



27th Annual Report
2015-2016

Victims Assistance Committee of the
Northwest Territories

June 30, 2016

The Honourable Louis Sebert, Minister of Justice

Dear Mr. Sebert:

Victims Assistance Committee (VAC) Annual Report

On behalf of the Victims Assistance Committee, I am pleased to present the 27th Annual Report for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2016, thereby meeting our legislative requirement as per section 10 (1) of the *NWT Victims of Crime Act*. I would also like to welcome you as Minister of Justice and thank you for your cooperation in supporting the work of the Victims Assistance Committee.

The membership, funding recommendations, and Ministerial approvals for disbursements from the Victims' Assistance Fund (VAF) for the 2015-2016 fiscal year and resulting activities supported by the disbursements are documented in this report.

As the VAC Chairperson, I would like to thank the current two members of the committee, Florence Barnaby of Fort Good Hope and Gladys Macpherson of Fort Smith, who have been appointed for their knowledge, experience, skill, and commitment in reviewing proposals to the Victims Assistance Fund (VAF), discussing issues and priorities concerning victims, and making funding recommendations to you for your consideration.

The shared goal of the VAC committee is to ensure the best use of the Victims Assistance Fund to directly serve and benefit victims of crime in the NWT as they try to rebuild their lives after experiencing crime. These uses include: training of members of the public, justice professionals and justice partners, public awareness of the needs and rights of victims under the Canadian Victims Bill of Rights (CVBR) enacted in July of 2015, as well as projects, programs and events that support the diverse needs of victims and their families towards healing, in as much as they are able to heal from the adverse effects of experiencing crime.

Working with Victim Services staff and initiatives of the Community Justice & Policing Division of the Justice Department and other community groups and agencies, The Victims Assistance Committee members also work towards achieving the goal of preventing and reducing the incidences of crimes committed by NWT residents who choose to behave illegally, and supporting the needs of the victims of these crimes in addressing the physical, emotional and practical harm caused to them. Although reducing slightly, as indicated in RCMP Mayor's Reports and the federal survey, "Criminal Victimization in the Territories, 2014", incidences of criminal behaviour continue to threaten the physical and emotional safety and quality of life of NWT residents in all communities.

Through the Victim Services programs, information on the criminal justice system and restorative justice options, No Contact Orders, victims' rights under the CVBR, and community support services is made available to victims and their families and support networks. Immediate emotional support, court accompaniment, practical assistance and referrals for ongoing services are made available to assist victims of crimes to meet their needs and ensure their rights are recognized, respected and upheld under the CVBR. The GNWT has established a Complaints Mechanism if this is not done.

The mandate of the Department of Justice is for the administration of justice in the Northwest Territories, including victim services, policing, and corrections. It is carried out in a manner which respects local community and indigenous values according to the "Respect, Recognition and Responsibility" document of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations of the GNWT. The Department of Justice Community Justice & Policing staff members encourage communities to assume increasing responsibilities, for example, how to best support the needs of victims of crime and how to engage in community safety initiatives. The Committee appreciates your continuing guidance in these important endeavours as we all try to develop and support an effective NWT justice system which is accepted and sanctioned by members of the communities it serves and which meets their needs and aspirations for culturally responsive approaches to justice.

The Committee looks forward to working with you through the GNWT Department of Justice to: raise public awareness of the needs and rights of victims of crime, especially since the Canadian Victims Bill of Rights has been enacted and is being implemented; to reduce and prevent incidences of crime, especially family violence crimes, and other serious violent crimes; to address the needs and priorities of victims of crime and their families under the CVBR, especially in supporting the needs of children who witness crime, continue to build trust relationships with the RCMP; and, to lessen the long-term negative effects on victims and their families of experiencing crimes that occur in the Northwest Territories.

