



25 YEARS



Victims of Crime NT
supporting victims of crime

2019-2020
ANNUAL REPORT



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About Us

Victims of Crime NT Inc. (VoCNT) is a community-based organisation, established in 1995 to support Territorians and NT communities impacted by crime. VoCNT offers a range of practical and emotional support services and prevention activities across the NT, and advocates for victims of crime by ensuring public and government awareness of their rights, needs and interests.

VoCNT has offices in Darwin, Alice Springs and Tennant Creek, employing 10 staff. Volunteers play an essential role in supporting the governance of the organisation and in many areas of our service delivery.



In partnership with the Northern Territory Government, VoCNT has provided:

- Information, referral, crisis support and counselling
- Assistance to prepare victim impact statements, financial payment applications, or to attend court
- Financial assistance in resecuring residential and business properties and vehicles
- Security Improvement program for residential properties
- Business security audits
- Victim support in Youth Justice Conferencing
- Crime prevention education and activities



Victims of Crime NT
supporting victims of crime

“ My experience with VoCNT has completely changed the way we feel in our home. The sense of improved well-being, including our sense of security is transformed in a most positive way. ”

“ The staff members that I dealt with were very understanding and I am incredibly impressed with VoCNT. Will definitely recommend to friends. ”

Vision, Mission, Values

Vision

To reduce the adverse impacts of crime; building resilient individuals and communities with a strong sense of safety, security and connectedness.

Mission

Committed to assisting those in the community who have been, or may be affected by crime, by providing them with support, advocacy and prevention strategies.

Values



Respect

We demonstrate respect for the dignity and inherent value of all people, particularly victims of crime.



Integrity

We undertake our work with openness, honesty, transparency and authenticity.



Commitment

We provide an accountable, reliable and proactive service to victims of crime and the community.



Professionalism

We ensure that our staff and volunteers have the skills and knowledge to deliver the services and support required in a professional and accountable manner.



Equality

We treat all victims of crime and others impacted by crime based on their specific needs in a non-discriminatory manner.

Chair Report

What a year it has been! Victims of Crime NT (VoCNT) continues to support and help people affected by crime by providing advocacy, emotional and practical assistance through a time of crisis and recovery.

This year has been very interesting for everyone, and our dedicated team maintained service delivery by working from home through the COVID – 19 pandemic. Personal support and home and business resecures continued during this time to ensure victims were provided assistance when required.

Over the past 12 months the Board farewelled a number of members.

A huge thank you to Jill Huck who has been a valuable member of the Victims of Crime team as a volunteer, Chairperson, and most recently Deputy Chair. Jill's commitment to Victims of Crime NT over the years and dedication to the achievements of the organisation are greatly appreciated.

The Board also farewelled Samoane Regattieri (Treasurer) and Helen Egan. I would like to say a personal thank you for your contribution through your participation in sub-committees, sharing knowledge and advice on governance and volunteering your time to the Board.

While we have farewelled three members of the Board we have also welcomed three new members; Megan Elgar, Bernard Ho, and Michael Kalidonis who bring a range of experience to the Board.

Stalwarts, Michael Myers and Alia Intably have provided valuable support to our new Board members as they settle into their role. As a volunteer Board our members are committed to the vision of VoCNT and dedicate their own time to attend meetings, join sub-committees, and be part of out-of-session decisions and weekend planning days. Our CEO, Melinda Fleming, has a clear vision and displays her commitment to people in coaching our staff team to perform at their best. She has established strong stakeholder networks which have enabled the Board and victims of crime across the NT to reinvigorate our vision for the future.

Thank you to NT Police Commissioner, Jamie Chalker APM, for his commitment to the role of Patron, and we look forward to your ongoing support as we move forward into next year. Commander David Proctor APM, as the NT Police representative to the Board, your input, knowledge and advice is always greatly appreciated and welcome.

“ The 2019/2020 year has been a period of change and improvement. The dedication of the staff throughout the year and most especially their resilience during the pandemic was inspiring. Despite the adversity we have expanded our volunteer numbers. A permanent presence has been established in Tennant Creek and work with stakeholders in Katherine is underway increasing VoCNTs footprint across the NT. ”

Northern Territory Correctional Services Commissioner, Scott McNairn, supports VoCNT through the *Sentenced to a Job* program. I am proud to represent Correctional Services and remain the Commissioners representative on the board.

The 2019/2020 year has been a period of change and improvement. The dedication of the staff throughout the year and most especially, their resilience during the pandemic, was inspiring. Despite the adversity we have expanded our volunteer numbers. A permanent presence has been established in Tennant Creek and work with stakeholders in Katherine is underway, increasing VoCNT's footprint across the NT.

The *Business Resecure* program continued to grow providing support to small businesses impacted by crime. The *Vehicle Resecure* pilot became part of the *Safe at Home* funding agreement during the 2019/2020 financial year.

The demand for assistance from victims across the NT continued to grow during 2019/2020. The first half of the financial year saw a rapid rise in requests for assistance, largely driven by increased referrals from NT Police. The increased demand placed considerable strain on the budget which resulted in a review of eligibility criteria for service. This re-evaluation ensured assistance was maintained for the more vulnerable members of our community.

A new five year funding agreement with the Department of Attorney General and Justice has been signed, re-branding the existing programs under the banner of *Restore, Recover, Protect*. This provides an opportunity to build on our strategic intent and business plan with longer term goals. The expansion of service provision across the NT, stakeholder engagement and more robust governance

structures in place creates a platform for a rewarding year ahead.

VoCNT reached its 25-year anniversary in 2020, and while celebrations of the milestone have been delayed due to COVID-19, work is in progress to mark the occasion in November in order to acknowledge the contribution of past and present staff and volunteers.

I look forward to another busy year working with a great team and continuing to build on current achievements.



Deborah Cass
Chairperson

CEO Report

In my second year as CEO of Victims of Crime NT, I can reflect on change, challenge and growth in equal parts to my first year, albeit for different reasons. A global pandemic was not what we had imagined for 2019/2020, and it has certainly triggered new and different ways of thinking about service provision and imaginings for the future.

The first half of the financial year saw a significant spike in demand for both property crime and victim support services. Across most program areas our performance measures were reached by December. Daily referrals from Police across the NT were consistent and high during that period, the result of many training sessions with Police in both Darwin and Alice Springs. Financial assistance for property crime related matters was stretched beyond capacity, and revised eligibility criteria was necessary to ensure our funds would last the year and were targeted towards reaching the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people. Fortunately, we can thank COVID-19 for the budget reprieve that came with lower crime rates and demand for services in the latter part of the year. Receiving advice that our request for additional one-off funding for the 2019/2020 year had been granted by Department of Attorney General and Justice (AGJ) was also welcomed.

The staff team displayed flexibility and agility as we made the transition to remote working arrangements in the final quarter of the year, as COVID-19 restrictions triggered the closure of our offices. I am proud of the way in which the team made this transition and were steadfast in ensuring there were no service interruptions. That transition took just one day and was a seamless process largely due to a previous Information Technology

strategy that positioned us well for remote access. Clients were supported through their choice of phone, email or online meeting platform, all of which were well utilised during the shutdown period. Our offices re-opened in early June with a COVID-19 safety plan in place. Our vigilance around COVID-19 continues, and the new ways of thinking and practices that emerged during that period will remain for future benefit.

