

ADAPT

DOMESTIC & FAMILY VIOLENCE (DFV) ACTION PLAN REPORT



Real World Technology Solutions

Real World Networks

Submitted to Telco Together Foundation on 8th August 2024



FOREWORD

At Real World Technology Solutions, our commitment extends beyond providing innovative telecommunications solutions; we are dedicated to fostering a supportive and safe environment for all our customers and employees. This commitment is why we proudly signed the Telco Industry DFV Pledge, underlining our dedication to addressing and mitigating the impacts of domestic and family violence (DFV) within our community and industry.

We recognise that telecommunications can play a pivotal role in either exacerbating or alleviating situations of DFV. As such, we are proactive in our approach, continually reviewing and enhancing our policies and support systems to ensure they are responsive and sensitive to the needs of victims and survivors. We are committed to collaborating at an industry level to also foster a combined approach to addressing this.

Our current priorities focus on deepening our understanding of DFV's implications within the telecommunications sector and strengthening our internal policies and employee training programs. We are committed to continuous improvement, ensuring our environment is not only inclusive but also equipped to support those affected by DFV. Through ongoing training, policy revision, and industry collaboration, we aim to make a meaningful difference, providing a safe haven and reliable support for all individuals affected by domestic and family violence.

Our staff team of 20 is small, but this also means that we are able to dynamically review and adapt our response as required.

Andrew Yager
CEO

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PROVIDE

We provided support for our employees before undertaking any work regarding our DFV Action Plan, letting them know that this subject can be upsetting/triggering, and providing them with support resources (eg 1800RESPECT).

