



# EVALUATION OF THE REMAND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (DV) INTERVENTION

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITIES AND  
JUSTICE

CORRECTIVE SERVICES NSW

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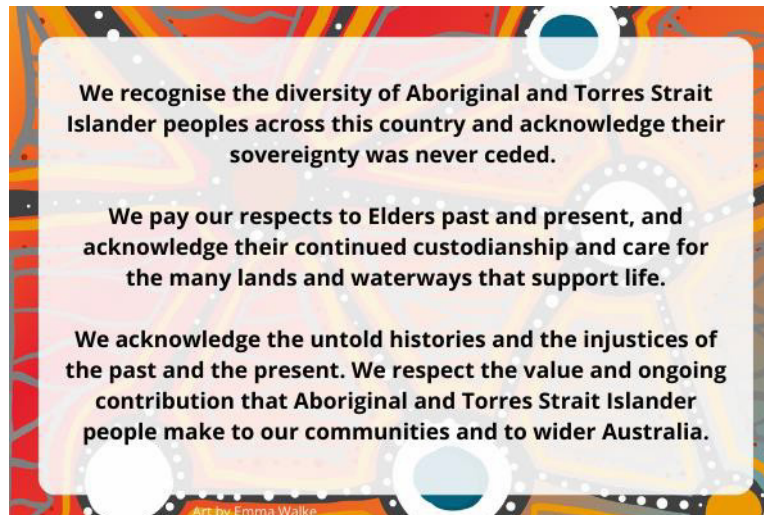
## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we undertook our work. We pay our respects to Indigenous participants and acknowledge their past trauma, thanking them for sharing their experiences. We would also like to thank the many key informants from the Remand DV intervention team and the non-Indigenous participants who undertook interviews. We thank them for their time and insights and trust that their views are adequately represented in this report.

This work was completed with the assistance of Dr. Tania Matruglio and Dr. Amanda Clarke in the Department of Communities and Justice, Corrective Services New South Wales.

### **ARTD consultancy team**

Kathleen De Rooy, Theebana Tharmakumar, Emily Yorkston, Paula Shaw and our Aboriginal associate, Uncle Syl Johns.



We also acknowledge the talent and artistry of Emma Walke, who designed the artwork for our report cover page. The design shows a story of connection to country and people, representing the breadth of work we do with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Australia. The colours represent the land, and the lines in between represent the water that connects us all.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### PROJECT

Corrective Services New South Wales (CSNSW), in the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ), engaged ARTD to explore how the Remand Domestic Violence (DV) intervention was implemented, and the program's effectiveness in achieving the intended outcomes for participating men.

This document is the Final Evaluation Report, which uses both qualitative and quantitative data to provide answers to the key evaluation questions.

### METHODS

This was a mixed-methods evaluation involving both qualitative and quantitative approaches including:

- a **document review** of background documents and materials used in the delivery of the intervention.
- a **systems map** to show how outcomes for men who participate in the Remand DV intervention are influenced by a range of variables including institutional, individual and social and community factors.
- qualitative analysis of **semi-structured interviews** with key stakeholders (CSNSW) and participants at Francis Greenway Correctional Complex<sup>1</sup>, and Cessnock Correctional Centre, and Tamworth, Maitland, and Mt Druitt Community Corrections.
- quantitative analysis of **administrative data**, such as program enrolment and completion rates, and effect on post remand breaches of Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders (ADVOs) as well as further DV offending.

### KEY FINDINGS

The Remand DV intervention has been implemented in seven correctional centres across NSW since 2016. It is reaching men in the target group, however, demand for the intervention exceeds supply.

#### THE PROGRAM IS REACHING MEN IN THE TARGET GROUP

Between 1 January 2019 and 30 June 2023, Remand DV has been delivered to 2,239 men. The men who participate span a broad age range (average 38 years, range 19 to 75 years). One third (32%) identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and about one in five (18%) are culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD). Two in three of the men have never been married (60%) and two thirds (66%) of the men have children. Of those men, one third (31%)

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<sup>1</sup> This facility was previously known as the John Morony Correctional Centre.

have children that live with them. About half of the participants receive Australian Government benefits (54%) and almost all (89%) of the men live in major cities in NSW or inner regional NSW.

### ELIGIBLE MEN CHOOSE TO PARTICIPATE WHEN THEY HAVE CLEAR INTERNAL MOTIVATION TO DO SO

Services and Program Officers (SAPOs) use the Intake Screening Questionnaire (ISQ) to determine men's eligibility for the Remand DV intervention. Not all eligible men are willing to consider Remand DV when they are first remanded, particularly if they do not intend to plead guilty. The rapport that SAPOs build with individual men can overcome this initial reluctance, as can framing the intervention in a non-threatening way.

Men choose to participate for a range of externally and internally driven reasons. Some men participate because they want to use the completion certificate as evidence when their matters go to court. Men who were internally motivated saw the intervention as an opportunity to learn more about themselves and how they show up in relationships. SAPOs note that while men may initially be externally motivated, engaging with the program can activate their internal motivation.

Accepting the Remand DV booklet is an important pathway to eventual participation in the intervention. The quantitative administrative data shows that approximately three-quarters (73%) of men who were offered Remand DV booklets accepted them. All men who do ultimately become participants were offered the booklet.

### IT CAN BE DIFFICULT FOR REMANDED MEN TO PARTICIPATE

It can be difficult for remanded men to attend all six sessions in the intervention because of the dynamic nature of remand. There is no certainty about how long the remand period will be, and remanded men are often moved between correctional centres with little notice. Even men who are dedicated to participating in Remand DV may find themselves unable to continue it. Other barriers to participation include needing to balance attendance with work commitments or medical appointments. The classroom style learning environment can also be a barrier to men whose experiences of the education system may not have been positive. The intervention content may not be equally accessible to men from culturally and linguistically diverse or Indigenous backgrounds.

### DEMAND FOR THE PROGRAM CURRENTLY EXCEEDS AVAILABILITY

Currently, demand for the Remand DV Intervention is high and correctional centres do not currently have enough facilitators available to meet it. SAPOs must do training to be qualified to deliver the Remand DV intervention. Training (often through mentoring by a formally trained SAPO) is necessary because the role requires a nuanced understanding of DV, as well as strong facilitation skills and knowledge about how to work effectively with particular cohorts of men, including unsentenced men, Indigenous men or men from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

There is a limit to the number of group programs that can be run in correctional centres because of the low availability of appropriate rooms, the number of appropriately trained staff available and the centres' tight daily schedules.

### THE INTERVENTION CONTENT IS DELIVERED DIFFERENTLY ACROSS THE STATE

The intervention is structured to be delivered as six discrete modules. The operational reality of the centres in which the intervention is delivered mean that it is offered differently at each. For example, it is delivered as three, two-hour sessions on consecutive days at Francis Greenway Correction Complex (with a rolling intake - see section 2 for more information), and as six, one-hour sessions on six consecutive days at Cessnock Correctional Centre. Cessnock only accepts men into the program as a cohort: once the intervention has started, eligible participants must join a waitlist for the program.

Qualitative data from interviews with both participants and corrections staff indicate that having a stable cohort enables more active engagement with the content, as there is greater opportunity to build trust and rapport amongst group members.

### THERE ARE CHALLENGES IN MEETING THE LEGAL LITERACY NEEDS OF PARTICIPANTS

A key goal of the intervention is to improve men's legal literacy, specifically their understanding of their ADVO, so that men are better able to comply with the conditions of their orders and reduce breaches. The qualitative data consistently shows that neither participants nor SAPOs felt the legal literacy content met the participants' needs.<sup>2</sup> Participants reported a continuing uncertainty about the legal requirements of their orders, and SAPOs reported feeling ill-equipped to respond to participants' legal questions.

### THERE ARE OPPORTUNITIES TO MAKE THE PROGRAM MORE ACCESSIBLE

Men and the staff who deliver the intervention both say that as whole, the intervention content does not acknowledge how relationships occur in other cultures, including for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It also was orientated towards people who identify as male and choose heterosexual relationships. Staff and men from different cultures, reflected that these participants did not always relate to the relationship configurations presented in the program content, which made it challenging for them to learn about building healthy relationships. Accessibility is addressed in section 4.2. Recommendations.

## EMERGING OUTCOMES

Broadly, there is reasonable indication that the intervention is achieving its intended outcomes and impacts. Men speak positively about Remand DV and encourage other remandees to join it. The men we spoke to said they had learnt some communication skills, and ways of managing their stress (and distress) in positive ways. Those men who had been

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<sup>2</sup> Note that participants view the legal literacy video at least once. The intervention intends for it to be shown at every session, but due to cohort makeup, it may be shown only once to avoid repetition.



released spoke about being able to transfer these skills into their lives at home. Men told us that Remand DV taught them about healthy relationships. They said they learnt the importance of responsibility, including being accountable for their past choices.

Analysis of quantitative administrative data shows that there is a slightly lower rate of ADVO breaches in the post-remand period among participants compared to the non-participant group (41% participant breaches, 43% non-participant group breaches), but the difference is not statistically significant. However, the data suggests that completing all six sessions of the intervention appeared to have a small effect in reducing post-remand breaches. This may indicate a 'dosage' effect, whereby, men who receive the full 6-session 'dosage' of the program are more likely to experience greater benefits. Men who had completed all 6 sessions at least once, had a slightly lower rate of breach (10%) than men who did only 1 session (13%). This relationship may also be influenced by factors we could not measure, for example men who undertake all 6 sessions may also exhibit more inherent motivation to change. Alternatively undertaking all 6 sessions suggests that men may have been on remand for longer periods of time and therefore had less opportunity to breach their ADVO.

Our analysis of the administrative data revealed a modest link between participating in the intervention and subsequent engagement in additional programs. Although a slightly smaller proportion of Remand DV participants were eligible for programs compared to the non-participant group, a higher proportion of them engaged in DV programs (35% vs. 27%). Participation in the Explore, Question, Understand, Investigate, Practise, Plan, Succeed (EQUIPS) program was low for both groups but was slightly higher among Remand DV participants (13% vs. 10%). These findings may suggest that the intervention enhances readiness for DV-specific programs, however, there are a range of factors that influence participation in these programs including their eligibility criteria. Further investigation that is beyond the scope of this evaluation would be required to verify this finding.

While the findings are not statistically significant, they do provide some indication that the intervention may be having at least a small impact on reducing DV offending. The qualitative findings also support that the intervention is successful in supporting some men to reflect on their abusive behaviours. Given the serious and pervasive nature of domestic and family violence (DFV), and the difficulty in affecting changes in entrenched abusive behaviours, these results support the value and importance of this intervention.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Recommendation 1: The Remand DV intervention materials should be reviewed and revised. This should include:**

- **Reviewing and updating the intervention content**, in consultation with program delivery staff and, where possible, with participants, to ensure it reflects a variety of cultures (including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander), relationship configurations and types of violence.
- **Maximising the accessibility of content**, by using plain English and translating key resources into languages other than English.

- **Including in program booklets information about programs and services men can connect with on release**, including family counselling and men's behaviour change programs.
- **Identifying the optimal session length** over which participants can maintain attention and scheduling the program accordingly.
- **Considering renaming the intervention** to reduce its association with domestic violence and emphasising the content that is about healthy relationships and legal literacy.

**Recommendation 2: Improve the accessibility and quality delivery of the Remand DV intervention. This should include:**

- **Consider expanding the cohort of men who are eligible** for the intervention, for example, to include men who have been previously found guilty of DV, or who have an expired ADVO.
- **Ensuring there are sufficient numbers of appropriately trained SAPOs** available to meet existing demand for the intervention. Consideration should also be given to utilising a two-facilitator model to support greater participant engagement and facilitator peer support.
- **Strengthening mechanisms for facilitators to share good practice** and access further professional development.

**Recommendation 3: Investigate additional mechanisms for providing individualised legal literacy information and support for men on ADVOs, such as through outreach from a prisoner's legal service.**

- **Ensuring Remand DV participants can be referred to accessible specialist legal supports** to respond to their specific questions in relation to their ADVOs.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

Corrective Services New South Wales (CSNSW), in the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ), engaged ARTD to design and undertake a process and outcomes evaluation of the Remand Domestic Violence (DV) intervention. The purpose of the evaluation was to explore how the Remand DV intervention was implemented, and the outcomes it achieved.

This document is the Final Evaluation Report, which uses both the qualitative and quantitative data to provide responses to the key process and outcomes evaluation questions.

## 1.1 POLICY CONTEXT

Domestic violence (DV) is a complex issue involving societal, cultural, family, and individual factors. While both men and women can be perpetrators,<sup>3</sup> research suggests that men are predominantly responsible.<sup>4</sup> The *National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children* defines domestic violence as ongoing behaviour aimed at controlling a partner through fear, which can include physical, sexual, emotional, and psychological abuse. Perpetrator accountability is seen as a crucial component in ending DV, and the *National Outcome Standards for Perpetrator Interventions* (NOSPI) sets standards for engaging men who perpetrate DV through various programs, including justice and legal services, behavioural change programs, and counselling services.

Research suggests that Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders (ADVOs) can reduce or, in some cases, eliminate negative behaviours towards victims of domestic violence (DV).<sup>5</sup> Ordering and enforcing ADVOs is an important way that the Australian criminal justice system can contribute to a reduction in the incidence of DFV in Australia.<sup>6</sup>

However, when people who have been remanded in custody go back into the community, there is risk that they will breach their ADVO or commit a new DV offence. For example, in 2013, 25,535 ADVOs were distributed by the NSW courts, and 3154 of these people were guilty of breaching their ADVO as their principal offence.<sup>7</sup> There are many factors that can influence a breach, including whether people completely understand their ADVO and its associated conditions.

Evidence-based interventions to increase the legal literacy of people held on remand can contribute to preventing ADVO breaches. Being legally literate supports accountability and pro-social decision-making. Evaluations of legal service interventions where duty lawyers

<sup>3</sup> University of Queensland. (2020). *National domestic and family violence benchbook* (7<sup>th</sup> ed.).

<sup>4</sup> Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety. (2018). *Violence against women: Accurate use of key statistics* (ANROWS Insights 05/2018). Sydney, NSW: ANROWS.

<sup>5</sup> Trimboli L & Bonney R (1997). An evaluation of the NSW apprehended violence order scheme, (11), retrieved from: <https://www.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/Publications/Legislative/l11.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Trimboli L (2014) Legal service for defendants in Apprehended Domestic Violence Order (ADVO) proceedings: An evaluation, (147), Retrieved from: <https://www.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/Publications/CJB/cjb179.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Trimboli (2015). Persons convicted of breaching Apprehended Domestic Violence orders: their characteristics and penalties. (102). Retrieved from: <https://www.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/Publications/BB/BB102.pdf>

provide advice to defendants in ADVO proceedings have shown positive outcomes, including enhanced knowledge about the order conditions and the consequences of breaching them.<sup>8</sup>

Legal literacy interventions need to be delivered alongside behaviour-focussed interventions that support perpetrator accountability and victim-survivor safety.<sup>9</sup> These may seek to improve emotional awareness, expression, empathy and communication skills, or addressing the beliefs and attitudes that can contribute to the choice to use violence.<sup>10</sup> Research is not conclusive, but it is generally believed behaviour change programs targeting individual's needs and risk appropriately can provide participants with the skills to manage interpersonal conflicts without resorting to violence.<sup>11,12</sup>

The previous NSW Premier prioritised achieving a 25% reduction in DV-related reoffending by 2023, amounting to 670 fewer people committing breaches. This was reflected in an investment by the NSW Government of \$687million over four years—in addition to an \$80million investment by the Australian Government—to reduce DV reoffending, and support victim-survivor safety.

