Meeting the needs of victims of crime

Sydney, 18–19 May 2011
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As Director of the Australian Institute of Criminology it is my pleasure to welcome you to the Meeting the Needs of Victims of Crime Conference.

I would also like to acknowledge our conference partner, the Victims Support Services branch of the NSW Department of Attorney General and Justice for their work in creating this event.

This is a timely gathering, as over the last decade there has been a broadening of a number of government victim support programs and enhanced partnerships between victims support services, both in the non-government sector and across various justice departments. Over the next two days it is important that we discuss and reflect on what works when delivering assistance to survivors of crime.

A lot has been achieved, but there is much more that can be done.

At gatherings such as this, it is critical that we listen to the views of people who are survivors of crime, especially those who have then engaged with the broader victim support networks, along with the views of academic researchers, policy makers, victims support workers, and those who work with and for victims in police, courts and corrections services.

Further, it is important that we consider ways of improving the accessibility of services to ensure all victims receive some level of support, should they desire it, and that we improve our understanding of the types of support needed by victims of the various types of crime.

I hope you are both challenged by, and enjoy, the ideas, presentations and discussions, and that the outcomes of the conference add to your knowledge of this complex discipline of victim research and support.

Dr Adam M Tomison
Director, Australian Institute of Criminology
May 2011

On behalf of the NSW Department of Attorney General and Justice, and our partner, the Australian Institute of Criminology, I welcome you to the “Meeting the Needs of Victims of Crime” Conference in Sydney.

This conference will be a forum for service providers, Government and non-Government organisations, policy makers, criminal justice practitioners and academics to come together to exchange ideas and explore solutions to examine best practices and to facilitate discussions of the challenges in the field.

In the program you will see that there are over 50 sessions addressing some of the wide range of issues that affect victims of crime. As we know, anyone can become a victim of crime and vulnerable members of our community, who become victims, have particular needs and can require specialised support. I am heartened that presenters at this conference will specifically address the needs of Indigenous victims, victims of sexual assault, victims of domestic violence, victims of human trafficking and other vulnerable victims.

I am pleased that so many distinguished speakers and practitioners who are interested in the needs of victims of crime are speaking at this conference, sharing their knowledge, their research and their experience in assisting victims of crime.

I encourage you to participate in the workshops and take other opportunities to discuss issues relating to victims of crime with our speakers and also with your fellow participants. I hope you will be challenged by the research and experiences presented and can apply this in your work with victims of crime.

Laurie Glanfield
Director General
Department of Attorney General and Justice
About the conference

This conference will bring together delegates to discuss what research tells us about victims’ rights and needs in all their diversity. Delegates will exchange ideas and solutions, examine promising practices and discuss challenges in meeting the needs of victims of crime.

The issues are complex. Individuals and communities are affected by a wide range of crimes such as family and sexual violence, as well as terrorism, break and enter, homicide, fraud, home invasion, elder abuse, road trauma and armed robbery.

In the context of building the evidence, major themes for the conference will include:

• effective ways of giving victims a voice;
• what works and why in addressing the needs of victims in the criminal justice system, for example, investigation, court processes, restorative justice and support needs;
• understanding the financial and practical needs of victims, what assists and appropriate forms of compensation;
• meeting the psychological needs of victims and the effectiveness of counselling;
• collaboration and strategic partnerships—what works between governments, non-government and private sectors; and
• challenges to evaluating practice in human, community and legal service environments.

Meeting the Needs of Victims of Crime Conference will also explore the international experience and how that can be applied in Australia.

Australian Institute of Criminology

The Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) is Australia’s national research and knowledge centre on crime and justice. The Institute seeks to promote justice and reduce crime by undertaking and communicating evidence-based research to inform policy and practice.

The AIC was established in 1973 as a Commonwealth statutory authority and operates under the Criminology Research Act 1971. The Director reports to the Minister for Home Affairs and Justice and to the Board of Management, comprising distinguished criminal justice practitioners from around Australia.

The functions of the AIC include conducting criminological research, conducting and arranging conferences and seminars, and publishing material arising from the AIC’s work.

Victims Services, NSW Department of Attorney General and Justice

Victims Services, a business unit of the NSW Department of Attorney General and Justice, is comprised of three key areas. The Victims Compensation Registry and Tribunal offers compensation and recovers monies paid in compensation from convicted offenders. The Policy and Service Delivery section including the Victims Access Line provides counselling, information, support and referral services for victims of crime and develops policies and programs to assist victims of crime in NSW access their Rights within the criminal justice system. The Families and Friends of Missing Persons Unit (FFMPU) co-ordinates support to families.

The Victims Access Line provides a single entry point for Victims of Crime in NSW to assist them in accessing services. This is supported by the Justice Journey section on the Victims Services website which brings together in one website information victims need from various agencies as they journey through the criminal justice system.

Victims Services administers both the Approved Counseling Scheme and compensation to victims of violent crime. Compensation provides financial payments to eligible victims who have been injured in an act of violence, such as assault, domestic violence and sexual assault.

The Approved Counselling Scheme provides free face to face counselling, up to 22 hours, to victims of violent crimes that have occurred in NSW. The counsellors with the Scheme are social workers, psychologists, clinical psychologists or psychiatrists in private practice who have proven experience in working with victims of crime.

Victims Services is also responsible for the implementation of the Charter of Victims Rights, which sets out standards for how victims of crime should be treated by NSW government agencies and funded non-government agencies.
Important information for delegates

Registration desk
The conference registration desk will be located in the Level 2 pre-function area at the Mercure Sydney. The registration desk will be open at the following times during the conference:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday 18 May 2011</td>
<td>8.00 am–5.30 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday 19 May 2011</td>
<td>8.00 am–4.15 pm</td>
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Catering and dietary requirements
Morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea will be served daily in the Level 2 pre-function area. If you have indicated that you have special dietary requirements on your registration form, catering other than vegetarian will be provided for you in a specially marked section. Please don’t hesitate to ask venue staff should you have any questions.

Cocktail reception
The cocktail reception is open to all conference delegates who registered for the full program. It will be held on Wednesday 18 May 2011 on the Level 2 terrace and pre-function area (weather permitting). The reception will start immediately at the conclusion of the final session at approximately 5.30 pm. The reception will conclude at 7.00 pm.

Name tags
All registered conference delegates will be issued with a name tag and lanyard upon registration at the conference. Name tags must be clearly visible at all times during the conference.

Conference evaluation
Included in your conference satchel you will find a conference evaluation form. To assist the AIC with planning future conferences, please complete the form and place it in the conference evaluation drop box located at the registration desk prior to your departure.

Insurance
Conference registration fees do not include insurance or cover for loss or personal injury. There is no insurance provided by the conference organiser. Delegates should arrange their own personal and travel insurance.

Privacy
Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000
Information collected in respect of proposed participation in the conference will only be used for the purposes of planning and conducting the conference and for future correspondence about AIC research, events and publications. Delegate information will be accessed by the conference organising committee, the AIC and accommodation venues when necessary.
Parking
Undercover parking is available at the Mercure Sydney. Access via Little Regent Street and is subject to availability.

Disclaimer

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<th>Sunday–Thursday</th>
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The services specified in this booklet are available at the time of writing. However, in the event that any service becomes unavailable or minimum numbers are not met, the conference organiser reserves the right to alter, reschedule or cancel the event or any component thereof.

The views of speakers and panel members do not necessarily reflect those of the conference organisers and sponsors.
### Conference Program Day 1 Wednesday 18 May 2011

