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TRANSCRIPT OF PODCAST

Work with Purpose

EPISODE #55

REDUCING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Hosted by David Pembroke, Founder and Chief Executive Officer,
contentgroup

TRANSCRIPT

David Pembroke:

Hello everyone and welcome once again to Work with Purpose, a podcast about the Australian Public Service. My name's David Pembroke, thanks for joining me.

David Pembroke:

I begin today's podcast by acknowledging the traditional custodians of the land from which we broadcast today, the Ngunnawal people and pay my respects to their elders past, present and emerging and acknowledge the ongoing contribution they make to the life of our city and this region.

David Pembroke:

Today on Work with Purpose we discuss the national disgrace of violence against women and their children with the two Australian Public Service leaders with responsibility for combating this cowardly and ugly scourge. The numbers are appalling. One in three Australian women have experienced physical violence. One in four Australian women have experienced violence by an intimate partner. One in five Australian women have experienced sexual violence. Australian women are most likely to experience physical and sexual violence in their home at the hands of a male, current or ex-partner. Of women who had children in their care when they experienced violence from an ex-partner, 68% reported that children had seen or heard the violence.

David Pembroke:

So before we get in today's conversation about the National Action Plan, let's just sit with those numbers for a minute and think of those defenceless women and children just for a moment. Think of the trauma. Imagine the terror and the abuse. Feel the fear and the deep pain and the shame. Because those statistics are not numbers, they're people. They're your mother, your daughter, your sister, your cousin, your work colleague, or your friend. And it's appalling. And as an Australian male, I am deeply ashamed. We have to do better. There is no excuse, never, any excuse for violence against women and their children.

David Pembroke:

Liz Hefren-Webb is the Deputy Secretary of the Families and Communities Stream at the Department of Social Services and the co-chair of the National Plan Advisory Group. Liz also has responsibility for the National Redress Scheme, which was established in response to the Royal Commission into institutional responses to child sexual abuse. She also has responsibility for problem gambling policy, financial wellbeing policy and programs and the cashless welfare policy. Liz was previously a first assistant secretary in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet in the Indigenous Affairs division, where she was responsible for education, community safety, health and wellbeing programs and policy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Liz has an arts degree with honours in government from the University of Sydney. Liz, welcome to Work with Purpose.

Liz Hefren-Webb:

Thanks, David.

David Pembroke:

Alison Frame is the Deputy Secretary of Social Policy at the Department of Prime minister and Cabinet, and she was also a co-chair of the National Plan Advisory Group. Alison commenced as deputy secretary of social policy

in PM&C in August of 2020 and has led social policy initiatives and reform across both the Commonwealth and New South Wales governments. Most recently she worked in the New South Wales government as Group Deputy Secretary, Property and Housing, where she was responsible for nine housing and property agencies, including Crown lands, property New South Wales and the Land and Housing Corporation. During her time in other New South Wales government senior leadership roles, she was the deputy secretary in both the Department of Planning and Environment and the Department of Premier and Cabinet. Alison led reforms on child protection, domestic violence, indigenous policy, disability policy and governance.

David Pembroke:

Alison holds a bachelor of speech language pathology and a bachelor of political science from the University of Queensland and has a master's of public administration from the London School of Economics. Alison, thanks for joining us on Work with Purpose.

Alison Frame:

Thank you for having me.

David Pembroke:

Look, I'm not really sure where to start with this, particularly as an Australian male, because I just find these figures are just so unacceptable. They're so evil. They're humiliating. They're degrading, but Liz, if I might start with you, as a co-chair of the National Action Plan, just how big a problem are we talking about?

