

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS
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QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 17th NOVEMBER 2025
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 24th NOVEMBER 2025**

Question

“In relation to issues identified within the [Violence Against Women and Girls \(VAWG\) report](#) relating to coercive and controlling behaviour, will the Minister provide an update on what actions have been undertaken, and what work, if any, has been completed?”

Answer

The issues identified within the VAWG report relating to coercive and controlling behaviour were wide-ranging. A short summary of the key findings, followed by the actions that we have taken in response, is outlined below.

Before delving into the detail of the work that has been undertaken however, it is important to note that, at the time the Taskforce research was undertaken, the Domestic Abuse (Jersey) Law 2022 was not yet in force. This means that the offence of domestic abuse (under which coercive and controlling behaviour is captured) was not yet established. This new piece of legislation has enhanced both public and professional awareness of coercive and controlling behaviour. At time of reporting:

- There have been 26 prosecutions since the law came into force
- 20 crimes have proceeded to court so far
- 16 of those prosecutions have resulted in convictions so far¹

Key finding: Coercive and controlling behaviour is an extremely common feature of domestic abuse and there is a need for further training for a range of professionals

The VAWG Taskforce report highlighted how coercive and controlling behaviour often occurs alongside other forms of domestic abuse, with more than 85% of the domestic abuse victim-survivors surveyed by Taskforce researchers reporting that they had experienced emotional or psychological abuse and jealous and/or controlling behaviour. Worryingly, some of these victim-survivors also described encounters with support professionals who they felt were uninterested in their experience of coercive and controlling behaviour or did not recognise how this behaviour is often an indicator that abuse will escalate to physical violence. These research findings led the Taskforce to concluded that, whilst coercive and controlling behaviour seems to make up a strong component of victim-survivor’s experiences of VAWG in Jersey, this form of abuse is not well understood by the professional community.

Since the publication of the Taskforce report, much work has been undertaken to improve professional knowledge in this area:

- In the past 12 months, Safeguarding Partnership Jersey has delivered training on coercive and controlling behaviour within the context of domestic abuse for 62 individuals across the Jersey Youth Service, Health and Care, Andium, the Children and Families Hub, States of Jersey Police, Schools, Jersey Domestic and Sexual Abuse Support, Mind Jersey, Brighter Futures and the Office of the Children’s Commissioner.
- In January 2024, a new requirement was included in the Jersey Quality Improvement Framework that 70% of General Practitioners in each GP Surgery must complete IRIS training on domestic abuse. To date, approximately 91% of GPs have received the training across the Island.

¹ Data provided by States of Jersey Police 20.11.2025

- Links Group were commissioned to deliver training in September 2025 to veterinary practices across the Island on the link between animal abuse and domestic abuse, and how to safely respond to instances of suspected domestic abuse.
- The Jersey Customs and Immigration Service received training from Safe Lives, a leading UK organisation specialising in domestic abuse training, in April 2024. Since this time targeted enquiry procedures have been incorporated within their work.
- An organisation “Alpha Vesta” was commissioned to provide perpetrator awareness training for a range of public services, including professionals working within the Jersey Family Court Advisory Service. This training was completed in October 2025.
- A working group has been established within Health and Care to progress the recommendations relating to the introduction of VAWG training and routine enquiry in health care settings, alongside the development of a medical pathway for responding to instances of non-fatal strangulation.
- A new Domestic Abuse and Sexual Harms group has been established under the Building a Safer Community Framework. This group is scheduled to conduct a training needs analysis for support services in the new year.

A significant amount of work relating to improve Islander’s awareness of coercive and controlling behaviour has also taken place, including:

- The delivery of a Government campaign to raise awareness of coercive and controlling behaviour
- The delivery of a States of Jersey Police campaign to increase awareness of the Domestic Abuse Disclosure Scheme known as “Clare’s Law”
- The provision of information on online and technology-facilitated abuse, a common component coercive and controlling behaviour, on gov.je.

I intend to lodge several new pieces of legislation by the end of the year which will provide new legislative tools for the prosecution of perpetrators, and protection of victims, of coercive and controlling behaviour. This includes:

- Amendments to the Domestic Abuse (Jersey) Law 2022 which will create additional protections for victim-survivors
- The introduction of a new Harassment and Stalking Law which will capture behaviours that take place online or using digital technology, alongside behaviours taking place in the physical world
- The introduction of a new offence of non-fatal strangulation
- The introduction of a range of new intimate image abuse offences

Key finding: Economic abuse is a common component of the coercive and controlling behaviour that victim-survivors are experiencing in Jersey

The Taskforce highlighted that economic abuse is a very common form of coercive and controlling behaviour. Many victim-survivors of domestic abuse told the Taskforce that economic abuse was a significant component of the methods used by their abusers to control and restrict them. These women told researchers that professionals very rarely asked them questions about economic abuse, which indicated a need for professionals on the island to better understand economic abuse.

Since the publication of the Taskforce report, the following work has been undertaken to improve support for victim-survivors and increase professional knowledge in this area:

- The Government has commissioned the UK organisation ‘Refuge’ to deliver training on economic abuse and online and technology-facilitated abuse to a range of professionals across Safeguarding Partnership Jersey, States of Jersey Police, Health and Social Care, and a range of specialist support services. Delivery of this training began in September 2025 and is ongoing. In addition to the provision of this training, Refuge are also developing bespoke guidance and hosting Q&A sessions aimed at assisting professionals to manage complex cases involving economic, online and technology-facilitated abuse.
- The introduction of 13-weeks of financial support for victims of domestic abuse with less than 5 years residency to help remove the financial barriers that many individuals face when trying to

leave an abusive relationship. I understand this has already created significant and meaningful changes to the lives of a number of victim-survivors.