The lead up to the drafting of a 5-year funding agreement (2020-2025) with AGJ involved the development of a new business case, which was a collaborative staff and board process. While most services will principally remain, we will have just one program brand – *Restore, Recover, Protect*. This will replace the *Safe At Home* and *Core Services*. Other changes include the expansion of our NT footprint and amendments to program elements to achieve greater reach and improved outcomes for those affected by crime. In terms of VoCNT's financial sustainability, this 5-year funding agreement is significant.

The year has seen a greater focus on volunteer development. Our volunteer team has increased moderately; however, the real progress has been made with the development and update of training resources, improved recruitment methods, and more opportunities for volunteers to have ongoing support and a greater sense of connectedness. Overall, this work has reinvigorated and strengthened our profile as a volunteer organisation.

Access to local services is important to people Territory-wide, and as such, a permanent presence in Tennant Creek has been realised. A location at the Paterson St Hub has seen many pop-ins and increased access to services. Regular visits to

Katherine for youth justice conferencing, stakeholder engagement and promotion are building towards a regular presence in the near future and the expanded footprint we hope to achieve.

In maintaining our collaborative focus, both informally and formally, our partnership work has flourished. This has particularly advanced our planning work in the crime prevention and education space, and we look ahead excitedly as these projects come to fruition in the latter half of 2020. Building and maintaining positive relationships has been followed by establishing mutual partnerships to respond to emerging needs. In addition, we have continued to work closely with our Police colleagues to maximise access to victim support across a number of fronts. There is no doubt that *'together, we are better'* and we appreciate all our partner and network organisations, business groups and suppliers for their collaborative commitment.

With much gratitude, I thank the staff and volunteer teams for their no-nonsense attitude and resilience this year. The VoCNT Board has worked diligently to steer the organisation in the direction of our Strategic Plan, despite the effects of an unexpected spike in service demand and a global pandemic. I thank each of them and in particular recognise our Chairperson, Deb Cass, for her trust and support. Our governance team has experienced some membership movement during the year, farewelling three Board members and welcoming three more.

Looking forward to 2020/2021 there are some clear priorities. The roll-out of our newly branded *Restore, Recover, Protect* program will become our initial focus. Beyond that, we intend to start the journey to develop and implement a *Reconciliation Action Plan*. An ongoing challenge for us lies in improving the victim journey within the justice system, acknowledging the importance of their

voices and experiences, and striving for a coordinated and trauma informed approach at every point of contact. This work is of great importance in terms of victim recovery and requires commitment to the *Northern Territory Charter of Victim's Rights* from a large cohort of our stakeholders.

As we reach our 25-year milestone in 2020, it's a time to reflect on the efforts of some wonderful human beings who founded this organisation in response to the need for something more; the need for people affected by crime to be supported through their time of crisis and recovery. I'd like to acknowledge and honour all people who have been involved with VoCNT over the last quarter of a century, as it is your contributions that have kept the rights and needs of victims of crime at the forefront, enabling this important work to continue today.



Melinda (Mel) Fleming
Chief Executive Officer

Financial Statements

Our special purpose financial statements have been completed by BDO Australia, Darwin. These are available to members at our Annual General Meeting, will be posted to the VoCNT website and will be submitted with our Annual Information Statement on the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission (ACNC) portal.

Acquittals have been prepared by BDO for the Dept Attorney General and Justice, including Correctional Services NT, Territory Families and the Dept Trade, Business and Innovation. They will be submitted in line with funding agreement requirements

Governance Team

The Board of Victims of Crime NT Inc. give their time and professional skills in a voluntary capacity to set and guide the overall strategy of the organisation.

A Special General Meeting was held in November 2019 to update the Constitution. A subsequent review of the By-Laws has also been finalised.

“ With much gratitude, I thank the staff and volunteer teams for their no-nonsense attitude and resilience this year. The VoCNT board has also worked diligently to steer the organisation in the direction of our Strategic Plan, despite the effects of an unexpected spike in service demand and a global pandemic. ”

Deborah Cass – Chair and Correctional Services Representative

Jill Huck – Deputy Chair
Resigned April 2020
Position vacant as at 30/6/2020

Dr. Michael Myers – Public Officer

Samoane Regattieri – Treasurer
Resigned May 2020
Position vacant as at 30/6/2020

Kwame Selormey – Member
Resigned July 2020

Alia Intably – Member

Megan Elgar – Member
Appointed April 2020

Michael Kalidonis – Member
Appointed May 2020

Bernard Ho – Member
Appointed May 2020

Commander David Proctor APM – Police Representative

Melinda Fleming – Secretary

Membership

VoCNT has revised its membership categories in the last year.

We now offer individual or organisational membership options.

Additionally, the establishment of *Friends of VoCNT* has resulted in a significant increase in the readership of our newsletters, and connection via the website and social media pages.



Patron

This year we welcome and thank NT Police Commissioner Jamie Chalker APM for accepting the role of Patron.

Patron Message

On 11 November 2019, I was appointed as Commissioner of Police and CEO of Fire and Emergency Services. It was with great pleasure that I also accepted the role of Patron of Victims of Crime NT.

Since its establishment in 1995, Victims of Crime NT continues to support people within the Northern Territory who are impacted by many crime types.

I, along with many others, am fully aware of the impact of crime on its victims and the community and the significance of the role of Victims of Crime NT in providing emotional and practical support to those victims to reduce and minimise this adverse impact.

As Patron, I look forward to assisting Victims of Crime NT to achieve its goals and will be promoting the important work undertaken. I encourage community members to join Victims of Crime NT to build an increased feeling of community safety and greater resilience within the Northern Territory.

I would like to extend my gratitude to all those who support Victims of Crime NT and look forward to your ongoing support in the future.



Strategic Plan 2019-2022



GOAL 1 OBJECTIVES

- 1.1 Examine and develop existing program models in line with current/emerging needs and service gaps, ensuring greater geographical reach
- 1.2 Build upon and strengthen expertise in the delivery of victim support in Restorative Justice Programs
- 1.3 Drive public and community awareness of the experiences, needs and rights of victims
- 1.4 Engage in crime prevention strategies that enhance the safety of individuals and build safer communities

GOAL 2 OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 Implement recognised governance principles (*AICD 10 Principles of Governance*) and invest in training and resourcing for Board and Management
- 2.2 Ensure future viability through effective planning processes and robust policy, financial and risk management frameworks
- 2.3 Maintain a professional leadership team that is reflective and responsive

GOAL 3 OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 Build and maintain a skilled and professional volunteer workforce
- 3.2 Adopt a continuous learning and improvement philosophy across the organisation
- 3.3 Utilise contemporary practices to build a positive culture and workforce sustainability

GOAL 4 OBJECTIVES

- 4.1 Secure ongoing funding in partnership with government, and generate alternate funding streams to enable greater flexibility and timely responses to victim needs
- 4.2 Build and enhance the positive organisational profile and reputation of VoCNT
- 4.3 Promote a culture of innovation and creativity across the organisation

GOAL 5 OBJECTIVES

- 5.1 Strengthen and maintain purposeful relationships with government partners and key stakeholders
- 5.2 Increase community involvement and connection with an expanded membership base
- 5.3 Develop a stakeholder *Management Plan* that identifies potential partners and opportunities

“ I would just like to thank you for this great service to the public. It is important to know that there are services available to assist people when horrible things happen to them. As well as the insecurity and stress created by the crimes committed against people, there is also often financial hardship. This service is invaluable to people in many ways. ”

Organisational Structure



Victims of Crime NT
supporting victims of crime



Our Team

The VoCNT staff team has operated from three offices throughout the year – Darwin, Alice Springs and Tennant Creek (Paterson St Hub).

