

**Proposed Personal Safety Survey – 2012**  
**Survey Advisory Group Meeting Minutes**

Date & Time	July 16, 2010. 10am - 3pm
Location	Archer Boardroom, ABS House, Benjamin Way Belconnen
Chairperson	Bob McColl, Assistant Statistician Social Conditions Statistics Branch, Australian Bureau of Statistics

<b>Attendees</b>	
Australian Bureau of Statistics	Social Conditions Statistics Branch Bob McColl Children and Families Surveys Section: Fiona Blackshaw, Penny Vandenbroek, Jack Dearden, Jessica Gourlay Living Conditions: Carolyn Ashley Education, Crime and Cultural Statistics Branch National Centre for Crime and Justice Statistics: Soula Macfarlane, Sam McNally
Commonwealth Department of Families, Housing, Community Services & Indigenous Affairs	Jake Winter, Greg Campbell
VicHealth	Melanie Heenan
University of Wollongong	Michael Flood
Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault	Antonia Quadara
NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet	Pia Riley for Alex Shehadle
Vic Department of Justice	Kristen Diemer
Vic Department of Planning and Community Development	Rachael Green
Qld Department Families, Youth and Community Care	Helen Warneke
SA Attorney-General's Department	Vanessa Swan, Fiona Mort
ACT - Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services	Anna Fieldhouse
Women With Disabilities Australia	Sue Salthouse
<b>Telephone Attendees</b>	
NT Department of Health and Families	Fran O'Toole (accompanied by ABS Outposted officer, Sophie Vassiliou)
NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research	Jackie Fitzgerald for Don Weatherburn
<b>Apologies</b>	
Commonwealth Department of Families, Housing, Community Services & Indigenous Affairs	Fiona Smart
Australian Domestic & Family Violence Clearinghouse	Gaby Marcus
Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department	Sarah Teasey
Australian Institute of Family Studies	Rae Kaspiew
Vic Department of Premier and Cabinet	Cameron Bray
WA Department for Child Protection	Sherrilee Mitchell
Tas Department of Justice	Robyn Yaxley
Australian Institute of Criminology	Jacqueline Joudo Larsen for Adam Tomison
National Association of Services Against Sexual Violence	Veronica Wensing
<b>Other Invitees</b>	
Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department	Toni Pirani

Note: These meeting minutes also include information to explain post meeting actions, to document where survey development is up to in preparation for Pretesting – see comments under **Post SAG meeting actions**. ABS welcomes any further input from SAG members if they have concerns, comments or feedback.

## **Agenda item 1. Arrival and Morning Tea**

## **Agenda item 2. Welcome, Introduction and ABS Scene Setting**

### **Introduction: Bob McColl**

1. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) is currently exploring the possibility of conducting a Personal Safety Survey (PSS) in 2012. While a 2012 PSS would be expected to largely build on the 2005 PSS and deliver time series comparisons, there are new and emerging information requirements that the ABS would seek to address if they were to conduct the survey again. In early preparation, should funding be secured, the ABS has convened a Survey Advisory Group (SAG) to participate in discussions regarding emerging requirements and plans for a possible PSS 2012.

2. Timing for a possible PSS has to be integrated with the current ABS work program. The ABS has a particularly large household surveys work program over the next few years, including the 2011 Census and the 2011 Australian Health Survey. At this stage, including time to allow for development and testing of new content for PSS, the earliest time slot available for the survey to be run is in 2012.

## **Agenda item 3. Role of Advisory Group**

3. The primary role of the SAG will be to provide expert advice on development of the survey in relation to the content, implementation and dissemination, including priorities that would guide final decisions on content. This would include group members providing their views on:

- the relative priorities of proposed new content;
- advice on concepts and definitions;
- the special procedures to be adopted by, and training for, ABS interviewers to ensure the cooperation and safety of survey participants and interviewers;
- the outcomes of field testing; and
- possible survey outputs and information dissemination strategies.

4. Under the assumption that the survey will proceed in 2012, it is anticipated that the SAG group may meet three or four times throughout the survey development process. Advice and guidance from the group will be sought at key stages of the survey program, as follows:

**July 2010** - Face to Face Meeting (in Canberra) - primary focus of this first meeting is to inform members about the possible timing for development and enumeration; proposed survey design; proposed new content; testing strategies; and an overview of dissemination plans.

**November 2010** - Face to Face Meeting post Skirmish (in Canberra)

**September 2011** - Face to Face Meeting post Dress Rehearsal (in Canberra)

**April 2012** - If necessary, a Face to Face Meeting during enumeration to discuss dissemination (in Canberra)

The ABS may also seek ongoing advice/guidance out of session from SAG members on an ad hoc basis, as needed. This contact may be done via email or by phone or smaller working groups could be convened for discussion.

## **Agenda item 4. Background to the Survey**

5. An information priority from any forthcoming PSS will be time series measurements of high priority information. A 2012 PSS would be designed to provide data that can be compared to the 2005 PSS. A potential 2012 PSS would build evidence based on the nature, extent and characteristics of women's and men's experiences of violence in Australia and assist in monitoring and evaluating the government's success in achieving priority actions and strategic outcomes.

6. Previous ABS surveys:

- Personal Safety Survey 2005 (4906.0)
- Women's Safety Survey 1996 (4128.0)

7. ABS Information Papers used for evaluation and development:
  - Conceptual Framework for Family and Domestic Violence (4529.0)
  - National Information Development Plan for Crime and Justice Statistics (4520.0)
  - Sexual Assault Information Development Framework (4518.0)
  
8. Current policy context:
  - *Time for Action: The National Council's Plan for Australia to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children, 2009-2021*
  - The various State and Territory plans, policies, strategies and frameworks for reducing violence.
  
9. The ABS has also taken into account common data gaps/themes arising from conferences such as the Women's Health Conference, Hobart, June 2010.
  
10. In preparation for conducting the PSS again, the ABS has also reviewed the outputs from the 2005 PSS. Through this process the ABS has identified areas for improvement in the survey questionnaire and output processing.
  
11. Fiona Blackshaw explained that through this process a couple of issues of concern have been identified with the Confidentialised Unit Record File (CURF) produced from the 2005 PSS. Noting that these data issues were not impacting estimates published in the Summary publication.
  
12. The CURF that was released from the 2005 PSS has 6 levels of information on the file:
  - Person level: demographics about respondent and their current partner; general safety items, lifestyle indicators
  - Violence level: information about respondents most recent incident of violence by sex of perpetrator (male/female); by 4 types of violence (sexual/physical assault/threat) – up to 8 incidents and detailed information about the characteristics of these (8) incidents such as location; whether reported to police; fear/anxiety experienced; help sought after incident. It also contained high level summary prevalence information about whether the respondent had ever experienced violence by sex of perpetrator (male/female); by 4 types of violence (sexual/physical assault/threat); by 5 perpetrator types (stranger; current partner; previous partner; boy/girlfriend; other known man/woman)
  - Partner level: information about violence by current partner and (most recently violent) previous partner – detailed information about the characteristics for each type of partner violence (how often; whether children witnessed; fear/anxiety experienced; whether intervention order issued).
  - Abuse level: information about experience of abuse before the age of 15 by a man and by a woman
  - Harassment level: information about experience of (sexual) harassment by man and by a woman
  - Stalking level: information about most recent incident of stalking by a man and by a woman, including characteristics of most recent incident such as type of perpetrator; type of stalking behaviour; fear/anxiety experienced.
  
13. The key issues identified in reviewing the 2005 files:
  - Data regarding emotional abuse by a current partner was located on the Violence level. It was found that only a subset of those experiencing emotional abuse had their data included on the CURF (less than 10% of records had been correctly extracted for this item). Once corrected, it is expected that additional data about the types of emotional abuse experienced and whether this occurred in the last 12 months might also be made available.
  - Data on the Violence level was correct for a respondent's most recent incident of violence by sex of perpetrator (male/female); by 4 types of violence (sexual/physical assault/threat) for each of these 8 incidents. However it was found that where a respondent had experienced more than one particular type of violence (eg more than one incident of sexual assault by a man) data had not always been merged onto the file correctly. The flow on impact is that not all prevalence data is on the CURF. For example, if someone had experienced sexual assault by their current partner and a stranger, if their most recent incident was by the stranger, there was no prevalence information to indicate they had also experienced sexual assault by their current partner. The corresponding data was, however, on the Partner level of the CURF.

- In reissuing the CURF, the information would be more clearly included on 2 separate file levels:
  - a 'Perpetrator' level which would be used to determine whether a person has 'experienced violence' (ie data for the 40 different prevalence rates available from PSS by 4 types of violence/sex of perpetrator/5 types of perpetrator); and
  - a 'Most recent Incident' level which would be used to assess the characteristics for a person's 8 most recent incidents of violence (ie type of violence by sex of perpetrators) such as location of incident, whether reported to police, support sought after incident.
 The introduction of these separate levels on the CURF should also make it much simpler to use.
- Data on the Stalking level about the 'type of stalking behaviour experienced' was also found to have some inconsistencies (around 1400 records do not necessarily have the correct type of stalking behaviour extracted).

14. Through this review process, the ABS also identified other minor data issues that will also be corrected as part of the reissue (eg corrections to data labels, revisions to better identify 'not applicable' populations for data items). The ABS also identified a small number of data items that had initially been excluded from the CURF, where it may now be possible for further information to be released (eg Contribution of alcohol or drugs to the most recent incident of violence, Whether experienced anxiety or fear after most recent incident of violence, How often experienced anxiety or fear after most recent incident of violence).

15. The ABS is currently assessing what is required for the CURF to be reissued. A cautionary note will be posted on the ABS Remote Access Data Lab (RADL – where the CURF is accessed from) informing CURF users of the issues identified shortly.

#### **Agenda Item 5. Development Timeframe**

##### **Possible Survey: Timetable**

16. Key survey dates – assuming funding for the survey is forthcoming (noting that some of these have changed from those presented at the SAG meeting):

- Data content consultation – July 2010
- Pretesting content finalised – end July 2010
- Pretesting (including a Skirmish) – (now) October 2010
- SAG Meeting – (now) November 2010
- Dress Rehearsal content finalised – (now) end November 2010
- Dress Rehearsal – [REDACTED]
- SAG Meeting – (now) September 2011
- Final data content – October 2011
- Live Survey enumeration period – [REDACTED]
- Publication – April 2013
- Users' Guide & CURF – June 2013

17. These dates are indicative only. The ABS is still finalising the development timetable for Pretesting and the Dress Rehearsal (eg the dates for Pretesting and Dress Rehearsal have moved from those presented at the meeting).

18. Fiona Mort queried the ABS position on funding and what the cut-off point was for the ABS. Bob McColl explained that the ABS would not be proceeding unless confirmation of funding for the survey had been received by late September 2010, in time for the Pretesting/Skirmish phase.

19. The ABS explained the requirement for new content to be appropriately tested prior to its inclusion in the PSS. The Pretesting/Skirmish phase will provide the best opportunity to cognitively test any new content prior to the Dress Rehearsal. Any content that is considered complex is best tested at this phase. Opportunities to test new content after this phase will be more limited.

20. ABS emphasised that all new survey content needs to be finalised in time for inclusion in the Dress Rehearsal. If any new content/questions are unsuccessful in the Dress Rehearsal, the likely outcome will be that they will need to be removed from the survey.

## **Agenda Item 6. Survey Content**

21. For further information, please refer to the discussion paper provided for Agenda Item 6 (this was circulated prior to the meeting). "Discussion Points" referred to below are those outlined throughout the discussion paper.

### **Agenda Item 6.1 Broad design objectives & Key design parameters**

#### **Broad design objectives**

22. As part of assessing the feasibility for a PSS, the ABS has assessed what size survey would be required for the survey to meet a number of broad design objectives and certain key estimates. These design factors assessed, include a PSS that could provide:

- Estimates for violence against women and men aged 18 years and over in Australia (since the age of 15, and in the last 12 months) for
  - State/territory level estimates on the prevalence of violence against women
  - National level estimates on the prevalence of violence against men
  - National level estimates on the prevalence of violence against men and women by current and previous partners
  - National level estimates on the prevalence of violence against women, by broad country of birth
  - National level estimates on the prevalence of violence against women, by broad age groups
- Improve understanding of the characteristics of violent incidents to inform the design and implementation of future prevention interventions to reduce violence
- Achieve a baseline from which to measure the outcomes of future strategies to reduce violence
- Produce data to analyse changes over time that can be compared to the 2005 PSS

23. ABS emphasised that in determining survey objectives, outputs and any new content that might be sought, we must consider the safety of both our respondents & interviewers. The more information we are asked to collect, the longer we take to complete interviews with respondents: this means that there is a higher possibility of potential risks to respondent and interviewer safety.

