

Briefing notes – key arguments challenging coercive control laws

These notes are intended for you to use if you are arranging meetings with parliamentarians or representatives from organizations promoting the new coercive control laws. The notes run through the major issues we cover in our MOS documents, and refer you to the relevant sections for you to bone up prior to your meeting. Note they are not intended for use in emailing people. Our draft letter can be adapted for any approach you wish to make by email.

We've all heard about the new laws to protect women from dangerous, controlling men. We saw Hannah Clarke's parents interviewed about how these laws could have prevented the tragic death of their daughter and grandchildren.

These laws don't prevent homicide

Much as we'd all like to protect women who are at risk, coercive control laws simply don't prevent domestic homicide. There was no mention of homicide when these laws were introduced in Tasmania in 2004 or the UK in 2015 and they had no impact on rates of domestic homicide. There's no proper evidence supporting a link between homicide and coercive behaviour. ([Part 3](#))

They just don't work

The laws were a dismal failure when first introduced, resulting in no prosecutions at all in the first three years in Tasmania. In the UK, there were many incidents reported but hardly any convictions as police struggled to work out what on earth coercive control is all about and how to make charges stick. ([Part 2](#))

What is it?

That's the problem. No one agrees on what's involved in coercive control – one report found 22 quite different definitions in the literature and legal organizations have pointed out it is impossible to pin down. (Parts [1](#) & [5](#))

Men just as likely to be victims

All the academic evidence on the emotional abuse shows men are just as likely to be victims of controlling behaviour as women are. Remember the Johnny Depp court case where Amber Heard was heard on tape, following Depp from room to room, hurling abuse at him? The Australian Bureau of Statistics shows men and women are equally likely to experience emotional abuse. UK research from the University of Central Lancashire discovered male victims suffer similar patterns of abuse as women but also face more threats of having access to children denied. ([Part 6](#))

Only men are charged

Lawmakers have been determined to use coercive control laws only to target men. The American feminist who invented the whole idea was convinced men were the only perpetrators and toured the world successfully promoting criminalization of this manufactured concept. (Parts [1](#) & [4](#))

Police trained to target men

The big discovery has been that the only way these coercive control laws work is if police and courts are carefully trained how to weaponize the laws strictly against men. In NSW, women's groups sounded the alarm that women could find themselves on the receiving end of such charges, without this indoctrination. So, even though the legislation had been passed, the government put the whole thing on hold until police and the judiciary are taught to ensure only males get charged and convicted. (Parts [2](#) & [4](#))

Coercive control is a con job

That's where we are now, with dangerous laws being rolled out across Australia which deliberately misrepresent the true nature of coercive relationships where men and women are equally likely to display emotional abuse. ([Part 1](#))

Male victims ignored

Male victims who need help are more likely to be charged than protected from their abuser. Most men are denied access to victims support services. ([Part 6](#))

Trashing legal safeguards

It is shameful that police and the judiciary are being conscripted to support one side of a gender war, dismantling long standing legal safeguards to allow severe criminal punishment doled out for impossibly vague accusations regarding often trivial matters. ([Part 5](#))

The laws are already running into problems

With media increasingly highlighting cases like the Johnny Depp/Amber Heard case, where women are displaying coercive control, feminists are already struggling to keep control over the narrative. Witness the recent ABC story warning that Tasmania is facing a "growing misidentification crisis" where police have "mistaken the victim for the perpetrator" and charged them with criminal offenses. Women are being charged with coercive control rather than men. ([Part 2](#))

This whole feminist project will come unstuck if huge numbers of male victims of coercive control come forward, make complaints to police and are taken seriously. That's exactly what we want to happen. ([Part 7](#))