Liz Hefren-Webb:

Thanks, David. I mean, you ran through the statistics so I won't repeat the statistics, but it is a very significant and serious problem and I think many people are aware that it's the leading cause of preventable death for women aged between 25 and 45. It's something that, as a nation, warrants our deep and sustained attention and I put the emphasis on the word sustained because I think often with issues like this it can be easy to throw up your hands and think, it's so big and it's so prevalent, how are we ever going to make a difference and how are we ever going to reduce it, but there is evidence basis for us to draw on on what works, what can have an impact. That's how I kind of approach the topic thinking that... Not that we're going to bite off the whole elephant at once but we're just going to start with what we can start with, what we know and build our knowledge and start where we can have the most impact.

David Pembroke:

Now it's not a new problem and there have been previous action plans, so could you also just give us a little bit of background as to exactly what has been discovered previously? And when you talk about the evidence that's been assembled, what do we know of the actual problem?

Liz Hefren-Webb:

That's right. There's been collective efforts in Australia to reduce domestic violence for a number of years. And in 2010, the first national plan to reduce violence against women and their children was launched. It had bipartisan support. It was a joint effort by the Commonwealth and all the states. It was designed to run for 12 years and so it concludes this year.

Liz Hefren-Webb:

I guess, on the positive side, that national plan has achieved some change. We've measured that Australians are less likely now to hold attitudes supportive of violence against women, behaviour that once went unchallenged is now regarded as unacceptable by the majority of Australians and more Australians are

recognising nonphysical behaviours as violence. And that data comes from the National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Surveys that the Commonwealth government funds.

Liz Hefren-Webb:

But prevalence of violence does remain unacceptably high. As you said, around one in four women and one in 13 men have experienced physical or sexual violence from a current or previous partner since the age of 15 and the proportion of women reporting a recent experience of sexual violence increased from 1.2% in 2012 to 1.8% in 2016. We've also seen... I guess, got a better understanding now of the impact of violence on particular target groups, such as Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander women and children, women with disability, the LGBTIQ community and other groups that experience multiple forms of disadvantage.

David Pembroke:

Okay. So listen, I'll come back to you in a minute just to unpack a little bit more about where do we go from here and what do we do, but Alison, your role there at PM&C, prime minister and cabinet obviously has that central coordinating role, that ability to be able to bring the whole of government together. Was that a particular focus of your effort in terms of the development of the National Action Plan in your role as the co-chair?

Alison Frame:

Yes, certainly it was. I mean, it's something that is really high on the agenda here in the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet and always has been. And one of the reasons for that, along with all the statistics you've gone through... Both of you have gone through a range of statistics that continue to be shocking and confronting when we hear them and I think it's important to keep calling out these statistics all the time to remind people of the extent of the issue.

Alison Frame:

But along with the knowledge of the extent of the problem, we also have the Office for Women based here in the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. And that's within the group here, within the social policy group in prime minister and cabinet, so obviously it's a really big focus for us and that brings a real practical focus of work from prime minister and cabinet on progressing the work of the Office for Women that's got a specific focus on safety, where we work very closely with Liz and her department and they have the lead on those safety issues.

Alison Frame:

And then the Office for Women also work across other issues for women's leadership and even more importantly, women's economic security, which is so closely tied to the issue of women's safety. We know that women who are more economically secure, if they are less vulnerable financially and able to look after themselves and their children and not dependent on someone to an enormous extent, then they are going to be more safe and have more options to exercise there. So that's a really important agenda as well that compliments... Basically underpins the safety the agenda as well. So there's a lot of work goes on in the Office for Women around women's economic security, leadership and then the really strong focus on safety, which culminates in the national plan as you've referred to there.

David Pembroke:

So in terms then of that sort of central coordinating role, my understanding is that you took advantage of some of the sort of architectural changes inside government that were brought about by COVID to better coordinate responses towards this new National Action Plan. Is that correct?

Alison Frame:

Yes, certainly. The new architecture that was put in place as part of the COVID response. And this is part of working in government. You always look for opportunities and what can the new machinery offer in terms of increased influence and in an issue like this, women's safety, that's long-standing and needing this constant attention and support, you want to leverage any influence that you're able to.