#### **Key Estimates (see Handout 1)**

24. ABS has undertaken some preliminary sample design assessments. This information was outlined to the SAG.

25. Broad survey objectives are to produce 4 key estimates of prevalence for women by state/territory and for men national data (with an expected relative standard error of 25% or less) for:

1. Experienced Sexual Assault in last 12 months
2. Experienced Physical Violence (ie assault and/or threat) in last 12 months
3. Experienced Emotional Abuse (by a Current and/or Previous partner) in last 12 months
4. Experienced Intimate Partner Violence in last 12 months

26. ABS explained that of the four key estimates, the estimate for 'Women who experienced sexual assault in last 12 months' (1.3%), and 'Men who experienced sexual assault in the last 12 months' (0.6%) are expected to have the lowest prevalence rates, based on 2005 PSS data.

27. In assessing the fully responding sample size required to meet the broad survey design objectives, the ABS has determined that a fully responding sample of approximately 17,110 women (for women this would range from around 1,950 to 2,480 per state/territory) and 5,300 men would be required.

28. Using this design requirement to produce estimates for sexual assault, an assessment of the expected relative standard errors (RSEs) for each of the other key estimates was undertaken to demonstrate the expected prevalence rates and expected accuracy levels.

29. ABS also explained how much this design would improve the expected confidence intervals (+/- 2 relative standard errors) for estimates, especially estimates for women in Tasmania, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory, in comparison to the 2005 PSS.

30. With regard to the possibility of producing estimates for 'Men who experienced sexual assault in the last 12 months (0.6%)' by state/territory, the ABS explained that a much larger sample of men would be required (in order to produce estimates with an expected relative standard error of 25% or less). It is estimated that a sample of around 30,000 fully responding men would be required in order to produce the equivalent estimates for men. This would add considerably to the costs and ABS would need to further assess whether there was sufficient interviewer capacity to conduct a much larger survey in 2012. At this stage there are no plans to increase the size of the male sample.

**Broad Age Group and Broad Country of Birth Group - key estimates, and approximate RSEs (see Handout 2)**

31. Using the State/Territory sample design, an assessment of estimates that could be produced by Broad Age Group and Broad Country of Birth Group has been undertaken to determine the feasibility of producing reliable estimates for each of these groups.

32. Based on this assessment, it appears that most of the key estimates for women by Broad Age groups and Country of Birth group would have RSEs of less than 25%. The following estimates are the only exceptions, which are likely to have RSEs of greater than 25%:

- Women aged 45-54 years who experienced Sexual Assault in last 12 months;
- Women aged 55 years and over who experienced Sexual Assault in last 12 months
- Women born in MESC who experienced Sexual Assault in last 12 months; and
- Women born in Other countries who experienced Sexual Assault in last 12 months.

**State and Territory Fully Responding Sample Size Comparisons (2005 to 2012) (see Handout 3)**

33. For comparative purposes, a summary of the potential PSS 2012 sample by State/Territory for women and men in comparison to the fully responding sample achieved in 2005 was provided.

34. ABS noted the increase in the total sample for men (from 4,552 to an expected 5,300) and women (from 11,861 to an expected 17,110). For men, with a national level design, data will be more robust with the larger sample. For women, while there are slightly smaller samples for NSW, Victoria and Queensland, the differences to the expected RSEs will be negligible; however the much larger samples for Tasmania, and especially the NT and the ACT will provide much needed data (with much smaller RSEs) than was available from the 2005 PSS.

**Discussion Point 1. Do SAG members have any comments or questions on the key estimates and populations of interest?**

35. There was general agreement with the design objectives and key estimates for a potential 2012 PSS.

36. However, SAG members noted that the sample design does not provide for estimates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The ABS explained why this was not possible:

- Most ABS social surveys are designed to provide good statistics for the general population and as such are usually unsuitable for producing estimates of characteristics of small population groups like the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population. Representation of Indigenous people in Australia's total population is small, at around 2.5%, and only around 1.3% of the population is for those aged 18 and over (the population scope for PSS).
- To produce reliable estimates for the Indigenous population requires a specifically designed sample for urban, rural and remote areas of Australia.
- A survey incorporating Indigenous people requires an extensive screening process, from which an appropriately sized and representative Indigenous sample could be constructed.
- Given the sensitive nature of the information collected in PSS, more culturally sensitive methodologies would also need to be developed and tested.
- Further complicating PSS is the need to conduct interviews in a private setting, to ensure the safety of both respondents and interviewers.
- It was understood and agreed by SAG members that the PSS is not an appropriate vehicle for this research.

- SAG members also requested more detailed information so they are able to explain why the PSS won't be able to be used to provide Indigenous estimates. This has been provided in Attachment 1.

### **Agenda item 6.2 Overview of Survey Content** (see Handouts 4 & 5)

37. Given the requirement for a 2012 PSS to produce estimates to assess changes over time, the ABS outlined to the SAG the various key estimates that were produced from the 2005 PSS. This session was designed to assist SAG members to understand what information is currently available (in addition to that provided in the Summary publication) that would be replicated if a PSS were run again in 2012.

38. The data presented in Handouts 4 and 5 shows a picture of the prevalence rates for violence 'in the last 12 months'. SAG members would also appreciate the same data showing prevalence rates for experience of violence 'since 15 years of age', to show a wider picture of the prevalence of violence. It was agreed that it would also be useful to have information regarding the Relative Standard Errors (RSEs) of these data, and to show how the RSEs can be used to calculate confidence intervals (for 'the last 12 months' and 'since age 15' estimates). ABS undertook to provide this information to SAG members.

39. ABS explained that the focus for the survey is to provide measures for 40 different prevalence rates (that is, 4 different types of violence, by sex of perpetrator (2 types), by 5 key perpetrator types) to show whether a person has ever experienced each of these types of violence, and when their most recent incident of each of these 40 types occurred. This provides information that enables us to say whether or not a person has experienced many different types of violence. This information can be aggregated many different ways to produce estimates and can be aggregated up to produce a single estimate: "Whether experienced violence" (if yes to any of the 40 different types equals 'experienced violence').

40. Detailed characteristics are then collected for a respondent's (8) most recent incidents of violence (ie by the 4 types of violence (ie sexual &/or physical assault &/or threat), by sex (by a male &/or a female perpetrator)). This information shows the differences in actions/reactions between the 8 different types of violence/sex of perpetrator: it is not designed to produce an aggregate estimate of actions/reactions for all violence (we don't collect information for all their incidents of violence). As people have different actions/reactions for the different types of violence: these can't be added together. For example if a person reported their most recent incident of sexual assault by a man to the police but didn't report their most recent incident of physical assault by a woman to the police – you can't create an overall estimate from this information to show the proportion of people who report their violence to the police (you can only provide an estimate of those who report a particular type of violence by the sex of perpetrator to the police).

41. Detailed characteristics are also collected about partner violence for violence by a current partner and violence by a previous partner (note: as a person can have had more than one violent previous partner, we ask them to think about their 'most recently violent' previous partner). This information shows the differences in actions/reactions for current versus previous partner violence. ABS explained that, as per characteristics of a respondent's most recent incident of violence, detailed information about partner violence can't be added together to produce aggregate estimates for all partner violence.

42. Other gendered estimates (such as Sexual harassment by a man & by a woman, Stalking by a man & by a woman); Demographic characteristics of both respondent and their partner (such as age, sex, employment status, etc); and Other data (such as general feelings of safety, lifestyle indicators such as financial stressors).

43. The complexity of the various different prevalence rates produced from the PSS were discussed. SAG members raised the point that some of the results from the last PSS were used incorrectly, possibly due to interpretation issues. With a proposed 2012 PSS, SAG members asked that ABS take special care to ensure that results are correctly and clearly communicated.

44. ABS offered to develop, in the longer term, some "snapshot" pictures of the 2005 PSS data, to give a broader perspective of the data that can be found within PSS, as well as explaining what data is not able to be extracted from PSS.

### **Action Items Arising**

- ABS to update Handouts 4 and 5 to include RSEs/confidence intervals and to create equivalent handouts that show estimates of violence since age 15. (These will be sent out shortly)
- ABS to develop some "snapshot" pictures of the 2005 PSS data, to give a broader perspective of the data that can be found within PSS, as well as explaining what data is not able to be extracted from PSS. (This will be done over the next 12 months)

### **6.3 Possible new and amended data items Demographic and socioeconomic modules**

#### **General comments**

45. During the discussion of the new and amended content proposals, SAG members noted that they would find it easier to understand and assess the content changes if they were also provided with the question wording and response categories for these questions.

#### **Language**

46. In response to demand for more information on Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) communities, a number of **new** data items are proposed to be included in a 2012 PSS, including:

- Main language spoken at home (respondent)
- Whether has English language difficulties (respondent)
- Assistance used for English language difficulties (respondent)

Note: the two English language difficulties items would replace the single English proficiency item used in the 2005 PSS.

47. ABS explained the possible limitations for this data due to survey procedures [REDACTED]. This will limit the number of interviews conducted with those from CaLD backgrounds as:

- [REDACTED]
- While the ABS employs interviewers with foreign language skills, not all languages will be able to be catered for and some interviews won't be able to be conducted.
- Possible cultural differences may also limit participation by respondents.

#### **Discussion point 2. Do SAG members agree with the proposed questions to collect additional information on language abilities? Are there any special concerns?**

48. ABS undertook to provide SAG members with the actual questions used to collect the language data items – these are shown in Attachment 2.1.

49. SAG members welcomed the expansion of the potential CALD measures, noting the expected limitations.

50. There was general agreement from SAG members for the inclusion of the proposed questions for the Language module and the removal of the single English proficiency item used in the 2005 PSS.

#### **Social connectedness**

51. To give an indication of the type of support that a respondent may have access to and how this may vary between people who have/not experienced violence, it is proposed that a 2012 PSS include the following **new** items:

- Whether able to get general support from outside the household
- Whether able to get support in a time of crisis from outside the household
- Source of support from outside the household in time of crisis

#### **Discussion point 3. Do SAG members agree to the inclusion of questions of social connectedness based on standard ABS items?**

52. SAG members agreed that the proposed questions are a positive addition to the survey. There was strong agreement that the impact of violence on an individual's social connectedness is an important measure.



53. ABS undertook to provide SAG members with the actual questions used to collect the social connectedness data items – these are shown in Attachment 2.2

54. However, concern was raised that the questions proposed were deficit-based, and that help-seeking behaviours did not necessarily give a robust measure of 'social connectedness' on their own.

55. Additional question options were discussed, including a volunteering question, a self-assessed identification of connectedness, and questions used in the ABS General Social Survey. ABS undertook to further consider options that might capture this additional aspect.

**Post SAG meeting actions:**

56. An additional question about involvement in social activities has been added – this is also shown in Attachment 2.2.

**Health**

57. To give an indication of the overall health and wellbeing of a respondent and how this may vary between people who have/not experienced violence, it is proposed that a 2012 PSS include the following **new** items:

- Self-assessed health status
- Quality of life measure (Delighted-Terrible Scale)

**Discussion point 4. Do SAG members agree to the inclusion of basic health questions based on standard ABS items?**

58. ABS undertook to provide SAG members with the actual questions used to collect the health data items – these are shown in Attachment 2.3.

59. There was general agreement from SAG members that the additional health questions are of value.

**Disability**

60. In response to demand for any information on Disabled communities and their experiences of violence, it is proposed that a 2012 PSS include the ABS short disability module. Questions from the module will provide a **new** item, with all respondents being classified under one of the following:

- Profound core activity limitation
- Severe core activity limitation
- Moderate core activity limitation
- Mild core activity limitation
- Education/employment restriction only
- No specific limitation or restriction
- No disability or long-term health condition

61. ABS outlined the 16 questions used to determine the above data item. Including the suite of questions required to determine disability status will add approximately 5 minutes to the average length of survey interview (for all respondents). Timing and any associated affects will be further assessed after the Dress Rehearsal.

62. ABS also explained the possible limitations for this data due to survey procedures [REDACTED] This will limit the number of interviews conducted with those with a Disability as:

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

- The PSS only includes those living in private dwellings so residents of 'special dwellings' (such as boarding houses, institutions) will not be in scope for the survey.

Therefore it is likely that any estimates from PSS for people with a disability will be underestimated.

63. Despite these limitations and possible underrepresentation, the PSS should be able to produce some broad estimates.

**Discussion point 5. Do SAG members agree to the inclusion of questions from the ABS short disability module? Are there any special concerns?**

64. SAG members agreed that the disability module would be a positive inclusion to the survey, as there is a strong demand to better understand the impact of violence on those who have a disability. WWDA were particularly pleased with the inclusion of this module.