### 1.1.1 CORRECTIVE SERVICES NSW APPROACH TO REHABILITATING PEOPLE IN CONTACT WITH THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

The Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) works with children, adults, families, and communities to deliver services with the objective of achieving a vibrant, sustainable, and inclusive community. DCJ has invested in programs that support men who use violence to change their controlling and abusive behaviours, including Men's Behaviour Change Programs (MCBPs), counselling support, and the No to Violence Men's Referral Service.

As part of DCJ, Corrective Services New South Wales (CSNSW) runs the state's correctional centres and supervises people on community-based orders. It offers people a range of programs and interventions while they are remanded or sentenced to a term of imprisonment or community order. The objective of these programs is to support people who are program eligible to understand the factors that led them to offend, and to acquire the skills necessary to independently manage their risk of reoffending. These programs are described in the Compendium of Offender Behaviour Change Programs.<sup>13</sup>

Underpinning the criminogenic and non-criminogenic programs alongside a range of education, skills training and psychology service interventions that CSNSW offers, is the understanding that a complexity of individual, institutional, and societal factors shape behaviour and experience, and contribute to offending and re-offending (see Figure 1).

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8 Trimboli L (2014) Legal service for defendants in Apprehended Domestic Violence Order (ADVO) proceedings: An evaluation, (147), Retrieved from: <https://www.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/Publications/CJB/cjb179.pdf>

9 Brooks J (1992) Addressing recidivism: legal education in correctional settings. *Rutgers Law Review*, 44(3), 699-.

10 Day A, Chung D, O'Leary P, & Carson E (2009) Programs for Men who Perpetrate Domestic Violence: An Examination of the Issues Underlying the Effectiveness of Intervention Programs. *Journal of Family Violence*, 24(3), 203–212.

11 Erten B, & Keskin P (2022) Does knowledge empower? Education, legal awareness, and intimate partner violence. *Feminist economics*, 28(4), 29-59.

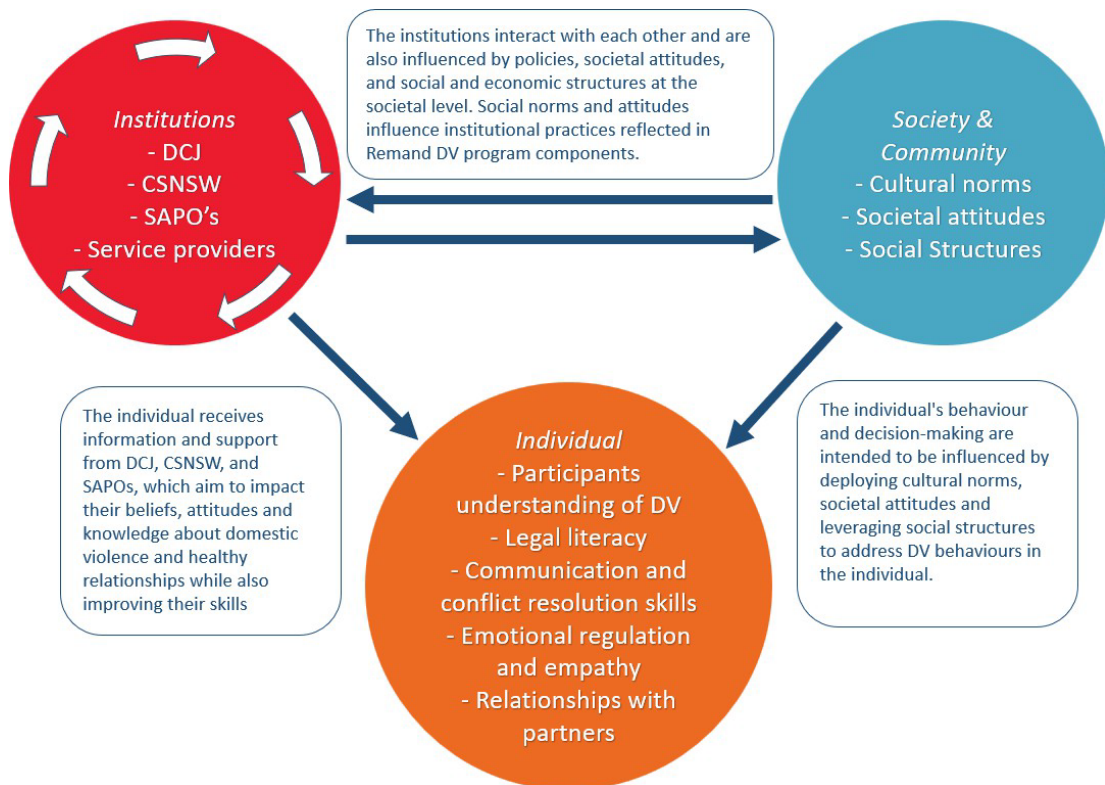
12 Brooks J (1992) Addressing recidivism: legal education in correctional settings. *Rutgers Law Review*, 44(3), 699.

13 Corrective Services NSW (2021) Compendium of Offender Behaviour Change Programs. Offender Services and Programs, Offender Management and Programs Division. Corrective Services NSW, Department of Communities and Justice.

These interventions, programs and support services also draw on the principles of behaviour change readiness.<sup>14</sup>

CSNSW offers programs and interventions across a continuum of intensities to align with a person's risk of reoffending. In contrast, individuals can participate in remand and wellbeing programs as long as their offences are relevant to the program or they possess characteristics suited to the program content (e.g., being a parent). This is consistent with the risk needs responsivity (RNR) approach to working with people in contact with the criminal justice system.<sup>15</sup>

**FIGURE 1. ECOLOGICAL MODEL OF OFFENDING RISKS**



<sup>14</sup> Prochaska JO, DiClemente CC & Norcross JC (1992) In search of how people change: Applications to addictive behaviours. *American Psychologist*, 47, 1102–1114.

<sup>15</sup> Andrews DA & Bonta J (2010) Rehabilitating criminal justice policy and practice. *Psychology, Public Policy and Law*, 16(1): 39–55.

## 1.2 THE REMAND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (DV) INTERVENTION

In its Policy Statement,<sup>16</sup> CSNSW indicates that the Remand DV intervention was implemented to contribute to a reduction in DV re-offending. The Remand DV intervention was collaboratively developed between CSNSW and Legal Aid NSW. It is a six-session, voluntary intervention that assists men to understand their legal circumstances specific to DV and provides them with knowledge and skills for healthier relationships.<sup>17</sup> It does not require men to admit guilt or take responsibility for the charges for which they are currently remanded.

The **six modules** offered to participants are:

- Coping: Managing Emotions and Distress Tolerance
- Caring: Healthy Lifestyle
- Communication: Social Skills
- Change: Identifying Abuse
- Choices: Action and Safety Planning
- Connection: Family Friends and Community

The **objectives** of the Remand DV program are to support remanded men to:

- understand the legal circumstances specific to domestic violence, including any associated ADVOs
- learn knowledge and skills for fostering healthier relationships
- enhance men's readiness to participate in programs that target DV behaviour in the community or in custody.

Men are **eligible** to participate if they have:

- a current domestic violence charge (family or intimate partner); and/or
- a current ADVO.
- Do not have charges for sexual offence/s

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<sup>16</sup> Matsuo, D. (2021) Policy for implementation and recording remand interventions for state-wide programs. CSNSW. [https://correctiveservices.dcj.nsw.gov.au/documents/related-links/publications-and-policies/policies-defined-by-gipa-act/Policy\\_for\\_Implementation\\_and\\_Recording\\_of\\_remand\\_interventions\\_for\\_State-wide\\_Programs.pdf](https://correctiveservices.dcj.nsw.gov.au/documents/related-links/publications-and-policies/policies-defined-by-gipa-act/Policy_for_Implementation_and_Recording_of_remand_interventions_for_State-wide_Programs.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> Remand DV was first implemented in 2016 as a five-session intervention. In 2019, a sixth session was added that explores positive relationships and connections with family, friends and the community more generally.

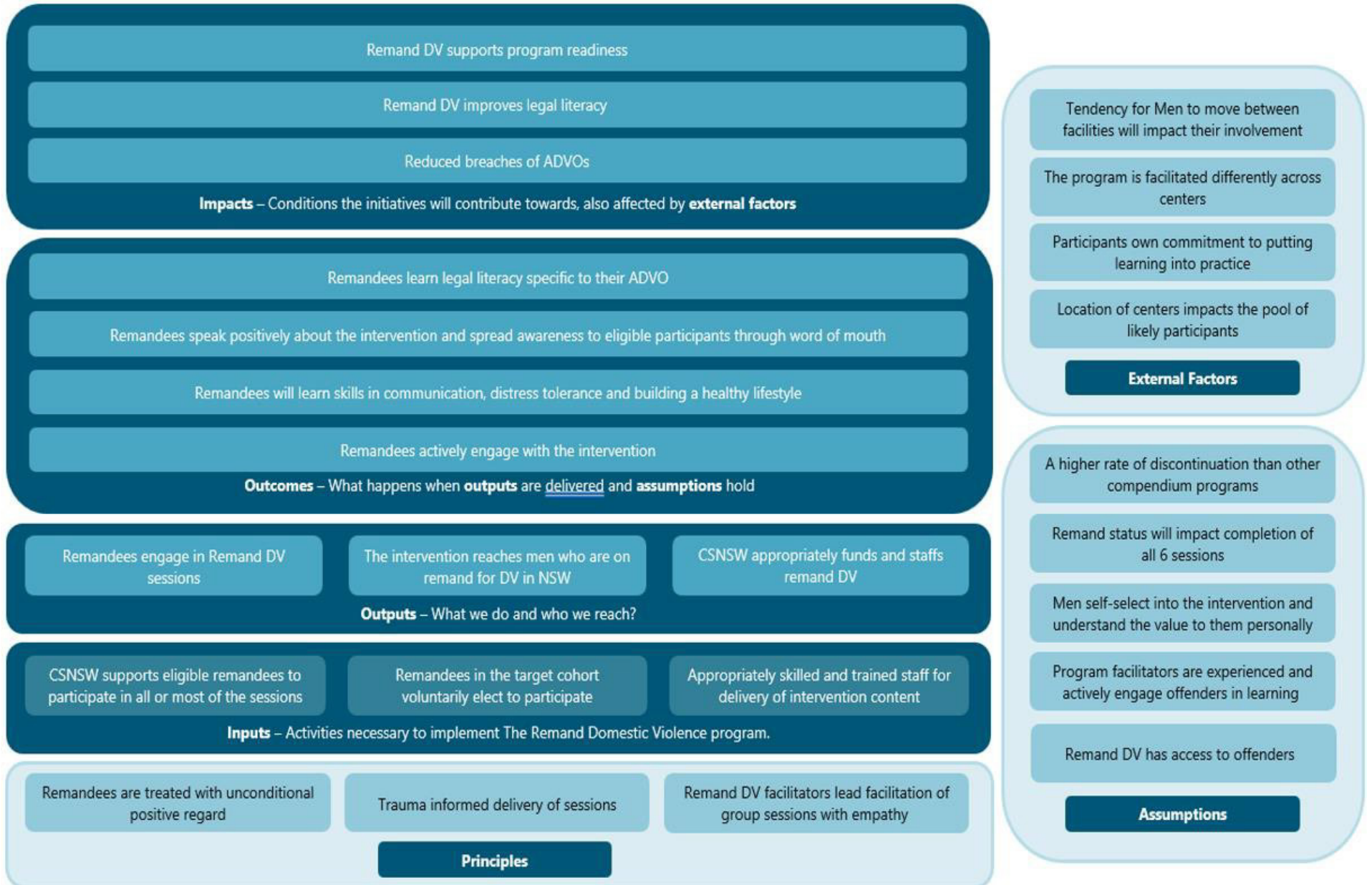
Some men who would otherwise be eligible are **excluded** via a suitability assessment if they have:

- active psychotic symptoms
- alcohol or drug intoxication, or withdrawal symptoms.

Not all remanded men will be convicted of the charges on which they are held. Some of the men who are convicted will be released upon sentencing given time already served. Other men will be sentenced to a term of imprisonment, and some of these men will complete their sentence on community-based orders. Others will be sentenced to community service orders only, spending no further time in custody.

Like other CSNSW programs, the intervention **design** is underpinned by the principles of CBT and solution-focussed therapy, while also providing legal literacy education. ARTD worked with CSNSW stakeholders to develop a logic model to show how the intervention is expected to achieve its intended outcomes (Figure 2).

FIGURE 2. LOGIC FOR THE REMAND DV INTERVENTION





## 1.3 THE EVALUATION

### 1.3.1 SCOPE AND PURPOSE

The **purpose** of the evaluation was to gather detailed information on how Remand DV has been implemented between January 2019 through to January 2024,<sup>18</sup> and any emerging participant outcomes. The Remand DV intervention has been operating since 2016. In 2019, a sixth module was added to the program to bridge an identified gap relating to meeting the needs of community-based offenders who, unlike persons on remand, were in contact with family and friends while participating in the program; this session is called connection: family, friends' community. The program as it was delivered prior to the addition of the sixth session is not in scope of this evaluation.

The evaluation explores how the Remand Domestic Violence (DV) intervention was implemented, and the program's effectiveness in achieving the intended outcomes for participating men. The evaluation does not include a quantitative analysis that predicts long-term recidivism. It does include analyses of post-remand breaches of ADVOs and other DV offending over a limited period post remand to explore potential relationships between participation and outcomes.

Analysis was structured around the intervention outcomes/impacts as outlined in the program logic (Figure 2). These include:

- increasing legal literacy specific to ADVOs, measured as the rate of ADVO breach post participation
- learning skills in communication, distress tolerance and building a healthy lifestyle, measured as a DV offence<sup>19</sup> post participation
- supporting program readiness, measured as the participation in alternative programs post participation.

This document is the Final Evaluation Report, which uses both qualitative and quantitative data to provide responses to the key evaluation questions (Table 1).

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<sup>18</sup> The quantitative administrative dataset captures events up to June 2023.

<sup>19</sup> DV offences are captured as a charge for a DV offence.

TABLE 1. KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS

Process	
KEQ1	How effectively is the Remand DV intervention reaching the target population?
KEQ2	How sufficient are the resources and funding available to the Remand DV intervention to achieve its objectives?
Outcome	
KEQ3	How successful has the intervention been in achieving the outcomes set in the intervention logic?
KEQ4	How well has the Remand DV intervention achieved the intended short, medium, and long-term intervention objectives?
KEQ5	To what extent is the Remand DV intervention meeting the specific needs the intervention was designed to?
KEQ6	What are the opportunities for improvement for the Remand DV intervention?