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Conference Session</th>
<th>Room</th>
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<tr>
<td>8.00–9.00</td>
<td>Registration opens</td>
<td>Level 2 Pre-function</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.00–9.30</td>
<td>Welcome to country</td>
<td>Grand Central</td>
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<td><strong>Welcome address</strong>—Dr Adam Tomison, Director, Australian Institute of Criminology</td>
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<td><strong>Conference opening</strong>—The Hon Greg Smith SC MP, NSW Attorney General and Minister for Justice</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.30–10.15</td>
<td>Plenary address 1</td>
<td>Grand Central</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Jonathan Doak—Realising participatory rights for victims of crime</td>
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<td>10.15–11.00</td>
<td>Plenary address 2</td>
<td>Grand Central</td>
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<td>The Hon. David Levine AO RFD QC—Victims of crime—the geometry in the courtroom and in the administration of sentences</td>
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<td>11.00–11.30</td>
<td><strong>Morning tea</strong></td>
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<td>11.30–13.00</td>
<td>Concurrent session 1a—Understanding the needs of victims of crime</td>
<td>Central</td>
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<td>Concurrent session 1b—Sex workers as crime victims</td>
<td>Town Hall</td>
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<td>Concurrent session 1c—Victims of sexual assault</td>
<td>St James/Museum</td>
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<td>Concurrent session 1d—Therapeutic approaches</td>
<td>Martin Place</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.00–12.30</td>
<td>Matthew Willis, Australian Institute of Criminology—Increasing disclosure of violence in Indigenous communities</td>
<td>Jules Kim, Scarlet Alliance—Meeting the needs of migrant sex workers in Australia: Research to address crimes against sex workers</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.30–13.00</td>
<td>Rachel Martin, Thea Deakin-Greenwood and Josie Smith, Wirringa Baiya Aboriginal Women’s Legal Centre—Aboriginal women in prison: The story from inside out</td>
<td>Scarlet Alliance—Meeting the needs of migrant sex workers in Australia: Support for sex workers affected by crime</td>
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<tr>
<td>13.00–14.00</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Concurrent session 2a—Policing contexts</td>
<td>Concurrent session 2b—Court support</td>
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<td>14.00–14.30</td>
<td>Yasmin Green, Victoria Police—<em>Meeting the needs of victims within a policing context</em></td>
<td>Brendan Searson, NSW Police Force—<em>Court support for victims and witnesses</em></td>
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Concurrent session 3a—Meeting the needs of vulnerable populations</th>
<th>Concurrent session 3b—Victim involvement in the criminal justice system</th>
<th>Concurrent session 3c—Identifying and responding to victims of human trafficking</th>
<th>Concurrent session 3d—Meeting the needs of domestic violence victims</th>
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<tr>
<td>16.00–16.30</td>
<td>Angela Murphy and Alison Ollerenshaw, University of Ballarat—<em>‘Victims won’t even report the crime let alone use support services’: The complexities of building pathways to victim support services for marginalised people</em></td>
<td>Kate Milner, Department of Corrective Services, Debbie Iorns and Jane Bolitho—<em>Providing victims of violent and serious crime a central position in the justice process: Post-sentence victim–offender conferencing in NSW</em></td>
<td>Belinda Lo, Fitzroy Legal Service—<em>Opening the doors to justice: Supporting trafficked survivors of sex slavery through the legal system</em></td>
<td>Elaine Lloyd, Northern Violence Intervention Program and Pam Kaye, Central Domestic Violence Service—<em>Enhancing accountability: Practice tools for domestic violence interventions</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>16.30–17.00</td>
<td>Victoria Clack, Hunter Institute of Mental Health—<em>Mental health issues and the media: the application of key learning’s to victims of crime</em></td>
<td>Tracey Booth, University of Technology, Sydney—<em>The voice of the crime victim in the sentencing hearing: ‘An improperly enacted and damaging ritual’?</em></td>
<td>Frances Simmons, University of Technology, Sydney—<em>The challenge of meeting the needs of trafficking victims: Pathways to compensation</em></td>
<td>Gaby Marcus, University of New South Wales—<em>Integrated responses to domestic and family violence: What, how, when and why</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>17.00–17.30</td>
<td>Myvanwy Hudson, University of New South Wales—<em>‘I learnt to accept the unacceptable’: The needs and experiences of adult female survivors of interfamilial child sexual assault negotiating the criminal justice process</em></td>
<td>Sarah Krasnostein, University of Melbourne—<em>A right to know: To what extent are sentences affected by Victim Impact Statements?</em></td>
<td>Malini Laxminarayan, International Institute of Victimology—<em>Generalising legal needs of victims: Evidence from the Netherlands and Nepal</em></td>
<td>Rochelle Braaf, Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse—<em>Fostering abused women’s safety through financial independence: The empowering role that services and agencies can play</em></td>
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Evening Reception</th>
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<tr>
<td>17.30–19.00</td>
<td>Evening Reception</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Conference session</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.00–8.30</td>
<td>Registration opens</td>
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<td>8.30–8.40</td>
<td>Day 2 opening—Minister’s address—Minister for Home Affairs and Justice, Brendan O’Connor MP</td>
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### 10.30–10.30 Morning tea

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Concurrent session 4a—Meeting the needs of vulnerable populations</th>
<th>Concurrent session 4b—Victim participation in the criminal justice system</th>
<th>Concurrent session 4c—The role of police in supporting victims</th>
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<tr>
<td>10.30–12.00</td>
<td>Central</td>
<td>Town Hall</td>
<td>Martin Place</td>
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<td>10.30–11.00</td>
<td>Marg Camiller, University of Ballarat—Justice system—enter if you’re able: Using the Social Model of Disability to give voice to sexual assault victims with cognitive impairment</td>
<td>Tanya Monaghan, Department of Corrective Services—The Victim-Offender Mediation Unit: Meeting the needs of young victims of crime</td>
<td>Nicola Doumary, Victims Assist Queensland and Craig Weatherly, Queensland Police Service—A collaborative approach to supporting victims of crime in Queensland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.00–11.30</td>
<td>Josh Sweeney, Australian Institute of Criminology—Victimisation and fear of crime among a sample of police detainees: findings from the Drug Use Monitoring Australia (DUMA) program</td>
<td>Tyrone Kirchengast, University of New South Wales—Victim harm, social harm and the adversarial criminal trial: Challenging lawyers’ perceptions on the role of victim experience in criminal law</td>
<td>Tony Campbell, Supportlink, Inspector Bernard Jackson and Sergeant Mark Pollard, Victoria Police, Amanda Smillie, Victims Support Victoria—New eReferral: police to victims support agencies</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.30–12.00</td>
<td>Heather Mather, Centacare Catholic Diocese of Ballarat and Benita Marson—The reality of supporting rural victims</td>
<td>Ken Marslew, Enough is Enough Anti Violence Movement Inc—Victim, Survivor, Thriver—The Journey</td>
<td>Extended session to 12.00</td>
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### 12.00–1.00 Lunch

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Concurrent session 5a—Recent findings on victims of crime</th>
<th>Concurrent session 5b—Victims’ needs</th>
<th>Concurrent session 5c—Victims’ voices</th>
<th>Concurrent session 5d—Meeting the needs of male victims of domestic and family violence</th>
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<tr>
<td>1.00–2.30</td>
<td>Central</td>
<td>Town Hall</td>
<td>St James/Museum</td>
<td>Martin Place</td>
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<td>1.00–1.30</td>
<td>Rita Shackel, University of Sydney—Preliminary findings of a qualitative study on the needs of victims of crime in Australia</td>
<td>Craig Matters, Victoria Police—What victims want: not to be victims. What victims need: Information and intensive management</td>
<td>Cathy Kezelman, Adults Surviving Child Abuse—Speaking out for change: Giving victims a voice</td>
<td>Extended panel session—Toni McLean, Think Twice! Program—Are men really victims of intimate partner violence?</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.30–2.00</td>
<td>Cassandra Cross, Queensland Police Service—‘It could never happen to me’: The hidden truth about online fraud victimisation and barriers to its prevention</td>
<td>Mandy Young, NSW Department of Attorney Genera and Justice — Serving victims</td>
<td>Jodi Death, Queensland University of Technology—Hearing the voices of survivors of child sexual abuse by Church leaders: Why we don’t and how we can follow</td>
<td>Greg Andresen, Men’s Health Australia—Meeting the needs of male victims of family violence and their children</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.00–2.30</td>
<td>Jade Lindley, Australian Institute of Criminology—Supporting victims of scams: What’s needed, what’s available and what can be improved?</td>
<td>Isobelle Barrett Meyering, Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse—Compensating domestic violence victims: How do the states and territories compare?</td>
<td>Janet Loughman, Women’s Legal Service, NSW—From pilot project to legislative reform: Keeping sexual assault victims’ counselling records confidential</td>
<td>Greg Millan, Men’s Health Services—Working with men affected by violence Followed by a panel session, moderated by Dr Elizabeth Celi, psychologist and author</td>
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### 2.30–3.00 Afternoon tea

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Panel discussion—National approaches and meeting the needs of victims of crime</th>
<th>Facilitator: Mr Brendan Thomas, Assistant Director General, Crime Prevention and Community Programs, of the Department of Attorney General and Justice</th>
<th>Grand Central</th>
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<td>3.00–4.00</td>
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<td>Grand Central</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.00–4.10</td>
<td>Conference close</td>
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Guest speaker biographies and presentation overview

Dr Jonathan Doak, Nottingham Trent University, United Kingdom

Dr Jonathan Doak is a Reader in Law at Nottingham Law School, Nottingham Trent University where he is also Director of the Criminal Justice Research Group. He has published widely in the fields of victimology, restorative justice and criminal evidence. He has a particular interest in the influence of international trends and human rights discourse on the development of criminal justice law and policy in common law jurisdictions. Dr Doak will speak on the implications for domestic criminal justice of the rapidly expanding recognition of victims’ rights as human rights at an international level.

Realising participatory rights for victims of crime

The idea that victims should be afforded a ‘voice’ in criminal proceedings is increasingly finding favour in domestic legal orders, as well as in international criminal tribunals and regional human rights systems. This paper examines the parameters of what appears to be an emerging ‘right’ to participation and explores some of the ways in which meaningful and effective participation might be realised within the criminal justice system.

Dr Ann O’Neill, Director, angelhands Inc

Dr Ann O’Neill is an award winning humanitarian, victimologist, educator, activist, volunteer and researcher. Her interests lie in social justice and victims of serious interpersonal crimes, such as homicide and family and domestic violence. She has a unique and innovative approach to educating and assisting government, organisations’ and people to deal with trauma, stress and change in their lives and their work places. Her pursuits are recognised internationally as she has presented in England, Croatia and the United States.

Meeting the needs of victims—what works and why from 3 perspectives—Victim, Practitioner and Researcher.

The audience will be asked to journey with her using their heads, hearts and hands, as experiences of criminal victimisation are deconstructed and analysed from all three of these perspectives.

As a survivor of crime, an experienced practitioner and a researcher, Ann will explore what can work for victims of violent crime when seeking to master their trauma symptoms and negotiate the criminal justice system. This will be juxtaposed with what may not work for victims of crime and why.

Peter Senge said, ‘We lead by being human, not corporate, professional and institutional’ and Ann will share why this is especially true when dealing with victims of violent crime.

The Hon David Levine AO RFD QC, Chairperson, Serious Offenders Review Council

The Hon David Levine AO RFD QC has been Chairperson of the Serious Offenders Review Council NSW since 2006. He was a Judge of the NSW District Court 1987–1992 and Supreme Court 1993–2005. David Levine retired as a judge of the Supreme Court of New South Wales in 2005. He is an expert in defamation law and has a significant reputation for law reform and in criminal law. The Hon David Levine AO RFD QC has had an active involvement in the community service aspect of law and served for a decade as Chair of the Board of the Arts Law Centre of Australia.

