

NATIONAL QUEENSLAND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

# 84 domestic violence orders broken every day in Queensland

By [Lydia Lynch](#)

February 20, 2020 – 5.11pm

5 [View all comments](#)

A domestic violence order was broken 84 times a day on average in Queensland in 2019, [police statistics show](#).

A total of 30,796 domestic violence protection orders (DVO) were breached last year, an average of four an hour and almost five times as many as the 2001 figure.



Slain mother Hannah Baxter with her three children – Trey, Laianah and Aaliyah.

Brisbane mother Hannah Clarke was driving her three young children to school on Wednesday morning when her estranged husband, Rowan, doused his family in petrol and lit them on fire.

Ms Clarke and her three children – Laianah, Aaliyah and Trey – all died.

Police have confirmed domestic violence orders had been taken out during the couple's break-up.

The [shocking act of violence](#) shows that for some women, a DVO does nothing to stop a deadly attack.



Hannah Clarke with her three children – Laianah, Aaliyah and Trey, aged between three and six – all of whom died after her husband, the children's father, set them on fire in their car.  
FACEBOOK

Brock Wall was sentenced to two terms of life in prison [after murdering his ex-girlfriend](#), Fabiana Palhares, with an axe and jumping on her stomach to kill their unborn child at their Varsity Lakes home in 2015.

Wall had two domestic violence protection orders made against him at the time.

Another Gold Coast woman, Tara Brown, was [bludgeoned to death](#) by the father of her child, Lionel Patea, in 2015 with a 7.8-kilogram metal fire hydrant cover.

Ms Brown had been hiding from him at a safe house and friends' homes since taking out a DVO just days earlier.

Two days later, [Karina Lock, 49, was shot dead by her estranged husband](#), Steve Lock, in front of horrified onlookers at a Gold Coast McDonald's. They then watched him shoot himself in the head.

He had a court-ordered two-year domestic violence order against him at the time.

Across the state in 2001, there were 6500 DVO breaches, compared with 30,796 in 2019 – an increase of 374 per cent.

But Women's Legal Service Queensland chief executive Angela Lynch has previously told *Brisbane Times* the increase could be a good thing if it meant more women were seeking help, police were prioritising the issue, and courts were issuing more orders.

"That is a phenomenal increase, but it probably reflects the landscape in Queensland and the prioritisation of this issue in the past few years," she said.

"There is probably still an under-reporting of the amount of breaches that do occur, because we still have many women and clients who come to us and inform

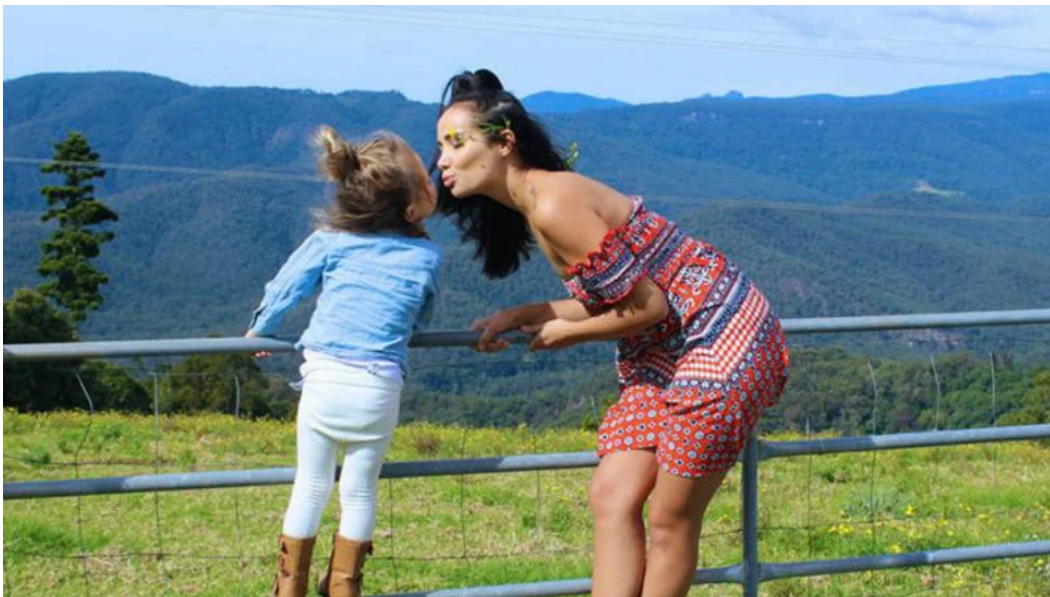
us of difficulties in getting police to take breach action or take the matters seriously.

"The domestic violence orders do require the back-up of police to take breach action to be really effective."

Ms Lynch said even the act of obtaining an order could be a meaningful symbol for a lot of victims.

"It signifies in a public way for the first time the system acknowledging what she has been through," she said.

Once an order was made, it was up to police to crack down on breaches, which could escalate quickly.



Tara Brown's death came less than a week after she sought police help to protect her from her estranged partner. FACEBOOK/TARA BROWN FOUNDATION FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RELIEF

"Perpetrators are always testing those orders out and sensing what they can get away with," Ms Lynch said. "They will often start with smaller breaches just to see how far they can push things."

"If the police don't take action, they will move on to larger breaches and push the boundaries of those orders."

Police Minister Mark Ryan said he hoped the government could continue to look for ways to stop domestic violence because "it has to stop".

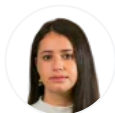
"It reminds us all that our children are so precious, but also that they are fragile and vulnerable," he said.

"Three innocent children and their loving mother gone – gone for inexplicable reasons."

"I hope, like so many others do, that we can continue to look for ways to stop this, because it has to stop."

**CLARIFICATION** — This story previously named the children's mother as Hannah Baxter. The Queensland Police Service has since informed media she had legally been using her maiden name 'Clarke' and no longer used her married name of Baxter.

---



**Lydia Lynch**



Lydia Lynch is a reporter for the Brisbane Times

---