

NCOSS Summary of Domestic Violence Election Kit Candidate Feedback

6th March 2003

NCOSS has received 44 Domestic Violence feedback forms from candidates. The breakdown in terms of political parties is as follows:

ALP	1
Independents	1
The Greens	42
Total	44

(A couple of letters were received from Liberal National Party candidates advising that the feedback form had been forwarded to Shadow Ministers for a response. No responses were received)

ALP Response

None of the recommendations were ticked. If elected I will

- Approach all necessary bodies such as DoCS, NCOSS and the DVAS for a full briefing on the relevant matters to help me ascertain the immediate priorities and then apply my support appropriately.

Independent Response (Manly)

Supports all recommendations. If elected I will

- I am fully supportive of continuing to raise these issues in the Parliament and in representations to Ministers, particularly in the lead up to budget time.

The Greens Responses

The vast majority of the responses from Green Candidates were as follows. This is the Greens position.

1. Which of the recommendations in this document do you support?

Recommendations for	Yes	No	Why?
1. Amendment of legislation to provide greater police accountability.	Y		The Greens have consistently opposed the increasing of police powers and argued for increased resourcing of the Police Integrity Commission, the Ombudsman, and a review of policing in relation to Aboriginal peoples.
2. Increase in funding to WDV CAP to provide more support workers.	Y		The WVCAP provides an essential service in support of women in fear of personal violence. This service needs to be fully funded, and The Greens NSW fully support this recommendation.
3. The provision of safe waiting space for women in NSW Local Courts.	Y		The Greens fully support the provision of safe waiting spaces for women involved in domestic violence proceedings whilst attending court.
4. Increase in funding to WDV CAP to provide legal representation.	Y		The provision of Legal Aid in AVO proceedings is unequivocally supported by The Greens, as well as significantly increased funding to Legal Aid to provide effective representation in all situations.

5. Increase in funding to DVAS to provide solicitors and support workers in rural NSW.	Y		The Greens wholly support increased funding to DVAS to ensure that services are provided in non-metropolitan NSW and in a culturally appropriate manner.
6. Increase in funding to the DV Line to reduce waiting times experienced by callers.	Y		Telephone counseling and referral services are critical in dealing with immediate issues and providing timely service. Rapid response can be crucial in avoiding, or ameliorating the effects of, episodes of violence. It is therefore critical that waiting times be reduced to as short a time as possible. The Greens support moves to reduce waiting times, while increasing service provision.
7. Funding be allocated to FWAHS to provide sexual assault/domestic violence workers	Y		Non-metropolitan services, particularly to Aboriginal peoples, need to be at the same level and equivalent quality as metropolitan services. The Greens supports increases in funding to ensure this occurs so that services can be delivered as needed.

2. If elected, what will you do to reduce and prevent domestic violence in NSW?

The Greens believe that domestic violence is not acceptable. All women have a right to safety at home, on the street and in the workplace. Violence against women is not a 'women's' problem. Breaking the cycle of domestic violence is a societal problem and the provision of shelter and refuge for women should be considered only as a short-term solution. Any act of violence should be condemned publicly and privately as unacceptable. The Greens' long-term objective is to create an environment of non-violence, and to provide care and protection for victims in the interim.

The Greens NSW will therefore work towards:

- establishing a national inquiry into all forms of sexual assault, including assault within marriage and relationships, and implementation of uniform sexual assault laws;
- providing education to both boys and girls from early primary school level on non-violent conflict resolution;
- reviewing all relevant laws which have bearing on violence against women, treatment of victims and perpetrators;
- addressing the health effects, both physical and emotional, of violence against women, through adequately funded health and education programs;
- using culturally appropriate publicity and educational campaigns to change the way violence is viewed in our society, including strategies to educate men that violence against women is a crime;
- expanding crisis services for women with and without children, by providing refuge and services to victims of rape, abortion, incest, female circumcision and domestic violence. Special provision needs to be made for geographically remote communities and services should be culturally appropriate for indigenous Australian women and women from ethnically and socially diverse backgrounds;
- ensuring women's access to safe and secure accommodation through a comprehensive housing policy and the provision of adequate emergency housing.

3. If elected, what will you do to ensure that domestic violence services are properly resourced to meet the needs of their clients *?

The Greens believe that services to many groups within the community are grossly under-funded. Services to women involved in domestic violence proceedings are critical to a

woman's health and wellbeing, and should be resourced to the level where those services are able to operate without restriction. These services should then be an absolute funding priority in budget negotiations.

This would include funding for direct service agencies and programs such as DVCAP/WDVCAS, as well as health, housing and emergency housing agencies that provide services directly to women in domestic violence situations who would be accessing a wide range of services.