



Victims of Crime NT

supporting victims of crime

SUPPORTING VICTIMS OF CRIME

Victims of Crime NT NEWSLETTER

December
2017

IN THIS ISSUE

VoCNT Update

We would like to welcome Jeffrey Stanton to Victims of Crime NT, joining us in the role of CEO.

Everybody here is looking forward to working with Jeff and what he will bring to this role, no doubt his experience and leadership will be a big plus to VoCNT.

Get to know Jeff a little bit better by reading the Message from the CEO article on page 6.

Survey Results

Thank you to everyone who took the time to answer our questions in regard to the Draft Charter of Victims' Rights. We have included some findings for those who are interested on page 3.

Community Involvement

While our role at VoCNT includes offering support and guidance to those who have been affected by crime, one of the big benefits of our jobs here, are the conversations and engagement we have with community members. It really is a privilege to serve the community in this role.

Over the past year we have had stalls and displays at the Palmerston Shopping Centre and several community events being held in Darwin, as well as attending the Darwin and Katherine Shows.

We've enjoyed the different members of the community coming up and having a chat with us, these chats really show how passionate and loyal the residents are to their local areas and the prevention of crime.

It is only through the ongoing support of the community and our sponsors that we have been able to be as successful as we are. For a full list of our sponsors see page 7.

Checkout the article A Staff Members Perspective by Krystal on page 5 to get a feel for what happens in the VoCNT offices.

The Committee

There has been many changes within VoCNT this past year including changes to the structure of the Committee, so check out the article VoCNT Committee to get to know our Committee Members on page 4 and a message from our new Chair, Rene on page 5.

Other Highlights

We have some Holiday Security tips on page 2 along with a summary of the services VoCNT offers.

On page 3 we have an article about Volunteering and the latest Crime Statistics for the NT.



VoCNT Out and About

We were at the Palmerston shopping Centre and Tony Sievers MLA and Chief Minister Michael Gunner decided to stop for a chat.



It's Show Time

Krystal at one of our stall stands at the Katherine Show.

Holiday Security

Many break and enter offences occur during the holiday season. A large number of break and enters occur when your home appears to look unlive in and it becomes obvious that no one is home. If you are planning a holiday:

When Away:

- ⇒ Check and lock ALL windows, doors, garden shed, gates, garages and any other areas of your home that are able to be secured before leaving
- ⇒ Complete an Absentee Owner Advice Form at your local Police Station
- ⇒ Ask a friend or neighbour to park in your driveway
- ⇒ Ask trusted friends or neighbours to clear your mailbox and check on your home occasionally while you are away; advise them of where you can be contacted
- ⇒ Let your neighbours know when you are away - they will then be able to report suspicious behaviour if they see someone that doesn't belong in your neighbourhood
- ⇒ Make sure that the lawn does not become overgrown
- ⇒ Set timer lights in your home to come on at different times throughout the day and night
- ⇒ Stop all deliveries that you are expecting
- ⇒ Don't advertise your movements on social media - you don't know who is watching



- ⇒ Pay essential services bills in advance: electricity, gas, water, telephone so that your supply continues while you're away
- ⇒ If valuable items are left in the home ensure that your property Inventory is up-to-date
- ⇒ Lock the electricity meter box to prevent thieves interfering with your power supply or security lighting
- ⇒ When packing for a holiday, avoid packing your vehicle the night before as it may become an attractive target for a thief

When Home:

- ⇒ Have you piled your presents up under the tree and are they visible from the street? Keep your valuables and gifts out of sight and they'll be there to open on Christmas morning
- ⇒ Don't advertise to everyone what you got for Christmas by leaving your empty packaging and boxes outside

- ⇒ Prevent unwanted visitors from entering your home through an unlocked front door or window while you're entertaining your guests around the pool or cooking the barbeque in the back yard. Lock up even when you're home
- ⇒ Mark your property using a Neighbourhood Watch NT UV Marker Kit. These can be collected from your local Police Station
- ⇒ Always report suspicious behaviour - Emergency Only 000 / Police Assistance 131444 / Crime Stoppers 1800 333 000

Compiled from the NSW Police Home Safe Checklist and Neighbourhood Watch NT Holiday Hot Tips.