Victims of crime—the geometry in the courtroom and in the administration of sentences

Dr Jane Ursel, Professor of Sociology, University of Manitoba, Canada

Jane Ursel is a professor of Sociology at the University of Manitoba in Canada and is the Principal Investigator on two longitudinal studies. The Winnipeg Family Violence Court Project, now in its twentieth year of operation, collects data on all persons accused of family violence offenses in the city and currently has a data set of over 30,000 cases. The longitudinal study entitled ‘the Healing Journey’ involved interviews with 665 Canadian women from 40 communities across three Provinces, who had experienced intimate partner violence.
Dr Ursel has been an expert witness at two Canadian domestic homicide-suicide inquiries and was the Chair of the Implementation Committee for the inquiry into the Deaths of Rhonda and Roy Lavoie. In this capacity she and her colleagues were able to implement over 73 recommendations for improvements in the Justice and Social Service system response to domestic violence.

Dr Ursel is also the Director of RESOLVE (Research and Education for Solutions to Violence and Abuse), a tri-provincial research network with offices at the Universities of Manitoba, Regina and Calgary. Most recently she is involved in statement gathering for the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Can court specialisation enhance victim safety?

The Winnipeg Family Violence Court, established in 1990 was the first specialised criminal court in Canada to deal with domestic violence cases. This court hears all cases of partner abuse, child abuse and elder abuse. For the past 20 years, Dr Ursel has collected data on all offenders ever arrested on a domestic offence in the city. This presentation will focus on spouse abuses cases and address the following questions, which arise from controversies over the criminalisation of spouse abuse:

- Are there differences in court outcomes and sentencing by the ethnicity of the accused?
- Are there differences in court outcome and sentencing by the gender of the accused?
- Have mandatory arrest policies led to dual arrests?
- How do victims whose partners have been charged assess the system?
Concurrent session 1a—
Understanding the needs of victims of crime

*Working in groups with victims of violent crime: What works and when*

Dr Ann O’Neill, Director, angelhands Inc

The international literature indicates that a range of programs are available to meet the needs of victims of violent crime. Victims may have a variety of issues to address and alternative resources may be necessary to address these varying needs. However, the array of programs available can be confusing and best practice is not considered in the literature. The aim of this presentation is to describe best practice when working with groups of people who have been victims of violent crime.

*Increasing disclosure of violence in Indigenous communities*

Matthew Willis, Senior Research Analyst, Australian Institute of Criminology

While the non-disclosure, or under-reporting, of violent crime can be an issue for many communities, studies suggest that in Indigenous communities as much as 90 percent of violence is not disclosed to police. Within this ‘dark figure of crime’ are human experiences that can leave victims without help and support, perpetrators not coming to justice and cycles of violence continuing unbroken.

This presentation will explore some of the reasons for the high rates of non-disclosure of violence in Indigenous communities. From an overview of the reasons for non-disclosure in the broader Australian community, the presentation will discuss how factors specific to Indigenous Australians influence individual decisions to disclose violence. Barriers to disclosure including fears (of retribution, spreading of violence to others in the community and the response of police and other government agencies), shame and a lack of anonymity and services in rural and remote communities will be discussed.

Against these challenges, there are ways to encourage disclosure through services, training/education and community responses. Positive responses to the challenges of non-disclosure focusing on the needs of Indigenous Australians will be discussed, together with the need to locate these within broader efforts to address the cycles of intergenerational violence that can so heavily impact the lives of Indigenous Australians.

*Aboriginal women in prison — The story from inside out*

Rachael Martin, Principal Solicitor, Thea Deakin-Greenwood, Solicitor and Josie Smith, Community Legal Education Worker, Wirringa Baiya Aboriginal Women’s Legal Centre

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children are overrepresented in all statistics relating to victimisation—children are 7.5 times more likely to be victim of child sexual assault than other children, Aboriginal women are five times more likely to be the victim of domestic violence than other women and Aboriginal women are 10 times more likely to be the victim of a homicide than other women. Most of the time, the perpetrator is an Aboriginal male.

All women whose lives are affected by violence have fewer life chances, reduced choices and prospects, and all too often, women’s lives veer off-course to drug and alcohol abuse, spiralling mental health conditions, repeated victimisation and in some cases, contact with the criminal justice system resulting in incarceration. Aboriginal women are extraordinarily overrepresented in prison by comparison with non-Aboriginal women. Aboriginal women comprise close to 30 percent of the NSW female prison population, although only two percent of the general population, Aboriginal women are the biggest minority group in Australian prisons.

Research involving Aboriginal women in prison also paints a grim story; over half have experienced out-of-home care, over half have an immediate relative that was a member of the stolen generation, 30 percent have experienced child sexual assault before the age of 10; 70 percent have experienced a child sexual assault before 16 years of age. Eighty percent have had at least one relationship involving domestic violence and many suffer long-term psychological and psychiatric conditions and self-medicate with drugs and alcohol.

Since July 2008, Wirringa Baiya Aboriginal Women’s Legal Centre, in conjunction with two other legal centres, has provided a regular legal outreach service to women in three
correctional centres in Sydney. Through this experience, they have been able to work directly with women who have experienced violence and abuse and offer them advice, information, casework and referrals to move on from violence. The statistics from their experience mirror the reported statistics and in some cases, their experiences are much starker and certainly contain more narrative than statistics alone can reveal. The legal service provided are culturally appropriate and one of the key focuses of the service is to help women to access information about victimisation, domestic violence and hopefully, to move on from violence.

Meeting the needs of migrant sex workers in Australia—research to address crimes against sex workers

Jules Kim, Migration Project Manager, Scarlet Alliance, Australian Sex Workers Association

Understanding the barriers sex workers face to accessing justice is a vital part of addressing those barriers. Respectful research is required to create strong evidence for policy.

In 2009, Scarlet Alliance embarked upon the process of establishing such research with the Australian Institute of Criminology, with remarkable outcomes. Respectful of the community's needs and promoting sex worker leadership in the methodology, collection and analysis, we are about to launch a body of evidence that will contribute to international understanding of sex work, trafficking and migration.

When considering national research with the sex worker community, conducted in English, Thai, Chinese and Korean in four states and territories, there was much to plan for such as ensuring confidentiality and privacy, that there was a good basis for research, that a successful instrument was used and that sex workers had input and control at every level, and that support was provided to sex workers who interacted with the project.

This presentation will outline the methodological approaches used in this research and point towards successes and lessons to assist others to understand in greater detail the ways migrant sex worker communities collect data, including information about being affected by crime.

Meeting the needs of migrant sex workers in Australia—support for sex workers affected by crime

Migration Project Manager, Scarlet Alliance, Australian Sex Workers Association

The infrastructure of the sex worker community in Australia has lived a rich and productive history. For more than two decades, sex worker organisations have done outreach, evaluated our work, collated data and used it to improve our work in the future. Sex workers of non English-speaking background have provided leadership, peer education, outreach and policy input during this history. In Thailand, EMPOWER Foundation has also been doing this work for 20 years.

Currently, Scarlet Alliance runs a national Migration Project to meet the needs of sex workers of different language backgrounds including Thai, Chinese and Korean. This project networks with the 13 other sex worker organisations, networks and groups across Australia, providing advice, capacity and support to sex worker peer educators and non English-speaking background sex workers in Australia. We are

Concurrent session 1b—
Sex workers as crime victims

Sex worker organisations globally—infrastructure, choice and power

Elena Jeffreys, President, Scarlet Alliance, Australian Sex Workers Association

Globally, sex workers have established their own organisations and infrastructure, funded and unfunded, in the form of unions, associations, welfare services, micro-banks, regulatory bodies and committees. Their communities are helping themselves, providing peer education, networking, camaraderie and advocacy, resulting in better health and justice outcomes for sex workers.

This rich history provides a unique logistical entrance for a better understanding to address the needs of sex workers within the criminal justice system. Yet criminal justice systems are a source of discrimination, alienation, marginalisation and pain for sex workers. Why?

Scarlet Alliance works in Australia, Asia and the Pacific and has found that criminalisation of sex work contributes to police corruption and a lack of access to justice for sex workers.

Due to socialised norms about sex work, sex workers are seen as needing certain kinds of help and support (eg help to exit the sex industry). A person who is a sex worker deserves access to justice if that is what they seek—not a legal system designed to punish them for being a sex worker.

Scarlet Alliance will present on the array of questions lawmakers and advocates should consider prior to considering law reform in Australia. This will provide the conference with access to justice from the sex worker community's point of view.
developing a set of resources for sex workers, which includes information in Thai, Chinese and Korean, about Australian law, access to justice, visa laws and more.

Recognising the transnational nature of migration, our project includes an international partnership with EMPOWER Foundation in Thailand. This has augmented a 20 year history of cross-cultural work between sex workers in Australia and Thailand.

The Australian component of the project is available to support sex workers’ interactions with the criminal justice, in languages other than English.

Concurrent session 1c—Victims of sexual assault

A study of NSW legislative reform for sexual assault complainants—examining complexities: The prosecutor’s predicament

Rezana Karim, Session Lecturer and PhD candidate, University of New South Wales

This paper aims to present research findings from a qualitative study of stakeholder perspective of NSW law reform aimed towards empowering sexual assault victims. The study aims to provide insight into the decision making process of Prosecutors employed by the NSW Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP). The study comprised of a questionnaire disseminated to all Crown Prosecutors and Trial Advocates working for the DPP. Participants in the survey were subsequently invited to participate in an in-depth interview aimed at gaining greater understanding of prosecution perspectives on sexual offence trials. The research was premised on the notion that too often, law reform is passed without effective consultation with advocates.

