ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Parliament House
State Square
Darwin NT 0800

GPO Box 3146
Darwin NT 0801

REPORT TO THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Under section 46B of the *Coroners Act 1993*

In the matter of the Coroner's Findings and Recommendations regarding the death of Ralph Donald

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Under section 46B of the *Coroners Act 1993* (the Act), I provide this Report on the findings and recommendations of Local Court Judge Elisabeth Armitage, Territory Coroner, regarding the death of Ralph Donald (the Deceased) (Attachment A refers).

This Report includes responses to the recommendations of the Territory Coroner by Mr Martin Dole APM, Commissioner, Northern Territory Police Force (NTPF), Ms Karen Broadfoot, Acting Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Department of Children and Families (DCF).

The Deceased was a 35-year-old man who pronounced deceased at 6.36 pm, on 3 October 2023 at his family's residence in Millner, NT. The cause of death was suicide by self-inflicted gunshot wound to the head. The Deceased's death by suicide occurred in the context of domestic violence between his ex-partner who he had a child with.

Recommendations of the Territory Coroner

The Territory Coroner made the following formal recommendations regarding the death of the Deceased:

> '**Recommendation 1:** Domestic and Family Violence Death Review Team
>
> *To the NT Government:*
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> That (in line with other State/Territory jurisdictions, eg NSW), the NT Government establish and sufficiently fund a multi-agency Domestic and Family Violence Death Review Team (DFVDRT) to review deaths occurring in the context of domestic violence in the Northern Territory.
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> The DFVDRT should (in line other State/Territory jurisdictions, eg NSW), be convened by the NT Coroner or Deputy Coroner and include representatives from any or all of the following:
>
> a. Aboriginal (ACCO) service providers,

b. NT Police,

c. Department of Children and Families,

d. NT Corrections,

e. NT Health,

f. NAAJA,

g. NT Legal Aid,

h. Department of Education,

i. Non-Government sector experts and non-government service providers, and

j. Lived experience experts.

Part 9 of the *Coroners Act 2009* (NSW) should inform the establishment, functions, obligations and powers of the DFVDRT, including the duty of persons to assist the team with full and unrestricted access to relevant records (see s101L).

The DFVDRT should be empowered and resourced to, when considered appropriate, engage directly with a deceased person's family and community to acknowledge their loss and to inform the review process.

Recommendation 2: Prioritisation of face-to-face PARt

To the Northern Territory Police Force:

The NT Police Force should continue its roll-out of Prevent. Assist. Respond. training (PARt). In doing so, the NT Police Force should:

a. prioritise delivery of the face-to-face component of PARt training to any police officer who may respond to incidents involving domestic, family or sexual violence in the course of their day-to-day duties and for any JESCC call taker who has not completed PARt;

b. endeavour to have all NT Police officers and auxiliaries undertake initial PARt by way of face-to-face training, to be followed by a program of refresher and/or supplementary online modules;

c. further to the recommendation made in *Findings in the Inquest into the death of Domestic violence victim (Jingili Water Gardens)* 17.01.25, in relation to all serving police officers who are identified as falling substantially short of expected standards, when responding to or supervising responses to domestic and family violence incidents, the NT Police Force should ensure that these officers are fast tracked for and rostered to complete face-to-face PARt training, if they have not already done so.

Recommendation 3: Inclusion of relevant information in SupportLink referrals

To the Northern Territory Police:

That NT Police:

a. explore with SupportLink Australia Ltd whether the following system architecture changes can be made to the SupportLink system:

   i. to prompt and enable referrers to include CRATs, PRSTs or other risk assessment documents. and relevant SerPro narratives when submitting SupportLink referrals, and

   ii. to prompt and enable referrers to indicate whether it is safe to send and/or leave a message on the contact phone number for the person being referred and/or whether there is an alternative contact number that can be used safely; and

b. if these changes are made, that NT Police update the Domestic and Family Violence General Order to require members, where possible, to upload these documents and record this information in SupportLink referrals.

Recommendation 4: Legislative change to give police increased powers to seize firearms when investigating complaints of domestic and family violence

To the NT Government:

That the NT Government effect legislative change to give police the discretion to seize firearms when officers are lawfully in a dwelling to investigate a DFV complaint. Such legislative change may require a commensurate increase in police resourcing to ensure such seizures can be effected in a way that minimises risk.

Recommendation 5: System architecture changes to enhance ability to receive information relating to DFV reports

To the Department of Children and Families:

That DCF make system architecture changes to prompt and enable people submitting reports relating to allegations of DFV to include copies of CRATs, PRSTs or other risk assessment documents and for Police reporters to submit relevant SerPro narratives (where information sharing restrictions permit).

Recommendation 6: Embedding a specialist DFV Practitioner at DCF Central Intake

To the Department of Children and Families:

That DCF embed a specialist DFV practitioner at Central Intake, to assist in assessing reports made alleging domestic or family violence. That specialist practitioner should have undertaken RAMF, Safe and Together and face-to face PARt training.

