



**New Zealand House of Representatives**  
Te Whare Māngai o Aotearoa

**Justice Committee**  
Komiti Whiriwhiri Take Ture

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# **2024/25 Annual review of the Executive Board for the Elimination of Family Violence and Sexual Violence**

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Presented to the House of Representatives  
by Hon Andrew Bayly, Chairperson

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## Executive Board for the Elimination of Family Violence and Sexual Violence

### Recommendation

The Justice Committee has conducted the 2024/25 annual review of the Executive Board for the Elimination of Family Violence and Sexual Violence, and recommends that the House take note of its report.

### About the Executive Board

In 2018, a joint venture was established to enable a whole-of-government approach to addressing family violence and sexual violence. Four years later, the joint venture was replaced by the Interdepartmental Executive Board.<sup>1</sup> The Executive Board brings together the chief executives of nine government agencies:

- Department of Corrections | Ara Poutama Aotearoa
- Ministry of Education | Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga
- Ministry of Health | Manatū Hauora
- Ministry of Justice | Te Tāhū o te Ture
- Ministry of Social Development | Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora
- New Zealand Police | Ngā Pirihimana o Aotearoa
- Oranga Tamariki | Ministry for Children
- Te Puni Kōkiri | Ministry of Māori Development
- Accident Compensation Corporation | Te Kaporeihana Āwhina Hunga Whara (acting as Independent Advisor).

The Board is responsible for providing Ministers with a whole-of-government strategy and advice on interventions to eliminate family violence and sexual violence. Its other areas of focus include monitoring implementation of Te Aorerekura (the National Strategy to Eliminate Family Violence and Sexual Violence) and managing sector and cross-agency relationships. The business unit that supports the Board works with agencies, communities, and non-government organisations to promote more awareness of family and sexual violence and to co-ordinate collective government action to implement the strategy. Previously known as Te Puna Aonui, the business unit is now called the Centre for Family Violence and Sexual Violence Prevention.

We held a hearing with the Secretary for Justice and Chair of the Executive Board, Andrew Kibblewhite, and the Centre's chief executive, Emma Powell, to discuss the Board's performance.

<sup>1</sup> From July 2022 to June 2025, the Board used the gifted te reo Māori name Te Puna Aonui.

## Summary of 2024/25 performance and audit results

The Board is funded through Vote Justice under the appropriation *Elimination of Family Violence and Sexual Violence*. Since it was set up in 2018/19 until the end of 2024/25, spending has totalled \$90.84 million.

### Financial trends

	2022/23 \$million	2023/24 \$million	2024/25 \$million	Change in 2024/25
<b>Revenue</b>	20.52	18.42	22.08	19.9%
<b>Expenditure</b>	19.67	17.59	21.32	21.2%
<b>Net surplus</b>	0.85	0.83	0.76	—

Revenue increased by 19.9 percent in 2024/25, of which more than half was due to changes in the Supplementary Estimates. An additional \$1.356 million was allocated for overhead costs, and \$500,000 was transferred from Vote Police to progress the New Zealand Police Project Whetū business case. The project aims to provide a national, integrated information and data-sharing model that underpins a multi-agency operating model for family violence response and early intervention.

Expenditure was \$1.096 million higher than budgeted (\$20.223 million) and \$0.760 million lower than the Supplementary Estimates (\$22.079 million). The variances are mostly due to the changes in overhead costs, expenses for the Project Whetū business case, and adjustments for projects and work programmes.

### Audit results

The auditor issued a standard audit report, indicating that the information audited fairly reflected the department's activities and financial position. He rated the management control environment, the financial information and supporting systems and controls, and the performance information systems and controls as "good".

### Performance reporting

The Board explained that it uses two frameworks to measure its performance: a monitoring and outcomes framework that it first published in late 2024, and the Government's Target 4 (Reduced Violent Crime).<sup>2</sup> We heard that the Board intends to publish a new framework in March 2026 that aims to show how its work affects family and sexual violence outcomes. The Board said in relation to Target 4 that it tracks the rate of family and sexual violence.

