



**VICTIMS OF CRIME COMMITTEE  
ANNUAL REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT FOR 2016**

**Submitted:**

**June 30, 2016**



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Victims of Crime Committee (“the Committee”), which is represented by police leaders and justice officials from across the country, is mandated to enhancing the Canadian police community’s capacity to respond effectively to the protection of victims of crime. On behalf of victim, the Committee aims to enable dialogue, problem solving and innovation across Canada to address victims’ issues; and to advocate for legislative changes to address the needs of victims.

Since 2015, the Committee has successfully produced information and training material for law enforcement agencies across Canada to assist in performing death notifications. The Committee provided a Death Notification Pocket Guide as a useful reference tool that law enforcement agency members can refer back to when performing a death notification. In addition, the Committee members produced a death notification video entitled “A Knock at the Door”. Both the video and pocket guide was shared with all member agencies of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police.

During this reporting period, the Committee accomplished the following:

- Committee meeting, Quebec City, Quebec, on August 16, 2015
- Development of the death notification training video (August/September 2015)
- Motion recommending new Co-Chairs of the Victims of Crime Committee (February 10, 2016)
- Letter to the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police members on death notification information and training material (March 31, 2016)
- Creation of the Victims’ Rights in Canada Pamphlet (May 2016)
- Attended the Victims and Survivors of Crime Week, *the Power of Our Voices*, May 29 – June 4, 2016, in Ottawa, Ontario
- Committee meeting, in Gatineau, Quebec, on June 2, 2016



## MISSION STATEMENT & GOALS

The Committee's mission statement is:

**To enhance the Canadian police community's capacity to respond effectively to the needs of victims of crime**

The Goals of the Committee are:

1. To enable dialogue, problem solving and innovation across Canada to address victims.
2. To gather and promote effective practices.
3. To focus national attention on the needs of victims.
4. To promote systemic response to victims.
5. To advocate for legislative changes to address the needs of victims.



## MEMBERSHIP

As at June 6, 2016, membership to the CACP Victims of Crime Committee is as follows:

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| <b>Rick Bourassa</b> <i>(Co-Chair)</i>             | Chief, Moose Jaw Police Service                            |
| <b>Jill Skinner</b> <i>(Co-Chair)</i>              | Deputy Chief, Ottawa Police Service                        |
| <b>Eric Jolliffe</b> <i>(Past Co-Chair)</i>        | Chief, York Regional Police                                |
| <b>Trevor Daroux</b> <i>(Past Co-Chair)</i>        | Deputy Chief, Calgary Police Service                       |
| <b>Gillian Blackell</b> <i>(Technical Advisor)</i> | Director, Policy Centre for Victims Issues                 |
| <b>Harvey Cenaiko</b> <i>(Technical Advisor)</i>   | Chairperson, Parole Board of Canada                        |
| <b>Bill Fordy</b>                                  | Chief Superintendent – Surrey Detachment, RCMP             |
| <b>Danik Guerrero</b>                              | Commandant, Service de police de la Ville de Montréal      |
| <b>Scott Harris</b> <i>(Technical Advisor)</i>     | Ass't Commissioner, Correctional Services Canada           |
| <b>Colleen Kelly</b>                               | Superintendent, Halifax Regional Police                    |
| <b>Dominique Lafrenière</b>                        | Captain, Sûreté du Québec                                  |
| <b>Derren Lench</b>                                | Chief Superintendent – “E” Division, RCMP                  |
| <b>Robyn MacEachern</b>                            | Inspector, Ontario Provincial Police                       |
| <b>Paul Martin</b>                                 | Chief, Durham Regional Police                              |
| <b>Elizabeth Pilcher</b>                           | Superintendent, Winnipeg Police Service                    |
| <b>Tom Russell</b>                                 | A/Staff Superintendent, Toronto Police Service             |
| <b>Darlene Savoie</b>                              | Superintendent, Edmonton Police Service                    |
| <b>Lori Morin</b>                                  | Superintendent, Regina Police Service                      |
| <b>Paul Smith</b>                                  | Chief, Charlottetown Police Service                        |
| <b>Ron Smith</b>                                   | Chief Superintendent, RCMP – “G” Division                  |
| <b>John Syrette</b>                                | Chief, Anishabek Police Service                            |
| <b>Suzanne Wallace-Capretta</b>                    | Manager, National Office for Victims, Public Safety Canada |
| <b>Cathy Meehan</b> <i>(Committee Support)</i>     | Ottawa Police Service                                      |
| <b>Lori Anderson</b> <i>(Committee Support)</i>    | Moose Jaw Police   |

