



Annual Report 2005

Commission for the Support of Victims of Crime

Report to the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform

2005

Executive Summary

- The Commission held 11 formal meetings, as well as a number of subgroup meetings, between March and December 2005.
- In 2005 the Commission focussed on supporting and promoting the existing services for victims of crime, particularly in the voluntary sector, in order to ensure continuity of services on the ground, pending the development of a national framework of services.
- 71 applications for funding were received after a public advertisement and were examined in detail.
- €685,750 was distributed to 28 groups providing front-line services to victims of crime in 2005 out of the €750,000 available to the Commission.
- The Commission met with a number of the criminal justice agencies and voluntary groups working with victims of crime as part of an ongoing and extensive round of consultations.
- The Commission has also promoted the development of mechanisms for communication and co-operation among the groups being funded and between them and the criminal justice agencies, in order to provide a more efficient and comprehensive service to victims of crime.
- Background research and preparatory work was initiated during 2005 to inform the development of an overall framework of services for victims of crime, which will be the focus of the Commission's work programme for 2006.

1. Background

1.1 The Commission for the Support of Victims of Crime was established in March 2005, with a three year remit to

- devise an appropriate support framework for victims of crime into the future and
- to disburse funding for victim support and assistance measures.

1.2 Members of the Commission:

Mr Jim Mc Hugh, (Chairman), former Assistant Commissioner, An Garda Síochána,
Ms Nora Owen, former Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform,
Mr Sean Lowry, former head of the Probation and Welfare Service,
Mr Michael Whelan, Gemini Consulting,
Ms Marian Finucane, broadcaster.

1.3 Secretarial and other supports are provided by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform.

1.4 The Commission was established against a background of:

- a need to review the mechanisms and services put in place by specific agencies to assist victims, in the context of the criminal justice system as a whole, as set out in the Victims Charter
- the evolution of thinking in relation to victims' needs; for example recognition of the need to support victims of rape and sexual assault and domestic violence during court proceedings
- a wider context within which policy needs to be considered, specifically in the context of Ireland's obligations under the EU Framework Decision on the Standing of Victims in Criminal Proceedings
- the decision of the Minister to withdraw funding from the Victim Support organisation with effect from 31st March 2005.

Victim Support, a voluntary registered charity, had been providing assistance to victims of crime for a number of years, and was almost entirely funded from public monies. In recent years serious internal difficulties had given rise to grave concerns about governance, accountability for public funds and the very significant depletion of its activity and service levels.

1.5 Arising from the above, the Commission decided on a two-tiered approach to its work. In the short term, it would focus on trying to ensure continuity of services on the ground for crime victims where existing

services were failing or were absent. In a later phase, it would undertake a comprehensive review of current and future needs with a view to devising a framework of victim services into the future.

2. Meetings

- 2.1 The Commission met 11 times in the period March to December 2005 covering a total of 40 hours' discussion. In addition subgroups were appointed to examine specific issues.
- 2.2 The Commission also initiated a round of consultations with interested parties in the context of its review of provision for victims of crime. (cf section 5 also).

3. Disbursement of Funding

- 3.1 €750,000 was made available to the Commission for disbursement in 2005.

A public advertisement was placed in national newspapers inviting applications for funding for the provision of services or assistance to victims of crime. A detailed application form was forwarded to each of the applicants and 71 completed applications for funding were returned to the Commission. **Copy of advertisement and application form are at Appendix A.**

- 3.2 Each application was examined in detail by the Commission.
- 3.3 The Commission decided to prioritise the funding of activities at ground level that provide direct supports for victims of crime, rather than e.g. administrative structures or research projects.
- 3.4 Separate meetings were held with each organisation being considered for funding to discuss the nature of the services to be provided. Each successful organisation was required to provide written undertakings before monies were issued. These included a commitment to co-operate with other organisations and services being funded by the Commission and to provide reports and financial accounting as required.
- 3.5 Organisations being funded were required to be legal entities, to register with the Data Protection Commissioner, and to provide evidence of tax compliance in accordance with DJELR procedures.
- 3.6 **Victim Support**
During 2005 the Commission received applications for funding from a number of groupings of local volunteer branches currently or formerly affiliated to Victim Support. These were:
 - Victim Support itself,

- the Federation for Victim Assistance, a grouping of 10 branches
- Support after Crime – which claims to have the affiliation of a number of branches in Cork and Munster
- three individual branches that have stayed independent.

