



searchlight group
EXECUTIVE SEARCH & ADVISORY

Candidate Briefing Pack



Chair

A new national organisation established by No to Violence

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 board and constitution through governance, risk and safety systems, finance and 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 an inaugural Chair very few board roles offer the chance to take an organisation from incorporation to national leadership inside a single strategic plan, in work where the outcomes are measured in the safety of women and children.

THE ROLE OF THE CHAIR

Role. Chair (non-executive) of Men's Family Violence Services Australia.

Board. a transitional Board is currently in place, drawing on some existing NTV Board members. The inaugural Chair will lead the build of the permanent Board, with the transitional Board involved in its selection.

Sequence. the Chair and CEO searches run concurrently, with the Chair appointed a short step ahead so the incoming Chair and transitional Board can help select the inaugural Chief Executive Officer.

Remuneration. the Chair role is remunerated at approximately \$25,000 per annum (indicative, to be confirmed); director positions are also remunerated, at a level still to be confirmed.

Commitment. TBA. Expect the establishment year to carry the heaviest load.

Location. National. The Board operates largely virtually; an East Coast base is preferred.

Term. TBA.

MFVSA is seeking a values-driven, experienced Chair with the governance authority to build and lead a high-performing Board from establishment, the credibility to reassure government and funders through the transition, and the maturity to form a trusted partnership with an inaugural CEO.

Key responsibilities

- **Build the permanent governance model:** lead the transition from the initial governance arrangements to a high-performing permanent Board, including its composition, committees, governance framework and ways of working, with victim-survivor safety and workforce wellbeing embedded from the outset.
- **Reassure funders and government:** represent MFVSA at the most senior levels through the transition, giving Commonwealth and state funders and sector partners early confidence that nothing will be lost.
- **Appoint and partner with the inaugural CEO:** sit on the selection panel, and form a mature, accountable partnership with the chief executive; the relationship that will be critical to determine early success.
- **Oversee risk, safety and financial sustainability:** govern a substantially government-funded model through establishment, with sound oversight of risk, quality and safety systems in a high-consequence, publicly scrutinised sector.
- **Build an informed and engaged Board:** Foster a culture of continuous learning and curiosity among directors, ensuring the Board remains connected to the evolving family violence landscape and is equipped to govern in the context of emerging risks, opportunities and sector developments.

Alongside completing MFVSA's setup and supporting its growth, the Chair carries the ongoing responsibilities of any board chair:

- Chair Board meetings and facilitate collaborative decision-making that builds consensus.
- Lead the Board's strategic, policy and financial planning.
- Lead CEO performance, remuneration and succession, and Board succession planning and evaluation.
- Ensure robust management of conflicts of interest and the transitional arrangements with NTV, while safeguarding MFVSA's governance and operational independence.
- Foster a cohesive culture across the Board and executive leadership.
- Partner with the CEO in representing the organisation externally, including public statements when required.
- Ensure constitutional, legal and regulatory compliance, including Corporations Act and ACNC obligations.

WHAT YOU WILL BRING

The profile below describes the substance of the role rather than a rigid checklist. Formal governance qualifications are valued but not required; what matters is demonstrated chairing experience and the judgement that comes with it.

Essential

- An experienced chair, with the governance authority to build a board and its supporting structures from the beginning.
- Demonstrated governance experience in a complex, regulated or high-risk service environment, with strong judgement in relation to service quality, safeguarding, organisational risk and performance.
- Strong financial and funding literacy, including the capacity to oversee financial sustainability, organisational performance and risk in a substantially government-funded service environment.
- Direct experience of, or clear capacity for, standing up or transforming an entity.
- The standing to reassure government, funders and sector partners through the transition.
- The maturity to appoint, partner with and hold accountable the inaugural Chief Executive.
- Comfort operating governance-first while being somewhat more hands-on through the establishment phase.
- A genuine understanding of the gendered nature and drivers of men's use of family violence.
- A commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, including in how the ongoing Board itself is built.

Highly desirable

- Credibility in family violence or adjacent human services.
- Experience overseeing organisational performance, culture and a chief executive partnership.
- The capacity to engage and network across a competitive sector, and to pursue collaboration for greater impact.

Disposition

- An authentic commitment to ending men's use of family violence and to victim-survivor safety.
- Political judgement, and the credibility to build trust across stakeholders.
- An appetite for strategic conversations: theory of change, metrics for success, and evidence of impact.
- The genuine time and emotional capacity to serve an inaugural board in demanding, high-consequence work.
- Self-awareness and emotional intelligence, with the judgement to build trust and navigate group dynamics in the boardroom.
- Consultative, with strong active-listening skills to build consensus among directors.
- Uncompromising integrity, underpinning the trust an inaugural Chair is asked to hold.

Working at MFVSA

- A rare mandate: help build a national specialist organisation that starts with live, funded services and an experienced workforce, rather than from nothing.
- A workforce ready to commit: around 40 experienced staff transitioning in, backed by seed funding and established referral pathways.
- Purpose you can see: governance decisions here translate directly into safer families and communities.
- 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 manages every stage of this appointment. The Chair and CEO searches run 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. From now.
- **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, including participation in the founding CEO selection. On appointment.

