

13 October 2017

**Crime Victims Support Association Submission to the Victorian Law Reform
Commission:**

Review of the Victims of Crime Assistance Act 1996

Victim support

Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal who can award victims with financial assistance with funeral cost, medical bills, counselling, loss of income sounds great, but when victims of homicide and the like visit, they are feeling very nervous and uncomfortable with a solicitor they have only met once or twice. This is where we need a victims advocate to be with to give them comfort from people who have been there before.

Eligibility

It should be as it is: homicide is homicide and family violence should not be “sugar coated”, they are what they are.

Assistance available and timeline of awards

Assistance available and timeline of awards is something that should be looked at. To the best of my knowledge, the amount of money for victims since 1994 or there about has not changed. It should at least keep up with the cost of living. The injuries where victims are unable to walk or look after themselves should be brought to date – at the moment it is pathetic. Victims with long term needs should also be well looked after, not you have had six counselling and that's it.

VOCAT process

VOCAT is a disgrace and the reports we have received from victims is a disgrace. Phone calls to VOCAT go unanswered, causing victims more stress. They need a victims advocate to keep control. We believe they should be left open, there are no other options to take other than fixing it ourselves.

Noel McNamara OAM

President

Crime Victims Support Association.