Interviews focused on how prosecutors viewed in practice s 306B Criminal Procedure Act 1986 that allows for videorecorded evidence of a sexual assault complainant’s testimony to be adduced in a retrial. The change aimed to place the victim in a position of empowerment and to limit their trauma by having to give evidence again in the retrial. The relationship between legislative reforms leading to procedural change for victims and the current structural/cultural confines of the adversarial trial, in which prosecutors make their decisions, are examined together to analyse the real effects that these reforms have on sexual assault victims. In particular, the empirical research reveals how prosecutors practice their discretion to actualise victims’ ‘rights’ of protection and empowerment. Often, however, these rights for complainants are not realised on account of other competing obligations required from a prosecutor.

Developing a strategic and collaborative partnership approach to ensure equitable access to counselling services for victims of sexual assault in a custodial environment

Deanne Dale, Clinical Senior, Westmead Sexual Assault Service

Bernadette Hollis, Nurse Manager, Metropolitan Region, Justice Health

This paper describes the development of a strategic and collaborative partnership between two NSW Health Services—Justice Health and Westmead Sexual Assault Service, who are committed to improving service access and preventing inadvertent re-traumatisation of incarcerated women who are victims of sexual assault. Sexual assault is experienced at the rate of 1:3 among incarcerated women in New South Wales compared with 1:5 among women in the general Australian community. A project was developed to improve access to ongoing sexual assault counselling for women received into custody at Silverwater Women’s Correctional Centre (SWCC) commensurate with what is available in the general community for victims of sexual assault.

Between 2001 and 2006, attempts were made to improve access through the establishment of a ‘clinic’ within SWCC. However, in an environment of resource constraints, service provision returned to the WSAS site—‘Grevillea Cottage’. Correctional officers escorted women and observed counselling sessions as per the NSW Corrective Services policy. Consequently, safety, privacy, therapeutic effectiveness and timeliness were compromised. Simultaneously, Justice Health staff were identifying women who had been sexually assaulted. After initial forensic examination and subsequent follow-up by Justice Health Public Sexual Health, counselling referrals were unable to be well co-ordinated due to operational issues within the custodial environment.

This paper describes how, through a process of extensive consultation, relationship development, negotiation and evaluation, a sexual assault counselling service in a ‘clinic’ format based at SWCC was re-commenced in mid 2010 and has since evolved to include a preventative psycho-educational group program.

Shifting poles—from tertiary service provision to primary prevention: Piloting a preventative approach to providing counselling services to victims of sexual assault at Silverwater Women’s Correctional Centre

Katja Bulic, Sexual Assault Counsellor/Psychologist, Westmead Sexual Assault Service

In 2005, the Westmead Sexual Assault Service (WSAS) was providing Sexual Assault Counselling service through a ‘clinic’
where a counsellor attended the Silverwater Women’s Correctional Centre to see a number of clients individually. This service ceased in 2006 due to staff shortages and other resource constraints. In 2010, the idea of re-establishing the clinic was revisited by both services in response to an increase in demand and the risks to clients, staff and the community of delivering such services on the WSAS premises.

The clinic was formally re-established in August 2010, however, the uptake of individual counselling was slow. An informal review of the service provision in this setting was conducted in November 2010. The review coincided with the new directions in Justice Health service delivery, whereby more emphasis is placed on group and preventative work. As a result, in January 2011, WSAS and Justice Health started trialling a group education program focused on educating women about the prevalence of sexual abuse/assaults in the community, procedures in responding to sexual assaults, psychological effects of trauma, as well as counselling process and options. Four education sessions were delivered to a group of young offenders. The pilot evaluation suggested a number of modifications to the program. The new program incorporated these modifications and was consequently re-evaluated.

This paper describes the learning drawn from program evaluations and worker’s experience, future directions in group and individual service provision, as well as challenges for workers unaccustomed to working in correctional settings.

Concurrent session 1d—Therapeutic approaches

Evaluation of ‘outsourced’ counselling to victims of crime—a client and counsellor perspective

Anthony Jones, Team Leader, Northern Victims Assistance and Counselling Program

Rose Sommerhalder, Intake worker, Merri Community Health Services

Merri Community Health Services deliver the Northern Victims Assistance and Counselling Program which provides practical support and counselling to victims of violent crime in the Northern Metropolitan region of Melbourne. Growing demand and changes in the Department of Justice funding model to promote more flexible service delivery has led to an increase in the use of outsourced counsellors.

This presentation will discuss the complexities of providing ‘outsourced’ counselling to this client group and present results of an evaluation project conducted in late 2010. In this project, clients and counsellors were asked to rate the counselling both in terms of outcomes and processes. The results indicate some areas of significant benefit to clients, the importance of feedback mechanisms and some areas where further improvements can be made to facilitate both better client and service outcomes.

The importance of boundaries for therapists working with victims of crime

Tony Robinson, Clinical Psychologist, Vitality Psychological and Consulting Services

Boundaries are important in therapy. In the experience of being a victim of a crime, our clients have had their personal boundaries intruded on in a criminal way. As a result, it will be crucial for the therapist to have clear, safe boundaries when working with victims of crime.

This presentation reviews the usual boundaries in therapy and how they apply in therapy with victims of crime. The presentation has time for participants to describe occasions when they have found boundaries challenged in their work with clients.

Informing practice—the role of research in effective therapeutic responses to child sexual assault

Carol Ronken, Research and Policy Manager, Bravehearts Inc

Nadine McKillop, Bravehearts Inc

One in every five Australian children will be sexually assaulted by the time they reach 18 years of age. Working in the area of child sexual assault prevention and intervention since 1997, Bravehearts Inc understands that this is a complex and unique offence type and as such, the therapeutic response to the trauma and harm on individuals must be tailored to specifically address the dynamics of this offence.

Unlike other traumas experienced by children and young people, child sexual assault is almost always premeditated, involving predatory acts of grooming, manipulation and exploitation. Offenders are, in the majority, known to the victim and are someone whom they trust and have an ongoing relationship with. Grooming tends to ‘disarm’ children and young people and the relationship between the offender and the victim tends to have a strong effect on the victim’s perception of the offence. The psychological effects almost always include strong feelings of self-blame, betrayal and shame.

Couched in the comprehensive understanding of child sexual assault developed over 13 years, this paper illustrates the application of Bravehearts’ extensive experience working in the area and the findings from data collected from over 550 child victims to develop a specialised therapeutic process. The paper explores the importance of a therapeutic response that addresses common presenting issues experienced by children and young people who have experienced this type of trauma (such as shame, reduced self-esteem, negative
thoughts, misplaced perceptions of responsibility, sexualised behaviours) within the context of the unique dynamics of the offence.

Concurrent session 2a—Policing contexts

Meeting the needs of victims within a policing context

Yasmin Green, Policy Officer, Victims Advisory Unit, Victoria Police

This paper will explore the unique dual role of the Victims Advisory Unit, Victoria Police in its direct service delivery function and research and policy functions. By detailing the important linkages between research, policy and direct service delivery, the paper will explain how the Victims Advisory Unit works to provide a consistent and comprehensive service to victims, identifies opportunities to develop existing police practice and meets the challenges that arise from this complex and diverse area.

Victoria Police is usually the first point of contact for a victim following a crime, providing a crucial gateway to the criminal justice system. Police are therefore in an advantageous position to provide immediate early intervention to support victims and assist them in accessing services. Consequently the policing response delivered may influence a victim’s feelings and perceptions about their experience, not only influencing their recovery but also their participation in the criminal justice process as a witness.

With this in mind, it is essential that the policing service provided to victims of crime is delivered in a meaningful way that acknowledges that the impact of crime varies from person to person. It is imperative that the service provided is commensurate with the victim’s needs, while being respectful of their circumstances. The service provided by Victoria Police is based on how best to meet each individual victim’s needs by way of supporting operational police members in their day-to-day interactions with victims.

Panel—Establishing a victim-centred approach to sexual assault in Victoria Police

Detective Superintendent Rod Jouning, Victoria Police

Professor Martine Powell, Deakin University

Patrick Tidmarsh, Forensic Interview Advisor, Victoria Police

Victoria Police is currently establishing a victim-centred approach in its investigation of sexual assault and child abuse. This involves significant structural and cultural reform and a stronger focus on multi-agency partnerships.

The aim of this presentation is to outline how these changes will improve Victoria Police’s ability to meet the needs of sexual assault and child abuse victims. It will discuss the three main areas of reform through a panel of three speakers:

• Detective Superintendent Rod Jouning, Victoria Police, will discuss the government context for the reforms and the establishment of a statewide network of specialist sexual assault investigative units;
• Professor Martine Powell, Deakin University, will discuss the establishment and outcomes of three multidisciplinary sexual assault centres (based on an evaluation she undertook on behalf of Victoria Police); and
• Patrick Tidmarsh, Forensic Interview Adviser, Victoria Police, will discuss the development of expert sexual assault interviewers.

The panel will include a discussion on an innovative interview technique developed by Victoria Police to better recognise the dynamics of sexual assault and the experience of victims. This technique expands the parameters of police questioning to consider the full scope of the relationship the offender builds with the victim, rather than focusing on the specific criminal incident. The panel will discuss the potential of this approach to increase victim access to justice.

