



# The evolving role of police in Tasmania:

A decade of rising demand and complexity.



### FAMILY VIOLENCE

**+250% in family violence incidents**

Domestic-related dispatches have increased from 1,582 incidents a decade ago, to 5,856 in 2023–24.

**Greater complexity, longer duration**

Family violence cases are high-risk and complex, with the greatest growth seen in medium and low-risk cases that require intensive documentation and follow-up.



### INTENSE LEVELS OF ACCOUNTABILITY

Tasmanian officers operate within a rigorous oversight environment that includes internal governance, legislative/judicial oversight, and independent external bodies.

**Legislative/judicial oversight**  
(Magistrate, Supreme and Coroner's courts, Inquiries)

**Internal Governance**  
(Professional Standards)

**Independent External Bodies**  
(Ombudsman, Integrity Commission)

**Public scrutiny**  
(Media, *Right to Information Act 2009*)



### FRONTLINE DEMAND AND DISPATCH

**40% increase in frontline demand**

ESCAD operational dispatch incidents have risen by over 40,000 in the last decade, reflecting a surge in calls for service.

**138,000+ dispatch jobs**

In 2023–24, Tasmania Police managed a total of 126,706 operational incidents statewide.

**Disturbances dominate**

Disturbance calls, often involving arguments, are now identified as the most frequent incident type handled by frontline officers.



### SCOPE CREEP

**Police as the default 'catch-all' service**

Due to resource shortfalls in other sectors, police are now the primary responders for non-core tasks that belong to other agencies, e.g. welfare checks, ambulance assists and child safety issues.

**Acting as 'hospital security guards'**

Officers frequently lose hours waiting in hospitals or performing security functions for health services managing mental health crises.

**An outlier in bailiff duties**

Tasmania is the only jurisdiction in Australia and New Zealand where police still routinely perform civil bailiff duties and execute warrants for the Department of Justice.



### TRAINING AND MENTORING

Balancing operational demands with time for training and mentoring new staff remains an ongoing challenge.



### YOUTH CRIME

Rising youth crime has increased workload, with cases requiring significant additional time due to child safety and legal obligations. 80% of youth custody cases result in bail.



### SPECIALISED RESPONSE EXPECTATIONS

There is growing public and organisational expectation for specialised responses to complex incidents, shifting away from traditional general duties.



### PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

**PTSD: the invisible wound**

Psychological injuries, including PTSD resulting from repeated trauma exposure, are primary drivers of workforce loss.

**27% of resignations are linked to injury**

Over a quarter of officer departures are related to workers compensation claims, highlighting the heavy toll of the job.