



searchlight group
EXECUTIVE SEARCH & ADVISORY

Candidate Briefing Pack



Chief Executive Officer

August 2026



ABOUT MEN'S FAMILY VIOLENCE SERVICES AUSTRALIA

Men's Family Violence Services Australia (MFVSA) is a new, independent national organisation established by No to Violence (NTV), the national peak body for ending men's use of family violence. Following a strategic review, NTV identified an inherent tension between its peak body and information and referral functions and its role as a direct provider of intervention services. It therefore resolved to demerger its direct service delivery into MFVSA, a separate company limited by guarantee with its own Board, governance and leadership. MFVSA will operate independently from NTV, enabling it to focus exclusively on the delivery and growth of specialist intervention services, while NTV concentrates on advocacy, policy, research and sector leadership. MFVSA is targeted to be fully operational in late 2026.

MFVSA is an unusual proposition as start-ups go. It begins on day one with live, funded services, established referral pathways, and around 40 experienced staff transitioning across, together with seed funding from NTV. Its inaugural leaders will carry two mandates at once: protect continuity, so that funding agreements and the men and families relying on the services are never in doubt and build the culture and performance of a standalone entity, from finance, people and risk systems through to an employer brand the workforce can commit to.

Purpose and direction

- **Vision:** an Australia free from men's use of family violence.
- **Mission:** to reduce men's use of family violence through specialist counselling, accountability and evidence-based behaviour change interventions.
- **Purpose:** address violence at its source while centring victim-survivor safety.

Services

- Individual counselling, and structured counselling and accountability programs including partner contact and support.
- Men's Accommodation and Counselling Services, and place-based interventions and justice system supports.
- Court-ordered interventions and specialist corrections-focused intervention services.
- Telehealth national services.

MFVSA's market position: Australia's specialist counselling and intervention service for men who use family violence. Its brand aspires to be trusted, authoritative, compassionate, evidence-led and courageous.



STRATEGIC DIRECTION

MFVSA's Strategic Plan 2026–2029 sets a three-year course to establish Australia's leading specialist intervention service focused on men who use family violence: a nationally recognised, financially sustainable, clinically excellent organisation that reduces harm, increases accountability and improves safety for women and children. The plan is built on five priorities:

- **Clinical Excellence:** deliver best-practice counselling, behaviour change programs and risk-informed interventions.
- **Safety Leadership:** embed victim-survivor informed governance and risk management systems.
- **National Growth:** expand reach through new contracts, telephone and remote digital delivery, and strategic partnerships.
- **Sustainable Revenue:** diversify funding across government contracts, grants, fee-for-service and philanthropy.
- **Influence & Innovation:** embed evaluation and evidence creation, and contribute to research, service and system reform.

The three-year horizon

- **Establish:** secure anchor funding, transition frontline staff and management, recruit the inaugural leadership, and launch the brand.
- **Expand:** grow nationally, scale specialist intervention programs, and deepen the referral network.
- **Lead:** achieve national recognition as the standard-setter and publish evidence of impact.

For interested candidates, the attraction will be the building of MFVSA itself: very few executive roles offer live, funded services and an experienced workforce on day one, with a mandate to take the organisation from establishment to national leadership with the framework of an existing Strategic Plan.



THE OPPORTUNITY

Role. Chief Executive Officer of Men's Family Violence Services Australia.

Reports to. the MFVSA Board. A transitional Board, drawing on some existing NTV Board members, is currently in place; the ongoing Chair is being appointed concurrently, a short step ahead, and will sit on the CEO selection panel.

Team. around 40 experienced staff transitioning from No to Violence, with three direct reports: General Manager, Corporate Services / Company Secretary; General Manager, Services and Business Development; and Executive Assistant.

Scale. live, funded services from day one, in a substantially government-funded model, with seed funding from NTV.

Location. national. MFVSA operates largely virtually; an East Coast base is preferred.

Contract. To be negotiated.