Concurrent session 2b—Court support

Court support for victims and witnesses

Brendan Searson, NSW Police

Workshop—Best practice in court preparation and court support

Emma Zammit, Senior Witness Assistance Service Officer, Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions

Deborah Scott, Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions

This is a theory and skills-based workshop for practitioners and others interested in this area. As court preparation is a key component of the services provided to victims and witnesses within ODPP prosecutions, the Witness Assistance Service has developed a best-practice model in court preparation and court support. This model aims to assist witnesses to give evidence to the best of their ability, in the interests of justice and without jeopardising an accused person’s right to a fair trial or hearing. It also aims to minimise potential court-related negative consequences such as stress associated with giving evidence or re-traumatisation.
Court preparation often starts from the first contact that a Witness Assistance Service officer has with a witness. However, court preparation is much more than speaking with witnesses about their worries and providing them with knowledge of the court process. The focus of this presentation is to:

- present a best-practice model for witness preparation in criminal proceedings;
- promote a multidisciplinary approach to preparing and supporting victims and witnesses;
- consider the particular needs of victims of violent crime and vulnerable witnesses when attending court to give evidence; and
- provide some practice-based strategies for effective court preparation and court support.

Concurrent session 2c—Victim reflections

It’s not fair—victim reflections on justice decision-making

Robyn Holder, PhD student, Australian National University

Victim views about the justice system and justice decision-making have been represented as uncompromisingly negative. They are commonly measured from single surveys and singular moments in time. These methods narrow and flatten complexity and confine the dynamic interaction between the individual and their social and institutional context. The interpretations made of victim views have also tended to avoid understanding the composites of these reflections. This paper explores victim assessments of the processes and decisions of justice agencies through the use of a longitudinal panel of adult female and male victims of violence. This paper discusses victim assessments with regard to procedural and distributive theories of justice.

A retrospective exploration of formal and social support received—experiences of secondary victims of homicide in England and Australia

Dr Ann O’Neill, Director, angelhands Inc

This presentation will present the findings of Dr O’Neill’s PhD study. This qualitative retrospective descriptive study explored English and Australian secondary victims of homicide narratives of their experiences in order to identify and delineate their post homicide support needs. This thesis is a study of the experiences of support proffered to secondary victims of homicide in England and Australia, and their perceptions of the nature of that support. The support included, but was not limited to, support needs emanating from within the criminal justice system.

The results document the demographic profile of the secondary victims of homicide, the circumstances surrounding their experiences of homicide and the sources of support they identified, the number of times each was mentioned and the nature of the support experience described; that is, how effective the support experienced was, based on if it was described as helpful or unhelpful.

Finally, a model is proposed to identify and delineate three dynamic dimensions of post homicide support, the buffering factors (needs), structural supports available (resources) and the type and nature of support provided (functions). Suggestions put forward by the participants are presented and several recommendations are proposed on how to better support secondary victims of homicide.

Concurrent session 3a—Meeting the needs of vulnerable populations

‘Victims won’t even report the crime let alone use support services’—the complexities of building pathways to victim support services for marginalised people

Angela Murphy, Program Coordinator, Rural Social Welfare, School of Behavioural and Social Sciences and Humanities, University of Ballarat

Alison Ollerenshaw, Senior Research Officer, School of Behavioural and Social Sciences and Humanities, University of Ballarat

Marginalised people are much more likely to be victims of crime than perpetrators, yet have poorer access to victim support services. Our research investigated issues for victims of crime in accessing victim support services in regional Victoria. The research identified barriers, as well as potential enablers, to the use of support services by five marginalised groups—Indigenous people, those experiencing homelessness, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, the elderly and those with mental health issues. Interviews were conducted with 58 workers from victim support services, the police, sexual assault services, Indigenous agencies, mental health services and the homelessness sector.

Thematic analysis of interview data revealed a range of ‘tangible’ barriers to service access including the normalisation of crime, poor networking and protocols between agencies, victim distrust of the police and judicial system, shame and fear of retribution, underdeveloped cultural competency among workers and low levels of awareness and understanding of victim support services. Potential enabling factors included building trust with victims and their communities, developing professional expertise
in victim support and cultural competence and refining interagency and inter-sectoral referral pathways.

While these ‘tangible’ factors explain why service access remains problematic for marginalised groups, it is the social, political and economic marginalisation of these groups that prevents effective systemic responses to meeting needs. Stereotyping, the lack of societal valuing of victims’ rights for these groups, poor systemic advocacy and a limited power base for driving change are the greatest structural obstacles to effective support services for marginalised victims of crime.

**Mental health issues and the media—the application of key learnings to victims of crime**

Victoria Clack, Senior Project Officer, Hunter Institute of Mental Health

The media has an important role in influencing social attitudes towards, and perceptions of, mental health and mental illness. Through the use of accurate and sensitive reporting, the media can make a significant contribution towards the improvement of community attitudes to mental health and mental illness and the promotion of help seeking behaviour.

The Mindframe National Media Initiative has been funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing since 2000. The Mindframe Initiative is a comprehensive strategy that aims to influence media representation of mental illness and suicide by encouraging responsible, accurate and sensitive portrayals of these issues.

This presentation will provide an overview of the research evidence regarding the impact of media reporting of mental health issues upon the community, and in particular, vulnerable groups. Key findings from the Mindframe Initiative will be applied to a specific vulnerable group—victims of crime.

‘I learnt to accept the unacceptable’—the needs and experiences of adult female survivors of intra-familial child sexual assault negotiating the criminal justice process

Myvanwy Hudson, PhD Candidate, Social Science and Policy, University of New South Wales

Victims/survivors of historical childhood sexual assault face a number of barriers in accessing legal recourse. This paper examines one such group, focusing on adult female survivors of intra-familial child sexual assault and their experiences and perceptions of the criminal justice processes in Victoria, South Australia, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory. Drawing on qualitative research interviews with a diverse range of female survivors of intra-familial child sexual abuse (including Indigenous, those from non English-speaking backgrounds and rurally marginalised women) and in-depth interviews with relevant advocacy, legal and policy stakeholders, this paper begins by examining women’s positions and victimisation within the childhood family home, and their later negotiation of the criminal justice system as adults. Intrinsic to this will be an exploration of the substantiative barriers women face when engaging with the criminal justice system and the unique aspects of this crime which exacerbate these barriers. This will be followed by an examination of women’s needs, as reported by survivors throughout the criminal justice process, from disclosure through to post trial. In conclusion, the potential of alternative approaches such as restorative justice and specialist sexual assault courts will be critically discussed. In particular, close attention will be given to pre-existing jurisdictional initiatives such as the ACT Wraparound Program, the South Australian Mulligan Inquiry into Child Abuse and NSW Sexual Assault Communications Privilege (SACP) Project.

**Concurrent session 3b—Victim involvement in the criminal justice system**

**Providing victims of violent and serious crime a central position in the justice process: Post-sentence victim–offender conferencing in New South Wales**

Kate Milner, Manager Restorative Justice Unit, Department of Corrective Services

The purpose of restorative justice is to address the individual needs of crime victims which remain unmet by the traditional criminal justice system. The Corrective Services New South Wales Restorative Justice Unit operates the Victims Register and practices restorative justice, specialising in victim–offender conferencing.

Participation in victim–offender conferencing enables victims of crime to have a voice, to ask questions of the offender that are individually meaningful, to express how they have been personally affected, to hold the offender personally accountable and to put forward ideas regarding how the harm of the offence can be repaired. While anecdotal evidence fed back to facilitators over the years suggests that participation in victim–offender conferences can empower victims of crime, systematic research on this topic is scarce.

This presentation will provide insight into this topic from the perspective of a practitioner, the sister of a murder victim and a researcher. It will include an overview of the victim–offender conferencing initiative, the personal experience of one participant and the promise of an Australian Research Council partnership project to undertake research on the potential benefits of victim–offender conferencing for victims of serious crime.
Meeting the needs of victims of crime

The voice of the crime victim in the sentencing hearing—an improperly enacted and damaging ritual?

Tracey Booth, Senior Lecturer in Law, University of Technology, Sydney

That victim participation in the sentencing process by way of verbal victim impact statements (VIS) is a contentious aspect of contemporary criminal justice has been well-documented. In particular, many legal practitioners have expressed concerns that the presentation of verbal VISs will be unnecessarily dramatic staged events and threatening to the integrity of the hearing. In 2006, a pilot scheme in the United Kingdom provided family victims with the opportunity to read their VIS aloud to the sentencing court in relation to offenders convicted of murder and manslaughter. When the scheme was rolled out nationally in 2007, however, family victims had lost this opportunity; if the VIS was presented verbally, then it would be read by legal counsel ‘who could be trusted not to behave too expressively or go off script’. Rock argues that a major contributing factor to this decision was the belief that the verbal presentation of VISs by family victims were ‘improperly enacted and damaging rituals’ and inappropriate in the adversarial sentencing court.

Building on Rock’s recent research in Britain, this paper will present findings from an ethnographic study of 18 sentencing hearings of homicide offenders in the NSW Supreme Court in which 30 VISs were read aloud to the court by family victims. In particular, it will consider whether VISs are ‘improperly enacted and damaging rituals’ in this context.

A right to know: To what extent are sentences affected by Victim Impact Statements?

Sarah Krasnostein, PhD candidate, University of Melbourne

In Victoria, sentencing judges are required to take into account the impact of the crime on the victim when determining an appropriate sentence. This is facilitated by the victim’s right to prepare a Victim Impact Statement (VIS) explaining to the court their personal circumstances and loss resulting from the offence. A question remains, however, about how the VIS actually affects the sentence. Judges have a general duty to give reasons for imposing a particular sentence. There are significant policy reasons underlying this general duty; for example, it facilitates appellate review for error. Importantly for victims, the duty to provide reasons also acknowledges that the public has a right to know the basis of fact and law for the sentence passed. In 2009, the Court of Appeal emphasised that it is desirable for the reasons for sentence to refer to the content and weight of the VIS. However, there is no obligation for judges to refer to all factors considered in arriving at a sentence. Preliminary research indicates that, in practice, reasons are fairly boilerplate, containing a generalised assurance that all relevant factors were considered. There need not be a transparent listing of factors considered, the weight they were given, or the purposes for which sentence was imposed. Without a requirement to provide full and proper reasons for sentence, the attention and weight given to the VIS is unclear. This indicates that currently the right of victims and the public to know the basis of a sentence is not guaranteed.

