

21 May 2018

The Executive Director
Australian Law Reform Commission
GPO Box 3708
Sydney NSW 2001
By email: info@alrc.gov.au

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Australian Law Reform Commission's Family Law Review - Issues Paper

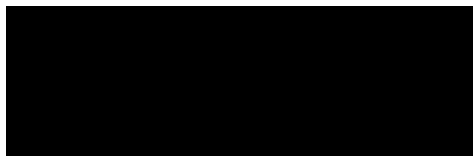
I write to endorse the submission of our peak body, the National Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention Legal Services Forum ('National FVPLS Forum') to the Australian Law Reform Commission's Family Law Review Issues Paper.

Djirra (formerly the Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service Victoria) would be pleased to consult directly with the Australian Law Reform Commission as appropriate throughout the next stages of the inquiry.

For the Commission's reference we attach a description of our organization and the work we do as a family violence specialist, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation with state-wide reach across Victoria.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our Manager, Strategy and Policy, Laura Vines, at [REDACTED].

Kind Regards



Antoinette Braybrook
CEO
Djirra



About Djirra

Established over 15 years ago, Djirra is an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation which provides culturally safe and holistic assistance to Aboriginal victims/survivors of family violence and sexual assault.

Djirra provides frontline legal assistance and early intervention/prevention, including through providing community legal education to the Aboriginal community, the legal, Aboriginal and domestic violence sectors. With support from philanthropic sources, Djirra also undertakes policy and law reform work to identify systemic issues in need of reform and advocate for strengthened law and justice outcomes for Aboriginal victims/survivors of family violence and sexual assault.

Djirra is open to Aboriginal men, women and children who have experienced or are at risk of family violence or sexual assault, as well as non-Aboriginal carers of Aboriginal children who are victims/survivors of family violence. Djirra is not gender specific, however at last count 93% of our clients were Aboriginal women. In 2016-17, Djirra provided 1265 legal services and 515 non-legal support services to Aboriginal victims/survivors across Victoria. Our early intervention and prevention programs reached 990 women across the State.

Djirra's legal services include advice, court representation and ongoing casework in the areas of: family violence intervention orders; child protection; family law; victims of crime assistance; and, where resources permit, other civil law matters connected with a client's experience of family violence such as: police complaints, housing, Centrelink and infringement matters.

Djirra has a holistic, intensive client service model where each client is assisted by a lawyer and paralegal support worker to address the multitude of interrelated legal and non-legal issues our clients face. Djirra's paralegal support workers, many of whom are Aboriginal women, provide additional emotional support, court support and referral to ensure our clients are linked into culturally safe counseling and support services to address the underlying social issues giving rise to the client's legal problem and experience of family violence. This may include for example assistance with housing, drug and alcohol misuse, social and emotional wellbeing, parenting, financial and other supports.

As an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation, Djirra is directed by an Aboriginal Board and has a range of systems and policies in place to ensure we provide culturally safe services in direct response to community need.