Alison Frame:

And with the creation of the national cabinet, there was also created alongside that a National Federation Reform Taskforce and underneath that they set up a Women's Safety Taskforce. So that actually absorbed some long-standing work from all the women's safety ministers across the states and territories and brought them together with the Commonwealth to continue the work on the national plan that had been going on for a long time.

Alison Frame:

But it did give it a renewal of focus and a new accountability mechanism to the Federation Reform Taskforce, which is the leaders of every state and territory in Australia and the prime minister and also the treasurers of every state and territory in Australia and the Commonwealth treasurer and also a local government representative. So they meet once a year under this architecture and the Women's Safety Taskforce are meeting far more frequently and have been progressing the national plan through all the ministers across the nation.

Alison Frame:

But also alongside that, the actual national cabinet itself, we've been able to progress some issues and this is at the instigation of the government, to progress some issues around women's economic security and just to leverage the fact that premiers and first ministers and the prime minister are sitting around the table and are on board with wanting to move an issue forward and to move it faster than it might have been in the past.

Alison Frame:

And so we've taken some things to national cabinet around women's economic security, where there's been a quick agreement then to a whole new framework for women's economic security, that's focused on reducing the gender pay gap, on reducing barriers to women's labour force participation, increasing female educational attainment and increasing representation of women in senior leadership and financial security. Really fundamentally increasing women's financial security. And all states and territories have got on board and said, "Yep. We will sign up. We're going to do a new reporting framework and we're going to report our progress against these things."

Alison Frame:

And as I said earlier, David, these things are really important underpinnings of safety as well. The more independence and autonomy and financial security women can enjoy, the more safe they're going to be. They are certainly correlated. I know it's not a precise correlation but they are important working together in terms of addressing gender equality, which is a primary driver of violence against women and their children. So we've really taken that opportunity to use the national cabinet.

Alison Frame:

And also just before Christmas, the states and territory governments agreed through that mechanism again, through the national cabinet, to extend reporting on gender equality in all their agencies and departments across their massive organisations in each state and territory government to provide reporting to the

Workplace Gender Equality Agency on that. So, yet another outcome delivered there in record time, I think it's safe to say record time, that supports all this work around women's safety.

Alison Frame:

I do wonder whether we would have been able to get those things agreed as quickly without being able to leverage that new national architecture there. You've got this mindset with all leaders at the moment of moving quickly to respond to issues and taking the opportunity to progress things that might have been... Issues kicking around for a long time. So it's great to see that opportunity taken up and how it can support the women's safety agenda.

David Pembroke:

So Liz, Alison to describes the sort of momentum that these architectural changes and frameworks have been able to deliver, are you then optimistic that we are going to see improvements off the back of those changes and improvements?

Liz Hefren-Webb:

I am optimistic. I think sometimes working on topics like this, you can struggle a little bit to retain your optimism because the dial on things like this moves slowly. So this is about behavioural change, attitudinal change over a whole population. And we often talk about things like seatbelts or smoking bans, or immunisation, other major kind of public health issues, where it took many, many years before the campaigns and the activity started to show a real change in behaviour, so I try and keep a really long horizon when I'm thinking about change in this area.

Liz Hefren-Webb:

As I said, we are starting to see attitudinal change. You hear that anecdotally a lot of people tell you that their kids have much more kind of gender equality focused attitudes, that they don't have the kind of ideas about what a girl does and what a boy does, or they are not as hung up on gender stereotypes as older people. So you can see that playing out anecdotally but it also shows up in the data, that rigid gender stereotypes, Australians are less likely to stick to them now. And there's a pretty good body of evidence that violence against women is underpinned by rigid gender stereotypes and expectations of men and women.

Liz Hefren-Webb:

So I do stay optimistic. It is hard when everyone is aware of some of the most horrific examples of violence against women and children in recent years and I'm not going to go over them, but when those cases hit the headlines, you do sometimes feel like you're not making a difference but I try and look at the long view.

