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## Coroner Exposes Family Violence System Failures

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A Victorian coroner has condemned systemic failures in family violence support after a murdered woman’s estranged husband ambushed her with a hatchet. Coroner John Cain found that offenders referred to specialist services often go unchecked, leaving victims at risk. The case highlights gaps in intervention and risk assessment, despite police and support groups following protocol.

The victim, referred to as GY, had reported her husband's violent behaviour for years, including death threats and financial abuse. In August 2022, she sought help, securing a Family Violence Intervention Order (FVIO) and safety measures. Yet just days later, her husband attacked her in her backyard, killing her and injuring their children as they tried to intervene. Cain noted that while authorities acted within their roles, the system failed to hold the perpetrator accountable.

Alarming, a referral for the offender to a support service remained unprocessed at the time of the murder. Cain stressed that delays in contacting violent offenders are a recurring issue, undermining victim safety. He also criticised current risk assessment tools used by police, calling them inadequate for predicting homicides despite identifying general violence risks. The coroner urged Family Safety Victoria to address these delays and recommended further research into high-risk offenders.



The findings underscore a harsh reality: bureaucratic delays and flawed risk assessments continue to cost lives. Cain's recommendations echo those from past cases, demanding better public awareness and support for bereaved children. Until systemic reforms are implemented, victims of family violence remain vulnerable to those who slip through the cracks. The tragedy serves as a grim reminder that procedural compliance is not swift enough, decisive action is essential to prevent further bloodshed.