**School of Humanities and Social Inquiry**

**Men as Allies: A Case Study of White Ribbon Australia**

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# Method

## Overview

This case study uses mixed methods to explore the opinions and experiences of male allies in WRA that are part of the Ambassadors program. Through the combination of confidential interviews and an anonymous survey, the three primary research questions will be explored:

1. Why do men become allies in the social movement to prevent VAW, particularly men’s VAW movement?
2. What challenges do they encounter?
3. How do they overcome those challenges?

## Benefits of Research

This research directly benefitted participants by providing an opportunity to tell their stories and opinions; to know their ideas and contributions were valued. Their efforts may also lead to a greater understanding of anti-men’s VAW specifically and ally movements in general. Participants were already motivated to assist WRA because they were Ambassadors; involvement in this research was an opportunity to expand that role. Additionally, this research provided an opportunity for participants to reflect on their time with WRA and in preventing men’s VAW.

## Ethical Considerations

There were several ethical concerns. First, because of the sensitive nature of men’s VAW, there was a risk of discomfort. However, the researchers had prior experience with the sensitive topic and working with allies. Participants were given a Participant Information Sheet outlining the research methods, and interviewees were given the opportunity to discuss any questions or concerns with the researchers. Participants were advised of potential risks associated with the research and informed that their involvement is entirely voluntary. Participants were also supplied with a list of counseling and support services before completing the interview or survey, and the researchers were available for aftercare.

Second, privacy and confidentiality were ethical concerns. All interview participants were de-identified and referred to by pseudonyms, their demographic details anonymised, and their data securely stored. Additionally, any potentially identifying information from the anonymous survey was kept confidential and presented only in an anonymised, aggregated form. Participants were assured that no one, including WRA, could access the data, except for the researchers. This research protocol was to assure no conflicts of interests arose, or negative impacts occurred to the participant’s reputation, status, or credibility.

Finally, there was the possibility of unresolved violence being disclosed. All participants were informed that all unresolved violence would be reported to Crime Stoppers. The combination of discomfort, privacy concerns, and the potential for discovering unresolved crimes were all ethical concerns that were weighed against the benefits of the research before beginning. The research procedure was approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of Wollongong.

## Participant Recruitment

Participant sampling was based on men currently involved with WRA’s Ambassador program, a group of male allies working with the organisation, all of which were above the age of eighteen. These men self-selected to participate and all current members of the Ambassador program were approached for inclusion. The researchers were not provided a sampling frame by WRA. Instead, potential participants were contacted by WRA via email to self-select for participation in the survey and interviews.

An initial set of pilot interviews was conducted to refine the research instruments. These first Ambassadors were contacted directly by WRA’s staff on behalf of the researchers, providing contact information, and a Participant Information Sheet to the participants. Additionally, some participants provided the researchers’ contact information to other potential participants who then contacted the researchers. Thus, the participants themselves make initial contact with the researchers, and no personal information beyond basic contact information is made available to the researchers before completing a Consent Form.

After the research instrument had been refined, other participants were recruited by an email sent by WRA’s staff to the entire pool of Ambassadors. The email included a link to an anonymous online, quantitative survey and contact information for the researcher, with an invitation to participate in a follow-up interview. At the conclusion of the survey, survey respondents had the option to leave their contact information so the researcher could set up a follow-up interview. The survey data and contact information were not connected to maintain the anonymity of the survey. A reminder email was sent to all potential participants a month later.

## Data Collection

The primary reason to use interviews and a survey was the complementary nature of both methods. The interviews provided a rich source of lived experiences through narrative, however not all Ambassador had the time or desire to participate in an interview. There is little demographic data on male allies in Australia. Because of the national reach of WRA, this project created a useful profile of men in the allyship space across the country. The demographic data collected includes age, occupation, ethnicity, religion, postcode, and political affiliation. By comparing responses across demographic markers, trends that would not be found through interviews will emerge. The combination of interviews and a survey will provide a well-rounded insight into of individual allies and the allies as a group. Thus, the survey serves two purposes, as a complement to the interviews and as a unique data collection source.

### Interviews

All interview participants completed a single interview either in person or over the phone in English. Interviews ranged from fifteen minutes to three hours in length, the mean being fifty-five minutes in length. The interviews were semistructured, with broad questions related to WRA and general questions about their work as anti-men’s VAW ally. The semistructured interview method allowed participants to express what they feel is relevant and to have control over the direction of the interview.

### Survey

An anonymous online survey was conducted using Survey Monkey. Respondents were recruited for this via an email from WRA. The respondents were not required to answer any questions on the survey. The survey consisted of closed, multiple-choice questions and open questions. Additionally, most closed questions included an option to include an ‘other’ response to mitigate researcher bias and to be more indicative of participants’ authentic experiences.

## Participant Recruitment

Participant sampling was based on men currently involved with WRA’s Ambassador program, all of whom were above the age of eighteen and are current members of the Ambassador program. Potential participants were contacted by WRA via email to self-select for participation in the survey and interviews.

## Sample

A total of 2062 Ambassadors were approached by WRA, via email, and invited to participate in the study. A total of 86 participants completed an interview. Of these, 10 were completed face-to-face, and the remaining 76 were completed via audio-only Skype/telephone calls. For the survey component, an overall response rate of approximately 17.9 percent was attained with 370 surveys undertaken. Of these, 296 were considered satisfactorily completed (see 1.9.1, p. 2) for inclusion in the research reported here, giving an 80 percent completion rate and a 14 percent final response rate (see 1.9.3, p. 2).

Table 1 (below) provides a breakdown of Ambassadors contacted by each state, as well as the corresponding final response rate. Due in no small part to the changes associated with the Ambassador program being undertaken at the time the survey was administered, it is likely that the sampling frame included Ambassadors who had already ceased their affiliation with the Ambassador program. It is therefore likely the true final response is higher than the 14.4 percent reported here.

Table : Response rate as proportion of sampling frame, by state

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Emails sent  (sampling frame) | Response received  (sample achieved) | Response rate (Percent of emails sent) |
| ACT | 165 | 32 | 19.4% |
| VIC | 610 | 89 | 14.6% |
| WA | 136 | 19 | 14.0% |
| QLD | 226 | 17 | 7.5% |
| NSW | 479 | 79 | 16.5% |
| SA | 336 | 47 | 14.0% |
| NT & TAS | 110 | 13 | 11.8% |
| Total | 2062 | 296 | 14.4% |

## Data Analysis

Data analysis occurred concurrently with the quantitative data and qualitative data. All interviews were recorded digitally, de-identified, and transcribed. Survey results were analysed using SPSS software with open-ended responses recoded using grounded theory. Due to the complexity of the project, another researcher Claire E. Seaman from the University of Wollongong, reviewed the themes and data to assure trustworthiness and minor adjustments to the coding framework were made.

## Key Statistical Analysis Notes

The following methodological information is taken **verbatim** from the Internal White Ribbon Ambassador Report ([Bell and Seaman 2016, 104-111](#_ENREF_6)). This report was prepared for WRA by Kenton Bell and Claire E. Seaman. This report was not made publically available due to privacy issues; however, a public report will be released outlining a majority of the findings.

### Avoiding Inflated numbers

Descriptive statistics are presented as proportions of the total 296 Ambassadors surveyed, rather than as proportions of the total ‘valid’ responses to each survey question. Extensive recoding of responses to demographic questions was also undertaken to maximise the usability of responses, and to maintain the confidentiality of respondents. To meet one of the main objectives of the report—understanding ‘who’ Ambassadors are relative to males in Australia generally—comparisons were made to 2011 Australian Census data across key demographic categories. Permission to use the ABS’ online Table Builder application, and to access confidentialised Australian Census data, was obtained by both researchers. Table Builder facilitated the extraction of 2011 male population data across key demographic variables to Excel where summary statistics were produced with Australian Census items that best match survey categories, where possible (see 1.9.4 below, p. 2). Inferential analysis using one-sample binomial and t-tests were undertaken for comparisons to Australian Census statistics obtained. For Ambassador survey responses, chi-square tests for independence were used to examine differences across key Ambassador demographic characteristics. Independent samples t-test were used to examine differences in count variable responses as they produced the same results as nonparametric testing. The alpha level was set at .05, and significant findings are included where relevant.

### Criteria for ‘Complete’ Surveys

Surveys were selected as ‘satisfactorily complete’ if participants provided valid responses to all of the following questions: ‘How did you initially hear about White Ribbon?’, ‘Has being an Ambassador changed how you relate to women?’, and ‘Postcode of primary residence’. These questions were chosen as they provided the best indication of participation across the different sections of the survey and were close-ended questions.

### Response Rate and Assessment of Attrition Bias

The response rate of approximately 14 percent is low. We expect that there are several factors for this. Firstly, WRA uses email to communicate with Ambassadors en masse. Along with email addresses not always being a fixed point-of-contact, we expect that many Ambassadors may simply have not been aware that the survey was running. Secondly, WRA is undergoing a period of significant change, including alterations to Ambassadorship. It is not known how many of the 2062 emails were read or received by Ambassadors who were still active as Ambassadors.

Attempts were made to assess whether surveys omitted had systematic differences to those included in order to evaluate the presence of attrition bias. The first question, ‘How long have you been involved with WRA?’ was answered in 50 percent of omitted surveys and had a mean of 4.30 years and standard deviation of 2.51. This was not significantly different to the completed survey results (*M =* 4.00, *SD* = 2.47) and does not provide evidence for the presence of attrition bias. Comparisons on further survey items were hindered by a steep decline in valid item responses among omitted surveys from this initial question.

### Use of 2011 Australian Census data

2011 Australian Census Data was accessed using the Table Builder Basic platform available for use, with permission, from the ABS. Tables were then exported to Excel to calculate relevant statistics. Data was refined to include only men in Australia aged between 18 and 80 years old, inclusive, unless otherwise stated. Percentages were calculated using ‘Total’ figures that then had any ‘Not stated’ and ‘Inadequately described’ responses deducted ([ABS 2015](#_ENREF_5)).