In the midst of COVID-19 and remote working arrangements, the team agreed that the forced familiarity with online meetings had resulted in improved connections within the team. No pajamas were ever spied at daily Zoom check-ins!

An origami crane project was initiated by Mandy during COVID-19 to inspire and challenge us all.

Property Crime Program Staff

Mandy
Chris
Jess

Corporate Support Staff

Mel
Trish

Victim Support Program Staff

Renate
Carrie
Michelle

Volunteers

Krystal

Thank you to Kym and Amy who also worked with the team this year.

Volunteers

A Volunteer Development Officer role was created this year and has been successful in terms of improving recruitment, coordination and training opportunities and improved team cohesion.

The VoCNT volunteer team are a remarkable bunch of people, most of whom offer their time out of hours answering crisis calls. They respond with care and empathy to callers who are often in distress, providing support options and reassurance. Office volunteers have also assisted with administrative tasks and projects, and have worked alongside our Victim Support Officers.

A highlight for us was getting involved in National Volunteer Week celebrations which occurred in the middle of COVID-19 closures. We did this by:

- Hosting a virtual Volunteer Party
- Having one of our volunteers interviewed by the ABC – well done Alisson!
- Making a gratitude video to add to a selection compiled by Volunteering NT - *Colour Your Community Red*

In 2019-2020, our Victim and Office Support volunteers contributed 453 hours to our organisation and our After-hours Phone Support volunteers contributed 6,054 hours. This amounted to 6,507 of volunteer hours for the financial year!

**Volunteers trained
in 2019-2020**

**Active volunteers
in 2019-2020**

**Volunteer hours
in 2019-2020**

Words from our Volunteers

“ Being a volunteer and choosing to help others without anything in return is very humbling, you interact with people from all walks of life and in our case (at VoCNT) those interactions are often raw and intense as some of our callers have just experienced a crime. Without realising, volunteering makes you more empathetic towards others and allows to reflect and be grateful for what you have. ”

“ Just recently, someone called just to say thank you. The lady was elderly and her house was broken into twice, the fact that she was alone in Darwin with no relatives, living on her pension only and not able to repair her broken door made her feel at risk. We were able to help with her broken door and put some extra security measures in place. The lady stated that the team made her feel safe again in her house and that was the greatest gift one could have given her. ”

“ Recently I have started my volunteer career with Victims of Crime NT. Being a Psychology student in real life, my ultimate goal is to promote the psychological wellbeing of the people who are underprivileged. Through Victims of Crime NT, I get to work directly with people who need assistance to provide them with financial and emotional support, advocacy, and appropriate referrals. This is quite satisfying to see that the lives of people are positively impacted through the excellent work of Victims of Crime NT and me being a part of it. As a part of their skilled team, I highly recommend this service to everyone as we strive to build a resilient and well-prepared community to strongly face the adverse effects of crimes and traumas. ”

“ I moved into the role of Volunteer Development Officer in August 2019, making me responsible for recruiting, training and providing coordination support to the highly valued team of volunteers at VoCNT. During the past year our volunteers have dedicated in excess of 6,500 hours of their time to provide essential support services. Team members individually bring a range of knowledge, skills and wisdom to the organisation, which enhances our ability to respond to those who may be in crisis, or need practical support to manage the effects of crime. Big congratulations to the team for their dedication and voluntary service this year. You are truly appreciated! ”

- Krystal, VoCNT Volunteer Development Officer





supporting Territorians impacted by crime

From humble beginnings and a need identified by two community members impacted by crime, Victims of Crime was founded in 1995.

The organisation became incorporated as a community organisation in 1996, and was granted government funding to operate an office supported by volunteers. In 1998 a full-time Executive Officer was appointed, and the organisation began to focus on victim advocacy, as well as continuing to walk alongside victims in their journey of recovery.

Over the next decade, VoCNT successfully campaigned for the introduction of legislation to assist victims of crime. In 2006, the Northern Territory Government enacted the *Victims of Crime Rights and Services Act* and the *Victims of Crime Assistance Act*, which introduced a statutory compensation scheme for victims of violent crime, created a Ministerial Advisory Committee (Crime Victims Advisory Committee), and introduced the *Northern Territory Charter of Victim's Rights*.

Attention to the emerging needs of victims of crime and subsequent growth saw a court support service added, along with 24-hour access to support. The landscape for victim support continued to expand at this time.

In 2015, VoCNT added property crime responses to its programs, providing financial assistance, home security assessments and improvements, and remote community projects. Most recently another victim support program working in restorative youth justice conferencing has been added to enable victims the opportunity to participate in the youth justice process.

Today we have 10 staff working across the Northern Territory. A volunteer Board continues to govern the organisation, and a team of dedicated volunteers assist in daily operations and ensure our after-hours support line remains available. VoCNT remains committed to listening and responding to the needs of victims of crime by developing programs and providing a specialist perspective on the impact of government decisions on people who have suffered harm through crime.

VoCNT now works in partnership with funding from a number of Northern Territory Government agencies – Attorney General and Justice, Correctional Services, Territory Families, and the Department of Trade, Business and Innovation. Our strong relationship with NT Police has been maintained for 25 years, and is vital in terms of referring victims for support.

“It's rewarding to know that many people have been helped through the support Victims of Crime NT has provided for 25 years. This would not have been possible without the dedication and caring nature that volunteers and staff have given to other Territorians.

“We started 25 years ago as a small group with large ambitions. We faced many hurdles but as a group we rose to the challenge and the Victims of Crime Assistance League (VOCAL) was established. Shortly after, the Territory Government acknowledged the need for victim support services and announced financial support for the organisation.

“Everyone involved can be very proud of what Victims of Crime NT has achieved in the past 25 years by providing a selfless service to the community.”

- Peter Gandolfi, Victims of Crime NT Co-Founder

“Being involved in the early years was exciting and ground breaking. It was a time when victims really started to be heard in the system and community. I look back at my time with fond memories of dedicated volunteers, supportive partnerships, and of course, strong and inspiring survivors of crime. I am so very proud to say that I was part of the journey.”

