



MEDIA RELEASE

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Dametto reaffirms calls for specialised DV police service

Queensland Police officers are being relegated to a career where feeling “overwhelmed, burnt out and terrified of making a mistake” is the norm given the skyrocketing demand being placed on the service by domestic violence, Katter’s Australian Party (KAP) Deputy Leader and Hinchinbrook MP Nick Dametto has said.

Mr Dametto said 40 per cent of all Triple Zero calls made daily in Townsville related to domestic violence incidents, placed an astronomical burden on the already-stretched local police resources.¹

A news report published yesterday by the *Courier Mail*², outlined some of the findings of the Commission of Inquiry into Police Responses to Domestic and Family Violence.

Police officers surveyed were reportedly experiencing a great deal of stress from attending domestic and family violence incidents, particularly relating to paperwork, red tape and criticism.

14.5 per cent of those surveyed scored abnormally high on burnout, 30 per cent scored high on a measure of psychological distress, and 21.4 per cent met or exceeded the threshold for probable post-traumatic stress disorder.

In response to this, Mr Dametto has criticised the Palaszczuk Labor Government for failing to ensure police numbers had kept up with population rises and increased demands on Queensland Police Services (QPS).

He said the Government should explore the creation of a secondary DV-exclusive police service, which is rolled out state-wide and collaborates with psychologists, social workers and other support agencies to respond to all calls and cases of a domestic violence nature.

“While the Government’s recent announcement that Townsville is set to be home to a new Domestic Violence High Risk Team³ may take some pressure off our officers here in the North, more needs to be done to curb the trend of domestic and family violence that plagues our communities state-wide,” Mr Dametto said.

“Our police are struggling with rising case numbers, increased population and added demands placed on officers, especially throughout the pandemic.”

¹ <https://www.townsvillebulletin.com.au/truecrimeaustralia/police-courts-townsville/north-queenslands-domestic-violence-statistics-remain-high-depite-concerted-efforts/news-story/1356ea2ffc24ba135a2fc571b8233150>

² <https://www.couriermail.com.au/truecrimeaustralia/police-courts-qld/cannot-sleep-for-worrying-dv-cops-terrified-of-making-mistakes/news-story/0c9e9387ea1745afe20793a9cc8bb374>

³ <https://statements.qld.gov.au/statements/95561>

NICK DAMETTO
Member for Hinchinbrook



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Mr Dametto said while only three additional multi-agency High-Risk teams were being rolled out state-wide over the next four years, Queensland police officers would continue to suffer increased pressures on the job while being under-resourced.

"With domestic and family violence incidents making up close to half of all calls our police service receives, I don't think I'm out of line calling for a secondary policing unit that would be responsible for all proactive and reactive domestic violence policing requirements," he said.

"Under the KAP's proposal, officers part of this unit would be provided with additional specialised training on preventing, managing and prosecuting domestic violence incidents.

"We would also like to see these officers supported by other government-funded specialists such as social workers and psychologists, to ensure their own mental health is addressed," said Mr Dametto.

Last year, fewer than 90 domestic violence specialised officers in Queensland were tasked with managing 107,000 cases.⁴

In 2020-21 domestic and family violence matters increased by 13 per cent in comparison to the previous year.⁵

"We understand that QPS currently employs officers, including the new multi-agency team to be based in Townsville as specialists for domestic and family violence, however the force is struggling with the rising case numbers, increased population and demand placed on officers," he said.

"For example, in 2009-10, QPS laid 8,033 charges for breach of a domestic violence order. In comparison to 2020, where 35,838 charges were reported. Each instance requires an immense amount of police focus and time. Not to mention the toll it can play on our officer's mental and physical wellbeing.

"It's important that we support those in our community during often the most dangerous and tragic times of their lives, and by having a lack of specialised officers for these incidents we're failing the most vulnerable in our community."

The KAP Members of Parliament will continue to have discussions with the Minister for Police regarding their proposal for a secondary policing unit responsible for domestic and family violence.

—ENDS—

Photo: State Member for Hinchinbrook and KAP Deputy Leader Nick Dametto.

Media Enquiries: Sam Shaw 0421 467 731

⁴ [Fewer than 90 domestic violence specialist police officers in Queensland to handle 107,000 cases | Australia news | The Guardian](#)

⁵ [The rise of domestic violence under the cover of the COVID-19 pandemic - ABC News](#)