The Co-Chairs and past Co-Chairs would like to thank and acknowledge Pam Arnott, former Director of Policy Centre for Victims Issues, Deputy Chief Bob Percy of Halton Regional Police, Superintendent Brent Schmidt of Regina Police Service and Steven Pinto of York Regional Police who due to retirements and position changes, are no longer members of this Committee but have provided valuable insight and support during the past few years.

Over the past year, the Committee welcomed Gillian Blackwell, Director of Policy Centre for Victims Issues, Chief Superintendent Bill Fordy of RCMP Surrey Detachment, Superintendent Elizabeth Pilcher of Winnipeg Police Service and Superintendent Lori Morin of Regina Police Service.



## MEETINGS

Since the date of the last annual report, the Committee has met on the following dates:

1. August 16, 2015 in Quebec City, Quebec  
Attendance at the Annual Conference of Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, on August 15 – 19, 2015
2. Conference Call No. 1, on February 2, 2016
3. June 2, 2016 in Gatineau, Quebec  
Attendance at the Victims and Survivors of Crime Week, *the Power of Our Voices*, on May 29 – June 4, 2016 in Ottawa, Ontario

Attendance at all meetings is well above majority, with all Committee members showing their dedication to the mission of the Victims of Crime Committee through active participation. Comprehensive meeting minutes are included in the Appendices portion of this report.



## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### 1. Death Notification information and training material (August 2015 – March 2016)

Committee members have repeatedly heard concerns from families of victims with the way in which law enforcement agencies across Canada perform death notification. Death notifications have a long lasting impact on family members. Many of the members of the Committee know first-hand that delivering a death notification can be an extremely stressful experience, and must be done with clarity and compassion. When delivering a death notification, it is critical to be well informed and prepared, as next-of-kin deserve accurate and complete information about the death of their loved one.

That is why on March 31, 2016, the Committee's past Co-Chairs sent a letter to all members of the CACP with respect to performing death notifications. The letter contained a link to a Death Notification Training Video entitled "A Knock at the Door" and attached a Death Notification Pocket Guide. The video and pocket guide are best practices that law enforcement agencies can use to supplement existing training on death notifications. These tools were also designed so law enforcement agencies could modify them, as needed to reflect their respective death notification procedures, policies and training guides.

#### a. Death Notification Training Video "A Knock at the Door"

"A Knock at the Door", also available in French, breaks down the process of performing a death notification and reinforces the need to ensure all death notifications are conducted with dignity, professionalism and compassion. The video can be viewed by clicking the following links:

English: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=th78geeU-Ag&feature=youtu.be>

French: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hPgMZxqq7L0&feature=youtu.be>

The video was shared with all CACP members on March 31, 2016 and aims to assist law enforcement agencies across Canada in providing a victim-centred approach to death notification, focusing on respect and dignity to the victim and family.

In preparation for the video, Calgary Police Service, a Committee member police agency, undertook research on best practices on the death notification policies, procedures and protocols of different police agencies. The research found that there was no national death notification standard and every agency varied in their death notification policy.

The Committee identified a need for some basic standardization in death notification. After reviewing a number of existing training courses and videos on death notification, the Committee believed a new training video should be developed that contains more up-to-date content. Calgary Police Service undertook the development and production of the video with input from members of the Committee.



## **b. Death Notification Pocket Guide**

The Death Notification Pocket Guide was developed to assist law enforcement agencies perform death notifications. The pocket guide, based on the pocket guide used by Calgary Police Service, is a useful reference tool that law enforcement agency members can refer back to when performing a death notification. The pocket guide highlights the following common segments in death notification:

- Planning – notification should be done as soon as possible. Know the details, identify and verify legal next-of-kin, victim information, etc.
- Notification – done in person; introduce yourself, provide details, etc.
- After Notification – be prepared to repeat information and offer assistance for any type of emotional or physical reaction from family members.