David Pembroke:

The new National Action Plan does look... It's a 10-year plan, '22 to '32. Could you pick out perhaps one or two, perhaps three priority areas that the National Action Plan will be focusing on? That question to you, Liz, first.

Liz Hefren-Webb:

I should say that we are still in the consultation phase. Many people will know we had violence against women summit last year that the prime minister hosted at Parliament House. That was a combination of months and months of consultations. We had done workshops with experts, with victim survivors, consultation with the general public, et cetera. And so we have put together a draft national plan which went out for final consultation on the 14th of January, so when I talk about the kind of key themes and architecture of that, I will say that it's still draft, subject to the comments we get back.

Liz Hefren-Webb:

But essentially it's got four principles. They are gender equality, as I mentioned. The diverse lived experience of victim survivors. Closing the gap. As many people know, there's a closing the gap target specifically related to violence. And intersectionality, which is about the interplay between gender drivers of violence and other forms of discrimination, inequality and disadvantage. And then we've got four pillars.

Liz Hefren-Webb:

Those principles I said should underpin all of our actions, then we're going to have actions in each of the following four pillars, which is prevention. So working to change those attitudes that I talked about. Early intervention, which is working with people who are at high risk of experiencing or perpetrating violence. Response, so helping people who are currently experiencing violence through systems like the police justice system, crisis support and then recovery, which is about helping victim survivors to be safe, healthy, and resilient. As Alison said, to reestablish economic security as well as personal security and to enable them to thrive. So beneath all those pillars there'll be a set of actions. The government's still determining the exact shape of that but that'll be the structure of it.

David Pembroke:

So Alison, Liz describes a comprehensive body of work, complex. How do you as a co-chair of the National Plan Advisory Group, what's the role and how do you bring people together? Because as you described in your earlier answer, it's the national cabinet, the National Federation Reform Taskforce, the Women's Safety Taskforce, it's the treasurers, it's the leaders. And that's at that highest level but then underneath there obviously there are a huge number of public servants working across all the states and territories. And then there's the third sector being involved as well. How do you run something like that? How do you pull it together in an effective way so that you can land at a draft national plan that Liz has just described?

Alison Frame:

Yeah. Thanks for that question, David. I mean, certainly you start with an advisory group that is comprised of really diverse expertise and different experiences, and that's what we did working with Liz and her team at DSS to make sure that the advisory group, I think there's 19 on it overall, is comprised of advocates, as well as victim survivors and service delivery organisations. You make sure that you've got diverse group of women and men on that group who are able to represent different perspectives. So to me the critical part of that group is the in-depth knowledge they all bring of different perspectives and experiences of domestic and family violence. I know Liz and I just benefit so much from that.

Alison Frame:

And we ask a lot of them too. We ask a lot in that group about how we want them to harness their own networks and bring information back to the group. It's not just them sitting there as an individual. They have deep networks and expertise and we want that to be brought to the table. So they do all of that for us and that informs the national plan and makes sure that we are hearing from a diverse group. As Liz said, there was also a really significant summit last year and her department's also so convened a lot of other additional consultations, so there's been really expansive consultation.

Alison Frame:

For my role in PM&C, David, I think in relation to what you said about how do you bring it all together, is co-chairing the group with Liz, but always having in mind, where is the opportunity in all these other entities and groups and the momentum that's provided by the national cabinet and the Federation Reform Council and the next meeting of the Women's Safety Taskforce.

Alison Frame:

There is so much goodwill in all of these groups. Not just goodwill, also the same disquiet that you expressed at the beginning, David, about this current situation. Everyone wants change. I think my role there is to think about where is the opportunity to take things to those groups then and to try and move things along more quickly, and to really harness the desire for change that is just there across the board. Liz and I don't work with anyone, I don't think, who doesn't really want to see change happen and wants to work really constructively to help deliver that.