### TableBuilder Basic Tables Generated

* Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011, ‘SEXP and AGEP by INCP’. Findings based on 2011 Census of Population and Housing, generated 12 February 2016.
* Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011, ‘SEXP and AGEP by LFSP’. Findings based on 2011 Census of Population and Housing, generated 12 February 2016.
* Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011, ‘SEXP and AGEP by MDCP and MSTP’. Findings based on 2011 Census of Population and Housing, generated 12 February 2016.
* Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011, ‘SEXP and AGEP by QALLP’. Findings based on 2011 Census of Population and Housing, generated 12 February 2016.
* Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011, ‘SEXP and INCP by LFSP’. Findings based on 2011 Census of Population and Housing, generated 12 February 2016.
* Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011, ‘SEXP and INCP by UR’. Findings based on 2011 Census of Population and Housing, generated 12 February 2016.

### Limitation on Interpretation

Another assumption, which is unique to chi-square testing, is that the expected frequency count is above 5. Fischer’s Exact Test was not used. Where this second assumption is not met, and there is a key qualitative insight, the statistics are presented in descriptive rather than inferential terms

### Calculation of Ambassador Length of Involvement

Respondents’ length of involvement as indicated in ‘Months’ and ‘Years’ responses was coded into a single continuous variable. Respondents who indicated between 1 and 9 on the ‘Months’ measure had these added in decimal form to the number of years they indicated they had been involved (i.e.: 1 month, 2 years = 2 + .1 = 2.1 years). Respondents who did not provide a response for one of the variables had their response imputed as ‘0’ (i.e.: 0 months, 5 years = 5 + 0 = 5 years). Respondents who provided ‘0’ or missing responses to both questions were coded as ‘missing’ so that the lowest possible length of time is .10 of a year (imputed from 0 years, 1 month). Respondents who indicated 10 months were imputed as +.9 years rather than an additional year. Respondents who indicated 11 or 12 months were recoded as +1.0 months; an additional year. This process facilitated the fitting of responses into a base-10 continuous variable outcome. While this slightly over-inflates time of involvement for many respondents (.1 of a year is greater than 1 month), this recoding process was undertaken for its relative simplicity and transparency. 98 respondents provided valid ‘month’ responses, meaning 183 respondents provided only ‘year’ responses (there were 281 total valid responses to this question). Given the high number of ‘year’ responses only, it is likely that respondents may have ‘rounded-up’ their time of involvement with WRA. The variable should be interpreted cognisant of these factors.

### Creation of ‘Age’ Categories

Respondents’ years of birth were recoded into a continuous variable, Age, which indicated the age the respondent turned in 2015. To maintain respondent confidentiality in displaying frequency data, ages were also coded into five categories:

* + Ages 18-29
  + Ages 30-39
  + Ages 40-49
  + Ages 50-59
  + Ages 60+

### Creation of ‘Remoteness’ Categories

The distribution of Ambassadors is based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics Remoteness classification, relative to the males in Australia aged 18-80 years, according to 2011 Census data ([ABS 2013](#_ENREF_4)).

### Creation of ‘Sexual Orientation’ Categories

To maintain respondent confidentiality, this variable was recoded into two categories. The first encompasses those who indicated they were ‘heterosexual’, and the second contains an aggregate of the responses, ‘gay’, ‘bisexual’ ‘can’t choose’, and valid ‘other’ responses.

### Creation of ‘Relationship Status’ Categories

To maintain respondent confidentiality, responses were coded into aggregated categories. ‘Married’ was retained as its own category, ‘de facto’ was recoded to a new category, ‘in a relationship (other)’, which included the five ‘other’ responses to this question who indicated they were currently in a relationship but not necessarily ‘married’ or ‘de facto’. ‘Separated but not divorced’ and ‘divorced were combined into a new category, ‘separated or divorced’, and the remaining categories ‘widowed’ and ‘single, never married’ had low sample sizes and so were also combined into a new category, ‘single or widowed’.

### Comparability of ‘Relationship Status’ Variables to 2011 Australian Census Data

There was no comparable category in the 2011 Census item, ‘Registered Marital Status (MSTP)’ for ‘in a relationship’. Instead, responses of never married people who are in relationships are included under ‘never married’ and people previously married and in a relationship fall under the relevant categories, ‘separated’ or ‘divorced’ or ‘widowed’ ([ABS 2011a](#_ENREF_2)).

### Creation of ‘Primary Language’ Categories

Responses to this question were coded into two new binary variables. ‘No’ responses were recoded to variable ‘primarily speaks English at home’, and all responses to the stated options, including valid responses to ‘other’ were recoded to comprise the variable ‘primarily speaks a language other than English at home’.

### Creation of ‘Place of Birth’ Categories

Responses to this question were coded into new categories; ‘yes’ to ‘Australian born’ and, ‘no’, to ‘born overseas’. The survey item, ‘What year did you move to Australia’ was not included in this report. Several respondents noted that they experienced issues with the ‘drop-down box’ used to indicate a response to this question. To maintain respondent confidentiality, countries of birth were coded as two new aggregate categories. The United Kingdom was retained as a dichotomous categorical variable, ‘born in the UK’, which included ‘other’ responses which also indicated being from the country. A second binary variable ‘Born elsewhere’ encapsulated all valid ‘other’ responses, as well as responses to the stated options; ‘New Zealand’, ‘China’, ‘India’, and the ‘Philippines’.

### Creation of ‘Religiosity’ Categories

Responses to this question were coded into three new categories. People who indicated ‘I do not identify with a religious group’, or who provided an ‘other’ response that indicated they did not identify as religious were coded into the category ‘no religious affiliation’. To maintain respondent confidentiality, those who responded with a Christian religion (‘Anglican/Church of England’, ‘Baptist’, ‘Catholic’, ‘Lutheran’, ‘Pentecostal’, ‘Presbyterian and Reformed’, and ‘Uniting Church/Methodist’ or a relevant ‘other’ response) were coded into the category, ‘Christian religions’. Similarly, respondents who indicated ‘Buddhist’, ‘Hinduism’, ‘Islam’, ‘Judaism’, and ‘Spiritual without a denomination’ or valid ‘other’ response were coded into, ‘Other religions or spiritualities’.

### Creation of ‘Political Party Affiliation’ Categories

To maintain respondent confidentiality, responses for ‘Liberal Party’ and ‘National Party’ were joined to form the response, ‘Liberal or National Parties’, as representative of the current Coalition alliance in Australian politics (there was no set responses for other Coalition parties). Any responses to ‘Australian Democrats’, ‘One Nation’, or ‘Family First’ or ‘Other’ were coded into a single ‘other’ response.

### Creation of ‘Key Occupation’ Categories

Only a few occupations indicated could not be coded (1.4 percent), and 26 respondents did not provide a valid response. Occupations were classified based on ABS working definitions of blue and white-collar occupations used in the *Australian Social Trends* ([ABS 1997](#_ENREF_1)).

* + ‘Blue-collar occupations . . . refer to the following major groups of the Australian Standard Classification of Occupations: tradespersons; plant and machine operators, and drivers; and labourers and related workers. These major groups are predominantly associated with trades and lower-skilled jobs that are often physical.’
  + ‘White-collar occupations . . . refer to managers and administrators; professionals, para-professionals; clerks; salespersons and personal service workers. These major groups are predominantly associated with higher education and specific skills or with lower-skilled jobs that are mainly social rather than physical.’

### Creation of ‘Income’ Categories

To maintain respondent confidentiality and to facilitate comparisons with available census data, income categories were condensed into four groups:

* + ‘<$400 per week’ for all income categories at and below this amount
  + ‘<1500 per week’ for all income categories between $400 and $1499 per week
  + ‘<2000 per week’ for the income category ‘$1500 - $1999 per week’
  + ‘$2000+ per week’ for all income categories greater than and including $2000 per week.

### Comparability of ‘Income’ to 2011 Australian Census Data

Weekly income does *not* include any deductions such as tax or superannuation. Additionally, Australian Census ‘Negative income’ responses were considered equivalent to ‘Nil income’ ([ABS 2011b](#_ENREF_3)).

### Quotations from the Survey

Quotations taken from survey responses were corrected for spelling and grammar.

### Creation of ‘Feminist-identifying’ Categories

A small proportion (4.4 percent) of respondents did not provide a valid response to this question. A total of 34.5 percent of Ambassadors responded affirmatively while 61.1 percent indicated that would not consider themselves a feminist, including 2 percent who explicitly stated they identified as ‘pro-feminist’. Overall, 36.5 percent of Ambassadors surveyed were classified as ‘feminist-identifying’ or ‘pro-feminist’.

### Religiosity and Joining WRA.

Of the Ambassadors surveyed, 1 in 6 from ‘other’ religious faiths indicated this response, relative to 1 in 20 Ambassadors surveyed from Christian-based religious faiths or with no religious affiliation. The associated chi-square test failed the expected count assumption.

### Primary contribution to WRA

Common themes to this open-ended question were identified. Where possible, responses were categorized into one or more categories. A total of 264 Ambassadors provided a response to this question with 247 providing valid, codifiable responses. Proportions are calculated from the overall sample total of 296.

### Primary contribution to preventing or reducing men’s VAW

Common themes to this open-ended question were identified. Where possible, responses were categorized into one or more categories. 263 Ambassadors provided a response to this question with 249 providing valid, codifiable responses. Proportions are calculated from the overall sample total of 296.

### What does WRA provide you?

Where possible, responses were categorized into one or more broad categories. 258 Ambassadors provided a response to this question with 245 providing valid, codifiable responses. Proportions are calculated from the overall sample total of 296.

### Classification of Formal or Informal Involvement

Direct involvement refers to Ambassadors, who have explicitly engaged in preventing men’s VAW in a direct, highly focused capacity. It may be formal or informal. Direct, formal involvement includes Ambassadors whose paid professional work, or community work has been or is currently primarily directed towards ending and preventing men’s VAW. It is a broad group which includes (but is not limited to) Law Enforcement who have specified they have been involved in Family Violence units or similar, professionals working with victims or perpetrators of violence, and people working for organisations directly targeting men’s VAW. Direct, informal involvement refers to Ambassadors, who stated that they have personally intervened to stop violence and/or have assisted a victim, including those who have assisted family or friends experiencing men’s VAW. Not too dissimilar to direct involvement, 'Formally involved in Work with Direct Exposure to VAW or Prevention Efforts' refers to Ambassadors who did not report informal direct involvement, and whose formal work was not specified as being primarily focused on preventing men’s VAW but which included some exposure to violence, providing safe spaces for victims, as well as advocating against violence. Finally, indirect involvement categories refer to Ambassadors, who reported working through either formal or informal relationships with a focus on shifting the culture around men’s VAW.

