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Victim Services in Canada, 2002/03

by Rebecca Kong

Highlights¹

- In the year ending March 31, 2003, there were 606 victim service agencies and 9 criminal injuries compensation programs that were eligible to respond to Statistics Canada's Victim Services Survey. The majority of victim service agencies were police-based (41%), followed by community-based agencies (19%), sexual assault centres (17%), court-based agencies (10%), system-based agencies² (8%) and other types of agencies (includes hospital-based domestic violence and sexual assault treatment programs and agencies that fall into more than one category) (3%). The remaining 1% comprised criminal injuries compensation programs. Survey responses were received from 81% (484 services and 8 criminal injuries compensation/financial benefit programs).
- In 2002/03, almost 360,000 clients were assisted by the 412 victim service agencies that reported annual counts. About one in eight agencies (13%) was unable to provide annual counts of clients served (and 2% did not respond to the question).
- Based on a snapshot of almost 4,400 clients assisted on October 22, 2003, the vast majority were victims of a crime against the person (78%) and female (77%). While 3% of clients were victims of criminal harassment, 5% were secondary victims of homicide and other crimes resulting in the loss of life, 30% were victims of sexual assault, 41% were victims of other types of violent crime and the remaining 22% had experienced other types of incidents, including property and traffic offences.
- Almost half (47%) of clients served by an agency other than a police-, system- or court-based agency on October 22, 2003 had reported their incident to the police, 30% had not reported to the police and reporting was unknown for 22% of clients.
- The vast majority of agencies reported providing the following types of services: general information (offered by 95% of agencies), emotional support (95%); liaising with other agencies on behalf of the client (85%); providing court information (85%); providing information on the structure and process of the criminal justice system (85%); providing public education (85%); immediate safety planning (85%); court accompaniment (82%), and; assistance with victim impact statements (81%).
- Most agencies (57%) reported having one or more programs dedicated to specific populations. Agencies most frequently reported having programs dedicated to children (41% of agencies) and adult women (37%). One-quarter of agencies offered programs specifically for Aboriginal people, 19% for persons with physical disabilities, 19% for persons with mental challenges, and 13% for ethno-cultural or visible minority groups.
- 444 agencies (92%) reported the equivalent of 1,448 paid full-time staff having worked in 2002/03. Five percent of agencies had no paid staff and relied solely on volunteers (and 3% did not respond to the question).
- 367 agencies (76%) reported a total of 9,616 volunteers (19% did not use volunteers and 5% did not respond to the question). The number of hours worked by volunteers that year is equivalent to 1,107 full-time volunteers.

1. Unless otherwise specified, analysis of service agencies and clients in this Juristat excludes criminal injuries compensation/financial benefit programs because these latter agencies completed questions specific to their type of agency.
2. Services under this model assist victims throughout their contact with the criminal justice system from the police right through to the corrections stage. This model can be characterized as "one-stop" service delivery.



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Introduction

In Canada, there have been several changes to legislation, policies and procedures over the past three decades to respond to the needs of victims of crime. In 1983, the Federal-Provincial Task Force on Justice for Victims of Crime released its report on issues faced by victims of crime, particularly regarding their role in the criminal justice process. Issues for victims included, for example, the absence of the victim's voice in the criminal justice process, the traumatizing experience of court proceedings, and the lack of information about the perpetrator's status and whereabouts (Federal-Provincial Task Force on Justice for Victims of Crime, 1983). Since then, governments have implemented several changes to respond to these concerns, such as amending federal legislation to provide victims the opportunity to prepare victim impact statements and the right to receive information (see Boxes 1 and 5; Department of Justice, n.d.). In addition to changes to legislation, policies and procedures, new types of services for victims of crime, such as police-based and court-based services, have emerged to join long-standing services such as sexual assault centres and shelters for battered women that grew from grassroots movements in the 1970's.

While victims' concerns have received attention over the last three decades and governments have implemented measures to address these concerns, little is known about the services available to victims and those who use them. To date, the only source of national data on services for victims of crime has been Statistics Canada's Transition Home Survey that collects information on residential services for abused women and their children (see Box 4). To address the lack of information in this area, the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics (CCJS), through funding from Justice Canada's Policy Centre for Victim Issues, conducted for the first time a national voluntary survey of various types of victim services in 2003. The objective of the Victim Services Survey is to provide a profile of service agencies, including the services offered, and some insight into the clients who use them. This *Juristat* presents the findings from this survey and, where relevant, integrates other empirical information such as victimization, police-reported and Census data.

Box 1 – Victim's rights in Canada¹: A brief overview of major changes

The creation of compensation schemes for victims of crime was the first form of legislated action to address victim needs. In 1967, Saskatchewan enacted the first legislated compensation scheme and by 1988, all provinces had enacted victims' compensation schemes. Today, all jurisdictions, except Newfoundland and Labrador and the three territories, have compensation schemes for victims of crime, although they vary in terms of criteria and expenses and damages for which they will compensate.

In 1988, there was a wave of changes and initiatives in relation to victims' rights. That year, the *Canadian Statement of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime* was endorsed by the federal, provincial and territorial ministers responsible for justice. The intention of these basic principles was to promote the fair treatment of victims, particularly during the criminal justice process, and to provide guidance for federal, provincial and territorial laws, policies and procedures. In 2003, federal, provincial and territorial ministers responsible for justice endorsed a new *Canadian Statement of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime* that modernized the 1988 statement (Department of Justice, 2003). Some notable changes to the statement include: more specific principles regarding the different types of information victims require; updated language that reflects developments in victim rights in Canada since 1988, and; the removal of a statement suggesting victims are obliged to report their victimization and co-operate with law enforcement authorities.

The passage of Bill C-89 (*An Act to Amend the Criminal Code: Victims of Crime*) in 1988 encompassed a number of amendments in relation to the victim's role in the criminal justice system, including the introduction of victim impact statements to the Canadian criminal justice system. The victim impact statement describes the harm done to or loss suffered by the victim of the offence. Since then, legislation on victim impact statements has continued to develop. For instance, in 1995, sentencing provisions under the *Criminal Code* (section 722) were amended to require the court to consider a victim impact statement at the time of sentencing an offender where such a statement has been prepared. In 1999, further amendments were made. As a result of these changes, judges are required to inquire whether or not the victim has been informed of their right to complete a victim impact statement and, where the victim has not been informed, the judge can adjourn proceedings

¹ For more information, see Department of Justice n.d. *The Policy Centre for Victim Issues. "Legislation."* <http://canada.justice.gc.ca/en/ps/voc.index.html>.

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to allow time for statement preparation. In addition, victims have the option of delivering the statement orally or in writing. Finally, in accordance with section 745.63 of the *Criminal Code*, information provided by victims is permitted at hearings for offenders serving life sentences who are seeking a reduction in the number of years they need to serve before being eligible to apply for parole.

In 1988, victim surcharges became a part of Canada's sentencing law. A victim surcharge is imposed in addition to any other punishment for an offender convicted or discharged of a *Criminal Code* offence or an offence under the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act*. Presently, a victim surcharge is 15% of a fine imposed and where no fine is imposed, the surcharge is \$50 for summary offence convictions and \$100 for indictable offence convictions. Section 737 of the *Criminal Code* states that the funds are to be used for victim assistance by the province or territory in which they are collected. In addition, some provinces and territories have their own surcharge legislation that applies to infractions of provincial and territorial laws.

Following revisions in 1983 and 1988 to the *Criminal Code* sections dealing with sexual offences, the 1990's saw a number of changes to procedural and evidentiary rules intended to facilitate the provision of testimony during court proceedings for sexual offences and other specified offences. Examples of current provisions include: protecting the victim's private and confidential records from use in court; banning the publication of the name and identity of victims and witnesses; under certain circumstances, permitting victims under the age of 18 and victims who have difficulty communicating due to a disability to provide testimony from behind a screen or by closed-circuit television.

Box 2 – Victims' use of helping agencies

In general, the role of victim services is to assist victims with the consequences of crime, such as emotional and physical injury and financial loss, to help victims through the criminal justice process and to assist in preventing future victimizations (Canadian Federal Provincial Task Force on Justice for Victims of Crime, 1983). Despite this critical role, data from the 1999 General Social Survey (GSS) on Victimization show that less than four in ten victims reported their incident to the police. In addition, results suggest that few victims made use of formal helping agencies, although use of services was more frequent among victims of spousal violence. It should be noted, however, that victim services also provide assistance to populations that are not measured by the GSS, such as secondary victims of crime (e.g. families, friends and communities who were not the actual victim of the offence, but were affected nevertheless), victims of offences not measured by the GSS (e.g. impaired driving) and children and youth less than 15 years old.

According to the 1999 GSS on Victimization, in almost 175,000 (9%) of the non-spousal violent incidents measured by the survey, the victim contacted or used a social service such as a crisis centre or crisis line, a counselor, a community or family centre, a women's centre, a men's centre or support group, and a police-based and/or court-based victim service agency. Police and court-based victim services provide assistance to those who report their incident to the police. According to the 1999 GSS on Victimization, 37% of the 6.5 million personal and household victimizations¹ experienced by respondents that year were reported to the police (Besserer et al, 2001). Reporting rates were lower for violent than non-violent incidents. In the vast majority of the violent incidents measured by the 1999 GSS that were reported to police, victims did not contact or use a police or court-based service (93%).²

Victims of spousal violence were more likely to use a social service. Among those who were assaulted by a spouse in the five years prior to the survey, 48% of women and 17% of men used a social service. Among all victims of spousal violence, the most frequently used service was a counselor or psychologist (28%), followed by a crisis center or crisis line (10%) and community center or family center (10%). Further, transition homes were used by 11% of female victims of spousal assault while 2% of male victims reported using a men's centre or support group.

