

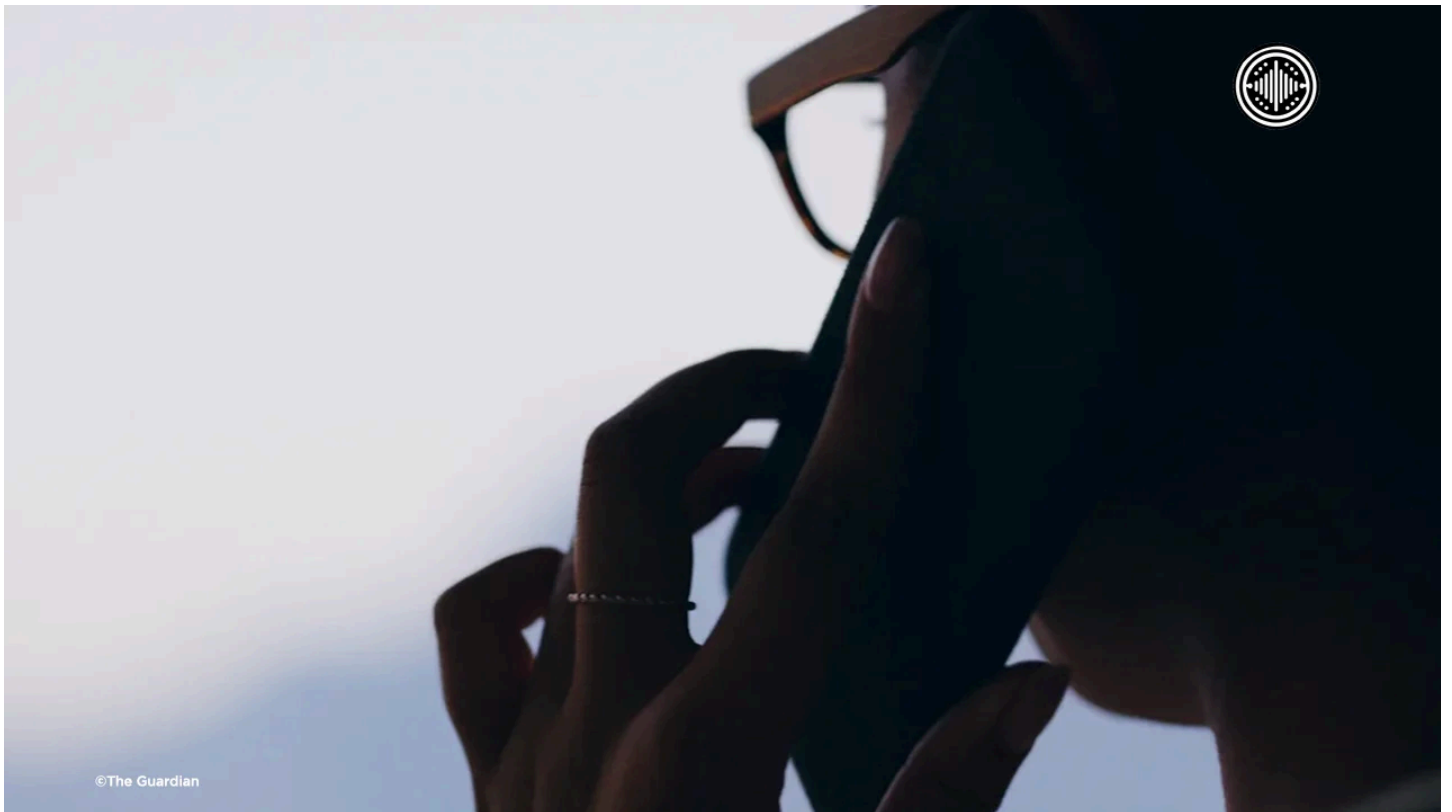
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DVConnect Helpline Faces 388% Surge in Unanswered Calls

August 8, 2025

– Categories: Human Rights



A government-commissioned review has revealed a 388 per cent increase in abandoned calls to DVConnect, Queensland's primary domestic and family violence helpline, between July 2023 and March 2025. The review, conducted by BDO and tabled in the Queensland Parliament on August 7, 2025, showed that the crisis was most acute in October 2024, when only 41.9 per cent of calls were answered.

In that month, out of 6,590 calls made to DVConnect's Womensline, 3,829 went unanswered. Callers waited on average 12 minutes and 47 seconds before abandoning the call, while those who remained on hold endured wait times of up to 21 minutes and 24 seconds. The number of abandoned calls between October and December 2024 reached 10,076. By mid-2025, this figure had fallen to around 4,000.

Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence Amanda Camm described the findings as “damning” and said that every unanswered call represents someone in crisis who may face serious risks.

The BDO audit identified several systemic issues contributing to the service breakdown. Staff worked only 57 per cent of their rostered hours in December 2023, despite peak demand. The review also flagged an unresolved and strained relationship between DVConnect and Telstra Health, culminating in the termination of the 1800RESPECT contract in May 2024. DVConnect did not disclose this risk during funding negotiations, undermining trust with government officials.

In response to the audit, DVConnect implemented several reform measures including a new peak-time triage system and improved rostering. By April to June 2025, the overall answer rate had improved to 73 per cent, and a trial phase achieved up to 93 per cent responses during high-demand periods.

The Queensland Government has allocated \$31.3 million over four years to expand Womensline and Mensline capacity, including the establishment of a 24/7 crisis hub in North Queensland.

DVConnect expressed commitment to improving its performance and rebuilding trust with the government. Minister Camm emphasized that this was not a matter of funding shortfalls, but workforce management and transparency.