## Limitations

While this is a case study of WRA’s Ambassador population, the representativeness of this study is limited by the self-select nature of the design. For instance, it is likely that results may reflect social network clusters of Ambassadors (e.g., Ambassadors from the same workplace), and that the Ambassadors that agreed to participate were the most motivated to do so. Additionally, the population was in flux during the research window as WRA was going through corporate restructuring and the Ambassador program was being overhauled, with each potential participant being asked to recommit concurrently to the organization. With the application of inferential statistical tests, it is assumed that 2011 Australian Census data is representative of true population parameters and that the Ambassador sample is representative of the Ambassador population despite the nonrandom sampling method. Some caution should, therefore, be taken in interpreting the statistics (see 1.9.6, p. 2). Finally, this is the first research project of its kind due to the scope and intention of the project. The results should be viewed through a case study framework and as a pilot study ([Bell and Seaman 2016](#_ENREF_6)).

## Research Outcomes

* A research finding report sent to all Ambassadors.
* Internal Report to WRA that exhaustively discussing Ambassador feedback.
* Publication of several academic papers outlining key findings such as allyship, feminism, and masculinity.
* Public reports made available through the WRA website. Additionally, the researchers will publish results in the popular press such as newspapers, Huffington Post, and the Conversation to bring further awareness to the issue of men’s VAW.
* Presentations at conferences related to gendered violence and sociology in Australia and globally.
* This research is a pilot study. The intention is to replicate this study with other White Ribbon organisations and similar organisations around the world for cross-cultural analysis. These efforts will create a research instrument that others can use to investigate male allyship in relation to men’s VAW and improve programming within their organization.

# Results and Discussion

WRA and the Ambassadors were forthcoming in their participation. The Ambassadors openly discussed their views on a range of topics while answering the three primary research questions: why did you become an Ambassador, what challenges have you encountered, and how did you overcome them? To contextualise the results and frame the discussion, particularly in a case study, one must situate these answers in a particular place in time and in reference to the demographic profile of respondents (survey takers).

Interviews began in April of 2015 and Australia was in a state of heightened awareness about VAW at the hands of men. One reason is Rosie Batty, who was named Australian of the Year in January of 2015. Batty’s 11-year-old-son Luke was murdered by his father at cricket practice the previous February. Batty had taken steps to protect Luke, she ‘involved the police, the courts, child protection and social workers to keep her son and herself safe’ ([Thompson and McGregor 2014](#_ENREF_11)). The death of Luke Batty echoed across the country ‘when a grieving mother spoke out calmly just hours after her son’s murder; she gave voice to many thousands of victims of domestic violence who had until then remained unheard’ ([National Australia Day Council 2016b](#_ENREF_10)). Rosie and Luke’s story frame the respondent’s place in time. Furthermore, Lieutenant-General of the Australian Army and White Ribbon Ambassador David Morrison was named Australian of the Year in 2016 continues that narrative. Morrison’s notoriety in the public arose when he ‘ordered misbehaving troops to ‘get out’ if they couldn’t accept women as equals, his video went viral, and he started a cultural shift that has changed Australia’s armed forces forever’ ([National Australia Day Council 2016a](#_ENREF_9)).

Another tumultuous event was several people speaking publically as Ambassadors, but their message did not completely aligned with the message of WRA. For example, Tanveer Ahmed, a psychiatrist, authored an opinion piece in *The Australian* on February 9, 2015, titled ‘Men Forgotten in Violence Debate’. Tanveer signed this article as a White Ribbon Ambassador. Tanveer was roundly derided in the media and academic circles. WRA initially did not revoke Tanveer’s Ambassadorship instead stated he must go through recommitment process; however, Tanveer would later step down from his role as an Ambassador. WRA issued a statement that his article and ‘subsequent comments are inconsistent with the message and focus of the White Ribbon Campaign. . . . [and we appreciate] . . . the resulting deep concern of our supporters, including other White Ribbon Ambassadors’ ([White Ribbon Australia 2015](#_ENREF_13)).

Two remaining events frame the experience of respondents during the research window. Tony Blair decided to take the mantle of Minister for Women Finally, WRA itself was going through a restructuring process with long-time employees leaving and priories shifting. Two of these changes was the individual in charge of the Ambassador program left WRA and all Ambassadors had to undergo a recommittal process. This recommittal process was directly related to Tanveer’s actions and need to deliver a cohesive message from the Ambassador.

The Batty tragedy fostered a countrywide dialogue that was furthered by General Morrison. Ahmed spoke out as an Ambassador with a message against White Ribbon’s ethos and created a controversy. Tony Blair took it upon himself to become Minister for Women and subsequently helped destroy the social security net women rely on. Finally, the White Ribbon Ambassador program itself was being revamped, and the Ambassadors were reaccredited. With these key situational points in mind, who are the Ambassadors of WRA? In quantifiable numbers who are these men who publically profess to ‘stand up, speak out and act to prevent men's violence against women’ ([White Ribbon Australia 2016](#_ENREF_14)).

## Respondent Demographic Profile

This demographic data is taken entirely from the survey which had 296 valid responses (see Method 1.9.2, p. 2). When possible the survey responses are compared to men in Australia between aged 18–80 based on data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (see Method 1.9.4, p. 2). Additionally, most, but not all interview participants indicated they had also completed the survey.

### Age and Location

The average respondent age is M = 50.6 (see Figure 1, p. 2). The Ambassadors are significantly older on average than the general population of men in Australia aged 18–80 (M = 44.76) as well as men in Australia who volunteer aged 18–80 (M = 47.02). Postcode information was used to classify state location and remoteness (see Methodology 1.9.9, p. 2). Respondents from all Australian states participated with a higher proportion in New South Wales and Victoria (see Figure 2, p. 2) Of the sample population, 62.2 percent of the respondents live in a City, 22.6 percent in an Inner Regional area, and 15.2 percent live in Outer Regional, Remote area, or Very Remote. As seen in Figure 3, p. 2, this distribution is similar to the larger male population in Australia, but they are slightly less likely to come from City areas than surveyed Ambassadors ([Bell and Seaman 2016, 34](#_ENREF_6)).

Figure : Respondent Age Categories

Figure : Respondent State Location

Figure : Geographical Remoteness: ABs and Males in Australia

### Relationships and Children

Overwhelmingly, the sampled Ambassadors identified as heterosexual (95.3 percent) as only 4.7 percent identified as gay or bisexual, or provided an additional identifier Most Ambassadors reported being married (77.4 percent) or in a relationship (12.8 percent). Only 4.7 percent reported being single or widowed, while 5.1 percent indicated they were separated or divorced (see 1.9.11, p. 2). This finding is signifigant because as seen in Figure 4, p. 2, Ambassadors are much more likly to be married (77.4 percent) in comparison to males in Australia (52.1 percent) ([Bell and Seaman 2016, 36](#_ENREF_6)). A majority of the respondents have children (84.1 percent) with 47 percent having daughters and sons, 17.9 percent have only daughters, and 19.3 percent have only sons and the majority indicated they had both (47.0 percent) (see Figure 5, p. 2).

Figure : Relationship Status: Ambassadors and Males in Australia (Fixed choice, Single response)

Figure : Respondents with Children (Fixed choice, Multiple response)

### Country of Origin, Language, and Religiosity

Most of the respondents (80.7 percent) were born in Australia, those that were not primarily come from the United Kingdom (10.8 percent) and 96.6 percent primarily speak English in the home. In comparison, 71.6 percent of males in Australia were born in Australia ([Bell and Seaman 2016, 37](#_ENREF_6)). A majority of respondents (54.4 percent) identify with a religious group, of those that do, 44.6 percent are Christian (see Method 1.9.15, p. 2). Most of the non-Christian survey respondents identified as ‘spiritual’, more than once Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism were indicated. However, 44.3 percent of survey respondents indicate no religious affiliation. This is notable because in the broader male Australian population, aged 18–80, only 26.1 percent indicated no religion ([Bell and Seaman 2016, 38](#_ENREF_6)).

### Political Affiliation

In Australia, people sometimes refer to being politically on the left or right. The respondents indicated a broad range of positionality but were primarily centric to left leaning; no respondent indicated they are entirely right leaning. The political affiliations of the respondents were varied but are primarily Australian Labour Part (32.4 percent) and Liberal Labour Party (29.4 percent), additionally, 23.6 indicate they had no party affiliation.

Figure : Respondent Location across the Left/Right Political Spectrum (Fixed choice, Single response)

Figure : Respondent Political Affiliation (Fixed choice, Single response)

### Education, Employment, and Income

Surveyed Ambassadors are significantly more educated than other males in Australia, as 67.2 percent have a Bachelor degree or higher qualification as opposed to 14.8 percent in the general population ([Bell and Seaman 2016, 41](#_ENREF_6)). Almost all (90.5 percent) Ambassadors surveyed indicated they were employed in paid work; however, only 71.6 percent of males in Australia reported being employed, including 55.2 percent employed full-time, and 12.2 percent part-time ([Bell and Seaman 2016, 41](#_ENREF_6)).

Respondents were also asked to indicate their occupation from an extensive list. Based on the pattern of responses, occupations were grouped into common key categories (see Figure 9, p. 2). The categories were further coded, where possible, into ‘industry type’, using definitions from the ABS (see Methodology 1.9.17, p. 2). A majority of the surveyed Ambassadors (63.5 percent) are employed in paid work that can be categorized as ‘white-collar’ work and few in ‘blue-collar’ occupations (2.0 percent) as indicated in Figure 13 (p. 43). The respondents primarily work in Government (15.6 percent), Law Enforcement (13.6 percent), and 12.5 percent in Health and Wellness ([Bell and Seaman 2016, 43](#_ENREF_6)).

Survey respondents were asked for their gross annual revenue by income categories with a ‘per week’ breakdown (see Methodology 1.9.18, p. 2). The majority of Ambassadors surveyed (57.1 percent) earned over $2000 per week. Although wages have increased between 2011 and 2015, the Ambassador population is still markedly different to the average male population in Australia, as presented in Figure 10 (p. 2). Because a majority of Ambassadors are currently in full-time work, comparisons were made between Ambassador income and the income of the average male full-time worker in Australia, aged 18-80 (see Methodology 1.9.19, p. 2).