Recommendation 7: Prevent. Assist. Respond. Training for DCF staff

To the Department of Children and Families:

That DCF consider rolling out face-to-face PARt training to all employees who may respond to allegations of domestic or family violence in the course of their day-to-day duties. This training should be followed by a scheduled program of online training by way of refresher and/or supplementary PARt modules.

Recommendation 8: Increased number of specialist DFV counsellors

To the NT Government:

That the NT Government provide funding for an increased number of specialist DFV counsellors to be employed (following merit-based processes) by a range of services across the Territory, such as Relationships Australia NT. The NT Government should ensure that the services include organisations likely to be accessed by a range of people, including men and women, Aboriginal and non Aboriginal people, in both remote and urban areas.

Recommendation 9: Restoration of DLI funding to Dawn House

To the NT Government:

That the NT Government urgently restore the $6.5m Department of Logistics and Infrastructure funding to Dawn house to upgrade its facility and increase its number of shelters.

Recommendation 10: Outcome evaluation for NT Men's Behavioural Change Programs

To the NT Government:

With respect to Men's Behavioural Change Programs (MBCPs), the NT Government should implement the ANROWS recommendation for an outcome evaluation of the NT MBCP programs.'

Responses to the Territory Coroner's Recommendations

A copy of the Coronial Findings was provided to Commissioner Dole, on 1 July 2026, in accordance with section 46A(1) of the Act.

A written response was received from Commissioner Dole on 17 September 2026, as required by section 46B(1) of the Act. The response includes the following:

'**Recommendation 2: The NTPF accepts this recommendation in part**.

The NTPF supports the intent of this recommendation and remains committed to enhancing member capability in responding to domestic, family and sexual violence through the ongoing rollout of PARt. In June 2026, the NTPF approved in principle, and subject to funding, the delivery of a:

- two-day face-to-face PARt abridged program as mandatory training for all in-service sworn members and Public Sector Joint Emergency Services Communications Centre (JESCC) call taker staff; and

- five-day PARt program to various police recruit streams.

While the NTPF recognises the demonstrated benefits of PARt training and the positive impact it has had on member practice, it considers PARt to be one component of a broader domestic, family and sexual violence capability framework. The NTPF acknowledges that effective responses also depend on compliance with General Orders, operational supervision, professional judgement, leadership and ongoing professional development. Accordingly, the NTPF's implementation approach will seek to strengthen capability across all of these areas rather than rely solely on a single training product

The Assistant Commissioner responsible for Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence and Youth has been assigned as the lead to implement this recommendation in part.

Progress will be monitored through the Coronial Committee, with updates provided to the Territory Coroner through the Coronial Recommendation Bi-Annual Status Report.

Recommendation 3: The NTPF does not accept this recommendation.

The NTPF acknowledges the intent of this recommendation and has considered its feasibility. However, SupportLink Australia Ltd is a commercially procured third-party platform and is subject to government procurement arrangements and will be reconsidered through future tender processes.

Additionally, the Coronial Committee identified concerns regarding the security, privacy and management of sensitive information contained within CRATs, PRSTs and associated police records. It was also acknowledged that SerPro narratives, CRATs and PRSTs are preliminary assessment tools and may not constitute verified information. The Committee was not satisfied that the transmission and storage of these documents through a third-party referral platform would provide an appropriate level of control over the handling of highly sensitive policing and personal information.

Given these concerns, the NTPF does not accept this recommendation.'

A copy of the Coronial Findings was provided to Mr Brent Warren, then CEO of DCF, on 1 July 2026, in accordance with section 46A(1) of the Act.

A written response was received from Ms Broadfoot, currently Acting Chief Executive Officer, on behalf of Mr Warren, on 7 October 2026, as required by section 46B(1) of the Act. The response includes the following:

Recommendation 1

'DCF notes this recommendation. Pursuant to initiative 35 of the DFSV Reduction Strategy, the Northern Territory Government (NTG) has committed to establishing and implementing a systematic DFSV death review process for the Territory. There is currently no dedicated resources for this initiative.'

Recommendations 2 and 3

'I understand that Northern Territory Police (NTPOL) has written to you separately about its response to this recommendation.'

Recommendation 4

'The above recommendation relates to the administration of the *Firearms Act 1997* (NT) and the *Police Administration Act 1978* (NT). NTPOL has provided DCF with the following response to the recommendation: "*NT Police does not support Recommendation 4 and maintains the position that no legislative amendments are required. Accordingly, submissions were made opposing any proposed legislative changes. NTPF does not support Recommendation 4 being directed to this agency. If required, we can provide our submission to support DCF's response.*'"

Recommendation 5

'DCF notes this recommendation and is considering whether system changes to the Mandatory Online Reporting Tool (MORT) can be made in this way.'

Recommendations 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10

DCF notes and is considering these recommendations.

I am satisfied that the Commissioner of NTPF and the Acting CEO of DCF have considered the recommendations of the Territory Coroner and have appropriately responded to the recommendations.

DATE: 10 NOV 2026

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MARIE-CLARE BOOTHBY

Attachment A - refer to findings