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QLD Axes Key Women's Safety Role Amid Reform Push

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The Queensland government has quietly eliminated the Independent Implementation Supervisor role for women's safety reforms, raising concerns about accountability in addressing domestic and family violence.

The Queensland government has discreetly terminated the Independent Implementation Supervisor role, established to oversee the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce reforms, prompting criticism over weakened accountability in tackling domestic and family violence (DFV). The role, previously held by Linda Apelt and later Cathy Taylor, was created in

November 2022 to monitor progress on 277 recommendations from the Taskforce's *Hear Her Voice* reports and the *A Call for Change* inquiry into Queensland Police Service (QPS) responses to DFV. The decision, confirmed by the Department of Justice on July 30, 2025, comes as 72 recommendations have been implemented, with 195 underway, per a Queensland Government statement.

The Taskforce, launched in 2021 under chair Margaret McMurdo AC, aimed to strengthen responses to coercive control and improve women's experiences in the criminal justice system. The Supervisor provided biannual reports, with the fourth, released in May 2024, noting "strong and genuine commitment" to reforms, including the Criminal Law (Coercive Control and Affirmative Consent) Act 2024, which criminalizes coercive control with a 14-year maximum penalty. However, the role's scrapping has drawn ire from advocates. Emma Pritchard, a DFV survivor and advocate, told ABC News that the move undermines transparency, stating, "Without oversight, there's a risk these reforms stall."

Queensland Attorney-General Yvette D'Ath defended the decision, arguing that the reform program's integration into departmental structures ensures ongoing progress, with \$588 million committed since 2015, per a May 2024 report. Critics, however, question the timing, noting 205 recommendations remain incomplete. The government insists that agencies like the QPS and the new Victims' Commissioner will maintain momentum, citing initiatives like specialist DFV training for police and two new specialist courts in Brisbane and Cairns.

The decision follows other cost-cutting measures, raising concerns about prioritization amid a \$1.5 billion DFV investment. As Queensland pushes for systemic change, the absence of independent oversight risks eroding trust in the government's commitment to women's safety, with stakeholders watching closely for further developments.