David Pembroke:

But how do you then make sure that everybody is heard, that everyone can make their contribution, because I'm sure there are difficult personalities. To manage different people with different priorities at different times, how do you bring it together into that coherent contribution which then enables you to settle on that draft National Action Plan?

Alison Frame:

I'll start on that one, David, if you want, then I might hand over to Liz. She would have some more about the extent of the consultations there in the Department of Social Services.

Alison Frame:

In the actual group itself, the National Plan Advisory Group, Liz and I have no trouble there making sure that everyone gets an opportunity to express their view. We literally go around the table and make sure that everyone's provided that opportunity. We make sure that it's not just one or two people we're hearing from all the time. They're quite lengthy meetings, as you would expect and they need to be, to talk through the issues in detail. And then there's also opportunity to follow up offline and Liz and I would have other conversations around that as well. And as I said earlier, there's goodwill in the group. No one wants to exclude anyone at the table. They want to make sure that everyone's perspectives are offered and that Liz and I and all the members of our team that are there, benefit in those conversations.

Alison Frame:

I don't find that's too difficult in the National Plan Advisory Group, but as you say, there's a lot of people in this country who have strong views, who want to be heard and Liz and her team have run some broader consultation processes there to try and capture, obviously, thousands of perspectives into the input to the national plan. David, I'll hand back to you, but I think that I answered that question from PM&C's perspective.

David Pembroke:

Yeah. Great. Thanks, Alison. Liz, that's really interesting, as Alison described, you had your hands on the consultation. You were trying to reach into the community through the representation, through the advisory group. What were some of the big challenges around that?

Liz Hefren-Webb:

I think some of the challenges are that there's a degree of scepticism out there. There's always a scepticism that government really wants to do something long-term and serious. People, understandably, get sceptical the government they might just be focused on quick wins or sort of some nice sounding announcables. And I think part of our role, Alison and I, in kind of spending a lot of time with the expertise on the advisory group is to make it clear that's not what we're here for and that's not what the ministers and the prime minister want. They actually want this to be a long-term and broad based strategy and to be operating at multiple levels.

Liz Hefren-Webb:

I think trying to deal with that scepticism, you've got to be prepared to take a bit of heat and a bit of frustration. Some of the people who are on the advisory group have worked in this sector for 30, 40 years. They've given their life to it. They have been disappointed by different governments of different persuasions in the past and seen sort of policy ideas come and go, so you kind of have to let them express some of that frustration, I think. I think that's been one of the keys and just being a good listener. And not necessarily having to respond to everything or be defensive when people have a bit of a go at the department, I think is a key kind of skill that you learn as a public servant and that's come in very handy in this role.

Liz Hefren-Webb:

I'd say also there's an inherent bit of tension between the groups who have come out of the women's movement and the groups out of the LGBTIQ movement. They've got common goals, they both want the same thing, but it's a question of language. Sometimes it can be hard for us to get the language right and for us to not inadvertently exclude people. So that's been something we've had to work through.

Liz Hefren-Webb:

I think the Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander representation on the group has been fantastic but we also, I should mention, have a separate Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Advisory Council, which is chaired by an external person, Sandra Creamer, who's the head of NATSIWA, and that adds depths and breadth to the work as well. So those are, I guess, some of the challenges for me. I take the role very seriously, as I know Alison does and I do consider it a real honour to be able to work on something of such importance.

David Pembroke:

Well, thank you for that answer. And we now go to the segment of the podcast where we feature the IPAA Future Leaders and questions from the IPAA future leaders and Liz I'll ask this question. It comes from Jack Milne from the Attorney-General's Department and Jack asks, "Are you able to provide any additional information on how the draft action plan will relate to the recent release of Australia's disability strategy?"

Liz Hefren-Webb:

Thank you for the question, Jack. So we've got a few big cross-cutting strategies happening in our department. We've got the national plan to end violence against women and their children. We have Australia's Disability Strategy. We've also just released Safe and Supported, which is a national framework to prevent child abuse. Our secretary and our executive are very keen that these kind of plans actually intersect and support each other.