Figure : Employment Status: Ambassadors and Males in Australia (Fixed choice, Single response)

Figure : Respondent Current or Last Occupational Category (Fixed choice, Single response)

Figure : Per Week Breakdown of Annual Income from all sources and before deductions: Ambassadors and Males in Australia

### Respondent Dempographic Review

In comparison males in Australia, the surveyed Ambassadors are older and work more white-collar jobs. While they are geographically dispersed in comparison to the general population of males in Australia, they are significantly higher educated and earn more. Additionally, Ambassadors surveyed are more likely than other men in Australia to be married and have children, and identify overwhelmingly as heterosexual. With this demographic profile of the sample population in mind, one can better contextualise and explore the first of three primary research questions.

## Why do men become formally involved as allies to prevent men’s VAW?

Why are men motivated to participate *formally* in White Ribbon Australia (WRA) to stop men’s violence against women (VAW)? A man does not need to be an Ambassador to be an ally or to actively speak out and stand up against men’s VAW. In the survey, Ambassadors were asked several questions to gain insight into the pathways that lead to formal involvement as a WRA Ambassador. For the first question, Ambassadors were asked to indicate how they initially heard about the organization (see Figure 11 below).

Surveyed Ambassadors primarily heard about WRA through their workplace or the WRA Workplace Accreditation program (43.9 percent), a community event (13.5 percent), community club or organisation (7.1 percent), and friends (6.4 percent). The large proportion of Ambassadors who initially heard about WRA through the workplace or the Workplace Accreditation Program should be interpreted with caution. It likely reflects the scope of this program in Australia, but may also be attributable to the survey method and the potential clustering of responses (see Limitations 2.10, p. 33).

Figure : How did you initially hear about WRA? (Fixed choice, Multiple response)

A second survey question regarding pathways to formal involvement asked Ambassadors whether they had been previously involved in preventing violence against women before working with WRA. This survey question was open-ended and responses were coded into key themes (see Figure 12, p. 2). These themes broadly categorise the nature of their previous involvement as being either formal or informal, and as either through direct prevention efforts, exposure to prevention efforts, or through indirect prevention efforts (see 1.9.26, p. 2).

The range of responses to this question provides important insight into the way in which the unique Ambassador characteristics are associated with previous experiences in allyship and preventing men’s VAW. Although there are some differences by remoteness and education level, there were no differences in other aggregate key characteristics that differentiate Ambassadors from the male population, such as age, income, religiosity, and even length of involvement. Although limiting factors cannot be ruled out concerning whether or not men previously involved in preventing men’s VAW become Ambassadors, this does provide some indication that participation in allyship against men’s VAW may not be contingent on these factors. This finding gives weight to the generalizability of these results as a case study of WRA Ambassadors and perhaps indicative of the experiences of men more broadly engaged in ending men’s VAW ([Bell and Seaman 2016, 50-51](#_ENREF_6)).

Figure : Prior Involvement Preventing men’s VAW (Fixed response, yes response allowed for elaboration)

### Motivations for WRA Involvement, Survey Results

A third survey item regarding pathways to formal involvement asked Ambassadors to indicate the reason(s) why they became involved with WRA. Top motivations to join WRA include; moral obligation (69.6 percent), hearing stories related to men’s VAW (53.7 percent), and learning statistics about men’s VAW (43.2 percent), while the primary reason indicated was to make a difference in their community (75.7 percent). Two survey respondents added contrasting but similar views on making a difference in their community. One survey respondent wants to use his ‘leadership position as CEO to make a difference [in] my organisation and as a role model for the community’ and another states he works as an Ambassador for ‘the love of my sisters and women in my Aboriginal community.’ One survey respondent eloquently stated his moral obligation existed because ‘violence against women is abhorrent and a most heinous breach of their human rights; so serious in fact that I could not, nor can, do nothing.’ Learning statistics is a key motivator for Ambassadors, as one survey respondent stated ‘as a father of two young daughters I was horrified by the statistics of violence against women in our community and internationally. I wanted to lend my support and to try and change attitudes so that all women were able to live in a community free from violence.’

A third (33.4 percent) of survey respondents indicated that violence committed against someone they knew was a motivator. A similar number of Ambassadors were influenced or invited by women (24.0 percent) to join as by men (27.7 percent). This response indicates that both men and women equally view WRA as a way for men to speak out against men’s VAW and those men are similarly willing to listen to men and women about becoming involved. One survey respondent said ‘I was proposed as an Ambassador by some female staff at my school. I have never sought formal permission or approval for the work that I do at the margins of my profession. . . [and] . . . having been accepted, I wear the Ambassador's badge proudly on a daily basis.’ While women and men both influence men to participate, politically ‘right’ Ambassadors as less likely (.53 times) to be influenced or invited by women to join WRA ([Bell and Seaman 2016, 55](#_ENREF_6)). While almost a quarter (23.0 percent) of Ambassadors indicated they were invited directly by WRA to join, two groups were more likely to indicate this response. Those involved for more than three-and-half years (2.02 times as likely) and Ambassadors with a personal income of $2000 or more per week (1.68 times) ([Bell and Seaman 2016, 55](#_ENREF_6)).

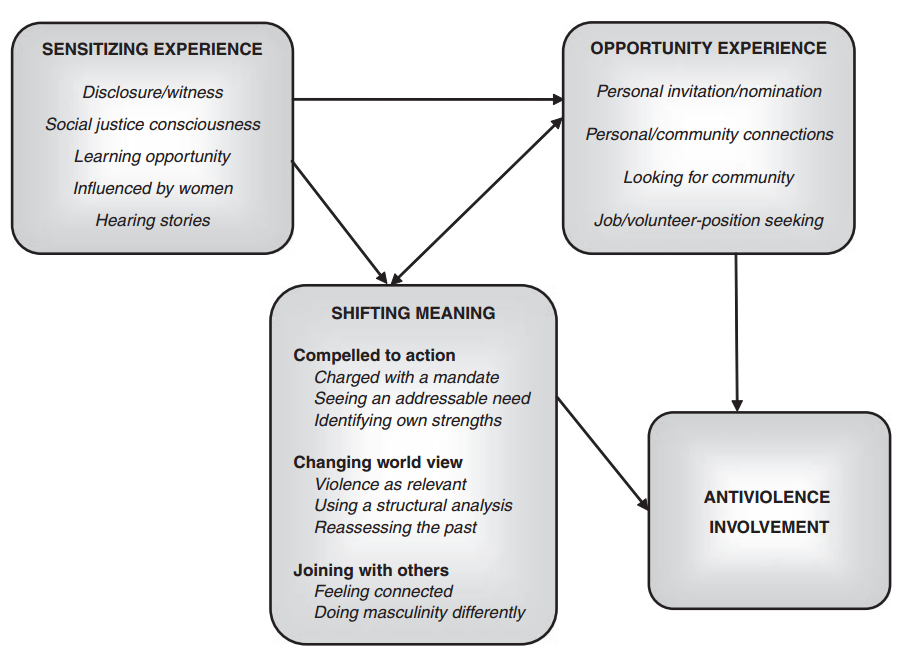
Over a tenth of respondents indicate using the WRA ‘name’ as a resource (12.2 percent), as well as for profile building within their profession (11.5 percent). Two groups of Ambassadors are more likely to indicate this response, the combined Ambassadors in Healthcare and Medical, Mental Health, Social Work or Counselling and Charity Third Sector occupations (4.01 times) and Ambassadors with daughters only (2.59 times) ([Bell and Seaman 2016, 55](#_ENREF_6)). Just under a tenth (7.8 percent) of Ambassadors indicated that networking opportunities are a reason they join WRA. These three findings are indications of resource mobilization by the Ambassadors, with WRA as the resource. This indicates a mutually beneficial relationship between WRA the organisation and the Ambassadors. A relatively small amount of Ambassadors indicated they joined WRA because of prior participation with a similar organization (6.1 percent), however, Ambassadors involved for over three-and-half years, and feminist-identifying were more (3.38 and 2.55 times, respectively) likely to indicate this response ([Bell and Seaman 2016, 55](#_ENREF_6)).

Figure : Reasons for Involvement with WRA (Fixed choice, Multiple response)

### How Can I Not?

Interview participants echoed the sentiment of survey respondents when asked why they joined WRA. Often during interviews, participants were taken aback with the question, intimating ‘how could they not be involved?’ This rejoinder was consistent with Casey and Smith’s findings in ‘‘How Can I Not?’: Men’s Pathways to Involvement in Anti-Violence against Women Work (2010). Casey and Smith determined that ‘men’s engagement is a process that occurs over time, that happens largely through existing social networks, and that is influenced by exposure to sensitizing experiences, tangible involvement opportunities and specific types of meaning making related to violence’ ([Casey and Smith 2010, 953](#_ENREF_8)). Casey and Smith divided their conception model into three themes, which make men engage as antiviolence allies: a *sensitizing experience*, an *opportunity experience*, and *shifting meaning*. Additionally, Casey and Smith’s conceptual model provided a basis for selectable choices on the survey.

Figure : Casey and Smith’s Conceptual Model of Men’s Pathways to Antiviolence Involvement.



The use of Casey and Smith’s conceptual model was several-fold. First, Casey and Smith’s worked synthesised the prior scholarship of why men become allies to prevent violence against women to create an accessible model. Second, the conceptual model is arguably the best representation of *temporal* ally involvement available. Third, a key aspect of Casey and Smith’s model is the ‘path’ to allyship. Typically, men have a sensitizing experiece(s) that leads to an opportunity experience(s) and/or a shifting meaning(s) thus leading them to active antiviolence involvement (see Figure 14 above). The primary question is not whether each ally within the WRA’s Ambassador program that responded to the survey or participated in an interview experienced this pathway but whether the aggregate of these men did and how WRA utilises these ‘pathways’. Furthermore, how does WRA engage with these pathways be created or fostered when found. Additionally, this research was an attempt to determine if Casey and Smith’s work is replicable on a larger scale. Specifically, could a qualitative study of a relative few men be applied to a quantitative study? From the evidence above, Casey and Smith’s conceptual model is not only useful for exploring allyship within a case study but appears replicable over a much larger sample size.

The key aspect of the conceptual framework is that ‘the impact of a sensitizing or opportunity experience or the particular ways men made sense of it, constituted the motivating factor that allowed men to take or seek an opportunity to get involved’ ([Casey and Smith 2010, 959](#_ENREF_8)). The question is Casey and Smith’s conceptual model analogous to the aggregated survey data and how does WRA facilitate these pathways as part of the social movement to foster allyship? In other words, are the various pathways (individual-based) to anti-violence involvement found within a case study (group-based) of WRA (a social movement organisation) and how are they created or fostered (to further the movement of preventing VAW)?