The Commission met each of the three main groupings formally on separate dates. Among the issues discussed with all three groups were governance and structures, arrangements for the delivery of services on the ground, the prospects for co-operation with each other and with other groups providing victim services (e.g. the National Crime Victims Helpline), and plans for future development. Arising from these meetings, the Commission agreed to make sufficient funding available to enable them to continue to provide services at ground level.

The Commission also received a number of applications from former Victim Support specialist services which had decided to operate independently of Victim Support and to make individual independent applications for funding for this purpose. These were:

- The Court Witness Service (formerly Court Support Service)
- National Crime Victims' Helpline (formerly Crime Victims' Helpline)
- Support after Homicide (formerly Families of Murder Victims)
- Irish Tourist Assistance Service (formerly Tourist Victim Support Service).

The Commission considered that the services being offered by these groups were necessary and valuable, and having satisfied itself as to arrangements for good governance, etc., agreed to provide funding support.

National Crime Victims Helpline

The Commission supports and promotes the National Crime Victims Helpline [1850-211-407] as a central point of contact for all victims of crime. The Helpline began operating in September 2005 and was formally launched by the Minister on 14th November 2005. It is staffed by volunteers and operates from 10.00am to 4.00pm Monday to Friday. It is currently recruiting and training additional volunteers and will extend its operation to Saturdays in the near future. As well as providing information and emotional support for victims of crime, the Helpline will act as a resource for other voluntary organisations and the Gardaí in helping to ensure that victims of crime can access the supports appropriate to their needs.

3.7 Services to victims of Domestic Violence

The Commission received applications for funding from 21 organisations providing services to victims of domestic violence, mainly for the provision of a court accompaniment service.

3.8 Services to victims of Sexual Violence

The Commission received 20 applications for funding from organisations providing services to victims of sexual violence. Again the majority of these applications were seeking funding for the provision of a court accompaniment service.

3.9 Summary of successful applications

28 organisations were successful in securing funding from the Commission in 2005. The allocation to the Rape Crisis network is in respect of a number of individual Rape Crisis Centres, 16 of which had originally made individual applications. **Appendix B** has a full list of the organisations which were allocated funding in 2005.

A further 4 applications were approved in principle but monies have not yet issued pending formalisation of their structures in accordance with Commission requirements. These are:

- Support after Crime – formerly part of Victim Support in the Munster region
- 3 individual former Victim Support branches which are continuing to operate independently.

3.10 Summary of unsuccessful applications

There were 26 unsuccessful applications. The Commission gave priority to activities that provide direct supports to victims of crime at ground level, and a number of applications failed this test. A full list is at **Appendix C**.

4. Developing a Support Framework for Crime Victims

4.1 Co-ordination of existing services for victims of crime

In the interest of providing a co-ordinated service to victims of crime, the Commission has written to all of the relevant criminal justice agencies notifying them of the allocation of funding to the various groups, the nature of the service being provided by them, contact numbers etc. and asking for co-operation and assistance with their work.

The Commission is working to enhance the co-ordination of services across the various agencies, and between the agencies and voluntary groups, in order to ensure that services are widely available, that the various needs of victims are met and that there is no duplication of services etc.

The Commission wishes to acknowledge the encouragement, assistance and co-operation it has received from the various agencies, in particular, an Garda Síochána, the Courts Service, the Office of the DPP and the Probation and Welfare Service.

4.2 Review of the Victims Charter

The Commission's remit includes the examination of all aspects of the

provision of services for victims of crime within the criminal justice system. These provisions are currently set out in the Victims Charter which was last updated in 1999.