1. *The GSS measures eight specific crime types: assault, sexual assault, robbery, theft of personal property, breaking and entering, theft of motor vehicles and/or parts, theft of household property and vandalism.*
2. *The number who did contact or use these services is too small to be expressed.*

The Victim Services Survey

The Victim Services Survey was intended to be a census of system-based³, police-based and court-based victim services, sexual assault centres and financial benefit programs for victims of crime. Also included were selected community-based services (Box 3). As the range of community-based services can be very broad, the scope of community-based services was limited to those that provided assistance to victims of crime and that received funding from a ministry responsible for justice matters. It should be noted that in many areas, particularly remote areas and in northern communities, victims of crime often rely on a variety of social, health and community agencies for assistance and that these agencies are not covered by this survey.⁴ Further, shelters for abused women and their children

province is responsible for the delivery of system-based services with the actual delivery of service done by professionals with volunteers and fee-for-service contract assistants helping with specific roles. Although all the Atlantic provinces follow the system-based model, some police forces in Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick continue to provide police-based victim services.

It should be noted that the administration of victim services in Manitoba underwent an amalgamation over 2002 and 2003 whereby Manitoba Justice became responsible for the delivery of victim services, including those that had been delivered by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). In order to provide consistent and standardized victim services, Manitoba Justice established 21 Crime Victim Service Workers who are employees of Manitoba Justice and are considered agents of the Crown. The Crime Victim Service Workers guide victims through the complexities of the criminal justice system by advising them of their rights and responsibilities and offering support while the charge proceeds through the criminal justice system. The Crime Victim Service Workers work closely with the police and the courts and are housed in a number of RCMP detachments and court offices, but travel throughout the province to provide services. For the purpose of this survey, the survey response from Manitoba Justice, which represents the work performed by all Crime Victim Service Workers, is characterized as a system-based model of service delivery.

3. *Services in the Atlantic provinces follow the "system-based" model of service delivery. Services under this model are independent from police, courts, and Crown-attorneys and assist victims throughout their contact with the criminal justice system from the police right through to the corrections stage. This model can be characterized as "one-stop" service delivery. The*

4. *See, for example, Mary Beth Levan (2003). Creating a framework for the Wisdom of the Community: Review of Victim Services in Nunavut, Northwest Territories and Yukon Territory. Ottawa: Justice Canada.*

are not covered by this survey as they are currently surveyed by Statistics Canada's Transition Home Survey (see Box 4), which was established in 1991/92.

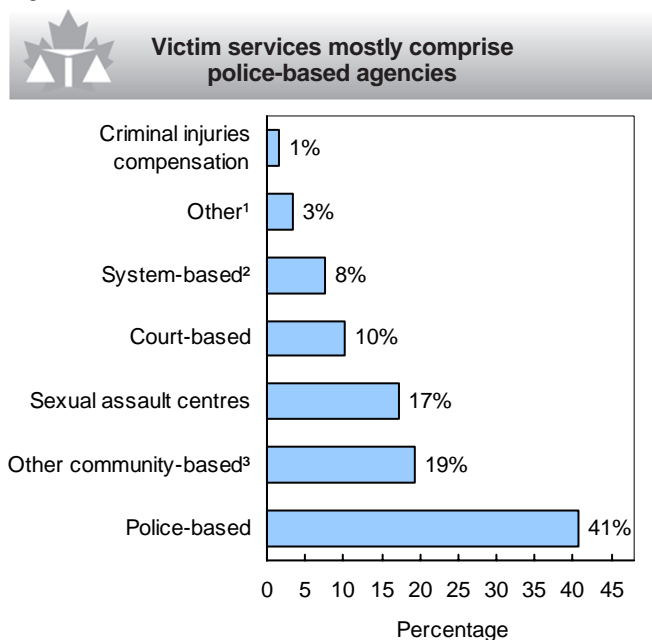
The 2002/03 Victim Services Survey collected the following types of information from all services with the exception of financial benefit programs: descriptive information to provide a profile of agencies (e.g. types of services offered and accessibility of services); annual counts for the preceding 12-month fiscal period (e.g. number of clients served, number of agency personnel and volunteers, and revenues and expenditures), and; a description of clients served on a "snapshot day" to provide a profile of clients who use the services. Criminal injuries compensation programs and other financial benefit programs were asked to complete a separate section that collected annual information on applications for compensation and other financial benefits and awards.

In October 2003, questionnaires were mailed to 715 agencies understood to provide services to victims of crime. Of these, 606 were deemed eligible to respond and 109 were ineligible to respond largely because they had either closed (59) or were out of the survey scope (45). The majority of closures were court-based victim/witness assistance agencies in British Columbia which were no longer funded after 2002/03. Four in ten of the 606 agencies identified were police-based victim service agencies (Figure 1). Of the 606 agencies, responses were received for 484 services and 8 criminal injuries compensation or financial benefit programs, equalling an overall response rate of 81%. Please refer to the Methodology section for more detail regarding data collection.

While the overall response rate was 81%, response rates were highest for system-based agencies and "other" types of agencies (100% respectively) and lowest for sexual assault centres (58%) (Table 1).

Among all the provinces and territories, response rates ranged from 59% for Quebec to 100% for Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, Yukon and Nunavut (Table 2).

Figure 1



1. Includes 9 sexual assault/partner or domestic violence treatment centres, 11 agencies that offered combined types of services and 1 other type of agency.
2. Services under this model assist victims throughout their contact with the criminal justice system from the police right through to the corrections stage. This model can be characterized as "one-stop" service delivery.
3. Includes Ontario Victim Crisis Assistance and Referral agencies which are community-based, but work directly with the police.

Note: Percentages do not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: 2002/03 Victim Services Survey, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Statistics Canada.

Table 1

 Response rates by type of victim service agency, 2002/03

Type of agency	Number of services eligible to respond	Number of forms received	Number of services represented by the forms received	Response rate Percent
System-based ¹	46	10	46	100
Police-based	246	182	207	84
Court-based	63	52	52	83
Sexual assault centres	105	59	61	58
Other community-based ²	116	96	97	84
Criminal injuries compensation and other financial benefit programs	9	5	8	89
Other ³	21	21	21	100
Total victim service agencies	606	425	492	81

1. Services under this model assist victims throughout their contact with the criminal justice system from the police right through to the corrections stage. This model can be characterized as "one-stop" service delivery.

2. Includes Ontario Victim Crisis Assistance and Referral agencies which are community-based, but work directly with the police.

3. Includes 9 sexual assault/partner or domestic violence treatment centres, 11 agencies that offered combined types of services and 1 other type of agency.

Source: 2002/03 Victim Services Survey, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Statistics Canada

Table 2



Response rates by province and territory, 2002/03

	Services eligible to respond	Responses received	Response rate
	Number	Number	Percent
Newfoundland & Labrador	12	11	92
Prince Edward Island	4	4	100
Nova Scotia	31	31	100
New Brunswick	19	18	95
Quebec	44	26	59
Ontario	162	124	77
Manitoba	22	21	95
Saskatchewan	34	30	88
Alberta	116	88	76
British Columbia	151	129	85
Yukon territory	3	3	100
Northwest Territories	6	5	83
Nunavut	2	2	100
Canada	606	492	81

Source: 2002/03 Victim Services Survey, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Statistics Canada

Box 3 – The Victim Services Survey: Key Definitions

Agency: Agency is the unit of count for the Victim Services Survey and refers to the organization or office through which victim services are provided. It should be noted that in cases where victim service programs are offered by the provincial government through a number of locations or offices, each office is counted as one agency. This approach was taken in order to avoid under estimating the extent of victim services in some jurisdictions. See the Methodology section of this report for further details.

Victims: In the 2002/03 Victim Services Survey, the definition of victims or clients served includes both primary and secondary victims of crime. Primary victims are those who were the direct target of the crime and secondary victims are those who were not the target of the offence but were impacted by it (e.g., family members, friends, classmates, etc.). In this *Juristat*, the terms “victim” and “clients” are used interchangeably when referencing data from the Victim Services Survey and the terms include both primary and secondary victims. It should be noted that some agencies, particularly police-based agencies and Ontario’s Victim Crisis Assistance and Referral agencies, also provide assistance to clients who experience a crisis which may not be criminal (e.g. suicides, fatal or serious vehicle collisions that are non-criminal, drownings, etc.). These counts are also included in counts of clients served.

Police-based services: Victim services that are delivered through a federal, provincial or municipal police service.

System-based services: Models of service delivery for victims of crime that are independent from police, courts and Crown-attorneys, and assist victims throughout their contact with the criminal justice system. System-based agencies may also serve clients who choose not to involve the criminal justice system. These models of service are found in Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick where they are administered by the provincial governments. Service delivery by Manitoba’s Crime Victim Service Workers, who are housed in various Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) detachments and court offices, has also been characterized as system-based for the purpose of this survey.

Court-based Victim/Witness Assistance Programs: These programs are specifically mandated to provide support services for individuals who have become involved in the court process as either victims or witnesses of crimes. They generally provide information, assistance and referrals with the goal of making the court process less intimidating. Types of services provided can include court orientation, preparation and accompaniment, updates on progress of the case, coordination of meetings with the Crown, assessment of children’s ability to testify, etc. Programs can be geared toward specific clientele such as children or victims of domestic violence.

Sexual Assault Centres: Agencies whose mandate is to exclusively serve victims of recent or historical sexual assault. These agencies will often have 24-hour crisis telephone lines and are community-based, not-for-profit agencies.

Community-based services: Any other non-government, not-for-profit agencies not listed above that provide direct services to victims of crime and are funded in whole or in part by the provincial/territorial and/or federal government responsible for criminal justice matters. Crime prevention programs are excluded. For the purpose of analysis in this *Juristat*, Ontario’s **Victim Crisis Assistance and Referral Services (VCARS)** are included within community-based agencies. These agencies in Ontario work closely with the police but are a community-based, non-government service. They provide on-scene and short-term assistance to victims of crime and other traumatic events and make referrals to community services for longer-term assistance. The **Centres d’aide aux victimes d’actes criminels (CAVACs)** in Quebec are also included within community-based agencies. These agencies are funded by the province’s Ministry of Justice and their model of service delivery is the same as system-based agencies, but these are community-based agencies.