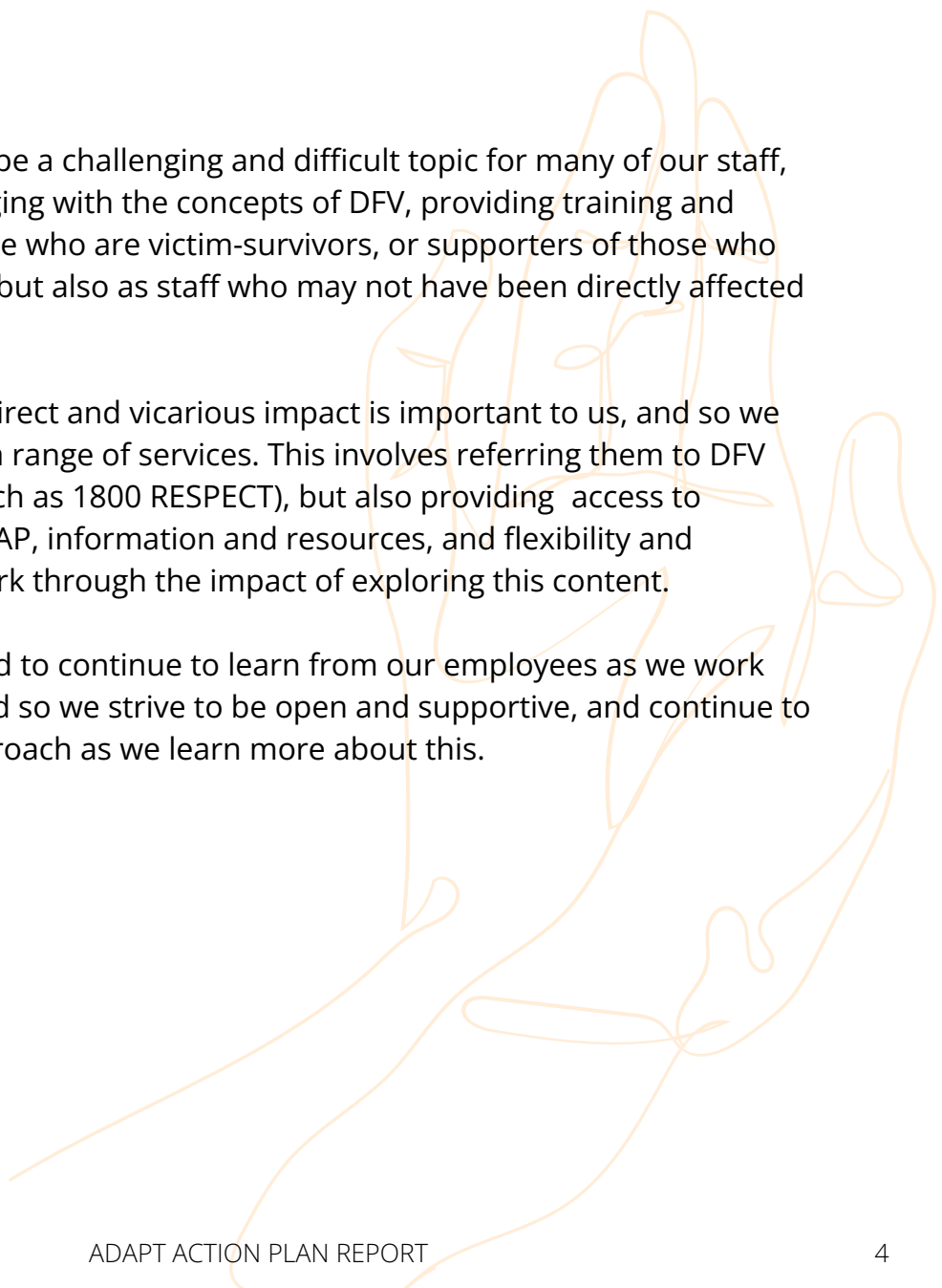


This support includes:

Recognising that DFV can be a challenging and difficult topic for many of our staff, we understand that engaging with the concepts of DFV, providing training and supporting can affect those who are victim-survivors, or supporters of those who are within our staff team, but also as staff who may not have been directly affected personally.

Understanding both the direct and vicarious impact is important to us, and so we provide support through a range of services. This involves referring them to DFV support organisations (such as 1800 RESPECT), but also providing access to counselling through our EAP, information and resources, and flexibility and understanding as they work through the impact of exploring this content.

We recognise that we need to continue to learn from our employees as we work through these matters and so we strive to be open and supportive, and continue to adapt and evolve our approach as we learn more about this.



EXPLORE

We have undertaken a discovery process of Government and Industry Expectations of Telcos regarding DFV (DFV Action Framework Appendix 6) and references in the Suggested Resource List (DFV Action Framework Appendix 7).



CONSULT

We have formed a cross-business working group to plan our approach to responding to the issue of DFV, for our customers and employees.



This working group includes customer service, finance, executive and senior management.

REVIEW

We have reviewed our pathways from our business areas to our team responding to DFV victim-survivors and ensured there is a clear process for internal referral.



We have reviewed our corporate culture and approach to Workplace Equality and Respect.



We have applied a DFV lens across our organisation and understand all DFV interaction points.



We have reviewed our training programs to ensure those that are related to DFV are flagged to incorporate information about the subject.



In the first instance, we have reviewed our child safety training material and updated this to ensure the training information and details related to children exposure to DFV is accurate and contemporary.

We have implemented processes to flag content that is potentially challenging for our staff to interact with. This ensures that we can provide relevant, appropriate and tailored staff in a way that meets them where they are at, ensuring that they are appropriately supported as we wrestle with very difficult topics.

While we have continually performed training within our customer facing teams to be aware of potential DFV issues, and some of the signs and flags to look out for, we are continually refining and improving on these, and as we develop new structured training approaches to a range of topics ensuring this is included in the training material.

Due to our work with Arts organisations, we have been able to work closely with Live Performance Australia in developing some of these resources. We have also done substantial work over the last 15 years with our religious customers in reviewing, developing and training our staff team in responding to issues of DFV. Many of our staff regularly do professional development training provided by these organisations.

We also have been working in conjunction with professional psychologists.

REVIEW

We have reviewed our policies and will include the subject of DFV in the following ones:



Complaints Handling

Date reviewed: 10th Feb 2024

Next review date: 10th Feb 2025

Employee Induction

Date reviewed: 25th Mar 2024

Next review date: 25th Mar 2025

Customer Charters

Date reviewed: 1st May 2024

Next review date: 1st May 2025

Harassment & Bullying

Date reviewed: 25th March 2024

Next review date: 25th March 2025

Paid Leave

Date reviewed: 29th Jul 2024

Next review date: 29th Jul 2025

Code of Conduct

Date reviewed: 25th March 2024

Next review date: 25th March 2025

Flexible Work

Date reviewed: 1st Dec 2023

Next review date: 1st Dec 2024

Financial Hardship

Date reviewed: 15th Jun 2024

Next review date: 15th Jun 2025

Child Safety Policy

Date reviewed: 4th Dec 2023

Next review date: 4th Dec 2024

Child Safety Code of Conduct

Date reviewed: 4th Dec 2023

Next review date: 4th Dec 2024

Child Safety Reporting Procedure

Date reviewed: 4th Dec 2023

Next review date: 4th Dec 2024

Policy on Exposure to Adult Themes

Date reviewed: 4th Dec 2023

Next review date: 4th Dec 2024

Paid Leave Policy

Date reviewed: 29th Jul 2024

Next review date: 29th Jul 2025

DECIDE

The development of our Plan sits within this team:



Executive Management

We have decided how we will manage the development and implementation of the DFV Action Plan.