65. ABS undertook to provide SAG members with the actual questions used to collect the disability data items – these are shown in Attachment 2.4.

66. WWDA enquired as to what information would be available from this component of the survey. The ABS can confirm that, based on expected prevalence rates, if this measure is included within a potential 2012 PSS, a national level prevalence rate of violence against women with a disability should be available.

67. WWDA also asked whether group households are in scope of the survey. ABS confirmed that group households for the disabled, as well as those women's refuges that are set up in private dwellings, are not specifically excluded from the scope of the survey; they are private dwellings. These households will stand the same chance of selection as a private dwelling and may well be selected in the sample. SAG members noted that residents in women's refuges may not agree to be interviewed.

68. The ABS will continue to further assess the expected reliability of estimates for women with a disability. With special emphasis on whether the sample design will be able to deliver reliable measures of the 8 different types of violence, for women with a disability. This information will be provided at the next SAG meeting.

**Lifestyle Indicators**

**Financial Stress**

69. After reviewing the 2005 PSS content and the possible new or amended content for a 2012 PSS, ABS proposed that two items relating to household finance be moved to earlier in the survey interview:

- Whether household members could raise \$2,000 in an emergency
- Whether household members ran out of money for basic living expenses in last 12 months

70. No comments/issues raised by SAG members.

**Alcohol Consumption**

71. The ABS proposed to delete the questions relating to the respondent and their current partners' alcohol consumption.

Questions proposed for deletion:

*The next few questions are about people's alcohol consumption.*

*Do you drink alcohol?*

1. Yes
5. No

*How often do you drink so much that you get drunk?*

1. Drink but never get drunk
2. Get drunk a couple of times a year
3. Get drunk a couple of times a month
4. Get drunk once or twice a week
5. Get drunk every day or almost every day
6. Don't know

Does your current partner drink alcohol?

1. Yes
5. No

How often does your current partner drink so much that [he/she] gets drunk?

1. Drinks but never gets drunk
2. Gets drunk a couple of times a year
3. Gets drunk a couple of times a month
4. Gets drunk once or twice a week
5. Gets drunk every day or almost every day
6. Don't know

72. ABS noted that information about the contribution of alcohol and/or drugs to the most recent incident of violence (for each of the 8 different most recent incidents) was to be retained. Please see these questions below.

[REDACTED]

**Discussion Point 5.1: Do SAG members agree to the deletion of the questions regarding alcohol consumption?**

73. There was considerable discussion regarding this proposal. Those at the meeting discussed the concept around respondent/partner's alcohol consumption that was collected in the 2005 PSS and how this does not actually establish 'Risky alcohol consumption' like other ABS surveys do such as NATSISS, National Health Survey. To do this requires much more detailed information to be collected about the amount and frequency of alcohol consumption. SAG members were advised that to collect information to identify alcohol consumption about the respondent and their partner would require many additional questions (a total of 12 in fact); whether a respondent would actually know the details about their current partner's consumption was also questioned. It was felt that the measure from the 2005 PSS only provided a very rough guide regarding alcohol consumption that wasn't as useful as the concepts collected in other ABS surveys nor was it comparable.

74. SAG members noted the importance of context around alcohol consumption and violence. Members felt that collecting the information about the contribution of alcohol and/or drugs to the most recent incident of violence provided the necessary context that this more general alcohol consumption concept didn't.

75. SAG members discussed that linking the general alcohol consumption question to experience of violence might be misleading – while you could assess whether someone drinks alcohol and experienced violence, this did not necessarily provide a causal link between violence and alcohol. It was seen as very important to know whether there was link between an incident and whether it involved alcohol (not general drinking patterns) and that using the information in this way might somehow be construed that alcohol consumption could be 'blamed' as the reason for the violence.

76. Further discussions indicated that there were other items that provided better indicators for violence such as emotional abuse and social connectedness. These were considered to be more useful in the prediction of violence, as well as measuring the impact that violence is having on people's lives. Those at the SAG meeting agreed, given the need to identify areas to cut content to enable other, more relevant information to be

collected, that these items be dropped: it was felt that other new content was of a higher priority.

77. The NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research voiced strong concern regarding the removal of the items concerned. They were particularly keen for this item to be retained in the survey as an analytical variable (and have since followed up with a further request for the ABS to reconsider its deletion).

78. However, it was overwhelmingly agreed that the questions remaining, regarding the contribution of alcohol and/or drugs to the most recent incident, would provide a measure of the connection between alcohol and violence, without the necessity of the general consumption questions.

### **General Safety**

79. The content from the 2005 PSS has been reviewed and updated to better align with other current ABS surveys that contain similar concepts and questions. Briefly, the wording of questions on feelings of safety when doing various activities alone at night now asks for the level of safety felt, with the items being:

- Feelings of safety using public transport alone at night
- Feelings of safety waiting for public transport alone at night
- Feelings of safety walking alone in local area at night
- Feelings of safety at home alone at night

80. ABS undertook to provide SAG members with the actual questions used to collect the general safety data items – these are shown in Attachment 2.5.

81. There was no time at the SAG meeting to discuss the proposal to delete questions from the survey on reasons for not using public transport, walking alone and staying home alone: the responses 'Did not feel safe' or 'Other' are not felt to be particularly useful. Nor was there time to discuss the possible alternate set of 'main reason' questions that could be developed, such as:

[REDACTED]

### **Discussion point 6: Do SAG members have any comments on the usefulness of the General Safety questions? Would the module be of greater use if questions about 'main reason' are included?**

82. This was not raised at the meeting as a priority issue for any members of the SAG.

83. At this stage, given all the other new content proposed for inclusion and the additional interview time required to collect this information, ABS has decided not to develop further questions to collect information about the reasons for not feeling safe in the survey.

84. It was also felt that there was related information elsewhere within the PSS regarding the respondents' feelings of fear and anxiety.

85. SAG members are able to provide feedback if they have any concerns or issues they'd like to raise.

### **Sexual Harassment**

86. The content from the 2005 PSS has been reviewed and updated to better align with changes in technology that have occurred since the last survey, as well as current thinking around what constitutes sexual harassment. The module heading has been updated from 'Harassment' to 'Sexual Harassment' so that the nature and intent of the questions contained within the module is clearer.

87. It is also proposed that the first question in the module be updated as follows:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

88. The replacement of 'obscene' is due to interviewer feedback from the 2005 PSS that many respondents from countries where English is not a first language required this concept to be explained. The expansion of ways in which an obscene message may have been delivered acknowledges changes in accessibility related to technology advancements.

89. ABS undertook to provide SAG members with the actual questions used to collect the sexual harassment data items – these are shown in Attachment 2.6.

**Discussion point 7. What do SAG members think of the proposed change of concept for 'obscene' contact/phone call in the sexual harassment module?**

90. This was not raised at the meeting as a priority issue for any members of the SAG.

91. SAG members are able to provide feedback if they have any concerns or issues they'd like to raise.

**Emotional Abuse**

92. Given interest in data related to intimate partner violence, ABS has investigated refining/expanding the measure of emotional abuse, so that it could be combined with measures of violence (ie Sexual and/or Physical violence) by current and/or previous partner to derive a new measure for Intimate Partner Violence. This might also be used to assess possible links between Emotional Abuse and other forms of violence (ie Sexual and/or Physical).

93. In the 2005 PSS, two questions on Emotional Abuse were asked, but only of respondents who were married or in a de facto relationship. The proposed changes for a 2012 PSS would expand this concept to include Emotional Abuse by:

- Current partner (who could be male or female);
- Male Previous partner; and/or
- Female Previous partner

94. This would enable estimates to be produced to assess the gendered nature of violence, including emotional abuse.

95. Acknowledging the need for more information and the relatively broad definition of Emotional Abuse applied in the 2005 PSS, it is proposed that a 2012 PSS include a refined, more precise definition (in line with *Conceptual Framework for Family and Domestic Violence*). The definition would incorporate additional behaviours to those identified in 2005 and would also determine that behaviours experienced by a respondent were sustained and repetitive in nature.

96. The proposed questions would ask about behaviours relating to aspects of emotional, financial, social, religious and pet abuse, including whether a current, previous male/female partner had ever:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

97. To meet the definition of emotional abuse, one way to determine this could be to ensure that the respondent: experienced more than one of these behaviours; or if they experienced only one behaviour, that this behaviour occurred multiple times.

98. ABS also acknowledged that it was important to try and weed out false positive responses (eg where behaviours were prevented/controlled in cases where the respondent had an addiction or compulsion).

99. It is expected that questions from the module will provide the following items:

- Whether ever experienced emotional abuse by a partner - **expanded**
- Type of emotional abuse behaviours experienced by partner - **expanded**
- Frequency of emotional abuse behaviours experienced by partner - **new**
- Timeframe of most recent incident of emotional abuse by partner (including last 12 months) - **expanded**
- Type of partner (Current and/or Previous) - **new**
- Sex of (emotionally abusive) partner - **new**

100. While acknowledging the interest in Emotional Abuse as it relates to domestic and family violence, the ABS also explained that there are currently no plans to collect this emotional abuse information for any other perpetrator types eg emotional abuse by other family member.

101. The feasibility of including the revised concepts/questions for Emotional Abuse will be assessed after field testing.

#### **Discussion Points 8, 9 & 10: Emotional Abuse discussion/comments/concerns.**

102. SAG members were extremely pleased that the topic of emotional abuse is being reviewed and was a matter of priority within a proposed PSS for 2012.

103. There was general discussion regarding the possible ways in which to measure emotional abuse.

104. Concern was raised over the definition of emotional abuse proposed for a PSS 2012. It was thought that this definition may also be too broad and capture false positives (eg a respondent may report a nagging partner through this series of question but this was not thought to have the same impacts as a partner whose behaviour was intended to cause emotional fear or harm).

105. Discussion surrounding the behaviours listed came to the conclusion that it is the *impact* that these behaviours have on the respondent (ie causing anxiety/fear) which is actually an indicator of emotional abuse, rather than necessarily, the behaviours themselves.

106. Suggestions were made by SAG members, as to how the response categories could be refined, to encompass a broader range of behaviours, as well as to try to avoid any 'false-positive'.

107. The ABS explained that derivations, based on responses to the various questions, could be used to derive a measure of emotional abuse that could take into consideration the complexities.

#### **Post SAG meeting actions:**

108. The ABS has reviewed the Emotional Abuse module to take on board the issues and ideas discussed at the SAG meeting, around refining the concept for those who have experienced emotional abuse to:

- consider the concept of repeated/ongoing nature of behaviours
- determine the impact on the respondent (eg whether the behaviours caused fear/anxiety)
- refining the wording of the various response categories, to ensure greater clarity of the behaviours

1.09. The revised concept now includes whether fear and/or anxiety was present, to ascertain/clarify whether the behaviours they had experienced could be determined as "Experiencing Emotional Abuse".

1.10. A revised module (to be used in the upcoming Pretesting/Skirmish) showing the actual questions used to collect the emotional abuse data are provided in Attachment 2.7. Given the key nature of this concept (to enable estimates of Intimate Partner Violence to be produced) SAG members are encouraged to let the ABS know if they have any concerns or issues with the updated concepts/questions.

### **Sexual and/or Physical Threats**

1.11. Characteristics of a respondent's most recent incident of Sexual and/or Physical Threat by a man and/or woman were collected in the 2005 PSS. The following items were found to be of very low prevalence and viewed as irrelevant by respondents. As data outputs were minimal, and the data will not be as reliable as some of the proposed new content, the following items are proposed to be removed from the violence modules:

#### **POLICE INVOLVEMENT AFTER THE MOST RECENT INCIDENT OF SEXUAL AND/OR PHYSICAL THREAT BY A MAN AND/OR A WOMAN**

- Whether police told about most recent incident of threat
- Whether perpetrator of most recent incident of threat was charged
- Whether perpetrator of most recent incident of threat went to court
- Main reason most recent incident of threat not reported to police

#### **SUPPORT-SEEKING BEHAVIOURS AFTER THE MOST RECENT INCIDENT OF SEXUAL AND/OR PHYSICAL THREAT BY A MAN AND/OR A WOMAN**

- Type of professional support sought after most recent incident of threat
- Type of support service used after most recent incident of threat

#### **FEAR OR CHANGE TO ROUTINE AFTER THE MOST RECENT INCIDENT OF SEXUAL AND/OR PHYSICAL THREAT BY A MAN AND/OR A WOMAN**

- Whether took time off work in the 12 months after the most recent incident of threat
- Amount of time off work in the 12 months after most recent incident of threat
- Whether felt **insecure** for personal safety in the 12 months after most recent incident of threat (non-partner violence)
- Whether felt **insecure** for personal safety in the last 12 months from most recent incident of threat (non-partner violence)
- Frequency of **anxiety** in the last 12 months from most recent incident of threat (non-partner violence)
- Changes to routine because of **anxiety** felt after the most recent incident of threat

### **Discussion point 11. Do SAG members have any comments on the proposed deletion of content relating to Sexual and/or Physical Threat by a man and/or woman?**

1.12. This was not raised as a matter of priority by any members of the SAG at the meeting.

1.13. However, during the course of the meeting it was highlighted that measuring respondents' anxiety and fear was of high priority to all SAG members. So, during an ABS review post SAG meeting, it was decided that the questions relating to anxiety or fear (as **above**) would be retained. All other questions relating to incidents of threat will be removed from the survey content for a 2012 PSS.