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Other services: Hospital-based sexual assault and spousal assault treatment centres, and services that provide a combination of any of the above services (e.g. those that may be a sexual assault centre as well as a family violence or spousal assault crisis centre).

Criminal Injuries Compensation Programs: Programs that provide monetary awards and benefits to victims of crime to help ease the financial hardship incurred as a result of their victimization, and to assist them in healing from physical injury or psychological trauma. Such programs are normally governed by legislation that outlines eligibility criteria and by guidelines for decision-making.

Other Financial Benefits Programs: Programs other than Criminal Injury Compensation Programs that are designated to pay for *specific* services for victims of crime. Examples of specific services are professional counselling, transportation to hearings, and paying for independent legal counsel to respond to applications to open counselling, therapeutic or medical records by defence counsel in cases of sexual assault.

A Profile of Victim Services in Canada

Each province and territory is responsible for the administration of justice and the delivery of services to victims of crime in their jurisdiction. As such, service delivery is organized differently across each of the provinces and territories⁵. While some jurisdictions have “one-stop” system-based services that assist victims through the different stages of the criminal justice system, others have separate agencies assisting the victim at the police, court or corrections levels. Further, most jurisdictions have sexual assault centres and other community-based agencies that assist victims through the criminal justice process and provide other assistance such as counseling. In terms of financial compensation programs for victims of crime, all provinces except Newfoundland and Labrador have some form of financial compensation program where the victim either receives money directly or the province covers costs for losses incurred or services required. As a result of the very different structures of service delivery across the provinces and territories, jurisdictional comparisons are not meaningful and are not advised.

Provision of information and emotional support are the most common types of services provided

Most types of assistance are either offered directly by the service agency or by referral to another agency. Overall, nearly all agencies indicated that they provide general information (95%) and emotional support (95%) (Table 3). Other services provided directly by the majority of agencies include: liaising with other agencies on behalf of the client (85%); providing court information (85%); providing information to the client on the structure and process of the criminal justice system (85%); providing public education such as information on crime prevention (85%); immediate safety planning for the client (85%); court accompaniment (82%), and; assistance with victim impact statements (81%). Among the different types of agencies, these services were among the most frequently reported. Referrals to other agencies are apparent in areas in which health or social services specialize, such as housing assistance, health/medical services and child protection services.

Seniors and victims of sexual assault and domestic violence are the focus of many agencies

The type of victimization people experience or their vulnerability can make it difficult for them to seek help and they may require specialized assistance to keep them safe, to help them through

the criminal justice process and to overcome the effects of the incident. This is particularly true in the case of violent crime or if the aggressor is a family member or someone known to the victim. Because of the relationship between the victim and the aggressor, the very nature of family violence often makes it difficult for victims to disclose the incident, provide testimony and recover from the victimization.

Agencies were asked to indicate whether they target certain populations for service, that is, populations the agency is specifically mandated to serve even though they may not be their exclusive clients. Overall, agencies most frequently reported targeting the following populations for service: senior victims of partner (79% of agencies) and elder abuse (75%), adult victims of sexual assault (71%), adult victims of partner abuse (67%), and adult victims of childhood sexual abuse (66%) (Table 4). When sexual assault centres are excluded from the analysis, these populations remain the top populations targeted for services, although their order of frequency differs slightly. The fact that these populations are the focus of many victim service agencies can be partly explained by the domestic violence policies and protocols in place in many provinces and territories and across the justice system.


Specific programs are directed most frequently toward children, women and seniors

Some victims may have particular needs that are best met by programs that are sensitive to these needs. For instance, children require assistance delivered in a way they can comprehend and in an environment in which they feel comfortable. Further, victims of Aboriginal descent or from diverse ethno-cultural backgrounds may require services that are delivered in a culturally sensitive way that takes into account cultural values and norms, religious beliefs, traditions and language.

The Victim Services Survey asked agencies whether or not they provided specific programs that were dedicated to certain segments of the population. Among the 484 services, 57% reported offering programs dedicated to specific populations, 35% reported no dedicated programs or that the provision of such programs was not applicable to their work and 7% did not indicate whether or not they provided dedicated programs (Table 5). Overall, 41% of all agencies provided specific

5. For more information, see Department of Justice (n.d.). Context of Programs and Services for Victims of Crime in Canada. <http://canada.justice.gc.ca/en/ps/voc/pub.html>.

Table 3



Percentage of victim service agencies that perform a service or work directly and/or through referral by type of service and work, 2002/03¹

	Direct service	Referral	Not applicable
	Percent	Percent	Percent
General Information	95	11	1
Emotional support	95	19	1
Liaise with other agencies on behalf of client	85	26	1
Court information	85	23	2
Information on criminal justice system structure and process	85	23	1
Public education	85	21	3
Safety planning - immediate	85	20	6
Court accompaniment	82	23	3
Assistance with victim impact statements	81	23	1
Crisis intervention	77	32	2
Court orientation	76	24	3
Victim/witness preparation	75	29	1
Case/trial updates	73	23	4
Advocacy	73	30	5
Training	70	19	15
Victim notification	64	33	8
Hospital accompaniment	61	25	17
Safety planning - long term	59	49	4
Critical stress debriefing/response	55	53	6
Transportation	55	38	12
Prevention training (for clients)	49	47	13
Emergency and disaster responses	49	33	26
Legal information and advocacy	49	57	4
Crisis counseling	44	59	2
Risk assessment (conduct or coordinate)	43	51	15
Claims assistance	41	48	12
Restorative justice/mediation measures: accompaniment & support	33	48	21
Counseling- individual	27	73	1
Crisis/distress line	27	66	8
Compensation- financial	22	63	12
Restorative justice/mediation measures: orientation and information	22	59	21
Psychological assistance	22	74	4
Lobby activities	20	30	46
Counseling- group	20	74	3
Self-help/peer support groups	20	78	4
Shelter/housing- emergency	15	82	4
Basic needs provision (e.g., food, clothing)	14	79	8
Conflict resolution	13	64	20
First aid	13	47	39
Compensation- other (e.g. pay fees for professional counselling)	12	61	19
Counseling- couple/family	12	82	4
Housing assistance	11	86	8
Health/medical services	6	79	12
Child protection services	5	85	6
Shelter/housing- longer term housing	3	87	7
Other	3	0	0

1. Totals exceed 100% due to multiple responses.


Source: 2002/03 Victim Services Survey, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Statistics Canada

programs for children, 37% for adult women and 32% for seniors. One quarter of agencies offered programs for Aboriginal persons. Slightly less than one in five services offered programs geared toward persons with physical or mental disabilities (19% respectively) and one in eight agencies (13%) reported programs specifically for ethno-cultural or visible minority groups.

Assistance is provided face-to-face and by telephone

The most frequently reported methods of service delivery were face-to-face meetings with the client (94%) and speaking with the client by telephone (91%). While providing assistance at the scene of the incident was less common overall (51%), it was very common among police-based agencies and Ontario's

Table 4

 **Percentage of victim service agencies that target specific populations for service, 2002/03**

	Victim service agencies	
	Number	Percent ¹
Adult victims of...		
Sexual assault	346	71
Partner abuse	326	67
Child sexual abuse	321	66
Other domestic violence	303	63
Criminal harassment (stalking)	302	62
Violence (general)	275	57
Workplace violence	183	38
Hate & bias crimes	179	37
Fraud/economic/property crime	176	36
Impaired driving	153	32
Residential school abuse	147	30
Political persecution/torture	37	8
Senior victims of...		
Partner abuse	383	79
Elder abuse	363	75
Other types of crime	298	62
Child or youth victims of...		
Sexual abuse or sexual exploitation	242	50
Domestic violence	208	43
Physical abuse/neglect	183	38
Violence - general	167	35
School-based violence	136	28
Hate & bias crimes	78	16
Impaired driving	57	12
Families of...		
Sexually abused children	257	53
Physically abused children	200	41
Homicide victims	191	39
Victims of impaired driving	121	25
Missing, abducted and exploited childre	117	24
Victims of residential school abuse	77	16

1. Totals exceed 100% due to multiple responses.


Source: 2002/03 Victim Services Survey, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Statistics Canada

Victim Crisis Assistance and Referrals Services that work directly with police (88%). Just over half of all services indicated providing service by mail (52%) and 6% reported using other methods, most of which were e-mail. The use of e-mail was most common among sexual assault centres and other community based agencies with 13% reporting this as one of their main methods of providing assistance (e.g. providing information).

The majority of services worked with the community and other agencies

Establishing connections with other agencies, persons at risk and the community in general is one way helping agencies of all kinds enhance service delivery. According to results from the 2002/03 Victim Services Survey, 86% of agencies reported

Table 5

 **Percentage of victim service agencies that offer dedicated programs to specific populations, by type of population, 2002/03**

	Number	Percent
Total service agencies	484	100 ¹
Total not applicable/no dedicated programs	170	35
Total that offer dedicated programs	278	57
Not stated	36	7
Total service agencies	484	100 ²
Children - both sexes	198	41
Adult females	180	37
Seniors - both sexes	153	32
Aboriginal persons	121	25
Female seniors	120	25
Adult males	113	23
Female children	105	22
Male children	96	20
Male seniors	94	19
Persons with physical disabilities	93	19
Persons with mental disabilities	90	19
Lesbian/bisexual women	82	17
Gay/bisexual men	64	13
Ethno-cultural or visible minority persons	62	13

1. Percentages do not add to 100 due to rounding.

2. Total exceeds 100% due to multiple responses.

Source: 2002/03 Victim Services Survey, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Statistics Canada

performing outreach work, 84% reported serving as members on committees and 70% reported having partnerships with other programs or agencies. System-based agencies were most likely to report committee participation (98%), followed by community-based agencies (92%) and sexual assault centres (92%). Police-based agencies were least likely to report sitting on committees (74%). Partnerships were also reported most frequently by system-based agencies (98%), followed by sexual assault centres (79%). They were least common among police-based victim services (58%).

