

**The Office of the First Minister
and Deputy First Minister**

Machinery of Government Division

Block E, Castle Buildings, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SG

Tel: (028 90 5) 22713 e-mail: geoff.beattie@ofmdfmi.gov.uk Fax: (028 90 5) 22337

**Debbie Pritchard
Principal Clerk
The Committee of the Centre
Parliament Buildings
Stormont
Belfast
BT4 3 XX**

4 February 2002

Dear Debbie

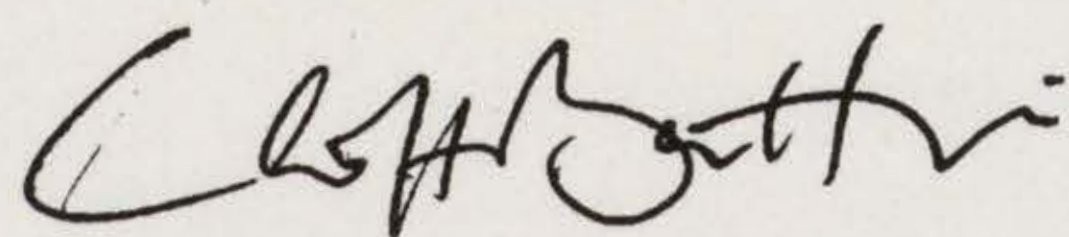
VICTIMS STRATEGY

I attach a paper on the Victim's Strategy for the Committee's information prior to Mr Haughey's appearance before the Committee on Wednesday.

The paper is designed to aid discussion of the Strategy by the Committee and Mr Haughey. Following Mr Haughey's meeting with the Committee, the paper will be finalised to record the Committee's views and this will form the basis of advice to Ministers.

Chris Stewart will support the Minister on Wednesday, together with Fergus Devitt and Caroline Evans.

Glad to discuss,



Geoff Beattie
Assembly Section

DRAFT VICTIMS' STRATEGY

Copy List

PS/Mr Haughey
PS/Mr Nesbitt
Mr Haire
Mrs Devlin
Mr Stewart
Mrs Bunting
Mr Devitt
Mr Uprichard

KEY THEMES

1. Definition of a "victim" as set out in the consultation paper received
and will be adopted for the strategy. The definition is as follows:

"The surviving physically and psychologically injured of violent, conflict related incidents and those close relatives or partners who care for them, along with those close relatives or partners who mourn their dead".

2. Introduction

It is recognised that:

- (a) the strategy must be relevant to individuals, as well as those in groups;
- (b) there is a need for the devolved administration to continue to work closely with the Northern Ireland Office, examining in particular how the potential transfer of certain functions after the next Assembly elections can be managed;
- (c) work will continue to determine the most appropriate methods of enabling victims to interact with policy makers;

DRAFT VICTIMS' STRATEGY

KEY THEMES

Definition

1. The definition of a "victim" as set out in the consultation paper received broad support and will be adopted for the strategy. The definition is as follows:

"The surviving physically and psychologically injured of violent, conflict related incidents and those close relatives or partners who care for them, along with those close relatives or partners who mourn their dead".

2. Introduction

It is recognised that:

- (a) the strategy must be relevant to individuals, as well as those in groups;
- (b) there is a need for the devolved administration to continue to work closely with the Northern Ireland Office, examining in particular how the potential transfer of certain functions after the next Assembly elections can be managed;
- (c) work will continue to determine the most appropriate methods of enabling victims to interact with policy makers;

(d) partnerships will be vital in delivering the strategy;

(e) Trauma Advisory Panels will have a key role to play;

(f) the strategy will run until 2004 as some funding streams end around then and some current Northern Ireland Office functions may transfer to the devolved administration on a similar timescale.

3. General Layout

- The Plan will contain a number of elements with Actions spread across Departments and Agencies to deliver practical help and services.
- The Action Plan has been drawn up in direct response to comments made in the consultation paper such as the need for information about funding, the role of the Churches and Faith Communities and how the achievements of victims can best be recognised.
- A list of key contact points in Departments and Agencies will be published to coincide with the strategy. This is in direct response to the request for more accessible information.
- The vision, value and aims set out in the consultation paper will remain for the strategy.

4. Additional Examples of Practical Benefit

5. Other relevant issues

- A Freephone helpline to the Victims Unit. A text phone will also be available.
- Staff training for those dealing with victims.
- The needs of victims being recognised in the development of a mental health strategy and in the review of counselling.
- Actions in the education and housing fields.
- Funding of a support worker for each Trauma Advisory Panel.
- Widespread publicity including leaflets in the three main daily newspapers and leaflets and posters in public areas such as GPs surgeries, Citizens Advice Bureaux etc, and articles in all Departmental magazines.
- Delivery of seminars and information events on a range of issues, including funding.
- Portraying positive achievements of victims.
- Development of parenting skills.
- Practical assistance to those interested in setting up and running a business.

5. Other relevant issues

- Role of the Interdepartmental Working Group and how it interacts with victims.

Type of funding	Period	Total Amount Available	Available to	Contact Points	Purpose of Funding
EU programmes for Peace II	2000-2006	£6.67m	Groups/organisations developing significant projects which must satisfy	Northern Ireland Voluntary Trust	To encourage peace and reconciliation. Targeted mainly at retraining and re-employment.
Cost Action			Groups working with victims and survivors.	Provided by the NIO, but no decision yet taken as to who will administer.	To allow work of groups to continue and develop.
Strategic Implementation Fund.			Departments and agencies.	OFMD/M	Departments and Agencies to take forward projects to assist victims.
Small grants scheme	2001-2004	£750,000	Groups/projects working with	Administered on behalf of the NIO by	Grants for relatively small amounts of funding to allow groups or projects to carry out specific pieces of work.

- Delivery of further capacity building.

- Collaboration with the Northern Ireland Office and the Northern Ireland Memorial Fund.

- Importance of determining standards and priority areas for research.

- No consensus on the need for a Victims' Commissioner.

- Recognition of the needs of those in rural communities.

7. Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring will be an essential part of the follow-up and will involve Committee of the Centre, Assembly and the production of a summary of activity and progress.

6. Funding

Type of funding	Period Covered	Total Amount Available	Available to	Contact Points	Purpose of Funding
EU programme for Peace and Reconciliation. (Peace II)	2000-2004 (although funds can be spent up until 2006)	£6.67m	Groups/ organisations developing significant projects which must satisfy strict criteria.	Northern Ireland Voluntary Trust.	To encourage peace and reconciliation. Targeted mainly at retraining and re-employment.
Core-funding.	2002-2004	£3m	Groups working with victims and survivors.	Provided by the NIO, but no decision yet taken as to who will administer.	To allow work of groups to continue and develop.
Strategy Implementation Fund.	2002-2004	£3m	Government Departments and agencies.	Victims Unit, OFMDFM	To allow Government Departments and Agencies to take forward projects to assist victims
Small grants scheme	2002-2004	£750,000	Groups/projects working with victims and survivors	Administered on behalf of the NIO by the Community Relations Council	Grants for relatively small amounts of funding to allow groups or projects to carry out specific pieces of work.

7. Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring will be an essential part of the follow-up and will involve Committee of the Centre, Assembly and the production of a summary of activity and progress.