- Sue Lowry, Victims of Crime Executive Officer 2001-2005

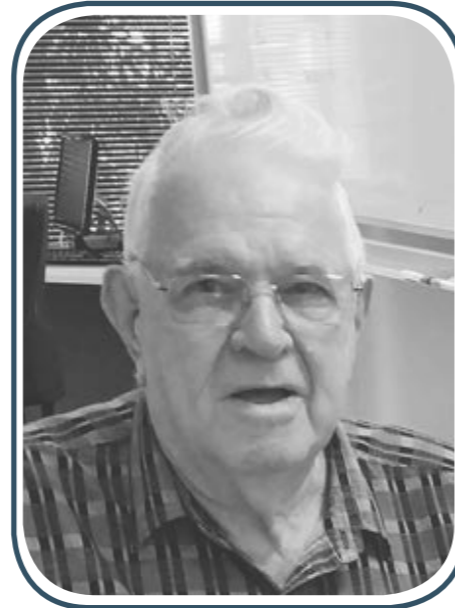


Reflecting on 25 Years of VoCNT

“ Congratulations on 25 years. I came to the NT in April 1994 and was involved with the Chamber of Commerce NT. I was approached by then NT Police Commissioner to work with businesses about security reminders for their premises. My neighbour at the time had also been broken into some 23 times. Thus, I was interested in the formation of Victims of Crime NT the following year.

It was 2011 before I joined the VoCNT Board as Deputy Chair in 2012, and Chair in 2014-2015. I was pleased to work with staff like Mike Campbell (CEO), Chris Fearn and Karen Lucas. Mike Campbell and myself lobbied hard to get more funds to expand into Alice Springs and to set up the *Safe at Home* program. Interestingly, my neighbour has not been broken into since adopting the *Safe at Home* program. ”

- Ken Cohalan OAM



“ Victims of Crime (VOC as it was then) was just a small child when I joined the Committee. Sue Lowry was the Executive Officer who was the only paid member of staff; the rest were dedicated volunteers who manned the phones 24/7 operating out of the AANT Building. The Committee was focused on long-term growth and public awareness. By the time I left the Committee after approximately 7 years we had a small presence in Alice Springs, and Mike Campbell was in charge, with 3 staff and a bookkeeper operating out of the Le Grande office. It has been with a parental pride to watch VOCNT continue to expand out into the regions and with great advocacy from successive EOs for NTG funding. I wish the VoCNT Team all the best to support victims in need. ”

- Ian Abbott, Former Management Committee Chair

When I first joined the VoCNT Board we had one employee who had the mammoth task of training and coordinating our dedicated volunteers across the Territory, plus addressing the needs of those who came through the door for assistance. As a result of working with the various Ministers over the years, we were able to increase our staffing levels, deliver support services to an every growing client base and respond quickly to critical situations such as the TIO bombing. VoCNT is a vital essential service for many victims on their personal road to recovery after experiencing a crime, which is often life changing.

- Sharyn Innes, Former Management Committee Chair and Life Member

“ I thoroughly enjoyed my time with the organisation and relished the professional relationships I maintained, as well as the rewards that came from providing support and assistance to people when they were potentially at their most vulnerable.

2006 was a particularly big year for us as an organisation. It was in this year that I liaised with the then Attorney-General The Hon. Peter Toyne and his office to restructure how victims of crime accessed financial compensation with the development of the Victims of Crime Assistance Act 2006 and the Victims of Crime Rights and Services Act 2006. This new legislation streamlined the process of applying for compensation by removing the ‘middle-man’, the lawyers, to make access to compensation for victims of violent crimes a less confronting administrative process. Victims could now apply directly to the Crime Victims Services Unit for compensation, this was less likely to re-traumatise victims by removing the need to return to court.

In 2006, VoCNT hosted the Victim Support Australasia Annual Conference in Darwin. This conference was entitled “Positive Ways: An Indigenous Say” and focused on victim and justice issues in the Indigenous context. Over two and a half days, more than 120 delegates attended functions and Key Note Addresses.

I am proud to have been involved with continuing to build the strong foundations of VoCNT after taking over from Susan Lowry, who was a strong advocate for victims of crime and who is widely credited with establishing and building the organisation. ”

- Trenea Millar, Manager 2005-2007

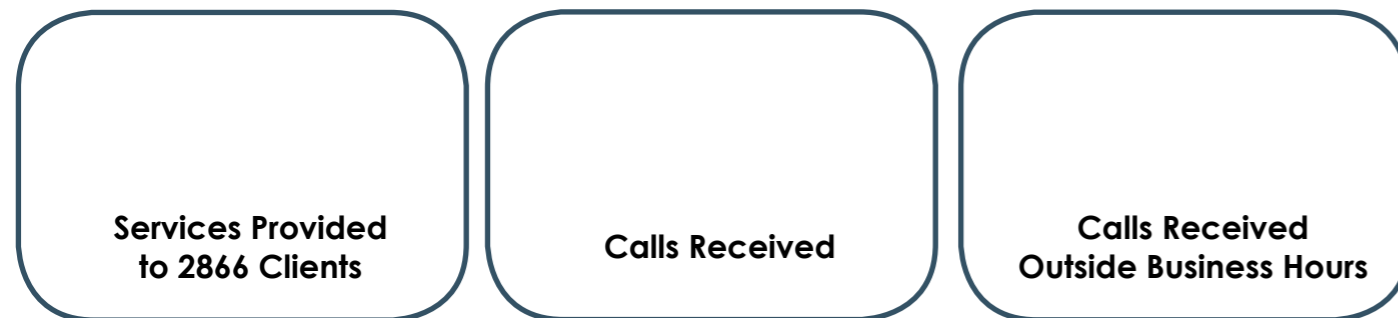


24-Hour Access to Services and Support

The Victims of Crime 24-hour support line, 1800 672 242 provides our clients with access to services and support in the most critical of times.

In 2019-2020 we received a total of 3,613 calls on the 1800 number. 123 calls were taken outside of business hours and 3490 calls taken during business hours.