About one in ten agencies used a waiting list

Two ways in which agencies manage their client caseload are by using waiting lists or prioritizing clients based on certain criteria. Only 13% of service agencies (61) reported using a waiting list in 2002/03, and half of these were sexual assault centres. Among agencies that reported using a waiting list, average waiting times ranged from one day to one year, with a median average waiting period of 14 days. Of those agencies that provided an average waiting period, half stated that the waiting time had increased from the previous year, 35% said that it had remained the same, 9% said that it had decreased and 6% did not know whether it had changed.

Prioritizing clients for service was a more common method of caseload management than waiting lists, with 44% of agencies applying this approach. A further 38% did not prioritize clients, 14% indicated that this practice was not applicable to their organization, and 4% did not indicate whether or not they prioritized clients for service. Prioritizing clients for service

was most frequently reported by system-based agencies (65%) and court-based victim services (62%), followed by sexual assault centres (56%). Thirty-eight percent of community agencies reported prioritizing clients, as did 35% of police-based agencies.

Agencies that prioritized clients were most likely to assess the urgency for service based on the following criteria: the agency's mandate or protocols (78%); the severity of the violence (77%); imminent court date for the victim (66%); victim's risk of repeat victimization or safety concerns (64%); and, whether or not the victim had contacted the agency directly (62%). Agencies were less likely to consider the victim's history of victimization (51%), the presence of children (47%) or the involvement of other agencies (35%) when making decisions regarding priority for service.

Criminal injuries compensation programs and other financial benefit programs⁶

During fiscal year 2002/03, nine provinces had compensation programs for victims of crime and all but one responded to the Victim Services Survey.⁷ The aim of compensation programs is to alleviate the financial burden victims of crime and their families can incur as a result of the incident. Each program is established according to its respective provincial legislative authority and is administered either by the ministry responsible for victim services or a compensation board. While there are variations across the provinces in terms of eligibility criteria, in general the programs are available to the victim of a criminal offence (usually violent crimes), family members or dependants

of persons who lost their life, and persons who are injured or killed while trying to assist a police officer or while preventing or attempting to prevent a crime.

The eight criminal injuries compensation programs that responded to the Victim Services Survey reported a total of 10,874 applications that were adjudicated or concluded during 2002/03 and another 8,927 that were carried forward to the following fiscal year. Of the total adjudicated, 70% were allowed or granted and 14% were disallowed. The remainder had another status, such as decision pending, withdrawn or abandoned by the applicant.

The eight respondents reported paying a total of \$70.6 million in compensation for victims of crime in 2002/03. The largest proportion of this total was paid out for loss of wages (42%). Compensation for pain and suffering accounted for 14% and costs for medical needs, rehabilitation, dental and eyewear needs made up 12% of the total amount spent on compensation.⁸ Periodic payments by one jurisdiction accounted for the almost 19% of money awarded for other reasons.

6. Readers are cautioned that aggregated figures for provincial criminal injuries compensation and financial benefit programs may be influenced by the activities of the largest provinces.
7. Of the ten provinces, only Newfoundland and Labrador did not have a compensation program during 2002/03. British Columbia's compensation program was unable to respond to the Victim Services Survey because of changes to the administration of the program and to its information management system that occurred in 2002. None of the three territories have compensation programs.
8. It should be the types of losses for which compensation is awarded varies by province and that not all provinces compensate for these types of losses.

Box 4 – Shelters for abused women in Canada: Some highlights from the 2001/02 Transition Home Survey

Prior to the Victim Services Survey, Statistics Canada's Transition Home Survey was the only source of national data on services for victims of crime. This biennial survey collects information on residential services for abused women and their children to provide a profile of services and counts of clients served.

On April 15 2002, there were 524 shelters that provided residential services for abused women and their children, 482 of which responded to the 2001/02 Transition Home Survey (Code, 2003).¹ A total of 101,248 women and dependant children were admitted to the 482 shelters across Canada in 2001/02. Compared to 1999/00, 25 new facilities reported to the 2001/02 survey. However, many of these were new types of residential facility services offered within existing shelters and may not result in additional spaces. Counting only openings of new facilities and excluding those housed in existing shelters, the number of shelter closures in 2001/02 exceeded new shelter growth (16 closures compared to 14 new facilities). Over the years, the types of shelters have also been changing with a decrease in transition homes and an increase in emergency shelters which provide short term respite for a wide population range, not exclusively abused women (Statistics Canada, 2003a).

The majority of women (73%) and children (84%) residing in shelters on April 15, 2002 were there to escape abuse. Of the women residing in shelters for reasons other than abuse, the majority (58%) was unable to find affordable housing and 31% were experiencing short-term housing problems. The largest proportion of women residing in shelters that day were aged 25 to 34 (35%), and the majority of children accompanying their mothers were under the age of ten, with children under five accounting for 39% of all children admitted (Statistics Canada, 2003a).

In 2001/02, 90% of shelters served urban areas, 42% served rural areas and 28% provided services to reserves, indicating that shelters often serve more than one type of area. While the percentage serving urban areas increased slightly from 1999/00, the proportion serving rural and reserve areas decreased.

In addition to providing secure and safe accommodations, the majority of shelters offered a number of services to residents and women living in the community. Services offered most commonly to residents include: individual, short-term counseling (89%); advocacy (87%); specialized services for women aged 55 and older (84%); housing referral (83%); parenting skills (76%), and; life skills (71%). Sixty-three percent of shelters offered culturally sensitive services for Aboriginal women and 61% provided such services for ethno-cultural and visible minority women. Over half of shelters provided group counseling for children (56%) and almost seven in ten provided programs for children who witnessed or experienced abuse (68%) (Statistics Canada, 2003a).

1. Data from the 2003/2004 Transition Home Survey were not available at the time of this publication, but will be available from Statistics Canada in the Spring of 2005.

Box 5 - Victims rights and services under correctional services and conditional release¹

Improving the rights of victims of crime also extends to the correctional and conditional release systems. As with other sectors of the criminal justice system, victims have voiced their need for more information regarding the decisions and activities of the criminal justice system in relation to the offender who harmed them, more information on the offender and more opportunities to be heard. Federal and provincial correctional agencies, the National Parole Board and the provincial parole boards of Quebec, Ontario and British Columbia are all impacted by these concerns.

The Corrections and Conditional Release Act

Correctional Services of Canada (CSC) is responsible for the supervision of offenders serving custodial sentences of two years or more while the provinces and territories are responsible for offenders serving less than two years. The National Parole Board (NPB) has the authority to grant, deny and revoke the parole of all offenders, including those serving a sentence of less than two years. Its jurisdiction extends to all provinces except Quebec, Ontario and British Columbia which have their own provincial parole boards. The legislation governing the CSC and the NPB, the *Corrections and Conditional Release Act (CCRA)*, formally recognizes the important role of victims in the correctional process (Solicitor General of Canada, 2002). Examples of the types of rights afforded to victims of crime under the *CCRA* include:

- The right to be registered to receive initial and ongoing information about the offender (e.g. location of penitentiary in which the sentence is being served; dates on which the offender is scheduled for release on parole or temporary absences and destinations during these absences; dates of NPB hearings; appeals by the offender of NPB decisions, etc.).
- The right for Victim Impact Statements to be shared with the CSC and to be considered by the CSC when assessing the offender's level of risk of re-offending and his or her programming needs.
- The right to obtain a copy of NPB decisions.
- The right not to be contacted by inmates.

In its May 2000 report which was the result of an in-depth review of the *CCRA*, the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights made six recommendations that pertained specifically to victims. The Government accepted all six recommendations. A recommendation to allow victims to make an oral presentation at NPB hearings was implemented in July 2001. Implementation of the other recommendations listed below is in progress:

- Provide victims with information related to offender program participation, offender institutional conduct, and new offences committed by a conditionally released offender resulting in federal reincarceration.
- Advise victims in a timely manner, and wherever possible in advance, of the planned, anticipated or scheduled routine transfer of inmates.
- Provide victims with access to audio tape recordings of NPB hearings for consultation purposes.
- Development of a comprehensive strategy to prevent any unwanted communications with victims from offenders in correctional institutions.
- To establish a victims' information and complaints office to have jurisdiction over victim-related activities of both the CSC and the NPB.

The National Parole Board: Recent statistics

Between July 1, 2001, when the recommendation to allow oral presentations at NPB hearings was implemented, and March 31, 2003, there were 220 presentations by victims at 152 NPB hearings (National Parole Board, 2003). Of these, 75% were in person, 17% were on audiotape and 8% were on videotape. The major offence of victimization for those making presentations during this period was most likely to be murder (27%), sexual assault or rape (20%) and manslaughter (16%). Regarding the provision of information to victims, the NPB reported 14,270 contacts with victims for this purpose in 2002/03, an increase of 2% over the previous 12-month period. In addition, the NPB received and responded to 4,009 requests for NPB hearing decisions, representing a 20% increase from the previous period.

1. Corrections-based victim services were not included in the 2002/03 Victim Services Survey because the National Parole Board was not in a position to report national statistics at that time.

A Profile of Clients

The number of clients served by victim services provides an indication of workload and, if collected in a standard fashion at regular intervals, can provide trend information. The Victim Services Survey attempted to collect the number of clients served by agencies during the fiscal year 2002/03. However, practices in collecting statistics vary greatly across victim service agencies, with some services unable to keep ongoing statistics because of a lack of resources or because of issues or policies around confidentiality.