The details of the Appointments of VAC Members follow:

Victims' Assistance Committee (VAC) Members:

Member	Appointed	Term Ends
Bridgette Larocque Inuvik Chair – active Request for reappointment as Member and Chair	1 August 2008 Reappointed as of: 1 st of August 2014 for a 3 year term	Ends: 31 July 2017
Florence Barnaby of Fort Good Hope Member - active	1 April 2010 Reappointed as of: 22 nd of August 2013 for a 3 year term	Ends: August 21, 2016
Gladys Macpherson of Fort Smith Member - active	12 April 2012 Reappointed as of: 8 th of May 2015 for a 3 year term	Ends: 7 May 2018

Sincerely,



Bridget Larocque, Chairperson

NWT Victims Assistance Committee – Legislation and Terms of Reference

NWT VICTIMS OF CRIME ACT – R.S.N.W.T. 1988, c.9 (Supp.) in force April 1, 1989

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

Definition of “victims” under the *Victims of Crime Act*:

“Victims” means persons who, individually or collectively, have suffered harm, including

- (a) physical or mental injury,
- (b) emotional suffering,
- (c) economic loss, or
- (d) substantial impairment of their fundamental rights, through acts or omissions that are in violation of criminal laws or laws that have penal consequences, regardless of whether the perpetrator is identified, apprehended, prosecuted or convicted, and includes, persons who have suffered harm in intervening to assist victims in distress or to prevent victimization and, where appropriate, the immediate family or dependants of the direct victims.

VICTIMS ASSISTANCE FUND (VAF)

The VAF is a special-purpose fund established by the NWT *Victims of Crime Act* (*subsection 11(1)*) with revenue from victim fine surcharges from territorial and federal courts. The VAF supports community-based projects and activities that provide services and assistance to victims of crime including:

- 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, 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 other issues relating to victims of crime;
- Research into the needs and concerns of victims;
- Distribution of victim services information; and,
- Promotion of services for victims.

The VAF does not provide direct financial compensation to individual victims or their families. The VAF mandate does not include funding proposals or projects from private businesses. As this is a revolving fund based on victim of crime surcharges from the NWT and Federal Courts, the amounts vary and available funds are limited at times.

VICTIMS ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE (VAC)

The NWT *Victims of Crime Act* establishes the three-member advisory body appointed by the Minister of Justice under the *Victims of Crime Act* and provides for three-year term appointments of Committee members (section 2(2)), as well as the designation of the Chairperson (section 3).

The Committee is responsible to promote:

- courteous and compassionate treatment of victims;
- redress (restitution) for victims for the harm that they have suffered;
- information to a victim about:
 - the progress of the prosecution of the offence in which he or she was a victim,
 - the role of the victim in the court proceeding,
- available social, legal, medical and mental health services and how to access them, and
- reporting the crime and co-operating with law enforcement agencies;
- assistance to victims in bringing their views and concerns to the attention of the court;
- measures to minimize inconvenience to victims and to ensure the safety of victims
- training for police, health, social service and other personnel as to the needs and concerns of victims; and
- research about services to victims and the needs and concerns of victims;
- making recommendations to the Minister on:
 - disbursements from the Victims Assistance Fund;
 - the development of policies respecting services to victims; and
 - any other matter that the Minister may refer to the Committee
 - making an annual report of Committee activities

The committee's objective is to support comprehensive community services including, but not limited to, victim support, information and assistance, coordination of criminal justice and community justice interventions, and training in best practices of staff and/or volunteers in how to best meet the needs of victims.

Where a full-service agency is not feasible, the committee supports innovative and community-based workshops, events, and projects to provide support to victims of crime and to raise awareness in the community of the impact of crime on victims.

COMMITTEE MEMBER RECRUITMENT:

There were no appointments ending in this fiscal year. Therefore, there was no advertising of application procedures for NWT residents to be considered for Ministerial appointment to the Victims' Assistance Committee in this fiscal year. Advertising to promote the availability of the opportunity to apply as an appointed member of the VAF is recommended for purposes of inclusiveness and transparency.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Eight meetings were held: June, July, August, September, October, November, January, and February.

The committee meets by teleconference monthly, or as needed, to review and recommend proposal, receive reports on funded programs and address any other activities or requests related to the mandate and work of the Committee.

Administration is done by the Manager, NWT Victim Services, and, in the absence of the Manager by other staff of the Department of Justice. Honorariums to members are prepared by the Manager and processed by the Department of Human Resources.

Committee members are paid honorariums at the rate of one half day (\$125.00) for Advisory Board members and (\$150.00) for the Chairperson per meeting.

APPENDICES:

A Statement of Revenues & Expenditures representing VAF activity for the 2015-2016 Fiscal Year is referenced in Appendix "A".

A Statement and Description of VAF Proposal Disbursements for the 2015-2016 Fiscal Year is referenced in Appendix "B".