#### Sensitizing Experience

Casey and Smith define a *sensitizing experience* as a ‘previous experience that rendered the issue of violence against women[[1]](#footnote-1) more salient or visible. . . . [that] . . . may have made the issue of violence more important or “real” ([Casey and Smith 2010, 959](#_ENREF_8)). Casey and Smith found five types of sensitizing experiences: *disclosure/witness*, *social justice consciousness*, *learning opportunity*, *hearing stories, influenced by women* ([Casey and Smith 2010, 960](#_ENREF_8)). All of Casey and Smith’s sensitizing experiences were echoed by the survey respondents and interview participants. Additionally, Casey and Smith found most of their participants experienced more than one sensitizing experience that made the issue of VAW more *real* to them ([2010, 959](#_ENREF_8)).

Casey and Smith found the most common sensitizing experience was ‘disclosure of domestic or sexual violence from a close female friend, family member, or girlfriend or witnessing violence in childhood’ ([Casey and Smith 2010, 960](#_ENREF_8)). When asked, ‘Why did you become involved in White Ribbon Australia?’ respondents listed three key sensitizing experiences, ‘domestic or sexual violence committed against someone you know’ (33.4 percent); ‘domestic or sexual violence committed by someone you know’ (15.9 percent); and ‘domestic or sexual violence committed against you’ (6.8 percent)[[2]](#footnote-2). Interview participants had a range of experiences of violence in their lives. Gordon (59, NT, Architect) discussed his motivation for participation began during his younger years working security in ‘hotels, clubs, city night clubs, and things’. Gordon had many female friends that worked in places ‘that weren't considered all that socially correct, but they were nice people’. Gordon continued that the female friends he knew,

Didn't deserve to be treated like that. The use to get beat up all that time. I used to get fed up with a lot of them and I always thought . . . I knew it was wrong and I would try to stop it wherever I could but they'd come into work beaten up and it's just not good, but it was just . . . those days, back in the sixties and early seventies people just accepted that this went with the job.

Gordon was sensitized to the issue by experiences of VAW in his ‘younger days’, and these experiences would later drive him to become part of WRA. Leonard[[3]](#footnote-3) (43, NSW, Engineer), felt a moral obligation to join WRA becoming aware of the scope of men’s VAW after a divorce, and when he starting dating again and ‘realised there's a lot of women out there with very, very bad stories about men’ and he wanted ‘to try and be part of the solution.’ While Gordon and Leonard’s experiences were about violence perpetrated against people they knew within their social circles. Several interview participants shared stories about domestic or sexual violence committed directly by someone they knew. For example, Chad’s (60, WA, Finance) daughter was murdered by her former partner who ‘stalked her, hunted her and found her and when she refused to comply with his wishes he attacked her’. Chad said he became involved with WRA ‘to lend my voice to a cause and to try and raise the profile of the notion of preventing or stopping men’s violence against women’. Chad also remarked that before his daughter’s death he ‘was just like 90 percent of other people in the world you know . . . it doesn’t happen in my street, doesn’t happen in my town, doesn’t happen in my family . . . it's not any different than any other traumatic events in a person's life’. Chad’s story is similar Marcus’ (35, Queensland, Sales) whose partner was murdered by her previous partner, and he became aware of WRA because of that incident. Marcus said he got involved so ‘other women didn't suffer the same way my partner did’. It is important to note however, that violence perpetrated against the surveyed Ambassadors (6.8 percent) is also a motivating factor to join WRA.

Marcus and Chad experienced violence against their loved one at the hands of people they knew. These experiences sensitized them to the issue of men’s VAW and Chad’s lament that is ‘doesn’t happen to my family’ will never be true again. These four men experienced violence directed toward people they knew or by people they knew. However, some people were sensitized directly against their person.

Several interview participants experienced violence directly perpetrated against them, which led to them becoming sensitized to men’s VAW and thus joining WRA. Cory (63, NSW, Social Work) said, ‘I think that I grew up in a home where my father was quite controlling. So, even though the abuse was not physical. I come to realize in my adult life that there was a lot of emotional abuse going on in my childhood.’ Cory’s words are a common refrain among interview participants. Curtis (48, WA, Psychologist) said, ‘My dad’s an alcoholic, but I have seen him be very abusive when he is drunk, only when he's drunk other times he’s been fantastic. I have seen that type emotional and psychological abuse growing up.’ Stanley (50, WA, Union Representative) shared his story, ‘Well, my father's a recovered alcoholic, recovering alcoholic. And in 1980, one night he very severely bashed my mum in my presence. He broke her nose, he pulled a gun on her. It was a nasty experience.’ Alvin (32, Victoria, Construction) said,

I was raised in a very violent home. It got to the point where we had to flee our house. There was myself with my sisters and my mom and my father threatened to kill us all so we had to flee our house. A year after we fled the house my dad actually tracked us down and he actually murdered my mom.

Cory, Curtis, Stanley, and Alvin all experienced violence in their own life and this sensitized them to the issue of men’s VAW, leading them to join WRA and perhaps toward a path of social justice consciousness.

A *social justice consciousness* that is pre-existing or an ‘egalitarian value system’ ([Casey and Smith 2010, 959](#_ENREF_8)) is another sensitizing experience. While not directly asked in the survey, several respondents indicated having a social justice consciousness in the open response option. Randall (51, Community Organizer, Western Australia) said he became involved with WRA because ‘I guess I joined White Ribbon when the issue of family violence wasn't on the front page as it is now. Part of it was I had three sisters, so I'm the youngest son. I married into a family of women. . . So my background I guess is social justice already any anyway, I've been fairly passionate about social justice issues and worked with street kids.’ Alfred (45, NSW, Government Worker) had similar thoughts on why he became involved with WRA. Alfred said he always had,

A fairly strong social justice streak in me right from the start, I guess I always wanted to see equality and fairness and justice, as long as I can remember . . . I sort of saw equality as a key platform for everyone. I guess I took that maybe from my parents but I saw it as an essential requirement for community living.

Jerome (54, Teacher, Victoria) said he became a part of WRA to ‘create awareness about the significance of family and domestic violence. That it's a significant issue in society; it's not class-based, it's across all socioeconomic levels, it's particularly an issue in our Aboriginal and indigenous populations. I have very strong social justice beliefs.’ Alfred, Ralph, Jerome and a survey respondent each had a ‘preexisting social justice consciousness or egalitarian value system’ ([Casey and Smith 2010, 959](#_ENREF_8)). However, Jerome’s story leads one to another possible sensitizing experience, a *learning opportunity*.

Jerome learned through teaching and thus provided learning opportunities for others. Jerome finished by saying, ‘I just think it's an important social justice issue that young people become aware of and have some exposure to’. One of the key learning experiences of the respondents was learning statistics about men's VAW, which 43.1 percent of survey respondents indicated as a reason for participation. This survey finding is echoed in the interviews. For example, Philip (3 , Personal Trainer, Tasmania) commented,

The statistics on the [WRA] website were horrifying to me. It’s something that struck a chord with me. My mother was a victim of domestic violence. Her story always rang a cord with me. But, I also sort of thought ‘I just want… I don’t want my beautiful wife involved in that at all, ever.’ She is one of four women in her family. She has got three other sisters. Statistics said one in four. I sorta thought I don’t want any of my sister-in laws involved in anything like that. I don’t want my daughter growing up in a world where that seen to be okay.

Philip experienced a learning opportunity after reading statistics on WRA’s website related to VAW. However, Philips ‘learning opportunity’ was coupled with the knowledge of his mother’s experience as a victim of domestic violence.

Philip had another sensitizing experience in Casey and Smith model, which is *hearing stories* from of violence survivors. A majority of respondents (53.7 percent) indicated that having heard stories related to men's VAW was a reason for their involvement. Another interview participant, Rodney (65, Restaurateur, Tasmania), told the story that led him to commit to working to prevent men’s VAW after he had researched VAW and WRA.

I was over in Malaysia . . . there was a case of a father, who had left his wife, he came back and he poured acid on his wife [Cheong Swee Lin, 50 years-old] and his daughter [Tan Hui Linn, 17 years-old[[4]](#footnote-4)], all over both, asleep in bed. And the young daughter almost lost her eyes. And what caught my attention was, that this daughter was doing an equivalent of a high school certificate exam, and despite her injury, she vowed that she was going to complete the test.

Rodney uses that story when he speaks as an Ambassador for WRA. However he continues, ‘I hear you say it, what happens in those countries [is horrible], well, let me tell you another story about a woman called Donna Carson’. Rodney is referring to Donna Carson, Australia's Local Hero of the Year in 2004. Carson is a survivor of domestic violence; in 1994, her then partner doused her with petrol and lit her on fire. Carson spent six months in a hospital burns unit and another fifteen months in rehabilitation. Carson then became a volunteer advocate for victims of violent crime and spoke at WRA events. Interview participant Gavin (48, Diversity Officer, Western Australia) heard stories of violence toward women from a ‘family friend’ who was part of a ‘high profile murder’ and it was through conversations with her that ‘basically sowed the seed that a heterosexual male—influential male within a male dominated workplace’ should get involved in anti-violence work. Philip, Rodney, and Gavin were each influenced by stories of violence that led them to WRA. However, Philip’s story like many interview participants had aspects of several types of sensitizing experiences within Casey and Smith’s conceptual model. For example, Philip heard stories of violence survivors, but specifically concerning his mother.

The final sensitizing experience is being in close relationships with and *influenced by women*. Survey respondents and interview participants had a lot to say about women in their lives. From partners to sister and mothers, to coworkers and friends, and daughter—men were affected by the women in their life. For example, 23.4 percent of survey respondents we ‘influenced or invited by women to join [WRA]’. Interview participants echoed the sentiment, such as Alton (60, Professor, New South Wales), who said, ‘my mother was a senator . . . and outspoken about issues . . . and because of the family links [to violent relatives] it sort of inspired me to become involved’. Jay was strongly influenced by women due his parents being separated and as he puts it, ‘living in the house with just my mother, my sister, and my grandmother . . . I had a very strong upbringing on the female side of things’. It is clear from the examples that sensitizing experiences do not happen siloed. Most of the example can be listed under multiple headings.

