



**Mark Speakman**  
Attorney General  
Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **SURVIVOR STORIES TO HELP SAVE LIVES**

Domestic and family violence survivors as well as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) frontline workers, academics and lawyers will be the focus of new Government forums to help shape future policy.

Attorney General and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence Mark Speakman said the two forums – a first for NSW – would champion courageous survivors and resilient workers with valuable insights to share from the frontline and the broader domestic violence sector.

“We are putting survivors’ voices and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices front and centre to ensure their experiences are given the respect and platform they deserve,” Mr Speakman said.

Mr Speakman said he would host the forums in the New Year in partnership with Domestic Violence NSW (DVNSW), during which members can provide feedback on existing programs and future policy development, and present new ideas.

“This is about making sure that the people who are directly affected by the outcome are actively involved in the process,” Mr Speakman said.

ATSI services and workers already make incredibly important contributions to policy development through other channels; the new forum will further support these crucial efforts.

Data from the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR) show the rate at which members of ATSI community suffer domestic violence-related assault is more than 2.5 times that of the general population.

“We’ve all heard the age-old Einstein saying that doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results is the definition of insanity,” Mr Speakman said.

“Well, we want to try something new and ensure that when we’re responding to violence in our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities we’re giving those initiatives the best chance of success and the best way to do that is by listening to the community and their frontline workers.”

DVNSW CEO Joanne Yates said input of survivor stories into public policy and legislative reform is critical to ensuring effective and appropriate responses to domestic and family violence.

“DVNSW welcomes these important initiatives and we are pleased to be partnering with government in order to bring our voices directly to decision makers,” Ms Yates said.