Almost 360,000 clients assisted in 2002/03

Of the 484 services, 85% were able to provide annual counts for 2002/03, 13% reported that they had no counts available and 2% did not indicate whether or not they could provide

annual counts. The 412 service agencies that provided counts reported helping 359,767 victims during that fiscal year. Many of these service agencies were not able to provide a breakdown of these annual counts by sex or age of their clients, but among those that could, the clients were more often female than male and adults than children.

In order to gather more detailed information on the characteristics of clients served, a "snapshot" approach was used. Agencies were asked to track clients served on October 22, 2003⁹ according to their sex, age group and type of victimization. In total, the 373 (77%) service agencies that responded to this question served 4,358 clients on that day (Table 6).

9. Through consultations with service agencies it was determined that October is a month where counts would be least affected by factors that can contribute to highs and lows in the demand for service.

Table 6

Number of clients served, by sex, age groupings and type of crime, October 22, 2003

Type of crime	Grand total		Total males		Males by age grouping					Total females		Females by age grouping				
					0-11 years	12-17 years	18-64 years	65+ years	Age unknown			0-11 years	12-17 years	18-64 years	65+ years	Age unknown
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number					Number	Percent	Number				
Homicide	85	2	28	3	2	1	18	4	3	57	2	0	2	47	1	7
Other loss of life	118	3	55	6	1	6	35	9	4	63	2	1	8	40	8	6
Criminal harassment (stalking)	138	3	21	2	1	1	17	1	1	117	3	0	0	105	0	12
Sexual assault - total	1,300	30	179	18	33	35	89	1	21	1,121	33	160	229	636	9	87
<i>by spouse, ex-spouse, intimate partner</i>	210	5	14	1	0	3	11	0	0	196	6	5	13	168	2	8
<i>by other family member</i>	582	13	68	7	17	18	28	0	5	514	15	115	118	226	5	50
<i>by other relationship</i>	508	12	97	10	16	14	50	1	16	411	12	40	98	242	2	29
Other violent offences - total	1,780	41	302	31	45	55	175	11	16	1,478	44	20	88	1,246	16	108
<i>by spouse, ex-spouse, intimate partner</i>	1,207	28	64	6	5	3	52	0	4	1,143	34	4	24	1,041	5	69
<i>by other family member</i>	198	5	66	7	28	17	16	5	0	132	4	11	48	55	5	13
<i>by other relationship</i>	375	9	172	17	12	35	107	6	12	203	6	5	16	150	6	26
TOTAL CRIMES AGAINST THE PERSON	3,421	78	585	59	82	98	334	26	45	2,836	84	181	327	2,074	34	220
Arson	13	0	5	1	1	1	2	0	1	8	0	0	0	7	1	0
Other property crimes	301	7	134	14	1	3	102	17	11	167	5	3	1	125	12	26
Impaired driving	22	1	16	2	0	0	16	0	0	6	0	0	0	5	0	1
Other traffic offences	27	1	18	2	1	0	16	1	0	9	0	0	1	7	0	1
Other Criminal Code offences	205	5	88	9	5	6	51	3	23	117	3	3	7	75	2	30
Non-criminal incidents	296	7	112	11	5	27	57	8	15	184	5	2	19	114	18	31
Traffic incidents - undetermined if criminal	35	1	17	2	3	0	12	2	0	18	1	1	2	14	1	0
Other incidents - undetermined if criminal	38	1	11	1	3	3	5	0	0	27	1	3	0	19	1	4
TOTAL OTHER INCIDENTS	937	22	401	41	19	40	261	31	50	536	16	12	30	366	35	93
GRAND TOTAL	4,358	100	986	100	101	138	595	57	95	3,372	100	193	357	2,440	69	313

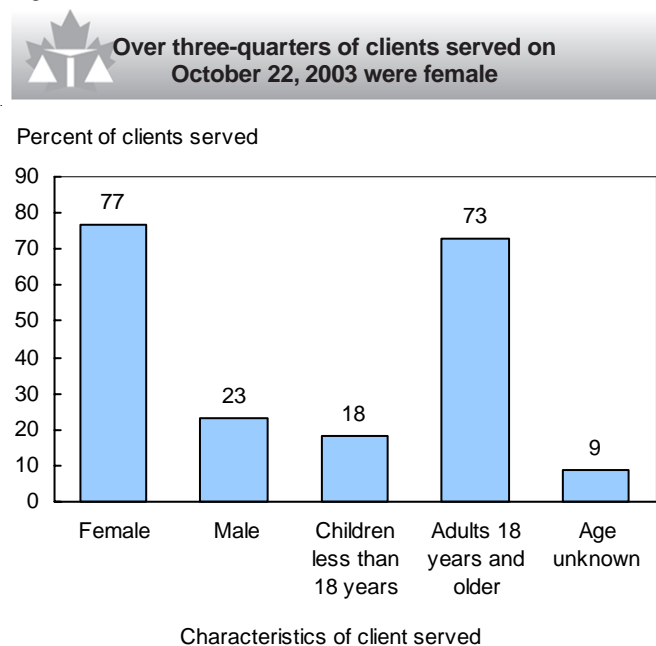
Source: 2002/03 Victim Services Survey, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Statistics Canada

Over three-quarters of victims served on October 22, 2003 were victims of a crime against the person

The vast majority (78%) of clients served on October 22, 2003 were victims of a crime against the person and 22% were victims who had experienced other types of incidents such as property crimes and non-criminal incidents (e.g. suicides, traffic collisions) (Table 6). Sexual assaults accounted for 30% of victims served that day. When sexual assault centres are removed from the analysis, victims of sexual assault account for 21% of victims served. Victims of "other" violent offences (excludes homicide, other offences resulting in the loss of life and sexual assault) accounted for over four in ten clients served. The majority of these were victims of violence by a spouse, ex-spouse or intimate partner and were largely female. Overall, 28% of all clients served on October 22, 2003 were victims of "other" violence by a spouse, ex-spouse or intimate partner and almost all of these were female. Compared to males, women assisted on snapshot day were more likely to be primary or secondary victims of crimes against the person (84% versus 59%). Overall, females accounted for 77% of all clients served on October 22, 2003 (Figure 2).

The frequency of female victims of spousal violence who were assisted by victim service agencies on snapshot day is not surprising given that most provinces and territories have protocols regarding spousal violence. Further, results from the Victim Services Survey show that a high proportion of

Figure 2



Source: 2002/03 Victim Services Survey, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Statistics Canada

agencies target victims of spousal violence for service. Further, data provided by a subset of 122 police departments in 2003 to the Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey show that adult female victims are more likely to be assaulted by someone they know (76% versus 48% for males), particularly a current or ex-partner (31%). Finally, according to the 1999 General Social Survey on Victimization, victims of spousal violence (34%) are more likely to use a social service than victims of non-spousal violence (9%).

Boys served by agencies were more likely to be victims of non-sexual violence, girls more likely to be victims of sexual assault

Regarding children, snapshot data show that children under 18 years of age accounted for 18% of clients who were served by victim services on October 22, 2003 (Figure 2), and 20% of victims of crimes against the person. Similarly, data from the 2003 Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey show that children under 18 years of age accounted for 23% of victims of crimes against the person who came to the attention of police. On October 22, 2003, three-quarters of the boys in this age group and about nine in 10 of the girls were victims of a crime against the person. Boys were most often being assisted by victim services because of non-sexual crimes against the person (46%) while girls were most often being served that day because of sexual violence (71%), particularly by someone other than a family member or intimate partner (Table 6).

Clients served on snapshot day were most likely to receive information and emotional support

On snapshot day, clients most frequently received emotional support (45%) and general information (39%).¹⁰ Other types of services received that day include: case or trial updates (28%); information on the criminal justice system (26%); education, prevention and training (23%), and; court information (23%). The services that were delivered the least that day were the more specialized services that the majority of agencies do not offer directly, including: assistance with restorative justice/mediation measures (less than 1%) and first aid, health/medical services and hospital accompaniment (1%, respectively).

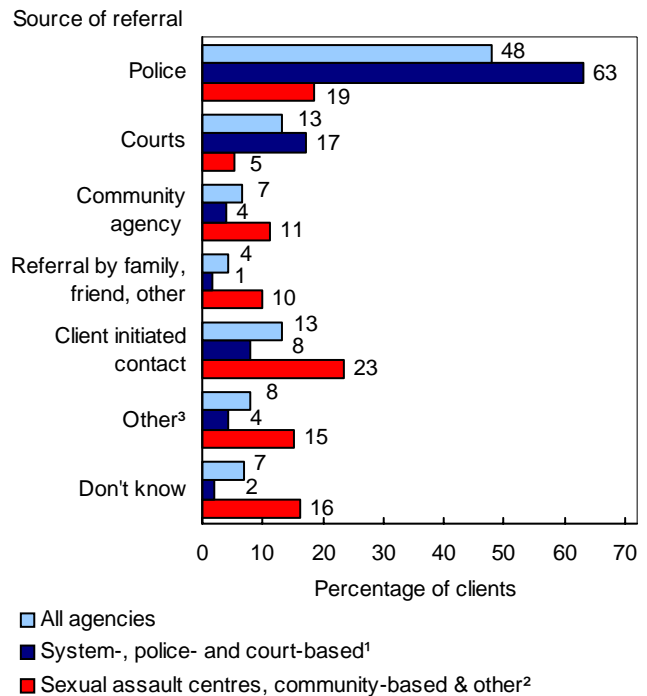
Less than one-half (47%) of victims served on snapshot day by a service other than a police-based, court-based or system-based service had reported to police while 31% had not reported and reporting was unknown for 22% of clients.¹¹ Similarly, the 2001/02 Transition Home Survey found that 29% of women in shelters for reasons of abuse on that survey's snapshot day (April 15, 2002) had not reported their most recent incident of abuse to the police (Code, 2003).