### 1.3.2 METHODS

This was a mixed-methods evaluation involving both qualitative and quantitative approaches including:

- a **document review** background documents and materials used in the delivery of the intervention.
- a **systems map** to show how outcomes for men who participate in the Remand DV intervention are potentially influenced by a range of environmental and social factors.
- qualitative analysis of **semi-structured interviews** with key stakeholders (DCJ and CSNSW) and participants at Francis Greenway Correctional Complex<sup>20</sup> and Cessnock Correctional Centre, and former participants at Tamworth, Maitland, and Mt Druitt Community Corrections.
- quantitative analysis of **administrative data**, such as program enrolment, participation rates and breaches of ADVOs.

The methods are detailed in Appendix 1.

<sup>20</sup> This facility was previously known as the John Morony Correctional Centre.

### 1.3.3 CONFIDENCE IN THE FINDINGS

We interviewed 23 men, across a range of demographic characteristics. This number is sufficient to ensure that participant views are broadly representative of men's experiences of the Remand DV intervention. There are some limitations, however.

The key limitation was that the sample did not include men from all correctional centres where the intervention was offered (Metro Remand and Reception Centre, Shortland, Mid North Coast, Long Bay Hospital and Goulburn). The evaluation concentrated on Francis Greenway Correctional Complex and Cessnock Correctional Centres as they delivered the most Remand DV program sessions. These centres were selected by CSNSW on the basis that they would maximise the number of men available to the evaluation.

In addition, there was no record of which specific sessions interviewees had completed. This meant we were not able to link participant responses to any specific sessions they participated in. Typically, men found it difficult to recall individual sessions, particularly men on community orders who had completed the intervention less recently. Lastly, not all men in the interview sample had participated in the intervention. These men were subsequently excluded from the qualitative analysis, which resulted in a sample size of 23 men.

We analysed administrative data for 2,239 men who participated in the intervention and where data allowed, made comparisons to a non-participant group of 14,688 men. This assured a robust analysis that captured all men who undertook the program during the period 1 January 2019 to 30 September 2023.

There are however some limitations to the quantitative analyses, which primarily relate to how the data is captured. The structure of the data meant there were some inaccuracies in capturing which facility participating men were held in during the index remand period, and when they undertook each session. This meant we were not able to map outcome analyses to specific locations to explore potential differences in organisational contexts.

## 2. IMPLEMENTATION

This Chapter shows how the Remand DV intervention is being implemented, drawing on program data and participant and stakeholder interviews. In particular, it answers the following key evaluation questions:

- How effectively is the Remand DV intervention reaching the target population?
- How sufficient are the resources and funding available to the Remand DV intervention to achieve its objectives?

This Chapter considers the cohort of men who were eligible and who participated in the intervention. It does not seek to draw distinctions with the non-participant group (men who were eligible and did not participate).

### 2.1 PARTICIPATION IN THE INTERVENTION

To undertake our analysis, we requested administrative data for all men eligible to participate in Remand DV for the period 1 January 2019 to 30 September 2023. Eligibility criteria requires that a participant is male, has a current domestic violence charge (family or intimate partner) and/or a current ADVO, that they must be unsentenced and not have charges for sexual offences. A risk rating is not required. This resulted in a cohort of 16,927 men in total (See Appendix 2). In this period, we identified that Remand DV has been delivered to 2,239 men.

The way participants progress through the eligibility and recruitment processes is shown in Figure 3. The recruitment process (detailed in Section 2.1.1) begins with offering eligible men booklets for the intervention. Men then can accept the booklet and are assessed for suitability to participate in the intervention. Almost all men who accept the booklet then go on to participate in at least one session. We refer to these men as program participants, and all other eligible men who did not participate as the non-participant group. The quantitative group analyses that follow provide descriptive observations and insights in relation to program outcomes. Some caution needs to be exercised in interpreting these analyses as the non-participant group includes men who, whilst eligible<sup>21</sup>, may not be suitable for the program. As such, the group does not represent a “control” for the participant group. This limits the extent to which analyses can be used to examine causal relationships between program participation and outcomes.

#### LIMITATIONS:

It was not possible to identify a valid and reliable control group from available data. A matched control group would need to be assessed as being both program eligible and suitable for program participation. Available data does not however provide an assessment

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<sup>21</sup> CSNSW advises that there may be some individuals in the non-participant group with expired ADVOs, which would make them ineligible for the intervention.

of program suitability. It is also on this basis that an assumption of program suitability is applied to persons recorded as having participated in the program.

Self-selection bias is an artifact of people voluntarily choosing to participate in a program. This can lead to a biased sample as those who choose to participate may differ systematically from those who do not. As Remand DV is a voluntary program people who are more motivated to change may choose to participate in the program.

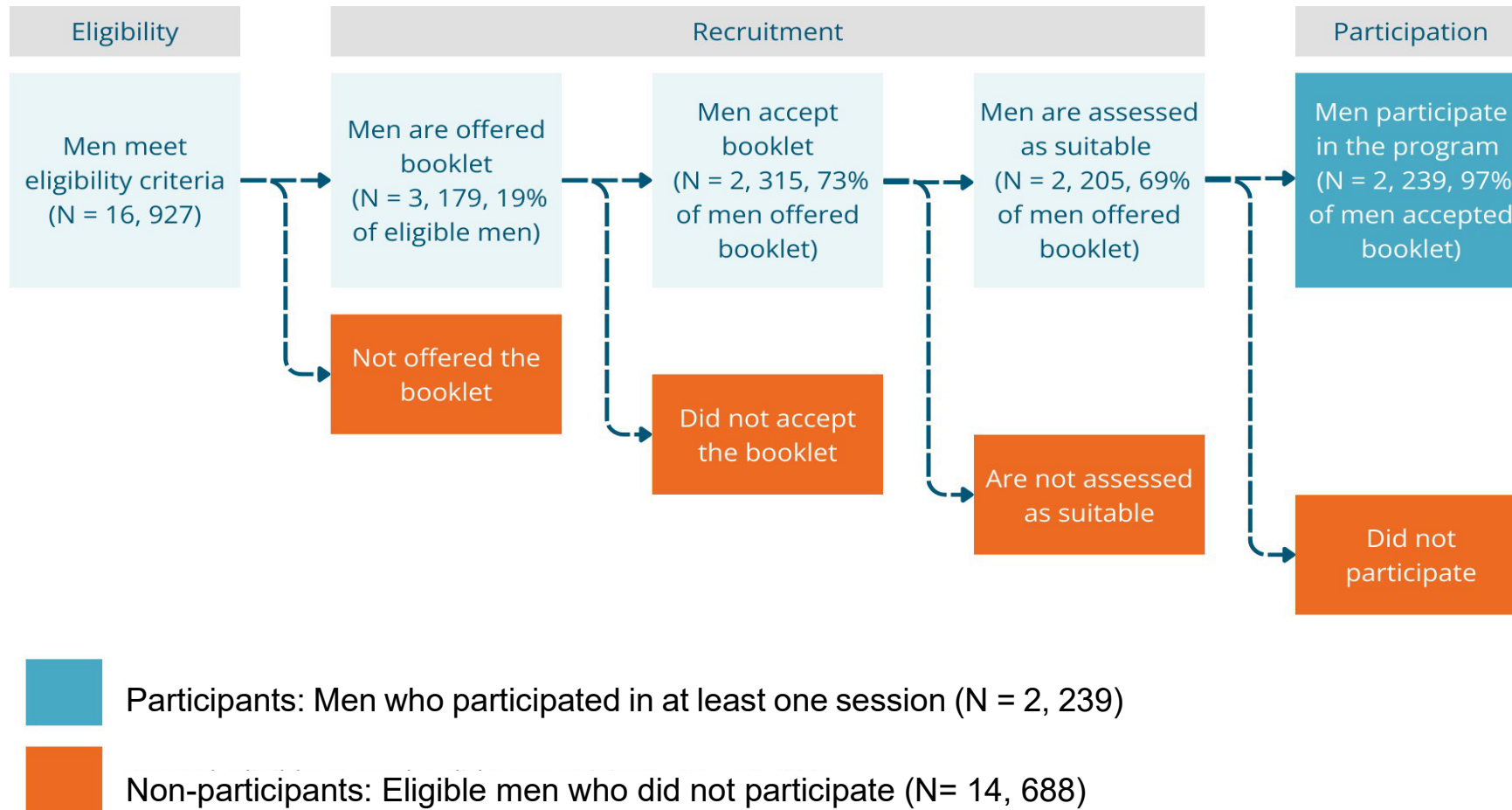
### 2.1.1 RECRUITMENT

Upon reception, Services and Program Officers (SAPOs) use the Intake Screening Questionnaire (ISQ) to determine men's admissibility to the Remand DV intervention. This is done within 36 hours of their arrival at a correctional centre.<sup>22</sup> At this time a booklet is offered to all inmates with DV charges or current Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders (ADVOs), allowing them to choose whether to participate in the intervention, simply take the booklet, or refuse both. Booklets for the intervention contain valuable information and guidance pertinent to addressing DV issues and basic legal information about ADVOs. The booklets provide men with information to help them decide if they would like to participate in the intervention itself. Men who choose to participate are added to a waitlist (where sessions are already at capacity), which is reviewed daily. The process of recruitment is outlined in Figure 3.

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<sup>22</sup> Corrective Services NSW (2021) Procedures for the reception, screening, induction, and orientation of CSNSW inmates. Offender Services and Programs, Corrective Services NSW.

FIGURE 3. THE REMAND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (DV) INTERVENTION PARTICIPANT PROGRESSION



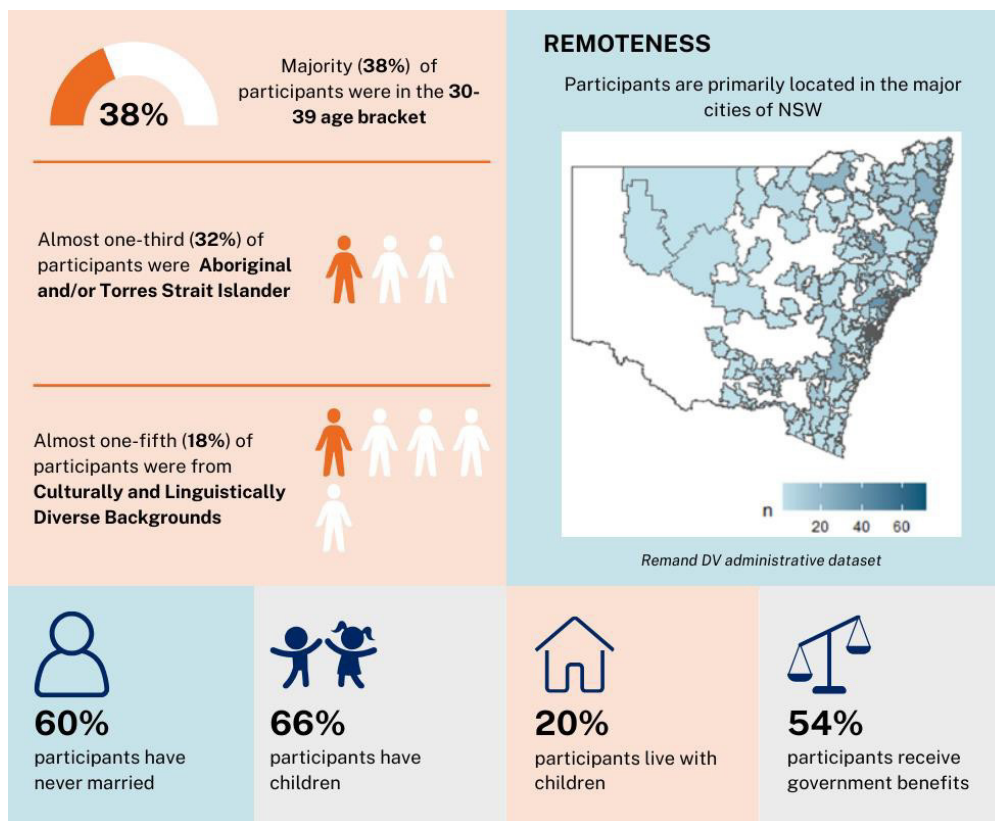
Source: Remand DV administrative dataset

Analysis shows that:

- on average, participating men are 38 years old (range 19 to 75 years).
- one third (32%) of men identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, which is consistent with the broader proportion of First Nations men who are incarcerated in New South Wales.
- one in five (18%) identify as culturally and linguistically diverse (see Section 2.2.5).
- two thirds (66%) of the men have children and one third (31%) of these men live with their children.
- more than half (54%) of men receive Australian Government payments.
- almost two in three (60%) men have never been married.
- almost two thirds (68%) of men live in a major city in NSW (see Appendix 2 for participant location map).

Figure 4 provides an overview of characteristics of Remand DV participants.

**FIGURE 4. CHARACTERISTICS OF REMAND DV PARTICIPANTS**



Source: Remand DV administrative dataset

OFFERING THE BOOKLET

A considerable proportion of men in the analysis cohort (eligible men) were offered booklets for the intervention. Approximately one in five men (19%) from the analysis cohort received

this offer (Table 2). This proportion likely reflects the fact that the program was available only in select centres, limiting the number of eligible men who were offered the booklet. All men who participated in the intervention were offered booklets. There is clearly an opportunity to expand offers to more eligible participants, though this may be limited by staffing and program availability constraints.

**TABLE 2. BOOKLETS OFFERED TO INDIVIDUALS (N=16,927)**

Booklet offered	Analysis cohort	
	n	%
Yes	3,179	19%
No	13,748	81%
<i>Total</i>	16,927	100%

Source: Remand DV administrative dataset

#### ACCEPTING THE BOOKLET

Accepting the Remand DV booklet is an important pathway to eventual participation in the intervention. As shown in Table 3, approximately three-quarters (73%) of men who were offered Remand DV booklets accepted them. Stakeholders—and the participants themselves—indicated that men receive a considerable volume of information as part of their induction, which can be overwhelming.



Not all eligible men are willing to consider the intervention when they are first remanded. For example, some stakeholders said that men who do not intend to plead guilty are wary that attending a DV intervention could be construed as an admission of guilt to their alleged offending behaviour.

*"When they're on remand, they think that if they do it, the magistrate might say if you're pleading not guilty, why are you doing the intervention?" – SAPO/MOSP stakeholder.*

This reluctance is also reflected in the proportion of men who accept the booklets. For example, one non-participant we interviewed reflected that he did not participate in the intervention because he was pleading not guilty.

**TABLE 3. BOOKLETS ACCEPTED BY INDIVIDUALS (N=3,179)**

Booklet accepted	Men who were offered a booklet	
	n	%
Yes	2,315	73%
No	864	27%
<i>Total</i>	3,179	100%

Source: Remand DV administrative dataset

### 2.1.2 SUITABILITY

To participate, eligible individuals must also be deemed to be suitable. The suitability screening is informal and done by SAPOs when recruiting individuals at the relevant centre. This includes screening out those who have active psychotic symptoms or who are experiencing alcohol or drug intoxication or withdrawal symptoms<sup>23</sup>.