VoCNT Services

We provide information, crisis counselling and referrals for other support services to any victim of crime, past or present. We can also assist in the preparation of documentation such as Victim Impact Statements and applications for financial assistance where victims are eligible. When necessary we will also advocate on behalf of a victim of crime to other agencies such as police, government and non-government agencies

24hr Help Line - 1800 672 242

This line is to be contacted in the event of a break-in in order for contractors to be contacted to resecure or clean up a property. The phone line is a free call number Territory wide.

Court Services

For those victims feeling traumatised or overwhelmed by the court process we can provide a support person to accompany them to court.

Safe at Home Program

This program is targeted towards Territorians who are most at risk of unlawful entry or domestic violence and/or personal crime in local and remote communities by assisting to improve the security of their homes or housing.

Re-Secure Program

This Program is designed to assist victims of crime financially to re-secure their property following an unlawful entry.



SURVEY RESULTS

A review of the NT Government Draft Charter of Victims' Rights

Over a period of three weeks these thoughts and opinions were collected by VoCNT staff members from the Darwin and Alice Springs offices. Members of the public were reached and consulted from a variety of areas, these included;

- Alice Springs
- Katherine Show
- Darwin Show
- Palmerston Shopping Centre
- Online – Facebook
- Other functions that VoCNT staff members attended

162 Surveys were completed with 137 comments taken on a various draft points, with a majority of respondents nominating 5 or more points that were most important to them. Included in the following pages are the comments obtained in reference to the statements listed in the survey.

FAST FACTS

87 People

Believed that Question 1 'To be treated with fairness, courtesy, dignity and respect' was most important.

76 People

Second was Question 3 'To be informed at the earliest opportunity about the availability of lawful protection against violence and intimidation by the offender'.

75 People

Third was Question 6 'On request, to be informed by the Director of Public Prosecutions as soon as practicable of:

- a) The charges laid against the offender;
- b) The time, date and place of the hearing;
- c) Any substantial changes to the charges;
- d) Any reasons for not laying charges, accepting a plea of guilty to a lesser charge or not prosecuting the offender;
- e) The outcome of the criminal proceeding including any sentence imposed; and,
- f) If an appeal is instituted, the fact of appeal, the grounds of appeal and the result of the appeal.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact Victims of Crime to receive the Survey Report.

Volunteering

Volunteers are the backbone of our Organization. Without them, we couldn't offer the services as we do to victims of crime. They span all ages and come from all walks of life; previous victims, professionals, students, and people with time to give to helping others.

Victims of Crime NT Inc. are always looking for expressions of interest from individuals who enjoy a challenge and would like to become volunteer Victim Assistance Workers (VAW).

The role of a VAW is wide and varied and encompasses:

Providing personalised emotional and practical support and information for victims at the time of the crisis

Assisting the victim in identifying personal needs and support networks, providing information about relevant agencies and how to access specialist services

Accessing external contactors, such as locksmiths or glaziers, to resecure properties to enable victims of break-ins to feel safe

Applying to become a Victim Assistance Worker involves the following process: Applicants must attend an interview with a Victims Of Crime NT Inc. staff member, a committee member and a member of the NT Police. A police check is authorized by the applicant at this time.

Successful applicants will be offered positions in the Intake Training Course, equating to 40 hours of professional training.

Successful completion of the training course is followed up with a post training meeting with our Volunteer Coordinator in order to clarify any queries or concerns. At this point the volunteer then partakes in a 3 month probation period before graduating as a VAW. Ongoing commitments include attendance at a monthly training session, usually held on the third Wednesday of each month, and monthly supervision sessions.

A Volunteer Assistance Worker Position Description and Application are available for interested persons by contacting the Victims of Crime NT Inc office.

To increase our ability to support and provide services to the Indigenous community, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are encouraged to apply.

Other Volunteer Opportunities

If you have an interest in being part of our Organisation but a VAW role is not for you, you may have knowledge or skills that could prove invaluable to us and be utilised in other areas, such as being a member of our Committee or by assisting in the office with administrative tasks.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To find out more, please contact the Victims of Crime NT office on **8941 0995**.

Thank You

To all our volunteers, you give up time perhaps with family and friends to help members of your community when they need it most, your work does not go unnoticed. For this we would like to give a sincerest thank you.



