

**Speaking Notes for Greg Heylin
At the Annual Conference of Victim Support Europe
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Workshop 3 – Victim Commissioners**

*The Commission for the Support of Victims of Crime, from
2005 to date*

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Overview

- 1. 2005 – 2008 beginnings**
- 2. Description and size of sector**
- 3. Framework Document and Victims of Crime Office**
- 4. Research**
- 5. Training days**
- 6. Victims of Crime Consultative Forum**
- 7. Questions and discussion**

1. 2005 – 2008 beginnings

Derek Nally
Victim Support
Volunteer to professionally led
Implosion

March 2005 Commission established
Toxic environment
Ensure continuity of service

2005 – 2008 first three year term
Chair retired police assistant commissioner – Jim McHugh
Retired director of the Probation Service – Sean Lowry
Ex- Minister for Justice – Nora Owen
Consultant – Michael Whelan
Media presenter – Marion Finucane

28 successful 26 unsuccessful applicants
Almost €700,000 disbursed

2. Description and size of sector

Seven groups from old Victim Support

Crime Victims Helpline
Support After Crime Services
Federation for Victim Assistance
AdVIC (Advocates for Victims of Homicide)
Support After Homicide
Irish Tourist Assistance Service
Victim Support at Court (formerly Court Support Service)

And

Victim Support

Mainly volunteers, with one or two full-time staff running the larger organisations.

Bulk of funding from Commission
Income 9 general crime groups 2011 €582,000
Of which Commission €460,500 or 79%

Micro organisations

Domestic violence

Thirteen successful in 2005

Grew and grew

Now 28 funded (2013)

Court accompaniment

Support until make decision to proceed

Civil court proceedings for protection orders

Few criminal court breaches of orders

And assault.

40 in country; funded in the main by Health Services Executive (soon to be Child and Family Agency).

€16.1m from HSE in 2011 to 40

€32m income in 2011 to 40

€22.3m income in 2011 (25 funded by Commission for which accounts available)

Commission funding €446,348 or 2%

Sexual violence

2005 funding for Rape Crisis Network Ireland representing 13 organisations

And

Sexual Violence Centre Cork

In 2013 funded

Rape Crisis Network Ireland representing 14 organisations

Dublin Rape Crisis Centre

Sexual Violence Centre Cork

One in Four

Court accompaniment

Accompaniment to police interviews

Accompaniment 24/7 to Sexual Assault Treatment Units

16 funded in the main by Health Services Executive (soon to be Child and Family Agency).

€3.4m from HSE in 2011 to 16

€7.2m income in 2011 to 16

€4m income in 2011 (4 funded by Commission)

Commission funding €159,400 or 4%

Sexual and domestic violence are feminist networked organisations by ideological and philosophical design.

Domestic violence mainly staff,
some volunteers on sexual violence accompaniment.

WAVE Council of Europe 40,000 organisations registered.

Counselling

No organisation in 2005

Five organisations in 2013

Income in 2011 of €1.6m

Commission funding €61,800 or 4%

Children

One organisation in 2005

Two organisations in 2013

€24.9m income in 2011 (4 funded by Commission)

Commission funding €61,800 or 0.15%

Barnardos bereavement counselling

Commission funds counselling for children bereaved by homicide

CARI (Children at Risk in Ireland) sexually abused children

Commission funds court accompaniment for all children.

2005 – 2008

€3.3m funding disbursed

Worked with police to encourage information to victims

Cooperation between voluntary sector organisations.

And with statutory organisations

Summarising the Commission funded sector with a few headline numbers:

- in 2008 7,700 victims were helped,
- in 2012, 15,637 victims were supported (just over twice as many as in 2008),
- through 30,570 contacts,
- using 467 volunteers and
- the equivalent of 26 full-time staff,

Compare with

Rape Crisis Network Ireland (2011 data)

- 14 members plus Dublin Rape Crisis Centre excluding Cork
- 28,615 helpline contacts
- 2,541 people took up counselling & support
- 646 people accompanied (included in Commission figures above)

Safe Ireland – domestic violence

- 42,383 helpline calls
- 5,959 women received face to face support
- 1,686 women received a place in refuge (plus 2,142 children)
- 152 women received a place in transitional housing (plus 185 children)

And

About 100,000 victims a year approximately

3. Framework Document and Victims of Crime Office

Commission recommended a new framework for overseeing victim services in April, 2008.

- ✓ A new Victims of Crime Office in the then Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform
- ✓ Chief Executive ex officio member of reconstituted Commission
- ✓ Twice yearly Victims of Crime Consultative Forum convened by Commission.

Minister accepted all recommendations

Office established September, 2008

Minster spent afternoon with all the victims groups September, 2008

Inter-connected websites, 2009

www.csvc.ie

www.victimsofcrimeoffice.ie

Continuity in membership of Commission, new Chair, also senior police officer, retired

4. Research

Report on Services and Legislation Providing Support for Victims of Crime

by Ivana Bacik, Liz Heffernan, Patricia Brazil and Marguerite Woods of the Law School, Trinity College Dublin. (December 2007).

The Needs and Concerns of Victims of Crime in Ireland

by Shane Kilcommins, Máire Leane, Fiona Donson, Caroline Fennell and Anna Kingston (October 2010).

5. Training days

Three days one each 2006, 2007, 2008

Four in 2009

- Court accompaniment – criminal
- Court accompaniment – domestic violence
- Supporting / supervising volunteers and staff workshop
- Finding, recruiting and integrating volunteers into the organisation

Three in 2010

- Financial governance
- Data protection (with the Data Protection Commissioner himself)
- Workshop of training volunteers

One in 2011

- Workshop on disclosure of counselling notes in criminal cases and issues concerning child witnesses and counselling with the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions and the police

6. Victims of Crime Consultative Forum

Not a conference. At least as much time for participation and discussion as for input.

Nine to date

2009

1. Terms of reference and methods of working, and victim impact statement legislative proposals
2. Counselling and emotional support and how to empower victims and victim impact statement legislative proposals. Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform launched Commission website

2010

3. White Paper on Crime consultation, prior to drafting
4. Implementing the revised Victims Charter, with the main criminal justice agencies

2011

5. “Working together for and with victims”, addressed also by new Minister for Justice, Equality and Defence
6. Cooperation and coordination between funded organisations and input to proposed victims legislation prior to drafting

2012

7. Fund-raising and philanthropy
8. Implementing the Victims Charter with the main criminal justice agencies

2013

9. Victims of crime and the media, with the Press Ombudsman and two journalists.