Package. Competitive executive package, commensurate with the skills and experience of the successful candidate.

This is a rare mandate: build something new without starting from nothing. The inaugural CEO will be hands-on with operations to begin, an effective, entrepreneurial executive comfortable with the elements of a start-up, while holding two mandates at once. Priorities include:

- **Protecting continuity of service:** carry the services, their funding agreements and the people relying on them across the transition without a break in delivery.
- **Leading the workforce transition:** bring around 40 experienced staff into a new organisation with care: industrial arrangements honoured, culture built deliberately, and an employer identity people commit to.
- **Building the corporate scaffolding:** establish finance, people, risk, quality and technology functions proportionate to a standalone entity, sequenced so that delivery never wavers.
- **Securing and growing the funding base:** hold the confidence of Commonwealth and state funders through transition, then diversify income across contracts, grants, fee-for-service and philanthropy.
- **Establishing MFVSA's positioning and brand:** build strong sector positioning through visionary leadership, in a changing political climate and funding landscape.
- **Leading with safety and integrity:** champion victim-survivor safety and the integrity of working with men who use violence, in practice and in public, under the scrutiny this sector attracts.
- **Partnering with the Chair and Board:** build a trusted, accountable relationship with the Chair, and support the establishment of good governance from the executive side.

WHAT YOU WILL BRING

The profile below describes the substance of the role rather than a rigid checklist; if you bring most of this and the appetite for the rest, we would like to hear from you.

Essential

- Substantial executive leadership of complex human, community or other client-facing services, with strong financial, operational and organisational management capability.
- The capacity to stand up or transform an organisation while keeping frontline services running.
- An effective, entrepreneurial leadership style suited to the establishment phase: hands-on with operations to begin, with the ability to step up and step down as the organisation grows.
- Demonstrated leadership of high-risk, client-facing services, with strong capability in service quality, safeguarding, risk management and organisational accountability.
- Demonstrated people and culture leadership through significant organisational change or transition, including building engaged, accountable and high-performing teams.
- Deep respect for victim-survivor safety, with sound risk judgement under pressure.
- The capacity to engage and network across a competitive sector: building trust across stakeholders and pursuing collaboration for greater impact.
- A genuine understanding of the gendered nature and drivers of men's use of family violence.
- A skilled communicator with strong influencing skills, comfortable representing the organisation publicly.

Highly desirable

- Credibility with Commonwealth and state government funders.
- Experience diversifying revenue beyond core government funding.
- Experience in men's behaviour change or family violence, or the ability to acquire it quickly and with humility.

Disposition

- Values-led and trauma-informed, with resilience under public scrutiny.
- A visionary leader who is equally focused on operational delivery.
- A genuine partner to the Chair and Board.
- Deep self-awareness, a commitment to self-development, and the ability to self-manage under pressure.
- An empowering leadership style with strong emotional intelligence, and the empathy to read others and manage conflict or tension to the best outcome.
- An authentic and compelling representative for the organisation, with impeccable integrity.

Working at MFVSA

- Purpose you can see: the CEO's leadership will directly contribute to reducing men's use of family violence and improving safety for victim-survivors, families and communities.
- A rare mandate: build something new without starting from nothing, with live, funded services and an experienced workforce from day one.
- Investment in people: seed funding, established referral pathways, and the backing of NTV through the transition.
- A feminist, victim-survivor-informed organisation: safety, accountability and evidence-based practice are lived values inherited from NTV. People with lived experience are warmly encouraged to apply.



THE SEARCH PROCESS

Searchlight Group is supporting MFVSA with this appointment. The Chair and CEO searches are running concurrently, with the Chair appointed a short step ahead. The process is rigorous, confidential and respectful of your time, and we provide feedback at each stage.