We asked what progress the Board has made in establishing clear measures to track its performance. The Board said that in 2024 it worked with the participating agencies' deputy chief executives to create performance indicators. The indicators relate to each of the

<sup>2</sup> Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, [Government Targets](#).

Board's functions: stewardship of strategy, alignment on policy, outcomes, stakeholder engagement, and trust with the sector.

The Board said the next step would be presenting a refined set of measures to board members for adoption. The Board would then pilot the performance measures to make sure that they are fit for purpose before bringing them into effect for the 2025/26 financial year. We asked whether the new measures should be included in the performance reporting of participating agencies. The Board emphasised that accountability at every layer of the system is important, but its first priority would be the Board's adoption of the measures. After the measures have been accepted, the Board would consider how they are given effect through agencies or chief executive performance.

We are aware that the Board's Strategic Intentions were published in September 2025, stating its four strategic objectives:

- coordinating action to improve outcomes for people most impacted by violence
- investing wisely based on what works
- realising its stewardship function, positioning itself for the future
- increasing accountability for delivery, including taking responsibility for core infrastructure improvements.

We look forward to discussing the Board's new performance measures and its strategic intentions the next time we meet with them.

## **Multi-agency collaboration**

The Board takes the lead role in coordinating a whole-of-government response to family and sexual violence. It engages with participating agencies to align work programmes and initiatives that will make a difference in reducing family and sexual violence. The Board said that, in addition to a full board meeting three times a year, a subcommittee also meets monthly. The subcommittee consists of the Centre's chief executive, the Police Commissioner, and the chief executives of the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Social Development, Ministry for Children, the Social Investment Agency, and Corrections. The main focus for the subcommittee is the second Te Aorerekura Action Plan.<sup>3</sup>

## **Engagement with the Social Investment Agency**

In our review briefing on the 2022/23 annual review of the Board, the Board stated that formal conversations were yet to occur with the Social Investment Agency about its involvement with the Board. We asked what work the Board and the Agency have done together since then. The Board said it was careful not to adopt a social investment approach too quickly, and took several months to better understand how the Agency could contribute to the aim of reducing family and sexual violence.

The Board explained that the Agency creates tools and frameworks for other agencies to use. It told us that that its partnership with the Agency works well because the Agency has developed outcome-based tools that monitor the progress of interventions and provide data

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<sup>3</sup> Executive Board for the Elimination of Family Violence and Sexual Violence, Te Aorerekura Action Plan, 2025–2030.

for better insights. The Agency's tools enable the Board to strive for better outcomes, particularly for key groups such as children and young people.

We note that the Agency is working with the Board on the first priority of the second Action Plan—investing and commissioning well. We are aware that Phase 1 of a review into expenditure across government on addressing family and sexual violence has been completed, and we asked what lessons the Board has learnt. The Board clarified that the first phase was only a “desktop exercise” and did not fully evaluate each of the services provided by the Board's agencies.

We heard that the review has made it clear what programmes and services are used by specific groups of people, and the types of outcomes they intend to achieve. For example, child advocacy organisations and Women's Refuge are well positioned to provide programmes that target stopping violence by boys and men. The Board said that one of the biggest lessons it has learnt was that a review of spending also needed to be done alongside analysing the effectiveness of programmes and services. It said the amount of available data it has on effectiveness is not as extensive as it would like, but it has started an evaluation into multi-agency responses on the ground to expand that database.

## **Consultation requirements for participating agencies**

The Board formalised its accountability framework for member agencies and agreed on operating procedures that set expectations for core duties and engagement, and escalation protocol. The procedures include the requirement for member agencies to consult and share information with the Board about any decision or change that has the potential to affect the system that deals with family and sexual violence. For example, the Police consulted the Board on their proposal to triage family harm incidents to make sure a change in practice would not have a negative outcome on family violence.

We heard that if the Board has concerns about a policy change, they would be escalated and discussions between chief executives may take place. The Centre's chief executive would also advise the Minister for the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence on whether to write to the Minister responsible for the proposed changes.

