

Victim Support Service Inc



Strategic Plan

2003 to 2005

Foreword – Our Vision

Victim Support Service has a challenging and exciting vision for the future – one which builds on the solid foundations of the past with a sense of confidence and pride in our achievements. We shall strive for continued excellence in service delivery, advances in the achievement of victims' rights and to identify new ways to respond to victims' needs in an ever-changing environment.

In the last six years Victim Support Service Inc. has stabilised, consolidated on strengths and dramatically expanded into regional South Australia. The organisation has doubled in staffing and financial base; pursued a more pro-active, positive and professional image; adopted a more progressive management culture; embraced and improved volunteerism; become increasingly responsive to victims' needs; and further advanced our reputation and contribution as a significant influence in the criminal justice system in South Australia.

This is our third strategic plan and expresses the common framework which ensures clear guidelines and operational focus. It will be used by the Board of Management to monitor policy and strategic directions and by staff to establish priorities, plan work and monitor achievements.

Mission

Victim Support Service Inc. provides support services to people who suffer as the result of a crime in South Australia. We work with the community to advocate for victims' rights and interests, and to reduce crime and its impact on victims.

Strategic Priorities

Our priorities for the next three years include a state-wide emphasis on:

- Always maintaining service standards especially while demand rises
- Improving equity of services for disadvantaged groups of crime victims
- Advocacy for more meaningful victim involvement in the criminal justice system
- Working with other agencies to enhance generic services for crime victims through training and victim awareness-raising
- Building our funding base to more adequately respond to victims' identified and expressed needs
- Obtaining permanent funding for regional services
- Working to secure the full implementation of the Declaration of Principles Governing Victims' Rights
- Taking action to prevent/reduce crime

Maximising Outcomes for Crime Victims

In this plan of strategic directions we identify priorities which incorporate current activities and new strategies which we shall endeavour to undertake. More detailed activities to achieve the strategic priorities and key aims are detailed in the Victim Support Service Action Plan 2003-2005.

Work under our six following program areas will be driven by nine key aims to keep us focussed on achieving maximum outcomes for crime victims

Key aims

- To provide support services in collaboration with others which help victims of crime regain a sense of safety, order and control and to reduce their sense of isolation with maximum regard for equity of access by crime victims to the service.
- To increase community awareness and commitment to victims' rights and interests.
- To advocate for the improvement of the Criminal Justice System to better recognise and appropriately respond to victims' needs.
- To work with other service providers to increase their awareness, commitment and ability to respond to victims' needs by providing specialist expertise upon which they can draw.
- To contribute to the knowledge of victims' issues by collecting and collating data, undertaking and commissioning research.
- To be recognised nationally as the authoritative source in South Australia of advice and comment on victims' needs and interests.
- To reduce the incidence of crime by increasing awareness about the impact, consequences and costs of crime to individuals and to the wider community.
- To reduce the incidence of victimisation by providing information about practical methods of countering crime.
- To obtain and manage optimum human and financial resources in a safe and healthy workplace to achieve the objectives of Victim Support Service.

www.victimsa.org

Client Support program

To provide a broad range of services which address the needs of victims of crime.

Strategic Direction

We continue to review existing services and look for new ways to better respond to victims needs. We have developed more effective intake processes, brief intervention strategies, new therapeutic groups and increased practical support by trained volunteers in regional areas. We have developed partnerships with key organisations and alliances with communities which add value to services for victims.

We need to evaluate what we are doing, give better advice about client's rights and try to address the needs of disadvantaged groups of victims. We will look for new and improved opportunities to build on existing services.

Priority Aims by Dec 2005

- ✓ Regular use of client evaluation processes for individual and group clients
- ✓ Consolidation and expansion of comprehensive and flexible range of services in regional areas
- ✓ Appropriate victim services being provided for indigenous victims
- ✓ Appropriate victim services being provided for culturally and linguistically diverse victims
- ✓ Clients receive relevant information soon after being allocated or attending a group
- ✓ Increased practical support and crime prevention initiatives
- ✓ Appropriate facilities for prosecution witnesses waiting to give evidence.
- ✓ Exploration of remote area client access to services through video and other technologies

Key Performance Indicators

- Client evaluation process in place in all offices
- All regions providing comprehensive range of services
- All group and allocated clients receive information packaged in an appropriate language

Information Service program

To collect resource material to provide information to interested persons and/or for organisational use

Strategic Direction

Information and data management are areas which are increasingly being both challenged and given exciting new possibilities by advancing technology. We will work collaboratively with other agencies to improve the collection and sharing of information related to crime and opportunities for victims.

Our Victims Voice newsletter and Resource Centre are vehicles for public information, the newsletter and internal database are tools for advocacy, the resources and database have direct impact on client service delivery.