Importantly, WRA actively creates sensitizing experiences. For example, White Ribbon Day and Night activities are often built and even in memory of women’s stories of experiencing violence. WRA has a large social media presence that shares women’s stories of violence against them, men’s stories of speaking out for women, and resources for *learning opportunities*. The *White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation* program provides ample *learning opportunities* to participants as the program discusses VAW and gendered inequality within the shared work location. However, being sensitized to the issue of VAW requires opportunity before one can actively become an ally.

#### Opportunity Experience

An opportunity experience is a ‘tangible entrée into antiviolence involvement’ ([Casey and Smith 2010, 960](#_ENREF_8)). Casey and Smith found four types of opportunity experiences: *personal invitation/nomination*, *personal/community connections*, *looking for a community*, and *job/volunteer-position seeking*. Sensitizing experiences within Casey and Smith’s conceptual model typically come first, but not always and similar to sensitizing experiences; opportunity experiences can occur multiple times. WRA and the Ambassador program is itself an opportunity experience.

WRA Ambassadors have become part of the program through several mechanisms and how Ambassadors are recruited has changed over time. Aspects of this change will be discussed further in relation to social movements and identity. When WRA began, men were actively recruited by the organization. Now, most Ambassadors are nominated by others or by themselves and go through a lengthy process before they are given the title of Ambassador. Thus, entrée into the program is varied but now streamlined and optimised to produce quality allies over a larger quantity of allies with the title Ambassador. However, each of Casey and Smith’s type of opportunity experiences are found within the Ambassadors. For example, 23.1 percent of survey respondents indicated they were directly invited to join by WRA, this is in line with *personal invitation/nomination* from the conceptual model.

The next opportunity experience is *personal/community connections*. Interview participant Reginald initially learned about the Ambassador program through WRA’s current campaigns and in reference to Rosie Batty, who at the time was the Australian of the year. Reginald had ‘attended a couple of White Ribbon events . . . [was] . . . happy to get involved in White Ribbon day’. However, the primary impetus to join was from one of his old friends from school who was ‘interested in becoming a White Ribbon Ambassador’ Reginald (40, Judge, New South Wales) explained,

My best friend from school that I still see quite a lot of, he had mentioned that he was interested in becoming a WR Ambassador and to be honest I hadn't really heard about the Ambassador program through WR. I knew that WR was an organization that was obviously had been promoting eradication of violence against women and other gender equality issues but I didn't know that they had an Ambassador or an Advocates program. When he mentioned that he was getting involved in this I did a little bit more research and thought that it would be something that I could also get involved with. Part of the reason while we're friends now and why we’ve friends for ages I think we see the world in the right way and we have the right sort of moral and social compass

Reginald’s story is not unique amongst the interview participants. Several others shared Reginald’s path into the Ambassador program. Reginald’s story is echoed in the survey findings as well, 27.1 percent of respondents stated they were ‘influenced or invited by other men to join’.

The next opportunity experience is *looking for a community*. Survey respondents stated they ‘wanted to join a community organisation’ (6.1 percent) as a reason for joining WRA. The most common reason that respondents indicated became involved with WRA is to ‘make a difference in my community’ (75.6 percent). Additionally, when asked, ‘How did you initially hear about White Ribbon Australia?’ Community events such as White Ribbon Day or White Ribbon Night (13.5 percent) and a community club or organisation (7.1 percent) were the 2nd and 3rd most common response respectively. While the last two points are not specifically stating the respondents were looking for a community, it underscores how important community is to the respondents.

The final opportunity experience is ‘job/volunteer-position seeking’. Casey and Smith found men became involved in antiviolence work because of job or volunteer position, a few leading to a formal position. This aspect of the conceptual model is certainly true of WRA based on the survey data and interview responses. However, the data is skewed because of considerable amount the survey respondents are in Law Enforcement (13.6 percent), Health and Wellness (12.5 percent), and the Third Sector (4.1 percent). For a complete breakdown of survey, respondent occupations see 2.1.5, p. 2. Also, WRA has the aforementioned Work Place Accreditation Program. Thus, WRA provides numerous opportunity experiences related to ‘job/volunteer-position seeking’. To quantify this, when asked, ‘How did you first hear about WRA?’ 43.9 percent of survey respondents replied the White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation Program or workplace in general. This is the most common response to this question after White Ribbon Day or White Ribbon Night and a community club or organisation. Interestingly, ‘profile building at work and within my profession’ (11.5 percent) and ‘professional directive, expectation, or request’ (10.8 percent) were two other reasons why men became involved. These aspects of allyship that is missing from Casey and Smith’s conceptual model. This will be explored further after examining the final pathway to engagement.

#### Shifting Meaning

Casey and Smith determined that a ‘shift in meanings’ was a key component of male ally anti-violence engagement ([Casey and Smith 2010, 961](#_ENREF_8)). Casey and Smith found that ‘the impact of a sensitizing or opportunity experience or the particular ways men made sense of it, constituted the motivating factor that allowed men to take or seek an opportunity to get involved ([Casey and Smith 2010, 959](#_ENREF_8)). Casey and Smith found three primary types of shifting meaning: *compelled to action*, *changing worldview*, and *joining with others*. The shifting meaning experienced by survey respondents and interview participants is clearly evident in previously mentioned aggregated data and participant responses. Within Casey and Smith’s conceptual model, there are subthemes under compelled to action, which are *charged with a mandate*, seeing *an addressable need*, and *identifying own strengths*. For example, the two most common reasons men became involved with WRA were to ‘to make a difference in my community’ (75.6 percent) and ‘moral obligation’ (69.8 percent). The drive to make a difference and live up to self-professed ethical responsibility compelled the respondents into action. Aforementioned interview participants complement these findings. For example, Marcus’ partner was murdered by a previous partner, making him aware of WRA, and he got involved so ‘other women didn't suffer the same way my partner did’. Sadly similar, Chad’s daughter was murdered by her former partner; he states he became involved with WRA ‘to lend my voice to a cause and to try and raise the profile of the notion of preventing or stopping men’s VAW’.

Perceiving an addressable need means that men understand that VAW is not only an actual problem but that clear and definite steps can be taken to deal with the issue. While not precisely comparable, survey respondents indicated that ‘to make a difference in my community’ (75.6 percent) and ‘to positively change how my family and friends treat women’ (36.6 percent) were two reasons they joined. These two responses indicate that men became involved with WRA to affect actively men’s VAW in their community or family and friends groups. Thus, these men can be said to think the issue is not only a problem, but one they can help solve and they intend to do so in their immediate surroundings. The final subtheme under compelled to action is identifying own strengths. The survey respondents are older than the larger Australian population and have a wealth of social and cultural capital amassed during their careers. When asked why they joined, one respondent added in the open response option:

I think I have skills that would enhance the work of White Ribbon. . . . [which is] . . . good at awareness raising and finding good men to speak out against family violence. However, I would like to ensure that conversations with men at risk of using violence are well informed and high-quality conversations. There are opportunities to work with sporting and community clubs or organisations for this to happen.

The survey respondents indicate that they not only think that VAW is a problem to be addressed but one that can be addressed. They indicate this position by actively dealing with the issue in their communities or among their family and friends. A previously mentioned survey respondent with a social justice consciousness reflected on why he was compelled to act by saying, ‘violence against women is abhorrent and a most heinous breach of their human rights; so serious in fact that I could not, nor can, do nothing’. The respondents were compelled to action because due to a shift in meaning because they felt a mandated drive to prevent VAW, felt that not only is VAW tangible but also changeable, and they felt they could make a positive change using their strengths.

The subthemes under changing world view are *violence as relevant*, *using a structural analysis*, and *reassessing the past*. Casey and Smith define *violence as relevant* as a ‘heightened awareness of the relevance of violence to their own lives, and particularly to lives of women they care about’ ([Casey and Smith 2010, 963](#_ENREF_8)). Again this type of meaning making can be inferred from the survey responses. For example, respondents stated that having ‘heard stories related to men's violence against women’ (53.9 percent) and ‘learned statistics about men's [MAW] (43.1 percent) were two key reasons they joined WRA.

*Using a structural analysis* was not specifically found with the survey findings. Casey and Smith define this subtheme as ‘linking sexual and domestic violence to social issues about which they had a pre-existing concern . . . [which] rendered the issue of violence against women more pressing or relevant’ ([Casey and Smith 2010, 963](#_ENREF_8)). However, it was found the previously mentioned interview respondent. Jerome is a university teacher that became involved with WRA because of class he taught. In this class, Jerome came to realize that ‘when you're looking at groups like Indigenous peoples as a group and homeless people as a group that the issue of domestic violence came through as a theme, as an underlying issue for Indigenous peoples but also an underlying issue for homelessness, particularly amongst females fleeing from domestic violence or family violence’. While Jerome is a teacher and thus providing context to new students to understand the structural aspect of men’s VAW, the past is what is informing the class, and it often requires reanalysis as meaning changes over time.

The last subtheme is *reassessing the past*, including one’s own past violence. When asked why they became involved with WRA, 1.4 percent of respondents indicated as one the reasons for their involvement were ‘domestic or sexual violence’ they had committed. Reassessing the past is echoed in the previous interview participants words. Gordon works security in places ‘that weren't considered all that socially correct’ and became friends with the women he worked with. Gordon got involved when he could but said, ‘they'd come into work beaten up and it's just not good, but it was just [pause] those days, back in the sixties and early seventies people just accepted that this just went with the job’. Gordon reflected on his past work and how he saw women treated, and this led him to WRA.

The final shifting meaning in Casey and Smith’s conceptual model is *joining with others*, more specifically the subthemes of *feeling connected* and *doing masculinity differently*. As mentioned, 6.1 percent of survey respondents ‘wanted to join a community organisation’.

[#INSERT MASCULINITY RESPONSES]

### Identity

A majority of respondents (59 percent) indicated they were involved in preventing men's VAW before engaging with WRA. These men were involved both formally and informally. Typically, respondents that were formally involved work in law enforcement or social work, with 18 percent of the total respondents participating in a direct, highly focused capacity and another 17.3 percent involved in work with direct exposure to men’s VAW or prevention efforts. The respondents that were informally involved in preventing men’s VAW

Although most Ambassadors have not created their identity as men actively confronting men’s VAW because of WRA, they typically now feel more confident to speak up to other men and are more mindful of relating to women. The Ambassadors do not work to prevent men’s VAW because of WRA but use it as a tool—many Ambassadors were doing this work long before the organisation existed. The men that need WRA the least are the key Ambassadors the organisation needs most. These men typically have the most social and cultural capital coupled with conviction. These men need to be utilised to train and inform others to ensure that WRA and the social movement to end men’s VAW continues.