Concurrent session 3c—Identifying and responding to victims of human trafficking

Opening the doors to justice—supporting trafficked survivors of sex slavery through the legal system

Belinda Lo, Policy Solicitor, Fitzroy Legal Service

Victims of trafficking for sex slavery are among our most vulnerable and ‘invisible’ survivors of heinous forms of exploitation and violence. The concept of slavery in modern times is very different to the acts of government sanctioned human bondage that caused the drafting of our first international conventions. Instead, in the twenty-first century, we now have human beings who are subjected to complicated enslavement via coercion, deception, threats and duress. Survivors of trafficking may initially be engaged with the criminal justice system due to visa issues, drug dependence or other activities. However, the constant threat of their families being harmed in their country of origin acts as a very effective disincentive to pursue legal action against the traffickers. What sorts of remedies/reparation are available for survivors of trafficking for sexual servitude; how accessible are they and are they useful?

Project Respect constantly comes into contact and works with women who have been trafficked into the sex industry—both in Victoria and in conjunction with other agencies, throughout Australia. The organisation established and continues to run the first shelter for women who have been trafficked and has a unique understanding of the needs of these women.

Project Respect and Fitzroy Legal Service ran the first Victims of Crime case in Victoria for a trafficked survivor of sex slavery. While some outcomes were very good, there is still much to be improved in victims of crime system for trafficked victims. We will discuss our learnings from our case in relation to the Victims of Crime processes, Victoria’s model for VoCAT and also provide suggestions for reform.
The challenge of meeting the needs of trafficking victims: Pathways to compensation
Frances Simmons, Lawyer, Migration Agent & Research Associate, University of Technology, Sydney

The author discusses the challenges in meeting the needs of victims of human trafficking and the obstacles trafficking victims face in obtaining compensation for harm they have suffered in Australia. Human trafficking takes many different forms and victims suffer many different injuries. The federal crimes of slavery, sexual servitude and trafficking in persons can result in economic exploitation, sexual assault, physical and psychological injuries, and false imprisonment.

The UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children promises States will provide trafficking victims with the ‘possibility’ of obtaining compensation (art 6(6)). But so far for trafficked people in Australia, meaningful opportunities to seek compensation have proved elusive. To date, over 170 suspected victims of trafficking have received support from the Commonwealth Government Support Program for Victims of Trafficking. However, the number of trafficking victims who have obtained compensation in Australia can be counted on one hand.

The author outlines the obstacles facing trafficking victims when they attempt to seek counselling and compensation under statutory victims of crime compensation schemes. The author aims to bring to light the legal challenges in finding appropriate forms of compensation for trafficked people, as well as the difficulties in obtaining effective cross-cultural service provision for trafficking victims. The author concludes by summarising the unique challenges that trafficking victims face in obtaining counselling and compensation and outlining the implications for future law and policy reform.

Generalising legal needs of victims: Evidence from the Netherlands and Nepal
Malini Laxminarayan, PhD researcher, International Institute of Victimology

The legal needs of victims have been studied in the victimological literature. Findings have indicated that victims desire participation, respect, restoration, compensation and retribution. The extent of these needs vary based on characteristics of the victim, including their national culture. This presentation outlines these five legal needs in particular, based on a theoretical framework of why victims have these desires. The goal of the presentation is to identify what role culture plays in these legal needs. The necessity to differentiate among victims, rather than treating them as one single group with universal legal needs, is recognised.

Data is presented from two diverse samples, victims of serious crime in the Netherlands and refugee victims of serious crimes in Nepal. The diversity is reflected in both their culture and legal systems. Therefore, the comparison is a good illustration of whether or not legal needs generalisations should hastily be made. First, main findings of qualitative interviews of refugee victims are presented. These findings are compared with the existing literature on victim needs. Second, both Dutch and refugee victims are surveyed on their experiences with the criminal justice system. These experiences include the treatment they received, their participation and characteristics of the procedure and the outcome. Analyses are then conducted to investigate whether and to what extent the five legal needs outlined above are significant predictors of fairness perceptions. These analyses are performed on both samples, so that differences can be identified. The presentation will highlight the differences and similarities between the two groups.

Concurrent session 3d—Meeting the needs of domestic violence victims

Enhancing accountability—practice tools for domestic violence interventions
Elaine Lloyd, Manager, Northern Violence Intervention Program
Pam Keye, Domestic Violence Case Manager, Central Domestic Violence Service

Two tools, developed by three Domestic Violence Services in South Australia, aim to enhance women’s voices within the criminal justice system, reduce risk of ongoing violence and abuse and build an evidence based history of experiences of violence and abuse for both women and children.

Documenting a Domestic Violence Incident is a one page, user-friendly tool that succinctly details incidents, including the victim’s perception of her risk and fear level. The tool aims to make the process of securing an intervention order easier for both the victim and police. The tool builds a picture of women and children’s experiences of violence and abuse over time.

The Risk and Safety Report aims to provide the court with up to date information, including proposals from victims on court sanctions such as bail or bond conditions that would enhance their safety. The Reports are also currently being trailed as tools to advocate for resources and services for women across a wide range of health, community and welfare agencies.
Both tools were developed in consultation with police prosecutions and aim to facilitate intervention responses that are informed by risk levels and evidence in order to promote accountability and enhance audit trails.

Outcomes:
- enhanced applications for domestic violence intervention orders and informed conditions;
- a documented audit trial of police intervention;
- documentation that builds a concise history of domestic violence; and
- Risk and Safety Reports lead to the consideration of sanctions or actions informed by women’s voices and experiences across systems.

Integrated responses to domestic and family violence—what, how, when and why

Gaby Marcus, Director, Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse, Deputy Director, Centre for Gender Related Violence Studies, University of New South Wales

Over the last two decades, interest and growth in integrated and interagency responses by governments has emerged as an international phenomenon. The appeal of ‘joined-up solutions to joined-up problems’ has fast consolidated this key trend in social policy and programming.

As a consequence, integration of service delivery in the human services area is now recognised as occurring on a wide continuum. This includes the arena of violence against women and child protection, both seemingly intractable problems with implications for a wide range of government and non-government agencies.

This paper will critique some of conventional ideas about integrated domestic violence systems, policies and services and scope the implementation of integration in Australia as well as reviewing some of the evidence on the outcomes of integrated systems.

This examination will include consideration of how integration can and should work for victims of domestic violence and suggest a policy framework to enhance collaboration between governments, government departments and the non-government sector.

Fostering abused women’s safety through financial independence: The empowering role that services and agencies can play

Rochelle Braaf, Senior Research Officer, Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse

What are the connections between financial issues and safety for victims of domestic violence? What space is there for specialist and generalist services alike to respond to economic issues for clients? This paper will explore the inter-relationship between financial security and domestic violence, and discuss the role that services, agencies and other organisations can play in responding to victims’ financial needs, in ways that promote their recovery and wellbeing.

The paper will draw on findings of a qualitative study examining the impact of domestic violence on women’s finances, pre- and post-separation, and the positive and negative effects of different responses for clients’ financial and other needs. Undertaken by the Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse study in 2009–10, the study drew on interviews and focus groups with 57 women affected by domestic violence and 50 workers across three Australian states.

The study highlights the need for government and service responses to domestic violence to recognise the centrality of financial security to women’s quality of life, post-violence. Based on the research, the paper will outline some key principles to fostering economic empowerment for victims of violence. It will discuss the effectiveness of a range of specific strategies identified in the study, including the relative value of individual advocacy, direct financial assistance and financial counselling and education.

Concurrent session 4a—Meeting the needs of vulnerable populations

Justice system—enter if you’re able: Using the Social Model of Disability to give a voice to sexual assault victims with cognitive impairment

Dr Marg Camilleri, University of Ballarat

This paper submits that there is a point at which people with cognitive impairment and the justice system collide—the impasse between cultural perceptions of reduced credibility and the legal requirement of proving the case beyond reasonable doubt. This impasse represents a significant hurdle for adults with cognitive impairment where decisions about their reports to police are assessed against a normalcy benchmark which is informed by disabling generalised assumptions that portray adults with cognitive impairment as ‘not able’, rather than as individuals with varied abilities. The result is that opportunities for people with cognitive impairment to access justice are extinguished prematurely.

Options of how the justice system can become more accessible to victims of crime from diverse abilities are examined through the lens of the Social Model of Disability. This paper is informed by the findings of a Doctoral study funded by the Australian Research Council, which considered
the pathway of sexual assault reports made by this cohort through the justice system and the informants on police decision-making when considering such cases.

**Victimisation and fear of crime among a sample of police detainees: Findings from the Drug Use Monitoring Australia (DUMA) program**

Josh Sweeney, Research Officer, Australian Institute of Criminology

National victimisation surveys such as the Australian component of the International Crime Victimisation Survey and the Australian Survey of Social Attitudes play an important role in criminological research, providing an essential complement to the administrative records of the police, courts and departments of corrections. Yet, like most national surveys of their kind, their reliance on landline telephone interviewing or household sampling frames often mean that some groups (e.g., prisoners, police detainees and persons living in medical facilities) are excluded, despite their being among those most likely to experience victimisation.