- **1 • Apply or enquire:** a CV and short cover letter to Searchlight Group, or a confidential conversation first.
- **2 • Initial conversation:** a discussion with Michael Holdway about the role and your background. August-September
- **3 • Structured interview:** a behavioural and values-based interview with Searchlight Group. September
- **4 • Panel interviews:** shortlist presented, and interviews with MFVSA's selection panel. Mid-October
- **5 • Due diligence:** referencing, verification and safety screening. On selection.
- **6 • Appointment:** offer, onboarding and transition support. On appointment.

Timing is indicative. Applications are reviewed as they are received, so early contact is encouraged.

HOW TO APPLY

Please upload a CV and a short cover letter on what you would bring to the role through the website portal link:

LINK: <https://searchlightgroup.com.au/jobs/chief-executive-officer-3/>

Closing date for applications is midnight on 6th September. If you would prefer a confidential conversation before applying, Michael Holdway would welcome your call.

About Searchlight Group

Searchlight Group is a Melbourne-based executive search firm specialising in the public and for-purpose sectors, with deep networks across the human services, community and government sectors. Michael Holdway leads this engagement personally, and every conversation is confidential.

Contact

Michael Holdway · Managing Director, Searchlight Group

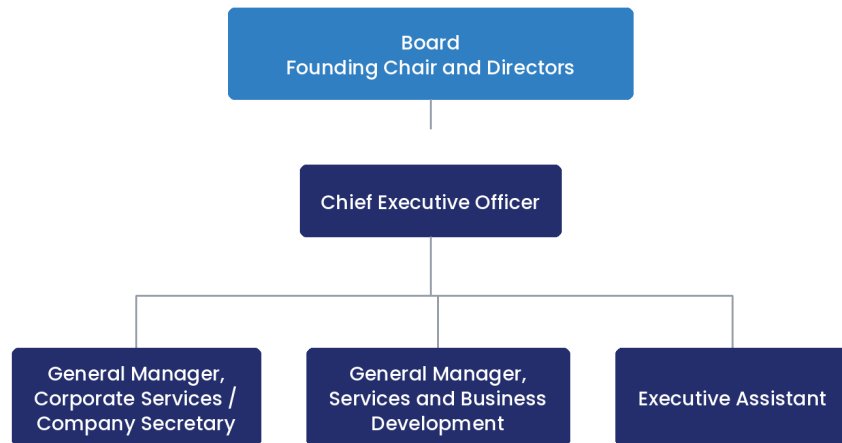
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ORGANISATION STRUCTURE - Proposed

MFVSA's initial leadership structure at establishment. The Chief Executive Officer is supported by three direct reports; corporate functions (marketing and communications, ICT and data, quality, risk and compliance, and people and culture) report through the General Manager, Corporate Services, and clinical leadership, men's behaviour change and counselling teams report through the General Manager, Services and Business Development.



Adapted from MFVSA planning documents, July 2026.



POSITION DESCRIPTION

Chief Executive Officer

Men's Family Violence Services Australia (MFVSA)

Position	Chief Executive Officer
Organisation	Men's Family Violence Services Australia (MFVSA)
Reports to	The MFVSA Board (transitional Board currently in place; ongoing Chair being appointed concurrently)
Direct reports	General Manager, Corporate Services / Company Secretary; General Manager, Services and Business Development; Executive Assistant
Scale	Around 40 experienced staff transitioning from No to Violence; live, funded services from day one; substantially government-funded model. [Annual funding/contract value TBC.]
Status	Full time
Location	National. MFVSA operates largely virtually; an East Coast base is preferred
Contract	[TO BE CONFIRMED]
Package	Competitive executive package, commensurate with the skills and experience of the successful candidate

ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

Men's Family Violence Services Australia (MFVSA) is a new, independent national organisation established by No to Violence (NTV), the national peak body for ending men's use of family violence. Following a strategic review, NTV identified an inherent tension between its peak body and information and referral functions and its role as a direct provider of intervention services. It therefore resolved to demerger its direct service delivery into MFVSA, a separate company limited by guarantee with its own Board, governance and leadership. MFVSA will operate independently from NTV, enabling it to focus exclusively on the delivery and growth of specialist intervention services, while NTV concentrates on advocacy, policy, research and sector leadership. MFVSA is targeted to be fully operational in late 2026.