### **Partner Modules**

1.14. After reviewing the content and structure of the 2005 PSS, a number of changes are proposed for the Partner modules.

#### **Additional Characteristics of Partner Violence**

1.15. To gain a better understanding of a person's experience of partner violence in the last 12 months, the following new items were proposed:

- Whether experienced violence by a partner more than once in last 12 months

- Length of relationship with partner
- Whether partner violence was seen or heard by children in last 12 months
- Whether further incidents of violence after restraining order taken out against partner occurred in last 12 months

116. There was not time at the SAG meeting to have detailed discussions about the above items (and they were not raised as key areas that required discussion during the meeting).

#### **Post SAG meeting actions:**

117. ABS has included extra questions in the partner modules to determine the above data items with the exception of the last dot point.

118. While in theory an extra question could be asked to determine whether further incidents of violence after restraining order taken out against partner occurred in last 12 months, it is unlikely that the prevalence of this occurring will be high enough (will only occur for a very small subset of the population) for output purposes.

119. Further it was decided that this concept lacked the context around why the violence re-occurred (eg they could have decided, despite the restraining order being issued, to let their partner move back into the family home – this doesn't mean the restraining order didn't work). This last item has not been included for testing in the Skirmish.

#### Help seeking behaviours and assistance sought

120. To gain a better understanding of intimate partner violence, a list of possible items that could be considered for inclusion was provided around help seeking behaviours and assistance sought relating to partner violence:

##### **JUSTICE INTERVENTIONS FOR PARTNER VIOLENCE**

- Whether police ever told about any incident of violence by partner
- Whether any further incidents of violence ever occurred after police told about partner violence
- Whether further incidents of violence that occurred after police told about partner violence occurred in the last 12 months
- Whether police not told about some incidents of violence by partner
- Main reason violence never reported to police
- Main reason some violence not reported/stopped reporting to police
- Whether partner was ever charged due to their violent behaviour/s towards respondent
- Whether any further incidents of violence ever occurred after partner was charged
- Whether further incidents of violence that occurred after partner was charged occurred in the last 12 months
- Whether partner ever went to court due to their violent behaviour/s
- Whether any further incidents of violence ever occurred after partner went to court
- Whether further incidents of violence that occurred after partner went to court occurred in the last 12 months
- Whether ever taken out a restraining order against violent partner (collected in 2005 PSS)
- Whether further incidents of violence ever occurred after restraining order taken out against partner (collected in 2005 PSS)
- Whether further incidents of violence after restraining order taken out against partner occurred in the last 12 months

##### **SERVICE & SUPPORT USE FOR PARTNER VIOLENCE**

- Type of professional support ever sought as result of partner violence
- Type of support service ever used as result of partner violence
- Type of informal support sought ever used as result of partner violence

121. It was not proposed to try and ascertain whether further instances of violence occurred after seeking services or support for partner violence. This would require each service or source of support to be assessed separately and would require too many additional questions (and would be unlikely to be able to produce



estimates for each type of service).

**Discussion point 12. Do SAG members have any comments on the proposed expansion of content relating to partner violence?**

122. There was very limited time at the SAG meeting to have detailed discussions about the proposed items.

123. Those at the SAG meeting recognised the difficulties in collecting information on Justice Interventions.

124. Members of the SAG presented some other ideas on how to collect the information around:

- *Who initiated the restraining order?*
- *If restraining order not sought, reasons why not?*
- *If restraining order was issued, would respondent recommend this course of action to others?*

125. Discussions at the SAG meeting have highlighted the importance of clearly defining the concepts to be collected for these items.

126. Other aspects raised by SAG members were around better understanding the context of the interventions eg police may have been called and removed an offender from the home. Despite this further violence could have occurred but this isn't attributable to the quality/efficiency of the police intervention – it could be due to other influences (eg their partner or other family member convinced the respondent to allow them to move back into the family home against police advice).

**Post SAG meeting actions:**

127. ABS has since further considered the new content and, as with the earlier restraining order item, it was decided that the new content put forward lacked the context around why the violence re-occurred. This could lead to misunderstandings about what the data is showing.

128. ABS will continue to review. At this stage no new items have been included for pretesting in the Skirmish. ABS is considering asking respondents some open ended questions at the end of the Skirmish interviews to try and tease out what might be feasible/worthwhile collecting. If SAG members have any other feedback about content to query respondents about for this topic, please feel free to raise with the ABS.

Frequency of Partner Violence

129. In the 2005 PSS, data regarding the frequency of partner violence was collected by determining:

- a) Firstly whether [REDACTED]
- b) [REDACTED]

130. It is proposed to change the item to a single question and determine frequency based on a 5 point rating scale as follows:

[REDACTED]

**Discussion point 13. Do SAG members have any comments on the proposed change of concept for measuring frequency of partner violence?**

131. This was not raised as a matter of priority during the SAG meeting.

132. Following the meeting, correspondence has been received asking the ABS to reconsider this proposal, as the proposed measure is perception-based.

**Post SAG meeting actions:**

133. ABS has further reviewed the frequency concepts collected in the survey.

134. In assessing data collected in the 2005 PSS there were marked discrepancies between what respondents reported between the 2 items eg respondents may have reported that they experience violence by a partner "often" and that it happened "monthly": whereas other respondents reported that they experience violence by a partner "sometimes" and that it happened "weekly". This could be because of changes in violence patterns over time (what used to happen "daily" now only happens "weekly" so the respondent's perception is that now it only happens "sometimes").

135. Partner violence can be a combination of multiple behaviours including: sexual assault; sexual threat; physical assault; and/or physical threat. For a respondent to be thinking about a single frequency for all these behaviours combined as one concept is considered quite complex and difficult. While the new proposal is a somewhat objective measure, it is felt that this will be easier for respondents to answer and is likely to yield more consistent responses.

136. It is worth noting that the items regarding frequency of fear/anxiety are collected differently. This is because we are measuring a single concept – the frequency of fear/anxiety: not the actions themselves. The PSS collects information regarding frequency of fear/anxiety in the following manner:

[REDACTED]

137. At this stage, the frequency of partner violence is to be tested as outlined in paragraph 130 above.

#### Current Partner

138. In the 2005 PSS, respondents were asked whether their current partner had ever threatened or physically assaulted anyone outside the household. The usefulness of this question, in relation to other proposed new content, is now being queried. This concept does not provide a true picture of the violent behaviours of the respondent's current partner, as apart from violence towards the respondent, the PSS does not ask about the current partner's violence towards any other people inside the household. It also does not try to ascertain the circumstances of any violence directed towards people outside the household. It is acknowledged that this is a very sensitive area for data collection, so rather than trying to expand the concept of violence towards others, it is proposed that the stand-alone question be dropped from the survey.

#### **Discussion point 14: Do SAG members agree to deletion of the item 'Whether current partner violent towards others outside the household'?**

139. This was not raised as a matter of priority during the SAG meeting.

140. This question will be removed from the survey.

#### **Agenda item 7. Review of morning sessions/queries arising post lunch**

141. No new issues raised.

#### **Agenda item 8. Overview of Survey Procedures and Methodology**

##### **8.1 Testing Strategy**

##### **Pretesting/Skirmish including Cognitive testing:**

142. The Skirmish will consist of a number of purposive interviews, with known victims of violence. This form of testing was used very successfully in the last PSS. Interviews were set up with assistance by a key SAG member first contacting the support centres to see if they would be able to assist the ABS, with the ABS then directly liaising with the support centre. The support centre identified clients who they thought would be suitable candidates.

143. The Pretesting Skirmish is currently proposed to take place in [REDACTED]. The ABS is hoping to have an estimated 20 interviews conducted across approximately 4 different centres, over a period of two weeks. The interview will be conducted by trained ABS interviewers, within the support centres, so that, if needed, immediate support is available to the respondent following the interview.

144. The broad aims of the Pretesting Skirmish, that will include cognitive testing, are to:

- test respondent understanding of modified and new questions
- assess length and wording of questions
- check suitability of response categories
- assess sensitivity of subjects/issues to be covered
- assess ability of respondents to recall past events
- assess overall length of interviews

**Dress Rehearsal:**

145. The ABS is planning that the Dress Rehearsal will be conducted in approximately 4 states.

146. The broad aims of the Dress Rehearsal are to:

- test any changes to content from Skirmish (limited)
- assess survey operational and procedural aspects such as:
  - check Interview length [REDACTED]
  - workload management
  - interviewer training
  - office procedures
  - last chance to check revised survey content

**Action Items Arising**

147. Due to the expanded discussion surrounding agenda item 6 at the meeting, this topic was not discussed at great length. Any SAG members with comments or questions regarding the testing strategy proposed by the ABS are encouraged to make contact with the ABS.

148. ABS would also appreciate assistance from SAG members in organising appropriate support centres to assist in the Skirmish testing process. If you are able to help out, please let us know.

**8.2 Survey Procedures**

149. While there was not detailed discussion for this agenda item, during the discussions ABS outlined various procedures that would be implemented for the survey.

150. Survey procedures are aimed at:

- ensuring the safety of respondents and interviewers
- gaining willing cooperation of respondents (voluntary survey)
- providing a safe environment that provides opportunity to speak openly, honestly and freely
- obtaining accurate responses to sensitive questions
- obtaining data that is consistent across the survey

**Household approach:**

151. [REDACTED]

**Interviewers:**

152. [REDACTED] The ABS will use experienced interviewers, and conduct specialised training sessions, designed to deal with the PSS subject matter directly. [REDACTED]

**Respondent Safety:**

153. Due to the sensitive content of the survey, respondent participation is not compulsory. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] All ABS surveys are carried out under the Census and Statistics Act, and the confidentiality of respondent information is guaranteed.

154. In addition to participation being voluntary, there is also an opt-out point [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Measures taken to encourage cooperation:

155. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Communication limitations:

156. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

157. [REDACTED] It must be kept in mind that these interviews are limited by the availability of [REDACTED] and the languages that these interviewers speak. Cultural barriers also pose limitations to the survey, as many people will not be comfortable discussing the content. Some interviews will not be able to be conducted, and it is likely that the sample will under-represent those who don't speak English.

158. Similar limitations will be experienced for those with communication difficulties, such as those with profound/severe core activity limitations. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] It is likely that those with profound/severe core activity limitations will be under-represented in the sample of the survey.

#### Action Items Arising

159. This agenda item was discussed intermittently throughout the meeting, however due to extensive discussions surrounding agenda item 6, this topic was not addressed specifically. Any SAG members with comments, concerns or questions regarding the survey procedures proposed by the ABS are encouraged to make contact with the ABS.

#### Agenda item 9. Overview of possible Survey output plans

160. Expected survey outputs include:

- Summary publication
  - State level data expected to be included
  - Gendered approach (Women's experience & Men's experience)
- Confidentialised Unit Record File (via RADL)
- Users' Guide (this will include the CURF Technical Manual)

161. Consultation regarding actual content will be undertaken with the SAG over the next year or so. ABS will also consider what 'snapshot' or 'themed' type releases might be possible.

#### Agenda item 10. Summary

162. The next SAG meeting will be held after the Skirmish (likely to be November 2010).

163. ABS will keep SAG members informed of progress eg once funding has been confirmed.

164. Please feel free to direct any question or queries to Fiona Blackshaw or Penny Vandenbroek.

## Attachment 1

### ABS consideration: Feasibility of including an Indigenous marker in the proposed Personal Safety Survey

1. While a Personal Safety Survey (PSS) could include questions to determine whether a person is of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin, it is not considered beneficial, as the survey would not yield reliable estimates for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population due to the survey design. A number of areas for consideration are outlined below.

#### Sample design considerations:

2. Most ABS social surveys are designed to provide good statistics for the general population and as such are usually unsuitable for producing estimates of characteristics of small population groups. Representation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia's total population is small: around 2.5% of the total population, with almost half of the Indigenous population aged under 20 years. For a PSS, which only includes persons aged 18 years and over, Indigenous people aged 18 years and over: this would only be around 1.3% of the total population.

