

Bordertown Tragedy Sparks Call for Regional DV Support

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A domestic violence murder-suicide in the South Australian town of Bordertown has renewed calls for greater investment in support services for regional communities.

South Australia Police confirmed a 41-year-old woman was killed by her 47-year-old partner at their home on Sunday, before the man took his own life. Major Crime detectives attended the scene on Monday, ruling out the involvement of any third party.

The incident has left the small town of 3,000 residents reeling. Located near the Victorian border, Bordertown is more than 180 kilometres from Mount Gambier and 270 kilometres from Adelaide, posing logistical challenges for access to essential services.

Susie Smith, co-chair of the domestic violence peak body **Embolden** and regional manager at **Centacare**, said the tragedy highlights the long-standing need for better resourcing of outreach services in remote and rural areas.

“We have been advocating for many years for more services that are less centralized,” Ms Smith said.

Centacare has run outreach programs in Bordertown and neighbouring towns such as Naracoorte since 2023, but most of the organisation’s staff remain based in Mount Gambier.

“We’ve worked closely with the Bordertown community on education about healthy relationships and domestic violence awareness across workplaces and cultural groups,” Ms Smith said. “These programs have made a real difference, but they need to be properly funded to be sustainable.”

South Australia Police Commissioner **Grant Stevens** confirmed officers had prior contact with the man earlier in the year, following a domestic violence incident, though there were no court-imposed restrictions on him at the time of the fatal attack.

“We will review our interactions with the individuals involved,” Commissioner Stevens said during an ABC Radio Adelaide interview. “I’m not saying police failed in this case, but we will look at the service delivery and provide our findings to the coroner.”

The Bordertown Islamic Community Centre has been particularly affected by the deaths. Dr Hassan Mahmood, a community leader, said the tragedy has deeply shaken local families, particularly those from migrant backgrounds.

“It will have a ripple effect across the community,” Dr Mahmood said. “This isn’t something people here are used to. It’s very difficult, especially for children growing up in a town like this.”

Centacare support workers have returned to Bordertown this week to offer assistance to residents and to support the grieving Islamic community.

“We truly admire what the Islamic community brings to the South East, and we are deeply saddened for them,” Ms Smith said.

According to the South Australian government, domestic violence remains a significant issue across the state, with victims in regional areas facing heightened barriers due to distance, isolation, and lack of local services.

Advocates are urging the government to address these structural gaps to help prevent further tragedies in towns like Bordertown.