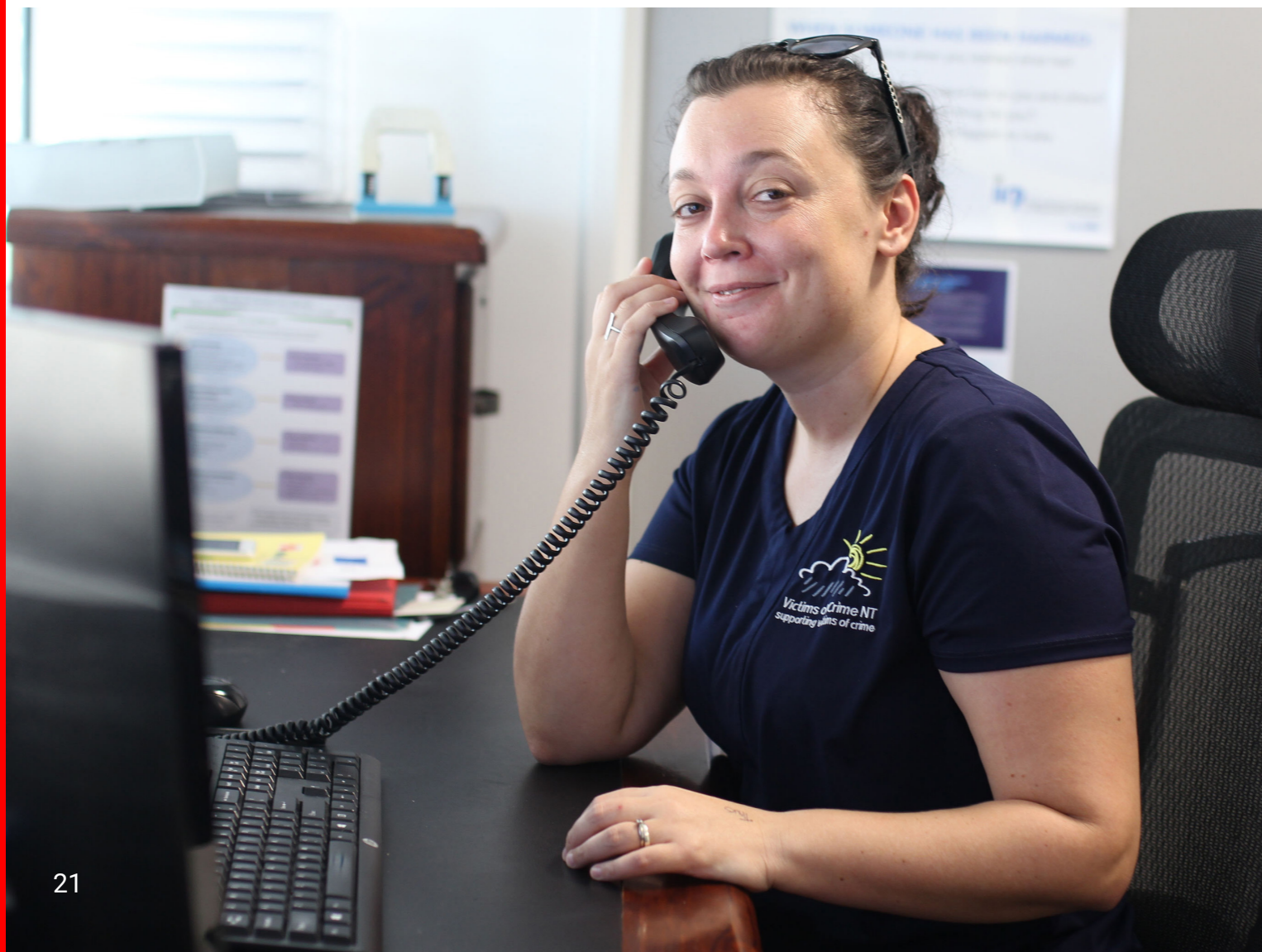
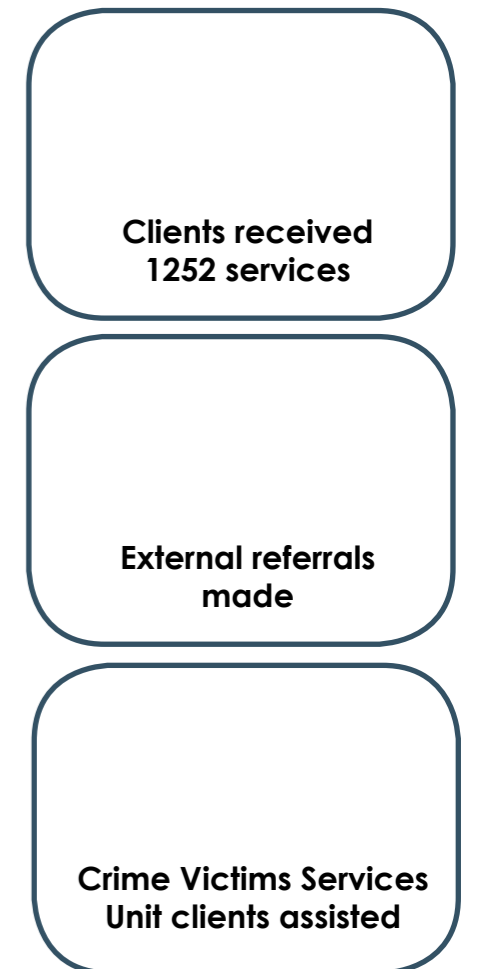
We provided 3,885 services to 2,866 clients.



Victim Support Services

Victim Support Services continued to meet the crisis and ongoing needs of individuals that have been impacted by crime, both current or historical. This service has been offered by Victim Support Officers located in Darwin, Alice Springs and Tennant Creek.

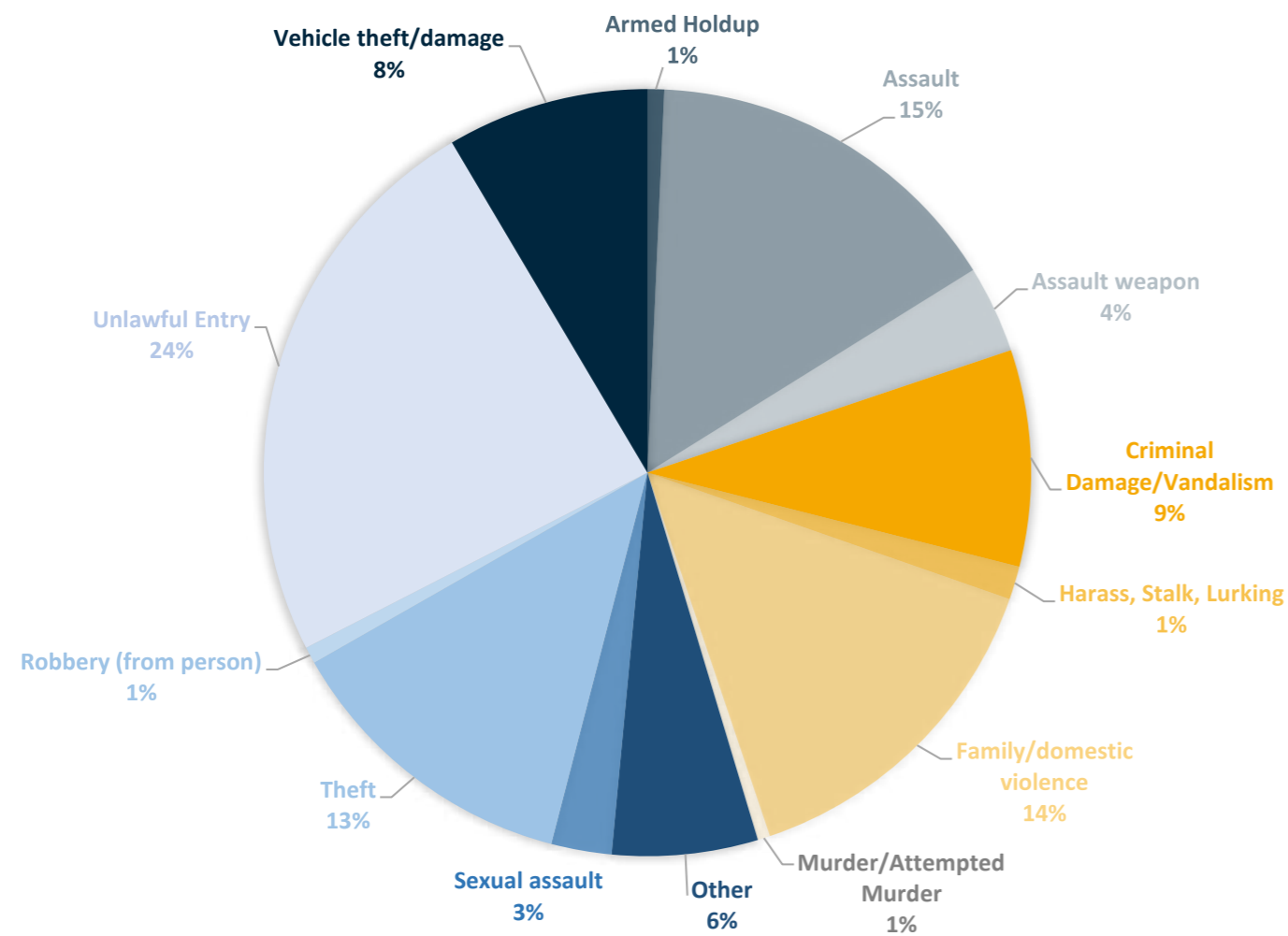
Clients received a variety of service options, tailored to meet their specific needs and in response to their experience of crime. Needs assessment and coordination of support options were offered to a large cohort of clients, and included:



“ You are doing a wonderful service for people (myself) when I was so confused and vulnerable, you made my life better when I was down. ”

“ Thank you for the support, I was quite an emotional mess when I first rang, I am much more informed and on top of the problem I was having. ”

Offence Types



Our partnership work with the CVSU has been strengthened to ensure we can support clients who are eligible to apply for financial assistance due to physical and/or emotional injuries as a result of crime against the person.

Services have been offered in-office, outreach, via phone, text or email, according to victim preferences.

We welcomed Michelle as a Victim Support Officer, who set up a VoCNT presence in the Paterson Street Hub in Tennant Creek. This has expanded the support to victims in this region and has enabled a consistent presence for Restorative Justice conferencing. Our Alice Springs office also welcomed Amy as Victim Support Officer.

“ Very helpful and informative, extremely understanding and compassionate. ”

Student Placement

In 2019 we welcomed a CDU student to the Darwin Office. Kelly was a 3rd year CDU student studying Social Work and on her first placement.

Kelly committed to a 500 hour placement with VoCNT over a period of 4 months. She spent some time within all program areas at VoCNT Darwin, but was focused on the CORE and Restorative Justice programs in particular. Kelly worked closely with the Victim Support Programs Manager on day-to-day operational tasks, as well as on a longer-term research project. Kelly was a great fit for our organisation and we enjoyed having her on the team.

“ I have loved working on the projects so will be staying on as a volunteer to continue working on this. Victims of Crime NT has provided me with a fantastic welcoming environment to learn and grow as a student, so thank you all very much. ”

- Kelly



Victim Support: Restorative Youth Justice Conferencing

This program gives victims the opportunity to meet the offender and to have their voices heard in the justice process.

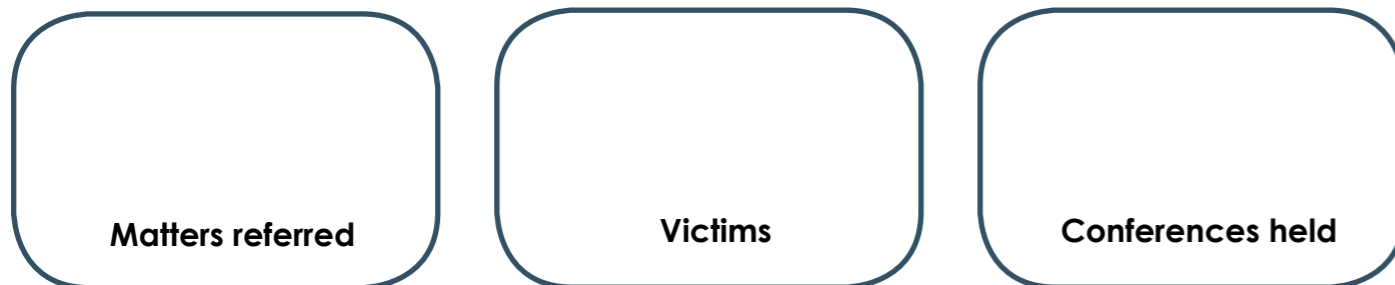
- Active participation in the justice process
- Safe and structured space to have their voice heard
- Opportunity to address their hurt and fear as a result of the crime
- Opportunity to hear the young person's explanation
- A designated Victim Support Officer to prepare, attend and follow-up
- Encourages offenders to take responsibility for their actions
- Promotes understanding of the impact offending has on the victim, their family and the community
- Interrupts negative behaviour patterns
- Opportunity for remorse and facilitation of change
- Inhibits re-offending

A formal evaluation of the initial Pilot Project in June 2019 detailed a range of recommendations, all of which were addressed this year.

Relationships with Police, Jesuit Social Services and several Youth Organisations (providing Diversion Case work) are well established, and VoCNT have attended regular stakeholder meetings to discuss and improve practice.

Youth Justice Conferencing for pre-court and pre-sentencing is now firmly established in Tennant Creek and Alice Springs.

Conferencing for the *Back on Track* program was supported in Katherine and Darwin.



Property Crime Programs

Safe at Home

Clean up and Resecure (CRP) offers victims of unlawful entry:

- Assistance to engage a contractor
- Funding up to \$400 to repair damage and resecure
- Internal referral to victim support programs
- External referral to relevant organisations

Vehicle Resecure Program (VRP) offers:

- Funding up to \$400 for glass breakage or key replacement

Security Improvement Program (SIP) is accessible to anyone who has a desire to improve their safety at home:

- Free home security assessment – on site visits to assess home and surrounds, and personal safety habits. A report with suggested improvements/upgrades is provided.
- Funding for eligible clients who are assessed as high risk, up to \$1000
- Assistance to obtain quotes and engage contractors

Demand for these services was significant in the July 2019 – January 2020 period, resulting in a revision of program eligibility criteria to enable funds to last, and to ensure funds were targeted towards reaching the most vulnerable and disadvantaged victims of crime.

An additional \$100K in funding was received from AGJ to enable continuation of financial assistance until 30/6/20.

In extending our reach with online options, we have partnered with Neighbourhood Watch NT to develop a new resource, *How safe is my place?* This will be an online home security assessment, to be launched in the latter half of 2020.