## **2. Motion recommending new Co-Chairs of the Victims of Crime Committee**

In February 2016 Committee members brought forward a motion recommending new Co-Chairs of the Victims of Crime Committee. Chief Rick Bourassa of Moose Jaw Police Service and Deputy Chief Jill Skinner of Ottawa Police Service received unanimous support from the Committee to be the next Co-Chairs.

With over 60 years of policing experience combined, both Chief Bourassa and Deputy Chief Skinner have a wealth of knowledge and experience that are invaluable to the Committee. Their interest and commitment to victims of crime is evident in their participation and leadership in the Committee and in their dedication and involvement in their respective organizations and communities.

The Committee is confident that under the new leadership of Chief Bourassa and Deputy Chief Skinner they will continue to further dialogue and focus national attention on the needs of victims.

## **3. Final Implementation of the *Canadian Victims Bill of Rights***

*The Canadian Victims Bill of Rights Act* came into force on July 23, 2015. The Committee and its members were regularly consulted throughout the development of Bill C-32 and during the implementation stage.

### **a. Victims' Rights Information Brochure**

In spring 2015, the Committee requested that the Policy Centre for Victim Issues within Justice Canada develop a brochure and business card holder for use by law enforcement agencies across Canada to provide victims with information about their rights under the *Canadian Victims Bill of Rights*. The brochure has been developed to include an overview of victims' rights under the *Canadian Victims Bill of Rights*. The business card holder serves to provide a website link where victims can find comprehensive information about their rights. The business card holder will also allow police services to insert their own card or their victim services card inside.



The Committee requested the brochure in electronic template format to allow police services to customize the resources by inputting their own contact information on the back and printing the product themselves. The electronic versions of the brochure and the business card holder were provided to the Committee at the end of May 2016. The Committee distributed the electronic versions to CACP members in June 2016 so that member agencies can customize and print the brochure and the card holders. Should individual police services require additional funding to print these products, they can apply to the Justice Canada Victims Fund at the following link:

<http://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/fund-fina/cj-jp/fund-fond/proj.html>

In addition, a generic version of the brochure (without customizable text) was printed and provided to all attendees at this year's Victims and Survivors of Crime Week Federal Symposium on June 3rd, 2016. The brochure is not currently online, but efforts are underway to have it available.

These resources are intended to assist police services across Canada in the implementation of the *Canadian Victims Bill of Rights*. They have been designed to serve a multi-purpose function by providing victims with information about their rights, providing that information in a timely manner (i.e. upon first contact with police and in the early stages of the criminal justice system), as well as providing information about the local services available to assist them. In addition, dissemination of these resources by law enforcement agencies across Canada will help to ensure nation-wide accuracy and consistency in the *Canadian Victims Bill of Rights* information provided to victims.

#### **4. Attendance at the Victims and Survivors of Crime Week, the Power of Our Voices, in Ottawa, on May 29 – June 4, 2016**

The majority of committee members attended the Victims and Survivors of Crime Week Symposium. This event brought together government, law enforcement, victims, victims' families and victim service providers to share experiences and best practices. This event served to reaffirm the Committee's mission and dedication to victims of crime.



## CONCLUSION

The Victims of Crime Committee demonstrates the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police's (CACP) commitment to ensuring the rights and protections of victims. This Committee brings together police leaders, criminal justice practitioners, government agencies and other partners to enhance the capacity to respond effectively to the needs of victims of crime.

The goals for the next year include:

- Providing input on policies, legislation, and regulatory changes that impact victims of crime;
- Further information gathering on victim services;
- Exploring the creation of victim awards;
- Greater focus on needs of First Nations, Inuit and Métis victims;
- Exploring best practices for victim support in major incidents.

The Co-Chairs and past Co-Chairs would like to thank the CACP for their continued support as we make advances in improving police services to communities.



## APPENDICES

- Appendix A** CACP Victims of Crime Committee Meeting Minutes
- Appendix B** Letter to CACP on Death Notification (English and French)
- Appendix C** Victims' Rights in Canada Brochure and Business Card Holder