

# FACT SHEET

## Doing more to support victims of crime

The Crime Victims Reform Package delivers on the Territory Government's commitment to boost support for victims of crime – putting victims of crime first.

Key initiatives of the reform package include establishing a Victims Register and the new Crime Victims Services Unit, incorporating the issuing of a Charter of Victims Rights in legislation and providing extra funding for the advocacy and support body, Victims of Crime NT.

These reforms will build on previous initiatives to better support victims, including:

- Break-Ins assistance funding – to help secure and clean up a home following a break-in
- Victims-Offending conferencing and Parole Board mechanisms giving victims a say in sentencing
- Greater protection of victims through new witness intimidation laws.

The reforms follow an extensive consultation period that commenced in 2001. The reforms implement most of the remaining key recommendations of a 1997 Report of the Crime Victims Advisory Committee ("CVAC"), as well as the recommendations made by CVAC in its 2005 Report entitled "The Establishment and Administration of a Victims Register".

### Crime Victims Services Unit

A new office will be established within the Department of Justice – the Crime Victims Services Unit to coordinate services to victims of crime.

The Crime Victims Services Unit (CVSU) will administer the Financial Assistance Scheme for victims of crime, the new counselling scheme and the Victims of Crime Register.

The new office will also be responsible for overseeing the operation of the Victims of Crime Charter and to coordinate government services to victims of crime.

Educating the community about the rights of victims and providing advice to victims about other victim's services will also fall under the responsibility of the CVSU.

### Charter of Victims Rights

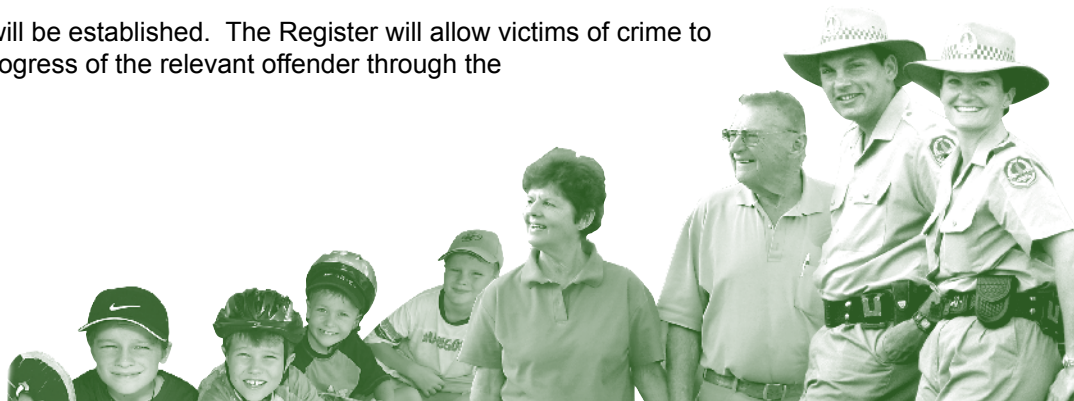
The Charter of Victims Rights sets down principles for the treatment of victims in the criminal justice system.

Under the reforms the Charter will be overseen by the new Crime Victims Services Unit. The CVSU will be able to investigate complaints of breaches of the charter.

### Victims Register

A new Victims Register will be established. The Register will allow victims of crime to be informed about the progress of the relevant offender through the prison system.

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The information available to registered victims may include the:

- earliest possible date of release on parole and any changes to the date
- date when the parole board is to consider release on parole
- actual date of release on parole
- conditions of a parole order that are relevant to the registered person or relevant offence
- revocation or cancellation of a parole order
- transfer to another prison interstate or overseas
- date of release from prison under a suspended sentence order
- conditions of a suspended sentence order
- variation, revocation, cancellation or discharge of a suspended sentence order
- the general locality where the offender intends to reside on release, if known; and
- death of the offender.

Registered victims may also be able to apply for information about the offender's security classification in prison, any courses or programs undertaken for rehabilitation and any transfer to another prison within the Territory.

This information is provided to the victim under a confidentiality agreement and for the purpose of assisting the victim.

By registering on the Victims Register in relation to a particular offender, the victim will be advised of any parole hearings relating to the offender and will be able to make a written submission about the offender to the parole board.