In an effort to broaden our understanding of victimisation, the Australian Institute of Criminology, through its Drug Use Monitoring in Australia program, designed a number of questions for inclusion as an addendum to its quarterly self-reported drug use and criminal offending survey. This presentation summarises the key findings of that research, with a focus on the prevalence of victimisation, the fear of victimisation and the actions taken by victims in response to their experiences.

**The reality of supporting rural victims**

Heather Mather, Youth and Justice Services Manager, Centacare—Catholic Diocese of Ballarat Inc

Centacare—Catholic Diocese of Ballarat Inc (Centacare) delivers the Victims Assistance and Counselling Program (VACP) across an area of 74,600 kilometres to regional and rural communities in Victoria. The Centacare service model responds to the many practical, physiological, psychological, social and emotional considerations of delivering victim services to rural victims of crime.

Our service model has been further developed through research conducted by University of Ballarat in partnership with Centacare and the Department of Justice into the barriers and enablers to support services for victims of crime from marginalised groups in regional and rural Victoria. Centacare’s presentation will highlight some of the most important aspects of our service delivery model under which we operate, which includes:

- empowering the victim through self determination;
- a flexible approach to the use of brokerage funds;
- responding effectively to the needs of victims and enabling their voices to be heard; and
- stakeholder relationships creating a collaborative, seamless service response.

While acknowledging each victim has their own unique story and needs, the audience will have an opportunity to hear the stories of two victims past and current journeys, highlighting the implications of being a victim of crime in rural/regional Victoria.

Included in the presentation is a focus on the additional complexity provided in delivering victim services within a rural context, especially to people from marginalised backgrounds who often present to victim support services with multiple and complex needs. The issue of rurality add a further layer of complexity for these victims of crime.

**Concurrent session 4b — Victim participation in the criminal justice system**

**The Victim–offender Mediation Unit—meeting the needs of young victims of crime**

Tanya Monaghan, Mediation officer, Department of Corrective Services

The Victim–offender Mediation Unit (VMU) is a specialised unit with the Department of Corrective Services in Western Australia. As it is well established that victims of crime want to be listened to, and to feel they have had choices and input, the VMU offers free and impartial mediation services to those victims whose corresponding offender is currently being supervised by the department. The VMU provides three types of mediation—reparative mediation, protective conditions process and victim–offender dialogue.

To speak of young people and the justice system, the tendency is for listeners to assume the speaker is referring to juvenile offenders. Perhaps this reflects society’s perception that young people are often the troublemakers in a community, or due to justice departments’ focus on juvenile offenders and their rehabilitation. However, the reality is that young people are a population vulnerable to victimisation and this is apparent when considering the VMU deals with child victims across all three mediation services and in cases involving both adult and juvenile offenders. Being a victim of crime can be an extremely distressing experience for any individual and especially for very young children and teenagers who may feel their emotional and practical needs are not being considered when adults take over.

This paper will outline the benefits for young victims in participating in VMU services and address the issues we face in providing a meaningful service to young victims of crime.
Meeting the needs of victims of crime. Also to be considered are several strategies in which the VMU may be able to improve the future quality of service provision to young victims.

**Victim harm, social harm and the adversarial criminal trial: Challenging lawyers’ perceptions on the role of victim experience in criminal law**

Tyrone Kirchengast, Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Law, University of New South Wales

In criminal law, victim input into the harms occasioned by criminal offending are often discounted as personal and subjective, irrational and largely founded out of vengeance toward the accused. Appeasing victim interests has thus been discredited by criminal lawyers as fuelling a law and order politics, resulting in the growth of new offences, greater police power and harsher penalties for those convicted. While debate abounds as to the significance of victims in the criminal justice system, some criminal lawyers continue to reject the views of victims on their subjective basis and out of their association with law and order politics. Victim perspectives on criminal offending are identified as little more than untested conjecture, associated with a political imperative to enact harsher laws and punishments. This paper argues that, in certain instances, victim perspectives on the general harms caused by criminal offending ought to be taken seriously by criminal courts as a way of including the victim as an important stakeholder in criminal justice. By moving beyond debates that merely characterise victims as driving a political imperative toward greater law and order, individual victims may be seen as an important adjunct to criminal proceedings that allows for the experiences of the victim as an important indicator of the social harms caused by offending. Conversely, the consequences of failing to include the victim may inadvertently lead to increased political pressure, fuelling demand for more law and order. Ways of appropriately including the victim’s perspective on the social harms of offending will be discussed.

**Victim, survivor, thriver—The journey**

Ken Marslew, Chief Executive Officer, Enough is Enough Anti Violence Movement Inc

This presentation covers Ken’s journey from the tragic loss of a teenage son, who was murdered, to the establishment of a grassroots support organisation. A personal story, focused on encouraging those that have been affected by traumatic incidents to re-evaluate their lives and move forward in a positive way. Covering issues such as anger, hate, justice, expectations and responsibilities.

**Concurrent session 4c—The role of police in supporting victims**

**Victims Assist Queensland & Queensland Police Service—a collaborative approach to supporting victims of crime in Queensland**

Nicola Doumany, Director, Victim Assist Queensland
Craig Weatherby, Acting Detective Inspector, Queensland Police Service

On 1 December 2009, the Queensland Government established Victim Assist Queensland (VAQ) as a central hub for victims of crime in Queensland to access financial assistance, complaints resolution and specialist support services. Collaboration with the Queensland Police Service (QPS) has been integral to the successful implementation of VAQ.

The working partnership established between QPS and VAQ allows information to flow seamlessly across the organisations, mitigating possible delays in assessing applications for financial assistance and meeting one of the basic needs of victims of crime—the timely provision of goods and services to aid their recovery. QPS and VAQ propose a joint presentation on improving services to victims of crime through strategic collaboration.

The presentation will provide an overview of the strategic partnership that the QPS and VAQ have developed including:

- establishing a Police Liaison Officer to be imbedded within Victim Assist, supporting timely access to information and minimising administrative burden on investigating officers;
- advice and consultation in the implementation of VAQ;
- promotion and successful resolution of complaints relating to the Fundamental Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime;
- the bi-annual Crime Victims survey commissioned by QPS and the inclusion of VAQ;
- the benefits of the collaborative partnership to victims of crime in Queensland including responsiveness, reduced reliance on victim to ‘re-tell their story’ and referral pathways; and
- the challenges in developing and maintaining the partnership and considerations for the future of this model and other collaborative service delivery models.
New eReferral—Police to victims support agencies

Tony Campbell, Chief Executive Officer, Supportlink
Inspector Bernard Jackson, Melbourne Police Service Area, Victoria Police
Amanda Smillie, Manager, Victims Services, Victims Support Agency
Sergeant Mark Pollard, Melbourne East Police, Victoria Police

One the most significant issues within the victim support sector is the lack of referral activity from police services to Victim Support Agencies. The lack of a common referral process that encourages police to participate in referral making has underpinned this issue. SupportLink is now working with the Victorian, Queensland and Australian Federal Police to provide an eReferral gateway so that victims can be more easily referred for support.

The SupportLink model establishes a more collaborative and proactive engagement of victims. The proactive nature of the model simply means fewer victims have to self-initiate and navigate their way to gaining specialist support.

Existing trials in Victoria have seen a 300 percent increase of referrals from Police to the Victims Services. Recently, a senior constable at the Victorian Victims Agencies conference noted that he wished that the new referral system had been in place years ago.

More Police and Ambulance Services within Australia are seeking to start trials with SupportLink. The implications for the victim support sector may be significant with an increase in referral activity. Queensland Police are now preparing for a full state roll out, which follows the Australian Capital Territory who have had the model established for a number of years.

Concurrent session 5a—Recent findings on victims of crime

Preliminary finding of a qualitative study on the needs of victims of crime in Australia

Rita Shackel, Senior Lecturer, School of Law, University of Sydney

Victims of crime are a diverse and heterogeneous group. The needs of victims have been identified as multifaceted and contingent on a wide range of factors including the nature of the offence and individual characteristics of the victim. This paper presents some preliminary findings of a qualitative study conducted across a number of Australian jurisdictions on victims’ experiences of the criminal justice system and the costs of accessing justice for victims of crime in Australia.
workplace colleagues and shareholders, communities and various commercial and business interests. These victims may need access to a range of services, including personal support, to address physical and mental health needs, financial support in order to recover monetary losses and administrative support, which may involve re-establishing credit ratings and recovering one’s reputation. Research shows that victims who do not seek support are at increased risk of being re-victimised in the ensuing 12 months. This paper explores what is needed, what is already available and what can be improved to support victims of scams. It draws on recent research findings to highlight victims’ needs, explores legal and community measures that are currently available and considers best practice initiatives in providing support to victims of scams in Australia. Through the creation of a support network, victims can not only recover from their losses but also learn how to avoid repeat victimisation in the future.

Concurrent session
5b—Victims’ needs

What victims want: Not to be victims. What victims need: Information and intensive management

Craig Matters, Community Engagement Inspector—Western Region, Victoria Police

Because they deal with people and events post-crime, police often forget that if the public are asked what they want, the first answer is to be safe and to not be victimised. If we truly want to help victims then police must concentrate efforts equally between preventative and reactive policing. This means having a model that doesn’t just look at apprehending offenders; but also addresses underlying drivers and enablers of crime, to prevent as many future victims as possible.

Once there are victims, they need help in two ways.

- Research has shown that victim satisfaction is strongly linked to process rather than outcome. They accept that police can’t solve all crime, but want to be believed, treated with respect and kept informed. However, police experience difficulty telling victims that crimes have not been able to be solved and they need to learn how to do this. When police have done all they can, they need to be able to often deliver a ‘negative’ outcome to victims. Police need to tell victims why their case hasn’t been able to be solved and what can be done from that point.
- For repeat victims, police need to case manage individuals, allocating them to specific units and members for assistance. The more times they become a victim, the greater the intervention/assistance need.