Men who have expired ADVOs are unable to participate the program, even though the content is suitable for them. SAPOs suggested that if a man is motivated to do the intervention, it should be allowed, given the potential benefits of participation.

*"I have a lot of guys come up [to me] that are not eligible but have an expired ADVO. They have DV perpetrator characteristics, and I have to say sorry you're not eligible. It is hard to say go away to the guys that are willing to learn. It should be expanded to anyone, including those who have been found guilty" – SAPO/MOSP stakeholder.*

Manager Offender Service and Programs (MOSP) staff and SAPOs said some men are reluctant to participate because domestic violence is viewed poorly by many men being held in correctional facilities. Men may be reluctant to participate in an intervention that by virtue

<sup>23</sup> CSNSW advises that the data relating to program suitability is not reliable. As such, this data has been excluded from analyses.

of its name is clearly about DV. These men may fear violence from other remandees or, if returned to the community, by the associates of people still held on remand.

*“They don’t want to be called a woman basher in the yard.” – SAPO/MOSP Stakeholder.*

This makes framing the intervention in a non-threatening way very important. In line with the program objectives, SAPOs in both sites describe Remand DV as a ‘healthy relationships program’ and avoid using the words ‘domestic violence’.

*“We sell it as a healthy relationship group - how to communicate respectfully - in this way, we can open it up to more people” – Head Office stakeholder.*

After initial screening, men can be referred to the program at any point in their remand period, either by SAPOs, psychologists, or case management staff. Men can also self-refer.

In addition to being offered a booklet, men learn about the intervention in a range of ways, including at their induction, via the SAPOs and Regional Aboriginal Programs Officers (RAPO), through word of mouth, flyers or posters displayed in the centre, or loudspeaker announcements. Seeing other men join the program can influence someone’s decision to join the intervention. For example, one man remanded at Francis Greenway Correctional Complex told us he saw the Remand DV group gathering in the yard and followed them to the program room to learn more. SAPOs agree that gathering the group in full view of other men is a useful recruitment tool. Gathering people in the yard as a recruitment tool is made possible when Remand DV is presented as a healthy relationship’s education intervention (rather than as a DV intervention).

*“I’ll go up to the yards for the [men]. We meet at that one central point every morning and I pretty much go: “Who wants to come?” And then they come.” – SAPO/MOSP stakeholder.*

The rapport that SAPOs build with individual men encourages them to do Remand DV. SAPOs told us that once men know and trust them, they are more likely to listen to how the intervention could benefit them and—if they join it—to engage productively with the content. More than half (14 out of 23) of the men we interviewed decided to do the intervention after a SAPO recommended it to them.

The Francis Greenway Correctional Complex is privately operated, and staff performance is measured against key performance indicators. SAPOs’ performance is measured by the number of men who complete sessions. Stakeholders suggest this incentivises SAPOs to recruit men to the intervention, and to ensure the way they deliver the program is engaging.

*“All custodial workers are doing something [related to] programs education. This creates a culture where everyone has a role and a responsibility that is beyond themselves. In turn this creates a prosocial culture in the prison.” – SAPO/MOSP Stakeholder.*

### 2.1.3 REASONS FOR PARTICIPATING

SAPOs—and men themselves—told us they chose to do the intervention for a mix of reasons representing both internal and external motivations. The balance between internal and

external motivations was different between men and may have shifted over time. Some men described external motivators for wanting to participate, including receipt of a completion certificate, which could be presented as evidence when their matters were before the court. Men in Cessnock said that participating gave them something to do with their time, which was different to men at FGCC, who have working responsibilities.

*"You've got nothing in there, so there is nothing better to do and you're gonna get something from it." - Participant stakeholder*

Men who were internally motivated saw the intervention as a chance to learn more about themselves or as a self-improvement opportunity. As one man told us,

*"I knew I was going home anyway, so I didn't really care what the judge thought. I was doing it for myself" – Participant stakeholder.*

Other men were motivated to improve how they showed up in relationships, and to change the patterns of the past. Some men told us they wanted to be able to show their partners their completion certificate to prove their intent to be a better partner. For other men, receiving an ADVO was a 'wakeup call' that prompted them to make a change. These men said they wanted to learn coping skills to improve their relationship, and more about the law, to better understand their order.

*"I wanted to break out a of the habit of arguing with my wife and to understand that it's not good to be verbally harmful to anyone". – Participant stakeholder.*

#### 2.1.4 BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION

A key barrier to participation relates to the nature of the remand experience and the high transience of remandees between centres.

Men who participated in the intervention were most commonly (39%) processed for intake at the Metro Remand and Reception Centre (Table 5). The data indicates that it is common for men to be moved during their index remand period. More than three quarters of participants were moved once (n=1,759 or 79%) and two thirds were moved a second time (n=1,431 or 64%). The data in (Appendix 2) shows the locations where men were held during their remand period.<sup>24</sup> Half of participants (56%) were moved twice and were ultimately placed at locations where the intervention wasn't delivered.

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<sup>24</sup> In 16% of cases, participants experienced their first movement date outside the window of the index remand start and end dates, while 58% experienced their second movement outside this window. These cases were excluded from the tables.

**TABLE 4. INTAKE CENTRE LOCATION OF PARTICIPANTS (N=2,239)**

Intake location	n	%
Metro Remand and Reception Centre	868	39%
Other*	807	36%
Shortland	340	15%
Mid North Coast	140	6%
Goulburn	54	2%
Cessnock	29	1%
Francis Greenway Correctional Complex	0	0%
Long Bay Hospital	1	0%

Source: Remand DV administrative dataset.

\*Category "Other" includes Bathurst Correctional Centre, Broken Hill Correctional Centre, Clarence Correctional Centre, Grafton Correctional Centre, Junee Correctional Centre, Kariang Correctional Centre, Maitland Correctional Centre, Parklea Correctional Centre, South Coast Correctional Centre, Tamworth Correctional Centre, Wellington Correctional Centre.

This concurs with data that shows that men's attendance at sessions tends to drop off as the session run progresses from 1 to 6. Movements between centres, particularly to locations where the intervention isn't provided, impact participants' opportunities to participate in all program sessions offered in the intervention.

It can be difficult for remanded men to stay engaged with the intervention because of the nature of remand: there is no certainty about how long the remand period will be, and remanded men are often moved between correctional centres with little notice. Even men who are dedicated to participating in Remand DV may find themselves unable to continue it. For example, a man might begin the intervention and then be transferred to a centre that does not offer Remand DV. Or, because Remand DV is delivered on a rolling schedule, the cohort in the centre to which he is transferred may be ahead of or behind where he was previously at with the intervention.

MOSPs reflect that the more remandees are transferred between centres, the more reluctant they become to participate in non-compulsory activities. Additionally, SAPOs reflect that the transient nature of the cohort makes it difficult to develop trust and rapport with participants.

It can be difficult for men to prioritise a voluntary intervention like Remand DV over the opportunity to participate in paid work. In many centres, Remand DV is offered at the same time as medical appointments, which men prioritise.

SAPOs and participants reflect that Remand DV content is not always accessible or appropriate to men from diverse backgrounds or for men with disability. This is further explored in Section 2.2.2.

The learning environment is a barrier for many men, including the physical location in which the intervention is delivered. For example, in Cessnock the program room is upstairs and may

not be accessible for men with physical disability. This room is next to the showers and is accessed by remandees who are not doing the intervention while the sessions are being delivered. This results in many distractions.

SAPOs reflect that the physical environment for delivering the intervention needs to allow for participants to feel safe as this allows them to focus, interact and actively engage. Some SAPOs, suggest delivering the intervention in an open, outdoor environment. Participants agree and would like to do the sessions outside in nature, as it helps them feel relaxed and grounded. Yarning Circles would make an ideal location to deliver elements of the intervention, if available at centres.

## 2.2 DELIVERY OF THE INTERVENTION

The Remand DV Intervention is offered in 7 correctional centres:

- Francis Greenway Correctional Complex (FGCC)
- Cessnock
- Metro Remand and Reception Centre
- Shortland
- Mid North Coast
- Long Bay Hospital
- Goulburn

As noted in Section 1.1, only two correctional centres (Francis Greenway Correctional Complex and Cessnock) were included in the evaluation.

The Remand DV model described in Section 0 sets the overall intent and direction for the intervention. However, the intervention is being delivered differently in FGCC and Cessnock (see Table 5), reflecting the operational context at each centre, for example, the number of staff and the needs of the participating men.

The following sections describe the key differences between the sites.

**TABLE 5. HOW THE REMAND DV INTERVENTION IS BEING IMPLEMENTED IN TWO CORRECTIONAL CENTRES**

Correctional Centre	Recruitment	Session sequence	Session delivery
Francis Greenway Correctional Complex	<p>Screened by SAPOs for participation eligibility and suitability.</p> <p>All men attend a 5-day induction as they enter the complex. If eligible/ suitable, they are informed by SAPOs about the intervention and asked if they would like to be put on the waitlist.</p> <p>Intervention is advertised on loudspeaker.</p> <p>Word of mouth from intervention participants.</p> <p>SAPOs reach out to participants and ask them if they would like to be put on the waitlist</p> <p>SAPOs gather intervention participants on the yard so remandees become aware of the intervention</p>	<p>3 sessions (1&amp;2, 3&amp;4, 5&amp;6) over 3 consecutive days</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2-hour sessions</li> <li>• Facilitated in the afternoon</li> <li>• 1 male or female SAPO facilitator per cohort</li> <li>• 8-10 participants in each session</li> </ul>
Cessnock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Screened by SAPOs for eligibility/ suitability.</li> <li>• Remandees are handed the intervention booklet on the first day in remand, along with other intervention documentation. If participants respond with a willingness to participate, SAPOs put them on a waiting list</li> <li>• Intervention is advertised on loudspeaker.</li> <li>• Intervention flyer displayed</li> <li>• Word of mouth from intervention participants.</li> <li>• Participants gather outside the program room at the location and time announced for each session on the loudspeaker</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 sessions (1-6) over 6 consecutive days</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1-hour sessions</li> <li>• Facilitated in the morning</li> <li>• 1 male or female SAPO facilitator per cohort</li> <li>• 8-10 participants in each session</li> </ul>

## 2.2.1 ROLE OF THE FACILITATOR

The Remand DV intervention is delivered by male and female SAPOs. In 2019, selected SAPOs attended a 10-week specialist training course to become Remand DV SAPOs. This training had not been made available to other SAPOs participating in the evaluation. Instead, the cohort of facilitators has been grown using a 'train the trainer' model.

Most (three out of four) SAPOs interviewed for this evaluation had been mentored by one of the original cohort of SAPOs. Before a SAPO can become a trained Remand DV SAPO, they will have been trained to deliver all other CSNSW programs including EQUIPS DV and therefore have relevant experience working with DV offenders. The SAPOs told us that, mostly, they felt sufficiently prepared to facilitate the intervention with mentoring and the intervention guidelines. They note the importance of adhering to guidelines when doing behaviour change work with men who may have perpetrated DV, particularly to avoid collusion.

All SAPOs are trained to deliver programs. From this training, SAPOs said they had a good understanding of the theory of CBT and how to facilitate a group. Some SAPOs had previous facilitation experience, which they drew on to challenge remandees' thinking. SAPOs learned the Remand DV content through mentoring from experienced Remand DV SAPOs and reading intervention guidelines. They also have opportunities to attend voluntary bi-monthly meetings with Program Development Officers for support.

While the content is well-defined and modular (see Section 2.2.2), working with men in a group setting means SAPOs need the skills to build rapport between the group of men, who may each be differently engaged. Facilitators must also be able to follow men's conversation and anchor it back to the prescribed content. Often, men want to talk about their mental health, different types of abuse and about their families, although this is not specifically part of the curriculum. As one SAPO explained:

*"Sometimes we talk about men's mental health for an hour because they ask questions about it. They don't get a safe space to talk about mental health outside of these walls. It's up to the facilitator to have these discussions and link it back to DV." - SAPO/MOSP stakeholder*

Both SAPOs and MOSPs agree that the program is best delivered by specialist Remand DV SAPOs because it requires a nuanced understanding of DV, strong facilitation skills and knowledge about how to work effectively with unsentenced men. A key barrier to implementation is that the demand for the intervention exceeds its available capacity (see Section 2.3.1). In part, this is because there are not enough specialist SAPOs available.

Participants told us that they are more likely to engage with the intervention content if the facilitator is someone they can relate to and trust. Both participants and key stakeholders suggested that sessions could be co-facilitated by people with lived experience of domestic violence and incarceration. Some men said that, with time, they would like the opportunity to become co-facilitators and support other men. While it is unlikely that this would be possible in a remand context, it does indicate that some participants believe the program has been

very valuable to them and they believe they could help it be valuable to others. Aboriginal participants said they would like to learn from an Aboriginal man with lived experience.

As noted in Table 56, Remand DV is facilitated by either one male or one female facilitator in the Francis Greenway and Cessnock facilities. This is different to Men's Behaviour Change Programs, which are required to have one male and one female facilitator.<sup>25</sup> While SAPOs from Francis Greenway expressed a preference for having a male and female facilitator, most of the men we spoke to were experiencing shame and guilt associated with their choices and said they did not feel comfortable with a female facilitator.

*"You can't have a female talk to men about DV. It just doesn't work." - Participant*

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR ONGOING LEARNING AND IMPROVEMENT

The SAPOs we interviewed for the evaluation are advocates of the Remand DV intervention and enjoy their role as facilitators. They were keen to improve their own performance, and the intervention overall. SAPOs said they would welcome feedback from participants on how they could improve their facilitation, and on how to improve the intervention content and its delivery. SAPOs said they felt well supported by their team and managers. However, some SAPOs suggested a community of practice for Remand DV facilitators across participating centres could support their professional development. This suggests that the existing bi-monthly meetings that are intended to serve this purpose are not sufficient in their current format to effectively meet the development needs of facilitators.

### 2.2.2 MODULES AND SEQUENCING

When the Remand DV intervention was first introduced, it contained five modules. In 2019, the sixth module was added (Figure 6).

Each module is a one-hour session. As noted in Table 5, the intervention is delivered as three, two-hour sessions over three consecutive days at Francis Greenway Correction Centre. It is delivered as six one-hour sessions over six consecutive days at Cessnock Correctional Centre.

At Francis Greenway, participants can join the intervention at any point, whereas at Cessnock, participants may only join at the start of the intervention. Cessnock made this decision because their view is that men need to know the content from the five previous sessions to be able to effectively complete the activities in the sixth session.

SAPOs and men themselves cited a variety of reasons for participating in the intervention, including both external and internal motivators. Some men were motivated by the prospect of receiving a completion certificate, which could be useful in court proceedings, while others simply sought an activity to occupy their time, particularly those without work responsibilities. Others were driven by a desire for self-improvement, viewing the intervention as an opportunity to learn about themselves, change past behaviours, and improve their relationships. Some participants aimed to demonstrate their commitment to

<sup>25</sup> Department of Justice (2017) Practice Standards for Men's Behaviour Change Programs. Justice Strategy and Policy, Chippendale, Sydney. Available at: <https://dcj.nsw.gov.au/documents/service-providers/domestic-and-family-violence-services/men-s-behaviour-change-programs/Men-s-Behaviour-Change-Programs-Practice-Standards.pdf>



their partners by completing the program, while others were prompted to seek help after receiving an ADVO, hoping to learn coping skills and gain a better understanding of the law.