Appendix "A"

A Statement of Revenues & Expenditures representing Victims Assistance Funding (VAF) Activity for the 2015-2016 Fiscal Year

April 1, 2015 – March 31, 2016

Revenue	Amount
Victim Fine Surcharges – Territorial – Fund 19	
Opening Balance from 2014-2015	\$ 78,619.10
Total Revenue (Fund 19 and 20)	\$148,869.57
Total Fund 20 transferred to Fund 19 (July 2015)	\$45,121.74
Total Disbursements	(\$108,286.00)
2015-2016 Total Fund 19	\$164,324.41
 Victim Fine Surcharges – Federal – Fund 20	
Opening Balance from 2014-2015	\$45,121.74
Total Revenue	\$89.00
Note: In July, Fund 19 and 20 were merged into Fund 19 for ease of reporting	
2015-2016 Total Fund 20	\$0
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Total Opening Balance Fund 19 and 20	\$123,740.84
Total Revenue Fund 19 and 20	\$148,869.57
Total Disbursements Fund 19 and 20	<u>(\$108,286.00)</u>
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BALANCE FORWARD	\$164,324.41
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Appendix "B"

A Statement and Description of Victims Assistance Fund (VAF) Proposal Disbursements for the 2015-2016 Fiscal Year

The Victims' Assistance Fund continues to support community initiatives that directly benefit victims of crime and their families and communities through:

- **Projects:** various projects, programs, public promotion/awareness, activities and events; and,
- **Research & Training:** the participation of Victim Services workers and justice partners in research projects, training, conferences and knowledge exchanges to better meet the diverse needs and rights of victims of crime and their families

Disbursements from the Victims Assistance Fund in 2015/16 totalled \$108,286.00.

The average project disbursement was \$7,219.07.

Fort Smith Métis Council-Fort Smith Victim Services: Total Approved: \$2,750.00

Public Information/Awareness/Promotion:

1. National Victims of Crime Awareness Week Activities: Approved: \$2,750.00

The funds were for the purchase of promotional items to strengthen public awareness about the Fort Smith Victim Services program and crime prevention during National Victims of Crime Awareness Week - 2016.

Inuvik Justice Committee - Inuvik Victim Services/Beaufort Delta Victim Services:

Total Approved: \$21,468.00

Training and Development:

1. Critical Incident Stress Management Certificate Training – Inuvik Victim Services: Approved **\$8,322.00** (some supplemental funding was required from the Victim Services Program budget due to delays to process the VAF proposal before the date of the training.)

The funds were for a training program for the Inuvik Victim Services Coordinator to attend a 14-day B.C. Certificate program in Critical Incident Stress Management at the Justice Institute of British Columbia.

2. Critical Incident Stress Management Certificate Training – Beaufort Delta Victim Services (a section of Inuvik Victim Services): Approved: **\$13,146.00**

The funds were for travel, accommodation and registration costs for the Beaufort Delta Victim Services Outreach Coordinator to participate in the 14-day Critical Incident Stress Management Certificate Training at the Justice Institute of British Columbia.

K'asho Got'ine Charter Community Council- Fort Good Hope Victim Services: Total Approved: \$16,900.00

Public Information/Awareness/Promotion:

1. Women's Support and Wellness Program: Approved: **\$8,500.00**

The funds were for a training program, "Women's Support and Wellness Program," to support tradition and culture as healing tools for victims of family and spousal violence to build self-esteem, learn about healthy relationships and violence prevention, create safety plans and learn about available resources and supports in the community of Fort Good Hope and region.

Training and Development:

2. "You Can Heal Your Life" Workshop: Approved: **\$8,400.00**

The funds were for a workshop called "You Can Heal Your Life" for individuals, partners, and family and community members living in Fort Good Hope and the region.

**Liidlii Kue First Nation – Fort Simpson Victim Services:
Total Approved: \$8,336.00**

Public Information/Awareness/Promotion:

1. White Ribbon Campaign: Approved: **\$1,336.00**

The funds were for a White Ribbon Campaign to raise awareness about the harm caused against women and girls through experiencing domestic/family violence and to promote healthy, non-violent spousal, partner, parental and other family relationships.