I have also directed officers to undertake a review of the Domestic Abuse (Jersey) Law 2022 in respect of whether economic abuse is sufficiently captured within the offence of domestic abuse. This review will not be initiated until 2028, at which time the law will have been in place for a number of years and offices will be able to effectively assess the impact it has had before considering whether further reform is necessary.

Key finding 3: Family Court System

The Taskforce report highlighted that, across jurisdictions, research has found that family court systems are failing to prevent perpetrators of domestic abuse from using the family court system to continue the abuse of their former partners and their children. The experiences that some women shared with the VAWG Taskforce researchers indicated that the key issues identified in the family court systems of other jurisdictions may also be present in Jersey. Some of the experiences shared with the Taskforce included feeling that their allegations of domestic abuse had been dismissed in child residency cases and that their former partner was able to manipulate the family court process to continue to intimidate and exert control over them.

Since the publication of the Taskforce report, work has been undertaken to improve professional knowledge in this area, including:

- The provision of training on domestic abuse by a UK specialist in children's law for members of the Family Justice Council and members of their teams, alongside lawyers specialising in family work in November 2024.
- The delivery of training on the strategies commonly used by perpetrators of domestic abuse and how to respond appropriately for professionals working within the Jersey Family Court Advisory Service (JFCAS) in October 2025.

I understand that the Family Justice Council will also be considering how work is coordinated across the Family Courts, JFCAS and the Children's Service in domestic abuse cases in their next meeting.

As was acknowledged in the VAWG report, Taskforce research in this area was subject to limitations because the anonymity of the women who engaged in the research meant that researchers were unable to verify their testimonies by accessing the relevant court files, judgements or orders. As a result, further research is needed so that the extent of the issues surfaced by the initial Taskforce research can be accurately characterised and understood. This is why I am commissioning an independent review of the family court system's management of cases involving allegations of domestic abuse. The terms of reference for the review have been agreed with the Family Justice Council, and I am currently in the process of interviewing potential candidates to undertake the review. I will ensure that an independent reviewer has been appointed by the end of December 2025.

Appendix 1: Progress overview of recommendations relating to coercive and controlling behaviour

No.	Recommendation	Owner	Status
4.1	Issue guidance on the application of the domestic abuse offence	Law Officers' Department	Awaiting reporting
4.2	Conduct a training needs analysis for support services	Minister for Justice and Home Affairs	In progress
5	Introduce training on economic abuse for support services	Minister for Justice and Home Affairs	In progress
11	Introduce legislation to address online and technology-facilitated abuse	Minister for Justice and Home Affairs	In progress
12	Introduce training on online and technology-facilitated abuse for support services	Minister for Justice and Home Affairs	In progress
13	Publish information on online and technology-facilitated abuse on gov.je	Minister for Justice and Home Affairs	Complete
24.1	Introduce emergency barring orders into the Domestic Abuse (Jersey) Law 2022	Minister for Justice and Home Affairs	In progress
25.1	Introduce an offence of non-fatal strangulation	Minister for Justice and Home Affairs	In progress
26	Issue guidance that makes it clear that economic abuse is captured within the offence of domestic abuse	Law Officers' Department	Awaiting reporting
27	Undertake a review of economic abuse convictions under the Domestic Abuse (Jersey) Law 2022	Minister for Justice and Home Affairs	Not started
28	Introduce an offence of stalking	Minister for Justice and Home Affairs	In progress
29.1	Commission an independent review of the Family Court System in relation to the management of cases involving domestic abuse	Minister for Justice and Home Affairs	In progress
30-32	Introduce training on domestic abuse for Family Courts professionals on domestic abuse	Courts	Complete
37	Consider the way work is coordinated across the Family Courts, JFCAS and the Children's Service	Family Justice Council	Not started
38.1	Introduce training on perpetrator management for JFCAS officers	Jersey Family Court Advisory Service	Complete
40	Introduce mandatory IRIS training for GPs	Minister for Health and Care	Complete
41-45	Implement training and routine enquiry across healthcare settings	Minister for Health and Care	In progress
46	Introduce training on non-fatal strangulation alongside a pathway for responding to victim-survivors of this form of violence	Minister for Health and Care	In progress
47	Introduce training for veterinary staff on the link between animal abuse and domestic abuse	Minister for Justice and Home Affairs	Complete
49	Introduce a concession for victims of domestic abuse with less than 5-years residency	Minister for Social Security	Complete
51	Issue a definition of immigration abuse which makes it clear this is a form of coercive and controlling behaviour	Law Officers' Department	Awaiting reporting

55	Implement training on domestic abuse and implement routine enquiry within the immigration service	Jersey Customs and Immigration Service	Complete
68	Introduce training on perpetrator management for a range of public services	Minister for Justice and Home Affairs	Complete
71	Increase awareness of the Domestic Abuse Disclosure Scheme	States of Jersey Police	Complete
73	Introduce a campaign to raise awareness about violence against women and girls	Minister for Justice and Home Affairs	Complete