In June 2005 the Commission wrote to the relevant agencies requesting the following information

1. an assessment of the Charter's provisions, insofar as they relate to that organisation in particular and the criminal justice system as a whole;
2. an estimation of the effectiveness of the services being provided by that organisation in terms of the benefits for the victim;
3. an outline of the proposals that organisation has for the further development of services for victims of crime.

Evaluation and analysis of the responses will inform the Commission's discussions and work in developing the framework for victim services during 2006.

5. Other Commission Activities in 2005

5.1 The following agencies made oral presentations to the Commission:

- An Garda Síochána Community Relations Unit
- Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions.

5.2 The Commission attended the following launches/Conferences:

- Parole Board of Northern Ireland Victim Information Scheme launch October 2005
- Launch of National Crime Victims Helpline – November 2005
- Muintir Na Tíre National Conference – November 2005.

5.3 The Commission visited the following during 2005:

- Court Support Service offices, Four Courts
- National Crime Victims' Helpline, Camden Row, Dublin 8
- Victim Support Chairman, Cork.

Commission for the Support of Victims of Crime

Allocation of funding for services to victims of crime

APPLICATION FORM

Completed forms to be returned to:

Justina Airlie,
Secretary,
Commission for the Support of Victims of Crime,
C/o Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform,
94 St Stephen's Green,
Dublin 2.

to reach us no later than **5pm on Wednesday, 20th April, 2005**. Emailed applications will also be accepted subject to the above deadline.

Reference No <i>(for office use only)</i>	CSV C/05/
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Name of Organisation / group:	
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Please read carefully the accompanying Guidelines before completing this form.

Incomplete application forms will not be processed.

Form csvc1**1. Applicant Details**

1.1	Full name of organisation/group making application	
1.2	Contact for Correspondence:	
	<i>Name:</i>	
	<i>Position within Organisation:</i>	
	<i>Address:</i>	
	<i>County:</i>	
	<i>Daytime Phone: Fax:</i>	
	<i>Mobile Number:</i>	
	<i>Email:</i>	
1.3	How long has your organisation been in existence?	
1.4	Is your organisation a registered company and/or charity? If so please quote registration number(s).	
1.5	Give details of your organisation's management structure / arrangements. If there is a Board of Management please append details.	
1.6	Name of Financial Institution where bank A/C is held	
1.7	Has the organisation received funding (from statutory agencies, sponsors or fundraising) in 2004 or 2005?	
	If so, please specify source(s) and amount of funding received.	
	What purpose/service was the funding used for?	
1.8	Can audited accounts be provided if required?	

2. Project Details

2.1	Please indicate the nature and purpose of the proposed project/service in respect of which funding is sought (see note 1, below*).	
2.2	Project Time Frame:	
	a) Earliest start-up for project from allocation of funds	
	b) Completion period for project from start-up	
2.3	Is this proposal a new project or is it a continuation of an existing service?	
2.4	Catchment Area (district, county, etc)	
	Are there any other groups in your catchment area doing the same or similar work?	
2.5	What target group(s) are expected to benefit from this project?	
	How have these been identified?	
2.6	Total cost of project:	
	Please give a breakdown of the total cost of the project at 2.6 under the following headings:	
	<i>Staff numbers and costs (incl. PAYE, PRSI etc.)</i>	
	<i>Premises (e.g. rental)</i>	
	<i>Office overheads (postage, telephone, stationery, materials etc)</i>	
	<i>Volunteer expenses</i>	
	<i>Other costs (specify)</i>	
	Amount of funding now sought from the Commission?	
2.7	Have you received or applied for funding in respect of this project from any other sources? If yes, please give details.	
2.8	Are you receiving or have you applied for funding for any other project? If so, please give details.	

Note 1: Additional details may be attached as an appendix to this form.

3. Disclosure of information under the Freedom of Information Act

The Commission for the Support of Victims of Crime wishes to remind applicants that the information supplied in the application form and supporting documentation may be released, on request, to third parties, in accordance with the Department's obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 1997 and 2003.