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

HOW TO APPLY

Please send 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/chair/>

Closing date for applications is midnight on 6th September 2026. 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

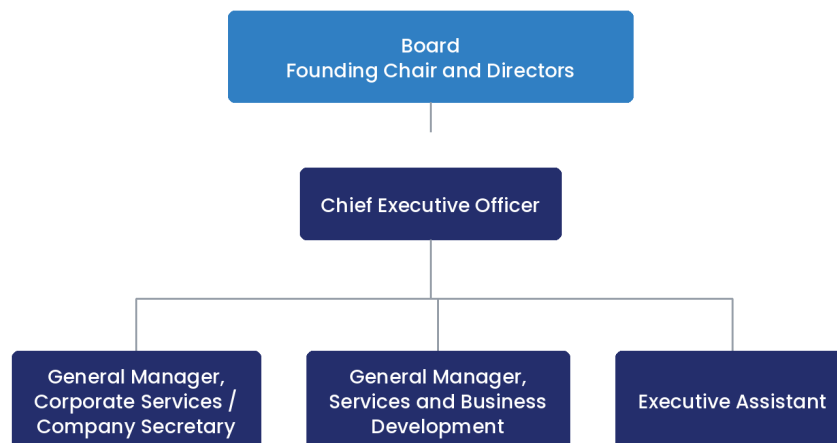
Michael Holdway · Managing Director, Searchlight Group

Mobile: 0400 006 513 · Email: michael@searchlightgroup.com.au

Suite 5, Level 5, 118 Queen Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

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.



Chair

Men's Family Violence Services Australia (MFVSA)

Position	Chair (Non-Executive Director)
Organisation	Men's Family Violence Services Australia (MFVSA)
Board	Transitional Board currently in place, drawing on some existing No to Violence Board members; the Chair leads the build of the permanent Board, with the transitional Board involved in its selection
Term	[TO BE CONFIRMED]
Time commitment	[TO BE CONFIRMED]. Expect the establishment year to carry the heaviest load.
Location	National. The Board operates largely virtually; an East Coast base is preferred
Remuneration	Approximately \$25,000 per annum (indicative, to be confirmed); director positions are also remunerated

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 will commence with live, funded services, established referral pathways, ~40 EFT experienced staff transitioning across, annual funding of ~\$7.1 million, and 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, as well as build the scaffolding of a standalone entity, including board and constitution, governance, risk and safety systems, finance and an employer brand the workforce can commit to.

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Chair will lead the establishment of MFVSA as a genuinely independent organisation, build a high-performing permanent Board and governance model, provide confidence to government, funders and sector partners through the transition, and form a trusted and accountable partnership with the inaugural Chief Executive.

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

Governance & Board Leadership

- Lead the transition from the initial governance arrangements to a high-performing permanent Board, including its composition, committees, governance framework and ways of working, with victim-survivor safety and workforce wellbeing embedded from the outset.
- Chair Board meetings and facilitate collaborative decision-making that builds consensus.
- Lead the Board's strategic, policy and financial planning.
- Recruit and induct ongoing directors and set the culture and standards of the boardroom.
- Build an informed and engaged Board: Foster a culture of continuous learning and curiosity among directors, ensuring the Board remains connected to the evolving family violence landscape and is equipped to govern in the context of emerging risks, opportunities and sector developments.
- Lead CEO performance, remuneration and succession, and Board succession planning and evaluation.

Stakeholder & Government Relations

- Represent MFVSA at the most senior level through the transition, giving Commonwealth and state funders and sector partners early confidence that nothing will be dropped.
- Partner with the CEO in representing the organisation externally, including public statements when required.

Executive Partnership

- Shape the CEO specification, sit on the selection panel, and form a mature, accountable partnership with the chief executive to enable early success.

Risk, Safety & Compliance

- Govern a substantially government-funded model through establishment, with sound oversight of risk, quality and safety systems in a high-consequence, publicly scrutinised sector.
- Ensure robust management of conflicts of interest and the transitional arrangements with NTV, while safeguarding MFVSA's governance and operational independence.
- Ensure constitutional, legal and regulatory compliance, including Corporations Act and ACNC obligations.

Culture

- Foster a cohesive culture across the Board and executive leadership.

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

Essential

- An experienced chair, with the governance authority to build a board and its supporting structures from first principles.
- Demonstrated governance experience in a complex, regulated or high-risk service environment, with strong judgement in relation to service quality, safeguarding, organisational risk and performance.
- Strong financial and funding literacy, including the capacity to oversee financial sustainability, organisational performance and risk in a substantially government-funded service environment.
- Direct experience of, or clear capacity for, standing up or transforming an entity.
- The standing to reassure government, funders and sector partners through the transition.
- The maturity to appoint, partner with and hold accountable the inaugural Chief Executive.
- Comfort operating governance-first while being somewhat more hands-on through the establishment phase.
- A genuine understanding of the gendered nature and drivers of men's use of family violence.
- A commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, including in how the ongoing Board itself is built.

Highly Desirable

- Credibility in family violence or adjacent human services.
- Experience overseeing organisational performance, culture and a chief executive partnership.
- The capacity to engage and network across a competitive sector, and to pursue collaboration for greater impact.

Personal Attributes

- An authentic commitment to ending men's use of family violence and to victim-survivor safety.
- Political judgement, and the credibility to build trust across stakeholders.
- An appetite for strategic conversations: theory of change, metrics for success, and evidence of impact.
- The genuine time and emotional capacity to serve an inaugural board in demanding, high-consequence work.
- Self-awareness and emotional intelligence, with the judgement to build trust and navigate group dynamics in the boardroom.
- Consultative, with strong active-listening skills to build consensus among directors.
- Uncompromising integrity, underpinning the trust an inaugural Chair is asked to hold.

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: Chair

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.