Only if police are able to do all these three things, will be giving victims the service they deserve.

Serving victims

Mandy Young, Director Victims Service, NSW Department of Attorney General and Justice

Victims Services, NSW Department of Justice and Attorney General is a public service organisation providing information, support, referral, counselling and compensation services to victims of crime, as well as overseeing the implementation of the Charter of Victims Rights in New South Wales. This presentation will look at how Victims Services stopped and took at look at its policy and service provision from a victim’s perspective. This resulted in a transformation of service delivery to better meet victims’ needs, rather than bureaucratic ones.

For example, we developed easy to use online services and a new phone system—reducing from five different numbers to one and allocating calls more appropriately, linking referral, support and counselling services to compensation. We moved to a case management framework for compensation, including undertaking our own evidence collection. We also streamlined counselling application processes, increased accountability of service providers to the Charter of Victims Rights and changed the legislation to support our improved service delivery.

This presentation will discuss the difficulties in this transformation, such as changing staff culture, up-skilling staff to be more responsive to victims’ needs and engaging with stakeholders, as well as some of the results, including an increase in people accessing services, a decrease in administrative processes to make our jobs easier and most importantly, better serving of victims.

The presentation will also highlight how it is critical to ensure that victims’ complex range of needs (from emotional, practical, therapeutic to financial) are being met and that ‘it would be too hard to change’ or ‘that’s how it’s always been done’ are not good enough reasons not to change public service ways to better meet client needs.

Compensating domestic violence victims: How do the states and territories compare?

Isobelle Barrett Meyering, Research assistant, Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse

The importance of making compensation accessible to domestic violence victims is well established in policy circles. Internationally, its significance as a legal remedy is reflected in the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, which obliges states to provide appropriate protective and support services to victims of gender-based violence. But to what extent are Australian states and territories currently meeting this obligation?
This paper will present the findings of a comparative study of women’s entitlements to compensation across all eight Australian states and territories. The study identified a range of special provisions that have been introduced to make compensation more accessible to women, primarily in New South Wales, the Northern Territory, Queensland and Victoria. This paper will report on these positive changes, as well as the Australian Law Reform Commission’s recent recommendations for further reform.

The paper will also discuss broader developments and potential directions in victim compensation legislation and their implications for women affected by domestic violence, including:

- controversial changes to the NSW scheme that widen the definition of ‘related acts’, remove a victim’s ability to lodge claims for violence pre-dating the lodgement date of a successful claim and reduce legal fees payable to solicitors;
- the emerging trend towards debt recovery from offenders; and
- the incorporation of compensation into restorative justice processes.

Victim compensation is often the only form of financial redress available to women affected by domestic violence. This paper will offer a timely assessment of how their needs are best met.

Concurrent session 5c—Victims’ voices

Speaking out for change —giving victims a voice

Dr Cathy Kezelman, Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director, Adults Surviving Child Abuse

This presentation aims to highlight individually and collectively the value of speaking out about childhood trauma. In Australia there are more than two million Australian adult survivors of child abuse. Many child abuse survivors struggle day to day simply to survive. Child abuse is fundamentally a silent crime, perpetrated behind closed doors, perpetuated by secrecy. Children often blame themselves and this inappropriate shame often continues into adulthood. Societal stigma and taboo conspire to silence victims, with fear and judgment eroding the empathy and understanding all victims need to be able to find health, wellbeing and re-engage in their communities.

This year, I published a memoir called Innocence Revisited—a tale in parts. It chronicles my journey of recovery from childhood trauma and beyond. In writing it, I found my voice. In turn, others have started coming forward to seek help and support. Victims globally are also starting to speak out. Yet there is still a lot of community resistance to hearing these stories. It is important that when survivors disclose their past that they are validated and empathically heard. As more stories are told, not only will individuals make steps towards recovery but we as a society will move towards real acceptance and understanding of the issues.

For too long victims in our community have been ignored, ostracised and silenced. As a society, it is high time we give victims a voice, acknowledge the reality of abuse and its impacts, shatter the secrecy, erode the shame and support those whose childhoods betrayed them.

Hearing the voices of survivors of child sexual abuse by church leaders —why we don’t and how we can

Dr Jodi Death, Lecturer, School of Justice, Queensland University of Technology

It is increasingly recognised that Christian churches and their institutions have historically been sites where the voices of survivors of child sexual abuse (CSA) by church leadership have not been effectively heard. This paper draws on data from a research project which sought the voices of church leaders who were identified as being proactive in addressing CSA within their individual denominations. From this research, several key inhibitors to hearing survivor’s voices within churches of Australia were identified. These key inhibitors include the culture of churches themselves, gendered ideologies, constructions of leadership and the deployment of forgiveness. The identification of such factors creates space to learn more effective strategies for hearing the voices of survivors both within churches and their organisations, as well as externally.

This paper, however, goes beyond considering these factors to report on a collaborative project initiated between Survivors Australia and Dr Death. This project specifically targets the voices of Australian survivors of CSA by church leaders. The primary objective of this project is hearing and valuing the voices of survivors of CSA by church leaders, but it is also believed that this will also provide movement for the creation of alternative ways of managing complaints of CSA by church leaders in Australia. Such complaints processes will be increasingly survivor focussed and include the creation of spaces where the voices of survivors are valued.

From pilot project to legislative reform—keeping sexual assault victims’ counselling records confidential

Janet Loughman, Principal Solicitor, Women’s Legal Services NSW

In November 2010, the NSW Government strengthened laws that protect the confidentiality of sexual assault victims’
Meeting the needs of victims of crime

counselling records in the criminal trial process and committed $4.4m for an independent service to assist victims in protecting the confidentiality of their records. When introducing these reforms into Parliament, the Attorney-General highlighted that they were informed by the Sexual Assault Communications Privilege Pilot Project, which was coordinated by Women’s Legal Services New South Wales (WLS).

The pilot brought together a strategic and unusual partnership comprising WLS, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, the NSW Bar Association and law firms Blake Dawson, Clayton Utz and Freehills. The pilot partners provided free legal assistance in the Downing Centre courts to victims asserting the sexual assault communications privilege, which aims to limit the use of counselling records made by, to, or about a victim of a sexual offence. Data collected by WLS during the pilot revealed the extent and nature of legal need, identified problems with the operation of the privilege and demonstrated how a victim’s advocate model of legal service delivery could work.

This paper provides an overview of the privilege and pilot, and examines factors that resulted in improved laws and policies. It will focus on the ways in which the new laws ensure victims can have a greater say in whether their confidential counselling records will be released and better maintain the integrity of counselling confidentiality so that victims are not forced to choose between confidential counselling and reporting a sexual assault.

Concurrent session 5d—
Panel session: Meeting the needs of male victims of domestic and family violence

Are men really victims of intimate partner violence?

Toni McLean, Counsellor, Think Twice! Program

Unlike most other victims of crime, male victims of intimate partner violence (IPV) are yet to be truly recognised by the judicial system or the larger community. There are a number of beliefs about male victims of IPV, such as that men are rarely genuine victims; if they are, they must have done something to deserve it; or they aren’t affected as much as women are by partner violence; and it is easier for them to leave their relationships. These are all myths.

This paper will
• present evidence which shows that victimisation of husbands by wives has been documented for hundreds of years;
• present current statistics on the prevalence and nature of partner violence against men;
• explain how studies have presented contradictory and confusing pictures of partner violence perpetration;
• explore how male victimisation has not been adequately researched, with implications for the judicial system, the media, and government and community campaigns;
• offer some reasons as to why this has been the case.

The acknowledgement of male victims has ramifications for government policy, the judicial system, and the provision of health and community services, as well as benefits for the community. We need a lot more information from and about male victims of partner violence in order to be able to meet their needs. Academics, clinicians and service providers need to be open to the possibility that a man who claims he is a victim of partner violence actually is.

Meeting the needs of male victims of family violence and their children

Greg Andresen, Researcher and Media Liaison, Men’s Health Australia

Contrary to common beliefs, around one in three victims of family violence and abuse is male. While many services and community education programmes have quite rightly been established over the past four decades to support female victims of family violence, the needs of male victims remain largely unmet. Male victims of family violence and their children are one of the most underserved populations of victims of crime in Australia, with appropriate and tailored services being almost non-existent.

This paper will present a brief overview of what is required to meet the needs of Australian male victims of family violence and their children. It will
• Present the often unheard voices of male victims of family violence and their children
• Describe the specific experiences of male victims of family violence and their children (barriers to disclosing and finding support; different forms of abuse; impacts upon victims and their children)
• Review the scant support currently available in Australia for male victims of family violence and their children
• Outline the support required in order for the needs of male victims of family violence and their children to be met
• Discuss recent overseas and Australian support initiatives for male victims of family violence and their children that could be adopted more broadly.
**Working with men affected by violence**

Greg Millan, Director, Men’s Health Services

In Australia, up to one in three victims of intimate partner violence are male. While many services have quite rightly been established over the past three decades to support female victims of family violence, the needs of male victims remain largely unmet.

The issue of men affected by violence in intimate relationships has been reported for many years. Workers in the domestic violence, community and family relationship sectors are acknowledging this problem and seeking out training for their workers. There is only one training program for professionals and this workshop will present an overview of this program and its evaluation.

‘Working with men affected by violence’ is a specifically designed training program for health, welfare and community workers that provides information and strategies for working with men who are affected by violence in their relationships.