/ Continuing	Action status Completed/ Progressing	Responsible Minister
	12	Provide historic increased core funding to Tasmania's specialist family and sexual violence services with five-year contracts to enable funding certainty.	New	Progressing	Community Services
	13	Deliver the Safe Beds for Pets program that will establish a coordinated network of safe bed providers and fund safe bed places for Tasmanians at-risk of, or experiencing family and sexual violence.	New	Completed	Prevention of Family Violence
	14	Investigate the establishment of a Tasmanian Family and Sexual Violence Peak to improve coordination of family and sexual violence services and advice on policy development and service design.	New	Progressing	Prevention of Family Violence
б	15	Continue to deliver the Rapid Rehousing Program.	Continuing	Completed	Housing, Planning and Consumer Affairs
Capacity building	16	Continue to deliver Flexible Support Packages.	Continuing	Completed	Justice
Capacit	17	Continue to deliver the Keeping Women Safe in their Homes Program.	Continuing	Completed	Justice
	18	Continue to provide legal assistance to people experiencing family and sexual violence.	Continuing	Completed	Justice
	19	Strengthen the Victims of Crime Service.	Enhanced	Progressing	Justice
	20	Continue to deliver perpetrator programs.	Continuing	Completed	Corrections and Rehabilitation
	21	Deliver mandated behaviour change programs, including as part of a family violence order, and for sex offenders.	Enhanced	Progressing	Corrections and Rehabilitation
	22	Continue to strengthen specialist police prosecution.	Continuing	Completed	Police, Fire and Emergency Management
	23	Continue to ensure forensic medical examinations for adult victim-survivors of family and sexual violence is a statewide service.	Continuing	Completed	Health

Priority areas	Action number	Action item	Action type New / Enhanced/ Continuing	Action status Completed/ Progressing	Responsible Minister
Prevention and early intervention	24	Effectively embed Respectful Relationships and Consent Education in Tasmanian schools and develop a suite of resources informed by key stakeholders and children and young people that builds understanding of consent, coercive control and grooming in the Tasmanian community.	Enhanced	Progressing	Education
	25	Expand the Step Up Adolescent Early Intervention Program into a statewide program across the South, North and North-West to provide early intervention for adolescents that use violence in their families and with intimate partners.	Enhanced	Progressing	Prevention of Family Violence
	26	Continue our partnership with Our Watch through the Tasmanian Government's membership of Our Watch and continuing the Our Watch Senior Advisor Role.	Continuing	Completed	Prevention of Family Violence
Prevent	27	Continue embedding Workforce Equality and Respect Standards in Tasmanian Government Agencies.	Continuing	Completed	Prevention of Family Violence
	28	Continue to deliver the Harmful Sexual Behaviours program for children and young people.	Continuing	Completed	Education
	29	Continue to strengthen the Defendant Health Liaison Service to provide early intervention assessment and management services to respondents.	Continuing	Completed	Health
	30	Continue to deliver the Men's Referral Service.	Continuing	Completed	Justice

Priority areas	Action number	Action item	Action type New / Enhanced/ Continuing	Action status Completed/ Progressing	Responsible Minister
	31	Establish Tasmania's first Victim-Survivor Advisory Council.	New	Completed	Prevention of Family Violence
	32	Deliver funding for community-based projects to support inclusion, access and equity to support diverse Tasmanians who experience barriers for accessing support for family and sexual violence.	New	Completed	Prevention of Family Violence
	33	Expand the Mothers Circle Pilot Program for culturally and linguistically diverse women to the South and North of Tasmania, strengthening individual capacity to identify and respond to family and sexual violence.	Enhanced	Progressing	Prevention of Family Violence
diversity	34	Continue the Safe Choices Local Support Coordinator role in the North and North-West of Tasmania, to ensure a statewide service for women with disability experiencing family violence.	Enhanced	Completed	Prevention of Family Violence
Voice and diversity	35	Continue the Hearing Lived Experience 2022 Survey of Victim-Survivors of Family and Sexual Violence to inform implementation of this Action Plan, and provide a comprehensive dataset of victim-survivor experiences.	New	Completed	Prevention of Family Violence
	36	Continue to support children and families through the Safe Homes, Safe Families Support Team.	Continuing	Completed	Education
	37	Continue to support Aboriginal Families through the Aboriginal Family Safety Workers in Child and Family Learning Centres.	Continuing	Completed	Education
	38	Continue to provide increased counselling services for children and young people experiencing family violence through the Australian Childhood Foundation and the Family Violence Counselling Support Service, Children and Young Persons Program.	Continuing	Completed	Prevention of Family Violence and Health

Family and sexual violence in Tasmania

In Tasmania, the legal definition of family violence covers forms of violence that may exist in the context of a significant relationship. Family violence is violent, abusive or controlling behaviour committed by a person against their current or former spouse or intimate partner. The *Family Violence Act 2004* (Tas) defines family violence in Tasmania.