## SEQUENCING AND PARTICIPATION

Participation in the intervention refers to attending at least one out of the six sessions offered. We tracked 2,239 individuals who met this criterion and became part of the participant cohort. It's important to note that participation (at some locations) is flexible, allowing individuals to join the intervention at any session. For instance, someone might start at session 3 and end at session 1, depending on when they attend their first or last session.

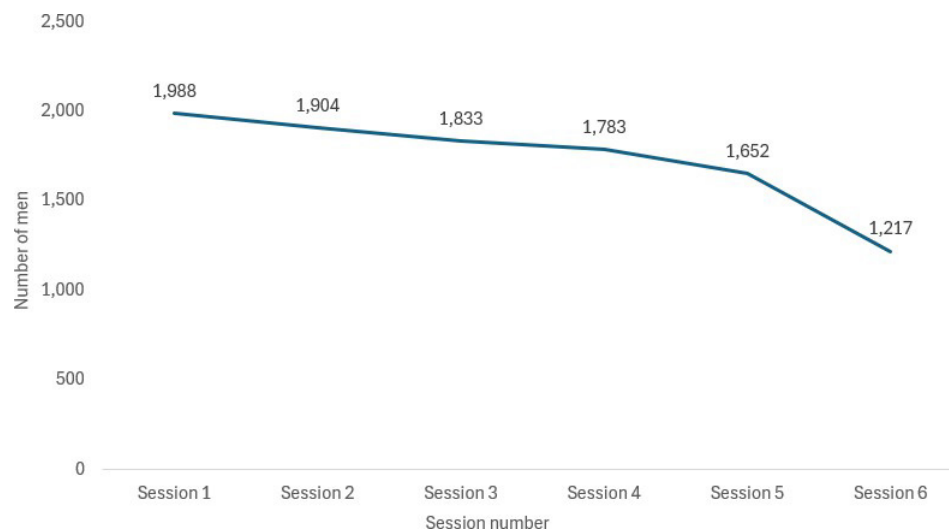
We look at participation in two ways:

- First, by session number, ranging from one to six.
- Second, by session content, which includes coping, change, caring, communication, choices, and connection.

We adopted this dual approach because starting from January 15, 2020, there were changes to the sequence of session content (see Appendix 3). By distinguishing between when the intervention is delivered and what content is delivered, we can identify any variations in participation.

Attendance at the first session in the run of all six is the highest and as the run progresses attendance tapers off (Table 7). This is likely due to participants being remandees who may be released, sentenced or transferred to another centre before they have the opportunity to undertake all 6 sessions (Figure 5). Almost three quarters (71%) of participants complete the first three sessions and about half (46%) of participants were able to complete all six.

**FIGURE 5. RATE OF SESSION ATTENDANCE**



**TABLE 6. RATES OF SESSION ATTENDANCE (N=2,239)**

Session number	Attended once	Attended twice	Attended 3 times	Attended 4 times
Session 1	<b>1,988</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>4</b>
Session 2	1,904	130	13	1
Session 3	1,833	120	13	0
Session 4	1,783	98	10	1
Session 5	1,652	88	7	1
Session 6	1,217	85	5	0

Source: Remand DV administrative dataset

The data shows that 50% of intervention participants spend less than or equal to 91 days on remand.<sup>26</sup> We know the challenges faced by remanded men in staying engaged with interventions like Remand DV are substantial due to the uncertainty of their remand period and frequent transfers between correctional centres. This uncertainty can disrupt their participation in the program, as they may be moved to a centre that doesn't offer the intervention or where the program's schedule differs. The constant transfers also make it harder for staff to build trust and rapport with participants. Moreover, men often see greater benefits in participating in paid work or attending medical appointments over voluntary interventions, further hindering their engagement. Men can also repeat sessions, Table 9. Demonstrates that there is a small group of men who decide to attend sessions multiple times.

## MODULES AND PARTICIPATION

Modules are structured into six discrete sessions: Caring, Coping, Connection, Communication, Change and Choices (action planning). Broadly the aim here is to expose participants to learnings that may help them to engage in behaviours like living a healthy lifestyle, managing their emotions and practicing distress tolerance, connecting with family friends and community, improving their communication styles, identifying abusive behaviours and to make plans to put into practice these learnings.

At the first session, participants also receive a workbook, seen as vital by both SAPOs and participants, especially for those preferring independent learning. The workbook aids in personal reflection beyond sessions and covers key learnings from the sessions seen in Figure 6. Qualitative data from the evaluation shows that stakeholders expressed that including more legal information, details for additional support group and post-release assistance would help to round out the workbook.

<sup>26</sup> Calculated using the start and end dates for the index remand period for participants only.

FIGURE 6. THE REMAND DV INTERVENTION CONTENT BY MODULE

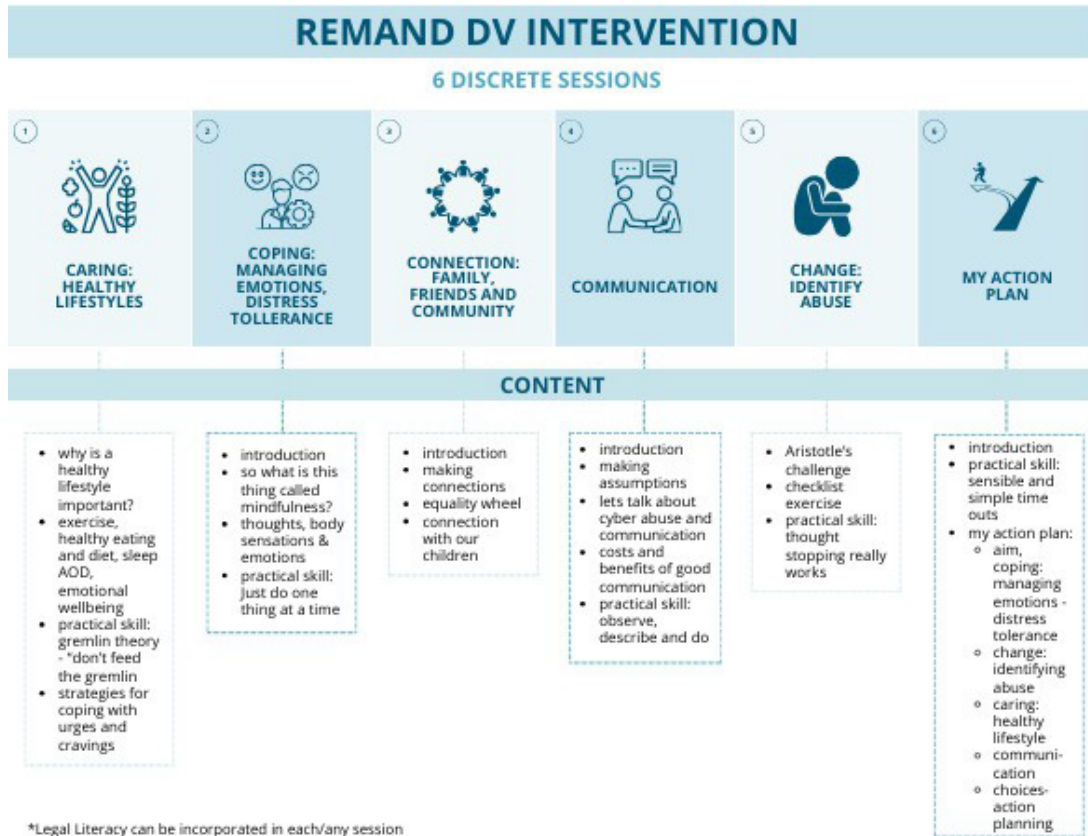
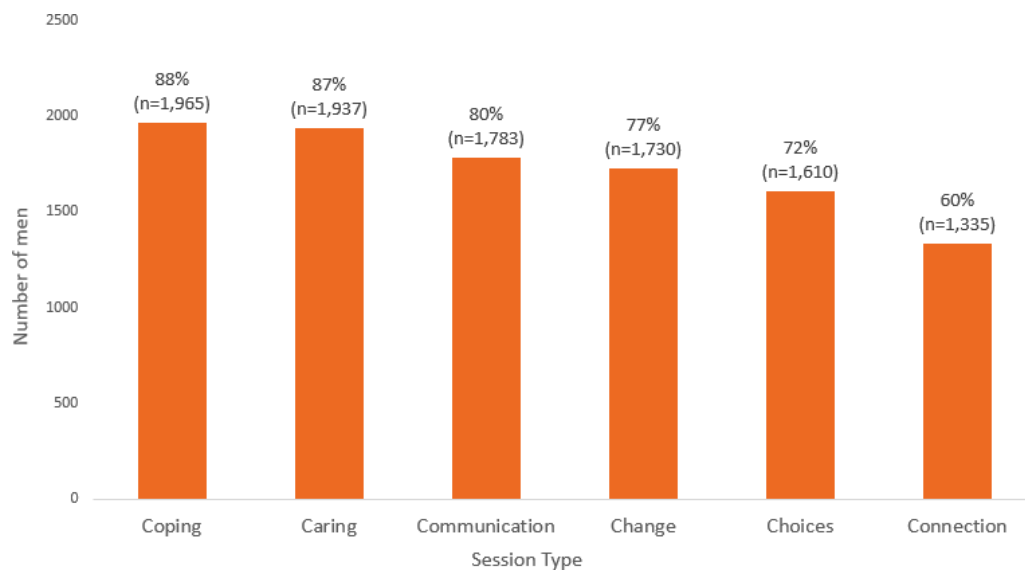


Figure 7 shows attendance at different session types. This content shows that the most attended sessions was 'Coping' followed by Caring, Communication, Change, Choices and Connection.

FIGURE 7. MODULE CONTENT AND THE NUMBER OF MEN WHO ATTENDED



Source: Remand DV administrative dataset.

The Coping session teaches mindfulness techniques to manage emotions and distress, 88% of participants attended this session. Here, participants practice observing thoughts and feelings without judgment. They learn to focus on one task at a time, stick to the facts, and avoid judgment. The session emphasises focusing on what works and setting aside feelings of anger or revenge. Overall, it aims to provide practical skills for managing emotions effectively. It was noted by SAPOs however that mindfulness can be the most challenging content to teach as men often struggle to identify with this concept.

*“You can have an absolute engaged group, and as soon as the mindfulness comes in 1/3 of the guys are not interested” – SAPO/MOSP stakeholder.*

SAPOs told us that participants are often most interested in the program content around different types of violence, and examples of these. Much of this content is contained in the session ‘Change: Identifying Abuse’ which 77% of participants attended. Information participants found useful is also included in the workbook. However, SAPOs note there is scope to update this content, so it better reflects current thinking about types of violence, particularly technology-related abuse, financial abuse, and coercive control.

It was also suggested by SAPOs that participants are highly engaged by the modules about family and healthy relationships because they can talk openly about the people they love in a safe space. This is an interesting juxtaposition to the data that shows the session ‘Connection: Family, Friends and Community’ had the lowest rate of attendance (60%).

The legal literacy component of the intervention is also designed to be delivered in each module of the program, noting that there could be new participants at each session. The legal literacy component consists of a clip ‘Got an ADVO? How to stick to your order’ and SAPO facilitated discussion and questions session. SAPOs reflect that they do not always facilitate the legal literacy component in each session due to time constraints, especially in fixed group sessions as they are aware that all members of the group have already seen the material.

SAPOs and participants said that the legal literacy aspect of the intervention can be a challenge for them. Some SAPOs said they felt unable to respond to participants’ specific questions about the conditions of their ADVOS, including their legal rights associated with interacting with their children, and the processes for taking out or removing an ADVO.

*“I don’t have that legal understanding myself... I have to refer a lot of [questions to] other people. They give me what they think needs to happen, not necessarily the answer.” – SAPO/MOSP stakeholder.*

### 2.2.3 WORKING WITH GROUP DYNAMICS

Alongside content and facilitation, the effectiveness of Remand DV is dependent on participants’ wholehearted engagement, including sharing their thoughts and feelings with the group. This can be confronting for some men, particularly at first. SAPOs observe that men may experience shame or guilt about their emotions, cognitions, and behaviours and be hesitant to talk about them. This was certainly evident among the men who spoke to us as part of the evaluation.

Other men struggle to find the right words, particularly if they speak English as a second language. Men may be concerned about how other men will respond to their sharing, particularly if they have experienced bullying while on remand. Other men may learn better in a group setting.

SAPOs have a key role in capturing and keeping men's trust and attention from the very first session, and in recognising and activating men's internal motivators to engage with the intervention. A SAPO told us their persistent and deliberate efforts to engage men are mostly successful:

*"As long as they have a foot in the door, we will work with them to get them engaged".*  
- SAPO/MOSP stakeholder.

Being engaging requires SAPOs to elevate the content beyond words on a page.

*"Participants do not engage when it is a SAPO reading out of a booklet or writing on a whiteboard. It is up to the facilitator to enhance what's in the booklet." – SAPO/MOSP stakeholder.*

One SAPO told us they encourage participants to draw and to write down their reflections. This was helpful for one of the participants we spoke to, who said:

*"I drew a picture of a person on the floor, and their emotions on the outside and inside" – Participant stakeholder.*

One of the men said the way the SAPO delivered the initial modules got him more engaged in the intervention than he thought he would be.

*"The only reasons why I thought I'd come was to get that certificate. I didn't give a stuff about what he was talking about...the way he delivered the first sessions, it got me as I opened up, and I said you know what? Everything he is saying is describing me. I thought, I'm gonna turn up tomorrow, and again the next day." – Participant stakeholder*

Acknowledging the complexity of men on remand being highly mobile, SAPOs suggest there appears to be some benefit to men starting and finishing the program as a group. SAPOs generally agreed that participants need time to build trust with each other and the facilitator. Both SAPOs and participants reflect that the first session tends to be the most difficult to generate engagement as it's a new environment, with new people and foreign content. Participants reflected that they couldn't develop trust with other participants when there were different participants attending each session, and they found it disruptive. Instead, they have suggested the intervention is facilitated by cohort, rather than session.

## 2.2.4 MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

Facilitators use a range of materials and resources to support delivery of the intervention.

### INFORMATION BOOKLET

Participants receive an information booklet at the first session. It is designed to support the participants' learning across all modules. SAPOs see the booklet as an important learning tool, particularly for participants who prefer to learn independently. Some participants explain how they reflect on the content outside of the sessions.

*"Looking at the iceberg every day in my cell makes me think how I'm seeing myself and for when I get out to not let that stuff pop up and [to] speak about it". – Participant stakeholder.*

Participants are often most interested in the program content around different types of violence, and examples of these. This information is included in the booklet, although SAPOs note there is scope to update this content, so it better reflects current thinking about types of violence, particularly technology-related abuse, financial abuse, and coercive control.