CRIME STATISTICS

CRIME	01/10/2015 to 30/09/2016	01/10/2016 to 30/09/2017	CHANGE %
Assault	6763	6980	3.2%
Domestic violence related assault	3970	4050	2%
Alcohol related assault	3507	3777	7.7%
Sexual assault	387	379	-2.1%
House break-ins	1663	2120	27.5%
Commercial break-ins	1859	2265	21.8%
Motor vehicle theft	2110	1856	-12%
Property Damage	6847	7572	10.6%

Sourced from: www.pfes.nt.gov.au/Police/Community-safety/Northern-Territory-crime-statistics.aspx

VoCNT Committee



Alan's experience ranges from working as a probation and parole officer (PPO) with Community Corrections in South Auckland NZ to working with local staff in an

advisory capacity within the Vanuatu Correctional Services.

In 2011 he made the move to Darwin from NZ, upon coming to Darwin he took up a position as Regional Manager, Casuarina Community Corrections. In 2013 he worked on the project to implement electronic monitoring across the NT and for the past 18 months has worked as Program Manager, responsible for the Community Work program.

He became a member of VoCNT because he believes in the rights of victims and feels strongly that the early support and assistance received by victims is an important factor in the healing process, resulting in empowering victims to once again feel in control of their own lives. He looks forward to being a contributing member of the organisation.



Ken joined the Victims of Crime NT committee in 2008 serving in a variety of roles.

He moved to the Northern Territory in 1994 to take up the role of General

Manager of Pauls and in 1998 he took early retirement after a total of 27 years with QUF Industries in the food and beverage industry.

In the past, Ken has been invited to China, Thailand and East Timor to provide business management expertise.

He is the past President for the Northern Territory Chamber of Commerce, the past President for the Combined Palmerston Probus Club, the Chair of the Area Consultative Committee, the Chair of the Council for the Aging (COTA-NT), an

Executive member of the Darwin Probus Club and has been involved in numerous other committees, boards and councils over the years.

Ken was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia for Business in 2008, for his service to the business sector, particularly through the Northern Territory Chamber of Commerce.



Kwame is a Community Services Leader who was born and raised in Ghana – West Africa. He has lived in Australia for 25 years. His tertiary education and

professional experience has covered the lifespan from early childhood studies through to children & family's services, exposure to aged care services and community development. He is currently the Interim CEO of the Melaleuca Refugee Centre.

He has over 20 years' experience working in the NGO sector, in roles that have included designing and leading provision of services to children, youth, people with disabilities, people from diverse cultural backgrounds, Aboriginal communities, as well as to people with severe and persistent mental illness.

Through his career, Kwame's work has influenced various government decisions especially in relation to services for people who are marginalized by society.

Kwame's philosophy is based on the belief that when individuals are empowered and given the opportunity to tell their story, resilience and healing is sparked, which ultimately helps generate healthy communities. He looks forward to bringing his experience to the Committee of VoCNT.



Samoane is an Aboriginal Woman who has grown up and lived in Darwin for 38 years and is a proud mother of 2 adult daughters.

She is an ATSI Case Manager within

the Ironbark Indigenous Support Programme. She has worked for the Ironbark Aboriginal Corporation for almost 9 years in a variety of roles, including Remote Employment, CDEP and training positions.

Prior to her position at Ironbark, Samoane spent much of her time in a range of roles within business management and is looking forward to adding her expertise to the Committee of VoCNT.



Jill Huck is a long term Territorian, having lived here since 1965.

She has qualifications in social work, social policy and mediation and has

had an extensive career in the health, welfare, education and the regulatory sectors.

She was appointed to the VoCNT Committee in early 2017, after initially working as a volunteer with the organisation and is the current Deputy Chair of VoCNT.

Another Committee member is Mick, with the exception of periods of study interstate and overseas, has spent his entire career in NT education.

He has spent 10 years in Top End Indigenous communities, including 3 years as Principal, Ngukurr Community School.

He has been Principal of five larger NT schools in both urban and remote areas, has held senior administrative positions with the Department of Education and Training and has led large NT educational regions. His contribution has encompassed a range of contexts and organisational environments, including Australian Indigenous and NT urban communities and in Asian and North American contexts.

Mick was awarded the AW Reeves Fellowship in 1995 by the NT Department of Education to undertake advanced study and research in educational leadership and management at the University of Alberta, Canada. During the tenure of the Fellowship, he gained a doctorate in educational leadership and management.

He retired in 2011 from the position of Principal at Parap Primary School, Darwin, after having served NT education since 1965, including 40 years as a school Principal.

A Staff Members Perspective

My role at Victims of Crime NT includes being the Safe at Home Operations Officer. A key aspect of my role is the arranging of re-secures and Security Improvements to homes across the Top End through the Safe at Home Programme.