Liz Hefren-Webb:

In the case of disability, we have representation from Women With Disabilities Australia on our advisory group. We work very closely with our disability colleagues because women with disabilities are more likely to suffer domestic violence and sexual assault shamefully in Australia, so they will definitely be one of the high priority and target groups. That work happens within the department in some ways by making sure that we are working across what can be internal silos and making sure that we're presenting kind of a joined up story on the work we are doing.

David Pembroke:

Thank you very much for that answer to Jack Milne's question. And to you Alison, a question from Emily Casey from the Australian Bureau of Statistics and Emily asks, "Has the consultation process, which included victim

survivors, specialist services, representatives from the health, law and justice sectors changed the way you view this issue and how you think government needs to respond?"

Alison Frame:

That's a great question. I think it's certainly been necessary to have the diverse perspectives there. I think for me the thing that has changed is recognising the increased focus on this since 2010, when the first national plan was put in place and the increased dollars that all governments have continued to allocate towards this issue. As I said, they appreciate its importance, they want to do something about it, so over the last 11 years, the money going into programs; prevention programs, support programs, so many aspects of domestic and family violence, has increased really massively. And that's a great thing.

Alison Frame:

But what I think for me has changed, and that's based on... Contemplating all the feedback from the really diverse stakeholders, in a way it's a paradoxical thing, that the more money you spend, the more I think we need to keep reminding people in the community that this doesn't mean that the government can solve this problem. And the stakeholders know this. They know that and they know that money is really important and all this support is needed. But I do worry about people who aren't as connected to the sector and understanding of the issue. They hear those shocking statistics and then they would hear a really big number that's spent from the Commonwealth government and all the state and territory governments and I really worry that there might be some extent to which they think, well, that'll fix it, or that's the best we can do.

Alison Frame:

Just hearing all those perspectives from stakeholders, you're just reminded all the time that this is such a deep cultural thing. It requires really active engagement from all of us. And we just can't ever just assume that the more money is expended on this issue, the less that means I have to think about this really actively and take a stand myself. For me as a parent, that means not leaving respectful relationships training to a school program, or something that might be funded somewhere, it's about that daily teaching about what's important and how we show respect to women and to everyone around us.

Alison Frame:

So I just think there are so many aspects of that where people... And I hear this from stakeholders all the time and you can see the underpinnings of this disrespect and where it culminates in violence and I think it's good to just be reminded and remind ourselves that we've all got a role to play. Governments will continue to spend money, they will rely on expert organisations and expert advice to do that to the best way that they can and to get maximum effectiveness, but it's a deep issue that requires really active engagement, thinking, support and commitment from everyone.

David Pembroke:

Alison, that's a great observation. And I wonder, Liz, how do you feel about that particular observation, that with government money, programs, big spending, that the community perhaps gets complacent and thinks that it's the government's job to solve the problem when in fact the problem is in the people? How do you make sure that the people understand that it's their responsibility, largely men, understand that the behaviour is completely and totally unacceptable?

Liz Hefren-Webb:

One of the key things we've been doing is the Stop it at the Start campaign, which is... There's been three phases so far, and the government's committed funding for a fourth. People will have seen the Stop it at the

Start ads. The last series was around the theme of unmute yourself. So when you're seeing disrespectful behaviour, take yourself off mute and actually speak up. That came from a lot of research.

Liz Hefren-Webb:

The kind of thing Alison was talking about, which is that people felt terrible about the domestic violence statistics and sort of thought, well, government can fix that and really, as Alison said, something this deep in our culture and our behaviour it requires an effort from all of us. And a lot of people when they were interviewed for the research for those campaigns said, "I know when I see disrespectful behaviour, I can kind of recognise it, but I feel uncomfortable about saying anything or doing anything." So the purpose of the campaign is to actually encourage people to take that next step and speak up.

