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Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the various lands on which we work today and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people participating in this webinar.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging, and recognise and celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal peoples and their ongoing cultures and connections to the lands and waters of NSW.

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Survivor Acknowledgement

We acknowledge all victim survivors of domestic and family violence, including any attending today, and the variety of ways that victim survivors resist violence in overt and covert ways.

We recognise the lives taken as a result of choices to use violence and the need for systems to make profound changes to uphold the safety and dignity of women and children.

We acknowledge the victim survivors who have led and advocated for the criminalisation of coercive control. We note that some people may have worries about these new laws, and we will have a chance to explore these together.

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Sensitive Content Warning

The information presented in this webinar may be triggering or cause concerns for some people. Please keep yourself safe and reach out for support.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should also be aware that this webinar may discuss or refer to Aboriginal people who have died.

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Please be aware:

While coercive control can be perpetrated by individuals of all genders and sexualities in intimate partner relationships, the focus of the current discussion, consistent with prevailing statistical evidence, will be on men who employ coercive control tactics against their intimate partners.

This approach acknowledges the heavily gendered nature of this behaviour, as consistently demonstrated across relevant research and data.

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What is Coercive Control?

- Coercive control is when someone repeatedly hurts, scares or isolates another person to control them
- It's domestic abuse and it can cause serious harm
- It’s an ongoing and repeated pattern of behaviours
- It includes physical and non-physical behaviours

The key to understanding coercive control:

- It is an assault on autonomy, liberty and equality
- A person aims to dominate and control another person
- It occurs within the individual context of that relationship, culture and community

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Coercive Control Legislation – Crimes Act 1900 Div 6A

Crimes Legislation Amendment (Coercive Control) Act 2022 No.65

- From 1 July 2024, coercive control is a criminal offence in NSW when a person uses a **course of conduct** of **abusive behaviour** towards a **current or former intimate partner** with the intention to coerce or control them – Section 54D *Crimes Act 1900 NSW*
- The criminal offence captures repeated patterns of physical and non-physical abuse used to hurt, scare, intimidate, threaten or control someone.
- The law only applies to abusive behaviour that happens after 1 July 2024
- Behaviour prior to commencement can be used to provide background and context to a relationship

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Section 54D: Abusive behaviour towards current or former intimate partners

Section 54D: Abusive behaviour towards current or former intimate partners

(1) An adult commits an offence if—

(a) the adult engages in a course of conduct against another person that consists of abusive behaviour, and

(b) the adult and other person are or were intimate partners, and

(c) the adult intends the course of conduct to coerce or control the other person, and

(d) a reasonable person would consider the course of conduct would be likely, in all the circumstances, to cause any or all of the following, whether or not the fear or impact is in fact caused:

(i) fear that violence will be used against the other person or another person, or

(ii) a serious adverse impact on the capacity of the other person to engage in some or all of the person's ordinary day-to-day activities.

Maximum penalty—Imprisonment for 7 years.

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Meaning of 'Abusive Behaviour'

Crimes Act s54F(2) contains a non-exhaustive list of "Abusive behaviours". This includes engaging in or threatening to engage in:

- violence or threats against, or intimidation of, a person
- behaviour that shames, degrades or humiliates
- behaviour that prevents the person from doing any of the following or otherwise isolates the person
  - making or keeping connections with the person's family, friends or culture,
  - participating in cultural or spiritual ceremonies or practice,
  - expressing the person's cultural identity
- behaviour that deprives a person of liberty, restricts a person's liberty or otherwise unreasonably controls or regulates a person's day-to-day activities.

ADVOs – Links to the Coercive Control Offence

Crimes (Domestic and Personal Violence) Act 2007 No 80

- The meaning of 'Domestic Violence Offence' in the CDPV Act includes an offence under section 54D(1)
- Section 16 - Court may make Apprehended Domestic Violence Order allows an ADVO to be obtained if the court is satisfied on the balance of probabilities that a person who has or has had a domestic relationship with another person has reasonable grounds to fear and in fact fears the commission by the other person of a domestic violence offence [s54D coercive control offence] against the person

Additional legislative impacts:

- Police investigative and weapon seizure powers
- Protections for victim survivors giving evidence in court proceedings
- Allowing Victim Impact Statements

Serious Domestic Abuse Prevention Orders (SDAPOs)

From 29 September 2025 Part 10A of the CDPV Act allows Serious Domestic Abuse Prevention Orders (SDAPOs) to be sought by Police or the DPP and ordered against an adult (18+) if during the previous 10 years [since at least 16], the person has:

a) been convicted of 2 or more domestic violence offences with a maximum penalty of imprisonment for 7 years, and

b) there are reasonable grounds to believe the making of the order would protect a family member of the person, a former, current or potential intimate partner of the person or a person in a domestic relationship with an intimate partner of the person by preventing the person engaging in domestic abuse.

- SDAPOs can be ordered if the accused has a previous conviction for a different ‘domestic violence offence’ and is then convicted of coercive control.
- Only being charged with coercive control does not enliven the SDAPO scheme.

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Misidentification & Systems Abuse

"I wasn't a good enough victim"

- Discrimination
- Perceptions of 'victims'
- Incident focused
- Misinterpreting resistance

Perpetrator intentionally misrepresenting their behaviour and the victim

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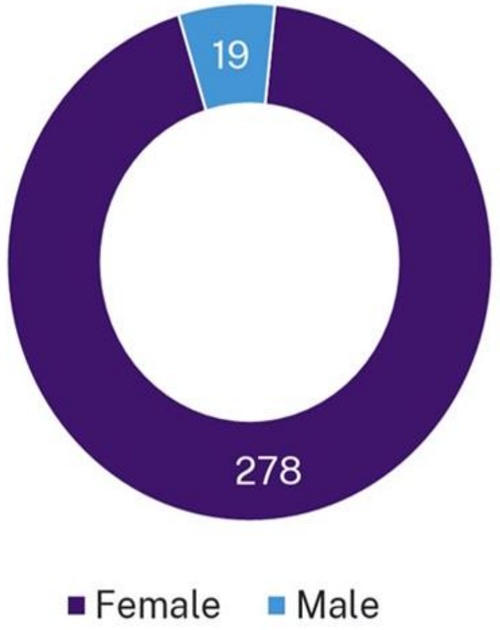
Victims of coercive control (n=297)

Jul 2024-Jun 2025

2.1 Victims by gender

94% of victims of coercive control were female



2.2 Victims by gender of the alleged offender

92% of coercive control incidents involved a female victim and a male alleged offender

9 persons were legally proceeded against in the 12 months to June 2025.

All nine were **male**, **non-Aboriginal** and aged between **30 and 49** years.

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