



**Victims
Information**
victimsinfo.govt.nz

VICTIMS CENTRE
Update

For people working
with victims of crime

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Tony Paine



CEO AT VICTIM SUPPORT MOVES ON

The end of August will bring to a close five years as CEO for Victim Support's Tony Paine. Before he heads off, the Victims Centre caught up with Tony about the changes he's seen and the highlights during his time in the role.

While heading up Victim Support, Tony has seen many changes. The most significant is the way the NZ Police have altered their approach to policing. 'They've become a very victim-centric police force which has been a profound change. Their focus on people at risk of being repeat victims makes so much sense and promises a lot in terms of both crime prevention and victim support.'

'If we can ensure that the small minority of New Zealanders who experience the majority of crime are safe, we will make huge gains in preventing crime and building stronger communities,' says Tony.

Another significant change has been the impact of the offender levy. The levy pays for the government grants that are delivered to victims of serious crime by Victim Support. 'In the last financial year, Victim Support paid out over \$2.4 million direct to victims. That's eight times the amount we were paying out five years ago,' says Tony.

There have been many highlights during Tony's time at Victim Support. 'Without a doubt the biggest highlight has been meeting people who have had to deal with the cruellest of crimes and tragedies and who seem to have found a way to deal with what's happened. Their positivity has been remarkable.'

'There has also been the people for whom vengeance is not even on the agenda. I have been humbled by their ability to get to a place that I can only hope I could get to in the same situation. Seeing the power of carefully run restorative justice to change victims' lives will also be an enduring memory.'

'It has been very pleasing to see the focus the Ministry of Justice has placed on victims' rights and issues. With the creation of the Victims Centre there is now a real dedicated coordination of services for victims right across the justice sector,' says Tony.

Tony has thoroughly enjoyed his time at Victim Support, and will miss the fantastic people he's worked with and met throughout Victim Support and the sector. 'There have been so many people who have such a passion for justice and their communities, it's been inspirational,' says Tony.

Tony will take up the role of Secretary General at the NZ Red Cross on 2 September. At the time of writing, the Victim Support Board was still in the process of recruiting a replacement CEO. In the interim Kevin Tso, General Manager Operations, will be acting in the role until an appointment is made.

victimsupport.org.nz

Funded by the Ministry of Justice (as well as other Crown funders and donations), Victim Support is an independent charitable trust working closely with NZ Police to help those hurt by crime and other trauma.

It provides a 24/7 crisis and follow-up support service for victims across New Zealand. In the year to 30 June 2013 Victim Support helped over 35,000 people.

Justice coalition launched



On 7 August New Zealand's first justice coalition was launched. The coalition is a collective of 12 justice sector non-government organisations, who are working together with government and criminal justice participants towards building a more effective and fair criminal justice system.

For more information or to join the network email office@rethinking.org.nz or phone **04 803 3930**

The coalition's principles include placing the real needs of victims at the heart of the justice process, to recognise the serious damage that imprisonment can cause to prisoners, their whānau and the wider community, and to only imprison for punishment proportionate to the crime or for the purpose of public protection.

The coalition's core members are:

- Community Law Centres of Aotearoa
- Henwood Trust
- Howard League of Penal Reform
- The Coalition of Howard Leagues
- Victim Support
- Prisoners Aid and Rehabilitation Trust
- Prison Chaplaincy Service of Aotearoa
- Prison Fellowship
- Restorative Justice Aotearoa
- Robson Hanan Trust
- National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges
- The Salvation Army.

The coalition focuses on understanding:

- the causes of crime, and in particular the role disparity and inequality play as drivers of crime within and across our communities
- the harm caused by crime both to individuals, their whānau or families, communities and to society as a whole
- what it means to be 'Smart on Crime' rather than 'Tough on Crime' and how do we most effectively avoid and address crime and social harm.

'From now on, there will be a strong and increasingly effective collective voice in the criminal justice sector' said Phil McCarthy, Executive Director of the Robson Hanan Trust. Change in the sector can occur more effectively, when there is effective collaboration and communication between government agencies and key stakeholders.'

Gregory Fortuin, Executive Chair of Prison Fellowship New Zealand, agrees. 'Coalition members have committed to a common vision, a shared set of measurable goals, and to the pursuit of evidence-based activities which not only reinforce one another's work, but also contribute to the government's targets.'

