Summary of implementation status at 30 September 2026

Review: Identification and management of financial abuse within the tax system			
Recommendation	**ATO Response**	**Status**	**Planned implementation date**
Recommendation 1a The ATO, in consultation with subject matter experts, community organisations and people with lived experience develop and provide regular mandatory training to all ATO frontline officers and other staff who engage with taxpayers to support them in identifying and referring cases of financial abuse to a specialist team.	**Agree** The ATO agrees to develop and provide training to support officers identify and refer cases involving financial abuse. Further, the ATO is currently implementing a Vulnerability Capability that will strengthen and coordinate the way the ATO supports people experiencing vulnerability. This program of work will include the development of a framework, together with specific actions and activities to support people experiencing vulnerability, including financial abuse. The current program identifies that the development and delivery of additional training to frontline staff, and other staff that engage with taxpayers is required.	Completed	Q4 FY26
Recommendation 1b The ATO, in consultation with subject matter experts, community organisations and people with lived experience create a specialist, centralised team to be the point of referral for cases of alleged or potential financial abuse	**Agree** The ATO agrees, noting that initial work will be required to determine how this recommendation can be best implemented and that the report provides scope for the ATO to determine how this can be achieved. For example,	Completed*	Original: Q4 FY26 Completed: Q1 FY27

that are outside the skills and expertise of ATO frontline officers to manage.	through expansion of the existing Additional Support Hub or establishing a new team. We also note that the Additional Support Hub was established as a specialist point of referral internally to ensure that cases are triaged appropriately where additional support may be needed.		
Recommendation 1c The ATO, in consultation with subject matter experts, community organisations and people with lived experience provide additional specialist training in financial abuse and trauma-informed practice to officers in that team, those in the Specialised client Support team and the Advocate Help Desk.	**Agree** The ATO agrees to develop and provide training to support officers identify and refer cases involving financial abuse.	Completed	Original: Q2 FY26 Completed: Q4 FY26
Recommendation 1d The ATO, in consultation with subject matter experts, community organisations and people with lived experience refresh its policies and procedures to include specific guidance on the identification and management of financial abuse within the tax system.	**Agree** A specific action for delivery under the ATO Vulnerability Capability is the development of additional guidance and procedures for staff on the identification, substantiation and management of financial abuse. The ATO will consider the IGTO's findings and this recommendation in the development and delivery of that specific action.	Completed	Q3 FY26

Recommendation 1e The ATO, in consultation with subject matter experts, community organisations and people with lived experience consider options to implement system indicators that alert ATO officers to potential financial abuse while minimising safety and privacy risks for victim-survivors.	**Agree** The ATO agrees to consider options for the implementation of system indicators within the confines of the existing legislative framework that determines what information the Commissioner can collect and for what purposes. The consideration of options will require an exploration of practical matters, legislative frameworks, and potential systems (processes and technology) changes before a decision can be made as to how and whether it is appropriate to implement systems indicators. We also note that depending on where we ultimately determine the bounds of our legislative framework to be on this matter, this could be a policy or legislative change matter for Government.	Completed	Q3 FY26
Recommendation 2a The ATO further develop its procedures and guidelines on the circumstances in which it will: • permanently remove a debt; • defer or discontinue recovery action; or • administer other types of relief for tax liabilities incurred because of financial abuse, to enable case officers to provide correct, consistent and complete advice and support to victim-survivors.	**Agree** The ATO agrees with this recommendation. However, we note that the ATO's powers to permanently remove a debt, defer or discontinue recovery action are very limited, and that the presence of financial abuse is not necessarily sufficient on its own to enliven these powers. For example, section 340-5 of Schedule 1 to the Taxation Administration Act 1953 allows the Commissioner to release certain liabilities where the taxpayer would suffer serious hardship if required to satisfy it. A victim-survivor suffering financial abuse might satisfy this test of serious hardship, but in some cases a victim-survivor might not.	Completed	Q4 FY26

	Further, section 340-5 also does not allow the Commissioner to release GST liabilities. The ATO agrees that in ensuring case officers give correct, consistent and complete advice and support, it can review and further develop its procedures and guidelines on the circumstances in which it can and cannot provide relief for tax liabilities incurred because of financial abuse.		
Recommendation 2b The ATO improve its written guidance and website communications to raise awareness amongst taxpayers and tax professionals about financial abuse, the types of support and relief that are available, and where to go for other forms of support such as community organisations, helplines and financial counsellors.	**Agree** Through the development of the ATO Vulnerability Capability, the ATO will commence a program of work to consider how we can improve our communications, including written guidance and our website, to better support those experiencing vulnerability, including financial abuse.	Completed	Q4 FY26
Recommendation 2c The ATO consider options to obtain supporting information in circumstances where the taxpayer may not have direct evidence of financial abuse, including from trusted partners.	**Agree** The ATO agrees to consider options that would be sufficient to the Commissioner, including leveraging existing processes that already exist externally to the ATO (such as state-based health services or law enforcement).	Completed	Q3 FY26
Recommendation 2d The ATO adopt a 'Safety by Design' framework and develop assessment tools to ensure that all relevant ATO teams have a lens of financial abuse when they design new	**Agree** The implementation of the ATO Vulnerability Capability will include the development of a framework. The framework will include a focus on ensuring the impacts for people experiencing vulnerability, including financial abuse, are	Completed	Q4 FY26