Clients using sexual assault centres or community-based agencies were more likely to initiate contact themselves than be referred by the police or the courts

Clients served on October 22, 2003 by victim service agencies were most frequently referred by the police (48%) (Figure 3). This is not surprising given the number of police-based and court-based services. Clients were equally likely to have been referred by the courts as to have initiated contact themselves

Figure 3

Clients using community agencies were more likely to have initiated contact with the agency themselves rather than be referred, October 22, 2004



1. Services under the system-based model assist victims throughout their contact with the criminal justice system from the police right through to the corrections stage. This model can be characterized as "one-stop" service delivery. For analytical reasons, this grouping also includes Ontario Victim Crisis Assistance and Referral agencies which are community-based, but work directly with police.
 2. Includes 9 sexual assault/partner or domestic violence treatment centres, 11 agencies that offered combined types of services and 1 other type of agency.
 3. Other sources of referral include hospitals/health care providers, corrections, other government agencies, and private practitioners.
 Source: 2002/03 Victim Services Survey, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Statistics Canada

(13%, respectively). The source of referral differed between agencies that are strongly linked to the criminal justice system, such as system-based, police-based, and court-based services, and those that are community-based and sexual assault centres. Clients assisted that day by sexual assault centres and other community agencies were more likely to have initiated contact themselves (23%) and less likely to have been referred by the police (19%) or courts (5%). Other more common sources of referral for clients of sexual assault centres and community-based agencies were individuals not associated with formal agencies, such as family and friends (10%), other community agencies (11%) and other agencies (15%) (e.g. health care providers, private practitioners, etc.)

10. This analysis is based on data provided by respondents who reported counts of clients assisted by type of victimization as well as the type of services offered. These percentages are therefore based on 4,286 clients assisted.
 11. Victims served by police-, court-, or system-based services have inherently reported to the police. Therefore, these agencies are excluded from this analysis.

Providing Services to a Diverse Population

Ethno-cultural and visible minority populations

Canada is becoming increasingly ethno-culturally diverse with the majority of immigrants living in large urban centres. According to the 2001 Census of Population, Canada's foreign-born population is the highest it has been in 70 years, with 5.4 million people (or 18% of the total population) born outside Canada (Statistics Canada, 2003b). Among those who immigrated to Canada during the 1990's, 58% were born in Asian and Middle Eastern countries and one-in-five emigrated from Europe. Almost three quarters of all people who had immigrated during that period lived in the three Census Metropolitan Areas of Toronto, Vancouver and Montréal.

As a result of increased immigration from non-European countries, the 2001 Census found that 13% of Canada's population identified themselves as a member of a visible minority. In addition, in 2001, almost one in six Canadians (approximately 5,335,000 people) had a mother tongue other than English or French, with the most common languages being Chinese, Italian, German, Punjabi and Spanish (Statistics Canada, 2002).

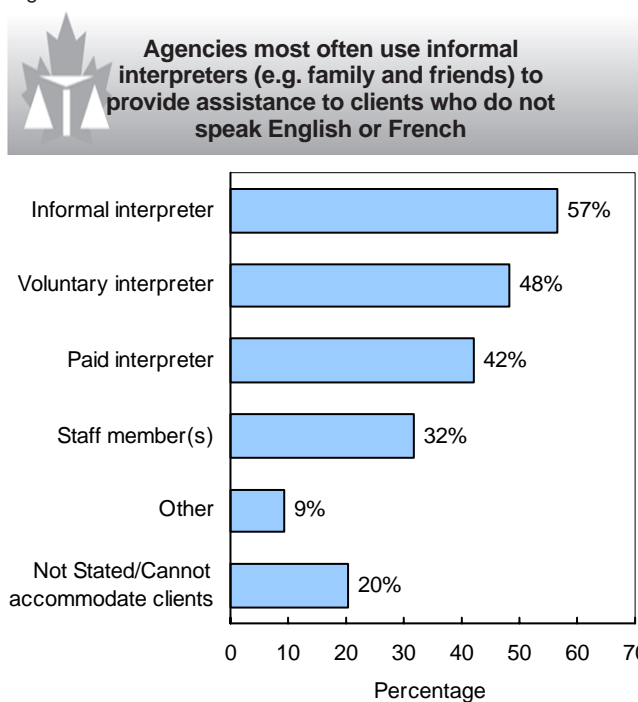
Surveys of the general population suggest that victimization among recent immigrants and visible minorities is lower than other populations, although factors such as language spoken and reluctance to participate in telephone surveys can impact the accuracy of victimization data. The 1999 General Social Survey on Victimization reported that 22% of immigrants (including non-visible minorities) who arrived in Canada between 1995 and 1999 were the victim of a property or personal crime, compared to 23% of earlier immigrants and 28% of persons born in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2001a). Further, the 2002 Ethnic Diversity Survey, which was conducted in nine languages including English and French (Badets, Chard and Levett, 2003), found that 13% of visible minorities had been a victim of a crime sometime during the five years prior to the survey compared to 17% of non-visible minorities.

Victims from diverse ethno-cultural backgrounds can face a number of barriers in terms of seeking help. For example, there may be reluctance by the victim to report the incident to the authorities because of cultural or religious beliefs, influence by the community, or mistrust (Smith, 2004). In cases of family violence, this latter concern can mean fear of what will happen to her/himself and the offender if the incident is brought to the attention of the police. Further, attempts to seek or provide help could be thwarted if services are not available in the victim's language or if the service providers do not understand the victim's ethno-cultural background.

One in eight agencies offered programs specifically for ethno-cultural or visible minority groups

One in eight (13%) service agencies reported offering programs dedicated to certain ethno-cultural or visible minority groups (Table 5). While over six in ten of these agencies did not specify the group for which they have programs, 16% reported having programs for South Asians (e.g. East Indian and Punjabi), 8% for East and South East Asians such as Chinese, 6% for

Figure 4



Note: Total exceeds 100% due to multiple responses

Source: 2002/03 Victim Services Survey, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Statistics Canada

persons from Latin, Central or South American origins and 18% for individuals from a variety of other origins.¹²

The vast majority of agencies can provide services to victims who do not speak English or French

While eight in ten agencies indicated that they could provide services to clients who do not speak English or French, 18% said they could not and 2% did not answer the question. Informal interpreters (57%), such as family and friends, was the method most frequently used to provide help to victims unable to speak English or French (Figure 4). This was followed by voluntary interpreters (48%), paid interpreters (42%) and staff members who could speak other languages (32%).¹³

Agencies were asked to indicate the languages in which staff or volunteers were able to communicate verbally with clients, and in which language audio or visual materials are available. Among all 484 services, the most frequently reported non-official language in which staff or volunteers could speak was Spanish (20% of agencies), followed by German (19%), and Chinese, Punjabi and Italian (14%, respectively) (Table 7). In addition, 17% indicated having audio or visual materials available in Chinese, followed by Punjabi (15%), Spanish (13%), Hindi (12%), Vietnamese (11%) and Arabic (10%).

12. Percentages will not add to 100 due to multiple responses.

13. Percentages will not add to 100 due to multiple responses.

Table 7

 **Percent of victim service agencies that can accommodate clients who do not speak English or French, by type of language and source of delivery, 2002/03**

Language	Staff/volunteers able to communicate verbally		Audio/visual materials available	
	Number	Percent ¹	Number	Percent ¹
Spanish	97	20	64	13
German	92	19	19	4
Punjabi	70	14	72	15
Chinese	68	14	82	17
Italian	67	14	32	7
Cree	58	12	13	3
Hindi	55	11	56	12
Dutch	54	11	7	1
Polish	54	11	26	5
Portuguese	51	11	28	6
Ukranian	50	10	7	1
Arabic	43	9	46	10
Hungarian	43	9	5	1
Vietnamese	41	8	51	11
Persian (farsi)	38	8	39	8
Urdu	36	7	18	4
Korean	32	7	26	5
Tagalog (Philipino)	32	7	7	1
Inuktitut	31	6	16	3
Greek	30	6	15	3
Gujarati	30	6	8	2
Ojibway	30	6	17	4
Somali	26	5	10	2
Tamil	26	5	11	2
Other	39	8	16	3

1. Total exceeds 100% due to multiple responses.
 Source: 2002/03 Victim Services Survey, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Statistics Canada

Aboriginal peoples

In 2001, 976,305 persons identified themselves as Aboriginal, a 22% increase from 1996 (Statistics Canada, 2003c).¹⁴ The 1999 General Social Survey on Victimization indicated that Aboriginal people were more likely than non-Aboriginal people to be a victim of a crime (Statistics Canada, 2001b). More specifically, while rates of theft of personal property were similar between the two groups, the rate of violent victimization among Aboriginal people was almost three times that of non-Aboriginal people (307 versus 110 incidents per 1,000 people). Moreover, Aboriginal people who reported being the victim of a property or personal crime were more likely to be victimized multiple times.

Among the 484 victim service agencies, 25% of agencies reported providing specific programs for Aboriginal people (Table 5).

Over one-quarter of agencies had staff or volunteers who could speak an Aboriginal language

With respect to communication in Aboriginal languages, 20% of services indicated that they had staff or volunteers who were

able to communicate in an Aboriginal language. Specifically, 12% of services reported having personnel who could speak Cree, 6% had personnel who could speak Inuktitut and 6% Ojibway (Table 7). Personnel in a further 5% of service agencies were able to communicate in a variety of other Aboriginal languages, the most common being Micmac and Dene.¹⁵

Residential schools abuse is unique to the Aboriginal community and continues to affect its members. These schools were first established in Canada in 1880 with the aim of colonizing Aboriginal children into either English or French culture and generations of Aboriginal children attended these schools until the last one closed in 1984 (Law Commission of Canada, 2000). Research and testimony reveal that Aboriginal children suffered many forms of abuse while institutionalized (Claes and Clifton, 2000). According to the Victim Services Survey, 30% of all agencies reported targeting victims of residential school abuse for service and 16% targeted their families.