On average I receive 20 calls a day (some days fewer, other days more) from Victims across the Northern Territory who are seeking support, information, financial assistance, and counselling services for a variety of crimes that have been committed against them.

Many of these people are quite emotional, they are often stressed, annoyed, anxious, angry and scared, all in the space of one telephone call.

They're not only worried for their own safety but that of their families and the security of their home.

Regardless of who I am talking to and their age, it's not unusual to hear the comment 'We are beginning to feel like prisoners in our own home'. I want to see what we at VoCNT can do to change that, to offer the client greater peace of mind and give them the security they are looking for.

While the backgrounds of the people who contact VoCNT vary greatly and overcoming cultural and language difficulties can present a challenge, I do my best to reassure the client that I am here to help and want to help. After all languages and culture can differ greatly but the feelings brought about by crime are the same for all.

In certain cases, I have spent 30 minutes on the phone with a client, because they just wanted to talk about their experiences with crime and they need a listening ear.

At VoCNT, there are never two days the same in my job, and I get to speak with people from all different backgrounds in life and I do have an extra soft spot for the older generation of the Territory.

The most enjoyable part of my job is knowing that each day when I come to work, I have the ability to make a difference to the lives of people across the Northern Territory, my community and the people who live in it.

Have a great day.



Krystal

Safe at Home Operations Officer



A Message from the Big Chair

It is with a great deal of excitement that I look forward to my coming year with VoCNT. There has been many changes this past year to the organisation, with a restructuring of the Committee and the appointment of Jeffrey Stanton as the new CEO of VoCNT.

It's only appropriate that I take a moment to acknowledge the service given by previous Committee Members and thank them for their time and commitment to victims of crime.

To the new Committee Members, I welcome them to VoCNT and look forward to another year of new initiatives not only to assist victims of crime, but educate and prevent people from experiencing being a victim of crime.

I would also like to thank our Patron, Commissioner Reece Kershaw, and Commissioner Mark Payne of the

Department of Corrections along with Police Liaison, Commander Kris Evans and the Attorney General, Natasha Fyles MLA for their ongoing support of VoCNT.

It is these strong partnerships that help VoCNT continue to deliver services and support to victims of crime throughout the Northern Territory.

VoCNT has a proud history of assisting victims of crime, this is only possible through the dedication of our volunteers and staff. It's their hard work that assists people to move on from being a victim of crime to becoming a survivor of crime.

Often the first point of contact our volunteers and staff deal with people who are distressed and emotional, the Committee and I recognise that it takes special kind of person to deal with these type of situations and we thank you for your kindness, empathy and professionalism that you bring to your roles in VoCNT.

I wish everyone a safe and happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

René Laan

WHO AM I?



René is currently practising as solicitor in Alice Springs. She was admitted to the NT Supreme Court and the High Court in

2013 after completing her legal studies through Charles Darwin University.

Originally from South Africa, she worked in the community development field for local government authorities and the not-for-profit sector in New Zealand and Australia. In South Africa she worked on federal government level in the demographics field and the redistribution of land programme. After 20 years working in the community development sector, she moved into the legal world.

This is René's second year on the VoCNT Committee and her first year as Chair of Victims of Crime NT.

A Message from the CEO

Only having been here for just over 5 months, it has been a pleasure getting to know the staff and Committee at VoCNT.

Taking over from the interim CEO Jacinta Stanton in July of 2016, did present some challenges, but Jacinta made the transition all the smoother, thank you to Jacinta for your professionalism while in this role and your continued support of VoCNT.

In July with regards to the review of NT Government Draft Charter of Victims' Rights, VoCNT developed a survey that collected the thoughts and opinions of many Territorians.

Over three weeks 162 Surveys were completed with a majority of respondents nominating 5 or more points that were most important to them. The top 5 points in order of priority were 1, 3, 6, 4, and 5.

These points were:

1/ To be treated with fairness, courtesy, dignity and respect.

3/ To be informed at the earliest opportunity about the availability of lawful protection against violence and intimidation by the offender

6/ On request, to be informed by the Director of Public Prosecutions as soon as practicable of: a) The charges laid against the offender; b) The time, date and place of the hearing; c) Any substantial changes to the charges; d) Any reasons for not laying charges, accepting a plea of guilty to a lesser charge or not prosecuting the offender; e) The outcome of the criminal proceeding including any sentence imposed; and, f) If an appeal is instituted, the fact of appeal, the grounds of appeal and the result of the appeal.