The Board clarified that the purpose of establishing the Board was to increase transparency over the funding spent on responding to family and sexual violence and monitoring the performance of programmes and services against intended outcomes. Its creation did not include the right to decide on the funding or nature of programmes and services that each participating agency provides in its own response to family and sexual violence.

## **Consultation on changes to funding for programmes and services**

We asked whether the Board had been consulted on halting further rollout of *Hikitia! For Our Future*, ACC's sexual violence prevention programme, beyond the first five regions because of funding pressures. The Board said it was aware that ACC was evaluating the effectiveness of the programme before deciding whether to roll it out further. We heard that the Board had learned of ACC's decision to halt any extension before it was consulted. It said this was an example of the Board not being notified early enough of a change. The Board suggested it would be interested in supporting further rollout if it occurred.

We asked whether the Board had been consulted on the decision to end funding for the Ministry of Social Development's *Safe, Strong, Families and Communities* programme that provided sexual violence treatment services. A ministry representative told us that the ministry reprioritised this funding to ensure its response to sexual violence was more effective. They said that the ministry consulted with TOAH-NNEST, the national body for ending sexual violence, about what reprioritisation could look like, and the ministry would decide soon about where the funding would be reallocated.

## **Police attendance at family harm incidents**

During our last review of the Board, some of us expressed concern about the Police's decision to attend fewer family harm incidents. We asked during our 2024/25 review how this decision may have affected the response to family and sexual violence. A Police representative told us that the Police adopted a risk–harm attendance framework that was piloted in September 2024 and then implemented four months later. The Police said that when there is high demand for services, every agency should be doing a first-risk assessment and then respond with the appropriate service.

Under the framework, incidents are prioritised using a system known as SCAN. Priority 1 events are considered emergencies and police must attend immediately.<sup>4</sup> The Police said that using the new framework had led to a 7.7 percent increase in attendance to family harm incidents. They explained that the increase was because of better-trained call takers using the SCAN system, who were asking the right questions at the time of the call. The call taker could determine whether there was an immediate risk or a breach of criminal justice proceedings, such as a warrant or Police Safety Order.<sup>5</sup> The Police said that many 111 family harm calls were assigned as priority 3 and later considered by “multi-agency tables”, that assign service providers to follow up with the family.<sup>6</sup>

## **Responding to family harm events involving children**

Some of us expressed concern that the Police's change in responding to family harm events could place children at increased risk in these situations. The Board told us that before adopting the new risk–harm assessment framework, the Police had to coordinate a multi-agency response to family harm events, which involved them being first responders, coordinators, and administrators. We heard that, ideally, the Police would stay “in their lane” as first responders and other agencies would pick up other parts of the response.

We heard that the Police had to carefully consider the effect any change in practices could have on other agencies before making the decision to adopt the risk assessment framework. The Police indicated that they are currently reviewing the framework to ensure they can gather as much information as possible on any child at risk or a victim of family harm. The Police told us that the Police Commissioner has created a senior oversight group for family harm involving adult sexual assault and child protection. The oversight group would review Police training and frameworks for quality assurance.

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<sup>4</sup> Priority 2 events incidents are not considered an emergency but require prompt attendance, while priority 3 events may still be police matters but are resolved through alternative actions rather than attendance.

<sup>5</sup> The SCAN acronym stands for Severity, Circumstances, Attributes, Need.

<sup>6</sup> A “multi-agency table” is a term for a meeting of several agencies to plan for longer-term safety.

The Police said their absolute focus is the welfare of children and identifying any child that could be at risk of family violence. They said the Police have 7,500 open investigations for child protection. We heard that the Police's risk assessment is the first step in their response to family harm events involving children. The information they gather is assessed by district family harm teams that decide whether a case needs to be referred to a "multi-agency table". The Police said that putting all the information together is important because "[o]ne incident doesn't actually tell you the whole picture that's happening in a whānau". The work of the multi-agency tables has led to the creation of 13,000 family safety plans.