Priority Aims by Dec 2005

- ✓ Improve access to information by culturally and linguistically diverse groups
- ✓ Consolidate effectiveness of the new VSS database, particularly in regard to regional service evaluation
- ✓ Improved access to the Resource Centre by regional SA
- ✓ Published history of Victim Support Service
- ✓ Positive utilization of information provided by the Regional Services review
- ✓ Increase “links” between Victim Support Service website and other agencies’ sites

Key Performance Indicators

- Research project commenced
- Data base fully operational
- Regional use of resource centre
- VSS history published
- Regional Services Review
- Collection of information by other agencies and sharing with VSS

Community

Development/Education program

To provide training, education or information about crime victims

Strategic Direction

It is important that crime victims can access quality assistance in their local community through generic service providers if they wish. We will work collaboratively with other agencies to ensure that the response to victims is enhanced and that our expertise can be accessed directly by victims and by other agencies through training and information.

We also need to maintain a high public profile to continue to raise awareness generally about victims of crime.

Priority Aims by Dec 2005

- ✓ Provide regular training for other service providers on victims rights and needs including those working with indigenous and minority communities
- ✓ Ensure effective Victims Liaison Committees in regional areas
- ✓ Maintain and ensure publication of a list of services for crime victims across the state
- ✓ Provide regular contributions to Victim Awareness Programs for offenders

Key Performance Indicators

- Training courses regularly delivered
- Victims Liaison Committee operative effectively in all country regions
- Publication of matrices of services

Advocacy program

To identify key issues for victims and work to achieve changes to the criminal justice system to better recognise and respond to victims needs and rights

Strategic Direction

As an independent non-government organisation Victim Support Service has a vital and unique role in advocating for the rights and needs of crime victims. There are many venues in which we undertake this important responsibility including using the media, contributing to government reviews, participating on working parties and committees or holding discussions with key influential persons in Parliament and /or government.

We aim to be respected for our balanced objectivity, realistic aims, and evidence-based argument but also for our passionate commitment to crime victims. We must continue to behave in a respectful but assertive way to retain our influence and avoid being marginalised by decision-makers.

Priority Aims by Dec 2005

- ✓ More victim sensitive media reporting
- ✓ Increased formal and informal restorative justice opportunities for more meaningful victim participation in criminal justice
- ✓ Effective offender rehabilitation to reduce criminal victimisation
- ✓ Improved use of facilities and opportunities for victims – including vulnerable witness facilities, criminal injury compensation, victim impact statement and Correctional Services Victims Register
- ✓ Services for indigenous and culturally and linguistically diverse crime victims
- ✓ Improved services and criminal justice systems for children who are victims
- ✓ Working to secure the full implementation of The Declaration Of Principles Governing Victims' Rights

Key Performance Indicators

- Regular mediations between victims and offenders
- Family conferences with adult offenders
- Greater utilisation of victim facilities and opportunities
- Offender rehabilitation programs evaluated and resourced
- New services/funding for indigenous and culturally and linguistically diverse crime victims
- New processes for child victims

Publicity/Promotion program

To increase community awareness about Victim Support Service, victims rights and interests

Strategic Direction

Publicity is different from community awareness as it is about keeping an obvious and, often, visual presence so victims and services for them, are not forgotten. If we are out of sight we will become out of mind too. We publicise Victim Support Service through offering training, talks, media, community announcements, a shop-front office, a web-site, posters and brochures.

Priority Aims by Dec 2005

- ✓ State-wide expansion of public speaking program
- ✓ Regular attendance at field days and community forums
- ✓ Visual presence in all Police stations, courts and in appropriate public buildings
- ✓ Promotion of services for victims via court based information systems
- ✓ Promotion of services via other organisations' publications
- ✓ Use of media to promote services

Key Performance Indicators

- Regular marketing/promotion to health and welfare services
- Regular volunteers talks to community groups in all regions
- Attendance at community forums
- Posters in all Police Stations and most country libraries and relevant organisations
- Collation of promotional activities and publications from other agencies

Resource Management program

To attract additional financial resources and manage all physical, financial and human resources effectively and efficiently

Strategic Direction

There are approximately 250,000 victimisations a year reported in South Australia. After increases in referrals for five years, we now provide services to over 2500 victims per annum. Waiting times have unfortunately increased because we do not have the income to provide the staff to meet demand.

We shall continue to manage within the resources we have by improving the ways we work. We shall also try to improve the resources available to help crime victims by asking the government and the community to take appropriate moral and financial responsibility to contribute to meeting the needs of victims.

In regional South Australia we promote a community development model, local ownership of services and a sense of community responsibility for assisting victims. We shall further develop partnerships with organisations and communities to expand/improve services and their accessibility.

As community awareness about victim's rights improves, so too do referrals for services – funding must be increased to meet victims' rights for services to meet their needs.

Priority Aims by Dec 2005

- ✓ Achieve appropriate long term Government funding for regional services
- ✓ Establish a paid worker position with primary focus on training
- ✓ Increase counselling resources to minimise client waiting time and enhance service standards
- ✓ Attract funding for indigenous and multi-cultural service development
- ✓ Consolidate the five regional services, promote the utilization of services and local initiatives for future development
- ✓ Increase corporate donations and sponsorship

Key Performance Indicators

- Regional Services Funding is permanent
- Training position established
- Maximum of 1 working day wait for intake and 10 days for counselling
- Funding for indigenous and other cultures' services
- Monitoring client demands

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