14. About half this growth can be attributed to demographic factors, such as a high birth rate among Aboriginal women. The remainder of the growth can be attributed to an increase in the number of people identifying themselves as Aboriginal and better enumeration of reserves.
 15. Percentages are based on multiple responses.

Populations with disabilities

In 2001, 3.6 million Canadians living in households (or 12.4%) reported having a disability (Cossette and Duclos, 2004).¹⁶ While disabilities related to mobility, pain and agility, were most common, with about one in ten Canadians 15 years and older experiencing any of these, other disabilities included those related to hearing (4.4%), vision (2.5%) as well as psychological disabilities (2.2%). Learning and developmental disabilities were less common (1.9% and 0.5%, respectively). While degrees of disability vary, nearly 6% of Canadians aged 15 years and older reported having a severe to very severe disability that year (e.g. being dependent on a wheelchair, being bed-ridden for a long period of time, etc.).

Data from the 1999 GSS on victimization indicate that persons with disabilities¹⁷ were more likely to be the victim of a violent crime (222 incidents per 1,000 for persons with disabilities versus 185 for those without), but that rates of multiple victimization for personal and property crimes were similar between persons with disabilities and those without (Statistics Canada, 2001c).

Agencies are more likely to be able to accommodate victims with mobility challenges than hearing or visual impairments

According to the 2002/03 Victim Services Survey, 19% of agencies provided programs dedicated to persons with physical disabilities and the same percentage reported providing such programs for persons with mental disabilities. In addition, agencies were asked to indicate if they could accommodate the provision of services to persons with physical or mental disabilities. Overall, the vast majority (90%) of services were able to accommodate persons with challenges in mobility, with about six in ten stating they are able to accommodate services for persons with hearing (63%) or visual impairments (60%).

Overall, 87% of agencies indicated that their location is wheelchair accessible, 5% did not have at least one entrance that was wheelchair accessible and 9% did not provide a response to the question.

Of the 307 agencies that were able to accommodate service delivery to persons with hearing impairments, 67% make use of sign language communication or interpretation, 33% have teletypewriters or telephone devices for the deaf and a further 12% indicated using other methods.¹⁸

Fewer agencies offered special services for people who are blind or visually impaired. Of the 288 that said they could accommodate victims with visual impairments, 26% had large print reading material available, 13% had Braille reading material and 15% indicated using other methods to accommodate visually impaired victims.

Box 6 – Victim Impact Statements

Victim impact statements represent a key initiative in affording victims a voice during the criminal justice process. Originally introduced in 1988, the opportunity for victims to provide information in the criminal justice process has expanded beyond sentencing hearings (see Boxes 1 and 5). In 1999, the *Criminal Code* was amended making it mandatory for judges to inquire prior to sentencing whether the victim had been informed of his or her right to submit a victim impact statement. Despite being a key initiative to involve the victim in the process, research to date suggests that very few statements are submitted to the courts (Roberts, 1992; Roberts and Edgar, 2002).

Few agencies track information on victim impact statements

In order to assess the extent to which victim services are involved in victim impact statements and the extent to which the statements make their way to the court, the Victim Services Survey attempted to count the number of victim impact statements with which victim service agencies assisted victims during the fiscal year 2002/03 and the number that were filed with the courts. Overall, many agencies were unable to provide this information. Specifically, 15% of agencies indicated that assisting clients with victim impact statements was not within the work they performed and a further 3% did not answer the question. Among the remaining 399 agencies, just over half (51%) did not track this information. The 187 agencies that did track this information reported assisting clients with approximately 15,500 victim impact statements in 2002/03.

Regarding the number of statements filed with the courts, even fewer agencies tracked this information. Counting only those agencies for whom this type of work was applicable and those who responded to the question, 65% reported that they did not track this information and the remaining 109 agencies reported a total of 5,466 statements filed with the courts in 2002/03.

The Victim Services Survey asked agencies about events that have impacted the demand for service and, despite the high percentage of agencies unable to provide specific counts of victim impacts statements with which they assisted, several agencies indicated that initiatives to ensure victims are informed of their right to complete a victim impact statement have increased their workload.

To serve victims with mental challenges, agencies mostly rely on partnerships with specialized agencies and help from those close to the victim

Approximately eight in ten (81%) agencies were able to accommodate clients with mental challenges or mental health issues. Of these 394 agencies, 89% accomplished this through partnerships with or assistance from another specialized or professional agency. About eight in ten (79%) stated relying on informal resources such as family, friends and caregivers of the client, and; 47% reported having trained staff.¹⁹

16. These data are from the 2001 Participation and Activity Limitation Survey. Persons with disabilities are those who reported difficulties with daily living activities, or who indicated that a physical, mental condition or health problem reduced the kind or amount of activities they could do.
 17. The reader is cautioned that the General Social Survey's definition of a person with a disability is different from the one above. Respondents to the 1999 General Social Survey were asked 2 questions designed specifically to identify persons with disabilities. Please see Canadians with Disabilities (Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85F003M1E) for more details.
 18. The remaining 11% did not indicate methods used.
 19. Percentages do not add to 100 due to multiple responses.

Restorative Justice

One in six victim service agencies reported being involved in restorative justice processes

Restorative justice is a relatively new concept in the criminal justice system and has the goals of restoring the loss experienced by the victim and the community, restoring relationships, and repairing any harm done to the victims and the community. This is achieved through voluntary participation by all parties, including members of the community, and requires the offender to recognize the harm they have caused, to accept responsibility and to actively take part in the reparation of harm done (Department of Justice Canada, n.d.). It encompasses a number of remedies and processes such as mediation, restitution and sentencing circles. It is an alternative to traditional criminal justice sanctions and what are considered to be adversarial processes. Some victim advocates caution, however, that restorative justice processes may not be suitable for all types of crimes, such as violent incidents or ones characterized by an imbalance of power between the victim and the offender (e.g. cases of family violence).

Several victim service agencies reported providing services related to restorative justice and/or mediation measures either directly or through referral, namely the provision of accompaniment and support during these processes (33% directly) and orientation and information regarding these processes (22% directly) (Table 3). In addition, agencies were asked whether or not they are involved in the delivery and coordination of restorative justice processes for criminal justice matters. Less than one in five (17%) of all services reported playing such a role in restorative justice activities. Policed-based services were most likely to report being involved in these processes (27%), followed by court-based services (16%). Sexual assault centres were the least likely to be involved (2%).

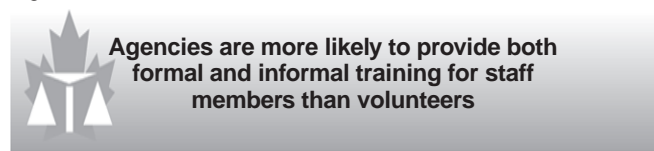
Employees and Volunteers

Agencies are more likely to provide staff with a combination of formal and informal training

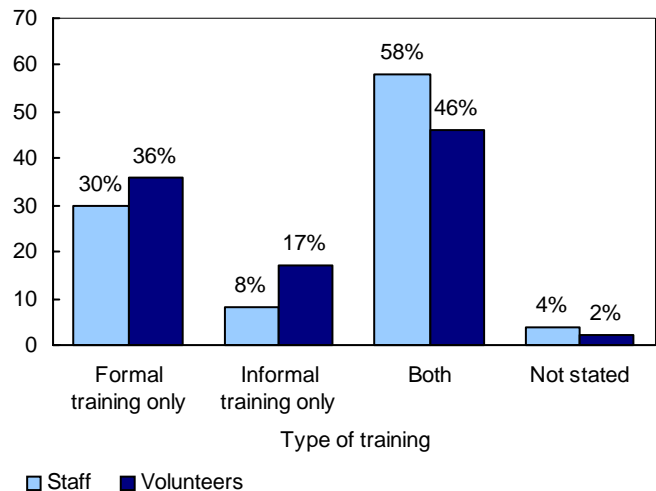
For 2002/03, 444 victim service agencies (92%) reported the equivalent of 1,448 paid full-time staff having worked that year, or an average of 3 staff members per agency.²⁰ Excluding the 26 agencies (5%) that were run completely by volunteers, 94% of agencies indicated that they provide training for employees (a response was not stated for 3% of agencies). The majority of these provided a combination of both formal and informal training (Figure 5).²¹ Again, excluding agencies run completely by volunteers, nine in ten reported at least one staff person receiving training or some type of professional development in 2002/03 and only 3% of agencies reported no staff receiving any training that year. In total, 1,623 employees received training or some type of professional development that year.²²

Given that victim services can be challenging work, it is not surprising that 92% of agencies reported providing staff with support to help them cope with these challenges. Just over half (53%) of these reported providing a combination of formal (e.g. employee assistance programs) and informal support, such as informal support offered between co-workers and by management in the form of informal discussion, guidance and

Figure 5



Percent of agencies



Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Source: 2002/03 Victim Services Survey, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Statistics Canada

encouragement and informal support for leave where there are no policies on leave for this reason. While 24% reported providing informal support only, 22% provided formal support only.

One in six volunteers left in 2002/03

Just over three-quarters of agencies (367) benefited from the work of 9,616 volunteers in 2002/03, suggesting an average of 26 volunteers per agency. About one in five agencies (19%) indicated that they did not use volunteers (the remaining 5% did not respond to the question). Almost three-quarters (74%) of volunteers had worked for the agency at some point during the previous fiscal year and the remaining 26% were new that year. Of the volunteers who had worked during 2002/03, 17%, or 1,616, had left the agency before the end of the fiscal year.

20. Counts for "full-time equivalents" reflect the conversion of hours worked by all part- and full-time employees into the equivalent of full-time positions.