We have decided how we will support our customers and employees.



We have decided how we will measure success.



We have decided which DFV Training Organisation we will work with to develop our training.



REPORT

We will complete our DFV Annual Update and submit it to TTF on 30th September 2025



We have decided how and where we will report our work. Please select.



Annual Report



Australian telecommunications companies that develop a Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) Action Plan have pledged to continually improve support for their customers and employees who are or may be DFV victims and survivors.

The pledge is signed by the company CEO and includes the commitment to develop a DFV Action Plan, and publish a public report, within two years of the date of signing the pledge.

Background

In 2022, The DFV Action Framework was introduced to the Australian Telco industry. Its core focus is to help telcos better understand how to provide appropriate support and provide an effective response to DFV victims and survivors.

The Framework was created by Telco Together Foundation's Industry Impact Hub, in collaboration with Foundation members Telstra, Optus, TPG Telecom, Vocus Group and Aussie Broadband.

Structured consultation was held with Government, Industry Organisations, frontline DFV service providers and smaller telcos to ensure the Framework content was able to deliver benefit to DFV victims and survivors. This guidance was assimilated into an easy to follow model, through the provision of DFV Action Plan templates, for adoption organisation-wide. Consultation included discussions with DSS Family Safety Branch, Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN), eSafety Commissioner, Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman (TIO), and 1800RESPECT, amongst other key stakeholders.

The Industry Impact Hub is an initiative of the Telco Together Foundation, where complex social issues of relevance to the industry and our communities are collaboratively discussed, addressed and actioned.

Framework Overview

This practical Framework consists of four Action Plan options relevant to any telco regardless of size or resources.

Telcos employ the Action Plan that best relates to their current knowledge or DFV strategy, choosing from the:

- Adapt DFV Action Plan
- Embed DFV Action Plan
- Tailor DFV Action Plan, or
- Influence DFV Action Plan

These Action Plans are not hierarchical and do not signify a telco 'league table' or ranking. Instead, they are progressive, providing a structured roadmap for continued reflection, improvement and adaptation over time.

Telcos must complete required minimum criteria, stipulated in the DFV Action Framework in order to complete their Action Plan, and their report.

A comprehensive response to the complex and critical subject of DFV takes time, requiring comprehensive planning across the organisation before execution.

Action Plan Reports

In addition to the DFV Action Plan Report, the telco commitment includes submitting an Annual Update to Telco Together Foundation, documenting progress since their last Plan.

The DFV Pledge, Action Plan, Report and Annual Update are signed by the telco Chief Executive Officer.

The four DFV Action Plan Options

The Adapt Action Plan

When planning, at an early stage, or reviewing your DFV Action Plan

Even the most socially responsible telcos have to continuously adapt and evolve to ever-changing environments. The purpose of the Adapt Action Plan is to plan, review or revise your approach to domestic and family violence within the context of your employees, customers, products, services and business strategy.

The Embed Action Plan

When implementing your DFV Action Plan – within your mainstream processes

Telco products and services are sometimes the only opportunity for customers to interact with employees. The Embed Action Plan places DFV victim-survivors at the centre of your products and services. With a DFV lens applied across your business you have a pathway to respond to customers and employees within your standard mainstream processes.

The Tailor Action Plan

When Implementing your DFV Action Plan – tailored to individual circumstances

In some circumstances, a response that is appropriate to one DFV victim-survivor may be harmful to another. The Tailor Action Plan enables a telco to deviate away from its mainstream processes, with support team(s) authorised to provide customers and employees with a customised individualised response.

The Influence Action Plan

When extending your DFV Action Plan, wider than your customers and employees.

As an industry we are unique in that we have direct access to nearly every Australian organisation and consumer. That provides an opportunity for a level of responsibility that goes beyond a telco's own business. The Influence Action Plan extends your sphere of influence beyond your employees and customer support, to the wider community.



The Industry Impact Hub is an initiative of Telco Together Foundation. We are the industry's foundation for collectively addressing some of the most complex social challenges within our increasingly connected world.



www.industryimpacthub.org
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