2. National Victims of Crime Awareness Week 2016: **\$7,000.00**

The funds were for the purchase of promotional materials to raise crime prevention awareness for the National Victims and Survivors of Crime Awareness Week 2016. This initiative strengthened the profile of the Liidlii Kue First Nation Victim Services program and its partnership with the RCMP. The RCMP assisted in the distribution of these materials in the regional communities of the Sahtu.

Native Women’s Association of the NWT: Total Approved: \$15,990.00

Public Information/Awareness/Promotion:

1. Guide for Families of Victims of Homicide: Approved: **\$9,500.00**

The funds were to provide support to families (secondary victims) of victims of homicide to attend the full trial of the accused (\$4,500.00) and to develop a Guide for Families of Victims of Homicide (\$5,000.00). These supports were intended to strengthen the available support and the healing process of all NWT families who have experienced the tragedy of death of a family member by homicide.

2. National Victims of Crime Awareness Week Activities: Approved **\$2,500.00**

The funds were for the purchase of promotional items to promote the National Victims and Survivors of Crime Awareness Week 2016.

Training and Development:

1. Training Yellowknife Victim Services Volunteers: Approved: **\$2,500.00**

The funds were for training volunteers and two staff of Yellowknife Victim Services on mental health and addictions, dynamics of family violence, sexualized assault, crisis intervention and intergenerational trauma.

2. Conference Attendance: "Diverse Voices": Approved: **\$1,490.004**

The funds were for one Yellowknife Victim Service worker to attend the "Diverse Voices, 15th Family Violence Conference" in Edmonton, AB from November 8-10, 2015. Participation in this workshop enhanced the skills of workers in the Yellowknife Victim Services program to work with victims of family violence through the sharing of information and knowledge from this conference.

Status of Women Council of the NWT - Total Approved: \$14,000.00

Public Information/Awareness/Promotion:

1. Promote National Family Violence Awareness Week (October 2015) Activities in NWT Communities: Approved: **\$14,000.00**

The funds were for supporting the continuation of community-based Family Violence Awareness Week projects across the NWT. These projects helped to support victims of crime by providing information on how to contact services, safety planning and prevention/reporting to RCMP if they experience violence.

YWCA of the NWT: Total Approved: \$17,842.00

Public Information/Awareness/Promotion:

1. Plain Language Booklet Development – "Legal Resources for NWT Women Dealing with Spousal Violence": Approved: **\$17,842.00**

The funds were for publishing costs and distribution of the book, "Legal Pathways – Spousal Violence in the NWT – A Resource for Women". It is offered free of charge to women who are victims of spousal violence and also as a resource to Justice partners who support women who are experiencing spousal violence.

TOTAL Approved Disbursements for 2015-2016 = \$108,286.00

INFORMATION ON SUBMITTING PROPOSAL APPLICATIONS

There are **two types** of application forms for VAF proposals:

1. For Projects, Events, Activities and Programs
2. For Training and Development

Proposals for either type of proposal can be submitted in fillable online documents that are

on the website of the Department of Justice-Community Justice & Policing-Victim Services links below. Proposals can also be mailed through Canada Post, or delivered In-person to the Community Justice & Policing Division of the GNWT Department of Justice, 5th Floor, Court House, Yellowknife:

For “Application Guidelines” for both types of proposals below:

<http://www.justice.gov.nt.ca/VictimServices/documents/VAFFundingGuidelines.pdf>

For “Project, Event, Activity, or Program Applications”:

http://www.justice.gov.nt.ca/pdf/VictimsServices/victim_project.pdf

For “Training & Development Applications”:

http://www.justice.gov.nt.ca/pdf/VictimsServices/victim_training.pdf

Mailing Address:

Community Justice & Community Policing Division
PO Box 1320, 5th Floor, Court House
4903 – 49th Street
Yellowknife, NT, X1A 2L9

Contact Person for More Information:

Coordinator, NWT Victim Services
Community Justice & Community Policing Division, Department of Justice
Tel: 867-767-9261 ext. 82217 or ext. 82214 or Fax: 867-873-0199
Email: Faith.Woodruff@gov.nt.ca or Maxine.Stanzell@gov.nt.ca

OR

Administrator, Community Justice & Policing Division, Department of Justice
Tel: 867-767-0261 ext. 82211 or Fax: 867-873-0199 Email: Stacey.Stabel@gov.nt.ca