

Dear Commissioners,

Victims of Crime NT is available to provide crisis intervention, support and referrals to all victims of crime in the Northern Territory. We are a free service and provide 24 hours telephone response line. As such we are available should any of your witnesses require assistance before during or after giving testimony at your enquiry.

Our Management Committee is also maintaining a watching brief headed by Jack Walsh as to whether or not we have a broader contribution to make to your Inquiry. We are interested in ensuring that you include consideration of the victims place in the current justice paradigm in the Northern Territory and the causative effect that has on the over emphasis on retributive justice in our community. In the current Northern Territory paradigm the victims perspective is not really considered or acknowledged unless they are a witness for the prosecution or presenting an impact statement post conviction, we consider it a possibility that this has led to a regime where the politicians and the media overemphasise the role of punishment and retribution in sentencing to assuage the unmet needs of the victims to be acknowledged and healed. We have observed that public discussions are frequently centred on tough on crime approaches and that this in turn leads people to more and more extreme measures to punish rather than prevent criminal behaviour. This combined with the increased vulnerability of many in our community due to PTSD following catastrophic events such as Cyclones, floods, WW2 bombings and failed public policy initiatives such as the removal of mixed race children and the Intervention has created a fertile ground for a call for retribution and harsh action to "protect" the public. It has created a situation where many ordinary Territorians viewed the Four Corners report and said "the little buggers deserved it" and much comment was made about the lack of inclusion of the perspective of the victims of the young men involved and their rights.

We acknowledge that the young men in Don Dale and the increasing number of children removed from dysfunctional and harmful care are Victims of this paradigm.

We are available at the convenience of your witness or your selves.

Kind regards,

*Jacinta Stanford*  
Acting Chief Executive

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Mobile: Privacy