Stakeholders suggested the booklet could also be improved by including more:

- legal literacy information, including general information on ADVO requirements.
- information about victim blaming.
- information about local DV support groups or programs.
- information about pre-release programs, including mental health and family counselling.
- including screenshots from the videos.

*"The booklet can be better. It can include information about help on the outside. To show us that there is help beyond this intervention, when we leave, that this is the first step, and we can be supported to keep going" – Participant stakeholder.*

Some SAPOs and participants believed the paper booklets could be replaced with electronic tablets to make the intervention more engaging and interactive and better support men who are not comfortable sharing in a group environment. However, unlike the paper booklets, it is unlikely these would be able to be brought back to men's cells or taken home with them.

### VIDEOS AND INTERACTIVE CONTENT

Both participants and other stakeholders agree that the video content is a powerful way to deliver content as part of the Remand DV intervention. It can be used to share information, which the group then discusses or, in the case of role play scenarios, to reinforce information the facilitator has previously shared. SAPOs said the videos are useful for engaging men towards the end of the sessions.

*"A lot of these guys probably left school for various reasons and making it like a classroom environment where we're talking at them doesn't work well. (It) isn't engaging. When they sit and watch a video, and they can see the behaviours, that's where we get the most out of their engagement."- SAPO/MOSP Stakeholder.*

The intervention design intends for the legal literacy video to be shown and related discussion and questions to be facilitated in every session, but SAPOs said that due to time constraints, they show it on an ad-hoc basis when they believe it is most appropriate to show, which was typically in the first session of the module.

However, participants and other stakeholders consistently reported that that the video content is old and outdated.

SAPOs report that participants have requested more role-playing scenarios to occur in the sessions. Participants suggest role playing to be integrated in the sessions as activities the men can do, to act out different relationship scenarios. The men say this helps them see the other party's perspective and think critically about their actions and how they affect others.

### 2.2.5 ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVITY

It is common for men in contact with the criminal justice system to experience disability, mental ill health or cognitive impairments that may make it difficult for them to concentrate. This is particularly true for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people as they are overrepresented in this group of men.<sup>27</sup> Many of the men we interviewed said it was hard for them to concentrate for the entire session. These men wanted the sessions to be shorter, or to be able to do the sessions again. While it is theoretically possible for men to do this, the high demand for the intervention and its rolling delivery model makes it practically difficult, particularly given remanded men are highly mobile. The administrative data does show however, that some men are able to complete some modules more than once.

In addition to experiencing disability, men in contact with the criminal justice system are often not confident readers or writers. For example, two thirds (66%) of the people who entered an Australian correctional centre in 2022 had not finished their senior high schooling.<sup>28</sup> Our interviews with SAPOs and participants indicate there may be opportunities to simplify the program content and materials, so they are more engaging.

It may also be useful to translate the material into other languages. As noted in Section 2.1, one in five (18%) participants identify as culturally and linguistically diverse. However, the Multicultural Health Communication Service indicates 25.1% of the NSW population speaks a language other than English as home.<sup>29</sup> This suggests that the intervention may be inaccessible to some men from CALD backgrounds. SAPOs' views are consistent with this, suggesting there is scope to improve cultural inclusivity by including diverse cultural examples of relationships in the booklet, videos, and role-playing scenarios.

*"[There was an] Afghani guy who speaks no English [participating in the intervention with me]. He asked me to translate the paperwork (ADVO) so he could talk to his wife. I told him he couldn't contact her, and he's been in for 6 months. A lot of people would*

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<sup>27</sup> Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (2020) People with disability over-represented at all stages of the criminal justice system. Available at: <https://disability.royalcommission.gov.au/news-and-media/media-releases/people-disability-over-represented-all-stages-criminal-justice-system>

<sup>28</sup> Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2023) Adults in prison. Available at: <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/australias-welfare/adults-in-prison>

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au/about-us/cald-community>

*call their wives or put their number on and get breached. The intervention needs to reach these people.” – Participant stakeholder.*

SAPOs reflect that as whole, the intervention content does not acknowledge how relationships occur in other cultures, including for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It is also orientated towards people who identify as male and choose heterosexual relationships. Some SAPOs said they acknowledge differences in the language they use during facilitation.

*“Something as simple as a statement that says: “We recognise that every culture is different. This intervention may be difficult for you to place within your culture”, can be effective in making participants feel seen, resulting in participant buy-in.” – SAPO/MOSP stakeholder.*

There may be other, more engaging ways to make the content accessible and inclusive. For example, one Aboriginal participant told us he would prefer to see Aboriginal illustrations in the information booklet. Another Aboriginal participant said video content is the most engaging.

## 2.3 MANAGING DEMAND

A key reason that men do not participate in Remand DV is because demand for the program currently exceeds its availability.

Currently, demand for the Remand DV Intervention is high and correctional centres are struggling to have enough facilitators available to meet it. One SAPO reflected that in some correctional centres there are up to 400 people eligible for the intervention and only 2 dedicated Remand DV SAPOs to deliver the intervention. Combined with the security requirements of 8-10 participants in a program room at one time, there is an overflowing waitlist of eligible participants who may not get a chance to participate in the intervention, depending on their length of time they spend on remand. Additionally, as men are transferred to different correctional centres, they are put on the bottom of the waitlist.

Some stakeholders observed that more funding is directed towards programming for sentenced men. In practice, too few specialist SAPOs means Remand DV is not delivered as often as it could be, or that it runs with only one SAPO facilitating it.<sup>30</sup> This poses challenges for the SAPO and is inconsistent with the Practice Standards for Men’s Behaviour Change Programs.<sup>31</sup>

While the service model is for a single facilitator to deliver the intervention, in practice, at the focus sites for this evaluation, co-facilitation is very common with SAPOs noting the important role of a co-facilitator in engaging participants in discussion. Intervention

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<sup>30</sup> We note the Remand DV intervention is not a Men’s Behaviour Change Program, but that the Guidelines for MBCPs require two facilitators—one male and one female—in all sessions.

<sup>31</sup> Department of Justice (2017) Practice Standards for Men’s Behaviour Change Programs. Justice Strategy and Policy, Chippendale, Sydney. Available at: <https://dcj.nsw.gov.au/documents/service-providers/domestic-and-family-violence-services/men-s-behaviour-change-programs/Men-s-Behaviour-Change-Programs-Practice-Standards.pdf>



stakeholders also suggest that having a co-facilitator would allow one facilitator to follow-up with participants and get them re-engaged, while the other facilitator leads the sessions.

## 2.4 PARTICIPANT NEEDS

As noted in Section 2, the Remand DV is reaching its target population, however demand for the program currently exceeds supply. There is some indication that resourcing may be directed towards programming for men who are incarcerated, and that delivery of remand interventions is limited by the availability of specialist SAPOs. This means men who are remanded and who could benefit from participating in interventions may not have sufficient access to them.

Men and the staff who deliver the intervention both say that as whole, the intervention content does not acknowledge how relationships occur in other cultures, including for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It also orientated towards people who identify as male and choose heterosexual relationships.

In addition, the intervention content has been noted as outdated, with participants seeking to know more about different types of abuse, including technology-related abuse and coercive control.

## 3. OUTCOMES

This Chapter provides answers to the key evaluation questions:

- How successful has the intervention been in achieving the outcomes set out in the intervention logic?
- How well has the intervention achieved the intended short-, medium- and long-term intervention objectives?
- To what extent is the Remand DV intervention meeting the specific needs the intervention was designed to?
- What are the opportunities for improving the Remand DV intervention?

This Chapter compares the outcomes for the participant cohort with a non-participant group (men who were program eligible but, for a variety of reasons, did not participate) (see Section 2.1 and Figure 3 for a summary of the participant and non-participant groups).

### 3.1 OUTCOMES

The intervention logic identifies four outcomes and three impacts for the Remand DV intervention (Figure 2). The extent to which these outcomes are being met is summarised below.

#### 3.1.1 REMANDEES LEARN LEGAL LITERACY SPECIFIC TO THEIR APPREHENDED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ORDER (ADVO)

Providing men with legal literacy education with regards to ADVOs is a central part of the intervention. This content is intended to provide participants with an improved understanding of the requirements set out in their ADVO to reduce the likelihood of a breach due to misunderstanding. However, the legal literacy component has consistently been raised by stakeholders as an area for improvement, with participants identifying that there is more information they'd like to know and Services and Program Officers (SAPOs) recognising that they do not have sufficient knowledge to provide this. Further to this, although the legal literacy video is intended to be delivered each session, SAPOs said there is often insufficient time available to do this or due to the stability of the participant cohort, repeat showings of the video are unnecessary.

#### IMPACT ON ADVO BREACHES

Analysis of the quantitative data fails to demonstrate that a smaller proportion of men who participate in the Remand DV intervention breached their ADVO than did men who did not participate in the intervention. However, the legal literacy component of the program was not always delivered as intended, meaning not all participants experienced the same level of exposure to it. Table 7 shows that 13% of participants and 12% of the non-participant group breached following the end of their index remand period. This shows that there is no

substantial difference between the rate of breach when comparing the groups. Data presented in Appendix 2 further shows that there are no differences between the general characteristics of the men who do and don't breach their ADVO.

**TABLE 7. NUMBER OF BREACHES, REMAND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PARTICIPANTS VERSUS THE NON-PARTICIPANT GROUP (N=16,927)**

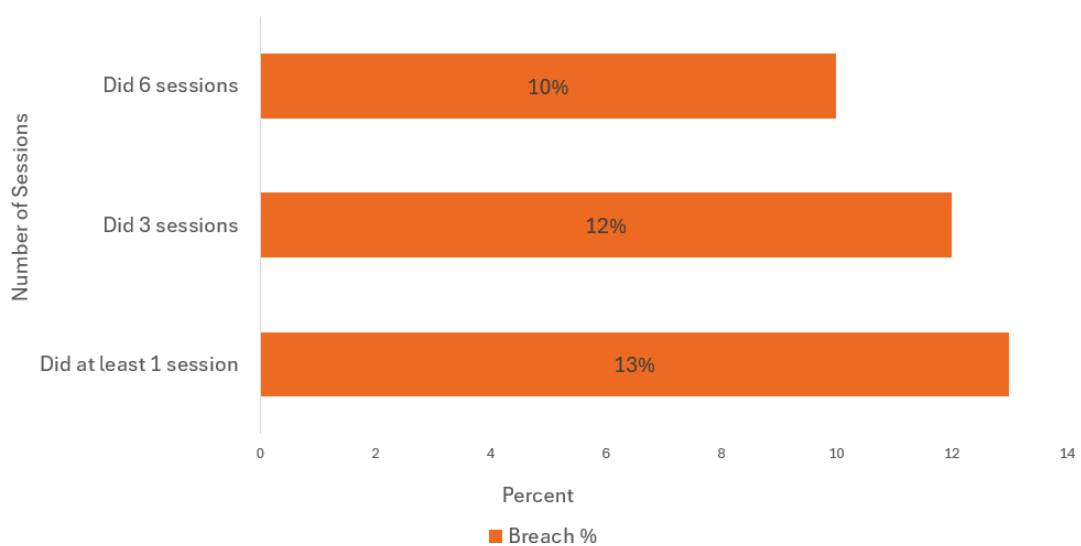
Breach post index remand period	Participants		Non-participant	
	n	%	n	%
No	1,956	87%	12,885	88%
Yes	283	13%	1,803	12%

Source: Remand DV administrative dataset.

### BREACHES AND INTERVENTION DOSAGE

Further analysis, however, suggests that some difference emerges when intervention dosage is considered. Figure 8 shows that men who do all 6 sessions at least once, have a slightly lower rate of breach (3% less than men who did only 1 session). This suggests some potential benefits from attending all of the sessions on offer in the intervention. This relationship may also be affected by unmeasured factors. For instance, men who undertake all six sessions of the intervention might inherently possess a stronger motivation to change. Additionally, completion could indicate that these men were on remand for longer periods, thus having fewer opportunities to breach their ADVO. It is also important to note that there are many factors which may impact whether or not a person is able to undertake all six sessions. These include length of time on remand, and transfers between centres, noting that not all centres offer the intervention and that each centre takes a slightly different approach to intake.

**FIGURE 8. PROPORTION OF BREACHES AND PARTICIPANT LEVELS OF ATTENDANCE AT REMAND DV SESSIONS**



Source: Remand DV administrative dataset.

## ADVO BREACHES AND SENTENCING OUTCOME

Men may have different opportunities to breach dependant on their sentence outcome. Table 8 shows us the sentence outcomes for participant and non-participant groups. Table 9 shows the rate at which participants breach their orders depending on their sentence outcome. Interestingly, participants who go on to community orders breach at the same rate (14%) as those who are sentenced. Because there are many factors which contribute to sentencing, (such as previous offences, the severity and types of charges) and because sentenced men can breach orders whilst in custody (for example, by making a phone call) it is very difficult to draw any conclusion from this finding. Men released with time served breach at a lower rate of 8%. Table 10 demonstrates this same pattern within the non-participant group. This means that sentence outcome alone is not tied to any differences in the rate of breach when comparing these patterns across the participant and non-participant groups. Further investigation of these patterns could be made in future evaluations.

**TABLE 8. SENTENCE OUTCOMES FOR PARTICIPANT AND NON-PARTICIPANT GROUPS**

Sentence outcome	Participants		Non-participants	
	N	%	N	%
Community order	478	21%	3,014	21%
Released (time served)	642	29%	6,128	42%
Sentenced	1,119	50%	5,492	38%
Total	2,239	100%	14,688	100%

Source: Remand DV administrative dataset.

**TABLE 9. PARTICIPANT BREACHES AND SENTENCE OUTCOME (N=2,239)**

Breach post index remand period	Community Order		Released (time served)		Sentenced	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
No	411	86%	588	92%	957	86%
Yes	<b>67</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>14%</b>
<i>Total</i>	478	100%	642	100%	1,119	100%

Source: Remand DV administrative dataset.