3. Apart from issues in producing estimates for small population groups, to produce reliable estimates for the Indigenous population requires a specifically designed sample, in both urban and rural areas that include the remote and very remote areas of Australia. ABS social surveys (that are not specifically designed to produce Indigenous estimates) generally do not include the very remote areas of Australia: the exclusion of very remote areas does not significantly impact an estimates produced for these surveys. Whereas the inclusion of very remote areas in the survey sample dramatically increases the overall cost of the survey due to the very high costs of travelling to and collecting data in these very remote areas.

#### Screening requirement to identify Indigenous population:

4. Part of the complexity in designing and conducting Indigenous surveys, is also actually identifying the Indigenous population living in urban and rural areas, where around 75% of the Indigenous population reside. To do this requires an extensive screening process to determine if there are any Indigenous persons in the dwelling from which an appropriately sized and representative Indigenous survey sample could be constructed. So produce estimates for Indigenous persons a survey would require a much larger sample and the survey would need to include an associated additional screening process in order to identify a representative sample of Indigenous persons from which valid conclusions could be drawn.

#### Cultural sensitivities:

5. However, apart from this, it is considered that different, and more culturally sensitive methodologies would need to be developed and tested in order to determine if it possible to collect good quality data about violence in Indigenous families/communities. Issues that would need to be explored include: is it culturally acceptable to divulge experience of violence particularly in a remote community setting? Once one person in a community has completed the interview, will others 'hear' about what is being asked and decide not to participate or not allow others to participate? Such aspects would need to be assessed and any issues overcome to help ensure the validity & reliability of such sensitive survey data.

6. Securing the privacy and safety of the respondents who would be interviewed would also be vital to its success. ABS experience with Indigenous surveys has highlighted that interviews in an Indigenous setting tend to be conducted where other people are present during the interview.

This is not just a survey procedural issue but highlights cultural differences that would need to be taken into account in the development and conduct of an Indigenous PSS type survey.

7. In summary, the ABS considers that a separate survey would need to be developed in order to meet the requirements for this data. The extra development time and cost would be significant. It would also require allowances to undertake special research and extensive consultation with Indigenous communities and organisations. Given the above design issues, a 2012 PSS sample design would not include any discrete Indigenous communities.

8. It had also been suggested to the ABS that the Indigenous indicator be included in the survey to provide 'some indication' for the Indigenous population. Where the ABS collects information specifically for Indigenous persons, such as the Indigenous Identifier, the ABS has a commitment to provide information back to the Indigenous community. Given the design aspects and issues outlined above, any PSS estimates produced from the survey under current design plans would certainly not be representative of the Indigenous population and any estimates would be misleading. Therefore an Indigenous identifier will not be collected in a PSS.

Alternative sources:

9. It is worth noting that some information is collected in the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS). This survey was last conducted in 2008 (and in 2002 prior to that) and collected some broad data about experiences of violence. While it does not contain the level of detail collected in PSS, outputs are available for whether a person was a victim of physical or threatened assault in last 12 months; and perceived neighbourhood/community problems (eg 'family violence', 'assault', 'sexual assault', level of personal safety day or night; and family stressors such 'abuse or violent crime').

- Attachment 2.1 Questions used to collect the language data items**
- Attachment 2.2 Questions used to collect the social connectedness data**
- Attachment 2.3 Questions used to collect the health data items**
- Attachment 2.4 Questions used to collect the disability data items**
- Attachment 2.5 Questions used to collect the general safety data items**
- Attachment 2.6 Questions used to collect the sexual harassment data items**
- Attachment 2.7 Questions used to collect the emotional abuse data**

Please refer to PDF for the above attachments

## Agenda Item 6.1 - Handout 1

### Sample design: State/Territory key estimate & Relative Standard Error (RSE) assumptions

For each key estimate, the following tables outline the possible State/Territory sample design for women and the National sample design for men. The figures are based on population estimates and prevalence rates from the 2005 Personal Safety Survey (PSS05), as well as some calculated assumptions for a PSS12. Each table contains:

- the actual population estimates and prevalence rates from PSS05;
- the approximate prevalence rate and population estimates for a PSS12 for sample design purposes;
- approximate fully responding sample required by State/Territory; and
- approximate Relative Standard Errors (RSEs) that would be achieved using this design by State/Territory.

Note: where the assumptions for the different prevalence rates and fully responding sample sizes by State/Territory are not met (eg actual prevalence rates are higher or lower; or the fully responding sample is smaller or greater) then this would impact the RSEs actually achieved (ie RSEs may be higher or lower than predicted).

Of the four key estimates, the estimate for 'Women who experienced sexual assault in last 12 months' is expected to have the lowest prevalence, based on PSS05. Therefore, the sample sizes required to produce good quality data for this key estimate have been used to demonstrate expected RSEs for each of the other key estimates.

Relative Standard Errors (RSEs) for PSS05 estimates (and associated prevalence rates) are noted throughout the tables as follows:

\* RSE of 25% to 50%

\*\* RSE greater than 50%

#### Key Estimate 1 – Sexual Assault

Women who experienced Sexual Assault in last 12 months – PSS12 Assumed prevalence<sup>(1)</sup> of 1.3%

State/Territory	PSS05 Population estimates and prevalence	PSS12 Approximate population estimates <sup>(1)</sup>	PSS12 Approximate Fully Responding Sample required	PSS12 Approximate RSE%
NSW	18,200* (0.7%)	33,600	2,480	25%
Vic	34,100 (1.8%)	25,300	2,180	24%
Qld	24,000 (1.6%)	19,100	2,180	24%
SA	7,200* (1.2%)	7,700	2,180	25%
WA	10,400* (1.4%)	9,700	2,180	23%
Tas	4,300* (2.2%)	2,600	1,980	23%
NT	2,700** (5.3%)	700	1,950	23%
ACT	800** (0.7%)	1,400	1,980	23%
Australia	101,600 (1.3%)	100,000	17,110	8%

Men who experienced Sexual Assault in last 12 months – PSS12 Assumed prevalence<sup>(1)</sup> of 0.6%

State/Territory	PSS05 Population estimates and prevalence	PSS12 Approximate population estimates <sup>(1)</sup>	PSS12 Approximate Fully Responding Sample required	PSS12 Approximate RSE%
Australia	42,300* (0.6%)	44,900	5,300	25%

(1) Based on PSS05 population estimates and prevalence



## Key Estimate 2 – Physical Violence

Women who experienced Physical Violence in last 12 months - PSS12 Assumed prevalence<sup>(1)</sup> of 4.7%

State/Territory	PSS05 Population estimates and prevalence	PSS12 Approximate population estimates <sup>(1)</sup>	PSS12 Approximate Fully Responding Sample required	PSS12 Approximate RSE%
NSW	99,800 (3.9%)	121,400	2,480	10%
Vic	102,600 (5.3%)	91,500	2,180	11%
Qld	79,900 (5.4%)	70,000	2,180	11%
SA	30,500 (5.2%)	27,800	2,180	11%
WA	32,000 (4.3%)	34,900	2,180	11%
Tas	9,700 (4.9%)	9,400	1,980	11%
NT	3,800* (7.6%)	2,400	1,950	11%
ACT	4,500* (4.1%)	5,200	1,980	12%
Australia	363,000 (4.7%)	361,600	17,110	4%

Men who experienced Physical Violence in last 12 months - PSS12 Assumed prevalence<sup>(1)</sup> of 10.4%

State/Territory	PSS05 Actual population estimates and prevalence	PSS12 Approximate population estimates <sup>(1)</sup>	PSS12 Approximate Fully Responding Sample required	PSS12 Approximate RSE%
Australia	779,800 (10.4%)	777,700	5,300	6%

(1) Based on PSS05 population estimates and prevalence.

## Key Estimate 3 – Emotional Abuse

Women who experienced Emotional Abuse<sup>(1)</sup> in last 12 months - PSS12 Assumed prevalence<sup>(2)</sup> of 1.9%

State/Territory	PSS05 Actual population estimates and prevalence <sup>(1)</sup>	PSS12 Approximate population estimates <sup>(1)(2)</sup>	PSS12 Approximate Fully Responding Sample required	PSS12 Approximate RSE%
NSW	41,700 (1.6%)	49,100	2,480	16%
Vic	41,100 (2.1%)	37,000	2,180	15%
Qld	33,400 (2.3%)	27,900	2,180	16%
SA	11,200 (1.9%)	11,200	2,180	15%
WA	11,400 (1.5%)	14,100	2,180	16%
Tas	4,100 (2.1%)	3,800	1,980	14%
NT	1,100* (2.1%)	1,000	1,950	13%
ACT	3,300 (3.0%)	2,100	1,980	13%
Australia	147,200 (1.9%)	146,200	17,110	6%

Men who experienced Emotional Abuse<sup>(1)</sup> in last 12 months - PSS12 Assumed prevalence<sup>(2)</sup> of 1.3%

State/Territory	PSS05 Actual population estimates and prevalence <sup>(1)</sup>	PSS12 Approximate population estimates <sup>(1)(2)</sup>	PSS12 Approximate Fully Responding Sample required	PSS12 Approximate RSE%
Australia	98,100 (1.3%)	97,200	5,300	19%

(1) This estimate excludes Emotional Abuse by a previous partner; it is assumed actual estimates from PSS12 would be higher.

(2) Based on PSS05 population estimates and prevalence.

**Key Estimate 4 – Intimate Partner Violence (Current and/or Previous Partner)**

Women who experienced Intimate Partner Violence<sup>(1)</sup> in last 12 months - PSS12 Assumed prevalence<sup>(2)</sup> of 3.0%

State/Territory	PSS05 Actual population estimates and prevalence <sup>(1)</sup>	PSS12 Approximate population estimates <sup>(1)(2)</sup>	PSS12 Approximate Fully Responding Sample required	PSS12 Approximate RSE%
NSW	65,800 (2.5%)	77,500	2,480	15%
Vic	61,400 (3.2%)	58,400	2,180	14%
Qld	56,200 (3.8%)	44,100	2,180	13%
SA	17,600 (3.0%)	17,800	2,180	13%
WA	17,800 (2.4%)	22,300	2,180	14%
Tas	6,900 (3.5%)	6,000	1,980	13%
NT	1,600* (3.2%)	1,500	1,950	13%
ACT	3,600 (3.3%)	3,300	1,980	13%
Australia	230,700 (3.0%)	230,800	17,110	6%

Men who experienced Intimate Partner Violence<sup>(1)</sup> in last 12 months - PSS12 Assumed prevalence<sup>(2)</sup> of 1.6%

State/Territory	PSS05 Actual population estimates and prevalence <sup>(1)</sup>	PSS12 Approximate population estimates <sup>(1)(2)</sup>	PSS12 Approximate Fully Responding Sample required	PSS12 Approximate RSE%
Australia	117,600 (1.6%)	119,700	5,300	16%

(1) This estimate excludes Emotional Abuse by a previous partner: it is assumed actual estimates from PSS12 would be higher.

(2) Based on PSS05 population estimates and prevalence.

## Agenda Item 6.1 - Handout 2

### Broad Age and Country of Birth Groups: key estimates and approximate RSEs

Using the State/Territory design parameters to predict the total female sample size for a 2012 Personal Safety Survey (PSS12), an assessment of estimates by Broad Age Group and Broad Country of Birth Group has been undertaken to determine the feasibility of producing reliable estimates for each of these groups.

#### 1. Broad Age groups

The following table shows the fully responding sample expected by the Broad Age groups based on the State/Territory sample design (see column 2) and the prevalence rates that would need to be observed in order to produce estimates with RSEs of 25% (see column 3). The last four columns show the assumed population prevalence rates for each of the four Key Estimates by Age groups, based on estimates from the 2005 Personal Safety Survey (PSS05).

The shaded cells indicate where expected prevalence rates, based on assumptions of prevalence rates from PSS05, are predicted to be lower than that required to produce estimates with an RSE of less than 25%.

#### Broad Age group assessment

Age	Column 2 Approximate Fully Responding Sample expected by Age <sup>(2)</sup>	Column 3 Population prevalence required to achieve a 25% RSE for expected sample size	Assumed population prevalence <sup>(1)</sup> for Key Estimates			
			Women who experienced Sexual Assault in last 12 months	Women who experienced Physical Violence in last 12 months	Women who experienced Emotional Abuse in last 12 months <sup>(3)</sup>	Women who experienced Intimate Partner Violence in last 12 months <sup>(3)</sup>
18-24 years	1,000	2.3%	3.0%	10.1%	1.5%	2.8%
25-34 years	2,160	1.0%	2.1%	7.1%	2.3%	4.6%
34-44 years	2,570	0.9%	1.7%	5.0%	2.7%	4.2%
45-54 years	2,360	1.0%	2.2%	4.0%	2.6%	3.3%
55 years and over	4,160	0.5%	1.5%	1.5%	1.0%	1.3%

(1) Based on PSS05 population estimates and prevalence.