Liz Hefren-Webb:

There's the episode of kind of two men at the football, a father and grandfather and the father saying, "You're playing like a girl," and then the grandfather saying, "What's wrong with playing like a girl?" And it's just supposed to be normalising the idea. You can call people out in a nice way, and in a funny way even, but you can call out some of those underpinning behaviours and attitudes that underpin disrespect. All our research suggests that Alison's right that it has to operate on those multiple levels.

Liz Hefren-Webb:

The other thing I'd say is, far more now, I think we've got engagement from the business sector, the university sector, some of those other sectors in society that haven't really been engaged with this topic in the past, and they are now beginning to see this is their business too. It affects their employees. It affects productivity. So even from the point of view, the bottom line it's their business, but they also know it's the right thing to do to try and make sure their workplace is a safe place and their employees have the ability to get help and know what to do. So I totally concur. I think that's something that has emerged over the consultations and through the evolution with the last national plan is we've become more aware of how broad and how deep seated and how it takes changes in all of our behaviours, it's not just about money for services.

David Pembroke:

Now listen, just before we go and wrap up, our listeners are always interested in the personal reflections of the senior public servants who we do speak to and I just wonder if there might be something that you've learnt out of this particular role in co-chairing the National Plan Advisory Group about yourself. What have you learnt about yourself? Liz, you described it before as a privilege to be involved, but is there any one or two things perhaps you might have taken away? I'll start with you, Liz and then finish with you, Alison.

Liz Hefren-Webb:

I think just an enormous respect for the people who've made this their life's work. I'm lucky enough to work on this topic but I also work on a range of other issues and I have done throughout my career. Some people have really given their whole life and career to this topic and just extraordinary people who I have so much admiration. And without that kind of commitment, you can't get an issue like this progress. So I guess it's admiration, my own sense of luck that this is not an issue that's touched me personally in any significant way and just as I said, honour and privilege to work on it.

David Pembroke:

And for you, Alison?

Alison Frame:

Yeah, I certainly agree with Liz. And I think for me that the personal learning then has been learning about how to take strength from other people. Like the people that we're working with on that advisory group, as Liz said, they've dedicated their lives to work in this area. They are so knowledgeable. They work every day with women and men who've been affected by domestic and family violence and they just keep going and they never lose their purpose and determination and motivation to do better.

Alison Frame:

And I think for me, I've watched that and listened to that and really taken strength from that myself and thought, "You got to keep going." When you opened you talked about the enormity of the problem and it's easy sometimes to think it's just so big, where do we start, but you can really take heart and be renewed by working with people who have done so much and have committed so much of their work and their expertise to continuing to respond to this issue. I think that's something that's been a real positive for me and just thinking, just keep going. There are always opportunities to do more. I think for Liz and I, it's been a privilege to chair the group and to just take the work through to the next stage.

David Pembroke:

Well, Alison and Liz, thank you so much for being so generous with your time and your insights today. I took an enormous amount away from it and let's hope, better than hope, let's make sure that this draft National Action Plan becomes a National Action Plan and it's well communicated, it's well understood and we continue to make progress. So thank you very much for coming on to Work with Purpose today.

Liz Hefren-Webb:

Thank you.

Alison Frame:

Thanks, David.

David Pembroke:

Work with Purpose is a part of the GovComms podcast network and we would be both delighted and grateful if you could find the time to give us a nice rating and a review on your favourite podcast play because it does help us to be discovered by others. Thanks again to IPAA and to the Australian Public Service Commission for their ongoing support for the program. And particularly to the great team at IPAA who do such a wonderful job in finding and preparing the wonderful topics and guests for the podcast, such that we've had today. And also to the team at contentgroup for making all the technology and the production and the promotion and all these other things happen behind the scenes. So a big thanks to all of them.

David Pembroke:

My name is David Pembroke. A big thanks once again to Liz and Alison for coming on today. That's it for now. We'll be back at the same time in two weeks, but for the moment, it's bye for now.

Voiceover:

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