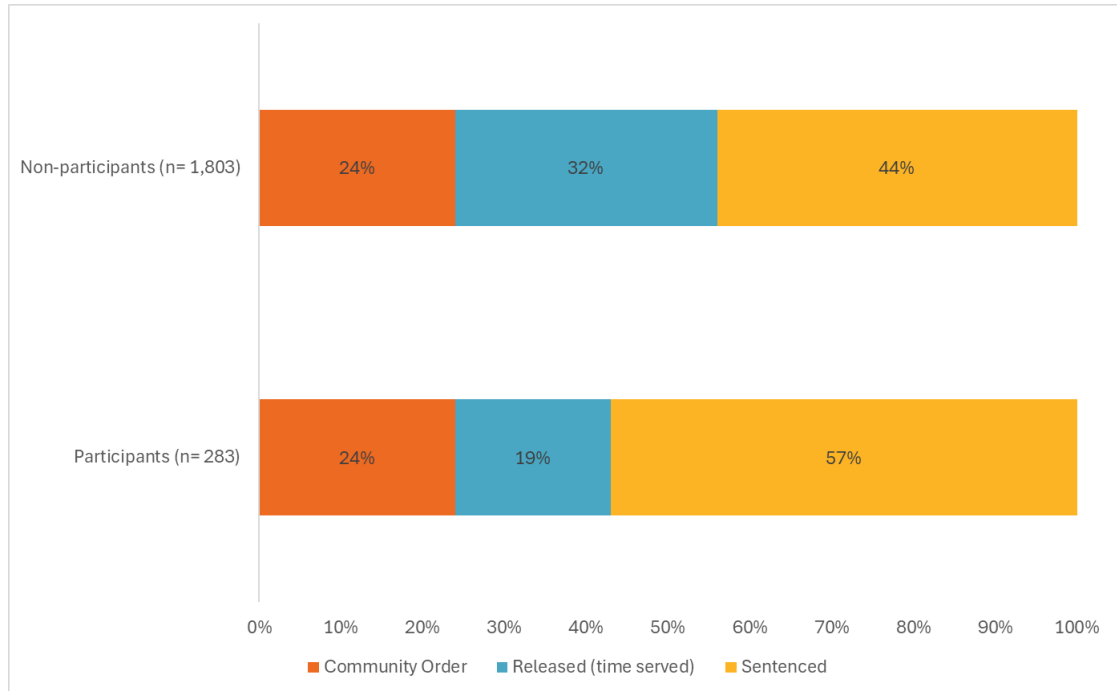
**TABLE 10. NON-PARTICIPANT GROUP BREACHES AND SENTENCE OUTCOME (N=14,688)**

Breach post index remand period	Community Order		Released (time served)		Sentenced	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
No	2,584	86%	5,600	91%	4,701	86%
Yes	<b>430</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>582</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>791</b>	<b>14%</b>
<i>Total</i>	3,014	100%	6,128	100%	5,492	100%

Source: Remand DV administrative dataset.

When focusing only on men who breached, some differences emerge between participants and the non-participant group. Figure 9 shows the type of sentence men were given after their index remand period ended and whether they experienced a breach. This figure illustrates that of the men who breach in the non-participant group, one third (32%) were released on time served compared to 19% of the participant group.

These findings suggest that while sentence outcomes do not correlate with breach rates, there are some nuanced differences between participants and men in the non-participant group who breach regarding the type of sentence they received at the end of the index remand period. Primarily, when released directly into the community with time served, participants appear to have a lower rate of breach compared to the non-participant group.

**FIGURE 9. MEN WHO BREACH: SENTENCE OUTCOMES**

Source: Remand DV administrative dataset.

### 3.1.2 LEARN SKILLS IN COMMUNICATION, DISTRESS TOLERANCE AND BUILDING A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

There is evidence that men are learning the skills the intervention intends for them to learn.

- **Communication:** Men said they had learnt to view situations from other's perspectives.
- **Distress tolerance:** Men reflected that they had learned about identifying coping mechanisms for stress, anger and anxiety and replacing this habit with healthier and more productive habits, like going fishing, journaling, being outside in nature or going for a walk with the kids rather than drinking and drug taking.
- **Healthy lifestyle:** Men were supported to identify positive and negative aspects of their life in community, and how to make choices that support them having more positive than negative experiences and influences.
- **Healthy relationships:** Men told us that the intervention had helped them understand healthy relationships. Men in community told us they were attempting to apply these after their release. They said they learnt the importance of responsibility, including accepting responsibility for their past choices. Men from all cultures said they had learnt about relationship equality, and how they need to contribute to this through their everyday actions. Men who were still remanded told us they planned to do more to help their partner on their release. Some men on community orders said they were choosing to spend more time with their children.

## INTERVENTION CONTENT AND FURTHER DV OFFENDING

To investigate the potential influence of the content delivered in the modules we analysed whether participants went on to engage in further DV offending.<sup>32</sup> While reducing DFV offending is not an explicit impact of the Remand DV intervention's program logic, available post-release data was examined to investigate whether any correlations between participation and reduced rates of offending exist. Table 11 suggests that there is a slightly lower rate of DV offences among participants compared to the non-participant group, but the difference is not significant. While the qualitative data suggests that the intervention is having an impact on how participants build their skills, this not currently translating to a quantifiable reduction in future DV offending. Further discussion as to the implications of these findings is provided in Section 4.1.2

**TABLE 11. DV OFFENCES: PARTICIPANTS VS THE NON-PARTICIPANT GROUP (N=16,927)**

DV offence post index remand period	Participants		Non-participants	
	n	%	n	%
No	1,318	59%	8,361	57%
Yes	921	41%	6,327	43%
<i>Total</i>	2,239	100%	14,688	100%

Source: Remand DV administrative dataset.

<sup>32</sup> Further DV offending is defined as a DV related charge post remand episode. These include the offences of abduction and kidnapping, aggravated sexual assault, attempted murder, breach of violence order, common assault, murder, neglect or ill-treatment of persons, non-assaultive sexual offences, other acts intended to cause injury, property damage by fire or explosion, property damage, resist or hinder police officer or justice officer, serious assault not resulting in injury, serious assault resulting in injury, stalking and threatening behaviour.

**TABLE 12. MODULE CONTENT AND DV OFFENDING POST INTERVENTION  
(N=2,239)**

Modules	No DV offending post attendance		DV offending post attendance	
	n	%	n	%
Coping	1,171	60%	794	40%
Caring	1,165	60%	772	40%
Communication	1,071	60%	712	40%
Change	1,032	60%	698	40%
Choices	962	60%	648	40%
Connection	854	63%	490	36%

Source: Remand DV administrative dataset.

Although the difference in DV offending rates between Remand DV participants and the non-participant group is not substantial, and these results are not statistically significant, the qualitative data suggests that participants are learning skills related to communication, distress tolerance, and healthy lifestyle choices, which are essential for preventing DV offences.

### 3.1.3 REMAND DV SUPPORTS PROGRAM READINESS

An intended impact of the intervention is to support readiness for participants to engage with other programs (in custody and in the community). The analysis below relates only to men who were assessed as being eligible to undertake any additional programs (to address criminogenic needs) in custody. The eligibility criteria here are set out by CSNSW and are different to the eligibility to participate in Remand DV. Data in Table 13 shows that a similar proportion of participants (21%) and non-participants (23%) were eligible to undertake programs.

**TABLE 13. ELIGIBILITY TO UNDERTAKE PROGRAMS POST INDEX REMAND PERIOD  
(N=16,927)**

Program eligible post index remand period	Remand DV participants		Non-participants	
	n	%	n	%
No	1,759	79%	11,365	77%
Yes	480	21%	3,323	23%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,239</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>14,688</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Remand DV administrative dataset.



Tables 14 to Table 17 compare the rate of participation in different categories of programs after their index remand period for eligible men from both the Remand DV participant and non-participant groups<sup>33</sup>. These analyses show us that:

- A slightly higher proportion of Remand DV participants participated in at least one of the Explore, Question, Understand, Investigate and Practise, Plan, Succeed (EQUIPS) program suite compared to the non-participant group (13% vs. 10%).
- Most men in either group did not undertake the Violent Offender Treatment Program (VOTP).
- A higher proportion of Remand DV participants took part in DV programs compared to the non-participant group (35% vs. 27%).
- Most men, both Remand DV participants and the non-participant group, participated in other programs post-index remand period. These programs could include various interventions, support services, or rehabilitation programs unrelated to domestic violence.

**TABLE 14. EXPLORE, QUESTION, UNDERSTAND, INVESTIGATE AND PRACTICE, PLANS, SUCCEED (EQUIPS)\* UNDERTAKEN POST INDEX REMAND PERIOD**

EQUIPS participation	Remand DV participants		Non-participants	
	n	%	n	%
Not participated	416	87%	2,975	90%
Participated	64	13%	348	10%
<i>Total</i>	480	100%	3,323	100%

Source: Remand DV administrative dataset.

\*Indicates participation in at least one component of the EQUIPS program suite

<sup>33</sup> Program participation is influenced by a number of factors including sentence outcome (programs are only available to sentenced men), sentence length and program suitability requirements.

**TABLE 15. VIOLENT OFFENDER TREATMENT PROGRAM (VOTP) UNDERTAKEN POST INDEX REMAND PERIOD**

VOTP participation	Remand DV participants		Non-participants	
	n	%	n	%
Not participated	477	99%	3,294	99%
Participated	3	1%	29	1%
<i>Total</i>	480	100%	3,323	100%

Source: Remand DV administrative dataset.

**TABLE 16. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAMS UNDERTAKEN POST INDEX REMAND PERIOD**

DV program participation	Remand DV Participants		Non-participants	
	n	%	n	%
Not participated	314	65%	2,440	73%
Participated	166	35%	883	27%
<i>Total</i>	480	100%	3,323	100%

Source: Remand DV administrative dataset.

**TABLE 17. OTHER PROGRAMS UNDERTAKEN POST INDEX REMAND PERIOD (N=3,803)**

Other program participation	Remand DV Participants		Non-participants	
	n	%	n	%
Not participated	31	6%	120	4%
Participated	449	94%	3,203	96%
<i>Total</i>				

Source: Remand DV administrative dataset.

Based on the data, participation in the intervention may support program readiness, particularly in terms of engagement with domestic violence (DV) programs. Although a slightly smaller proportion of Remand DV participants were eligible for programs compared to the non-participant group, a higher proportion of Remand DV participants engaged in DV programs than men in the non-participant group. Additionally, while participation in the EQUIPS program suite was relatively low for both groups, a slightly higher proportion of Remand DV participants took part. Further investigation of program readiness as an outcome of the intervention is required to clearly demonstrate a correlation.

### 3.1.4 REMANDEES SPEAK POSITIVELY ABOUT THE INTERVENTION

Word of mouth is an important way for men to learn about the intervention. Participants reported that hearing about the program from program participants influenced their decision to engage in the program. SAPOs also shared that remandees would ask them about participation after hearing about the program from other participants. Participants would speak about the program in the program in the yard, or to their cellmate, which sparked their interest in remandee participation.

## 4. DISCUSSION

This section draws together information presented throughout the report to provide a response to the key evaluation question:

- What are the opportunities for improving the Remand DV intervention?

### 4.1 OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

#### 4.1.1 IMPROVING PARTICIPATION

The Remand DV intervention is being delivered in a highly complex operating environment to a remandee population that is highly transient. Most (79%) Remand DV participants were moved between centres at least once during their remand period. In addition, remandees are awaiting sentencing and hearing dates, and hence, are very uncertain about their future. This contributes to the overall volatility of the target cohort, and hence, difficulty in recruiting eligible men to the intervention.

The administrative data shows that currently approximately one fifth (19%) of potentially eligible men receive a booklet about the Remand DV intervention. It is important to note however that not all eligible men were held in locations where the intervention is offered. In locations where the intervention was offered most centres reported that demand for the intervention exceeds their capacity to deliver it.

Capacity to meet demand for the program is limited by the number of suitably trained SAPOs who can deliver it, the available times for running programs in the daily correctional centre schedule, and the availability of the intervention in centres across all of NSW. SAPOs and Manager Offender Service and Programs (MOSPs) described the difficulty in scheduling programs at times that did not compete with other activities that may be perceived as more important, such as attending medical appointments or taking part in paid work. Additionally, only selected correctional centres offer the Remand DV program, which contributes to long waitlists.

In addition, many men on remand are reluctant to identify with anything associated with DV both because of how unfavourably that may be seen by other prisoners, and because they are concerned it may be perceived as an admission of guilt.

#### 4.1.2 IMPROVING ENGAGEMENT AND COMPLETION

The qualitative data suggests that many men who participate in the intervention engage positively. Although the data suggests that there is a sub-cohort of men who view participation as an exercise in “getting the certificate to show the magistrate”, interviews with participants showed that even some of these men ultimately engaged more fully.

Interviews with participants and SAPOs points to the importance of skilful facilitation to maximise engagement. Some SAPOs believed that having a two-facilitator model was most

effective because it allowed one facilitator to focus on delivering the content and the other to support engagement. The two-facilitator model was also seen to allow for facilitators to offer each other feedback and support and to allow for more effective de-briefing.

The quantitative data suggests that completing all six sessions of the intervention appeared to have a small effect in reducing post-remand DV offending. Men who had completed all 6 sessions at least once, had a slightly lower rate of breach (10%) than men who did only 1 session (13%). This result is not statistically significant, however, it may suggest a “dosage” benefit, whereby, men who receive the full “dosage” of the program are more likely to receive a benefit.

This data suggests then, that although the intervention was designed to be something that participants can access as individual sessions, the way the intervention is delivered to maximise completion should be prioritised. SAPOs interviewed for this evaluation also highlighted that completing all of the sessions with a stable group (i.e. no rolling intake) was the most effective way to encourage genuine engagement. Although the intervention is operationalised differently in different centres, the data supports taking an approach which enables more participants to complete the entire intervention.

However, SAPOs also noted that many participants were not able to sustain their attention for an extended period of time, which sets a limitation on the way the intervention can be delivered.

Facilitators and participants all spoke positively about many of the activities and materials and their effectiveness for stimulating discussion and reflection. However, interviewees also suggest that there is potential to improve engagement in the intervention by updating the materials used in its delivery to ensure examples are inclusive and relatable.

### 4.1.3 IMPROVING LEGAL LITERACY

The qualitative data for this evaluation has consistently shown that both participants and SAPOs have not felt that the legal literacy components of the intervention have been sufficient to meet the needs of participants. Participants reported a continuing lack of certainty about the legal requirements of their orders, and SAPOs reported feeling ill-equipped to respond to participants’ legal questions.

While updating the legal literacy materials and video content may have some effect on this, the extent to which Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders (ADVOs) are specific to particular men’s circumstances means that generalised materials are unlikely to fully meet the needs of many individuals.

### 4.1.4 IMPROVING OUTCOMES

There is some evidence that the intervention is achieving its intended outcomes. Men speak positively about Remand DV and encourage other remandees to join it. The men we spoke to said they had learnt some communication skills, and ways of managing their stress (and distress) in positive ways. Those men who had been released spoke about being able to transfer these skills into their life at home. Men told us that Remand DV taught them about

healthy relationships. They said they learnt the importance of responsibility, including being accountable for their past choices.

As described in 4.1.3, quantitative data shows only a very slight and not statistically significant reduction in the rate of DV offending in the post-remand period among participants compared to the non-participant group (41% participant breaches, 43% non-participant group breaches). There is also some indication that completing all six modules has a slight impact in reducing the rate of breaches.

While the findings are not statistically significant, they do provide some indication that the intervention is having at least a small impact on reducing DV offending. The qualitative findings also support that the intervention is successful in supporting some men to reflect on their abusive behaviours. Given the serious and pervasive nature of DFV, and the difficulty in affecting changes in entrenched abusive behaviours, these results support the value and importance of this intervention.

## 4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

**Recommendation 1: The Remand DV intervention materials should be reviewed and revised. This should include:**

- **Reviewing and updating the intervention content**, in consultation with program delivery staff and, where possible, with participants, to ensure it reflects a variety of cultures (including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander), relationship configurations and types of violence.
- **Maximising the accessibility of content**, by using plain English and translating key resources into languages other than English.
- **Including in program booklets information about programs and services men can connect with on release**, including family counselling and men's behaviour change programs.
- **Identifying the optimal session length** over which participants can maintain attention and scheduling the program accordingly.
- **Considering renaming the intervention** to reduce its association with domestic violence and emphasising the content that is about healthy relationships and legal literacy.