(2) Based on the State/Territory sample design parameters.

(3) This estimate excludes Emotional Abuse by a previous partner; it is assumed actual estimates from PSS12 would be higher.

Note: where the assumptions for the different prevalence rates and fully responding sample sizes by Age Group are not met (eg actual prevalence rates are higher or lower; or the fully responding sample is smaller or greater) then this will impact the RSEs actually achieved (ie RSEs may be higher or lower than predicted).

Based on this assessment, it appears that most of the key estimates for women by Broad Age groups would have RSEs of less than 25%, except for the following estimates, which are likely to have RSEs of greater than 25%:

- Women aged 45-54 years who experienced Sexual Assault in last 12 months; and
- Women aged 55 years and over who experienced Sexual Assault in last 12 months.

## 2. Broad Country of Birth groups

The following table shows the fully responding sample expected by Broad Country of Birth groups based on the State/Territory sample design (see column 2) and the prevalence rates that would need to be observed in order to produce estimates with RSEs of 25% (see column 3). The last four columns show the assumed population prevalence rates for each of the four Key Estimates by Broad Country of Birth groups, based on estimates from 2005 Personal Safety Survey (PSS05).

The shaded cells indicate where expected prevalence rates, based on assumptions of prevalence rates from PSS05, are predicted to be lower than that required in order to produce estimates with an RSE of less than 25%.

### Broad Country of Birth group assessment

Country of Birth	Column 2	Column 3	Assumed population prevalence <sup>(1)</sup> for Key Estimates			
	Approximate Fully Responding Sample expected by Age <sup>(2)</sup>	Population prevalence required to achieve a 25% RSE for expected sample size	Women who experienced Sexual Assault in last 12 months	Women who experienced Physical Violence in last 12 months	Women who experienced Emotional Abuse in last 12 months <sup>(3)</sup>	Women who experienced Intimate Partner Violence in last 12 months <sup>(3)</sup>
Born in Australia	8,960	0.3%	1.5%	5.3%	1.8%	3.1%
Born in MESC <sup>(4)</sup>	1,550	1.5%	4.0%	4.0%	2.5%	3.1%
Born in other countries	1,740	1.3%	2.5%	2.5%	1.9%	2.6%

(1) Based on PSS05 population estimates and prevalence.

(2) Based on the State/Territory sample design parameters.

(3) This estimate excludes Emotional Abuse by a previous partner: it is assumed actual estimates from PSS12 would be higher.

(4) Main English Speaking Country (MESC) includes: Canada, Republic of Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa, United Kingdom and United States of America.

Note: where the assumptions for the different prevalence rates and fully responding sample sizes by Broad Country of Birth Groups are not met (eg actual prevalence rates are higher or lower; or the fully responding sample is smaller or greater) then this will impact the RSEs actually achieved (ie RSEs may be higher or lower than predicted).

Based on this assessment, it appears that most of the key estimates for women by Broad Country of Birth groups would have RSEs of less than 25%, except for the following key estimates, which are likely to have RSEs of greater than 25%:

- Women born in MESC who experienced Sexual Assault in last 12 months; and
- Women born in Other countries who experienced Sexual Assault in last 12 months.

**Agenda Item 6.1 - Handout 3**

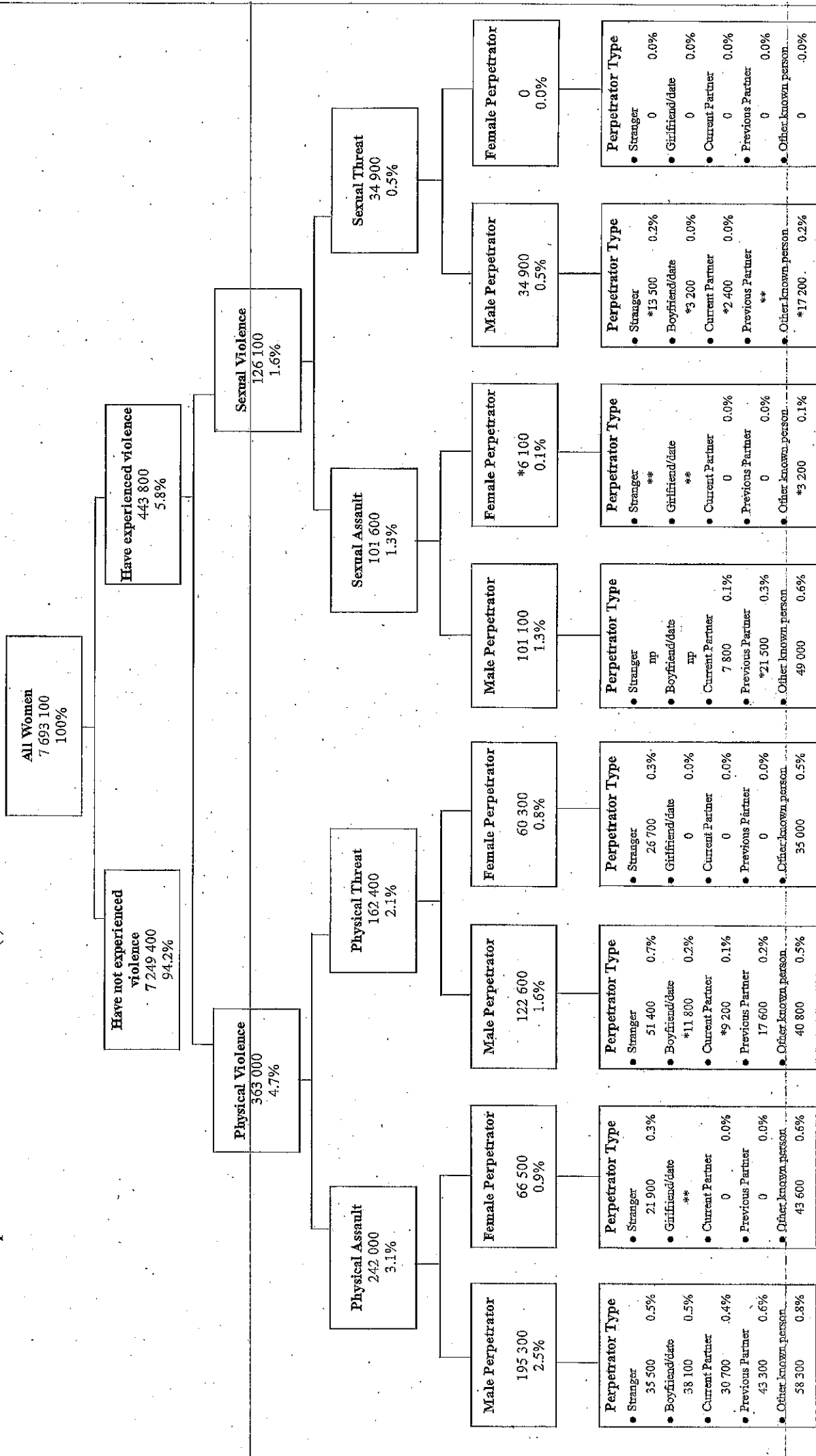
**State/Territory Fully Responding Sample Size Comparisons (2005 to 2012)**

State/Territory	Men		Women	
	PSS 2005 Fully responding sample	Potential PSS 2012 Fully responding sample design	PSS 2005 Fully responding sample	Potential PSS 2012 Fully responding sample design
NSW	1,461	1,778	2,611	2,480
Vic	1,058	1,280	2,248	2,180
Qld	888	1,070	2,220	2,180
SA	321	363	1,575	2,180
WA	463	546	1,680	2,180
Tas	186	145	837	1,980
NT	52	26	195	1,950
ACT	123	95	495	1,980
<b>Australia</b>	<b>4,552</b>	<b>5,303</b>	<b>11,861</b>	<b>17,110</b>

PERSONAL SAFETY SURVEY ADVISORY GROUP MEETING 16 JULY 2010

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HANDOUT 4. Women's experience of violence in the last 12 months(a)

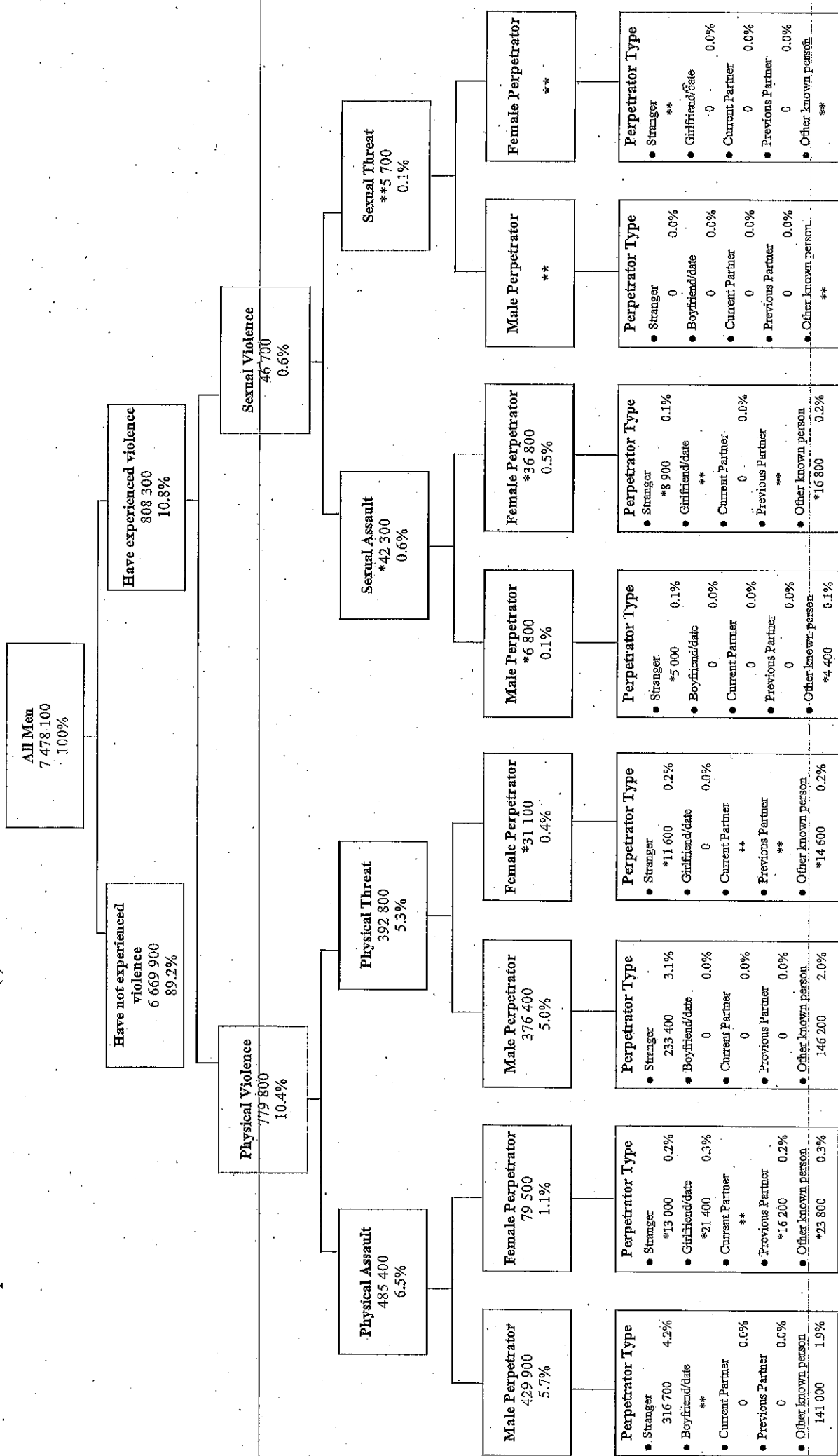


a) components may not add to the total, as individuals may have experienced more than one incident.  
 \* estimate has a relative standard error of 2.5% to 5.0% and should be used with caution  
 \*\* estimate has a relative standard error greater than 50% and is considered too unreliable for general use  
 np: not available for publication but included in totals where applicable, unless otherwise indicated

PERSONAL SAFETY SURVEY ADVISORY GROUP MEETING 16 JULY 2010

Agenda Item 6.2

HANDOUT 5. Men's experience of violence in the last 12 months(a)



a) components may not add to the total, as individuals may have experienced more than one incident.

\* estimate has a relative standard error of 2.5% to 50% and should be used with caution.