Other members have noted the benefits in working with other criminal justice agencies. As Tony Paine, Chief Executive of Victim Support puts it, 'This has been a great opportunity to advocate for better awareness of victims issues, in a sector that tends to be dominated by offender issues. We have noticed that other Coalition members are becoming more aware of victims' needs.'

Dr Greg Coyle of the Salvation Army notes a trend toward collaborative behaviour within the sector. 'In that way we can share our skills base, share the risk, pool our resources, but also maintain our individual identity and relationships at the local level.'

Kim Workman, Justice Coalition Coordinator, believes the best is still to come. The Coalition is looking to establish a stakeholder network of organisations that will work collaboratively and in partnership with the core members on issues and projects of special interest.

By working together with a single united and coordinated voice, the Coalition believes they can be more effective and deliver on their key focus areas.

Family Violence Death Review Committee

The Family Violence Death Review Committee was established in 2008 and sits within the Health Quality and Safety Commission. It is one of four mortality review committees in New Zealand made up of family violence experts from a range of disciplines and industry sectors, chosen to bring a wide array of skills, background experiences and perspectives to the table.

On 27 June the annual Family Violence Report was released. The committee considered 72 family violence deaths as the basis of the report. Of these, 20 were associated with child abuse and neglect, 35 were intimate partner homicides and 17 involved other family members.

Following this the committee has recommended the development of a multi-agency case management process for high-risk cases of family violence. It is also recommending placing a bigger focus on the safety and wellbeing of surviving family members following a family violence death.

The Committee Chair, Associate Professor of Law at the University of Auckland Julia Tolmie, says the recommendations focus on better inter-agency collaboration and information sharing, strengthening stopping violence programmes, and better care for victims after a family violence homicide.

Associate Professor Tolmie, says the deaths reviewed by the committee are all preventable. 'This is why the work carried out by the committee is so important – by learning about the patterns of behaviour associated with family violence deaths, we can recommend ways these tragic events might be prevented.'

Police attended over **94,000 family violence incidents** in 2011 – yet it's estimated that **only 20% of incidents are reported to the police**

She says the deaths reviewed by the committee represent only a small part of the damage and costs to society from family violence. 'For example, we know that police

attended over 94,000 family violence incidents in New Zealand in 2011, and yet it has been estimated that only 18–20% of all family violence incidents are reported to the police. As the visible tip of the iceberg, family violence deaths are not only a measure of lethality but also an important barometer of the incidence of family violence.'

Research shows that children who have experienced domestic homicide suffer problems for many years after the event. The annual Family Violence Report has specifically recommended

developing a multi-agency after-care process that focuses on the safety and wellbeing of surviving family members.

Associate Professor Tolmie says it is important to remember that addressing family violence is a community issue, and not only for individual front-line staff called upon to respond to cases.

'Family violence is a very important issue for government and society generally.'

The committee acknowledges the importance of enabling family members to share their experiences and insights, and are currently developing protocols for contacting family and friends so that their views can be heard and inform the work of the committee.



To read the full family violence report or for more information on the work of the Family Violence Death Review Committee, go to hqsc.govt.nz or phone **04 901 6040**.

Victims Centre information

The Victims Centre acts as the central point for all government and non-government organisations, working with victims to help them deal with the practical and emotional effects of crime each step of the way. We recently commissioned a report to understand the needs of our users and make sure our services were relevant to them.

As a result, so far the Victims Centre has:

- sent out victims information booklets to all primary and secondary schools, police and district courts throughout the country
- updated the Victims Centre website victimsinfo.govt.nz to include relevant and timely information including press releases and media clippings.

Our future plans for the website include:

- a resources section where victims can easily locate information on services available from government and non-government agencies, community groups and networks
- a map of the judicial process so victims can more easily understand the steps involved and what to expect.



You can find a full range of our brochures in a number of languages online at victimsinfo.govt.nz

You can also order copies free of charge from the Ministry of Justice by emailing publications@justice.govt.nz or calling **0800 587 847**.

We welcome your feedback on the website and you can make suggestions by using the suggestion box on the site victimsinfo.govt.nz

Contact us

To contribute to this newsletter, please email victimcentre@justice.govt.nz

For information about support services available to people affected by crime, please call **0800 650 654**.

Calendar

9-10 SEPTEMBER

**TOAH-NNEST
Imagining the Solution 2013**

Second annual national sexual violence prevention hui

26-27 SEPTEMBER

**Victims of Crime
National Conference**

For more information go to victimsa.org/conference.html