You are asked to consider if any of the information supplied by you in applying for funding under the this programme should not be disclosed because of sensitivity. If this is the case, you should, when providing the information, identify same and specify the reasons for its sensitivity. The Commission will consult with you about sensitive information before making a decision on release of such information. The Commission may, if requested, release information to third parties without further consultation with you, unless you identify the information as sensitive with supporting reasons.

If you consider that **some** of the information is sensitive, please identify clearly such information when submitting your application.

If you consider that **none** of the information supplied by you is sensitive, please complete the statement below to that effect. Such information may be released in response to a Freedom of Information request.

(Name of Organisation): _____
hereby agrees that none of the information supplied is sensitive, and acknowledges that any, or all, of the information supplied, may be released in response to a Freedom of Information request.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Name: _____ (in
block capitals)

4. Disclaimer

Please read carefully

It will be a condition of any application for funding that the applicant has read, understood and accepted the following:

(i) the Commission for the Support of Victims of Crime shall not be liable to the applicant or any other party in respect of any loss, damage or costs of any nature arising directly or indirectly from:

- a) the application or the subject matter of the application:
- b) the rejection for any reason of any application.

(ii) The Commission for the Support of Victims of Crime, its servants or agents shall not at any time in any circumstances be held responsible or liable in relation to any matter whatsoever arising in connection with the development, planning, operation, management and/or administration of individual projects.

5. Applicant's Statement

I/we certify that I/we read and understood the guidelines applicable to this funding. We agree that, if our application is successful, we will comply fully with any conditions that the Commission may deem appropriate.

I/we certify that all information provided in this application, and all information given in any documentation submitted in support of the application is truthful and accurate.

I/we hereby undertake that, if our application is successful, from the date of the allocation, no-one will be denied access to any service or part of a service in respect of which an allocation has been made on the grounds of sex, religion, ethnic origin or disability.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Name: _____ *(in block capitals)*

On behalf of: _____
(organisation's name)



Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform
An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt, Comhionannais agus Athchóirithe Dlí

PUBLIC NOTICE

Commission for the Support of Victims of Crime Funding for provision of Services to Victims of Crime

The Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform has established a Commission for the Support of Victims of Crime to

- (a)** devise an appropriate support framework for victims of crime into the future and
- (b)** disburse funding for victim support and assistance measures.

Funding will be made available in the current year. In advance of a formal application process, the Commission is seeking to compile a register of groups who are providing or who propose to provide victim services/assistance and who may be eligible for funding.

In that context, registered charities, voluntary/community groups and other bodies who provide or who may have proposals for the provision of victim services/assistance are invited to indicate their interest in securing funding for this purpose by writing to/e-mailing Justina Airlie, Secretary to the Commission, at the address below, by 31st March 2005 at the latest.

Please include a brief description of the services/assistance provided, the purpose of the services/assistance and the current and/or estimated future cost of providing such services/assistance.

A formal application form will be issued to those bodies who have responded to this advertisement.

Contact details:

Ms Justina Airlie
Commission for the Support of Victims of Crime,
C/o Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform,
Old Faculty Building, Shelbourne Road,
Dublin 4.

