



Mark Speakman

Attorney General

Minister for Prevention of Domestic and Sexual Violence

David Elliott

Minister for Police and Emergency Services

MEDIA RELEASE

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SEXUAL ASSAULT REPORTS SPIKE

Dedicated police and frontline support services are ready and willing to take your call: that's the message from the NSW Government today as new statistics are released showing a recent spike in sexual assault reports.

Attorney General and Minister for Prevention of Domestic and Sexual Violence Mark Speakman acknowledged the [NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research \(BOCSAR\) brief issued today](#) that reported a 61 per cent increase in sexual assault incidents reported to NSW Police in March 2021, compared with the monthly average over the previous year.

"I commend the extraordinary courage of all of the victim-survivors who've recently contacted police to report sexual assaults," Mr Speakman said.

"While this spike comes off the back of intense media coverage and long overdue public discussion of sexual violence in our communities, it also demonstrates what we already knew, that these crimes are significantly underreported each day.

"Our message to victim-survivors is please know that you are not alone, and that help is available, whether that's contacting the police or another support or counselling service."

Minister for Police and Emergency Services David Elliott said the NSW Police Force take reports of sexual violence very seriously.

"Although these figures are distressing, it is encouraging that there is an increased willingness to report sexual assaults and that is a testament to the strength of all victims who come forward, and to police for ensuring that victims know they will be supported and believed when they do," Mr Elliott said.

State Crime Commander, Assistant Commissioner Stuart Smith, said police are committed to preventing sexual assaults and supporting victims who come forward.

"It takes incredible courage to re-live trauma and come forward as a victim of sexual violence," Assistant Commissioner Smith said.

"Since the launch of Operation Vest in March this year, there was a significant increase in the number of people in the community who came forward to report sexual violence.

"The courage and bravery displayed by those individuals has already led to significant law reform, with consent laws being strengthened and simplified across the state.

“NSW Police will always thoroughly investigate reports of sexual violence and it is important that as a community, we continue these conversations and keep encouraging people to come forward.”

If you or someone you know are in immediate danger, contact Triple Zero (000).

More information on how to report sexual offences to the NSW Police is available [on their website](#), including the [Sexual Assault Reporting Option \(SARO\)](#).

The SARO is an online form that people can complete if they have decided not to make a formal report to police or have their matter investigated. This makes a record of what has occurred, while allowing the police to gather information on sexual offences and offending.

A number of other support services are also available to provide help:

- **1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732)** is a 24/7 national sexual assault, domestic and family violence counselling service.
- **NSW Rape Crisis (1800 424 017)** is a 24/7 phone counselling service for anyone who is experiencing, or has experienced sexual violence, and their supporters.
- **Kids Helpline (1800 551 800)** is a 24/7 national phone counselling service for young people aged 5 to 25.