## **Education and prevention**

### **A strategy for children**

The Police stressed that a coordinated approach through the multi-agency tables is the only answer to reducing family harm involving children. We heard that child abuse lives in silence and people need to feel confident that they can pick up a phone and tell someone that it is occurring. We asked the Board whether it should have a separate strategy for children, with a child dying every five weeks from family violence. The Board said that in its second Te Aorerekura Action Plan, one of its focus areas is protecting children and young people.

We heard that under the focus area "Keeping people safe", the Board identified components of a safe multi-agency response. One component needs to be a "victim/survivor and child-centred" response. A work programme addressing this would ensure that children are visible and protected within the multi-agency response. Another part of the Board's child/youth strategy is reducing harm to children through prevention and early intervention. We heard that the Board needs to do more work on this, particularly around workforce training and working more closely with Oranga Tamariki.

### **The difference between sexual assault and rough sex**

We were told that there is a fine line between rough sex and sexual assault. Some of us have learned that young people are presenting to A&E (accident and emergency care) rather than a rape clinic because they do not consider what has happened to them as an incident of sexual assault or rape. The Board observed that norms around sex are changing, especially for young people, with rough sex, strangulation, and choking becoming more common. These practices, however, can have severe health consequences, such as brain injury and PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder). It also highlighted that evidence shows that strangulation and choking are key indicators of future lethal behaviour.

We heard that one of the ways the Board can respond to sexual assault presenting as rough sex is educating staff working in emergency departments on the signs of sexual assault and how to make a referral to the right kinds of services. The Board told us it will publish sexual violence capability frameworks next year that will assist health professionals to identify more nuanced signs of sexual assault. It also would like to improve education for young people on the harm of rough sex.

## Other matters considered

We also discussed the following matters. For more detail, refer to the pages noted below in the *Hansard* transcript of our hearing, available on the Parliament website.

- **Partnership with tangata whenua**—We discussed the Board’s relationship with tangata whenua following the Minister’s decision not to continue Te Pūkotahitanga, and the reclaiming of the name Te Puna Aonui. The Board said it is focusing on working with iwi on the multi-agency responses to family and sexual violence. (*Transcript, pp 19–20.*)
- **Measuring rates of violence**—We asked whether the Board is able to sufficiently measure rates of family and sexual violence against other statistics, such as homicide, to measure its progress. It told us that the Board uses the New Zealand Crimes and Victims Survey because it measures both reported and unreported violence. (*Transcript, pp 21–22.*)
- **Project Whetū**—Project Whetū is a work programme developing an information-sharing and case-management system that will help agencies coordinate their efforts to identify and respond to family and sexual violence. We asked what progress has been made on it. We heard that the Board is currently considering an operating model and the technology associated with it. (*Transcript, pp 23–24.*)
- **Specialist training**—We discussed the timeline for providing specialist training. The Board told us that 10,800 frontline staff for member agencies have already been trained, with the aim of training 10,000 more by January 2027. We heard that the Board helps to support agencies by working with learning development teams to provide the right level of training for every staff member. (*Transcript, pp 27–29.*)

## Appendix

### Committee procedure

We conducted a standard annual review of the Executive Board for the Elimination of Family Violence and Sexual Violence for the 2024/25 financial year. On 4 December 2025 we heard evidence from the Executive Board for 2 hours and received advice from the Office of the Auditor-General. We sent written questions to the Board for response. We met again on 12 March 2026 to finalise this report.

### Committee members

Hon Andrew Bayly (Chairperson)  
Hon Ginny Andersen  
Jamie Arbuckle  
Carl Bates  
Tākuta Ferris  
Rima Nakhle  
Tom Rutherford  
Todd Stephenson  
Vanushi Walters  
Hon Dr Duncan Webb  
Dr Lawrence Xu-Nan

Kahurangi Carter and Helen White participated in our annual review hearing.

### Related resources

The following material is available on the Parliament website:

- [the annual report of the Executive Board for the Elimination of Family Violence and Sexual Violence](#)
- [the briefing paper we received from the Office of the Auditor-General](#)
- [responses from the Executive Board to our written questions](#)
- [the structured agenda for our hearing with the Executive Board](#)
- [the Hansard transcript of our hearing](#)
- [a recording of our hearing](#).