However, their identity may not have changed but their behaviour in some ways has. Most respondents do not feel they have been changed drastically by participation in WRA other than hardening their resolve and alerting them to the scope of the problem.

The exception to this is people coming from the Workplace initiative as many just learned about these issues. Particularly, respondents in the military.

Those that do report behaviour change, report changing how they relate to men but not so much to women, they maintain they were equitable with women. However, they do feel they are more mindful of women’s experiences both personally and professional. While these two statements seem contradictory, in fact, it represents a progression further down a continuum. The exceptions being men who were abusive and sought out WRA for ‘redemption’.

#### Feminism

On the survey, 99 respondents added comments to the questions. The key themes are outlined above in and illustrated in the quotations below. The interviews did not offer any additional insights not found in the anonymous survey responses. Of those who indicated in the affirmative, one-quarter (23.5 percent) provided a comment, which directly supported their ‘yes’. For example, one respondent supported having a feminist identity by saying, ‘Yes! I want my daughter to have the same opportunities and level of safety in her life as my sons.’ A few respondents indicated they were pro-feminist because ‘I consider myself “a pro feminist male”. I'm out of the school which has women as the only people who can describe themselves as feminist.’ A pro-feminist is a man who actively supports and *identifies* with feminism by promoting sex and gender equity and equality. Some theorists have contended that only women can be feminists due to embodied knowledge and lived experiences. This point is exemplified by 3.9 percent of Ambassadors indicating they are ‘unsure if men can be feminists’ or ‘have been told they cannot be feminists’.

Most older men (45+) identify in some way as a feminist, many have a deep understanding of various waves of feminism, and the arguments related to pro-feminism. Younger men (35-45) do not identify as feminist; some are offended by the question.

Many think the rhetoric around men’s violence needs to shame violent men in particular and contend WR paints all men as violent.

Most men do not want WR to move toward a gender or sex neutral position. However, they want WR to integrate with other programs.

Each of the interview participants had an answer for ‘why did you become involved in White Ribbon Australia?’ However, they were easily categorised in # ideal types. Casey and Smith conceptual model: a *sensitizing experience*, an *opportunity experience*, and a *shifting meaning* were immediately apparent. Perhaps, the most resounding reasons these men became allies were found at the end of the interviews. Edgar said, ‘I just think it’s important work and I’m proud to be part of it. . . . You’re only here once so you might as well try and make a difference in the right space, shouldn’t you?’.

## Positive experiences men encounter as allies preventing men’s VAW?

When determining why men become Ambassadors, the positive experiences must be taken into consideration. Ambassadors indicated their positive experiences as formal representatives of WRA (see Figure 24). The surveyed Ambassadors primarily indicated it is increasing their understanding of violence against women (75.0 percent) and knowledge of violence against women (72 percent). More than half (56.1 percent) of the Ambassadors surveyed, felt that they helped reduce or prevent MEN’S VAW, as one respondent eloquently said,

Positive experiences are many and varied. . . . It's about educating people, men, to stop violence against women. Being a part of an organisation that has a large market share allows you to be heard better. Your voice singularly and as a collective is heard. This, in turn, educates men about the issue. This is the positive experience - educating men to stop the violence and hence protecting women from violence.

Over half of the respondents (55.1 percent) indicated they had increased confidence to stand up for what they believed in. One survey respondent echoed the sentiment of others by saying because of being an Ambassador ‘I am no longer reticent about speaking up or committing myself to stopping violence against anyone’. Half of Ambassadors surveyed also felt a sense of purpose (50.7 percent). Marcus (35, Queensland, Sales) achingly describes how WRA provides him with purpose:

I think well it's just the sense of trying to let my partner's passing not be meaningless. You know, I want to make sure that she didn't die for nothing. You know, she was a good person and she had a lot to offer the world, and she can no longer physically be here, so I feel that it's just my responsibility to try and do whatever I can to ensure that that ray of sunshine doesn't completely extinguish. So I feel it's a really important thing for me in terms of my recovery and in terms of remembering and honouring her, it's an important part of what I do.

Half of the Ambassadors indicate a sense of personal fulfilment (49.7 percent) as a positive experience, with feminist-identifying Ambassadors indicating personal fulfilment more often (1.31 times) than other Ambassadors ([Bell and Seaman 2016](#_ENREF_6)). Several Ambassadors in both the survey and interviews talked about how the community reacts to them as Ambassadors including one how said he received ‘personal thank you[s] and encouragement messages from complete strangers whom have been affected by such violence.’

Ambassadors also feel a sense of community or solidarity with other Ambassadors (45.9 percent) and felt positive about meeting other Ambassadors (30.7 percent). Ambassadors involved for more than three-and-half years were more likely (1.58 times) to indicate meeting other Ambassadors as a positive experience ([Bell and Seaman 2016](#_ENREF_6)). For example, one survey respondent said they enjoyed ‘meeting & exchanging thoughts with other likeminded men & women at [WRA] events and hearing their stories.’ Ambassadors also indicated they had more equal and equitable relationships with women in the professional life (44.3 percent) and personal life (41.9 percent). A little over a third (35.5 percent) expressed that their friends and acquaintances viewed them more positively, with Ambassadors employed in government positions more likely to indicate this response (1.49 times) ([Bell and Seaman 2016](#_ENREF_6)).

A fifth (19.9 percent) of respondents indicates that the title of Ambassador assists in profile building at work and within their profession. A small amount (1.7 percent) indicated they use the title as a tool and to add credibility. As one respondent said,

Everything I do as a WRA I was already doing before I became a WRA. The Ambassador title simply gives me more credibility when I speak at a meeting or run an event. It has also increased my profile in the local media, who now use the title (and occasionally a white ribbon motif alongside the article) when I speak about domestic abuse.

The positive experiences of Ambassadors are varied but perhaps they can be summarized by one respondent who said, ‘I believe I am playing a very small part in that process. The quote “The Only Thing Necessary for the Triumph of Evil is that Good Men Do Nothing” is quite true in my opinion. I believe I am a good man “doing something”.’ As per the above section, men’s involvement as Ambassadors is closely tied to the aim of preventing men’s VAW. These men feel that through Ambassadorship and working with WRA is one was that they can achieve change.

## What challenges do men encounter as allies preventing men’s VAW?

Respondents were asked, ‘What challenges have you encountered as an Ambassador?’ (see ). The primary challenge the respondents encountered was ‘lack of time’ (36.5 percent). However, the next most common response (24.7 percent) was ‘no challenges faced’. The respondents felt they were ‘not being utilised properly’ (24.3 percent), for example, their particular skill-sets were not being used. The respondents also lamented the ‘lack of year-around involvement’ (21.6 percent), for instance, ‘only being called upon during White Ribbon Day and Night’. The respondents are time limited but want more to do, but want their efforts to focus on their particular skillsets. Three primary challenges remain for the respondents, ‘lack of a grassroots feel to the organisation’ (19.9 percent), ‘lack of communication from White Ribbon Australia’ (19.3 percent), and ‘short notice from WRA to assist in an activity’ (17.2 percent). Of the top seven challenges encountered by the respondents, five relate directly to issues of resource mobilisation.

There was less consensuses on challenges encountered by Ambassadors relative to the positive experiences. This question was a fixed response with multiple choices allowed. However, a quarter of Ambassadors provided further insight into their challenges by indicating ‘other’ (24.7 percent) and providing a response. The most commonly cited challenge was ‘lack of time’ (36.5 percent). Remarkably, the second highest response (24.7 percent) was ‘no challenges faced’ (although some also ticked challenges). One survey respondent had a unique position on the question, stating ‘The word challenge is probably not the correct term for me. I have been called upon numerous times, quite often at short notice, but I see this as an opportunity and not a problem or issue.’

Ambassadors indicated they are not being utilised properly (24.3 percent), as one respondent said, ‘I'd like to be used more to speak. . . . I'm a huge, appropriately skilled resource.’ Ambassadors are also concerned about not being utilised often enough due to lack of year-round involvement (21.6 percent) or as one survey respondent said, ‘I have never been contacted personally to attend speak or participate.’ Short notice from WRA to assist (17.2 percent) is another challenge as one respondent stated,

Some invitations (not all) have only been given a few days’ notice to attend when they were not able to find an available Ambassador. It would be more helpful for the Ambassador (whoever it may be) to have ample time to prepare a message or speech suitable for the event rather than just a face who shows up last minute.

The Ambassadors also felt that WRA lacks a grassroots feel (19.9 percent) as few respondents put it ‘generally there is a feeling that WRA targets celebrities and ignores grass roots actions’ and ‘I am not a celebrity and thus am not an attractive Ambassador for public events’ and ‘no database or contact with other Ambassadors except what you create yourself’. A tenth (9.8 percent) of the respondents disagree with decisions that WRA has made. For example, one respondent said, ‘I felt extremely uncomfortable with the way WR seemed to corporatise the Ambassador program, choosing powerful people to be Ambassadors regardless of their ideology. . . . Tony Abbott is renowned for his sexist, outdated views of gender roles.’ Additional disagreements often mentioned by survey respondents include working with alcohol companies; closing down WRA offices around Australia, having too many women in positions within WRA corporate being not reflective of male led; and the lack of funds directed to local WRA committees.

One survey respondent expressed that being an Ambassador ‘made advocacy more difficult’ due the perception that WRA ‘is only really active for a couple of days a year’ and ‘is a male lead initiative taking credit for the work women have been leading for decades.’ He continued, ‘as an advocate before becoming a WR Ambassador, I actually found I had more cut through’ as ‘it was easier to engage with men without the pretext of representing WR’ and ‘feminist spaces are highly critical of WR's role and strategy’ which makes ‘meaningful partnership and engagement within these spaces more difficult too.’ Another survey respondent stated,

I personally feel that there is a huge difference in public perception of how White Ribbon operates and how the reality works at an internal level. For example, there seems to be limited engagement with individuals (Ambassadors). In particular most events appears to have a ticket price, formal dress code. Personally, it would be more beneficial if there was an ongoing grass roots support network that Ambassadors didn't need fancy cloths, big wallets or large job titles could tap into.