21. Formal training by the agency includes the agency subsidizing the employee or volunteer in full or in part to attend certified courses, post-secondary courses or any other private courses. Informal training by the agency includes "on-the-job" training which is unstructured training in the work environment. It is training whereby employees or volunteers acquire the knowledge needed to perform their work under normal working conditions with the help of an experienced worker or under the direction of supervisory personnel. Informal training also includes the provision of "self-training" tools by the agency (e.g. texts, manuals, videos, CD's or computer software) that are self-administered. Informal training would also include conference, seminar and workshop attendance.

22. The number receiving training represents a count of both full and part-time employees and therefore can exceed the count of full-time equivalents employed in 2002/03.

Volunteers can help in many different areas. While some may assist clients directly or work on-call to provide assistance to clients when the need arises, others provide valuable assistance in areas such as administration, fund-raising, or serving as members of boards of directors. Respondents reported victim services volunteers contributing *at least* 44,275 hours per week during fiscal year 2002/03, the equivalent of 1,107 full-time volunteers. Victim Services Survey data suggest that volunteers each worked an average of almost five hours per week. In comparison, according to data from Statistics Canada's 2000 National Survey of Volunteering and Participating, between October 1, 1999 and September 30, 2000, 118,000 people in Canada volunteered an average of 12 minutes per week to work with a variety of law and legal organizations that includes victim services²³ (Taylor-Butts, 2002).

The Victim Services Survey asked respondents to provide a breakdown of hours worked by volunteers by specific types of duties. Among those that could provide these data, the majority (59%) of volunteer hours were spent doing on-call hours for direct victim service while 16% were spent on direct service to clients. Seven percent of volunteer hours were dedicated to other activities such as administrative duties, serving as members of boards of directors or fundraising. For 17% of hours, the type of work performed by volunteers was not specified.

The vast majority (92%) of services that used volunteers provided training for them, with 46% of these providing a combination of both formal and informal training (Figure 5). Compared to paid staff, volunteers were less likely to receive a combination of formal and informal training. Respondents reported 5,820 volunteers having received training or professional development during 2002/03.

Compared to paid employees, volunteers are more likely to receive just informal support to assist them with challenges they may face, such as stress when working directly with clients. Almost four in ten agencies (38%) reported providing informal support only for volunteers compared to 24% for employees.

Expenditures

Almost nine in ten victim service agencies (excluding compensation programs) reported information on their expenditures. Four hundred and thirty agencies reported expenditures totalling \$82.6 million. In addition, according to the 2001/02 Transition Home Survey, 451 shelters for abused women and their children reported \$212 in expenditures that year.

Impacts on Service Delivery and Future Challenges

In order to assess the factors affecting the delivery of services by agencies, the Victim Services Survey asked agencies to describe events that had occurred in the two years prior to the survey that impacted service delivery and the challenges they expected to face in the coming year. In general, the events impacting service delivery were frequently related to funding and changes in legislation, such as the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*, Bill C-79 from 1999 requiring the courts to ensure victims have been informed of their right to complete a victim impact

statement, and federal privacy legislation affecting the RCMP. Several provinces, such as the Atlantic provinces, Ontario and Saskatchewan, described changes in policies on domestic violence cases that increased the demand for service. Some jurisdictions also reported an increase in workload as a result of Bill C-79.

Some events were specific to certain jurisdictions. For instance, in Manitoba, respondents cited the new provincial *Victims' Bill of Rights* as the most significant event to have impacted service delivery that year. The Bill took effect August 31, 2001, but was phased in over time. In general, agencies in Manitoba reported a growth in clientele due to greater awareness by victims and increased funding. Also, victim services in British Columbia underwent program restructuring in 2002/03. Resources were reallocated, certain programs were changed, and the Crown-based victim/witness assistance program, offered through 40 locations by 35 full-time equivalents, was no longer funded. Respondents cited these as significant losses that displaced clients previously served by Crown-based agencies to the remaining agencies causing an influx of clients to services working under tighter finances.

While many services noted changes in funding as an issue affecting service delivery, Quebec was the only province to report a rise in funding, which resulted from an increase in provincial fine surcharge amounts²⁴ in 2002. Almost 60% of agencies in Quebec that responded to the survey reported receiving either more or new funding. This resulted in new staff, increased programming and more partnerships with government, all of which translated into an ability to serve more clients.

The survey also asked agencies to list the top three challenges that they will face in the delivery of services over the coming year and the steps the agency has taken or will take to address these challenges. The majority of respondents reported a lack of funding and a shortage of staff and volunteers as the main challenges. Efforts to manage these challenges include lobbying the government, completing more applications for funding, and increasing fundraising and community awareness.

Methodology

The Victim Services Survey was funded by Justice Canada's Policy Centre for Victim Issues and was developed in consultation with federal, provincial and territorial ministries responsible for justice and victim services, and with a number of victim service agencies from across Canada. The objectives of the survey are to provide a profile of victim service agencies, information on the types of services offered, and some insight into the clients who use them through a snapshot of clients served on October 22, 2003. In addition, the survey collected standardized information from criminal injuries compensation and other financial benefit programs regarding applications for compensation and awards for victims of crime.

23. In addition to services for victims, law and legal organizations include those that provide legal services, promote crime prevention and public safety, rehabilitate offenders and protect the rights of consumers.

24. This is a surcharge imposed in addition to any other punishment for contravening, in this instance, provincial laws or regulations as specified by the province of Quebec. The funds collected are used to finance victim services.

Victim services are defined as agencies that provide direct services to primary or secondary victims of crime and are funded in whole or in part by a ministry responsible for justice matters. The survey covered system-based, police-based, court-based and community-based agencies, sexual assault centres, criminal injuries compensation programs and other financial benefit programs. Corrections-based victim services were not included in the survey because the National Parole Board was not in a position to report data. The survey frame, or list of possible participants, was created from existing public directories on services for victims of crime and from lists of victim service programs obtained from provincial and territorial ministries responsible for victim services.

The Victim Services Survey is a mail-out/mail-back paper questionnaire and is intended to be a census of all victim service agencies that fall within its scope. Although it was intended that each service location complete one form, for administrative reasons some lead agencies submitted one form representing data for all service locations under their administration. Of the 606 agencies eligible to respond, 425 forms were received representing data for 484 agencies and 8 criminal injuries compensation/financial benefit schemes, resulting in a response rate of 81%. Of those deemed ineligible to respond, the majority were either closed or outside the scope of the survey.

To avoid undercounting the number of agencies represented by the survey forms returned, the analysis of services in this *Juristat* is based on the weighted number of 484 victim services and not the 425 forms returned. Information on criminal injuries compensation/financial benefit programs is based on the eight programs.

A total of 19 questionnaire forms reported data for multiple service agencies. These 19 forms represented data for 85 services and 3 criminal injuries compensation/financial benefits programs. The majority of the 85 services were reported by the following four lead services: Newfoundland and Labrador's Victim Services Head Office within the Department of Justice reported for 10 system-based service locations; RCMP Headquarters in Nova Scotia reported for 14 RCMP-based community service offices; New Brunswick's Victim Services Head Office within the Department of Public Safety reported for 14 system-based service locations, and; the one questionnaire submitted by Manitoba Justice²⁵ represents the work performed by 21 Crime Victim Service Workers who were housed in 8 RCMP detachments and 5 court offices, and was weighted to represent 13 service locations.

This method of responding to the survey affected the reliability of information regarding areas served by the victim service agencies. The survey asked respondents to indicate the areas they serve (i.e. urban/suburban, rural/village and/or reserve) and whether or not they are located on a reserve. However, when one form represents a number of service agencies each potentially serving different type of geographies, it is not feasible to distinguish which agency serves which types of geographic areas and the number of agencies located on a reserve. As a result, analysis of service agencies by the area(s) served is not presented.

Other Data Sources

General Social Survey conducts a survey on criminal victimization every five years, the last cycle being 1999. This last cycle involved a telephone interview with approximately 26,000 people 15 years of age and older living in the 10 provinces and asked specific questions about their fear of crime and whether or not they had been victims of specific personal and household crimes in the 12 months prior to the survey. The survey also measured women and men's experiences with spousal violence in the 5 years prior to the survey. The survey gathered detailed information about all victimizations measured, including reporting to the police and the use of social services.

The Transition Home Survey was developed under the federal government's Family Violence Initiative in consultation with provincial and territorial governments and transition home associations. The objectives of the survey are to collect information on residential services for abused women and their children during the previous twelve months of operation as well as to provide a one-day snapshot of the clients being served on a specific day. Statistics Canada began collecting basic information on transition home services and clientele in 1991/92. The survey was repeated with some changes in 1992/93, 1994/95, 1997/98, 1999/00, 2001/02 and 2003/04.

The Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR2) Survey captures detailed information on individual criminal incidents reported to police, including characteristics of victims, accused persons and incidents. In 2003, 122 police services in 9 provinces supplied data for the complete year to the UCR2 survey. These data represent 61% of the national volume of crime. The data are primarily from urban police departments and are mostly from Ontario and Quebec. The data are not geographically representative at the national or provincial level.

The Census of Population is a survey of the total population of Canada conducted every five years. The census collects valuable information on race/ethnicity, language, religion, disability, sex, age, and marital status. The census was last conducted in 2001.

The Participation and Activity Limitation Survey (PALS) is a post-censal survey designed to collect information on adults and children who have a disability, that is, whose everyday activities are limited because of a condition or health problem. Funded by Social Development Canada (formerly Human Resources Development Canada) and conducted by Statistics Canada, PALS provides essential information on the prevalence of various disabilities, the supports for persons with disabilities, their employment profile, their income and their participation in society. The sample consisted of 35,000 adults and 8,000 children and interviews were conducted between September 2001 and January 2002. PALS followed the groundwork laid by the Health and Activity Limitation Survey (HALS), which was conducted by Statistics Canada about persons with disabilities in 1986 and 1991.

25. See footnote 3 for details on the restructuring of victim services in Manitoba in 2002 and 2003.

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