The team kept their knowledge up to date by attending:

- National Security Conference in Sydney
- Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) training in Perth

Homes Resecured

Home Security Assessments*

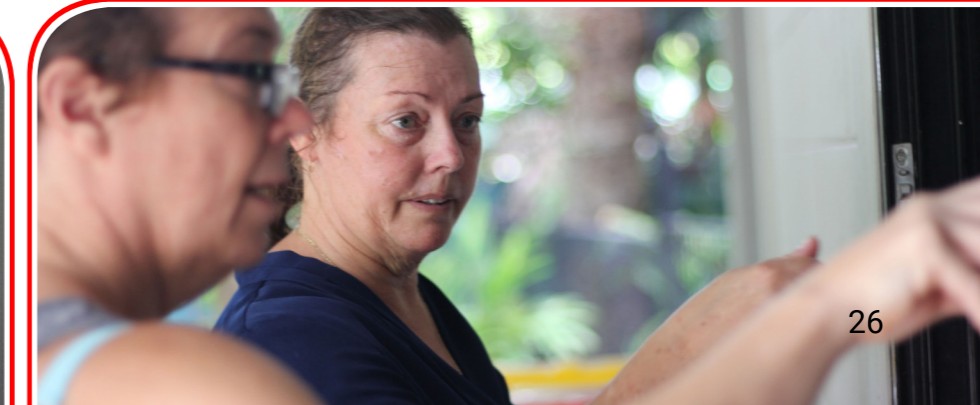
Homes with Improved Security**

Vehicles Resecured

*included 200 self-assessments

**high risk eligibility criteria was implemented for the Security Improvement Program in Jan 2020.

“ I would say that the young person saw a path to a better future from the conference. ”



Remote Communities Project

Projects are aimed at improving community safety in regional and remote communities. Projects are community driven and rely on relationships with local organisations and people who can identify their specific community needs and develop responses.

Activity was limited this year, mainly due to the impacts of COVID-19 on remote communities. The mandated closure of communities prevented engagement for a number of months. Limitations in terms of technology and access to online options meant a preference for face-to-face engagement, and with COVID-19 this was not possible. It is also useful to note that the Wet Season in the Top End limits both travel and works.

Engagement occurred with communities in Angurugu, Groote Eylandt and Wurrumiyanga (Tiwi Island) prior to COVID-19. As communities have reopened in the final months of the FY, our planning phase for 2020/2021 began. Nhulunbuy and Daly River community projects were initiated, and we have begun exploring an approach for community projects that engages young people in schools around community safety problem solving. These projects will be youth led and prevention focused.

A regional project was of benefit to 30 residents in Parap, supplying personal alarms and information/resource packs, which were distributed by police following a high-profile violent home invasion.

Business Resecure Program (BRP)

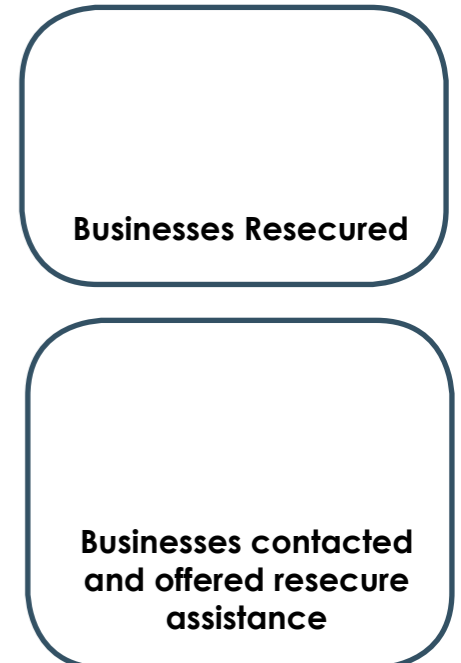
The *Business Resecure Program*, funded by Department Trade, Business and Innovation (DTBI), assists small businesses with less than 100 employees to resecure their premises following criminal damage or unlawful entry.

The program provides:

- Assistance to engage contractors or obtain quotes
- Funding up to \$750 for the first incident, \$500 for the second incident and \$500 for a third incident (subject to *Biz Secure* application)

In 2019/2020, 190 business clients were contacted and offered resecure assistance. Of these, 124 business clients had resecures completed, 30 businesses received assistance for a second incident and 11 received assistance for a third incident.

Additional funding was received from DTBI in May to enable the program to continue until 30/6.



Biz Secure Audits

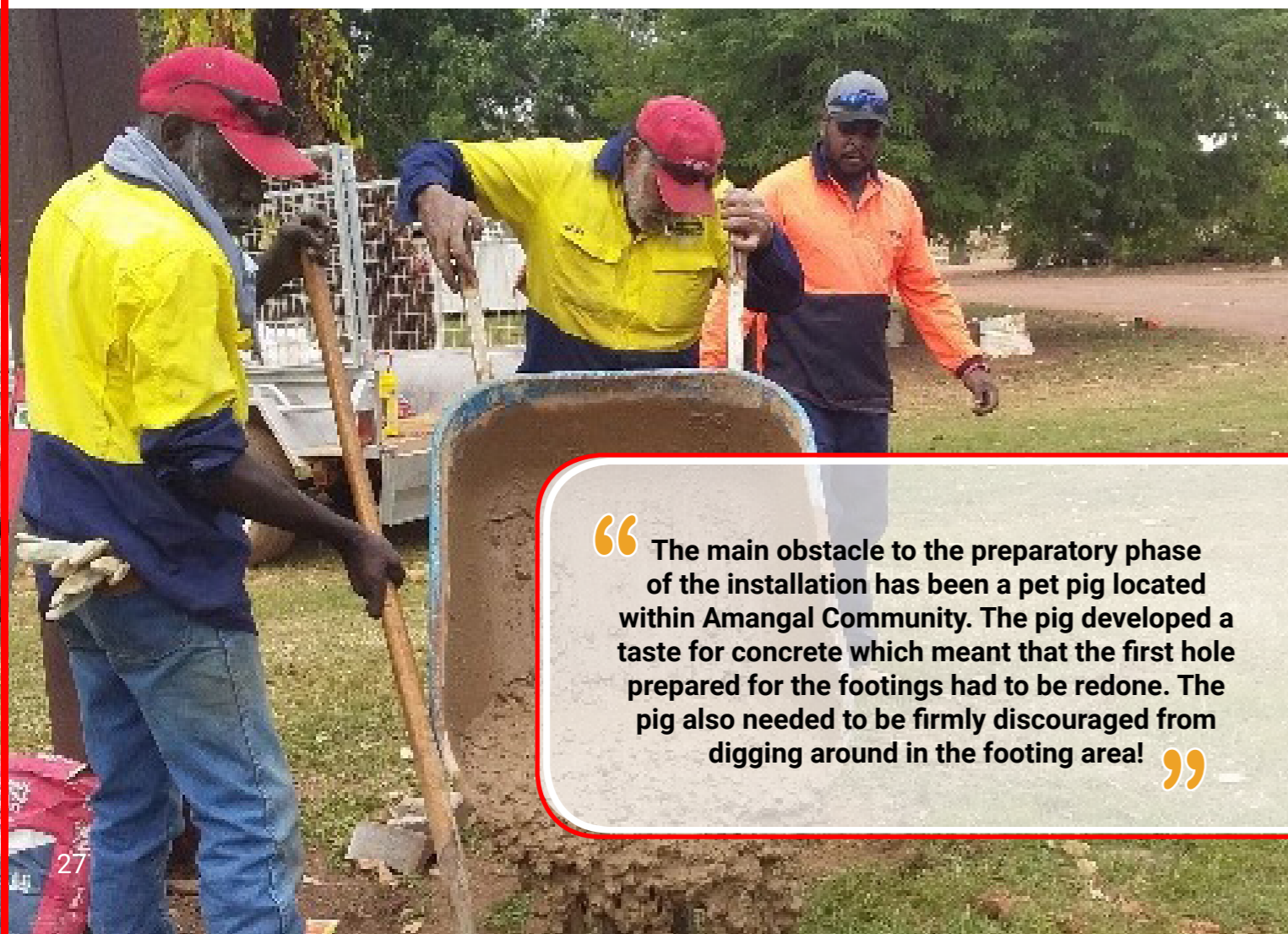
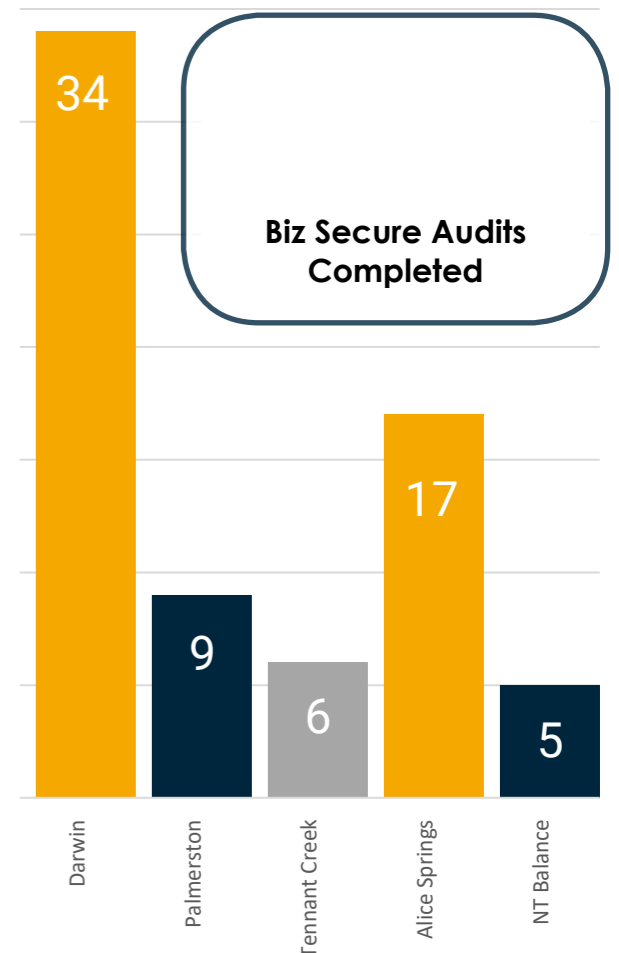
VoCNT has 3 staff qualified to conduct Biz Secure audits, completing 71 audits for businesses across the NT. These audits assist businesses to better understand their security needs and identify potential improvements.