4/ To be informed at the earliest opportunity about the availability of welfare, counselling, health, medical and legal services and remedies available to them

5/ To be informed by the NT Police at reasonable intervals about the progress of an investigation into a criminal offence unless the disclosure may jeopardise the investigation or they have requested that the information not be provided

In detailing a review of the NT Government Draft Charter of Victims' Rights, it was VoCNT's opinion/position that:

- Reviewing the words of the Charter will not on its own add much value for victims. It is the application of the Charter and monitoring of its compliance that need to be the focus of the review.
- Currently there is no consequence for any government agency or news outlet that ignores the rights of victims under the Charter, accountability is key in changing public perception.
- Every other jurisdiction in Australia has a Victim's Advocate who oversees the implementation of victims' rights. In the NT we have no such role and it is subsequently left to the non-government sector and volunteers to do this.
- The review of the Charter should focus on creating the structure that is missing around the current charter. For instance, who do you call if you have a problem with the way you are treated as a victim? What is the obligation on Government Officers to observe your rights?
- The current Charter wording should be reviewed to take out all the policy speak and make the Charter a distinct statement of rights such as the list using simplified language/English.

What this survey particularly highlighted to VoCNT is how passionate Territorians are about the rights of victims.

This is just one example of how VoCNT continues to be a voice for those who feel they don't have one.

I am determined that we continue to challenge the norm in dealing with victims of crime and look at new ways of offering support and services to those affected by crime in the NT.

I certainly agree with the comments of our new Chair, Rene Laan in thanking our previous Committee members for their service and welcoming our new Committee Members to VoCNT, along with thanking and acknowledging our partnerships with our Patron, Commissioner Reece Kershaw, and Commissioner Mark Payne of the Department of Corrections and the support of Attorney General, Natasha Fyles MLA.

To our volunteers and staff I am an eye witness to the effort and professionalism to which you help out your fellow Territorians, thank you for such a successful 2016 and together I looked forward to an even better 2017.

I wish our members, the Committee our supporters and partners along with all Territorians a safe and happy end to 2017 and all the best for 2018.

Jeffrey Stanton

WHO AM I?



Jeff has worked in many different areas encompassing community development, health, unemployment, indigenous, youth, housing,

crime prevention, drug and alcohol issues, and areas of social disadvantage over the past 40 years both in Australia and in SE Asia.

Internationally he has worked on many Australian government, UN and NGO programs in Timor Leste, China, Thailand, Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Indonesia and Pakistan. When in Australia he has worked with a variety of Indigenous communities in the NT, SA and WA.

Jeff has also held the positions of Executive Officer of the Community Services and Health Industry Training Company, Manager of the National Industry Education Forum, Executive Officer of FORWARD Aboriginal Corporation and Manager of Youth and Families for Australian Red Cross in the NT amongst other senior management positions.

Did You Know?

VoCNT is working on an App.



A tool to help you maximise your personal home security and provide information on assistance that is available through Victims of Crime NT.

It should be available in early 2018.

Sponsors & Supporters

Our sponsors and supporters are true champions of the vision of Victims of Crime NT to assist people to return to the life they had before a crime.

VoCNT would like to thank our sponsors and supporters and acknowledge their ongoing support.

Our Sponsors include:

- Department of the Attorney-General and Justice
- Department of Correctional Services



Our Supporters include:

- The Northern Territory Police
- Ruby Gaea Centre
- Crime Victims Services Unit (CVSU)
- Witness Assistance Service (WAS)
- Clerk of Courts, Darwin Magistrates Court
- Sheriff's Office, Darwin Supreme Court
- Dawn House
- Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)
- NT Legal Aid Commission

FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you, your business or community organisation would like to sponsor or support Victims of Crime NT please contact the Victims of Crime NT office.



The staff and Committee at VoCNT wish for everyone to have a safe and fun holiday period.

CHECK OUT

VoCNT Facebook

VoCNT is on Facebook have you liked us yet?

Our Facebook page keeps you up to date with what VoCNT is doing, events happening in Darwin and the rest of the Territory, there are links to interesting articles, along with security ideas and much more.



www.facebook.com/victimsofcrimnt/

VoCNT Website

Check out the VoCNT Website and stay up to date with what VoCNT is doing.



victimsofcrime.org.au/

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