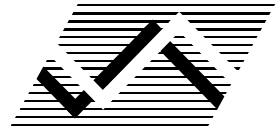


NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research

NSW Attorney General's Department



DR. DON WEATHERBURN
DIRECTOR

In reply please quote:

21 May 2008

Media Release: Domestic Violence Intervention Court Model (DVICM) evaluation 10.30am, 21st May, 2008

Efforts to improve the response of the criminal justice system to victims of domestic violence appear to have substantially succeeded, according to a report released today by the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research.

The principal aims of the NSW Domestic Violence Intervention Court Model (DVICM) were to:

- improve safety for victims of domestic violence coming into contact with the criminal justice system, and;
- ensure that perpetrators who are charged with domestic violence offences are held to account for their actions.

The DVICM was piloted in Campbelltown and Wagga Wagga Local Courts and involved Campbelltown, Macquarie Fields and Wagga Wagga Local Area Commands (LACs) within the NSW Police Force. The DVICM commenced in Campbelltown on 12 September 2005 and in Wagga Wagga on 10 October 2005.

Victims interviewed as part of the Bureau's evaluation reported that they were very satisfied with the police response in the Campbelltown, Macquarie Fields and Wagga Wagga LACs.

They also reported that they were very satisfied with the support they received from the Victims' Advocate in Campbelltown and Client Advocate in Wagga Wagga.

Most victims reported they felt safe at the time of the interview, with around four in five reporting they did feel safe. The majority of victims said they would report a similar incident to the police in the future.

The impact of the DVICM on the handling of domestic violence cases was mixed. Wagga Wagga LAC had high charge rates for domestic violence prior to the DVICM and these remained high throughout the DVICM period.

The proportion of alleged domestic violence offenders charged by Campbelltown and Macquarie Fields LACs increased after the DVICM commenced. Increases in charge rates for domestic violence, however, were also observed across the rest of NSW.

The percentage of matters finalised by guilty plea did not shift in Campbelltown. In Wagga Wagga, the percentage of matters finalised by a guilty plea actually decreased after the DVICM was introduced. The proportion of matters withdrawn by the prosecution or dismissed by the court remained stable in both Local Courts.

Court delays for matters that proceeded to hearing improved in Campbelltown Local Court after the DVICM but remained stable in Wagga Wagga Local Court.

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