Tel: 01-6028681. e-mail: JPAirlie@justice.ie

Appendix B – Successful Applications for funding 2005

	Funding issued in 2005	Amount	Service
1	Adapt Kerry Ltd	€12,000.00	Court accompaniment scheme
2	AdVIC	€16,000.00	Advocacy and support to families bereaved by homicide
3	Amen	€10,000.00	Court accompaniment scheme
4	ASCEND, Roscrea	€8,000.00	Court accompaniment scheme
5	CARI	€30,000.00	Court Accompaniment + training
6	Carlow Women's Aid	€8,000.00	Court accompaniment scheme
7	Court Support Service	€55,000.00	Court accompaniment scheme
8	Crime Victims Helpline	€80,000.00	Operation of National Crime Victims Helpline
9	Cumas, Dublin	€4,000.00	Provision of respite for families of drug users
10	Donegal Domestic Violence Service	€8,000.00	Court accompaniment scheme
11	Drogheda Women's Refuge and Children's Centre	€8,000.00	Court accompaniment scheme
12	Federation for Victim Assistance	€42,500.00	Provision of services to victims of crime
13	ICPAC	€1,000.00	Organise seminars & print booklet
14	Irish Tourist Advisory Service	€50,000.00	Provision of services to tourist victims of crime
15	Longford Women's Link	€8,000.00	Court accompaniment scheme
16	Meath Women's Refuge and Support Services	€8,000.00	Court accompaniment scheme
17	Mná Feasa Domestic Violence Project, Cork	€8,000.00	Court accompaniment scheme
18	Muintir Na Tíre	€25,000.00	Services to elderly rural victims of crime
19	OSS Cork	€8,000.00	Court accompaniment scheme
20	Rape Crisis Network	€100,000.00	Court accompaniment scheme
21	Ruhama	€20,000.00	Court accompaniment scheme
22	Sexual Violence Centre Cork	€15,000.00	Court accompaniment scheme
23	Support after Homicide	€40,000.00	Support to families of murder victims
24	Tearmann Housing Association, Monaghan	€8,000.00	Court accompaniment scheme
25	Victim Support	€72,250.00	Provision of services to victims of crime
26	Waves Coalition, Sligo	€10,000.00	Court accompaniment scheme
27	Women's Aid Dundalk	€3,000.00	Court accompaniment scheme
28	Women's Aid Dublin	€28,000.00	Court Accompaniment scheme+ other services
	Total	€685,750.00	

Applications included in group allocation

1	Dublin Rape Crisis Centre	Included with Rape Crisis Network
2	Sligo Rape Crisis Centre Ltd	Included with Rape Crisis Network
3	Wexford Rape & Sexual Abuse Support Services	Included with Rape Crisis Network
4	Carlow and South Leinster Rape Crisis Centre	Included with Rape Crisis Network
5	Kerry Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre	Included with Rape Crisis Network
6	Kilkenny Rape Crisis Centre	Included with Rape Crisis Network

7	Waterford Rape Crisis Centre	Included with Rape Crisis Network
8	Tullamore Sexual Abuse and Rape Crisis	Included with Rape Crisis Network
9	Limerick Rape Crisis Centre	Included with Rape Crisis Network
10	Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Centre (NE)	Included with Rape Crisis Network
11	Athlone Rape Crisis Centre	Included with Rape Crisis Network
12	Donegal Sexual Abuse and Rape Crisis Centre	Included with Rape Crisis Network
13	Galway Rape Crisis Centre	Included with Rape Crisis Network

Appendix C – unsuccessful applications for funding 2005

	Organisation	Reason
1	Dublin 12 Domestic Violence Service	Already funding Women's Aid
2	Anti Bullying Research and Resource Centre	not recommended
3	Castletown Community Alert	not recommended
4	Child Protection Services	not recommended
5	Clare Haven Services	not recommended
6	Co Clare Citizens Information Service	not recommended
7	COMPASS	not recommended
8	Cuan Saor Women's Refuge Ltd	not recommended
9	Exchequer Clinic	not recommended
10	Far Cry Productions	not recommended
11	Fold Housing Association	not recommended
12	Immigrant Council of Ireland	not recommended
13	Liam Living in the Aftermath of Murder	Duplication of FMV application
14	Missing in Ireland Support Service	Part approved, but offer refused by group
15	Move Ireland	Concerned with perpetrator rather than victim
16	National Consultative Commission On Racism & Interculturism	This application not recommended – primarily research. Contacts ongoing re needs in this area.
17	National Learning Network	not recommended incomplete application
18	New Beginnings	not recommended
19	One in Four	Already heavily funded
20	Society of St Vincent De Paul Drogheda	not recommended
21	South East Domestic Violence Intervention	Concerned with perpetrators rather than victim
22	Southill Community Development Project	not recommended
23	Victim Support Solutions	not recommended
24	Victims of Legal Profession/Irish Solicitors	not recommended
25	Walkinstown/Greenhills Network	not recommended
26	West Cork Women Against Violence Project	not recommended