Family violence and related incidents

Family arguments and information reports

A family argument is an incident attended by police where the parties have a significant relationship, but no family violence has occurred. A family information report is a record by police about a situation between parties with a significant relationship which is not considered an incident of family violence. It is not possible to statistically separate family arguments and family information reports.

Over the five-year reporting period 2019-20 to 2023-24, there was a steady increase in the number of police recorded family arguments and information reports.

Figure 1: Family arguments and information reports



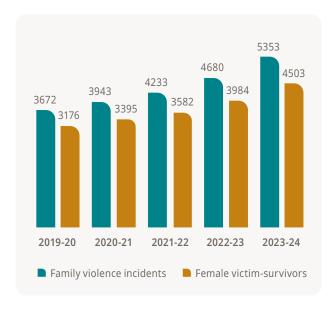
Source: Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management, April 2025

Family violence incidents

The number of family violence incidents reported have consistently increased each year, increasing by 46 per cent over the reporting period 2019-20 to 2023-24.

In 2023-24, female victim-survivors accounted for around 85 per cent of family violence incidents. This mirrors the overall trend of increased family violence incidents and is consistent with the disproportionate rates of violence against women across Australia.

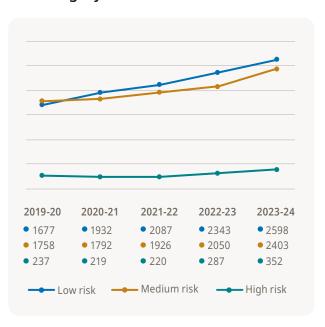
Figure 2: Family violence incidents



Source: Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management, April 2025

A family violence incident is assessed by police using the Risk Assessment Screening Tool (RAST). Incidents are determined to be within three risk categories: low, medium or high.

Figure 3: Family violence incidents by risk category



Source: Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management, April 2025

Low and medium-risk family violence incidents have gradually increased, showing an upward trend in reported incidents. High-risk incidents have also increased over the same period but not with a consistent upward trend. In 2019-20, there were 237 high-risk incidents compared with 352 in 2023-24.

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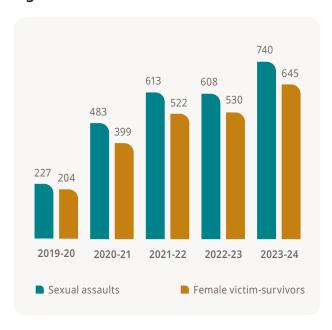
Sexual violence

Sexual violence is behaviour of a sexual nature directed towards a person that makes them feel uncomfortable, distressed or threatened and to which they have not consented. Sexual violence includes a wide range of unwanted, non-consensual, traumatic and harmful sexual behaviours.

Sexual assault is any unlawful sexual acts with or directly targeting another person. In Tasmania, sexual acts that constitute a criminal offence are in the *Criminal Code Act* 1924 (Tas) and the *Police Offences Act* 1935 (Tas).

Females continue to be overly represented as the victim-survivor of reported sexual assaults. In 2023-24, female victim-survivors accounted for around 88 per cent of sexual assaults.

Figure 4: Sexual assaults



Source: Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management, April 2025

What does this data mean?

It is important to understand that the increase demonstrated in the five-year trend data, does not necessarily indicate that family and sexual violence is becoming more prevalent. Rather, it is more likely to reflect growing community awareness, improved understanding of family and sexual violence, and increased confidence among individuals to seek help and engage with formal support systems.

Increased reporting is consistent with the expected process of change to prevent violence against women. Tasmania is only at the beginning of its journey and is continuing to strengthen services and systems.

The Our Watch² publication **Counting on change** is a guide for policymakers, researchers and advocates on measuring population-level progress towards the prevention of violence against women and children in Australia. The **Summary of Counting on change: A guide to prevention monitoring** provides additional information about the expected process of change.

Our Watch is the leader in primary prevention of violence against women. It is an independent not-for-profit organisation working to embed gender equality and prevent violence where Australians live, learn, work and socialise. Further information is available at www.ourwatch.org.au.



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