MFVSA begins with live, funded services, established referral pathways, and around 40 experienced staff transitioning across, together with seed funding from NTV. The inaugural CEO carries two mandates at once: maintaining continuity and confidence for funders, staff and the men and families relying on its services, while completing the establishment of MFVSA's organisational systems and culture and positioning it for sustainable growth.

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Chief Executive Officer leads MFVSA's strategy, operations and service delivery through transition and growth, completing its establishment as an independent national service organisation while protecting service continuity, strengthening organisational capability and partnering effectively with the Chair and Board.

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

Strategic & Operational Leadership

- Build the corporate scaffolding: establish finance, people, risk, quality and technology functions proportionate to a standalone entity, sequenced so that delivery is stable.
- Protect continuity of service: carry the services, their funding agreements and the people relying on them across the transition without a break in delivery.
- Translate the strategic plan into clear organisational priorities, measures and accountabilities.

People & Workforce

- Lead the workforce transition: bring around 40 experienced staff into a new organisation with care so that industrial arrangements honoured, culture is built deliberately, and an employer identity people commit to.
- Foster an inclusive, accountable and psychologically safe organisational culture.

Funding & Sustainability

- Secure and grow the funding base: hold the confidence of Commonwealth and state funders through transition, then diversify income across contracts, grants, fee-for-service and philanthropy.

Brand & Positioning

- Establish MFVSA's positioning and brand through visionary leadership, in a changing political climate and funding landscape.

Safety & Integrity

- Champion victim-survivor safety and the integrity of working with men who use violence, in practice and in public, under the scrutiny this sector attracts.
- Ensure services are safe, high-quality, evidence-informed and accountable, with strong practice governance, safeguarding, quality assurance, risk management and continuous improvement systems.

Governance Partnership

- Partner with the Chair and Board: build a trusted, accountable relationship with the Chair, and support the establishment of good governance from the executive side.

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

Essential

- Substantial executive leadership of complex human, community or other client-facing services, with strong financial, operational and organisational management capability.
- The capacity to stand up or transform an organisation while keeping frontline services running.
- An effective, entrepreneurial leadership style suited to the establishment phase: hands-on with operations to begin, with the ability to step up and step down as the organisation grows.
- Demonstrated leadership of high-risk, client-facing services, with strong capability in service quality, safeguarding, risk management and organisational accountability.
- Demonstrated people and culture leadership through significant organisational change or transition, including building engaged, accountable and high-performing teams.
- Deep respect for victim-survivor safety, with sound risk judgement under pressure.
- The capacity to engage and network across a competitive sector: building trust across stakeholders and pursuing collaboration for greater impact.
- A genuine understanding of the gendered nature and drivers of men's use of family violence.
- A skilled communicator with strong influencing skills, comfortable representing the organisation publicly.

Highly Desirable

- Credibility with Commonwealth and state government funders.
- Experience diversifying revenue beyond core government funding.
- Experience in men's behaviour change or family violence, or the ability to acquire it quickly and with humility.

Personal Attributes

- Values-led and trauma-informed, with resilience under public scrutiny.
- A visionary leader who is equally focused on disciplined delivery.
- A genuine partner to the Chair and Board.
- Deep self-awareness, a commitment to self-development, and the ability to self-manage under pressure.
- An empowering leadership style with strong emotional intelligence, and the empathy to read others and manage conflict or tension to the best outcome.
- An authentic and compelling representative for the organisation, with impeccable integrity.

Specific Requirements

- National Police Check.
- Working with Children Check.
- Any other probity or safety screening required by MFVSA policy or its funding agreements.

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Version	Date	Author	Description
0.1	August 2026	Searchlight Group	Initial draft for review: Chief Executive Officer

Prepared by Searchlight Group on behalf of Men’s Family Violence Services Australia. This position description is a working draft and remains subject to Board approval.