Many other respondents echo this Ambassador’s comments. For example, other respondents said, ‘I am disappointed as I feel left out of being a part of a global movement because I’m not rich’. Another Ambassador lamented,

White Ribbon events seemed to cost hundreds of dollars to attend. I understand this was to fundraise, and that many of the businessmen involved could easily spend that money, but it locked out a large portion of other interested people, and certainly negated any attempts WR made to being perceived as grassroots. I volunteered at some events just to be able to attend, and the speeches and atmosphere were excellent. People should not miss out on those speeches simply because they do not have enough money.

Several survey respondents indicated they had withdrawn from WRA or focused their ally efforts elsewhere. The respondents did this for a number of reasons. For example, ‘they [WRA] seem to not really care about the local communities directly.’ When discussing allyship, one respondent said he had ‘continued [his] activism against male violence towards women, but distanced [himself] from the White Ribbon brand’ and another said he had ‘disengaged from formal White Ribbon Day events, instead focusing on small grassroots events which recognise WRD.’ One respondent summarizes others’ complaints saying ‘Unfortunately I did not feel heard and . . . feel isolated from the White Ribbon community and not exactly empowered.’

A tenth of Ambassadors indicated they had a ‘lack of confidence in [their] ability to affect change’ (11.5 percent) and ‘lack of knowledge and skills to engage’ (9.5 percent). As one respondent said, ‘It is such a huge issue and it is difficult to see how we are truly making a difference’. Another Ambassador was ‘Unsure what I am being asked to do, beyond my own personal undertaking not to commitment or condone violence.’ Ambassadors are also concerned about other Ambassadors and want them to be ‘skilled up’ as one respondent said,

Not so much for myself but perhaps for other Ambassadors, it may be helpful to have an annual day where there is training given regarding public speaking, how to prepare an address face to face discussion about how to answer certain questions of how to present to various groups without losing or altering the central message of the campaign. This might strengthen the skills that Ambassadors may not naturally have in but could gain.

Another Ambassador said that ‘some of our current Ambassadors have little or no understanding about gendered violence, and I’ve heard comments such as 'men are equally affected by DV' coming from some Ambassadors.’ There is a variety to the challenges encountered by Ambassadors, however they neatly fit into three groups. These are a lack of proper utilization, isolation from other Ambassadors, and a lack of confidence to make a change.

### Resource Mobilisation

As previously mentioned, social movements can occur because people have resources to mobilise collectively, and this affects how they succeed or fail. Resource mobilisation theory contends that the primary determinant of a social movement is the successful mobilisation of resources by motivated and committed actors with a collective identity to achieve a goal. In the social movement to end men’s VAW, male allies are a strategic resource that must be harnessed. Particularly because the respondents want to do more, not less, and often lament the lack of opportunities outside White Ribbon Day and Night. The Ambassadors strongly feel that their work is part of their identity and want to have year-round opportunities.

One of the challenges encountered by the respondents was in the ineffective use of their ‘repertoires of contention’ which are a ‘set of means . . . [a social group] . . . has for making claims of different types on different individuals’ ([Tilly 1986, 2](#_ENREF_12)). The respondents have a plethora of repertoires of contention to achieve their goal of preventing men’s VAW. For example, the respondents were asked: ‘What do you think is or has been your primary contribution to White Ribbon Australia?’ (see 2.1.5). The respondents predominantly said ‘raising general awareness of men’s VAW and having discussions with others’ (54.7 percent), followed next by specifically ‘raising awareness in my workplace’ (26.7 percent). Followed next by ‘wearing my Ambassador pin’ (19.9 percent) and ‘running/assisting with White Ribbon Australia/anti-men’s VAW events or being on a White Ribbon Australia/anti- men’s VAW committee’ (14.2 percent).

Bourdieu’s typology of cultural,[[5]](#footnote-5) economic,[[6]](#footnote-6) social,[[7]](#footnote-7) and symbolic capital[[8]](#footnote-8) is essential to understanding the resources the respondents process and WRA can actively use. Reductively, economic capital is money and assets; cultural capital is ‘what you know,’ social capital is ‘whom you know,’ and symbolic capital is ‘why you are worth knowing’.

A majority of Ambassadors feel underutilised not only generally, but specific to their skill sets. The resource pool is immense and needs to be harnessed. Additionally, large portions of Ambassadors are retired and report having a wealth of time for projects as well as vast social and cultural resources waiting to be used. Many of the Ambassadors have long careers in law enforcement, counseling, and related fields. These Ambassadors expressed concern that their skills are not used to train or present to others.

The amount of academic and layperson knowledge the ABs have on the topics of criminology, MM, and VAW is astounding. This knowledge needs to be harnessed for use by WR through position papers and mentoring initiatives.

Over 10 men asked for me to send them current academic information related to VAW.

ABs feel underutilised as a resource, specifically men with a lot of training in specialised areas.

Several men run ‘batterer intervention’ programs or are trained psychologists but are not called upon to use this knowledge by WR.

Several men are teachers who have created teaching and learning instruments for their own use, but would like to share them.

Guides for specific organisations such as sporting clubs, some ABs went so far

More social media tools.

Most ABs use WR as the resource, not the other way around. If another resource could replace the value WR provides, the ABs would change their messaging.

A few older Ambassadors want to pass on what they know. By building regional committees and then creating lists of skill-sets for each Ambassador, the Ambassadors will seek out the help they need to promote WR. There are innumerable resources to be harnessed, and the Ambassadors will do it themselves if given the opportunity.

#### Allies as Resources to each Other

Repeatedly respondents indicated that they would like to meet other men who are Ambassadors. A majority of the respondents want local WRA committees (or they mentioned a similar solution) to facilitate planning of events, resource exchange, and networking opportunities; including low or no cost monthly meetings. Finding room for morning tea in key locations would provide a drastic change. The exchange of resources, particularly social and cultural capital would propel the movement.

ABs want regional mailing list that they can post to about events and ask for help.

Ambassador only Facebook page with localised group therein.

Many men feel they lack the training to speak actively out and want mentors.

Many men, as explained in Resources have long careers providing this training in this space and want to share it. One older man said, ‘I just want to pass on what I know’.

The capacity to exchange resources between ABs for the goals of WR is paramount for success. An example of this is most ABs that I spoke with through interviews are well over 40. I only spoke with 2 30 year-olds and one 20-year-old. The younger ABs expressed exasperation about what do in order to help the movement.

#### White Ribbon Australia as a Resource

The respondents wanted certain things from WRA. Several respondents mentioned the need for a monthly newsletter with key talking points, new research, and updates on events in their area. Additionally, the newsletter would include strategies to engage with men, useful resources, and a section highlighting ‘less famous’ Ambassadors.

ABs want access to more resources that can be used for presentations, such as:

Multiple time-length presentations with accompanying scripts, including bullet points explaining key issues and responses to common questions.

Up to date statistics in an easy to understand format.

### White Ribbon Australia: A Social Movement Organisation as a Challenge

Many Ambassadors are concerned with a perceived lack of communication and transparency from corporate, including a mindset often felt as too Sydney-centric. The Ambassadors report feeling isolated from the future direction of WR and only used as fundraisers, without knowing where the money goes.

The Ambassadors are concerned with the apparent lack of men involved on the corporate side of WR. For example, while lauding Libby (with a few exceptions); many Ambassadors were concerned that every time WR is in the media or they call the office, a woman answers.

The Ambassadors want WR to focus primarily on men’s VAW; however, they also wish WR would acknowledge and condemn women’s violence against men more actively, and all forms of DV/IPV more firmly. A small portion wanted a completely gender/sex-neutral organisation.

The Ambassadors perceive a loss of a ‘grassroots’ feel, citing the high-ticket price and formal dress code of some WR events. A large portion of the respondents got into this work to change their immediate community and find they are not given opportunities to do so. Additionally, the Ambassadors lament the lack of integration with other community groups with similar goals. This is troublesome for many Ambassadors who already work with other community groups, as they must separate their identity as an Ambassador from their other work.

Several respondents disagree with choices made by WR, particularly working with alcohol companies and ‘unworthy’ men being Ambassadors.

A large portion of the Ambassadors expressed frustration about ‘how to be an Ambassador’. The Ambassadors lamented not knowing how to have conversations with their friends and colleagues or how to intervene when witnessing violence. Thus, the Ambassadors would like more training videos and online resources such as templates for giving presentations of various lengths to different groups (e.g., sporting groups and schools). Finally, some Ambassadors want to be mentors and many need mentors, this could be integrated into the regional committees and resource lists.

Being an Ambassador can impede anti-VAW work. For instance, Ambassadors mentioned taking off their ribbon before meeting with community groups because of WR’s relationship to them or not mentioning being an Ambassador to other men because it made conversations harder.

Most Ambassadors value the recommital process and decreasing the number of Ambassadors.

ABs feel uncommunicated with, many mentioned that this project was the first thing WR has asked them to do. They fill disconnected from something they are passionate about and are frustrated. The ABs are often asked at the last minute to work an event and are not given adequate information about the location or preparation for speaking to the specific audience.

Many ABs do not know about key WR programs such as *White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation Program* and

However, a significant portion of the ABs I spoke with became ABs because of these programs as well.

Many men feel disconnected from WR the organisation and suggest this could be corrected through methods outlined in Reorganisation.

Many men acknowledge the limitations of WR but feel that it is too Sydney or city focused.

Many ABs applaud WR for taking a quicker stance against ABs that do not stand up for WR’s message and want this to happen more regularly.

ABs feel they often have to apologise for actions by other ABs instead of doing the work of preventing VAW.

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1. Casey and Smith use the phrases “anti-violence against women work” or preventing “violence against women. This paper specifically refers to men actively speaking out against **men’s** violence against women as this is the focus of WRA. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. It is important to note that 1.4 percent of respondents indicated that “domestic or sexual violence committed by you” was a reason to they sought to join WRA. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. All names assigned by a random name generator to protect the confidentiality of participants. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Tan Hui survived and continued on to university. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Cultural distinctions that develop between socioeconomic groups due to differences in access to education, occupation, and wealth. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Money or assets available to an individual or group that can be used to further their interests. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Social networks or “connections” that an individual has available to them; individuals or groups with large amounts of power and agency will be able to use this to their advantage. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Not a unique type of capital but “the form that the various species of capital assume when they are perceived and recognized as legitimate” ([Bourdieu 1989, 17](#_ENREF_7)). [↑](#footnote-ref-8)