Businesses receive a report with recommended security upgrades, and funding has been available from Dept. Trade, Business and Innovation for these. Demand for audit services has been consistent across the year, with a noticeable increase in the last quarter as the *Biz-Secure* initiative is set to finish in November 2020.

In our visits to businesses, we've regularly recommended attention to:

- Safe opening and closing procedures
- Staff training for how to act in the event of a crime
- Key security
- Cash security
- Maintenance/checking of door locks

We've also found that the majority of business owners identify CCTV as their primary security improvement.



“ The main obstacle to the preparatory phase of the installation has been a pet pig located within Amangal Community. The pig developed a taste for concrete which meant that the first hole prepared for the footings had to be redone. The pig also needed to be firmly discouraged from digging around in the footing area! ”

Correctional Services NT - Sentenced to a Job Funding

Funding was received each quarter from Correctional Services, representing a percentage of the funds generated by the *Sentenced to A Job* program. This funding was significantly lower than in previous years.

With this funding we have assisted the urgent needs of victims of crime who are more vulnerable and at risk. Often these clients have experienced re-victimisation and require assistance that other agencies cannot provide.

- Rent assistance where a mental health crisis followed an unlawful entry
- Multiple security upgrades recommended by our Home Security Assessments that were above the assistance offered by the *Security Improvement Program (SIP)*
- Clothing for an intellectually disabled person following arson to the home
- Utilities bill for client who had missed work due to trauma of unlawful entry
- Contribution towards CCTV installation for elderly high-risk victim
- Bike repair for vulnerable client to reinstate principal form of transport
- Contribution towards cost of personal alarms for taxi drivers at risk (collaboration between Police, VoCNT and Blue Taxis)

Education, Awareness and Community Engagement

A renewed marketing strategy across the year has resulted in greater brand professionalism and consistency.

- Refreshed website
- New style guide
- New brochure
- More online fact sheets
- A range of promotional templates

Our website and growing newsletter distribution has generated greater awareness of issues and needs, promoted available services and communicated crime prevention messages.

The VoCNT website attracted an average 21 users per day, with 3,600 visits occurring during the second half of the year.

The VoCNT newsletter now has 1,000 subscribers, and we are proud to report a 25% increase in social media followers this

financial year. The VoCNT Facebook had 510 followers as at June 30, 2020.

Whilst the arrival of COVID-19 has resulted in a decrease in opportunities for face-to-face service promotion and education, the first part of the year allowed us to participate in:

- Local shows (2019) – Alice Springs, Katherine and Darwin
- Katherine Community Safety Expo
- Seniors Wellness Expo, Alice Springs

5 Training sessions were also delivered to NT Police – Darwin and Palmerston regions.



Newsletter Subscribers

Facebook followers, a 25% increase.

Training session delivered to NT Police.



Our Partners & Supporters

We value our key partner agencies with whom we have worked collaboratively throughout the year.

Thank you to our colleagues in the following organisations:

NT Police
Crime Victims Services Unit
Witness Assistance Service
Neighbourhood Watch NT
Personal Protection Strategies
Jesuit Social Services
Volunteering SA & NT
Crime Victims Advisory Committee members
Biz-Secure Team, Dept Trade, Business and Innovation
Catholic Care
Anglicare
Council of the Aging (COTA) NT

Stakeholder connections have enabled us to provide more coordinated and improved service responses for the benefit of the people we support.

VoCNT staff have continued to stay involved with a number of networks and working groups, including:

Palmerston Safe Communities
NTCOSS Peer Support Network
Domestic and Family Violence Network
Red Cross Anti-Trafficking Working Group
Youth Interagency, Katherine
Chamber of Commerce NT – Darwin, Katherine, Alice Springs
Palmerston Regional Business Association
Institute of Managers and Leaders – NT Advocates Group
Community Safety Action Committee, Tennant Creek



**We extend our thanks and gratitude
to our funding partners:**

**Attorney General and Justice
NT Correctional Services
Trade Business and Innovation
Territory Families**



**NORTHERN
TERRITORY
GOVERNMENT**



Victims of Crime NT
supporting victims of crime