

Missed chances to save mother

By Ewen McRae

Recommendations from the Royal Commission into Family Violence (RCFV) may have saved a Melton West woman murdered by her partner in 2014, according to the Victorian Coroner.

Craig McDermott was sentenced to 25 years jail after he fatally stabbed the mother of his four children, Fiona Warzywoda, 33, outside her solicitor's Sunshine office on 16 April 2014.

Ms Warzywoda had finalised an intervention order against Mr McDermott earlier that day.

Coroner Audrey Jamieson found Ms Warzywoda had been the victim of abuse

throughout her relationship with Mr McDermott and that numerous risk indicators were apparent before her death, including a recent escalation in the severity of the violence. In the months prior to her death, Ms Warzywoda had been in contact with a number of services who held key information on the significant threat Mr McDermott posed.

Coroner Jamieson identified several lost opportunities for intervention, with services failing to make proper enquiries, adequately assess risks and share information before closing their investigations or discontinuing support.

Coroner Jamieson held a directions hearing on May 21 to address these issues, including Victoria Police's handling of family violence reports on four occasions (including a death threat made by Mr McDermott), and Child Protection Services' failure to assist Ms Warzywoda following the death threat.

At the hearing Child Protection Services reported on significant changes to their processes for managing family violence cases since recommendations were made by the RCFV.

Victoria Police submitted that issues with the police response prior to Ms Warzywoda's

death had also been addressed by RCFV recommendations.

In the finding, Coroner Jamieson acknowledged the important changes that had resulted from the RCFV and the efforts of the agencies to address issues in the years following Ms Warzywoda's death.

With the aim of improving public health and safety and preventing similar deaths, Coroner Jamieson recommended updates to Victoria Police, Federal Court of Australia and No to Violence/Men's Referral Service policies to identify, record and monitor family violence cases.

Paper recycling boost

A new recycling facility in Truganina is expected to process 39,000 tonnes of recycled paper a year.

Australian Paper Recovery's \$2.5 million paper sorting facility provides full grade separation of kerbside and commercial mixed paper and cardboard.

As long as no glass is mixed in with collected recyclables, the high quality paper and card is sorted and graded, then reprocessed locally and used to make newspaper and packaging.

Managing director Darren Thorpe said he was in discussions with a number of councils about adopting a "no glass collection" recycling policy.

"We need uncontaminated product, especially from glass," Mr Thorpe said.

"We can accept the paper and card here and sort it into a form that can be used by domestic

outlets in Australia feeding into a circular economy."

Since beginning operations in June, the facility has expanded to accept additional materials from regional and metropolitan kerbside recycling, including plastics and metals, further increasing recycling capability in Victoria.

Energy, Environment and Climate Change Minister Lily D'Ambrosio last week announced \$475,000 in funding towards the project.

Esther Lauaki



Minister Lily D'Ambrosio and local MP Sarah Connolly at the funding announcement.

(Damjan Janeski)