**Recommendation 2: Improve the accessibility and quality delivery of the Remand DV intervention. This should include:**

- **Consider expanding the cohort of men who are eligible** for the intervention, for example, to include men who have been previously found guilty of DV, or who have an expired ADVO.
- **Ensuring there are sufficient numbers of appropriately trained SAPOs** available to meet existing demand for the intervention. Consideration should also be given to utilising a two-facilitator model to support greater participant engagement and facilitator peer support.
- **Strengthening mechanisms for facilitators to share good practice** and access further professional development.

**Recommendation 3: Investigate additional mechanisms for providing individualised legal literacy information and support for men on ADVOs, such as through outreach from a prisoner’s legal service.**

- **Ensuring Remand DV participants can be referred to accessible specialist legal supports** to respond to their specific questions in relation to their ADVOs.

## METHODS

### SYSTEMS MAP

A systems map is a visual representation of the various components of a system and the interrelationships among them. We developed the systems map to show how the Remand DV intervention interacts with other aspects of the criminal justice system. It offers a perspective that clarifies the relationships, dependencies, and flows between system elements, allowing stakeholders to identify how change in one part of the system may influence other parts. The systems map is informed by an ecological model used within CSNSW offender rehabilitation frameworks which places the participant at its centre.

The purpose of developing a systems map for the Remand DV intervention include to:

- understand how participants are situated within a network of organisations, providers, and efforts aimed at addressing domestic violence behaviours.
- identify areas of strength, gaps, and potential improvements in the system that can enhance the efficacy of the Remand DV intervention.
- understand decision-making processes by highlighting the ways elements of the system influence one another.

### PARTICIPANT INTERVIEWS

ARTD collaborated with CSNSW to identify sites that would yield the largest and most representative sample of remanded men who had participated in the program. We developed a sampling framework that considered the number of men held on remand, the location of the centre, the number of men who had participated in the intervention and the number of sessions completed by those men. The final sample included two correctional centres (Francis Greenway Correctional Complex (formerly John Morony Correctional Complex), and Cessnock) and three community corrections offices (Mt Druitt, Maitland, and Tamworth). We aimed to interview a total of 33 men, including remanded men who were currently participating in the intervention, remanded men had declined to participate in the intervention and men on community orders who were previous participants (Table A1).

**TABLE A1. ACTUAL AND INTENDED SAMPLES OF EVALUATION PARTICIPANTS**

Characteristic	Intended sample (n)	Actual sample (n)
Remanded men currently participating	14	14
Remanded men who declined to participate in the intervention	4	4



Men on community orders who were previous participants	15	5
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We completed a total of 8 interviews with men on community orders however, 3 of the 8 men were incorrectly identified by CSNSW as program participants. These interviews are not included in this evaluation. ARTD planned to undertake follow up phone interviews with men who did not attend their community corrections office interview on their allocated day but the logistics relating to this process did not allow for this to occur.

We spoke with a diverse sample of men including Indigenous men (n=7), men from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds; (3 were Polynesian, 1 was Mediterranean, 1 was south Asian and 1 was African). We deliberately sought to speak with men with a range of ages and from different locations across the state (as per the suburb of last known address). Most participants were currently in an intimate partner relationship. Most (17 men) indicated they had current or past drug and alcohol addiction. The time these men had spent in remand ranged from 3-12 months.

## THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF PARTICIPANT INTERVIEWS

We used a general inductive approach for the qualitative data analysis<sup>34</sup>. We extracted common themes from the stakeholder and participant interviews, and continually maintained, adapted, added to or collapsed these themes as more stakeholders and participants were interviewed.

Once all interview data was categorised, we identified and described key themes and compared themes across stakeholders and participants, considering how experiences and perspectives differed and why and how the themes were inter-related.

## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

ARTD collaborated with CSNSW to identify stakeholders for interview. The sampling framework considered the role of the stakeholder and their location. The final sample included two correctional centres (Francis Greenway Correctional Complex and Cessnock) and stakeholders from Head Office. In both correctional centres we interviewed 2 Service and Programs Officers (SAPOs) and 1 Manager Offender Service and Programs staff (MOSPs). 5 stakeholders from Head Office were interviewed, ranging from program authors, executive level management and psychologists.

## INTERVENTION DATA

Quantitative intervention data for the period [01/01/2019 to 30/06/2023] was used to analyse outcomes.<sup>35</sup> The data includes all men who were eligible to participate in Remand DV during the observation period, both those who did and did not complete the intervention. Data on these men include basic demographic information, intervention session attendance,

<sup>34</sup> Thomas, D. R. (2006). A general inductive approach for analysing qualitative evaluation data. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 27(2), 237-246. Available at <https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.1020.8465&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

<sup>35</sup> The dataset was provided by CRES, DCJ

location during remand and both ADVO breach and DV offending post attendance in the intervention.

We used descriptive statistics and frequency tables to provide a summary of the data and the landscape across the different locations. We also examined differences in subgroups within the data through producing crosstabs of these measures for key variables of interest where it was appropriate given sample sizes.

## ADDITIONAL ANALYSES

### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ANALYSIS COHORT

**TABLE A2. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ANALYSIS COHORT (N=16,927)**

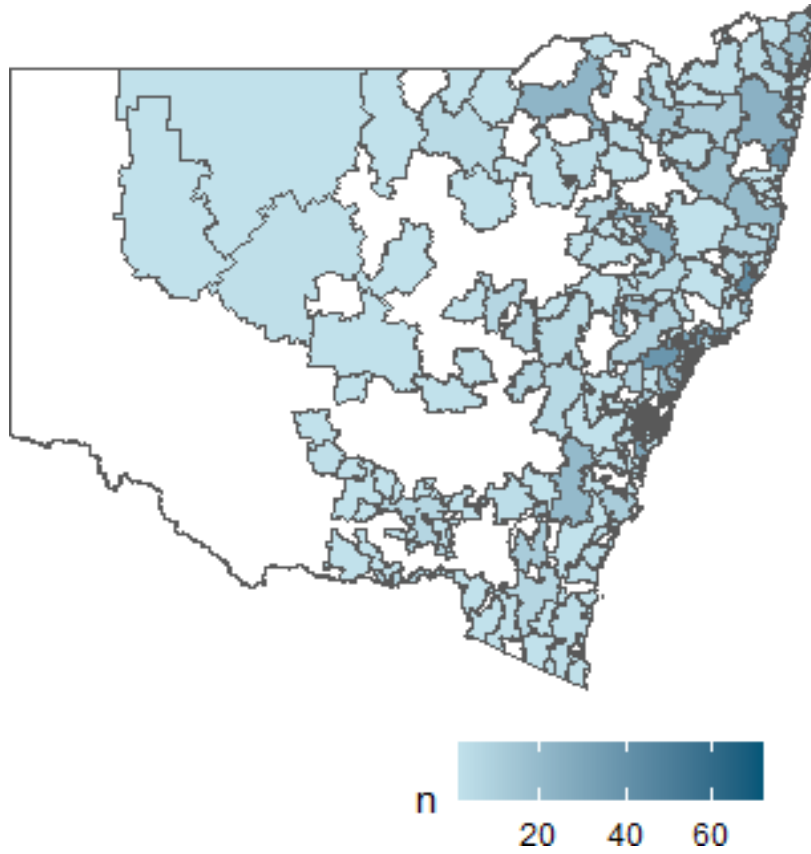
Characteristics	Participant Group (n=2,239)		Non-participant group (n=14,688)	
	n	%	n	%
<b>Age</b>				
18-29	494	22%	3,362	23%
30-39	<b>853</b>	<b>38%</b>	5,277	36%
40-49	624	28%	4,006	27%
50-59	236	11%	1,673	11%
60+	32	1%	370	3%
<b>Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Status</b>				
Non-Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	<b>1,518</b>	<b>68%</b>	9,561	65%
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	721	32%	5,127	35%
<b>Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Status</b>				
No	<b>1,844</b>	<b>82%</b>	11,737	80%
Yes	395	18%	2,951	20%
<b>Education: Achieved Year 10</b>				
Not Applicable	<b>2,219</b>	<b>98%</b>	14,294	97%
Yes	13	1%	226	2%
No	7	1%	168	1%
<b>Relationship Status</b>				
Never Married	<b>1,344</b>	<b>60%</b>	8,969	61%
Married/Defacto	703	31%	4,261	29%
Divorced/Separated	147	7%	767	5%
Other	28	1%	128	1%
Not Applicable	17	1%	563	4%
<b>Has Children</b>				
Yes	<b>1,473</b>	<b>66%</b>	8,226	56%
No	765	34%	6,158	42%

	Participant Group (n=2,239)		Non-participant group (n=14,688)	
Not Applicable	1	0%	304	2%
<b>Lives With Children</b>				
No	<b>1,778</b>	<b>79%</b>	11,648	79%
Yes	454	20%	2,468	17%
Not Applicable	7	1%	572	4%
<b>Receiving Government Benefits</b>				
Yes	<b>1,213</b>	<b>54%</b>	7,530	51%
No	1,019	45%	6,580	45%
Not Applicable	7	1%	578	4%
<b>Remoteness</b>				
Inner Regional NSW	554	26%	3692	26%
Major Cities of NSW	<b>1465</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>8803</b>	<b>62%</b>
Outer Regional NSW	135	6%	1378	10%
Remote NSW	12	1%	219	2%
Very Remote NSW	2	0%	63	0%

Source: Remand DV administrative dataset

## MAP OF PARTICIPANT LOCATION

FIGURE A1. MAP OF PARTICIPANT LOCATION



Source: Remand DV administrative dataset

## MOVEMENTS AND LOCATIONS OF PARTICIPANTS

**TABLE A3. THE FIRST LOCATION OF PARTICIPANTS (N=1,759)**

First remand location	n	%
Francis Greenway Correctional Complex	716	40%
Cessnock	426	24%
Other	330	19%
Mid North Coast	98	6%
Shortland	96	5%
Metro Remand and Reception Centre	55	3%
Long Bay Hospital	31	2%
Goulburn	7	1%

Source: Remand DV administrative dataset.

Category "Other" includes Bathurst Correctional Centre, Clarence Correctional Centre, Cooma Correctional Centre, Dawn De Loas Correctional Centre, Geoffrey Pearce Correctional Centre, Glen Innes Correctional Centre, Grafton Correctional Centre, Hunter Correctional Centre, Junee Correctional Centre, Kariang Correctional Centre, Kirkconnell Correctional Centre, Lithgow Correctional Centre, Macquarie Correctional Centre, Maitland Correctional Centre, Mannus Correctional Centre, Metropolitan Special Programs Centre, Parklea Correctional Centre, South Coast Correctional Centre, St Heliers Correctional Centre, Tamworth Correctional Centre, Wellington Correctional Centre

**TABLE A4. THE SECOND LOCATION OF PARTICIPANTS (N=1,431)**

Second remand location	n	%
Other	796	56%
Metro Remand and Reception Centre	209	15%
Cessnock	128	9%
Shortland	115	8%
Francis Greenway Correctional Complex	85	6%
Mid North Coast	63	4%
Goulburn	16	1%
Long Bay Hospital	19	1%

Source: Remand DV administrative dataset.

Category "Other" includes Bathurst Correctional Centre, Clarence Correctional Centre, Cooma Correctional Centre, Dawn De Loas Correctional Centre, Geoffrey Pearce Correctional Centre, Glen Innes Correctional Centre, Grafton Correctional Centre, Hunter Correctional

Centre, Illawarra Reintegration Centre, Junee Correctional Centre, Kariang Correctional Centre, Kirkconnell Correctional Centre, Lithgow Correctional Centre, Macquarie Correctional Centre, Maitland Correctional Centre, Mannus Correctional Centre, Metropolitan Special Programs Centre, Oberon Correctional Centre, Parklea Correctional Centre, South Coast Correctional Centre, St Heliers Correctional Centre, Tamworth Correctional Centre, Wellington Correctional Centre

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ANALYSIS COHORT: BREACH VS NO BREACH

**TABLE A5. CHARACTERISTICS OF MEN: BREACH VS NO BREACH (N=16,927)**

Characteristics	Did not breach		Breach	
	n	%	n	%
<b>Age</b>				
18-29	3,407	23%	449	22%
30-39	<b>5,338</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>792</b>	<b>38%</b>
40-49	4,025	27%	605	29%
50-59	1,702	11%	207	10%
60+	369	2%	33	2%
<b>Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Status</b>				
Non-Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	<b>9,854</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>1,225</b>	<b>59%</b>
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	4,987	34%	861	41%
<b>Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Status</b>				
No	<b>11,830</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>1,751</b>	<b>84%</b>
Yes	3,011	20%	335	16%
<b>Education: Achieved Year 10</b>				
Not Applicable	<b>14,461</b>	<b>97%</b>	<b>2,052</b>	<b>98%</b>
Yes	228	2%	11	1%
No	152	1%	23	1%
<b>Relationship Status</b>				
Never Married	<b>9,010</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>1,303</b>	<b>62%</b>
Married/Defacto	4,286	29%	678	33%
Divorced/Separated	826	6%	88	4%
Other	143	1%	13	1%

	Did not breach		Breach	
Not Applicable	576	4%	4	0%
<b>Has Children</b>				
Yes	<b>8,461</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>1,238</b>	<b>59%</b>
No	6,075	41%	848	41%
Not Applicable	305	2%	0	0%
<b>Lives With Children</b>				
No	<b>11,678</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>1,748</b>	<b>84%</b>
Yes	2,612	18%	310	15%
Not Applicable	551	4%	28	1%
<b>Receiving Government Benefits</b>				
Yes	<b>7,499</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>1,244</b>	<b>60%</b>
No	6,787	46%	812	39%
Not Applicable	555	4%	30	1%
<b>Remoteness</b>				
Inner Regional NSW	3722	26%	524	26%
<b>Major Cities of NSW</b>				
Outer Regional NSW	1328	9%	185	9%
Remote NSW	200	1%	31	2%
Very Remote NSW	58	0%	7	0%

Source: Remand DV administrative dataset



## APPENDIX 3 PROGRAM SESSIONS AND MODULES

There are 2 versions of the program divided by 15<sup>th</sup> January 2020. Colours are used to coordinate matching modules across the two versions where session runs are different.

PROGRAM _VERSION	PROGRAM_ SESSION_ID	DV_PROGRAM_SESSION_DETAILS
Version 1	1	01 Coping: Managing emotions, Distress Tolerance
Version 1	2	02 Change: Identifying Abuse
Version 1	3	03 Caring: Healthy lifestyle
Version 1	4	04 Communication: Social Skills
Version 1	5	05 Choices: Action and Safety Planning
Version 1	6	06 Connections: Family Friends and Community
Version 2	1	01 Caring: Healthy Lifestyle
Version 2	2	02 Coping: Managing emotions, Distress Tolerance
Version 2	3	03 Connections: Family Friends and Community
Version 2	4	04 Communication: Social Skills
Version 2	5	05 Change: Identifying Abuse
Version 2	6	06 Choices: Action and Safety Planning