\*\* estimate has a relative standard error greater than 50% and is considered too unreliable for general use.

**Personal Safety Survey 2012**  
**Survey Advisory Group Meeting**

Date & Time	7 December 2010, 10am – 3.30pm
Location	Archer Boardroom, ABS House, Benjamin Way Belconnen
Chairperson	Bob McColl, Assistant Statistician Social Conditions Statistics Branch, Australian Bureau of Statistics

<b>Attendees</b>	
Australian Bureau of Statistics	Children and Families Surveys Section: Kathryn McGrouther, Fiona Blackshaw, Penny Vandenbroek, Jack Dearden, Jessica Gourlay, Fiona Johnson National Centre for Crime and Justice Statistics: Kate Hahn (for Soula Macfarlane and Sam McNally) Living Conditions: Carolyn Ashley
ACT Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services	Anna Fieldhouse
Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault	Antonia Quadara
Australian Domestic & Family Violence Clearinghouse	Gaby Marcus
Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department	Dianne Heriot
Commonwealth Department of Families, Housing, Community Services & Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA)	Karen Gauntlett, Bree Willmore
NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet	Tanya Bosch
Vic Department of Planning and Community Development	Rachael Green
VicHealth	Melanie Heenan
WESNET	Julie Oberin
<b>Telephone Attendee</b>	
SA Attorney-General's Department	Fiona Mort
<b>Apologies</b>	
Australian Institute of Criminology	Jacqui Jourdo Larsen
Australian Institute of Family Studies	Rae Kaspiew
Commonwealth Department of Families, Housing, Community Services & Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA)	Fiona Smart
National Association of Services Against Sexual Violence (NASASV)	Veronica Wensing
NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research	Don Weatherburn
NT Department of Health and Families	Fran O'Toole
Qld Department Families, Youth and Community Care	Helen Warneke
SA Attorney-General's Department	Vanessa Swan
Tas Department of Justice	Robyn Yaxley
University of Wollongong	Michael Flood
Vic Department of Premier and Cabinet	Cameron Bray
WA Department for Child Protection	Sherrilee Mitchell
Women With Disabilities Australia	Sue Salthouse
<b>Other Invitees</b>	
Vic Department of Justice	Kristen Diemer



## Discussion notes and further developments

### **Agenda Items 1 & 2. Arrival and Morning Tea/ Welcome and Introduction**

#### **Introduction: Bob McColl**

1. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) is progressing work for a Personal Safety Survey (PSS) to be conducted in 2012. While a 2012 PSS would largely build on the 2005 PSS and deliver time series comparisons, there are new and emerging information requirements that the ABS would seek to address in a 2012 PSS.
2. Since the previous Survey Advisory Group (SAG) meeting in July 2010, targeted field testing (a 'Skirmish') has been undertaken. This meeting largely focussed on the outcomes of the testing and subsequent work that has been done in order to finalise the survey content for a larger field test (a 'Dress Rehearsal') in 2011.

### **Agenda Item 3. Minutes and Action Items from the Previous SAG meeting**

3. There were no comments on the Minutes from the July 2010 SAG meeting. There was a brief discussion of Action Items from the previous SAG meeting, including:

#### Overview of Survey Content (Agenda Item 6.2)

4. Handouts 4 and 5 provided estimates for women's and men's experience of 'Violence in the last 12 months' (relates to the period prior to the 2005 PSS). SAG members requested the same detailed information for 'Violence since the age of 15' be circulated. This would also include Relative Standard Errors (RSEs) and if possible, confidence intervals.
  - This work will be completed in the next few months.
5. ABS to develop some 'snapshots' from the 2005 PSS, to give a broader perspective of the data that can be found within PSS, as well as to help explain what cannot be extracted from PSS.
  - This work will be completed over the next 12 months.

#### Testing Strategy - Dress Rehearsal (Agenda Item 8.1)

6. Due to the expanded discussion about Agenda Item 6, this topic was not discussed at length. SAG members who had any comments or questions regarding the testing strategy were encouraged to contact the ABS.
  - Some feedback was received and was taken into consideration during Skirmish testing.
7. The ABS asked for assistance from SAG members in contacting appropriate support centres to assist with the Skirmish testing.
  - Veronica Wensing (NASASV) and Julie Oberin (WESNET) provided assistance in contacting potential support centres. [REDACTED] interviews with known victim/survivors through their extensive networks.
  - All support centres involved in the Skirmish have been formally acknowledged by the ABS for providing their assistance. Certificates of Appreciation and letters of thanks signed by the Australian Statistician, Brian Pink, have been distributed.

#### Survey procedures (Agenda Item 8.2)

8. This Agenda Item was discussed intermittently throughout the meeting, but due to extensive discussion of Agenda Item 6, this topic was not specifically addressed. SAG members who had any comments or questions regarding the proposed procedures were encouraged to contact the ABS.
  - No feedback was received.

## Agenda Item 4, PSS Skirmish outcomes

### 4.1 Background and objectives

9. In preparation for conducting a 2012 PSS, the ABS has reviewed the outputs from the 2005 PSS. Through this process some areas for improvement in the survey questionnaire were identified. A lengthy discussion on the items for review and testing was held at the July 2010 Survey Advisory Group (SAG) meeting.
10. As part of the redevelopment of the PSS, targeted field testing (a 'Skirmish') was undertaken from 25 October to 4 November 2010. The Skirmish comprised a series of interviews with known victim/survivors of violence conducted in support centres [REDACTED]. The broad aims of the Skirmish were to test new and modified survey content for comprehension, reliability and usability.
11. Key elements of the Skirmish were:
  - 5 ABS Interviewers;
  - 39 participants ('respondents');
  - 9 support centres; and
  - 5 geographic locations.
12. The ABS would like to acknowledge the support provided by [REDACTED] in arranging interviews with their clients, and for providing their time and resources to this process. The ABS would also like to thank Melanie Heenan for her time and support during the Interviewer training.

### 4.2 Procedures

13. The ABS visited support centres [REDACTED] to discuss the Skirmish and the interviewing process to be conducted. Demonstrations of the survey instrument were provided and potential questions were outlined. Due to time constraints, arrangements with support centres [REDACTED] were undertaken by phone/email.
14. A range of respondents were sought by the ABS, with an emphasis on people who had experienced partner violence to test new and modified survey content. Following a Training Day, experienced ABS Interviewers went to the support centres to conduct interviews with willing participants ('respondents'). Undertaking interviews in support centres enabled respondents to have immediate support, if required.
15. Respondents were asked the PSS questions along with a series of cognitive probes. The probes were designed to test for comprehension and to seek feedback on concepts and content. Respondents were also asked some general questions on their overall feelings about the survey and their reactions to the content. The responses to the cognitive probes have been used to gauge the effectiveness of existing content and to further develop new survey content. Interviewer feedback was also sought and has assisted in updates.

### 4.3 Findings

16. Information on the outcomes of Skirmish testing was presented to SAG members in a paper at the December 2010 meeting. For reference, the PSS consists of the following survey modules:

Language  
Education  
Labour Force  
Income  
Financial Stress  
Social Connectedness  
Health  
Disability  
General Safety  
Sexual Harassment

... list of survey modules continued on the next page

[REDACTED]  
Emotional Abuse  
Violence since the age of 15  
Abuse before the age of 15  
Current Partner Violence  
Previous Partner Violence  
Stalking

17. Summaries of discussions undertaken at the December 2010 SAG meeting that have informed changes, as well as development work undertaken since the meeting, are provided for the following survey modules:

4.3.1 Emotional Abuse  
4.3.2 Violence since the age of 15  
4.3.3 Partner Violence - Current and/or Previous Partner  
4.3.4 Abuse before the age of 15  
4.3.5 Stalking  
4.3.6 Sexual Harassment  
4.3.7 Language  
4.3.8 Disability

18. No issues were raised, or only limited discussion occurred, in relation to the other survey modules therefore no further information will be included here.

#### 4.3.1 Emotional Abuse

19. One of the main purposes of the Skirmish was to test new content relating to experiences of Emotional Abuse by a Current and/or Previous Partner (male and/or female). This survey module is an important addition to the PSS and will assist in gaining a clearer picture of Intimate Partner Violence. The concept of emotional abuse in the PSS includes the following elements:

- Repeated in nature;
- Preventing or controlling behaviour/s; and
- Intended to cause emotional harm or fear.

20. Discussion with SAG members has led to the inclusion of an additional descriptor that is implied through the survey content, but was not listed in the paper distributed at the December meeting:

- Results in feelings of anxiety and/or fear.

21. The questions in this module ask about experience of behaviours relating to aspects of emotional, financial, social, religious and pet abuse. They cover the frequency and timeframe of the abuse, as well as the occurrence of anxiety or fear.

22. The questions on emotional abuse were well understood by participants, as evidenced in feedback from the cognitive probes.

23. An outcome of the Skirmish was that questions on emotional abuse will be asked [REDACTED] in the survey questionnaire, [REDACTED]. This change was brought about through feedback from both respondents and ABS Interviewers. There was general agreement from SAG members to make this change.

#### 4.3.2 Violence since the age of 15

24. Several questions were tested for comprehension and some cognitive probes were asked to try and gauge potential new survey content on perceptions of the incident, help-seeking behaviours and service interventions. Many of the questions in this module are repeated in other survey modules, or are the basis for further questioning (eg Partner Violence).

Introduction to the Violence module

25. The sensitive topics in the Violence module are preceded by an introductory statement, which explains the importance of the information to be collected

Types of violence

26. Questions on four main types of violence are asked in the Violence module:

- Sexual Assault (includes attempted assault);
- Threatened Sexual Assault;
- Physical Assault; and
- Threatened Physical Assault (includes attempted assault).

27. For each type of violence respondents are asked whether:

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

28. Where more than one incident of a type of violence by a man/woman has occurred, respondents are asked to focus on their Most Recent Incident.

29. For each Most Recent Incident, the PSS determines the person (mainly) responsible and attributes one of five main perpetrator types:

[REDACTED]

30. Any other known person includes people such as father/mother, son/daughter, friend, employer/boss/supervisor, teacher, doctor, etc

Location of the Most Recent Incident

31. Following feedback from Skirmish testing, and overall revisions to wording throughout the Violence module, the response options for this question have been updated:

[REDACTED]

Perception of the incident being a crime or not

32. Skirmish testing indicated that a respondent's perception of an incident may vary over time, depending on the type of incident and their initial reaction to it. Information on the concepts and questions tested was presented to SAG members and since the meeting some adjustments have been made:

[REDACTED]

Police involvement

33. Skirmish testing indicated that the reasons for not contacting the police in relation to an incident may need some revision. It was thought useful to first collect all reasons, then the main reason. Information on these revisions was presented to SAG members. From these discussions an updated series of questions and response categories were developed. Respondents who experienced sexual and/or physical assault which was not reported to the police (by themselves or anyone else) will be asked:

[REDACTED]

Injuries received

34. There was interest by some SAG members in the types of injuries that a respondent may have incurred as a result of partner violence, with particular interest in dental problems. The following questions are asked in relation to a person's Most Recent Incident:

[REDACTED]

35. Respondents are also asked whether they saw a doctor about their injuries and whether the injuries had an impact on their usual way of doing things such as working, studying or socialising.

Sources of support

36. Questions on the use of formal and informal sources of support were tested during the Skirmish to gain better understanding of respondent interpretations and reasons for selecting possible response categories. The testing showed overlaps in the responses given to multiple questions. This information was presented to SAG members and since the meeting further development work has been undertaken.

37. To gain more meaningful information on the types of support used, several possible scenarios have been explored. The options have focussed on trying to make the intended questions clear to respondents and the resulting data items useful to stakeholders. This process has led to a more comprehensive question on help-seeking behaviour, as well as a new question on the point of first disclosure. This information will be collected for the Most Recent Incident and for partner violence.

[REDACTED]

Enablers & Barriers

38. Aside from the new questions outlined in Sources of support (see page 7), Skirmish testing provided some further direction in this area of development, particularly around disclosure of an incident.

39. There was some discussion with SAG members about the possibility of collecting further information on:

- things that helped to stop or reduce the violence,
- whether anything made the situation better or worse, and
- ways the respondent found to cope with their situation.

40. Most of the feedback on stopping/reducing violence related to known sources of tension or aggravation (eg alcohol, financial stress, pregnancy). Some further exploration of questions/responses on how the situation was made worse (mostly in relation to partner violence) has been undertaken since the SAG meeting, but given the development timeframes it is suggested that this idea be revisited for a PSS subsequent to 2012.

41. If any SAG members are interested in receiving more information from the Skirmish testing, please contact the ABS.

Measuring anxiety or fear

42. A number of questions refer to feelings of anxiety or fear experienced as a result of the Most Recent Incident. These or similar questions also appear in the Emotional Abuse, Partner Violence and Stalking modules.