internal policies or procedures, to minimise the potential for abuse of the tax systems.	considered in the design of new processes and procedures. The ATO will incorporate 'Safety by Design' principles into the programs of work established under the capability.		
Recommendation 3a The ATO undertake a review of its existing powers that may be applied to redistribute liabilities to perpetrators and develop staff guidance on how and when these powers would be used.	**Agree** The ATO agrees to undertake a review of existing powers under the law and associated staff guidance.	Completed	Original: Q3 FY26 Completed: Q4 FY26
Recommendation 3b The ATO provide accessible communication channels for victim-survivors or third parties to report suspected financial abuse in the tax system.	**Agree** The ATO agrees to provide appropriate communication channels to enable victim-survivors or third parties to report instances of known or suspected financial abuse that is impacting their tax affairs.	Completed	Q4 FY26
Recommendation 3c The ATO consider whether any of the exceptions contained within Division 355 of Schedule 1 to the *Taxation Administration Act 1953* empowers it to disclose instances of domestic and financial abuse outside of the ATO and: i. if the exceptions do not empower such actions, raise the matter with the Treasury for consideration as part of its current review of tax regulator secrecy exceptions; or	**Agree** The ATO agrees to consider whether any of the existing exceptions contained within Division 355 of Schedule 1 to the Taxation Administration Act 1953 empowers the sharing of protected information in instances of domestic and/or financial abuse, including to whom and for what purposes. However, in doing so, we note that whether a matter does ultimately fall within an exception under Division 355 is determined on a case-by-case basis.	Delayed	Original: Q4 FY26 Updated: Q2 FY27

ii. if the exceptions do empower such actions, implement a process and guidelines to assist officers to identify and refer cases for consideration of potential external disclosure.	We also note that any policy or legislative changes to provide further exceptions would be a matter for Government.		
Recommendation 4a The ATO publish more data about the outcomes of the Child Support Lodgement Enforcement program.	**Agree** The ATO agrees to publish more data about the outcomes of the Child Support Lodgement Enforcement program.	In progress and on track	Q2 FY27
Recommendation 4b The ATO engage with Services Australia and explore opportunities to increase the frequency of referrals and enhance the quality of information referred to increase the number of referrals which can be actioned for lodgement enforcement.	**Agree** The ATO is currently engaged with Services Australia and agrees to continue to explore opportunities in relation to both the frequency of referrals and quality of information referred, relating to the Lodgment Enforcement program.	In progress and on track	Q2 FY27
Recommendation 4c The ATO assess the risk and prevalence of income underreporting by individuals with child support obligations and assess whether the ATO's current compliance approach is commensurate to the risk.	**Agree** The ATO agrees to assess the risk and prevalence of income underreporting by individuals with child support obligations and assess the findings against the current compliance approach.	Completed	Q4 FY26
Recommendation 4d	**Agree** The ATO agrees with the recommendation. In doing so, we note that the ATO is able to review the current policy around the relevance of other Commonwealth debts when	Completed	Q3 FY26

The ATO consider its policy on debt relief where a victim-survivor has multiple Commonwealth debts and where those debts are caused by the same financial abuse.	considering whether a victim-survivor is eligible for debt relief. This will require us to also consider the extent to which the ATO's privacy and secrecy obligations allow it to disclose information to another agency to achieve cross-agency collaboration on debt relief. We also note that in applying the debt release policies, the ATO takes a holistic approach to understanding the financial circumstances of the client and all debts that they have. Ultimately, the operation of the law will determine how the specific liabilities of the taxpayer (government and non-government debts) are considered in the determination made by the Commissioner. Any specific consideration about providing for an alternate outcome to the current provisions, where those debts were caused by the same financial abuse would be a matter for government.		
Recommendation 4e The ATO develop a process for officers to share across business lines information received via a tip-off that potentially impacts child support or other social security benefits to enable a more holistic ATO response and appropriate support or resolution.	**Agree** The ATO agrees to develop a process for tip-offs to be shared across business lines to support the overall ATO response to the information received.	Completed*	Q1 FY27

* Recommendation has been implemented but awaiting verification from the ATO via its final review and sign-off process.