



**Eighteenth Annual Report of the
Victims Assistance Committee
of the Northwest Territories**

April 1, 2006 – March 31, 2007



June 12, 2007

The Honourable Brendan Bell
Minister of Justice
PO BOX 1320
YELLOWKNIFE NT X1A 2L9

Dear Mr. Bell:

Victims Assistance Committee Annual Report

On behalf of the Victims Assistance Committee, I am pleased to present the annual report for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2007.

This report details the disbursements from the Victims Assistance Fund (VAF) and reports on the nature of activities supported by fund disbursements.

In order to table its annual report in a timely manner, Committee members decided to separately report on the activities of the ongoing community-based victim-services programs. The activities of the ongoing victim-services programs will be presented later this fiscal year in a separate report.

This report focuses on disbursements from the fund for direct services, training and innovative short-term community projects that served to directly or indirectly support victims of crime. We are pleased to be able to continue to support community-based victim services program coordinators to attend training events that keep them updated on recent developments in family violence and victimology.

This year the Committee was pleased to see the Department work on the following victim-related projects:

1. An NWT-wide victim-services referral protocol with the RCMP;
2. One training session for victim-service program coordinators/volunteers in January 2007;
3. A face-to-face Victim Assistance Committee planning session in August 2006; and
4. Securing funding from the federal victims fund to purchase vulnerable-witness screens for use in court and laptop computers so victim-services workers can help prepare youth and children for court.

The Committee members, along with members of the NWT Victims Working Group (the Victims Coordinator, victim-services program workers and coordinators) wish to thank Justice Canada's Policy Centre for Victims' Issues for their generous funding contributions for the Victims Coordinator; purchase of vulnerable screens and laptops; and for victim-services workers' training.

In addition to these projects, victim services participated in the following national and territorial initiatives:

- A national consultation on Criminal Injuries Compensation in Ottawa in May 2006
- Planning for the second National Victims of Crime Awareness Week (April 22 – 28, 2007) and moderating/presenting at the April 23, 2007 launch event for this week in Ottawa; and
- Participating in two meetings of the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Working Group for Victims of Crime (September 2006 and February 2007) including work on this group's Sub-Committee on Aboriginal Victims of Crime.

I was pleased to be part of the planning committee for the first-ever "Walk for Change" – an over-100-kilometre walk from Yellowknife to Behchokò held in June 2006 to raise awareness about violence against Aboriginal women.

The Victims Assistance Committee is pleased to hear that NWT Courts will work with Justice Canada's Research and Statistics Division to research how the federal victims-of-crime surcharge is applied in the NWT.

In closing, I thank the following people for their hard work in supporting and promoting the needs and concerns of victims of crime in the NWT:

- Committee members Bridgette Larocque (Yellowknife) and Faye Noksana (Tulita);
- Victim-Services Program Coordinators/Workers: Sarah Smith and Carrie Lauder (Inuvik); Emily Lawson, Nora Doig and Marie Speakman (Yellowknife); Janet Grandjambe (Fort Good Hope); Alexandra Smith (Hay River); Louise Beck and Tara Mooney Fort Smith); and Betty Bird of Fort Simpson.
- Victim-Services Support Worker, Nellie Norwegian of Fort Providence;
- Victim-Services volunteers in Inuvik, Yellowknife, Hay River and Fort Smith.

Sincerely,

Nora Wedzin
Chairperson
Victims Assistance Committee

Victims Assistance Committee

VICTIMS OF CRIME ACT

The *Victims of Crime Act* establishes the Victims Assistance Fund (VAF) and provides for the appointment of a Victims Assistance Committee.

VICTIMS ASSISTANCE FUND

The VAF is a special-purpose fund maintained with revenue from victim fine surcharges. The VAF does not provide direct financial compensation to individuals but supports community-based projects and activities that provide services and assistance to victims of crime through:

- Training to sensitize and inform community resource workers about the needs and circumstances of victims of crime;
- Direct services that assist victims through crisis response, personal support, follow-up assistance, victim information and referrals;
- Public awareness and information on the rights and responsibilities of victims, available services, the criminal justice system and its procedures and any issues relating to victims of crime;
- Research into the needs and concerns of victims; and
- Distribution of victim services information.

VICTIMS ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE

Committee members are appointed for three-year terms to make recommendations to the Minister of Justice on policies regarding the needs and concerns of victims of crime and on distribution of the VAF.

The Committee's objective is to maintain and offer on-going support to comprehensive community services including victim support and assistance, coordination of criminal justice and community intervention and training of staff and/or volunteers. Where a full-service agency is not feasible, the Committee supports innovative community-based workshops and projects to provide support to victims of crime.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Committee meets monthly or as needed to review proposals and project reports. The Minister approved Committee recommendations for contributions totalling \$76,237.00 in 2006-07.

Statement of Revenue & Expenditures

April 1, 2006 – March 31, 2007

<i>Revenue</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Balance from 2005-06	\$66,149.44
Victim Fine Surcharges – Territorial	\$37,723.00
Victim Fine Surcharges – Federal	\$26,590.28
Total	\$130,462.72

<i>Expenditures</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Disbursements (see detailed listing below)	\$76,237.00
Total	\$76,237.00

BALANCE FORWARD	\$54,225.72
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VICTIMS ASSISTANCE FUND DISBURSEMENTS

April 1, 2006 – March 31, 2007

YWCA of Yellowknife **\$23,468.00**

- *Direct Services & Awareness:* Towards the cost of conducting group counselling programs for children about family violence, April 1, 2006 – March 31, 2007.

Native Women's Association of the NWT **\$45,377.00**

- *Direct Services:* Towards the cost of a victim services program worker to provide direct services to victims of crime in Yellowknife and surrounding communities, April 1, 2006 – March 31, 2007.

K'asho Got'ine Community Council **\$3,879.00**

- *Training:* Towards the cost for the Fort Good Hope Victim Services Program Coordinator to attend the "Healing Our Spirit Worldwide" conference in Edmonton, AB. August 6 – 11, 2006.

Native Women's Association of the NWT **\$1,049.00**

- *Training:* Towards the cost of for the Yellowknife Victim Services Program Worker to attend the "Diverse Voices: the 6th Annual Family Violence Conference" November 19 – 21, 2006 in Edmonton, AB.

Salt River First Nation **\$2,464.00**

- *Training:* Towards the cost to send one delegate to the 7th World Indigenous Women and Wellness Conference, "Warriors Against Violence" in Vancouver B.C., September 25 – 27th, 2006.