43. Skirmish respondents were asked to provide examples of their feelings to demonstrate that concepts were understood. This information has been used to provide additional help to Interviewers (and future respondents) by way of a help prompt.

[REDACTED]

44. Respondents were also asked to give timeframes for the frequency of their feelings of anxiety or fear. Where feelings related to an ongoing situation such as partner violence, it was difficult for respondents to provide an answer as their feelings often varied. Skirmish testing suggested that using a broader concept of measurement, similar to that used for experiences of emotional abuse, would work better. Therefore, the response options have been updated:

[REDACTED]





51. To try and gauge whether the respondent received a positive reaction (or not) from the first person or service told the following question will be tested in the Dress Rehearsal:

[REDACTED]

52. Respondents who selected any of the following options [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

53 Respondents who selected any of the following options at [REDACTED] will not be asked [REDACTED] as it is expected their needs will be addressed as required:

[REDACTED]

54. Equivalent questions will be asked in the Current Partner module.

Police involvement

55. Respondents will be asked a series of questions about police involvement in their violent partner relationship if they selected 'Police' as a person/service they had:

- ever sought advice or support from, or
- first told.

56. These questions are based on [REDACTED] in the Violence module, except for slight wording changes to account for any violence experienced during the relationship. The following examples are from the Previous Partner module:

[REDACTED]

57. Existing questions relating to violence or restraining orders have been repositioned to accompany the above questions:

[REDACTED]

58. Equivalent questions will be asked in the Current Partner module.

Housing arrangements on separation

59. From discussions with stakeholders, there appears to be an emerging need for data on housing arrangements during separation or at the end of a violent partner relationship. Some initial ideas were presented to SAG members and since the meeting further development work has been undertaken.
60. Respondents with a violent current and/or previous partner are asked questions to establish whether there have been any separations during the relationship. An existing question on relocating house has been reworded and a question on leaving possessions behind has been repositioned. An additional question on the type of housing arrangements used will be tested in the Dress Rehearsal. The following questions are asked in the Current Partner module of anyone who had experienced at least one separation:

[REDACTED]

61. In the Previous Partner module, the first question on housing is:

[REDACTED]

62. Additional questions focus on what happened when the relationship finally ended:

[REDACTED]

Reasons for separation and intentions to leave

63. A number of questions look at scenarios of separation and the reasons why a respondent left/returned to their partner, or wanted to leave, but felt unable to do so. There are common themes across these questions, therefore response categories are similar. Skirmish testing indicated scope for some additional reasons to be collected and discussions with SAG members confirmed some potential options. The following examples are from the Current Partner module:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

64. There are no equivalent questions in the Previous Partner module for [REDACTED]. However, respondents are asked reasons for returning to their Previous Partner following separation [REDACTED] as well as the main reason for their final separation:

[REDACTED]

65. SAG members expressed an interest in knowing if the violence continued after the relationship ended. Therefore, respondents who had a violent previous partner will be asked about behaviour/s during any separations, as well as after the relationship ended. The wording for [REDACTED] has been updated to allow for this slightly different concept and a new question has been added:

[REDACTED]

Violence during pregnancy

66. All female respondents who were pregnant at some point during a violent partner relationship will be asked the series of questions about their experiences. This includes respondents who were living with or no longer living with their partner. The following examples are from the Previous Partner module:

[REDACTED]

67. Equivalent questions will be asked in the Current Partner module.

Whether violence was seen or heard by children

68. From discussions at the SAG meeting, the wording of the question about children-witnessing any violence has been expanded to include 'abuse'. The following examples are from the Current Partner module:

[REDACTED]

69. Equivalent questions will be asked in the Previous Partner module.

Measuring anxiety or fear

70. Questions asked about feelings of anxiety or fear in the Partner modules build on [REDACTED] and reflect [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] in the Violence module. The following examples are from the Previous Partner module:

[REDACTED]

71. Respondents are asked to provide timeframes for the frequency of their feelings of anxiety or fear:

[REDACTED]

72. Unless the relationship finally ended because the respondent's previous partner died, they will be asked:

[REDACTED]

73. Equivalent questions will be asked in the Current Partner module.

#### 4.3.4 Abuse before the age of 15

74. Members discussed the potential for changes to the questions on Sexual/Physical Abuse before the age of 15, arising out of a query from the Children's Policy Branch of the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA).
75. The ABS were asked to consider the possible expansion of PSS to address data needs stemming from the 'Responding to Sexual Abuse' priority within the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020. This priority focuses on practices and services which provide specialised therapeutic treatment to young people with problematic and/or abusive sexual behaviours.
76. FaHCSIA are exploring ways to collect data on children aged under 15 years and experiences relating to sexual abuse. Specifically they are seeking:
- the rate of sexually transmitted diseases by 5-year age groups;
  - the number of people/organisations prosecuted for sexually exploiting children; and
  - the number/rate of children with substantiations related to sexual abuse.
77. There was general agreement by SAG members that the PSS was not the appropriate vehicle for such new content, due to the following concerns:
- the focus of the survey is women's and men's experience of violence - victim/survivor basis, not a perpetrator survey;
  - the scope of the survey is persons aged 18 years and over – therefore parental/guardian permission would be required for participation of younger people and this is not considered appropriate (particularly as a parent/guardian may be the perpetrator of abuse); and
  - the types of changes required to collect this information would affect time series comparability of existing survey content.
78. A reply has been sent to FaHCSIA outlining these issues and the difficulties in trying to adapt PSS to meet these very specific needs.

#### 4.3.5 Stalking

79. A number of updates have been made to this module based on changes to other parts of the survey. For example, the reasons for not contacting the police [REDACTED] and the frequency of anxiety or fear occurring [REDACTED].
80. SAG members expressed an interest in how various experiences are considered within the context of PSS. Respondents are asked a series of questions about behaviours by a man/woman for up to five potential stalkers. A series of experiences by one of these men/women has to be endorsed before the questions focus on that 'stalker'.
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

81. Additional information on these behaviours:

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

82. This initial question is followed-up by a more detailed question, asking the specifics of the encounter/s:

[REDACTED]

83. To be considered stalking:

- more than one behaviour must have occurred; or
- one of the behaviours must have occurred more than once; and
- the person responsible must have had the intent to harm or frighten the respondent.

84. These endorsements assist in the selection of a 'stalker', about which further information is collected, including:

[REDACTED]

#### 4.3.6 Sexual Harassment

85. Updated concepts and question wording for the introductory question [REDACTED] in this survey module were proposed at the July 2010 SAG meeting:

[REDACTED]

86. Skirmish testing found that too many concepts had been incorporated into the question and that overall it was too lengthy:

- causing confusion with many respondents, and
- requiring Interviewers to repeat the question multiple times to emphasise the intent.

87. There was some discussion with SAG members about the use of [REDACTED] rather than 'obscene' and whether there was potential for other types of behaviours to be included, such as 'racial slurs'. The change of wording came about from feedback on the 2005 PSS where the concept of 'obscene' had to be repeatedly explained, particularly to respondents from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) communities. There were also comments suggesting that people included racial vilification as a form of obscene phone call. Skirmish testing found that respondents understood the intent of [REDACTED] phone calls/messages by providing relevant examples [REDACTED]

88. Development work since the December 2010 SAG meeting has focussed on refining the concepts to be collected and the types of questions needed. The following questions will be tested in the Dress Rehearsal:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

89. The inclusion of a question on the method used to convey messages acknowledges stakeholder interest in the role of the Internet/modern technology in sexual harassment and goes some way to addressing a potential future data need.
90. There was also discussion with SAG members about the wording of a question on unwanted sexual touching, which referred to the respondent experiencing behaviour 'against their will'. This concept has been updated:

[REDACTED]

#### 4.3.7 Language

91. Some additional questions for this survey module were proposed at the July 2010 SAG meeting:

- Main language spoken at home (respondent)
- Whether has English language difficulties (respondent)
- Assistance used for English language difficulties (respondent)

92. Skirmish testing showed respondents had no difficulties understanding the question on main language spoken and it is proposed that this question also be asked in relation to the respondent's current partner.

93. A number of Skirmish respondents were from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) communities, with two respondents experiencing considerable difficulty with the survey questions due to language ability. One of these respondents was not asked the cognitive probes due to their lack of comprehension of the survey questions. They identified as having difficulties with understanding others and being understood:

[REDACTED]

94. Another respondent who experienced a similar level of difficulty with the survey questions identified as having no problems with English language proficiency in their day-to-day life.

95. As these Skirmish respondents both seemed likely to experience the same difficulties in trying to convey complex or detailed issues, their conflicting responses to these questions suggest they are unlikely to be a useful measure for language proficiency. Therefore, these two questions have been removed from the survey. Some potential other questions have

been reviewed, but due to the limitations of data collected from CaLD respondents, there are currently no plans to incorporate any new questions for the Dress Rehearsal.

96. Limitations on the collection of data from CaLD respondents were discussed at the July 2010 SAG meeting. As survey procedures are designed around respondent safety and confidentiality/privacy the number of interviews is likely to be impacted, due to the following constraints:

- While the ABS employs interviewers with foreign language skills, not all languages will be able to be catered for and some interviews won't be able to be conducted.
- Possible cultural differences may also limit participation by respondents.

#### 4.3.8 Disability

97. In response to demand for any information on Disabled communities and their experiences of violence, the Skirmish included testing of questions from the ABS short disability module. These questions will provide for the creation of a 'disability status' data item in the PSS.
98. The limitations for this data due to survey procedures were discussed at the July 2010 SAG meeting.
99. At the December 2010 SAG meeting, the ABS confirmed that based on expected prevalence rates the 2012 PSS is likely to produce a national level prevalence rate of violence against women with a disability. The ABS will continue to assess the expected reliability of these estimates, focussing on whether the sample design will be able to deliver reliable measures of the different types of violence.
100. Skirmish testing, while fairly limited found there were no issues in comprehension of the questions. To provide further information for analysis this module will be included in the Dress Rehearsal.
101. SAG members expressed an interest in the collection of details about limitations and/or long term health conditions within this module, particularly in relation to dental issues. The specifications for the Disability module were circulated with the July 2010 meeting minutes (refer to questions [redacted] and [redacted]). While it is possible that respondents may have dental issues related to their experience of violence, such detailed information is likely to be grouped under one or all of the following conditions:
- Chronic or recurring pain;
  - Any other long term condition that requires treatment or medication;
  - Any other long term condition such as arthritis, asthma, heart disease, Alzheimer's disease, dementia, etc;
  - Speech problems; or
  - Any disfigurement or deformity.

#### Agenda Item 5. Preparation for the Dress Rehearsal

102. The ABS is planning for a large Dress Rehearsal to be conducted in 3 to 4 states across Australia from [redacted]. The broad aims of the Dress Rehearsal are to:
- test any changes to the content post-Skirmish (limited); and
  - assess survey operational and procedural aspects such as:
    - interview length [redacted]
    - workload management
    - interviewer training
    - office procedures
    - revised survey content (last chance to check).



### 5.1 Interviewers

103. For the Dress Rehearsal, preference will be given to experienced ABS Interviewers. [REDACTED]

104. [REDACTED]

### 5.2 Training

105. Draft Interviewer training materials were created for the Skirmish and will be refined for the Dress Rehearsal. Further work includes the development of e-learning products which focus on key differences between the PSS and other ABS surveys, such as:

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

106. Work is also being undertaken to create an expanded [REDACTED] training package, which is provided along with survey-specific (ie content-based) training to Interviewers. [REDACTED]

### 5.3 Survey procedures

107. Further development of survey procedures is underway [REDACTED]

108. Respondent safety: Due to the sensitive content of the survey, respondent participation is voluntary. [REDACTED]

109. Confidentiality: All ABS surveys are carried out under the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*, and the confidentiality of respondent information is guaranteed.

110. Sensitivity: In addition to participation being voluntary, there is also an opt-out point. [REDACTED]

### 5.4 Key dates

111. For the Dress Rehearsal:

- Content finalised – December 2010/January 2011
- Interviewer training – [REDACTED]
- Enumeration – [REDACTED]

**Agenda Item 6. Where to from here...**

112. The next SAG meeting is scheduled for October 2011, at which the ABS intends to provide:

- feedback and findings from the Dress Rehearsal;
- impact of any timing issues; and
- detailed information on the dissemination plans.

113. Other key dates for the PSS:

- Final data content – November 2011
- Live enumeration – [REDACTED]
- Summary publication – April 2013
- Users' Guide & Confidentialised Unit Record File (CURF) – June 2013

114. These dates are indicative only as the ABS is still finalising the development timetable.

